

Member Forum



Date: Tuesday, 8 November 2016

Time: 5.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, City Hall

To: All Members of Council

Issued by: Ian Hird, Democratic Services

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Date: 8 November 2016



Agenda

1. Questions and replies

Questions received from councillors are set out in the attached document, together with the replies from the Mayor.

2. Statements

Statements received from councillors are set out in the attached document.



Member Forum

8 November 2016

Questions and replies



Procedural note:

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS:

- Councillors are entitled to submit up to 2 written questions each.
- Councillors are also entitled to ask a maximum of 2 supplementary questions at the forum.
- If a councillor has submitted 2 questions on 2 separate topics, they may ask both of their supplementary questions on just one of the topics if they so wish, or may ask one question on each of the 2 separate topics. All supplementary questions must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.
- Via the group leaders / whips, questions have been submitted in priority order.
- At the forum, the asking of questions will be rotated between the political groups that have submitted questions, taken in priority order.



QUESTIONS

The following member questions have been submitted:

A. Questions from the LABOUR Group (listed in order of priority):

LAB. QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Nicola Beech, St George Central ward

Subject: The role and responsibility of Bristol City Council as a commissioner

1. In our election manifesto we committed to prioritising local businesses and organisations to maximise the impact of the City Council's spending power in the local economy. With this commitment in mind, can the Mayor or Cabinet Member responsible tell me what we are doing as a Council to encourage more local businesses and not for profit organisations to bid for Council contracts and as part of his answer can the Mayor or Cabinet member tell me what Councillors can do to help encourage local businesses and organisations to take part in the Council's commissioning process?

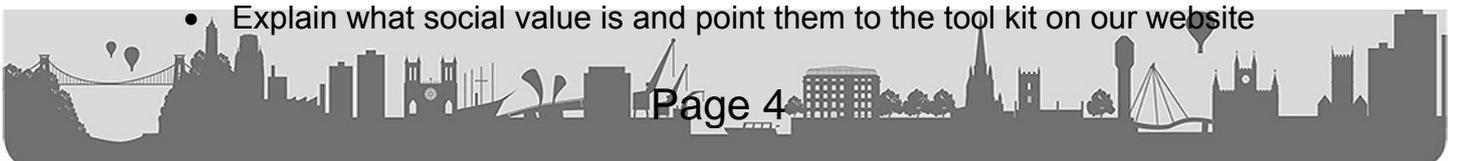
2. With regards to the upcoming procurement of Adult Social Care and Homelessness services, can the Mayor or Cabinet Member responsible confirm whether the Council will embed the social value toolkit in the Council's procurement process?

REPLY:

1. The council has developed an approach to social value which complies with procurement regulations and utilises a number of mechanisms to encourage local businesses and not for profit organisations to bid for contracts. These are
 - Ensuring that wherever possible large requirements are broken down into "lots" to enable smaller organisations to bid
 - Our social value requirements require the main contractor to have a percentage of local companies in their supply chain
 - As part of the commissioning process we endeavour to involve local suppliers in the development of the specification of requirements through consultation exercises and soft market testing events
 - We try to use open frameworks wherever possible, which allows organisations to join throughout the life of the arrangement. This allows opportunities to be available for smaller organisations to join when they feel they have the capacity to bid
 - We run "top tips for tendering" courses with Voscur for 3rd sector organisations
 - Engaging on a regular basis with the Federation of Small Businesses

What can Councillors do:

- Facilitate local organisations to form consortia which would allow them to bid for larger contracts
- Promote consultation and soft market testing events in their wards with smaller organisations
- Explain where we advertise opportunities to local businesses and organisations
- Explain what social value is and point them to the tool kit on our website



2. The social value toolkit is used in as many commissioning exercises as possible. Yes, it will be used in the up and coming homelessness service recommissioning exercise.
3. I have made clear my intention to design and deliver the VCS we want for to develop for Bristol in 2050 and make commissioning and grants deliver that.

LAB. QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Jon Wellington, Windmill Hill ward

Subject: Bedminster Green development

Since May, Cllr Lucy Whittle and I have been working with local residents and the Windmill Hill and Malago Community Planning Group who are concerned about plans to build a high rise development on Malago Green (also known as Bedminster Green). While we know the Mayor has little power over local planning decisions, we are concerned that this possible development could have detrimental impact on local services and the environment and we are all keen to ensure the site is developed in such a way that it brings about as, the group would like to see, 'a lively, community-orientated addition to the existing area which encourages interactions between neighbours and cares for the most vulnerable residents.'

In the spirit of our aim to not merely build houses but to build sustainable homes and communities in Bristol, will the Mayor or the Cabinet Member for Place agree to meet with local councillors and members of Windmill Hill and Malago Planning Group to listen to their proposals and discuss the community site brief that they have developed for the Bedminster Green site?

REPLY:

Yes. Myself and Cllr Smith will be pleased to meet with both ward members and also members of the local planning group to discuss this situation.

I agree that it is our aim to build communities, not just houses, and we will engage with communities across Bristol where there are plans to build.

Please contact the Executive Office to set this up.

LAB. QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Gill Kirk, Lockleaze ward

Subject: Bristol City Council's role in integrating health and social care

We are all aware that the only way we can provide adult social care sustainably it by working with our colleagues in the NHS to find workable models that integrate health and social care. These include 'place -based' Accountable Care Organisations, (ACO's).

There are many obstacles to integration. Providers and commissioners have to predict future needs of their areas in an uncertain financial climate whilst at the same time having to run day-to-day services under increasing pressures.

There are legal uncertainties over funding pots, contracting and governance issues, procurement and tendering in our increasingly fragmented health and care systems, and how

the risks and rewards are shared. There will need to be major cultural changes in systems leadership at a very senior level.

Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) should improve ‘place based planning’, across authorities and organisations, between acute and primary health sectors, and social care. Their aim is to provide more co-ordinated services, which would include pooling of budgets, multi-agency teams, and sharing of IT systems. But incentives to work together can be weak within the current NHS environment. Providers are under great pressure to prioritise their own organisational performance (their own services and finance) rather than working with others for the greater good of the population.

Local authorities need a strong voice within our local STP to ensure it does not focus its efforts purely on plans for reconfiguring hospital services. STPs need to prioritise the role of social care, funding social workers and care workers who provide the support to keep people out of hospital.

1. Can the Mayor or Cabinet Member responsible provide an update on what role Bristol City Council is currently playing in the development of our STP, and in providing systems leadership that can overcome the obstacles to closer integration?

2. Can the Mayor or Cabinet Member responsible tell members whether BCC will be expressing an interest in joining a new network of training and support in systems leadership for senior leaders in health and social care to be launched by the Kings Fund in March 2017 focussing on delivering local models of Accountable Care (The Kings Fund is an independent Health charity that shapes health and social care policy and practice)?

REPLY:

1a) Bristol City Council is involved as one of 14 systems partners in the development of the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Strategic Transformation Plan (“BNSSG STP”). Colleagues across the organisation: social care, Public Health, strategic planning and commissioning, are involved in many different aspects of the development of the plan, and the delivery. Collaboration has been effective to date and there is now an opportunity to strengthen the focus on social care and the community. However it is important that elected politicians play a greater role, in the development of the STP. Accordingly the draft plan will be coming to the Health and Wellbeing board on the 19th October.

1b) Bristol City Council has representation on the Strategic Transformation Plan (“STP”) Systems Leadership Group (SLG), and the Executive Board, and has also proactively established a ‘BNSSG Local Authorities Planning Group’ (Directors of social care, Public Health, and Commissioning) which has been meeting regularly, to ensure effective and coordinated contribution to the STP process and to outcomes. We are working together, across all STP work streams, on short and long term priorities, exploring and developing opportunities for collaboration at scale, including:

- adult social care workforce development: joint efforts to develop social care capacity and integrated teams
- 7 day working; integrated discharge services/processes
- working to support older people’s urgent care system
- care pathway opportunities: e.g. shared working to develop stroke prevention
- single point of access: a shared understanding

- shared commissioning where possible, e.g. community equipment
- working towards a single BNSSG health and social care integration plan

A written briefing is being prepared for Councillors on the BNSSG STP, and a briefing session on the STP has been arranged for 15th November 2016.

- 2) Bristol City Council is always interested in joining learning networks, and sharing and learning from good practice, where this will add value. The STP system as a whole would have to join this Kings Fund Network. This will be considered at the next SLG meeting on the 7th of December.

LAB. QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Paul Goggin, Hartcliffe & Withywood ward
Subject: Hartcliffe customer service point

1. The Medium Term Financial Plan proposes the closure of the Hartcliffe Customer Service Point. Can the Mayor or Cabinet Member responsible please provide the following information?

- How many people use the Hartcliffe CSP each week.
- How many FTE people work at the Hartcliffe CSP.
- What is the average level of arrears of tenants within the area it covers and how does this compare to the city average.
- What is the projected increase in rent arrears when this local service is replaced by one that is located five miles away.
- With particular reference to the needs of the elderly, the disabled and those without the financial means to buy a bus ticket, what transport will be provided to enable those with no internet access to visit the central Bristol CSP.

2. Can the Mayor or Cabinet Member responsible tell me what consideration has been given to relocating the Hartcliffe Customer Service Point in smaller premises as a means of both reducing costs whilst maintaining social inclusion?

REPLY:

- 1.
- a) There are 534 visits to the Hartcliffe CSP in an average week. Footfall for all CSP's is declining year on year. Nearly 60% of the footfall into Hartcliffe CSP is citizens self-serving, making payments or handing in documents, these transactions require no or little assistance from an advisor. Citizen will continue to be able to self-serve online or telephone the call centre
- b) The staffing FTE varies based on expected demand but is usually between 4 and 6.5 FTE (not including the team leader).
- c) The average level of arrears within the area is £603.64, the citywide average is £561.34, Please note the area figures are based on the Hartcliffe, Withywood, Knowle and Stockwood arrears areas.
- d) This is a consultation exercise and no decisions have been taken, however we would not expect the potential closure of the CSP to lead to further tenant arrears. We will ensure local citizens are aware of how they can continue to contact us if they are in need of support.

- e) There are community networks in the area that offer support, information, advice and guidance. These include
- Library @Symes, which will offer free access to on line services
 - The Gatehouse Centre which has a number of courses for the public including IT assistance
 - The CAB offering a drop in at the Health Centre.
 - South Bristol Advice centre, who offer a number of drop in services and pre-booked appointments in the area.
 - Citizens will be able to contact us by telephone

2. Previously options were considered including moving the Hartcliffe CSP to @Symes, but they were dismissed as not viable. Rationalisation to a single CSP will obviously result in greater efficiency due to economies of scale, but options can be put forward in the consultation. I would recommend you work with officers to identify potential options and costings.

LAB. QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Margaret Hickman, Lawrence Hill ward

Subject: The impact of the benefit cap in Bristol

Theresa May's Tory Government is reducing the benefit cap to £20,000 per annum. In Bristol 915 households could be potentially impacted by the reduction in the cap. Generally larger families living in Private Rented Sector properties in central and inner eastern parts of the city will be hit the hardest with the average loss of £3,100 per household per annum. The total loss across the city will be £2.8million per annum.

According to the Department of Work Pensions own statistics 3,226 children live in affected households and 76% of those affected are lone parent households.

1. Can the Mayor remind elected members what measures the Council is putting in place to ensure that the children of families affected by the benefit cap receive support and ultimately do not hungry?
2. Will the Mayor provide us with his assessment on what impact the benefit cap will have on the increasing number of children in Bristol living in poverty?

REPLY:

Constant reduction of the benefit cap without any control over housing costs, and particularly private rents will of course adversely affect the poorest and most vulnerable people. I do not agree with government policy. Any change of benefits must be accompanied by rent control powers.

However there has been a large amount of work undertaken to prepare for this change throughout the council. We have been proactively contacting households we expect to be impacted by the lower cap to complete benefit checks and undertake welfare rights work in case there are any unclaimed exempting disability benefits or eligibility to Working Tax Credits.

Where we are unable to identify exemptions, we have been completing action plans with households and making referrals into employment related support and our partners in the advice sector for debt advice as appropriate. We have also been working with Jobcentre Plus.

We have also been liaising closely with our housing association partners who are able to offer a wide range of financial inclusion and employment support to their tenants. Details of the cap and its impacts have also been communicated across the city to a wide range of voluntary and community sector organisations, our internal teams who assist households on a daily basis and the advice sector.

There are discretionary funds available to households in crisis, but we are not in a position to fully cover the loss in income. We have also been sharing data with 'Think Family' so that they are aware of any households that affected as well as briefing the Early Years Health and Family Support Network and Single Parent Action Network.

To help mitigate some of the inevitable impact we have the welfare reform group Advice Plus working hard to help families affected by welfare changes by ensuring they are claiming all benefits they are entitled to, offering budget advice and helping them access training to work. I want a new policy team to work to anticipate impact of these changes in the same way we dealt with the effects of Brexit.

LAB. QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Kye Dudd, Central ward

Subject: Poor air quality

Illegal levels of air pollution is causing up to 50,000 premature deaths each year in the UK.

Under the Air Quality Directive, the Government has to cut the illegal levels of nitrogen dioxide experienced in dozens of towns and cities in the "shortest possible time". However the Government has made little progress in meeting this target.

This week the High court ruled that the UK government plans to tackle air pollution are illegal and that the government is not doing enough to combat the national air pollution crisis.

In Bristol the case for implementing a Low Emission Zones or Clean Air Zone is clear. It is now believed that poor air quality is resulting in up to 300 premature deaths in the city annually.

Given the judgement this week it is more pressing that we successfully implement the Mayor's policies to improve air quality in the short to medium term rather than the medium to long term.

Can the Mayor or Cabinet Member responsible provide the Council with their assessment as to whether the Government is doing to enough to empower Bristol City Council to effectively tackle the city's Air Quality crisis and part of their answer can we please have an update regarding the progress that has been made towards implementing a Low Emission Zone or a Clean Air Zone in the city and can we expect the scheme to be implemented?

REPLY:



As you state the Government's air quality plans have been found to be inadequate by the high court. We have sought additional powers and funding to invest in cleaner transport and to improve air quality through the Devolution plans.

I am committed to implementing a Clean Air Zone in Bristol and have set up a Mayoral Working Group – led by Councillors Bradshaw and Hance. They are meeting this week to consider our overall approach to air quality and to clean air zones in particular.

They will be developing our response to the Government's consultation on CAZs and the work that will be needed in Bristol to implement such a zone. We need power to control and invest on buses and taxis.

A briefing for all councillors is being organised for the end of November to update them and I will keep you up to date as plans develop.

It is important the CAZ policy is implemented as part of a package that includes transport measures and not in isolation.

We have approached First Bus to commit to cleaner buses and we can consider direct transport measures that drive CAZ.

I have also announced a congestion task group aimed at improving traffic flow and therefore reducing harmful emissions. I am in the process of setting this up.

LAB. QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Ruth Pickersgill, Easton ward
Subject: The Old Chocolate Factory

As I am sure most members of the Council are aware how national government housing policy is making it increasingly difficult for Local Authorities to meet their policy commitments to secure a reasonable percentage of affordable housing in new developments. In 2015/16 we were only able to secure 10% affordable housing in Bristol.

In my ward of Easton, where our policy says we should have 40% affordable housing, there is a proposal for a new development of 135 properties on the site of the old Chocolate Factory, none of which are designated as social or affordable housing. This is a ward with rocketing house prices and a high proportion (35.8% compared to 25% City-wide) of private rented housing, where rent increases are leading to families being evicted or having to move away. We only have 12.7% social housing compared to 20% city-wide and so the strength of local feeling about addressing the need is phenomenal. Already there have been at least 600 objections to the proposals, mainly on the grounds of the lack of affordable housing.

Whilst I recognise that we are bound by discriminatory Conservative policies, I would like to ask:



1. What proactive work has been undertaken by the Council to identify best practice in other areas that has led to developers agreeing to build more affordable housing, and what more can we be doing in this area?
2. Can our guidance on viability assessments be revised, as some authorities have done, to be far more rigorous, prescriptive and transparent to reduce the opportunities for developers to make vast profits at the expense of local need?

REPLY:

1. The Council's Affordable Housing Practice Note was revised to achieve a more transparent and straightforward process for assessing developers' viability claims. Along with local objections, we have also pressured developers to meet our required mix of housing and affordable housing. Cllr Smith my cabinet lead for housing and I met with current and potential developers across the city to clarify our aims and seek partnerships that achieve them. This meeting was very positive. Since that meeting Cllr Smith has arranged to meet separately with the developers of the Chocolate Factory to explore options for affordable housing in the plans, and local ward councillors are invited.
2. We have recently benchmarked our performance against London boroughs. This shows that Bristol as risen to 21% level of affordable housing through section 106 agreements, while London boroughs have achieve 24% between 2013 and 2016. Some of this is related to higher sales values that increase the scope for affordable housing.

We are also aware of work being undertaken in the boroughs of Islington and Greenwich. Islington has adopted a detailed Supplementary Planning Document covering development viability; and Greenwich have amended their local list of validation requirements to include unredacted viability appraisals in cases where less than policy compliant levels of affordable housing are proposed. These are made publicly available. We will be contacting both these councils to look at achievements and best practise.

The mayor of London is carrying out his own review of London boroughs and we will await the report with interest.

LAB. QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Fabian Breckels, St George Troopers Hill ward
Subject: Better bus services for East Bristol

My constituents are among many demanding better bus services for East Bristol, and I they have been using the recent bus services consultation to demand, again, that direct bus services are provided from our part of the city to Bristol Temple Meads.

Can the Mayor or Cabinet Member for Transport tell me what can be done to persuade a bus provider to give us the direct link to the main train station that other parts of the city have taken for granted for years but which is still denied to my constituents and the rest of East Bristol?



REPLY:

The Council has been in discussion with operators about the commercial provision of a direct service from East Bristol to Temple Meads. This will continue further with the developments of the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone and Arena.

The Supported Bus Service consultation is currently being analysed. This consultation included the opportunity to identify unmet route needs which will inform the tendering and subsequent award process. I've asked officers to start shaping plans for the anticipated devolved bus structures.

LAB. QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Don Alexander, Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston ward

Subject: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The percentage of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) generated in the city is distributed to be used by Neighbourhood Partnerships. However, contrary to the Mayor's strategy, this is not shared out according to need but according to the geographical locality in which the development occurs leading to the situation where most of the money is given to the wealthiest areas. Can the Mayor or Cabinet Member responsible tell me whether this issue can be addressed as part of the current consultation?

REPLY:

The operation of CIL is tightly controlled by government regulations. These are very clear that the local element of CIL is devolved to the community in the area in which the development that paid the CIL is located in. I suggest to Cllr Alexander that he could meet with development officers to review the regulations and identify whether any provision for potential change exists to meet these aims.

LAB. QUESTION 10

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Fabian Breckels, St George Troopers Hill ward

Subject: Co-operative and community led housing projects

Can you set out what support has been given to co-operative and community led housing projects since May 2016?

REPLY:

The Council has provided support to a range of co-operative and community led housing projects since May 2016, in particular it has supported Bristol Community Land Trust (BCLT) to acquire Sheldon Road to deliver around 40 new homes and provided £50k Grant Funding to support pre development works. The Council has also supported Ambition Lawrence Western to recruit a part time development worker and will shortly release £50k capacity funding to Ambition Lawrence Western.



LAB. QUESTION 11

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Nicola Bowden-Jones, Frome Vale ward

Subject: IT structures within the Council

Councillors provide an essential scrutiny function for Bristol City Council. There have been many concerns raised by Councillors in recent months about the lack of support they receive from IT structures within the Council, and my concern is that this is having a detrimental impact upon Scrutiny. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has asked a number of times for the Council to improve its' Communication systems as there is now a real risk that ongoing IT problems are having an impact on our ability to undertake our duties not just on scrutiny committees but as city leaders.

With this challenge in mind will the Mayor or Cabinet Member responsible agree to meet with me and other colleagues who are being affected to discuss how we can resolve the IT problems that are affecting Councillors together?

REPLY:

Effective and reliable IT and communications systems are recognised as an essential prerequisite for elected members to be able to carry out their roles. The issues that have been raised following the roll out of new equipment and systems to councillors an action plan to address issues of reliability and suitability was presented to and discussed with Party Group Leaders in October.

The action plan was shared then with all Cllrs on 1st Nov and included a support programme for all Members and a session for discussing the ICT needs of all Councillors. The action plan is being actively implemented to resolve the ongoing issues and further updates will be provided.

(Does Nicola want to be IT champ?)

B. Questions from the CONSERVATIVE Group (listed in order of priority):

CON. QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Mark Weston, Henbury & Brentry ward

Subject: Corporate Strategy 2017-22 conversation on creation of urban parishes

1. Can the Mayor tell me where or from whom did this idea of establishing urban parish councils in Bristol originate?
2. What level of local precept do you envisage will be levied on residents?

REPLY:

1. There are several precedents across the country, including for example Sutton Coldfield, that use the 'Urban parish' concept in response to the current conditions placed on local government spending by austerity.

The Urban parish idea is that where communities can afford to and choose to, can fund their own local services and facilities where they might otherwise be unsustainable.

2. This is a consultation on the idea, and therefore at this stage it is impossible to say, however the amount of precept would have to be agreed by the communities themselves.

CON. QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Tony Carey, Brislington East ward

Subject: European City of Sport 2017

1. The Mayor may recall that last March, his predecessor announced this award or status for Bristol, and celebrated it as a success for the Bristol Partnership for Sport and Active Recreation. Can the Mayor tell me what consultation took place prior to applying for this title?
2. It has been reported that the current UK holder of this accolade, Stoke-on-Trent, is spending £3.5m as a host city. Can the Mayor confirm the cost to local taxpayers of participation in this scheme?

REPLY:

1. As Cllr Carey points out, this was an announcement by my predecessor and therefore my own knowledge of the issue was limited. I understand that application for the title was discussed by the members of the Bristol Partnership for Sport and Active Recreation. I have already established that the Bristol Partnership is not the best way forward for the sports offer for Bristol and am in discussion with sports organisations across the city to find the best way to achieve my three goals of access, participation and elite sport. A letter has been sent to the Bristol Partnership withdrawing our support.
2. There is no specific requirement for any financial commitment from the Council and I will ensure that this remains the case. It is envisaged that the accolade will be used to 'badge' and raise awareness of sport and physical activity, through an offering of activities and events already being planned by many of the groups and organisations who play a key role across this sector.

CON. QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr John Goulandris, Stoke Bishop ward

Subject: Long Ashton park and ride

1. The Mayor will be aware that the Cabinet report on the Long Ashton Park and Ride subsidy payments stated quite categorically that the contractual requirement to pay the subsidy ended on 31st March 2002. On whose authority were payments made after this date?



2. On the face of it, payments appear to have been made in error or without any legal, contractual obligation. At a time when the Council's finances are very stretched, recouping some or all of these payments would be a great help. Is BCC actively seeking return of all or some of these payments?

REPLY:

1. It is completely obvious that overpayments have been made and I have ceased them. In addition I have asked officer to review all existing leases and contracts, starting with the biggest 100. I am determined that faced with our current financial position we will be vigilant about our commercial operating procedures as well as maximising revenue.
2. The report from officers tells me that the subsidy payable under the contract was payable for the first 5 years after signing the Operating Agreement and that requirement ended on 31st March 2002. Given that the passenger numbers had not lived up to the assumptions made in relation to the business case that supported the Operating Agreement it was open to the Council to continue to pay a subsidy voluntarily and this is what the council chose to do at that time. As a result subsequent payments were then authorised by the Development, Environment and Leisure Executive of the Council (who had authority at that time).
3. There was a rationale outlined in a 2001 report to continuing the payments. BCC decided at that time to continue its support of the service as it was permitted to do, although there was no contractual obligation to do so.
4. Clearly errors have been made. I have made sure that they did not continue despite a potential legal challenge and put in place the processes described above to avoid repetition.

CON. QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Richard Eddy, Bishopsworth ward

Subject: Bulky waste collections

1. How much does it currently cost the authority to deal with fly tipping around the city?
2. How much revenue does BCC receive from its bulky waste collections?

REPLY:

1. We have estimated it costs approximately £500,000 per year to carry out fly tipping removal.

The statistics for fly tipping show an average of 2400 incidents per quarter (800 per month) across the city.



I would encourage all Councillors and citizens to report flytipping through the council website. This intelligence is key in enabling us to investigate and to take enforcement action where possible.

2. Bristol City Council received approximately £120,000 gross income on bulky waste collections in the last financial year.

The Council has recently increased bulky waste charges from £30 to £50 for 4-6 items, and from £15 to £25 for 1-3 items so this years' revenue figure is expected to be higher as a result of this.

The price increase put the Councils charging policy in line with other neighbouring authorities.

The annual cost of bulky waste service which includes collection & disposal is approximately £475,000.

3. I have initiated a clean streets campaign in line with my key pledges. I have appointed Curt James as the officer to lead and he is working closely with Bristol waste to tackle fly tipping, littering and other issues that stop our streets being clean. Along with Bristol Waste he has done a large amount of preparatory work to include communities and city partners and we will soon publicly launch the campaign. I look forward to all councillors engaging with the campaign.

CON. QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Peter Abraham, Stoke Bishop ward

Subject: Lord Mayor's office

1. Can the Mayor explain why the Lord Mayor's Office is relocating to the Council House?
2. Will the Mayor give an assurance that this is not a prelude to selling off the Mansion House?

REPLY:

At this time there has been no decision to relocate the Lord Mayor's Office to City Hall. We must however ensure that all services provided by the council are running as efficiently as possible and we are making the best use of our resources. To this end I feel that all options must be considered for the delivery of any services that are funded by the council tax payer and this would include the administration of the Lord Mayor's Office.

The Mansion House is a significant asset to the council's property portfolio. I am keen that we maximise the opportunities for income generation from this beautiful building which should have the potential to provide a valuable revenue stream for the council in

accordance with the challenges laid down by Members to avoid further difficult cuts in services.

I am mindful that there could be perceived conflicts between developing an essential income stream and the maintenance of the necessary civic functions of the property and I have asked the Monitoring Officer to produce a report to that effect.

CON. QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Geoffrey Gollop, Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze ward

Subject: Bristol Energy Company

1. As Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Board, I am conscious of the limited and privileged access given to information in relation to this enterprise. Can the Mayor advise me what opportunities there will be going forward for all Members to carefully monitor the progress being made to put this company onto a sustainable (and profitable) footing?

2. What, if any, contingency measures are there in place in the event that the recent 'My Bristol Tariff' drive fails to attract a high number of new customers to our municipal energy provider?

REPLY:

1. Both the Council, as Shareholder, and the Company are committed to being as transparent as we can about Bristol Energy, within the constraints of operating in a commercial marketplace.

We are planning for the next iteration of Bristol Energy's business plan to come to Cabinet in January 2017 and will be reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management board in advance to allow it to make recommendations to Cabinet before budget setting.

We have asked the companies to consider developing a public facing business plan so that non-commercially sensitive information can be shared with the members, customers and the residents of Bristol.

In the summer Bristol Energy held a showcase event, which over 70 people attended, at this this event Bristol Energy shared a lot of information regarding their companies, including their vision and achievements so far.

Bristol Energy also held a public drop-in session in July at the Hub at the waterside, to allow people to ask questions of the Managing Director and Senior Team.

2. Bristol Energy as a start up in this very competitive market is working hard to and get to a profitable footing as soon as it can.



The Council as the Shareholder of the Company is working closely with them on a number of different scenarios to consider how they can best respond to meet the current challenges within the market. This includes input from the Councils Independent Shareholder Advisors who have been running challenge sessions with both companies. The Bristol Tariff, which has recently been launched specifically for Bristol residents, has been a key focus of Bristol Energy's promotional activity during September/October.

There have been other activities which Bristol Energy have undertaken to attract new customers – e.g.

- Running a student campaign focused on seven different universities across the South West.
- Working with local radio stations in the city to promote their smart meter offer – a free smart meter trial for people in Bristol and surrounding areas.
- Continuing to work with local community groups, attending events across the city
- Using the Hub on the Harbourside to engage local people. The recent Briswool exhibition attracted around 7,000 people in just 26 days.
- Promoting activity and partnerships through various channels – their recent Bristol Pound partnership attracted local press coverage and was sent to thousands of Bristol Pound members.

Bristol Energy are currently evaluating the activity from the last two months, but early indications are that it has been successful. Bristol Energy have seen an increase in the proportion of customers from Bristol as well as a marked increase in the proportion of customers coming to them direct (i.e not through a broker).

I would like all councillors to work hard within their own communities to bring traffic to Bristol Energy. The Company does not have access to an open cheque book and has to become commercially viable if it is to continue a difficult market place where many companies have folded. I am committed to it being a success and I hope all councillors are, but we will consider the business plan together.

CON. QUESTION 7

**Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Matt Melias, Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston ward
Subject: Portway park and ride platform**

Further to and arising out of my questions on this subject to you at the last Question Time, please can you tell me the reason for the delay in delivering this infrastructure when funding for it was allocated four years ago?

REPLY:

The City Council has held a long standing aspiration to deliver a rail station to serve the Portway Park & Ride site, and the Park & Ride site was constructed with this in mind.



Due to the designation of the Severn Beach Line as a ‘Community Rail’ line, the City Council initially worked with the local Community Rail Partnership to investigate options for delivering the platform at lower cost, outside of the formal Network Rail project development process.

As the aspirations developed, Network Rail offered to undertake an initial option appraisal study, in recognition of the credibility of the proposals, and with a significant cost saving to the Council. Following the study, it is clear that the most efficient way to deliver the platform will be for Network Rail to continue to develop the project.

This has unfortunately delayed the delivery of the station but has given the project greater credibility and increased the likelihood of securing funding to deliver it. We are now on our way to making it a reality and I endorsed the bids at my last cabinet.

CON. QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Chris Windows, Henbury & Brentry ward

Subject: Strategic Community Infrastructure Income

1. Can the Mayor confirm the projects that the City's CIL payment are being spent on for the next 3-4 years?
2. Is the Mayor able to tell me when each of these strategic spending decisions was taken and by whom?

REPLY:

15% of CIL is allocated to local community projects via the neighbourhood partnerships. The remaining 85% is allocated to strategic projects. Since Bristol implemented CIL in January 2013, the following strategic CIL allocations have been made. In each case the allocations were made at formal Cabinet meetings by the former Mayor. These are as follows:

Date of Cabinet Meeting	Scheme to which CIL was allocated	Sum allocated
1 September 2011	Ashton Vale to Temple Meads Metrobus	£5,000,000
26 April 2012	Gainsborough Square improvements	£750,000
1 March 2016	Arena Island supporting infrastructure	£8,000,000

The Metrobus sum was drawn down in February 2016 and the Gainsborough Square sum in March 2016. It is anticipated that the Arena Island sum will become available in the 2018/19 financial year.

CON. QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Liz Radford, Westbury-on-Trym & Henleaze ward

Subject: Urban parishes

1. As the Mayor will be aware, unlike Council Tax, there is no actual cap or limit on the amount a parish council can seek to raise from residents in any one year. What safeguards or assurance can you give that these bodies will not impose very large sums or rises to fund devolved services?
2. Does the Mayor have any particular geographical areas or boundaries under consideration for these new parishes?

REPLY:

1. This is only a consultation on the idea, and it would therefore be premature for me to say what I would expect to be raised by the groups, or to say what parameters they would do that within, before we have had the wider conversation with the city.
2. As explained, this is just an idea at this stage, without a clear or defined geographic delineation. Much would be based on the consultation results and suggestions. No parish council can be set up without the agreement of the community in a referendum.

CON. QUESTION 10

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Steve Jones, Stockwood ward

Subject: Urban parishes

1. Having only recently undergone a comprehensive review of wards in Bristol, when does the Mayor envisage the future involvement of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to formally create any urban parishes?
2. How large or how many of these parishes is it thought could be established within the confines of the city's boundaries?

REPLY:

1. This is just the consultation on the idea of Urban Parish, and does not have defined geographic areas or demographic constituencies of particular size in mind and would wait until the consultation results are shared. It would certainly be too early to comment on the future involvement of the Boundary Commission to create anything formally.

CON. QUESTION 11

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Kevin Quartley, Bishopsworth ward

Subject: Urban parishes

1. Can the Mayor confirm whether or not urban parishes will replace or supplant all or some of the existing fourteen Neighbourhood Partnerships?



2. If not, how will these new governance arrangements be resourced?

REPLY:

1. This is the consultation on the idea, and it would therefore be too early for me to confirm any potential relationship to existing Neighbourhood Partnerships before we have even had the discussion with the city to consider this.

CON. QUESTION 12

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Graham Morris, Stockwood ward

Subject: Urban parishes

1. Will the Mayor produce a report for consideration by Full Council on the implications – both positive and negative – of creating new parish councils as part of this consultative process?
2. How does the Mayor intend to avoid creating potentially competing democratic forums or duplication in the roles of locally elected parish councillors and the traditional functions of ward Members?

REPLY:

1. There will be a full discussion of the results of the consultation if this is identified as a priority.
2. As explained in my preceding answers, this is the consultation on the idea, and it would therefore be too early for me to confirm any potential relationship to existing Neighbourhood Partnerships and would be a central consideration I would like the consultation to explore.

CON. QUESTION 13

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Lesley Alexander, Frome Vale ward

Subject: Long Ashton park and ride

1. The Mayor will be conscious from the controversy surrounding the Long Ashton Park and Ride subsidy payments that there is merit in reviewing critically all regular payments made by BCC. Is he confident that there are no other payments being made without due authorisation?
2. Would he agree that a zero based budget process would be very useful in uncovering payments, which are either no longer legally necessary or not value-for-money in today's difficult financial times?

REPLY:

Following my administrations discovery of the payments, I asked officers to review all existing leases and contracts, starting with the biggest 100. I want to be sure that we are being meticulous about our commercial operating procedures in light of this.

We will establish a group that will include the following actions:



- Reviewing all contracts due to end to ensure future commissioning has started and includes efficiencies within the contract;
- Review and consider contracts that are in flight and consider whether there is provision for in contract negotiations with providers/suppliers;
- Review all “off contract” spend that currently exists across the Council
- Review of inflation and uplift clauses in contracts

Each departmental management team has been asked to ensure that all budgets and expenditure across the council is reviewed as part of the mitigations that have been put in place to manage the Council’s budget gap. The makeup of the group will include political representation.

C. Questions from the GREEN Group (listed in order of priority)

GRN. QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Cleo Lake, Cotham ward

Subject: Council cuts

The devastating cuts to our budget along with the new benefit caps will affect some of the most vulnerable in our society. The Local Government Association has put together a [submission to the Autumn Statement](#) which clearly outlines the shocking impact that these cuts will have on local authorities and suggests a list of changes that must be made.

Can the Mayor update the citizens of Bristol with what progress he and the Core City Cabinet are making in demanding that central government rethink their plans ahead of the Government Autumn Statement due in just a few weeks, including the points raised in the LGA submission?

I find it shocking that in 2016 we risk regressing as a society and that yet again we allow bankers’ bonuses, tax evading corporations and other financial elites to be propped up and that disadvantaged people are to be scapegoats and squeezed. Opportunities will not be there for everyone - some people will always need support. We must ask ourselves the question: What did we do when we had the shirts ripped off our backs? There is only so much the voluntary sector and city office can pick up - we need to challenge these cuts right up to the final hour.

REPLY:

As stated in an earlier reply, the constant reduction of the benefit cap without any control over housing costs, and particularly private rents will of course adversely affect the poorest and most vulnerable people. I do not agree with government policy.

As I said in my reply to your cabinet question on the same matter, I raised the issue in a meeting with Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Sajid Javid when I met with him recently.

I have also written as part of the Core City cabinet to express our concerns about the 'winners' and 'losers' of the transition funding arrangements. Me and the other core cities have written to the Chancellor ahead of the Autumn Statement to allow cities to

drive more inclusive, productive growth, which will harness the economic power of our cities to establish a stronger economy across the whole of the UK. I met with the Chief Executive of core cities yesterday to discuss and analyse how best to manage government interaction.

I reiterate that my priority remains making Bristol a more equal and inclusive city where no-one is left behind. This means maintaining life-and-limb services and doing all I can to improve people's lives with the resources we've got. This requires cross party work to ensure we get the best we can for the most vulnerable people of Bristol.

GRN. QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Eleanor Combley, Bishopston & Ashley Down ward
Subject: Removing Clause 21 from the Bus Service Bill

The Bus Service Bill, which is currently going through Parliament, includes many good proposals which would allow local authorities to set maximum fares, introduce joint tickets and travel zones and set bus timetables. But the Bill may also include the controversial Clause 21, which could prevent councils owning local bus companies in the future. This clause is something that Greens, alongside many other political parties, transport campaigners and the House of Lords feel should be removed from the Bus Service Bill.

Given that 3 out of the 4 party groups represented in Council brought motions urging the Mayor to campaign against Clause 21, and that he has himself expressed a desire to keep publicly run bus services at least on his list of options, will the Mayor:

1. Write to Lord Ahmad to call on the Department for Transport to omit Clause 21 from the final legislation?
2. Contact our four Bristol MPs to impress upon them the importance of this as a local issue and ask them to do, or continue to do, all they can to oppose Clause 21?

REPLY:

I completely oppose clause 21, during my election campaign I undertook to look at the feasibility of public ownership and have asked officers to carry out that work.

Clause 21 runs in the face of localism, and centralises powers back to Westminster and away from what local people know is needed.

I will write to Lord Ahmed and our MPs accordingly.

GRN. QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Stephen Clarke, Southville ward
Subject: Prince Street bridge

Many of the residents in my ward of Southville have said to me that they are enjoying their walk to work in the morning through the new shops at Wapping Wharf and over the temporary pedestrian bridge next to Prince St Bridge. However, they have expressed concern about the longer term plans for the bridge and particularly whether it will be reopened for vehicles as well as walking and cycling. The Mayor will know that there have been a number of petitions which

have shown that many people would like it to remain closed to vehicles and that is certainly my preferred solution.

The bridge was closed to traffic in August 2015 and must presumably be getting close to being opened. Surely by now a decision must have been made as to whether it is going to be strengthened sufficiently to carry cars or just pedestrians and cyclists.

Can the Mayor confirm when it will be opened and what traffic will be allowed to use it?

REPLY:

We are currently expecting the repair work to be complete in February/March. The repairs will return the bridge to a position where it is capable of carrying the same types of traffic that used it previously. We won't make piecemeal changes to transport network.

We must take a strategic approach to transport and which must include the findings of the congestion task group. We will complete the makeup of the task group by the end of November and launch it in December. It will include wide representation, including public consultation. It will include traffic flow, economic inclusion, clean air and population health.

GRN. QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Charlie Bolton, Southville ward

Subject: Bristol living rent

In London, the Mayor has adopted a London Living Rent. Does the Mayor support the concept of a 'Bristol Living Rent' and will he investigate how it might work, what level it might be set at?

REPLY:

We are not opposed to the concept of a "Bristol living Rent" but this needs more consultation in addition would need to be structured different to that in London, in a very different housing market.

As a contribution to the debate, we would welcome a proposal by Cllr Bolton.

GRN. QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Martin Fodor, Redland ward

Subject: European Green Capital

As a former member of SERA (the Socialist Environment and Resources Association) I was interested in reports of your speech to the group in Liverpool as Mayor of Bristol, and a local MP's input.

It's reported (I can't find any text, and I know the report may not be reliable to what was actually said) that you think green politics is more about tackling fuel poverty than saving the

planet, and tackling environmental problems has to go hand in hand with alleviating poverty. I gather you said you did not want Green Capital to be for those in affluent, bohemian suburbs who could afford to pay a bit more for food. It's reported you said you'd like the environmental movement to become more inclusive.

I agree with all that, and am on record as saying I wanted the European Green Capital year to involve the whole of Bristol, and I got involved accordingly, thinking that's more effective than criticising the activities from outside as some did for the entire duration. But I wish to bring to your attention the breadth of activities and projects that took place through 2015 across our city, and recognise the many inclusive, socially and environmentally integrated projects underway then and in many cases still continuing to this day, thanks to the stimulus from our year as European Green Capital.

Here are a few of the new partnerships created and things that took place thanks to Bristol 2015 in our city:

- The 91 ways project that involved all 91 languages in the city around the theme of food which I believe is still active;
- The new collaboration among the surplus and waste food charities and projects, who now work together across the city to get more food to those who need it instead of being landfilled or destroyed;
- The 30,000 school pupils in the city who used the educational material developed here in 2015 and now available worldwide;
- A kitchens on prescription project, to support healthy cookery, and cookery events across the city;
- Food growing projects in every postcode, still going on;
- The first healthy city week, now repeated (involving you);
- The Big Green and Black Debates with Ujima radio (you took part);
- Workshops to tackle fuel poverty across the city targeted at people at risk of fuel debt – I personally helped deliver some of these, working with a debt advice charity. We more than doubled the Green Capital grant with Lottery funds, and we helped residents in Hartcliffe, Easton, the inner city, and Knowle West – one was excited to say she saved £10 a week, equivalent to £500 a year, after a session she took part in.
- Around 800 partner organisations formed around the winning bid, a model for partnership working in cities gaining a European title; they now have a CIC to continue to work together. I believe a number of the partners are involved in your new City Office now.
- The £2m grants are more than any other European Green Capital ever awarded – with 200 projects of all sizes.

The year is expected to lead to lots of inwards investment, but was of course far from perfect. I would not have prioritised some of the grants and activities myself. Only 4 events were obligatory to the successful city. But thousands took place, and visitors arrived from across the world.

The City bid with the agreements of partners and all party support. No funding was attached to the title when it was won, as it is not a prize, but this first ever European title meant the city has gained enormously and fostered new collaboration through working groups and events. A lot of good was achieved thanks to the £12m funds and value marshalled for the year from many sources. It's spending that would not have taken place in the city in most cases and of created much added value.



I note that activities took place in every single neighbourhood of the city, most schools, and the local grants were prioritised to the areas with most need.

The headlines since you took office have focussed on a review of invoices. You also have access to all the reports of project outcomes, events, and outputs from the year – there has been lots of information to look at.

1. It is always good to learn lessons for the future but with all this available could you explain if you meant to denigrate the year and the partnerships fostered through it, and can I ask what do you have to say to those from all walks of life who worked across the city in all neighbourhoods and contributed through ideas, grant projects, volunteering, and enthusiasm?

2. Are they all people who could afford to spend a bit more on food, or do they, and those in this council who took an active part and got involved, deserve thanks, not criticism?

REPLY:

While I agree that there were benefits from the Green Capital year, although for me, a successful Green Capital year would have achieved the 'clean air zone' for Bristol that we could already be enjoying the benefits of.

I and many others believe that many of the events were non-inclusive to the majority of people in Bristol. There are large parts of the city that would not have heard of the events you describe, or have had the opportunity to join in.

I want the review to be an opportunity to learn lessons, and to give residents and council their say on the initiative. As you state, I have initiated a review of Green Capital year and have asked it to bring its findings to Full Council. This will be the appropriate time and forum to discuss your opinions of the year and your claims of its benefits in more detail.

GRN. QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Stephen Clarke, Southville ward

Subject: Ashton Gate primary school; Upton Road closure

When the new Upton Rd site for Ashton Gate Primary School was opened in September 2015 there was uproar from parents about the danger to life and limb from the layout. This was because the site is split into two parts by Upton Road (often used a rat-run into Southville from Coronation Rd) and therefore there is a constant crossing of the road by children and carers.

At that time there was general agreement from parents, the former Mayor and officers that the situation was very unsafe and temporary measures were put in place as a review took place. Following pressure from Charlie Bolton and myself as local councillors for the area, we met with officers in early July this year and were pleased to hear that there would be an 'experimental order' for a road closure for an initial period of 18 months.

To date no progress appears to have been made with this and the dangerous situation continues. There have been two recent dangerous incidents and the situation is an 'accident waiting to happen'. I am very worried that a child will be knocked down and killed.

Can the Mayor confirm why there is a delay and when this road will be closed?

REPLY:

There is not currently a delay in the project.

Officers previously discussed with Councillors that the traffic counts needed to determine a baseline against which the impacts of an experimental order can be tested, needed to take place once the school returned in September and that they would aim for an experimental order to be in place very early in 2017.

We are still working to this timescale, and the “before” counts have taken place. However, they have been asked to consider whether a part-time closure of Upton Road during school times only could be viable rather than a full permanent closure. A report outlining the options has been prepared for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Transport. Cllr Clarke should liaise with Cllr Bradshaw on this matter.

GRN. QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Charlie Bolton, Southville ward

Subject: Bristol zero carbon city

In Labours' election manifesto, you said

'We will put Bristol on course to be run entirely on clean energy by 2050'

Given this is 34 years away, it is clearly vital that we have intermediate targets to demonstrate progress towards reaching this. Can you define what you mean by 'clean energy' and what targets you intend to achieve by 2020?

REPLY:

Your question is very timely. Last week at Cabinet I adopted the Bristol Resilience Strategy and the Paris Global Climate Change Agreement came into force.

The Bristol Resilience Strategy identifies climate change as a key issue for the city's future resilience, and actions are identified in relation to flooding, transport, community resilience and more. A key action in that Strategy is the development of a plan for how we will achieve those carbon targets – the Climate Change and Energy Security Framework. This week I asked officers to bring forward this Framework to Cabinet as soon as possible, building on the work and public consultation already undertaken.

In the meantime, I remain committed to the Target unanimously adopted by Council in 2009, to achieve a 40% reduction in emissions by 2020. We have also met with and are considering joining UK 100. We are analysing their work and identify how they can help us achieve our aims. We invited Cllr Bolton to part of that meeting so that he was involved and could help with the measures.



Clean energy for me, is energy which does not cause harmful pollution. My vision is that by 2050 all Bristol homes, businesses and local transport will be run on energy which is Zero Carbon. Clearly how successful Bristol is will depend not only on everyone in the city but on national policy and action.

D. Questions from the LIBERAL DEMOCRAT Group (listed in order of priority):

LD. QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Harriet Clough, Hengrove & Whitchurch Park ward
Subject: Housing and the necessary infrastructure

Having now seen the proposed new Spatial Plan, and with the continuing saga of the feasibility study looking at building houses on Hengrove Park, I am concerned about whether the necessary additions to vital infrastructure to support what appears to be upwards of 5,500 new homes (comprised of around 1,500 at the Park, 3,500 at Whitchurch Village, 300 home retirement village just off Wells Road, plus a number of other "small" developments) within the immediate vicinity of my ward.

All but one of our Primary Schools is at capacity, and several of those schools have waiting lists; the doctors surgery has been forced to close their lists to new patients.

Could the Mayor please confirm that the companion studies to the new Spatial Plan, including planning for education and health provision is underway and that my residents will not be forced to out of the ward for either schooling or healthcare as a result of your house building plans?

REPLY:

This is not the final draft of the proposed Joint Spatial Plan but the next step in its preparation which is considering how and where up to 105,000 new homes can be provided for by 2036.

I can confirm that preparation of evidence to support and justify the future Joint Spatial Plan is taking into account the projected needs of our growing communities for community services including health and education. I can also confirm that a supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be prepared to demonstrate the deliverability of the growth proposed.

Detail of development in Bristol will be developed in the review to the Bristol Local Plan which will be brought forward as the Joint Spatial Plan is submitted for examination.

I cannot confirm that residents will always receive education, health and other community services within the ward – this is not the case now and such services are not ward based.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Christopher Davies, Knowle ward
Subject: Tennis in Redcatch Park

I have submitted a statement in the main section of the meeting together with a petition. I am also appending to that some email comments received locally.

The “consultation” on charging residents in Knowle to play tennis at Redcatch Park was skewed in the scheme and failed to point out that:

- 1) The courts were recently massively improved through locally secured grants at no cost to the Council.
- 2) There is a very well run local Tennis Club, 200 yards away on Council land, that caters well for committed players who pay a membership.
- 3) The grant was given on the understanding that access was free.
- 4) Income is already available for the courts as the nearby Tennis Club has an arrangement to pay when it needs extra courts for league matches. This income is not available prior to the improvement of the courts through the grants.

The ‘consultation’ was only accessible briefly and seems to have been removed when Knowle residents started to comment in numbers.

1. Will the Mayor now ensure that I receive a full copy of the replies to the ‘consultation’ anonymised if necessary, so that we can ensure that Council response take the comments fully into account?

2. Can I get assurance from the Mayor that no charges will be levied to tennis players on Redcatch Park in the foreseeable future?

REPLY:

1. Yes, a copy of the responses can be provided. I suggest that Cllr Davies takes this up with officers, I can help facilitate this.
2. The Council is currently reviewing how sustainable parks tennis provision can be delivered in the future. There has been no decision on the best approach to achieve this.

LD. QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Anthony Negus, Cotham ward
Subject: Pavement parking

Provision for access for all, especially disabled people, underpins all Council services and documentation. Yet this is not seen fit to apply to our public footpaths where safety and accessibility is regularly limited by vehicles.

Even in Residents Parking Zones, where parking for cars is delineated, white vans and increasing numbers of delivery vehicles invade the footpaths. This denies safe access for pedestrians and particularly those with buggies, but also damages surfaces which will take even longer before they are repaired at cost to the taxpayer and create further danger to other users.



For too long the responsibility for action has been fended off by the Police and BCC parking services. Lack of a coordinated protocol has been the excuse for inaction. The Walking Alliance at a recent meeting called for this anomaly to be resolved so there is no longer this excuse for our footpaths not being restored to proper use by those for whom they are intended.

Will the Mayor undertake to develop such a protocol and ensure that this city's parking services teams and our police are enabled to impose sanctions on those whose inconsiderate behaviour denies the rightful enjoyment of a basic facility? This will at worst be a cost neutral exercise with fines raised in the discouragement of this anti-social parking being prioritised over catching out the unwary visitor for whom the system is difficult to understand.

REPLY:

Bristol City Council Parking Services staff enforce parking restrictions under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and local Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO).

Under this Act and TROs, the Council can legally take enforcement action against a vehicle only if it is parked on a pavement adjacent to a parking restriction and it is on land classified as adopted highway with an appropriate TRO in place. These restrictions have to be marked and signed in accordance with the Traffic Signs Regulation and General Directions 2016. Examples of these parking restrictions are double yellow lines, residents parking bays, bus stops and pavement/footways with appropriate signs. Penalty Charge Notices are issued by the Councils Civil Enforcement Officers in these circumstances but they do not patrol areas where there are no parking restrictions in place as they do not have legal powers in these areas.

Where there are no parking restrictions in place, then only the Police have any legal powers to take action. They have no legal power to issue fines under the TMA 2004 (which is decriminalised legislation) but they can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice if the vehicle is deemed to be causing an obstruction.

There are also sections of land that may look like a footway, but are private land. These areas are the responsibility of the land owner and cannot be enforced by the Council's Parking Services.

Both the Police and Council enforcement staff respond to requests to take action against pavement parking where the respective powers and resources allow. The introduction of a protocol would not change the fact that different legislation is used by the Council and the Police.

This subject is currently being looked at by central Government, but it is not known what timescale is being worked to for any changes in legislation.

LD. QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Gary Hopkins, Knowle ward

Subject: Subsidy of First Bus



Under the previous administration, a very substantial regular payment for running of park and ride services was awarded to First Bus.

1. Can the Mayor please explain why apparently a lower price offer was put aside and an offer to run the service without subsidy was apparently disregarded?

There are strict rules regarding subsidies paid to bus operatives with our competitive tendering.

2. Can the Mayor explain why the Council apparently side steps the total cap by splitting its de minimis payments to First Group to two of its separate subsidiaries, and as part of his answer, does the Mayor agree with me that it was unwise when First Bus told the Council of their plans to cut the Number 51 service to agree to transfer the evening subsidy and add it to that of the separate subsidy of the Number 50 service?

REPLY:

1. These contracts were awarded by my predecessor, the former Mayor. I am told that the Park & Ride contracts were tendered in accordance with EU regulations, and subsequently awarded on the basis of the cost and quality criteria laid out in the tender process. The successful tenderer was the lowest bid, which was a significant reduction in the previous Park & Ride contract price.
2. The Council does not exceed the cap on de minimis contract payments to any bus operator and this is true for the totality of First Bus operations in the West of England.

The funding for the service 51 contracted journeys was in part transferred to ensure the continuity of evening journeys on service 50. Without this funding they would have been withdrawn.

Funding for all contracted journeys is being reviewed to determine the most appropriate use of the budget for supported bus services.

LD. QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Harriet Clough, Hengrove & Whitchurch Park ward
Subject: Metrobus and accessibility

We've now been told that Metrobus will be using "old" buses for the route when it starts to operate. We have older buses on the routes in my area (primarily the 36 and 50) which include 3 inaccessible double-deckers that are still legal until the end of 2017. A good example of a more accessible bus would be those used on the 376 route, which can take a wheelchair and multiple buggies.

In a recent article on the Disability News Service the exploitation of the following loopholes have been highlighted:

One of the ways that some bus companies have been dodging the regulations, it is believed, is by simply removing the hanging straps in buses, and placing "no standing" signs in their vehicles.

This means they can call their vehicles coaches instead of buses, because there are no standing passengers.

Another tactic is to block-book inaccessible buses for contracts to provide free school transport.

Buses that provide only free school transport do not have to meet PSVAR, but the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency has told disabled activist Doug Paulley that it believes some councils are trying to cut costs by using inaccessible vehicles, while at the same time allowing members of the public to use the buses as fare-paying passengers, and also charging some pupils, which should invalidate the PSVAR exemption.

The third loophole used by bus companies is to take advantage of regulations that allow inaccessible vehicles that are more than 20 years old to be used for a maximum of 20 days a year.

Can the Mayor assure me that the buses that are used to serve the Metrobus route will be fully accessible and that workarounds to access legislation listed above will not be used?

REPLY:

There is no doubt that the MetroBus service is not what was on offer in 2012.

However MetroBus services will be operated by new buses that will fully meet Public Service Vehicle (PSV) accessibility standards. This is a requirement of the Quality Partnership Scheme for MetroBus and there will be no exploitation of loopholes as described.

It is vital that we build a transport network that is accessible for all, allowing people to connect to people, jobs and opportunities across the whole of Bristol. This is a project I have inherited and I remain optimistic that it will play a role in achieving those aims.

LD. QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Anthony Negus, Cotham ward

Subject: The benefits of focused enforcement

It is to be hoped that consolidation of the various enforcement teams around the Council will improve our capability. This will not happen unless we reverse this council's long-standing aversion to taking action against those people who abuse and spoil the well-being of citizens.

For too long the cost of occasionally losing a court case has set our entire enforcement policy. As a result the city and its citizens has had to bear the real costs of lack of enforcement in areas such as waste, planning and licensing infringements, antisocial behaviour and poor housing services. It is the evidential threat of enforcement that is more potent than actual sanctions.

Does the Mayor appreciate the true value of well-publicised focused enforcement action; will he direct a new intelligent approach to match that of most other core cities and thus deliver the hopes of our citizens who are poorly served.

REPLY:

I do appreciate the true value of the well-publicised and focused enforcement action and agree with the sentiments of the question.

I am taking an intelligent approach by redesigning the enforcement services to integrate enforcement on waste, nuisance and pollution control, animal welfare, licensing, highways enforcement and other neighbourhood enforcement.

The new team will be intelligence/data led and focus their resources on the areas and issues that have the most detrimental impact.

Once the new integrated team has been embedded, further consideration will be given to whether any other functions can be added.

Due to the specialist assessments and other considerations, enforcement teams such as planning and anti-social behaviour are not included in the multi-functional enforcement service.



Member Forum

8 November 2016

Statements from councillors



Procedural note:

STATEMENTS FROM COUNCILLORS:

- A maximum of 1 minute shall be allowed for the presentation of each statement (subject to overall time constraints).
- There shall be no debate on the statements and the Lord Mayor shall refer them to the Mayor for consideration.
- Statements will be dealt with in the order of receipt (subject to time).



STATEMENTS

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

- CS 01 - Cllr Clive Stevens – Air pollution
- CS 02 - Cllr Gary Hopkins – Tennis in Redcatch Park
- CS 03 - Cllr Martin Fodor – Local road safety schemes



STATEMENT CS 01

Statement from Councillor Clive Stevens

Subject: Air pollution

Pollution has been an equalities issue for centuries, the rich lived up on high and in the west of our city to avoid the stench and the smog, the pollution of Victorian times was a killer, in the 1950s we had the smog primarily from coal burning and in the 1970s lead in the air. The toxic mixture this time is particulates and NO₂. Perhaps for the first time in two centuries we have a chance tonight to take the first tentative steps towards making history, at least in Bristol, and so perhaps people in the centre, lowlands and the east can escape pollution one day. I ask Councillors to be bold tonight and people will write about you. Well Made in Bristol, the Bristol Post and Bristol 24/7 will!

There will be valid objections from those whose businesses or lifestyles may be affected. If these are lawful we should do our best to cushion the effects of any Clean Air Zone on those affected - tradespeople, those with no other transport options, taxi drivers, car dealers, organisations with diesel generators.

With appropriate timing and incentives we should be able to clean up the air and support those who will need help adapting to the changes of a Clean Air Zone, whether it's with bus subsidies, help changing vehicles and generators, charging points and the right timing so that technology is cheap enough for people to switch their diesel vehicles to cleaner technology. They are not to blame, some like I bought a diesel car as it causes less CO₂ not knowing the other effects. Cleaning up the air will help the deprived areas, those already with breathing difficulties and save the NHS a fortune. If we vote for this tonight we can both clean up our air and help our city have a smooth transition to a Clean Air Zone, we should ensure our approach is empathetic, reasonable and communicative.

The management of change is always difficult, but is no reason not to take a momentous step.

STATEMENT CS 02

Statement from Councillor Gary Hopkins

Subject: Tennis in Redcatch Park

For many years Bristol Parks Department employed a clerk to collect charges for people wanting to use the tennis courts in Redcatch Park. Unfortunately the courts were in very poor shape and positively dangerous due to tree roots. There were not even enough fees collected to cover the clerks wages, so the fees were abolished and a few people started using the dodgy courts. A few years back a team made up of local Councillors, the friends of the park and the youth club, that meets in the pavilion, successfully bid for money for a series of major improvements (MUGA youth shelter) culminating in a large grant to replace the offending trees and resurface the tennis courts. We were helped by our then contractor Quadron and so efficiently was the work done that money was left over to do up some of the parks paths. All this at no cost to the Council and from local effort.

The new courts have proved very popular with people of all ages using the courts as an entry to the sport and some going on to join the nearby club which of course has top facilities and a membership fee.

Some months ago a counter appeared on the entrance gate to the courts. We were assured by Council Officers that this was nothing to do with charging to play . We reminded them that the grant was obtained on the understanding that there would be no charges. A posting then appeared on the Bristol City Council website which claimed to be a consultation about charging for tennis in the parks in return for courts to be improved. No consultation had happened with local Councillors or groups that had raised the improvement money. Officers refused to exclude Redcatch Park from the scheme. Cllr Davies and I tried to alert local people and encouraged them to pass comments on the skewed, little noticed consultation. Many complained to us that as soon as a number of locals started to input the consultation was closed.

Whatever happens elsewhere in the city this scheme is not wanted in Knowle and will be resisted. We were though quite happy when the nearby Knowle Tennis Club agreed to pay a rental to use the courts for 10 Friday evenings during the summer for league matches. Council Officers did not of course consult us or local groups on this but the rental £400 would be a help and cover any small ongoing costs. The Council to date has failed to issue an invoice.

This whole sorry saga has been an object lesson in how not to behave and the council is now doing its best to drive people away from active sport and insult those who have assisted the positive local development whilst failing to collect agreed rent. We call for an immediate statement removing the threat to our local free to use facility.

STATEMENT CS 03

Statement from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: Local road safety schemes

Many months ago residents in my ward raised their concerns about the lack of a safe crossing for their children to get to school, from one side of Cranbrook Rd (the B 4054) to another near Cairns Road to Harcourt Hill. Every day they worried about children crossing this fast road [in the 20mph limit area] that cuts through the area. It has no crossing for a long length and divides a route to school at a fast downhill location used by commuters.

I explained how we have a clear process for everything that needs to be done to try and tackle such issues:

- Traffic choices website, so we can check for related project requests and register their issue;
- Work with the Police, to encourage Community Speed Watch;
- Accident stats, so see if there's a known problem;
- Liaison with Highways to get ideas for the area using their expertise and knowledge of traffic issues;
- A monthly working group that reviews and assesses proposals from residents, advised by Highways;
- An annual highways project budget for the Neighbourhood to focus resources on the most important project in the area
- A process to develop and prioritise from all the requests so we choose a series of local projects (one per year per NP)
- Forums where residents can raise concerns and talk to others, including our volunteers
- I also pointed out that there are also many other ways to campaign for a solution.

Only weeks later one of the residents' children was on their way to school and a car collided with the pupil exactly as feared. This immediately focused attention on the risks and a more urgent need to address the lack of a safe crossing.

Of course the group has mobilised many more parents and residents now and created a petition calling for a safe crossing, which they will present to the Full Council shortly. They've done everything imaginable to develop their case and publicise why it should be considered a priority in the neighbourhood. They've been in local papers and magazines, spoken at our Neighbourhood Forum, created their petition, got training in Community Speed Watch, had the mobile radar van out to monitor speed violations, and with our Neighbourhood Partnership's budget and agreement got a traffic monitoring box out for two weeks to gather evidence of speed and volume of traffic, which is being analysed right now, to draw up data which can affect the appropriate and valid ways to

create a crossing. [If speeds are proven to be too high then a signal controlled crossing is required].

It's hard to imagine what else a group of concerned residents with a strong case for consideration can do to make their case against the many other requests and project proposals we (councilors and volunteers) have to sift through.

It also shows how the local partnership has worked with them to guide them through the process.

But now we see the Corporate Plan proposes no more devolved Highways budget for Neighbourhoods. We've also been told there will be no team with local projects, no budget, and no facility known for anyone to prioritise and develop local projects or get officer time to work on something which could save lives.

I'd therefore like to know what the thinking is behind the proposed removal of what are almost always resident led and locally developed road safety projects and how we can progress this safety scheme?