

Member Forum - Questions & Statements from Councillors



Date: Tuesday, 5 July 2022

Time: 4.30 pm

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

Distribution:

Councillors: Mayor Marvin Rees, Donald Alexander, Lesley Alexander, Amal Ali, Kerry Bailes, Jenny Bartle, Nicola Beech, Marley Bennett, Mark Bradshaw, Fabian Breckels, Andrew Brown, Craig Cheney, Jos Clark, Asher Craig, Sarah Classick, Amirah Cole, Chris Davies, Carla Denyer, Tony Dyer, Richard Eddy, Emma Edwards, Jude English, Lily Fitzgibbon, Tessa Fitzjohn, Martin Fodor, Lorraine Francis, John Geater, Paul Goggin, Geoff Gollop, Zoe Goodman, John Goulandris, Katy Grant, Fi Hance, Alex Hartley, Tom Hathway, Helen Holland, Gary Hopkins, Katja Hornchen, Jonathan Hucker, Philippa Hulme, Farah Hussain, Chris Jackson, Hibaq Jama, Tim Kent, Ellie King, Heather Mack, Mohamed Makawi, Brenda Massey, Henry Michallat, Yassin Mohamud, Graham Morris, Paula O'Rourke, Barry Parsons, Steve Pearce, Ed Plowden, Guy Poultney, Kevin Quartley, Tom Renhard, Tim Rippington, James Scott, Sharon Scott, Steve Smith, Ani Stafford-Townsend, Lisa Stone, Christine Townsend, Andrew Varney, Mark Weston, David Wilcox, Chris Windows and Tim Wye

Copies to: Nancy Rollason (Head of Legal Service), Kevin Slocombe (Strategic Advisor to the Mayor), Simon Cowley (Mayor's Policy Advisor), Ben Mosley (Executive Office), Lucy Fleming (Head of Democratic Engagement), David Fowler (Members' Office Manager (Conservative)), Paul Shanks, Rachel Abba (DLT Support Manager), Sarah Wilson (DLT Support Manager - Business Change), Louise Baker (DLT Support Manager Place) and Sara Manix (DLT Support Manager)

Issued by, Oliver Harrison, Democratic Services
Floor 4, Brunel House (Clifton Wing), Bristol BS1 5UY

Tel: 0117 92 23846

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

Date: 4 July 2022



Agenda

1. Member Forum Questions and Answers

(Pages 3 - 44)

2. Member Forum Statements Received

(Page 45)



Member Forum

5 July 2022

Questions and replies



Procedural note:

Councillors are entitled to submit up to 2 written questions each.

- The questions submitted and written replies are enclosed.
- Councillors are also entitled to ask a maximum of 2 supplementary questions at the forum. A supplementary question must arise out of the original question or answer given.
- Via the group leaders / whips, questions have been submitted in priority order.
- At the forum, the asking of supplementary questions will be rotated between the political groups that have submitted questions, taken in priority order.



LABOUR QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Hulme, Horfield Ward

Subject: Land covenants in Horfield

There is a nearly 100-year-old covenant with the Council on land in Upper Horfield that belongs to the Methodist Church. The covenant states that the land must be used for religious or community purposes. Sadly, the Methodist church on the site closed two days ago, and we fear the land may be sold for housing.

Currently, some of the land and buildings on the site are used by Upper Horfield Community Trust, and some is now Hazelnut Farm eco-hub, growing food for local people with increasing community involvement. We recently held a fabulous community day at the site, which 500 people came to. It is evidently a local community facility and green space that is very important to the people of Upper Horfield – particularly since the area is densely populated and is within the 20% most deprived areas in England.

For the covenant to be lifted, the Methodist church or a potential developer would be subject to paying Bristol City Council an unspecified premium.

- a) Is the Council compelled to agree to end the covenant?
- b) Does it intend to do so?

REPLY:

It would be necessary to carry out a legal and property assessment of the covenant before we are able to give a definitive answer to this question. That has not been possible before the Council meeting.

However, if you have further details about the covenant in question, our legal services team would be happy to investigate the matter in more detail.



GREEN QUESTION 1

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Christine Townsend

Subject: Children's services

1. How many of the 450 SEND education places, that was pledged in the Mayoral manifesto of 2021, will have been created and occupied in Sept 2022 when the new academic year starts?
2. At a recent WECA meeting Cllr Cheney refused to accept £100 000 of funding for CYN youth services, can the administration please provide the rationale for the refusal of this external funding?

REPLY:

Q1.

220 specialist provision places will have been created by September 2022.

Q2.

This administration supported CYN when we donated £100,000 to support the launch of the Courts Project. CYN purchased this building, and when we made our initial investment, we were assured they would raise the rest of the funds elsewhere and not from public funds.

I'm surprised that you have singled this project out for public funding. Many of the city's charities and organisations have requested public funding to support projects and have been rejected due to the inability of us to fund third sector projects from public money. Where charities and organisations have property we have recommended to those trusts that they use their buildings to leverage funds.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mark Weston (Henbury & Brentry)

Subject: ACCESSING AND ASSIGNING APPROVED BUDGET SPENDING

The Mayor's revised budget proposals contained a number of additional spending lines for city parks (funded by CIL) to provide more outdoor play areas/equipment (£1.5m) and the regeneration of secondary shopping centres (£1.5m).

1. What criteria will be used to decide the allocation of these extra resources?
2. Can the Mayor advise me how Members can access or help determine where these resources are to be spent?

REPLY:

Q1.

As you will be aware, CIL legislation can be quite prescriptive and we have to meet the criteria. For parks, green spaces and local centres, only specific projects which align to regulations on use of Strategic CIL can be considered. Funding needs to be associated with areas where:

- there are significant levels of growth either planned for.
- or areas where significant levels of growth are predicted.

Q2.

Councillors are welcome to feed in to these plans via officers in the City Centre and High Streets and Parks teams.

Ultimately, Cabinet will be asked to approve investment proposals that meet these needs in the Autumn with delivery through 2023 and in to 2024.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jos Clark (Brislington West)

Subject: Tree Planting and Spatial Planning

Q1 I recently attended the Bristol Tree Strategy information session which sets out to encourage people and groups to sponsor a tree to be planted, which is targeting 1000 potential sites across Bristol. We also have the One Tree Per Child scheme, which I am very pleased to say we benefited from in Brislington, and it was lovely to see children from two of our schools planting trees and a species-rich hedge in Arnos Court Park earlier this year. Both these schemes are lovely ways of engaging members of the public in our future green canopy and giving those involved a real sense of ownership.

As part of our commitment to increasing tree coverage, the Lib Dems got the Trees for Front Gardens scheme last year, although sadly we have not seen any progress on this to date even though it is 6 months since it was passed unanimously.

I would like to put forward a further suggestion to increase public engagement. I understand that in New Zealand each person who is granted their citizenship is given a tree to plant to show that they are putting down roots in their chosen country. I would like to put forward a proposal that Bristol does not give each person a tree because many will not have anywhere suitable to plant theirs, but can I ask that Bristol dedicates an area and plants a tree to celebrate each time the city holds a citizenship ceremony i.e. 26 trees per year?

Q2 Bristol is under pressure to build more housing and can appreciate why people choose to live here, but with the demise of the Spatial Strategy our green spaces are coming under increasing pressure. Only recently we have seen in Brislington East that local people held a march on the meadows to show how let down they feel about being told the meadows would not be built on purely for electoral gain. Now this, along with the area running up-to the Hick's Gate roundabout, is under threat. I would like to ask the mayor if he will prioritise our brown field sites so that we can enjoy these green open spaces?

REPLY:

Q1.

We can try, depending on budget and timings. It might be that we find a way of dedicating trees that are planted to ceremonies rather than scheduling plantings against specific ceremonies.

Q2.

We've already prioritised brownfield sites and will continue to do so. However, Lib Dem councillors have voted against brownfield sites in planning committees recently, as well as speaking out against other brownfield sites in this forum. Can you assure me that we can expect the support of the Liberal Democrats in developing density on brownfield sites to take pressure off green spaces?



KNOWLE COMMUNITY PARTY QUESTION 1
Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gary Hopkins

Subject: Street Lighting Repairs

Late in October 2021 two workmen turned up in Wingfield Road to change the head on an old lamp standard. No advance warning was given. Their actions were closely observed by a resident who has provided a witness statement and saw everything from his front window.

Things started to go wrong when the workman up the cherry picker could not get the old head off. He decided to resort to using an angle grinder with disastrous results. The grinder produced a spray of molten metal (approx. 2000 degrees) which carried down over the front of neighbouring houses. Fortunately there were no pedestrians who would have received serious injuries. What did happen though was serious damage to 3 parked vehicles under the spray. Professional estimates put the damage at over £15,000 .

The disadvantaged residents phoned the council to complain.

The council internal communication was clearly inadequate as it took over 3 months for them to be told that it was not the council's responsibility as the work was carried out by a contractor that I am advised that at this stage we cannot name due to the ongoing dispute.

It was at this point that I was contacted by the residents.

I discovered that the council lighting team had not even been informed of the incident but when they came along to investigate, they were clearly concerned and they were hampered in taking effective action because they had not been informed. The work had clearly been carried out in a dangerous manner. The contractors were meanwhile pretending that the damage was not their fault and had to be harassed into even reporting to their insurance company. I have had much correspondence on this matter including letters to the mayor's office.

Q1 can the mayor please inform me what changes in procedure have been made to ensure that the appropriate department (street lighting in this case) are informed so remedial action can be taken in a timely manner.

Q2 What action has been taken against the contractor to ensure better practice in future and can i have proof of this.

REPLY:

Q1.

Following a detailed investigation, it was established that an officer from the Highway Electrical Asset Team (HEAT) had been informed of the incident by the Insurance Claims team and had forwarded the information/correspondence to the Contractor, in line with the Contract Terms and Conditions regarding 3rd Party Damage.

There was an error insofar as the officer in the HEAT team did not advise their manager of the incident. We have now reminded teams that insurance claims must go to team managers in future.



Q2.

As you already know because you've exchanged correspondence with the team, the Highway Electrical Asset Team has carried out a two-stage approach, the first stage being a site investigation into the working practices.

The site investigation made the several recommendations, detailed below:

1. Review the minimum barrier requirements in line with the Chapter 8 manual.
2. Review working practices of removing lanterns and brackets from columns.
3. Review procedures relating to site conditions when operatives leave site.
4. An IR (ineffective repair) be raised to correct the defective works.

The second stage is to implement and monitor the recommendations with a view to continually improving the service and quality being delivered. Item 4 has now been successfully completed and signed off.

Items 1-3 had been verbally discussed with the Contractor immediately following the completion of the investigation to ensure this incident is not repeated and to help ensure Contractor compliance. The Highway Electrical Asset Team carry out daily random site inspections, these site visits are documented and can be accessed via the Highway Electrical Asset Team. To sign off recommendations 1-3 in full, the Highway Electrical Asset Team and the Contractor have monthly Contract meetings to discuss operational issues, items 1-3 will be concluded at the July 2022 meeting, which will be documented, and revised working processes made available.

The Contractor will be continually monitored by the Highway Electrical Asset Team and reports/documentation relating to the monitoring are readily available. As well as random inspections and as a direct result of the incident the Highway Electrical Asset Team and the contractor will now carry out joint inspections to ensure any safe working practices are being implemented onsite.



LABOUR QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Bailes, Hartcliffe Ward

Subject: Hareclive Road and Anton Bantock Way junction

The Government is handing over powers for enforcing Moving Traffic Offences to Councils, which allows us to enforce illegal driving actions such as illegal left turns. One of my constituents, Keith Pullen, was killed by this on the junction of Hareclive Road and Anton Bantock Way in 2017. Since then, his family and I have been campaigning for a camera on that junction as a deterrent measure, and I have submitted a CIL bid to pay for the camera.

- 1) The Transport Team is currently compiling a list of junctions that will be the priorities for enforcement cameras. Will the Mayor support efforts to have a camera installed at this junction, and ensure it is high on the Council's priority list?

REPLY:

Officers are currently working through the list of requirements needed in order to make an application to the Department for Transport to enable Moving Traffic Enforcement to take place in Bristol. The DfT will consider new applications at the end of 2022.

An initial list of possible sites that could be enforced by these powers is being developed based on known noncompliance. The site at Hareclive Road and Anton Bantock Way will be added to this list for consideration and any site where there has been a fatal accident will be strongly considered.



GREEN QUESTION 2

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Barry Parsons

Subject: Landlord Licensing

1. Landlord licensing is a tool to improve standards and conditions in the private rented sector. Oxford City Council will begin a citywide licensing scheme later this year, providing clear standards across the city rather than a patchwork of rules for different wards. **Will the administration commit to taking the necessary steps to apply to the government for a citywide selective licensing scheme as soon as possible?**
2. I welcome the recent announcement of a Living Rent Commission for Bristol, but was surprised to see that there are as many places reserved on the commission for landlords as for tenants. **Can you explain the rationale for this?**

REPLY

Q1.

Work is currently underway to commission a new stock modelling survey on the current condition and size of the private rented sector in Bristol.

Once the results of this survey are available the Cabinet Member will consider all of the options available to him to ensure conditions in the private rented sector are improved.

Any proposal to license more than 20% of the private rented sector or more than 20% of the geographical area of the City will require approval from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Q2.

I hope you would support the Living Rent Commission for Bristol.

I can't give a rationale for your question as your premise is inaccurate. The membership is not set yet, with us still considering the expressions of interest received so far, but the expectation is that there will be far more people representing tenants than landlords on the commission. Given that the students unions reps are also representing a renting community, there are in fact more places on the board proposed for tenants than landlords.

There will also be opportunities for tenants with lived experience to submit evidence online for consideration by the commission, and for groups representing tenants' lived experience to nominate individuals to attend an inquiry session. In any case the commission will be seeking the evidence and data needed to give basis to any recommendations, as well as drawing on lived experience of renters.

However, it is important we get a wide range of views from commissioners and from submissions – and landlords, who would ultimately have to be part of an agreed approach are



right to be part of the conversation. It's obvious that they should be involved if our goal is for landlords to behave in the best interests of tenants and the wider city.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor John Goulandris (Stoke Bishop)

Subject: BRISTOL CAZ

1. Many residents in Sea Mills and Stoke Bishop are worried that the inclusion of part of the Portway (A4) in the Clean Air Zone will see HGVs turn off the Portway and then drive through suburban roads in Sea Mills and Stoke Bishop. There are weight limits on the main through roads e.g. Shirehampton Road, Druid Hill, Stoke Hill of 3 tons, but there is no signage advising drivers of this weight limit.

As part of the CAZ planning, does the Mayor agree that it would be sensible for the appropriate weight limit signage to be provided before the start of the CAZ?

2. In March 2022 Andy Burnham said :

If the Government permits a delay to compliance to 2027, compliance could be achieved without requiring a charging CAZ scheme – and I would suggest re-designing the scheme with that aim.

He, along with other local Labour and Conservative politicians have strongly argued for an “incentive” scheme rather than a “charging” model to be introduced.

The Greater Manchester CAZ is now paused with the government having agreed to delay compliance to 2026.

Given growing cost pressures on individuals and businesses, does the Mayor believe that something similar could/should be negotiated for Bristol?

REPLY:

Q1.

I agree this is a good idea.

We are commencing the signage installation early July, so any concerns or gaps that are identified within supporting signage can be addressed during the construction phase and prior to the CAZ going live. It is also important we utilise the A369 as an alternative route to the city centre.

Q2.

The main difference between the Greater Manchester scheme and ours is that the Greater Manchester scheme covers a larger area of the conurbation, whereas ours is a small charging zone in the city centre.



We are committed to delivering a Clean Air Zone in Bristol to help the city tackle its air quality issues. Air pollution has significant impacts on public health and we must do all we can to reduce and mitigate these impacts.

However, we have already lobbied government extensively to ensure businesses and households on low-incomes are not disproportionately penalised by the CAZ. I'm pleased we have secured £42m of funding from the government to mitigate the impacts and we are working closely with businesses and residents to help them upgrade their vehicles or transition to other cleaner forms of transport.

Our scheme has been consulted on and agreed with government and we don't intend to revisit that decision.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Kent (Hengrove and Whitchurch Park)

Subject: Public Transport and Education

1. Does the mayor agree that if we are to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels in our transport system the bus network for a city will be key to this and can the mayor share with me what policies he is proposing this year to achieve?
2. I have previously raised my concern about the use of part time timetables in schools. I was pleased the mayor was introducing a register to track how many children are being placed on part time timetables. Could the mayor confirm this is now in use and how many children in the city are currently registered on it?

REPLY:

Q1.

We have long recognised the importance of the bus network in achieving a sustainable transport offer.

The City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) includes significant funding for Strategic Corridors programme of works for bus improvements that we are reviewing. One of our major challenges is getting people back on the bus and we have asked First to offer their ideas as to how we can best support them.

We have worked through the West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset Council on the sub regional Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP). The indicative revenue allocation is £57.5m over three years and will see investment in a number of areas of bus provision, including new or enhanced supported and commercial services, and fares reductions and discounts. However, all this work is predicated on getting passengers to return to the bus and operators have staffing shortfalls that need addressing.

We are working on developing a business case for further funding under the Zero Emission Transport City. This submission will seek funding to accelerate the delivery of zero emission buses in the city.

Q2.

I'm grateful to you for raising this again and officers are taking this forward. The project is due to be finalised over the summer ready for the new school year in September. This will support the timing with the new government guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'.

There have been a couple of delays in finalising and launching the system, partly technical as well as capacity issues due to increased demands on the services. You're welcome to pick this up with the Director for Education and Skills directly so you can see the progress so far on this.



LABOUR QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Steve Pearce, St George Central Ward

Subject: Renters Reform Bill & Avon Pension Fund

1. Regarding the £12m of HRA funding that is going to be spent on upgrading council tenants bathrooms – what consideration has the Mayor and Cabinet Member given to ensuring that all the upgraded bathrooms are fully accessible, so that people will not need to upgrade them again in old age if necessary?
2. Given that the sun is shining and Wimbledon's back, there'll be a high demand for tennis in Bristol. Could the Mayor give an update on the success of the Bristol Parks Tennis Scheme?

REPLY:

Q1.

Bathroom design and specification is being co-designed with residents and stakeholder groups such as the specialist accessible homes and new build teams. Each have provided detailed requirements on what adaptations should be considered. However, we will consult with groups such as the Disability Equality Commission to make sure we get this right.

Whilst some of the requirements in new buildings cannot be achieved due to the design of existing properties, many reasonably practicable adaptations are being considered at installation to mitigate the need to upgrade in the future. These include; taps with levers, toilet spatula flushes, and sinks without pedestals to allow for wheelchairs if needed in future.

Q2.

The Bristol Tennis Scheme has been a huge success and the priority is to expand this scheme to all of Bristol's parks where tennis courts exist.

For the period April 21 – March 22, 11,750 users have accessed the Bristol Parks Tennis Scheme. There has been a total of 35,000 hours of court bookings and there are 2390 individuals with an annual household membership.

478 individuals have accessed community coaching sessions and a programme for volunteer tennis leaders has been established. Regular weekly sessions include: Women's community tennis, walking tennis, tennis for mental wellbeing, sessions for refugees and asylum seekers, sessions for young people with disabilities and sessions for young people from culturally diverse communities.



All in all, the Bristol Parks Tennis Scheme continues to provide high quality parks tennis in an inclusive, affordable, and sustainable way – for the other 50 weeks of the year as well as Wimbledon fortnight.



GREEN QUESTION 3

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Ed Plowden

Subject: Fix My Street and road danger

Fix 'Fix My street'

The railings on the green space adjacent to St Luke's Road have been broken for a long time. I reported them in summer 2021 and officers accepted they needed repair. I chased up in the winter but they remain unfixed.

The blocked drain on Summer Hill that causes a puddle forcing pedestrians to step into the busy Bath Rd was reported in February and remains blocked and a road danger problem.

The worn out paint on the bike lane on the Wells Rd (which in itself demonstrates exactly where the road danger is) has been accepted as needing repair, but remains unrepaired despite me reporting in in March 2021, even though the carriageway immediately adjacent to it was reconstructed and freshly painted.

The blocked drains in Totterdown that I reported in January have finally been cleared, by a contractor disturbing residents at 10pm in the evening and then they "dumped a large pile of sludge at the top of the slope of the Totterdown steps and just left it there".

There are many other examples of known problems persisting.

Q1: When will the Mayor report back on an estimated date for Fix My Street to meet it's target resolution time of 5 days, as offered to Councillor Makawi in December last year?

Road Danger

In the One City Plan there is an ambitious target to reduce to zero the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) due to incidents on Bristol's roads. This is in line with international good practice and especially important as people consistently report road danger as a reason that they do not cycle or allow their children to walk to school, with all the benefits that brings.

After two years of increased casualties under the current administration, good progress was finally being made in 2020 (unsurprisingly due to lockdown), but there is still no report on casualty statistics for 2021, and there does not appear to be any Road Danger action plan or strategy in place as signed off by this administration. Since the new protections brought in for people walking and cycling in the revised Highway Code, no visible effort has been made to raise public awareness by updating the messages on Variable Message boards around the City.

If we have any chance of meeting zero KSI by 2040 we need to concrete plans and to be implementing a wide range of measures without delay.

Q2: What SMART action plans are in place, including financial provision, for tackling the needless scourge of road danger?



REPLY

Q1.

While we don't directly run Fix My Street, we have resolved a number of issues that have helped speed up the process and improve response times. We recognise there are still improvements needed, but we continue to work with them, and train officers in how to close down cases correctly on the system.

Q2.

We remain committed to the ten-year plan set out in the City Council's Safe Systems Approach to Road Safety policy that extends to 2024. Road safety is a key element to our wider strategy for making the City safer, and the whole transport programme contributes to this alongside other areas of work such as planning and urban design. Therefore, it is not possible to put a figure on how much is being spent on efforts to reach this target.

The number of casualties fluctuate year on year due to many factors and the longer-term trend shows a continual decline in people killed or seriously injured in line with the target. The Casualty Review for 2021 will be undertaken once all the data has been received from Avon and Somerset Police.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Chris Windows (Henbury & Brentry)

Subject: REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION P22/02113/O at the FORMER FILTON RUNWAY

1. Can the Mayor confirm whether he has lodged an objection to the proposed huge increase in housing for this development on the city's border?
2. Have our own transport officers evaluated the potential impact of this radically altered, truly colossal, scheme on the road and rail network in this part of north Bristol?

REPLY:

Q1.

It would be irresponsible for me to formally object when Bristol has 16,000 people on the waiting list for housing, and many more in shared homes and living with family. This is a plan for brownfield development as part of a coherent plan for a mixed and balanced neighbourhood.

Nonetheless, we will follow closely the decisions made by the Conservative-led South Gloucestershire council's planning authority when they assess applications for sites on the city's border.

Q2.

Our Transport officers are working with colleagues at South Gloucestershire Council and with National Highways to assess the potential impacts of the development, as part of established joint working arrangements.

Our assessment will feed into South Gloucestershire Council's officer report when this is presented to their planning committee for a decision.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Sarah Classick (Hengrove and Whitchurch Park)

Subject: Housing and Local Press

1. Given the questions and stories still coming out of Imperial Apartments in the wake of the review being published does the Mayor believe that the report goes far enough to improve living conditions for residents and families living at Imperial Apartments?
2. The recent stories in the media about Local Democracy Reporters being banned from attending the mayor's briefings and the subsequent boycotting from other local news organisations is concerning as it locks Bristol citizens out of what should be transparent democracy. Will the Mayor commit to working with the local press and local democracy reporters going forward to ensure that citizens in Bristol are able to be properly informed about local democracy?

REPLY:

Q1.

You do not mention specific questions or stories, so I can only answer generally – yes the review has been very helpful in supporting our consideration of families we have nominated to Imperial Apartments and no longer nominating families with children older than 5.

It is worth reiterating that Caridon are the landlords and responsible for delivering safe and secure accommodation. We are still waiting their response to the review, which is disappointing given their responsibilities.

We want everyone to have a stable, affordable home, which is why we've made housebuilding a priority across Bristol, as well as used our powers in the private rented sector with licensing schemes. Bristol still faces a housing crisis, and so we can only take decisions with the places we have.

Q2.

There is no ban, which just shows you shouldn't believe everything you read online.

I initiated the press conferences to help the media to give them access and scrutiny. I tell them they can ask me any question they want. Every press conference is recorded and published unedited where any journalist and any citizen can watch them.

My press conferences are not statutory and are actually offered voluntarily, along with my weekly phone-in on Ujima.

When I hold a press conference, I invite the seven main news outlets in Bristol to attend. Six of them send their own journalist but the biggest corporate media company, Reach PLC, does not have enough staff to send one. Instead Reach wants to replace them with a publicly funded LDR reporter whose remit is very clear and very narrow and relies on impartial

coverage of council business. In addition, we have had several meetings with former editors of Bristol Live, senior managers at BBC West and the National Manager of the Local Democracy Reporting Service. At those meetings we tabled substantial evidence of a lack of impartiality by Local Democracy Reporters in the city and these were taken seriously by managers who undertook to improve the service. The press conferences are not impartial and are an open exchange of views, questions and answers.

Furthermore, the local media which has such a weak record on diversity and inclusion, locks many communities and voices out of democracy both in the way they select and tell their stories and their failure to employ people from Black, Asian and working class backgrounds over the last decades. This latter point is particularly important to me, and I'm not surprised that some elements of the media have closed ranks.



LABOUR QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Bennett, Eastville Ward

Subject: Renters Reform Bill & Avon Pension Fund

- 1) The Renters Reform Bill will go some way to addressing the power imbalance between landlords and renters, but significant problems will undoubtedly remain.

The Mayor has stated he welcomes the Bill, but believes it falls short in some areas - please could he elaborate on where he believes it could be strengthened?

REPLY:

Q1.

The recently published white paper, 'A Fairer Private Rented Sector' contains proposals to: end no fault evictions, introduce open ended tenancies, develop a national landlord register, take steps to prevent illegal evictions, improve access to justice for tenants and introduce measures to prevent discrimination.

While these proposals provide greater protections and flexibility for renters, they do very little to improve the affordability of, and access to housing for the thousands of low and middle-income households struggling in the private rental market.

We believe the draft bill could be strengthened by:

- Giving local authorities (LA's) the ability to introduce city wide property licensing schemes without Secretary of State approval.
- Simplifying enforcement powers on Interim and Final Management Orders to enable these to be used without financial risks to LA's.
- Giving LA's adequate tools to enforce the Decent Homes Standard in the Private Rented Sector so that they can crack down on criminal landlords.
- Extending the proposals for landlords or agents to prevent blanket bans on renting to families with children or those in receipt of benefits, to be broadened to include other vulnerable groups.
- Making the new Property Portal easy to use and containing useful information for landlords and tenants.
- Ensuring sufficient new burdens funding is provided to enable LA's to fully implement these new responsibilities.



GREEN QUESTION 4

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: Air Pollution

1. At present there's no requirement for street or park traders to use batteries or electricity. A trader is left to decide if they want to run a diesel generator or motor all day in a street or park. This includes sites in the air quality management area.

Q: Can we have an active policy to require traders to use alternatives to diesel generators or motors, including practical support for this from the council?

2. In January 2020 Party Group leaders and Whips agreed to implement action on wood smoke and particulates when a motion was scheduled at Full Council but not discussed (Ref Amended Joint Motion link Jan 2020:

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s45245/Wood%20burners%20-%20amended%20motion%20v3%20-%20final%20version.pdf>

As joint author of that motion I welcome the Mayor's new commitment with UK 100 to cleaner air and an ambition to tackle both particulate pollution and NOx.

Q: Will the Mayor report back to Full Council on progress implementing the measures and points covered in that motion?

REPLY:

Q1.

We are updating our policy on power units at events run under BCC permits. A framework is being developed based on technology types and locations.

We will investigate how the framework could be adapted to cover the power generation of regular traders.

Q2.

A communications campaign aimed at reducing wood burning was carried out last winter. A similar campaign will be developed for this winter.

Our Slow the Smoke citizen science project, funded by Defra is enabling citizens to collect data on particulate pollution and innovative engagement is taking place using Knowle West Media Centre expertise. In addition, a high-quality particulate monitor will be installed in St Werberghs by the end of 2022.

In May 2021 new powers were introduced by government to stop the sale of the most polluting fuels. There is a plan to raise awareness of these new rules in 2022/23.

We will be producing a Particulates Reduction Plan this year and consider all the issues the motion raised.



I am aware some environmental activist groups have avoided the issue of domestic wood burners. Can I ask Councillor Fodor what actions the Green party have taken to support the campaign to encourage people to stop burning solid fuels – is there a supporting communications campaign being led by his group?



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Smith (Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze)

Subject: BOOKING TO VISIT HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRES

1. Can the Mayor confirm whether or not our Authority has formally responded to the Defra consultation on the operation of these systems?
2. What (if any) public consultation took place prior to the decision to require people (post lockdown) to book up to two weeks in advance to access these facilities?

REPLY:

Q1.

Yes, Bristol City Council has formally submitted a response to the DEFRA consultation.

Q2.

No public consultation took place prior adopting the booking system as this is an operational change and has not resulted in any new restrictions in terms of waste being deposited, size of cars etc.

The booking system introduced does not require residents to book two weeks in advance – residents can book to visit a recycling centre on the day or day before wanting to visit. The system opened for booking two weeks before the requirement to book was brought in. This was to ensure residents were aware of the change and had time to adjust.

The average visit now takes residents less than 15 minutes from arrival to departure – preventing the queues of 1 hour plus during busy periods.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Andrew Varney Brislington West

Subject: Bridges and Active Travel

Q1 Sparke Evans Park Bridge:

Following a campaign led by Brislington West Liberal Democrat councillors to encourage much needed repairs and maintenance to the neglected Sparke Evans Park Bridge, we were delighted to read Bristol City Council's January 27 press release on the matter:

"We propose to invest £15m of funding to ensure six bridges over the New Cut get the repairs and maintenance they require...Aside from Gaol Ferry Bridge, five other bridges set to undergo repairs over the next five years are Vauxhall Bridge, Langton Street Bridge, Sparke Evans Park Bridge, Bedminster Bridge and Bath Bridge."

Unfortunately, in a follow up press release just three months later on 29 April, we were dismayed to see that Sparke Evans Bridge had been dropped from the list:

"A multi-million-pound investment in some of the city's most iconic and much used bridges has been proposed to deliver necessary repairs and maintenance over a five-year period...The six bridges that make up this proposal are Bath Bridge, Bedminster New Bridge, Bedminster Old Bridge, Gaol Ferry Bridge, Langton Street Footbridge and Vauxhall Footbridge."

When I asked the Cabinet Member with responsibility for transport why Sparke Evans Park Bridge had been omitted, he responded, "we have every intention of including S-E in the programme."

Could you therefore explain the discrepancy in the two press releases and reassure the people of Brislington West that Sparke Evans Bridge will indeed be included in the 5-year programme of repairs and maintenance as confirmed by the Cabinet Member for Transport?

Q2 Active Travel in Brislington West:

I'm sure the Mayor is as delighted as I am that the Callington Road Link has been cancelled and that my residents will soon have a fantastic new active travel corridor, the Brislington Greenway, which will promote sustainable journeys and help Bristol meet its commitments to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

The Brislington Greenway will connect to the Sustrans National Cycle Network Route 3 and allow seamless off-road journeys all the way from Stockwood via Brislington West to Temple Meads in the City Centre. Unfortunately, the section known as the St Philips Greenway, which runs alongside the river adjacent to Arnos Vale, is woefully below standard and urgently needs investment.

There is virtually no lighting, which renders the route unusable for many people during the long winter months. It is extremely narrow and uneven in many places, with nettles and other undergrowth at this time of year making it difficult for young children to safely navigate. The metal barriers at one of the access points to the path inhibit those with non-standard bicycles from using it. The path was recently partially blocked for several weeks by a fallen tree but

when I asked for its prompt removal, I was told it wasn't a priority, even though this is the only off-road active travel route for thousands of travellers. And it is likely to become much busier in the future as hundreds of new homes are built in Arnos Vale.

In its current state, it is not fit for purpose. It is out of bounds for large numbers of people and will not encourage enough people to switch to more sustainable journeys. Can the Mayor let the people of East Bristol know when it is going to be treated as a priority and when and what improvements are likely to be made?

REPLY:

Q1.

I wasn't aware of your campaign but this administration is taking action to fix a number of bridges that have been neglected for many decades. For the avoidance of doubt, Sparke Evans Footbridge has been identified for repair and refurbishment as part of our investment.

The six "New Cut" bridges programmed to be refurbished are indeed the ones which are listed within the Cabinet members statements, but for further clarification also will include Sparke Evans Footbridge, which in fact is not located on the "New Cut" corridor but spans the river, hence why it was listed separately.

Q2.

It is the case that the section of St Phillips Greenway from Avonmeads to Cattle Market Road is not up to the standards required for shared cycling and walking and is in a poor state of repair. A programmed cut back of vegetation will take place in the next few days.

However, space is limited to make meaningful improvements and modern shared use standards cannot be met without significant engineering and construction works. We anticipate that active travel needs for this route will be enhanced through the wider redevelopment of the St Philips area.



LABOUR QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jackson, Filwood Ward

Subject: Hartcliffe Recycling and Reuse Centre / Potholes

1. Can the mayor provide statistics from the Hartcliffe Way Recycling and Reuse Centre's first week in operation?
2. Potholes are one of the most frequent things councillors will hear about from residents. Can the mayor provide some information about work being done to reduce the number of potholes in Filwood and Bristol?

REPLY:

Q1.

Hartcliffe Way Reuse and Recycling was opened on the 21 June and offers residents a full range of recycling options, a reuse shop specialising in electronics, large white goods and IT, and the opportunity to drop off bulky and bagged waste.

Since opening the site has 1,790 visits have been booked and attended. 53 tonnes of waste and resources have been deposited, and the site's recycling performance is at 65%. The reuse shop has sold 243 items.

We expect the use of the site to grow as residents learn about this excellent facility.

Q2.

Every Ward is treated the same through an asset management approach where works are prioritised by condition need.

Since 2020 the council has been working with Gaist, a specialist surveying company, to inspect Bristol's roads using annual condition surveys and safety inspections to understand the true condition of the road network and prioritise works.

We also have a team of Highway Inspectors who manually inspect every road and footway in Bristol, identifying and repairing defects. Of the 10,345 defects repairs last year, almost 80% were generated by inspectors.

This data, with other data sets, is used to plan the preventative maintenance programme, which is carried out during the summer months through surface dressing. This prolongs the life of local roads, protecting them from environmental damage, which also helps prevent potholes.



You may have seen a recent report that shows in the last year road defects across the city have fallen from 7,650 to 5,749 and the number of potholes has gone down from 2,695 to 1,838.

The Highways and Electricals Assets Team are happy to provide a further briefing to members if required.



GREEN QUESTION 5

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Emma Edwards

Subject: Liveable Neighbourhoods and parking measures

National bodies including Bristol based council partners Sustrans, and Labour-run Councils like Lambeth and Waltham Forest in London, say managing parking with special measures such as RPZs should always be a prior feature, or adopted alongside, measures and changes that create Liveable Neighbourhoods.

Questions:

1. Does the Mayor agree?

2. Will the Mayor commit to deliver Residents Parking Schemes in preparation for Bristol's coming Liveable Neighbourhood pilot?

REPLY:

Q1.

No. My view as previously expressed, is that we need to see Liveable Neighbourhoods as one idea to tackle a number of problems. We need to see what works and what doesn't and most importantly make sure we take communities with us.

Q2.

A RPZ is not within scope of the project. The majority of the city does not have an RPZ and the pilot location explores how improvements can be delivered regardless of parking controls. Officers are working with other authorities that have delivered Liveable Neighbourhoods without parking controls to understand lessons learnt and best practise.

The Council is following a co-design process with the community and is responding to the issues raised. The first round of engagement invited communities in East Bristol to comment on the issues they faced locally. This needs to be led by residents, not a pre-conceived political solution where we know best but by listening and trialling different ideas.

Officers have been reviewing the feedback and will introduce proposals for several different approaches that can be used to trial against the issues raised.

As such, the Council will not commit to introducing an RPZ unless there is overwhelming support in the community for one. As I have said before, RPZs encourage car travel and do nothing to support modal shift.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Richard Eddy (Bishopsworth)

Subject: MAYORAL ATTITUDE TO CLIMATE CHANGE & DEMOCRACY IN BRISTOL

1. Can the Elected Mayor please justify his decision to fly to Vancouver in April 2022 to deliver a 14-minute talk on Climate Change when this could easily have been done remotely?
2. Does the Elected Mayor view the subsequent banning of Bristol's Local Democracy Reporters from his fortnightly press conferences as a sign of his commitment to transparency and democracy?

REPLY:

Q1.

Yes I can justify it.

I was one of 87 main stage speakers invited to speak at TED's annual global conference. My argument was that the battle against climate change will be won or lost in cities. But the current and international financial and policy context in which cities are working is not supporting city decarbonisation. National governments are not going to deliver that change, so cities need to be involved in international forums to drive that change, and I was at TED to shape global decision makers both in the room and elsewhere. The video has had 705,000 views on the TED website, and another 31,000 on Youtube.

Not attending forums like TED is small thinking. We are a global city, and working in a global context means we can take the city's view to shape the future.

Q2.

Holding a public press conference, and publishing it unedited is an example of my commitment to transparency and democracy.



GREEN QUESTION 6

Question to the Mayor from Councillor David Wilcox

Subject: Safer streets

1. Can the Mayor confirm that the changes to make the Nelson Street Cycle Lane both safe and LTN1/20 compliant will be met by the developer and not the council?

2. Lockleaze Residents are asking for the 30 mph speed limit on Romney Avenue to be reviewed as a secondary school – the Trinity Academy – has opened and the risk of drivers not acknowledging the change in speed limit is huge. **What is the process for instigating a review of this road, to reduce the limit to 20 mph?**

REPLY

Q1.

The design and approval of the Nelson Street cycle lane occurred prior to LTN1/20 and therefore there is no requirement for the developer to make changes in line with that guidance.

However, as with any highway changes installed by a developer, we are working with them to identify and resolve any related safety concerns and any costs will be paid by the developer not the council.

Q2.

The safety of pupils attending the school was considered when the plans for the school were developed and new crossings and traffic calming measures have been installed. These were the subject of a safety audit at the design stage and a further review will be being undertaken on the completed works.

The speed limit in the vicinity of the school is already 20mph. If further changes are felt to be needed along Romney Avenue then this should be discussed through the Area Committee process.

I would be interested in what evidence you have that the community supports the change as very few people attended the Acorn led protest at City hall and I haven't received an individual letters about the matter.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Graham Morris (Stockwood)

Subject: SAFETY ISSUES STURMINSTER ROAD / CRAYDON ROAD

On Saturday 25 June, there was another serious car accident in Stockwood. A three-car pileup this time; fortunately, no one was fatally hurt.

The cost to make the road safer is far beyond using the Area Committee process.

1. Can the Mayor confirm the number of road traffic accidents on these roads over the previous 5 years and whether there are any WECA or central government funds which could be used to make these roads safer?

REPLY:

In the last 5 years (1st March 2017 to 28th February 2022) there were 12 injury collisions recorded by the Police resulting in 9 slight and 3 serious injuries.

During that time there were 38 fatalities, 367 serious injuries and 3801 slight injuries on roads around Bristol. Therefore, whilst the collisions occurring along this road remain a concern, other locations around the City have been a higher priority for dedicated road safety intervention.

The A4018/A37 Bus Deal scheme has considered the concerns raised by local Councillors and is proposing to upgrade some of the existing refuge islands and provide new islands through this section of Sturminster Road, which should improve road safety.

This is funded through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement.



GREEN QUESTION 7

Questions) to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Wye

Subject: HR Committee requests

In the past year as chair of HR, I have made two requests to the Mayor on behalf of the HR committee. It disappoints me that these elicited no response and I am having to use Members Forum to get HR committee's requests addressed.

The first question (12.1.22) was to ask cabinet to consider how apprenticeship levy could be used to develop skills in retrofitting and sustainable skills. The council has previously benefitted from a Green revenue budget amendment to use unspent Apprenticeship Levy to ensure employees can learn new skills in installing and maintaining renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies in retrofitting of housing. What are the current plans to continue/expand this?

The second, more recent, (25.5.22) was to ask if BCC staff could be consulted on their views on whether their pension fund should be fossil fuel free. We were clear in the message to the mayor that we would want to put all sides of the argument to staff.

Both of these questions were the result of sensible and mature discussion and were supported cross party.

Unfortunately, neither was responded to. Could the mayor please:

- 1. Answer and respond to these previous questions;**
- 2. Explain why the Mayor thought it appropriate to simply not respond to the reasonable questions from a committee chair on behalf of said committee?**

REPLY

Q1.

Thank you for bringing these matters to my attention. I believe you have now had responses on these matters from my office and from the Chief Executive.

On the matter of the apprenticeships report, you will note that this is indeed due to be brought to Cabinet for consideration next week, where we will also consider what further steps can be taken to use our Apprenticeship Levy to maximise the benefit for staff and local residents to take on new skills.

Q2.

It's not appropriate – the email was missed and you have now had a reply.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Geoff Gollop (Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze)

Subject: COVERS FOR WATER TROUGHS

- 1 Can the Mayor confirm the cost of installing (mandatory) galvanised steel covers for all water troughs on allotment sites across the city?
- 2 From whom will these costs be recouped, for an action (I am given to understand) that is considered by many allotmenters to be entirely unnecessary and was not consulted upon?

REPLY:

Q1.

The cost of installing the covers for the water troughs was £62,525. The funding for this was secured through the corporate water hygiene improvement budget.

Q2.

It was considered necessary to install the covers as part of the improvement to water infrastructure on allotments sites and was identified necessary by the Duty Holder for water hygiene in the Councils Building Practice Service. To address this requirement a number of options were considered the most affordable option was to install lids to the existing troughs to make them an “enclosed” tank. This had the desired effect to preventing accidental ingress of debris and most importantly excluding light to prevent algae growth, both of which improves water quality.



GREEN QUESTION 8

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Tom Hathway

Subject: Drains

1. Last year the council retendered its gully cleansing contract. **What KPIs are this contractor being assessed against and how are they performing?**
2. Where there are capacity issues requiring upgraded infrastructure to improve drainage, **will you commit to engaging with ward members and the community in future and involve them in developing proposals?**

REPLY

Q1.

The KPIs we measure performance against are

- KPI1 - Time
- KPI2 - Quality
- KPI3 - Budget
- KPI4 – Communications

We are managing the contract in reference to these KPIs and continuing to work proactively with the contractor to improve performance.

More detailed information about performance is commercially sensitive, however we are happy to put you in touch with the relevant officer who can provide more information about this if required.

Q2.

Yes. Where we are undertaking planned upgrades of the drainage infrastructure this will be treated as any other project which involves consultation with the public and councillors.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Kevin Quartley (Bishopsworth)

Subject: CLOSED BRIDGWATER ROAD TOILET-BLOCK

1. On 15th March 2022, my ward colleague Cllr Eddy asked the Elected Mayor about the future use of the toilet-block at Bridgwater Road (Bedminster Down), closed to the public with other city lavatories in 2018.

At the time of the Mayor's reply, was he aware that this facility was among five citywide which it was proposed to be used by Bristol Waste Company for Street-Cleansing Sub-Depots & associated Public Conveniences?

2. Are the use of these closed toilet-blocks (including Bridgwater Road) by BWC time-limited and will local communities still be permitted to pursue with Officers their own proposals to re-use the facilities?

REPLY:

Q1.

As I stated in my response to your colleague the Council held off transferring any toilet blocks (including the facility at Bridgwater Road), in order to consider alternative uses for these sites, including ways they can support efforts to transform our waste services within the city.

Q2.

Bristol Waste are planning to use the five toilets blocks to accommodate street-based cleansing teams to work locally in the community with the aim of improving street cleanliness and greater connections with the community.

It is proposed that the toilets used by Bristol Waste will be future-proofed by having areas set aside to potentially be open as toilets in the future.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Lesley Alexander (Frome Vale)

Subject: NEW APPROACH TOWARDS TACKLING BRISTOL'S POTHOLE PROBLEMS

1. Irrespective of the recent positive pronouncements concerning improvements in surveying, identifying and early intervention to instigate repairs, the Mayor is well aware of the chronic state of many of our roads. Road maintenance is increasingly expensive, infrequent, and (sadly) often not very durable. Potholes are also costly in other ways, creating hazards and causing accidents which result in personal injury and property claims against the Authority.

I understand Conservative-controlled Council Stoke-on-Trent has introduced a very successful repair programme using a new machine by JCB called the 'Pothole Pro'. It is claimed that this can fix a pothole in just eight minutes (four times faster than traditional labour-intensive methods) and at half the cost.

Can the Mayor confirm whether our own highway maintenance team is aware of this development?

2. If the benefits of this approach to road repairs are confirmed or established – and it should be relatively easy to find out just by contacting pioneering councils who have embraced this technology - will the Mayor support its use in Bristol through our local procurement contracts or policies?

REPLY:

Q1.

We are aware of the Pothole Pro and have investigated its use with our civil contracting partners. The Pothole pro is a 3 in 1 attachment tool that fits to a wheeled excavator which can crop, cut and clean the road, undertaking repairs.

The claimed savings are impressive however we have some reservations as a small land (compared to the rural counties road network) urban authority. It cannot deal with structural failure that accounts for many of our road defects and the size and cumbersome aspect of the excavator and attachment, is not, in our opinion well suited to our busy, congested network. The technology is better suited to rural and high speed roads, with minimal junctions.

Q2.

To make it financially viable we would require a large programme of shallow patches in a close proximity. In this regard there may be potential to look at using it across the WECA region and we will investigate this with our neighbours and with Stoke on Trent.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 10

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Sharon Scott (Westbury-on-Tyrm & Henleaze)

Subject: GREENING URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

1. The Mayor will recall that many suggestions have been made in the effort to improve air quality and support biodiversity in our city. Greening walls, rooftops and biotech algae trees are just some of the ideas that have previously been advanced.

We also now have an ecological emergency action plan which aims to make urban settings or streets much more friendly to wildlife (particularly pollinators) through the creation of more sustainable and sympathetic micro ecosystems. Is the Mayor aware of the new concept of a 'living pillar' which utilises existing infrastructure (lighting columns) to house indigenous flowers and plants?

2. I understand this technology is currently being trialled in various parts of the country. Will the Mayor agree to examine these studies and, if proven efficacious, consider hosting a similar scheme here?

REPLY:

Q1.

I am aware of the concept, and the trials which are being carried out.

Through the work that the council is developing through the ecological emergency action plan the Council is committed to addressing the ecological emergency which it has declared through managing space for nature which will support the increase the biodiversity within the city.

Q2.

The council will consider various approaches to greening the city.

Obviously we will need to consider the cost, practicalities of the management and maintenance, consideration of impact on infrastructure and evaluate the benefits each idea can deliver when considering how this supports the increase of biodiversity, and cooling the city.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 11

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Henry Michallat (Stoke Bishop)

Subject: COUNCIL CASEWORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

1. The Mayor will be aware that the generic councillor.mpenquiries@bristol.gov.uk email has been devised by the Council to channel all councillor issues through an integrated BCC process. In fairness, this arrangement often works smoothly and ensures residents' issues raised by members are routed to the appropriate officer and a response elicited.

Unfortunately, the system does not appear to have the ability to notify or 'chase' officers, who fail to respond promptly (or within stipulated timescales) to an issue raised by a local councillor.

Can this procedure be improved so that, in the event of no response being forthcoming within one week, a chaser is sent to the relevant officer's line manager?

2. The member/officer protocol provides that councillors should receive replies from officers to a letter or email within one week. Some staff seem unaware of this. To remedy this situation, can the Mayor request a reminder be issued from the Chief Executive informing officers of the importance of responding to correspondence from members in a timely fashion?

REPLY:

Q1.

I don't manage the case system, but I understand the iCasework system does have the capability to send chaser reminders.

However, the 'relevant officer's line manager' is sometimes a person who does not operate i:Casework directly so there is variation across service areas. Automatic notifications may only therefore be a partial solution.

While I appreciate the frustration on matters like this, members are better-placed escalating any instances of overdue responses to the relevant service director so we can put measures in place to improve timeliness where required.

Q2.

Yes, the Chief Executive is happy to disseminate reminders as part of our regular internal communications bulletins to staff.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 12

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Graham Morris (Stockwood)

Subject: GRASS CUTTING

Despite meeting with officers in February, we are still getting a multitude of complaints about the standard (or absence) of grass cutting in some locations.

1. Can the Mayor please ensure a communication is issued to Bristol residents explaining the new grass cutting regime and the reasons why some of the grass is left long and uncut for the growing season?

REPLY:

Q1.

Changing the operational management of our parks and green spaces to benefit nature and contribute to the Nature Recovery Network is a key action from our Ecological Emergency Action Plan. Over the past two seasons we have introduced trial changes to grass cutting regimes ahead of public engagement and consultation processes in July/August this year that will capture residents' ideas and views and help us cement long-term site-level plans.

We are acting now to promote and raise awareness about how we manage land for nature. As part of this we have published [a new webpage](#), which will in future turn into a management for nature "hub", where residents can find out more information about managing land for nature as plans develop.

Residents who contact us to enquire about grass cutting are advised on our web pages of these measures and opportunities and that they will notice long grass being more of a feature in our parks. We welcome any comments from residents about their experience with these changes.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 13

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jonathan Hucker (Stockwood)

Subject: MAJOR ROUTE UPDATE

1. Can the Mayor provide an update on the progress of the A37 / A4018 Transport Corridor Project and, in particular, advise when will the results of the public consultation be made available?

REPLY:

As you'll understand, this is an ambitious project with a large geographic scope so there's a lot to consider.

Transport officers and my office have been considering the consultation results and having given these results due consideration, a revised business case is being developed. The consultation results will be published this summer as will the business case development.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 14

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jonathan Hucker (Stockwood)

Subject: IMPACT OF BATH CAZ

1. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest the introduction of the Bath CAZ has increased HGV traffic in Bristol and along the A37 Wells Road or has any monitoring been carried out to investigate the impact on Bristol of the Bath scheme?

REPLY:

We are not aware of any evidence of an increase through the A37. It doesn't appear on the face of it that drivers would use the A37 to avoid the Bath Clean Air Zone. However if you have any examples of this, they'd be welcome.



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

	Name	Subject
CS01	Councillor Gary Hopkins	Phone Mast in Redcatch Park

CS01

Members Forum statement from Cllr Gary Hopkins

Subject: Phone mast in Redcatch Park

In the petition debate later, you will hear from local residents in Knowle ward of the outrageous threat to put a 70 ft high phone mast in one of the most popular parks in Bristol. The legislation on which the phone mast agents rely gives powers to the companies to site masts on public land without planning permission if there is no alternative site to provide a service signal. After initially regarding the mast as inevitable the BCC administration is now not issuing the licence and faces a land tribunal on 15th of this month. The national legislation is draconian and was brought in at the demand of the phone companies when the government was selling off licences at high prices. BCC does have a chance in this case to set a national precedence and I call upon all parties to sign the attached letter which the council can use to strengthen its case.

We are providing this letter of concern regarding the action taken by the telecoms company in seeking to erect a 70ft mast together with ancillary ground developments including a diesel generator in Redcatch Park in Knowle Bristol.

We are not party to the early communications between the telecoms company and the council administration but are aware that the council and the local community are not against a mast in the area and in fact have suggested alternative local sites and solutions.

Whatever the problems that the telecoms company perceives we would suggest that the destruction of a valuable park much valued by the local residents is not an acceptable way forward.

We urge the telecoms company to withdraw their application while work continues on agreeing the best alternative.