

Member Forum - Questions & Statements from Councillors

Agenda



Date: Tuesday, 11 December 2018

Time: 1.00 pm

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

To: All Members of Council:

Issued by: Sam Wilcock, Democratic Services

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Date: Monday 10th December, 2018



Agenda

1. Questions and Replies

Questions received from councillors together with the replies from the Mayor, or relevant Cabinet member where appropriate. **(Pages 3 - 44)**

2. Statements

Statements received from councillors. **(Pages 45 - 47)**



Member Forum

11 December 2018

Questions and replies



Procedural note:

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS:

- 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.
- 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 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 Mark Brain

Subject: City centre bus stops

A constituent of mine has raised the problems faced by those with mobility issues whilst waiting for buses in central Bristol. Buses queue at bus stops on the Centre and in Broadmead and it is not possible for some people to see the destinations displayed on the front of the buses before they pull away. This can result in people with mobility issues missing buses that others may have been able to catch. The Mayor is also the portfolio holder for transport in his administration therefore:

1. Does The Mayor agree with me that this constitutes discrimination against Bristol's disabled and the elderly citizens?
2. What action will the Mayor be taking to try to end this discrimination?

REPLY:

1. I agree that everybody should be able to use the bus and be aware of the destination or number. We take our duties to tackle discrimination against equalities groups very seriously and all bus stop designs are subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment which considers the needs of all users.

A key theme of our strategy has been to introduce raised platforms, which support wheelchair users and people with other mobility impairments as well as children in buggies.

The real time information system gives an alternative to the bus itself in alerting people to when their bus is due to arrive at the stop and this is available at stops, online and via audio devices for the visually impaired

Combining bus stops is an efficient use of space, helps the buses to be reliable and helps the vehicles align with the raised kerb.

2. We will continue to consult with the public and equalities groups about the design and layout of bus stops and would be keen to hear from members of the public if there are problems at particular locations and suggestions they have.

Given we are in the middle of negotiating a bus deal (part of which will be upgrading tech) I will put visibility issues and audio options, on the table.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Jones

Subject: JOINT TRANSPORT PLAN

1. I, and many of my residents, have various concerns regarding the Joint Transport Plan pertaining to South Bristol and areas to the south of the city. Can the Mayor please confirm whether Bristol City Council have input into these plans as it feels that the whole project is being driven by BANES?
2. When the consultation on this was launched, the dates were agreed for the BANES consultations and the local Bristol City Councillors had to ask for meetings to be arranged. Stockwood was given 3.5 hours (from 1300 – 1630, on Monday, 3rd December). Does the Mayor think this is adequate consultation with local residents?

REPLY:

It is difficult to respond fully without understanding what your specific concerns are.

All four of the constituent authorities have fed into the plan, Bristol City Council and Bath and North East Somerset Council have been working together closely to develop housing and transport proposals for the region. The proposals for housing at Whitchurch and the new orbital highway link are included in the Joint Transport Study and Joint Spatial Plan, developed jointly by the West of England authorities. To develop the transport schemes in more detail, BCC and BANES jointly produced the South East Bristol and Whitchurch Package Transport Study, which informed the current BANES Local Plan consultation.

The current consultation is on the BANES local plan which sets out their proposals for strategic housing locations as part of the wider Joint Spatial Plan. As part of this consultation it is necessary to highlight and consult on the proposed transport interventions to mitigate the impact of the proposed housing developments. Public engagement events were arranged at Whitchurch on the 19th November and due to the levels of public interest a further event was arranged for Stockwood on the 3rd December.

An additional consultation event has been arranged for the 10th December at St Augustine's Church, on Whitchurch Lane (East Dundry Road). These three events should provide opportunity for local residents to comment on these emerging proposals. Further consultations will be held in due course as schemes and proposals develop further. Of course, councillors' views are also welcome.



GREEN QUESTION 1

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Paula O'Rourke

Subject: Procurement of consultants

I have, for many months now, been asking questions about the procurement policy for senior managers in BCC, especially the recruitment and selection of the Executive Director: Growth and Regeneration, as this role is the only one which was not fully marketed during the senior restructure that took place this year. Instead, we have an officer in charge of one third of the Council who has not been through any selection process and who is paid more than any other officer in the organisation. It is widely known that he will be in post until 2020.

I have not been able to get any clarity on the use of 'interims' and the responses to my questions makes me think that policies are being devised 'on the hoof'.

When I questioned the procurement process for the Exec Director: Growth and Regeneration, I was told that the role was procured by Guidant PLC. I then drew attention to the £1.9 million paid to another firm known as Penna PLC, and pointed out that Guidant is an agency generally providing lower level roles. I was then told that Penna were recruiting consultants and providing them to BCC via Guidant and that this satisfied the Council's procurement rules.

It seems a very convoluted route to engage a senior executive. Also note that there is only one senior manager provided by Guidant to BCC and that is - Executive Director: Growth and Regeneration!

I am very concerned that BCC is acting improperly by not having a transparent and rigorous recruitment/selection process for this important role. Also, without a tender process we don't know if we are getting good value for money. This post is paid on a daily rate (as agency staff are) in excess of £1400 but with the security of knowing that the post will be available until 2020. This has all the appearance of an employment relationship yet seems to be presented as a temporary consultant role.

1. Can the Mayor satisfy members that the Executive Director: Growth and Regeneration role will be properly tendered, so that we can be assured that we are getting value for money and we can be confident that the role is filled by an employee who has been through our rigorous selection process?
2. Can the Mayor clarify how consultants are procured, especially, can he explain why, from April to October, we paid £994,000 to Penna for 14 officers (which works out at £142,000 pppa) and then paid just one officer (the highest earning officer) through Guidant, an agency which supplies low-level public sector staff?

REPLY:

1. We are committed to permanent employment and a stable leadership team.

The executive director is currently overseeing a number of key projects for the city. We need continuity and strong leadership to deliver them and we are lucky to have the incumbent with his skills and experience. His recruitment is a positive for the city.

Recognising the need for continuity, we are committed to filling the role permanently in the future.



2. Interim senior managers are now hired through our Managed Service Supplier - Guidant. Clear guidance is provided to recruiting managers and you received a copy of this as a member of the Human Resources Committee last month. Interims can be engaged directly via Guidant or one of their suppliers.

The figure of £994,000 relates to payments made to Penna for interim senior managers from 2nd April 2018 to 29th October 2018 covering 14 individuals. Of those 14 placements, nine are active at the moment. Therefore, your assertion that this amounts to annual expenditure of £142,000 per placement is not accurate. With effect from 30th May 2018 Penna became one of Guidant's suppliers. Guidant have always supplied agency staff at all grades in the council.

It is also worth noting that this administration has reduced senior management costs by over £1million.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 1

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

Subject: Community Infrastructure Levy

Over the past few months' local residents and Councillors have worked really hard to put in bids for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money, this has been a long winded process and has been going on so long we are now starting to think about next year's bid, when we have not even been able to start the current years.

1. Can the Mayor tell the Brislington residents and I, who would really like to know when the money will be available to start implementing the projects.

REPLY:

Funding agreements for Brislington projects' were issued on Friday 7th December. Funds will be released upon receipt of signed copies.

The 2018 process approved funding to 45 projects to the value of £1,831,162 for infrastructure improvements to parks, community facilities, tree replacements, Highways/transport and school facilities.

We recognise there has been a long delay for some projects between the decisions being made and issuing of funding agreements.

The approach in 2019 will be changed to address this.

We have recently invited feedback from Councillors, community and voluntary organisations, and local people about the 2018 process and have been working with the Area Committee chairs to improve the processes in 2019.



LABOUR QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Harriet Bradley

Subject: Buses

1. The Mayor will be aware of the recent disruptions to bus services and the subsequent public protests. Although First Bus tries its best to provide acceptable services it is failing to do so, especially in the South and East of Bristol, where many of the large council estates are based. Buses to these areas, such as the 75 and 36, run infrequently and are unreliable, thus debarring some of Bristol's poorest citizens from inclusion in the activities of the city. Adequate public transport provision is vital to the Mayor's vision of a carbon-neutral city with reduced car use. Given that a private commercial company like First demands that each route is economically profitable and refuses cross-subsidy, is it not time for a serious campaign to lobby Parliament for an integrated municipalised system, such as Transport for London?

REPLY:

Thank you for the important question. I am aware of the protests and I issued a public statement saying I understood the reasons behind them.

We're in discussion with First Bus for an agreement to improve highway infrastructure in exchange for more, and increased, bus services. In those discussions, we will push to ensure there are more services in less connected communities who need public services.

In the short term First Bus are putting on additional buses on a number of routes including the 75 and 76.

As Councillor Bradley is aware, there is not much point in lobbying parliament under a conservative government for an integrated system, but powers have passed to the combined authority and we will be looking at options in the West of England Combined Authority board.

The board will consider plans to develop a bus strategy which will consider the most appropriate way to deliver bus services.

This will consider the powers available to WECA under the Bus Services Act 2017, which includes enhanced partnership working, as well as franchising. The key aspects to a successful and comprehensive bus network are frequent and accessible routes, quick and reliable journey times delivered by significant bus priority and supported by integrated ticketing.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Graham Morris

Subject: LOVE OUR HIGH STREETS FUND

1. What timescales do you think we are working with before the eligibility criteria are developed?
2. How can I ensure that Stockwood is considered in the next phase?

REPLY:

1. WECA asked each Local Authority to identify 1 high street in their area to run a pilot project, Bristol has selected Bedminster for its pilot area. WECA anticipate that the pilot projects will start in approx. 6 months' time, and that once the pilot projects have been completed they will establish a process to assess future proposals, which will include outcomes to be delivered by the fund.

2. Once we have further information from WECA on the process to assess future proposals and outcomes to be delivered we will be able to determine which of our high streets should be proposed for funding, and there is no reason why Stockwood cannot be considered at that stage alongside other opportunities for support.

We would welcome your support and input.



GREEN QUESTION 2

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Clive Stevens Subject: Treasury Management Mid-Year Report

Dear Marvin

Later today, at Full Council, councillors will be asked to vote on the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report. In it, page 163, they will see that the Authorised Limit for Debt is to be cut by £70m. I'm wondering why you want to do this; I appreciate the reduction still leaves plenty of headroom currently for debt but there is a lot going on and I think the least we could ask for is an explanation of why it is to be reduced please.

I have asked officers a few times now already, just before Audit Committee, during Committee and following it, but at the time of putting in this question to you I haven't had an explanation.

Full Council shouldn't be put in a position again of having to vote on something that's not been clearly explained. The previous instance I am referring to was just 9 months ago.

1. Could I possibly have an explanation why you desire to cut the authorised debt limit please, especially at a time when we are planning investment in more council houses, our own housing company, new schools (hopefully), flood defences, the City Leap and other zero carbon initiatives and many other major projects?

REPLY:

You are right to mention the many major projects we are progressing including this administration's work on the City Leap programme, that will have a transformative effect on our relationship with energy in the city; Goram Homes as part of our commitment to deliver the housing the city needs; and in line with our manifesto commitment, we are building secondary schools to increase the number of school places.

The authority is not allowed to borrow long term to finance the revenue services of the authority.

The authorised limit for 2018/19 is a control to restrict the level of borrowing of the authority that is undertaken to ensure borrowing is only used to deliver capital schemes of the authority.

Since the capital programme was approved in February 2018 schemes have been withdrawn and or re-profiled that were planned to be funded by borrowing. To ensure the authority remains within its statutory obligations the authorised limit is planned to be temporarily reduced to reflect actual in year forecasted activity, compliance with the code and ensure borrowing is only for a capital purpose.

With regards the capital schemes that you refer to, these schemes have yet to be approved by Cabinet / Full Council so currently no borrowing can be taken for these schemes in 2018/19.

As part of the 2019/20 budget process the capital programme will be reviewed and any changes will be reflected within the authorities Treasury Management Strategy including the updating of the treasury indicators and limits, one being the authorised limit.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Anthony Negus (Cotham Ward)

Subject: Private landlord responsibility

There are many grey areas of responsibility when issues arise in dense areas of rented properties. Landlords are requested to sign up to an agreement with BCC which amongst other things requires them to give contact details of landlord or agent to immediate neighbours.

1. Will the Mayor confirm how many landlords have complied with this agreement and if this is unknown why does this council not consider it important to obtain feedback and enforce?

REPLY:

In relation to mandatory, additional and selective licensable properties.

All property licences have conditions included as part of the licence. A number of these conditions also link to other documents, including West of England Code of Good Management and standards set in accordance with statutory/Council are requirements for facilities and fire safety.

Licences, together with their conditions last for five years. It is the responsibility of the landlord to comply with these conditions and this includes informing immediate neighbours of their contact details. Where there are changes with the property over this period landlords must still adhere to the conditions.

Licensed properties are inspected at least once and these inspections check compliance against, focusing primarily on the health and safety of the occupants, including gas safety, electrical safety, fire precautions etc.

Where breaches of these conditions are identified, landlords are given a timescale to comply, which if they do not do so, and there are serious breaches of these conditions, enforcement action will be considered.

Enforcement action is carried out in line with the Private Housing Enforcement Policy 2017 and the service uses a range legal tools and powers to improve property conditions.

If the inspection meets licence conditions during an inspection this is recorded. As you appreciate, signing of compliance only relates to the time of inspection as the service cannot carry out multiple inspections of the 6,000 properties licensable properties over the 5 year duration of the schemes. However, where there is evidence of any breach of conditions following the inspection these will be investigated.

Given the nature of the Licence conditions it is not possible at one point in time to confirm that all conditions have been met and therefore this is not recorded.

NB. We have recently updated the additional and mandatory licence conditions and are reviewing our operational procedures with regard to compliance with these conditions.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Don Alexander
Subject: Living Wage

1. Living Wage accreditation was rightly a priority for the Mayor in both of his campaigns and for Labour councillors past and present through the council's committee, including under the former Mayor.

Members of all parties should celebrate that Living Wage certification was recently awarded to Bristol City Council.

It has also been a priority, since 2016, to cut the cost of senior management at City Hall, though this has sadly been opposed by the other political parties.

Can the Mayor confirm both how much has now been saved on senior management and how much better-off council staff and contractor employees are as a result of adopting the Living Wage?

2. Now that we are officially a Living Wage council, can the Mayor confirm plans to make much-needed progress towards Bristol becoming a Living Wage city?

REPLY:

1. While our political opponents are obsessed with Fol's on individual wages, we are focused on delivery with a leaner structure, central to which is the new leadership team and mayor's office.

We have saved an ongoing annual figure of £1.2m in senior management costs since May 2016.

Our lowest paid workers currently receive £8.75 per hour and this will rise to £9 per hour in April 2019.

We will continue to promote the Living Wage to our City Partners and it was really positive to see that the University of Bristol have joined us in becoming a Living Wage employer. It is essential that all employers in the City look to adopt the real Living Wage

We are wholeheartedly committed to our Living Wage status, plans for which will be developed as part of the work on both the Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth Strategy and the One City Plan.

2. We are now looking at how we roll this out to our supply chains, which also includes impacted by the fact we signed the construction charter recently.

I am writing to chief executives around the city to ask them to work toward living wage accreditation and to work with their trade unions. I want Living wage to be the benchmark in the city, not an aspiration.

This Labour administration, working with Unions and Business has the opportunity to lead the way on making Bristol the home of decent jobs and good employment.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mark Weston

Subject: ASHTON COURT MINIATURE RAILWAY

The Mayor has previously stated that every time the Ashton Court miniature railway operates that the golfing facilities lose money and that the free parking allowed for users of the model railway takes money away from the Council.

1. Can the Mayor therefore explain why his officers are trying to insist that the railway operate for 34 days a year rather than the current 21? Surely this change would cost the Authority more money?

The Council's currently negotiation strategy seems to be riddled with inconsistencies and a vindictive attitude to volunteers who bring a lot of joy to many and income to the Council.

2. Does he not accept that if the Council removes the car parking provision at the miniature railway that more of its visitors will have to use the hard standing, which will then fill up faster and turn people away? Thus resulting in loss of income for both the golfing and railway attractions that ultimately ends up in the hands of the Council.

REPLY:

1. BSMEE's current operating model is to be open to the public just 21 days per year on select weekends and charge 90p a ticket. As a result, the car park in previous years tends to be full and this has dissuaded the golf customers from attending on days where the railway operates.

A number of changes are being made to Ashton Court in 2018 and 2019 which are aimed at making the most of the site for existing and future visitors. This includes improvements to the parking, café and a more family orientated golf offer.

The negotiations with BSMEE are being carried out in order to find a way to maximise the use of the council's expanded offer in the area as well as manage the demand for the BSMEE over more weekends of the year. Income to the council for the site fee will increase.

2. Visitors to the miniature railway and BSMEE members will be able to park in the main and overflow car parks; a changed operating model is expected to match demand. The removal of the area that was previously used for free parking will enable sustainable transport to be further promoted and ensure that the correct charges are applied to all cars.

Work is still ongoing to determine the best future use for the site for the future which balances the needs of citizens, volunteers and the council's parks service finances.

I agree with you that it brings joy to many people. By extending the service, the railway can bring a lot more joy to a lot more people.



GREEN QUESTION 3

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: Creating a policy to reject and eliminate digital billboards

The takeover of public space by digital billboards – along highways, on buildings, and around the city streets – is imposing consumer marketing on communities across the city, with no option to opt out. These billboards distract drivers. The energy demand raises the city's carbon footprint. Above all, consumer marketing and relentless adverts promote low self-esteem, encourage global brand consumption, and promote dissatisfaction, undermining local producers and the city's own economy and are illuminated 24 hours a day. These billboards are primarily being imposed in lower income neighbourhoods. They encourage obesity, fast cars, and luxury products and reduce wellbeing in communities. They may earn income for the council and earn large sums for their owners, but the cost to the community is too high.

1. Does the Mayor agree that on grounds of creating equality for communities' rights to local amenity and highway safety, the city should join the several US states, and dozens of cities around the world (such as Sao Paulo, Chennai and Grenoble) where digital advertising is being rejected?

REPLY:

There are two aspects to the council's responsibilities here.

First, as planning authority, the planning system already exists to protect the amenities of the city and conditions of road safety when advertising is proposed. I am aware that the Council has refused permission for many digital advertising displays which would have had a harmful effect on the city. When these decisions have been challenged at planning appeal we have successfully defended the decisions in the vast majority of cases.

I note that the Council's Development Control Committee has considered a number of digital advertising proposals over the last couple of years. Two of these have been approved next to the M32 and others have been refused permission where members have felt that the adverts would be harmful.

There is a lack of evidence that digital advertising is any less safe than static advertising. Locations and content will continue to be monitored so that any individual installation does not create a specific safety concern and a number of sites have already been discounted on that basis.

Secondly we also have an interest in this as the owner of advertisement hoardings now. This is easy to say in abstract, but there are consequences. How would you raise the money this currently brings the council – what would you cut? For example, many of the new bus shelters across the city include well designed digital advertising that funds the maintenance of the shelters, meaning that Bristol's citizens don't have to pay for this. The Council's Legible City project has also delivered sensitively designed digital advertising units in the city centre that generate income for the Council and is invested in the city for everyone's benefit.

Because of this, Sao Paulo which you cite as an example has actually stepped back from a ban and is now looking at how they can be used to fund much needed public works.



Also this is an extremely patronising and insulting approach presuming that people can't deal with advertising. I believe most people, not just you, are more than capable of discerning. I believe that well designed digital advertising can contribute positively to the city.

Advertising is widely used in the UK and the location planning is key to minimise any risks. I feel that the Council can rely on its role as local planning authority, utilising legislation that is available to us, to effectively regulate where digital advertising takes place.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gary Hopkins

Subject: Housing delivered

In the three years 2008/09 to 2010/11 an average of 1,769 new homes were delivered in Bristol with 496 being affordable. This represents an average of nearly 30% affordable housing.

By 2013/14 this had sunk to 102 affordable homes out of the dwindling total of 1,218, around 8%

By 2016/17 the figure was 199 affordable and 2017/18 184 representing just over 10% each year.

1. Does the Mayor feel that housing delivery under the Mayoral Model has been in reality a success or failure?

Despite making delivery in this area a key measure of his administration's success, (let's face it the rest of the promises headed south a long time ago), there is continuing projected failure to hit the promised figures and Scrutiny has yet to be supplied with the data to support a hoped for increase over the next year or so.

2. Can the mayor explain the discrepancies between promise and actual delivery?

REPLY:

As you know, the pledge was to reach 2,000 homes, 800 affordable by 2020.

There has been decades of under investment in house building. Failure by successive governments to engage with local government to make this possible. We inherited a council where house building was at a standstill.

The 2016/17 year includes a period before this administration was elected and we deliberately made our pledge for 2020 as it takes time to build housing, especially when the base for affordable homes was so low.

Interestingly you pick years 2008 - 2011 for comparison. Since that time the Coalition Government (which your party was a member of) introduced the viability assessment which allowed developers to duck their affordable housing contribution and the permitted development rules for offices to housing which carries no affordable housing requirement, we have also had a major increase in student housing which also currently has no affordable housing requirement.

That Coalition Government also reintroduced the cap of council house borrowing, thankfully removed in October by the Conservatives. It is that Coalition Government which collapsed the delivery of affordable and it is surprising that you bring this question with no sense of shame.

This administration has:

- Set up a housing delivery team, which is managing a programme of over 100 sites and over 3,500 affordable homes

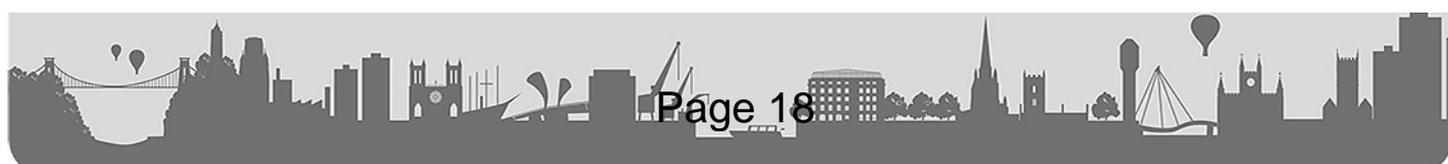


- Introduced a £57m housing association grant programme which is already seeing homes which would have been market housing being built as affordable
- Increased the council housing building programme, which will accelerate even further with the removal of the borrowing cap
- Stopped both the auctioning of council housing and the sale of council housing land to ensure delivery
- Set up a local housing company, Goram Homes and allocated the first two sites for development
- Started to buy back council housing sold under the right to buy
- Supported community led housing projects across the city which collectively have a pipeline of around 1,000 homes
- Hosted the housing festival which will see Bristol acting as a laboratory for modular housing and housing innovation which will also provide additional affordable housing
- Opened up council buildings for meanwhile use by homeless charities, rather than the Lib Dem's commercial guardianship schemes
- We are also taking forward the development of Hengrove Park which your Lib Dem group have historically blocked and are now trying to frustrate

With these initiatives in place we will meet our target for 2020 and sustain it into the following years.

It is the mayoral model that has allowed easier decision making and driven a delivery focused council for the first time in many years.

You continue to pursue opposition to the mayoral model against the people's wishes.



LABOUR QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mike Langley

Subject: Local Government Finance Settlement

1. Three months ago, Theresa May told us that austerity was over. Despite calls from the Mayor and over 5,000 Labour councillors from across the country, as ever, no action followed that soundbite. English councils still face a blackhole of some £6 billion by 2020.

Labour in Bristol – despite the opposition of the other parties – have safeguarded our libraries, including Wick Road; children’s centres; and frontline council services over the last two years. We have also coordinated action with the other core cities in the run-up to the Chancellor’s budget.

Will the Mayor keep up his efforts to push for fair funding for Bristol, including around December’s expected Local Government Finance Settlement?

REPLY:

Councillor Langley is correct to reiterate the successes of this administration and as a socialist, he knows we are bringing the right values to city government.

You are also right to highlight how all the opposition parties have opposed our progressive budgets that have safeguarded key services. Sadly, the nature of party politics in Bristol means even the parties who have claimed to be progressive have voted with the Tories against remarkable achievements by this administration in the face of ongoing Tory austerity, started by the Tory Lib-Dem coalition.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies estimate that between 2010 and 2020, the Tories will have cut direct funding to councils by 79%. The cross-party Local Government Association says that local councils will be facing an £8 billion gap by 2025.

Our Labour administration remains at the forefront of the fight against austerity. Last year, we organised one of Bristol’s biggest rallies in recent years, working with trade unions, community groups and activists. With our MPs and the other Core Cities, we then took a Green Paper to Parliament, backed by Jeremy Corbyn. He has since praised the ‘amazing creativity in the toughest of times’ and the ‘shoots of the renaissance of local government for the many, not the few – the rebirth of municipal socialism’.

Our progressive approach in Bristol has responsibly drawn down reserves, cut senior management by £1.6 million, innovated to increase income, and made backroom efficiencies where we can. Almost 600,000 people across the country have lost out on council tax support schemes but here in Bristol, and despite the opposition of all other parties, Labour has protected the full council tax reduction scheme for the poorest Bristolians while introducing an exemption for care leavers and a full levy on second homes. Our administration has brought competence where there was chaos, closing the former Mayor’s budget black hole and balancing the books while protecting frontline services.

Meanwhile, the national LGA Labour Group’s ‘Breaking Point’ campaign has brought a new focus on the challenge facing local government. All of Bristol’s Labour councillors were part of the national petition and I signed the letter with almost 80 other Labour council leaders calling

for an end to austerity. We used the Global Parliament of Mayors summit to convene the first ever meeting of the core cities and the metro mayors, coordinating calls for a £2 billion Clean Air Fund in the chancellor's budget. Councils need resources as well as responsibility.

When the Secretary of State for Communities and I visited St Anne's House in your ward last month, I once again highlighted that national cuts to local councils cannot carry on. I will continue to push for the funding and investment which Bristol needs.

The Government has delayed Local Government Finance Settlement, which was due to be published on 6 December. It is of concern that there is no clarity on council funding after the four-year deal runs out in March 2020.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor John Goulandris

Subject: RESULTS OF VEHICLE DWELLING PUBLIC CONSULTATION

1. During the summer a citywide consultation took place on the subject of van dwellers. Are residents who responded to the consultation going to be advised of the key findings?
2. In various residential areas, including parts of my ward, residents are concerned by the steadily increasing number of van dwellers on the highway and, in particular, disposal of waste, which is being deposited on grass verges, causing a potential health hazard. What are the Mayor's plans to deal with residents' concerns?

REPLY:

1. I would like thank the 800 people who took the time to respond to the consultation about the proposed policy for managing vehicle dwelling encampments on the highway.

Residents will be advised of the key findings. The consultation report is available on the City Council website: <https://bristol.citizenspace.com/communities/vehicle-dwelling-encampments/>

The proposed policy sets out a clear process for managing vehicle dwelling on the highway. Action will be taken if the encampment is creating a high impact on the local environment or community. The policy will be considered by Cabinet early in the New Year.

2. Meanwhile any concerns about litter or waste should be reported in the usual way: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/report-a-street-issue> or by phoning the customer services centre.

Any concerns about vehicle dwelling should be reported to the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team so that an assessment can made and where appropriate, enforcement action taken. neighbourhood.enforcement@bristol.gov.uk.



GREEN QUESTION 4

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Clive Stevens

Subject: Airbnb

Dear Marvin

A quick look at the Airbnb website shows 306 properties for rent for many weekends in Bristol next year. I'm not suggesting that you take a weekend break, even if you want one, I am suggesting that many of these locations are operating as businesses as they seem to be available all year round according to the website. Therefore it should be considered whether business rates are appropriate (as hotels) and if so enforced.

Also it wouldn't surprise me if some were using the services of Bristol Waste Company free of charge too. It is unfair competition to hotels and B&Bs who pay their way and are appropriately regulated.

And crucially, this type of uncontrolled use is displacing people from much needed homes. I'm told that Planning is impotent to do anything about this, but some digging has shown attempts by other authorities to get to grips with this:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/nightly-letting> (Referring to the Housing Deregulation Act 2015)

and

<http://www.broughtonspurtle.org.uk/news/council-moves-shortterm-lets>

Shows attempts that Edinburgh is trying.

As you will see from the Edinburgh site it seems to require cross departmental working, and there are some existing powers that can help.

1. Could you ask an officer please to assess the options and report back with recommendations please – before we lose hundreds more properties and have a really big problem on our hands?

REPLY:

English legislation states that a property can be let for up to 140 days a year without having to pay business rates. If a property is available to let for 140 days or more per year, it will be deemed a self-catering property and therefore will be subject to business rates. Rates will be based on the property type, size and location, and how many guests are able to stay in the listing.

We don't have the resources to manage this but we are working with Core Cities who need to consider lobbying for a change in national legislation. London is very active in this area.

My office recently met with the Bristol Hoteliers and we are also working together to lobby for regulatory change and finding short term solutions. The vast majority of Air BNB lets in Bristol is in Central ward.



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

Subject: South Bristol Ring Road or Orbital Road

1. How much additional traffic is modelled will use Whitchurch Lane, with the construction of the new South Orbital Road (formally called the South Bristol Ring Road)?
2. What impact will this road proposal have on the capacity of junctions at Fortfield Road, Court Farm Road and Bamfield?

REPLY:

1. We have, working with BANES colleagues, undertaken high level options assessment of transport proposals related to the Whitchurch Strategic Development Location to feed into the ongoing BANES local plan consultation.

This is available at the BANES local plan consultation web page. We will forward this comment to be considered as part of the consultation.

2. Modelling of the orbital road carried out to date is at a very strategic level and significant further work will be required to determine realistic expected changes to vehicle volumes and impacts on individual junctions. There will be further consultations as this work is developed and BCC expect to consult in Summer 2019 on further developments of the proposals and impacts within Bristol including Whitchurch Lane and the existing junctions.



LABOUR QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Harriet Bradley

Subject: St Anne's House

I would like to congratulate Cllr Paul Smith for securing government funding to establish a winter shelter for homeless people at St Anne's House, the first 24/7 shelter in Bristol. When opening the centre with the Housing Secretary, Mayor Marvin Rees also secured a welcome commitment from the operators that the community space promised to local people will be delivered in December.

Brislington Labour Party along with other local residents has been supporting the shelter with donations and attending meetings with the staff. However, a place catering for 30 people only touches the tip of the iceberg. As we all know, homelessness and rough sleeping in Bristol, as in all other cities, have increased dramatically since the start of austerity, rising by 128% over the past three years.

It is widely accepted that the problem will increase with the roll out of universal credit which reduces the income of those on benefits, thereby increasing the chance of rent arrears and eviction. While the contribution of local churches in providing shelter and food over the winter is welcomed, there is a lack of stable adequate accommodation offering rehabilitation and support to reintegrate homeless people into their communities. What longer-term policies is BCC developing to tackle the problem of homelessness?

And specifically, given the recent concerns and media coverage of the situation at Wick House, are there plans to cater for the 80 plus residents currently accommodated there if it is forced to close?

REPLY:

St Mungo's runs St Anne's House, not Bristol City Council. It is great news that this space has become available.

The community space usage at St Anne's House is planned to begin during December.

St Mungo's is in late stage discussions with a community provider who may run this space.

As well as a range of shorter term issues to reduce rough sleeping in the city, and commissioning 848 beds in our Pathways for single homeless people the main challenge is around increasing supply of move-on accommodation from supported housing. There are a range of initiatives to increase affordable private rented sector accommodation in the city as well as Homes England funding to increase the supply of affordable long term move-on accommodation. We are also seeking to increase access to Welfare Benefit advice within these projects and build resilience to help people maintain their tenancies.

The Homeless Prevention Team, is aware of the situation in regard to Wick House and the potential that it may close. We are monitoring the situation and working with colleagues in our Housing Benefit and our Housing Options and Advice Service.

If residents of Wick House are given legal notice to leave (or the owners indicate that they intend to serve notice on residents) a working group of key council officers and partners would look at early interventions. They will work with residents to assess their needs and seek housing options and solutions. Some of the current residents are known to the Homeless

Prevention Service already. We would seek to make contact with all residents in a planned way to offer key housing advice and assistance.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Peter Abraham

Subject: INFREQUENCY OF No.4 BUS SERVICE

Whilst plans for a future light rail/underground transport system are very aspirational, my residents are more concerned with the No. 4 bus service currently operated by First. It has recently been cut from a 20 minute service to half hourly and buses get regularly cancelled, so the service can become just one bus per hour. This can often entail a long wait in the cold for elderly residents. Stakeholders, councillors and residents have raised the poor service with First, but to no avail.

Would the Mayor be willing to write to First Bus seeking an improvement in the No.4 service?

REPLY:

The mass transit system you refer to is not just aspirational, they are close to becoming a reality, with the feasibility study soon to report. I hope the councillor and his group leader will bury their point scoring and soon join with us in welcoming the work that will lead to the transformative change in transport the mass transit system will bring.

Yes absolutely, to your specific question, but due to privatisation in the mid-1980s and bus operators, we do not have direct control.

We are working with the Combined Authority to develop a regional bus strategy. The combined authority board will consider those strategies soon.



GREEN QUESTION 5

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: Making a commitment to stop creating pseudo-public private spaces in Bristol

While development deals that get new squares and projects created on council land have some advantages, the city needs to recognise the downsides it creates and end this practice.

Our property and land holdings should not be used to create privately managed spaces. Handing streetscene and built environment responsibilities to developers leads to both obvious and unforeseen problems. This has already happened at Cabot Circus, Millenium Square, Broadmead, Temple Quay and now Victoria Street is proposed, outside the council offices.

In response to a previous question there is said to be no register of these privatised areas.

Consequences: e.g. as you enter Temple Quay Estate you are warned of the private rules there; they have created a very confusing double width road that is unmanaged for traffic, leading up to the station, and the landowners, citing legal issues, have failed to repair the cycle route bridge destroyed by a lorry driver for over a year now.... Development management companies are now in charge of litter bins, street sweeping, road signs, street lighting standards, private security patrols, and maintenance, plus street markets, entertainment and public rights to assemble or protest – all these and more are in the hands of an anonymous private sector management company. Our own ability to apply by-laws and legislation now require their permission.

1. Does the Mayor agree this loss of control and reduction in public rights outweighs the transfer of some expenditure to private developers?

REPLY:

There are large areas of council land which can be developed for housing and for commercial use by either the council or others and all can generate income in a variety of ways. Generally we prefer to grant long leaseholds to development partners developing council land in order to target annual revenue generation for the period of the lease, and also have additional control over what comes forward and how it is managed rather than disposal and a single capital receipt; although we do occasionally dispose of freeholds particularly for residential sites.

We aim, where possible, through the design process and the terms of the sale to retain as much of the publicly accessible environment as possible, such as streets and existing open space. However on occasion this is not always possible, or the best solution, especially in large development / regeneration projects such as Cabot Circus. When funding large developments, particularly of a commercial nature, developers must be able to ensure that the trading operations of businesses are able to operate efficiently and ensure compliance.

Where the Council does agree with developers on how these pseudo-public spaces will be managed, the successful trading of the businesses must be a priority to ensure the continued success of the business are assured providing jobs, business rates and many other benefits to Bristol.



The Council as landowner can attempt to agree to manage areas of developed land, this requires amicable agreement with the purchaser and would inevitably need to be in agreement with the purchaser on how the spaces will be managed.

It should be noted that there is nothing to prevent the Council discussing with a freehold or leasehold purchaser some physical or management changes to their development following completion of the build, but this has to be in agreement with the purchaser to ensure their businesses remain financially viable. Going forward, the council are looking to retain, as much as possible, access to existing open spaces.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Harriet Clough (Hengrove and Whitchurch Park Ward)

Subject: Dropped Kerbs

Almost two years ago I got money allocated to improve access in my Ward via dropping kerbs on several routes across the ward, but no further actions have been taken. This has become highly frustrating.

1. What further actions could I take to accelerate the delivery of these dropped kerbs, which will improve the quality of life for myself and other residents in my ward?

REPLY:

You are right to highlight work has not been completed and I've asked officers to prioritise it.

In the meantime Highway officers will continue to work with Ward Councillors to identify where dropped kerbs are needed and how much these will cost so that a decision can be made on how many of these can be installed once the cost of the path works are confirmed.



LABOUR QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mike Langley

Subject: Brexit

1. Bristol City Council recently published a draft report detailing the potential impact of a No Deal on Bristol, including future provision of services. It sets out how Bristol City Council, Bristol's universities, and other targeted city projects have received some £200 million of European funding since 2005 – helped hugely by Bristol's Brussels office, which the Tories tried to shut down last year.

As the circus in Parliament around the Government's deal nears its finale, will the Mayor regardless keep pushing for greater devolution and resources for Bristol?

REPLY:

1. Yes. As our draft assessment shows there are very few reasons for this council to be optimistic about Brexit, but the potential for further devolution and the decentralisation of power to cities is one of the few opportunities for us to explore.

Alongside my Core Cities partners I have been pushing for more fiscal freedom for cities and their surrounding regions. This will continue in the lead up to Brexit and following it, and I am encouraged that the government has indicated devolution will be back on the agenda post-Brexit.

We need to see a radical shift of power from Westminster to city regions. I am focused on seizing any opportunity to drive investment in jobs, skills and infrastructure – and to promote inclusive and sustainable growth.

A key part of this agenda is shaping the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which is proposed to replace the European regional funding streams that have brought in around €70m to the West of England in the current funding round. This money has supported business growth, for example £5.5m towards the development of Filwood Business Park.

A consultation on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund is expected to open soon. We will work with our partners nationally and regionally to make the case that the new fund should be of equivalent value to the EU funding streams it would replace – and to be fully devolved and flexible so it can meet local needs.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tony Carey

Subject: LITTER-POLICE ENFORCEMENT POLICIES

1. The Mayor may be aware of some of the complaints raised on social media about the operational practices and priorities of Kingdom. Can he confirm that the city's contracted enforcement officers do not use any of the alleged 'unethical' tactics which have led some local authorities to stop working with this company?
2. Whilst cigarette stubs are litter it is arguable that 97% of all fines issued around this material seems rather disproportionate. Will the Mayor ensure that the next waste contract will contain specific targets involving important – alternative - forms of anti-social littering or behaviour?

REPLY:

1. Since 6 November 2017 BCC has piloted a new approach to delivering stricter environmental enforcement measures against environmental crimes including littering, dog fouling, fly tipping and tagging. 11,400 fixed penalty notices have been issued to date and we are beginning to see behaviour change in the city centre.

We are not aware of all complaints raised on social media but Bristol City Council manages this contract in accordance with its terms which means that any complaints made are taken seriously and investigated, and corrective action is taken where needed.

2. It is also important not to trivialise the impact of littered cigarette butts. Cigarette butts are the most littered item in the world. The majority of the 5.6 trillion cigarettes manufactured worldwide annually come with filters made of a plastic called cellulose acetate which can take a decade or more to decompose. As many as two-thirds of these filters are dumped irresponsibly each year.

Bristol has an average smoking rate of 11.14%. With a mid-2017 population estimate of 459,300 this would mean that the city has 51,166 smokers. If each of these people smokes 10 cigarettes per day this would mean 186,755,900 cigarettes are disposed of in Bristol in a year.

The Clean Streets plan sets out our ambition to make Bristol measurably cleaner by 2020 and we will conduct annual independent local environmental quality surveys to measure changes to the cleanliness of the city.

We have not set FPN targets for the pilot project and will not set FPN targets for the new enforcement service. We are determined to change littering behaviour as a part of the Clean Streets Campaign and enforcement is a key part of this.

In August a Kingdom enforcement officer spent 14 days embedded with BWC to investigate fly tipping as part of the council taking a tougher stance on environmental crime. Kingdom issued 24 FPNs with 12 paid so far. This work is ongoing.

Between August 2018 and now Kingdom issued 15 FPNs for graffiti tagging and fly posting and confiscated paint from two taggers.

Between 11 October 2018 Kingdom have been working with the Council Neighbourhood Enforcement Team to tackle offences related to the presentation of commercial waste. Kingdom has issued 44 FPNs to businesses in that time.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 6

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

Subject: The Number 36 Bus

The number 36 bus has quite reputation in Brislington area and I think it would be fair to say that most people feel that the route needs sorting out to make it more efficient and reliable.

The proposal that has been put forward by First Bus has raised concerns by all the Councillors whose wards are affected. We feel that connectivity is really important and have put forward a proposal to terminate the two new services at the Brislington Park and Ride (see letter sent to Mayor dated 12th November 2018)

Can the Mayor tell us how you are going to support this bus service and work with First Bus to ensure that the service is improved and more widely used?

Copy of letter sent.

12th November 2018

Dear Mayor Rees,

The elected members for the wards of Brislington East, Brislington West, Knowle and Stockwood have spoken at great length to try and devise an option to overcome some of the Public Transport issues experienced in the wards of South East Bristol.

After short consultations with James Freeman of First Weston England and James McNeill of Stagecoach West, we believe we have been able to identify the matters that affect our communities the most.

Firstly may I, on behalf of my colleagues, say that we believe Mr Freeman's idea of splitting the Service 36 a bold idea and we would like to retain this styling. However, we believe that there must be a point in the routes of Services 36 and 93 where they meet up and allow cross-transfer of passengers. We have spent a great deal of time on this and have come to the conclusion that the Brislington Park and Ride (P&R) site should be the terminus for both services.

The Service 93 would operate as demonstrated by Mr Freeman during his public meeting at Hungerford Road Community Centre ten days ago. The Service 36 would also operate as he described except, instead of terminating at Brislington Square, it would continue up the A4 Bath Road to terminate at the P&R. On departing the P&R the 36 would cross the A4 into Emery Road, turn immediately into Broomhill Road. It would route the full length of Broomhill Road turning into School Road and Allison Road before turning right into Wick Road where it will resume it's normal routing.

Doing this will allow residents of the Hungerford estate and Capgrave Crescent, Whitmore Avenue, etc to use this service to the Brooklea Health Centre, Wick Road; the principal health facility in these wards; with out having to catch two buses as they currently do.

Services 513 and 514 are operated by Stagecoach West and run from Broadwalk to either Brislington Square on two days a week or to Callington Road Tesco three days a week. I have spoken briefly with Mr James O'Neill of Stagecoach West and he was certainly interested in

the following ideas.

Greater Brislington has two major supermarkets and a large hospital complex but none has a dedicated bus service to the detriment of those wishing to get there. Callington Road Tesco and the Hospital have 18 buses per week, that is all. Although Mr Freeman's revised plans would see a major improvement to this for those who can use the Service 93, the residents of Greater Brislington to the North of the A4 Bath Road still have very limited access.

Therefore we would like to ask that it be considered to change the Services 513 and 514 so that they would, instead of terminating at Broadwalk, would terminate at Callington Road Tesco and, instead of running a shuttle service through the narrow roads of Brislington, which takes a lot of time and is very difficult driving (I know because I drove this route for many years). Instead, it would operate a circular route, driving through Greater Brislington much as they do now but once they have reached Broadwalk, they would then continue directly to Tesco via the A37 Wells Road where the services would now terminate. The driver would have full rest facilities available and the shoppers would be able to wait inside the store for the bus to arrive, aware that they have a few minutes to get from the store to the bus stop.

If both routes operated thus, it would mean that Callington Road Hospital and Tesco would be served by 30 buses per week, a significant rise from the current number.

With the time now available to the driver, it may be possible to lengthen the route to take in a much larger area of St Anne's Park. By increasing the route to include Wyatt's View and Langton Way and turning around at the roundabout at the junction with Robertson's Drive this would much better serve the thousands of residents of this remote estate. We used to route the predecessor to the 513/4 service here when it was first initiated.

I mentioned earlier that there are two major supermarkets in Greater Brislington; the other one, not yet mentioned is Sainsbury's at Avon Meads. If there were sufficient time available, the new 513/514 service could serve this site too by routing to the roundabout at the junction of Whitney Road, Bloomfield Road and St Phillip's Causeway. There is a large lay-by at the rear of The Black castle public house which could be the bus stop serving Sainsbury's Supermarket.

Mr Freeman's team have already submitted the revised Services 36 and 93 to Bristol City Council and this application will very soon go to the Traffic Commissioner. However, may I request that this be postponed to allow thought and negotiations for this plan to take place

Although this email is lacking specifics and data, we do believe these options would cost no more than current services and would greatly enhance the public transport in the Greater Brislington, Knowle and Stockwood wards. Therefore, we earnestly request the Mayor to do all within his power to make it so.

For and on behalf of:

Councillor Mike Langley

Councillor Harriet Bradley

Councillor Jos Clarke

Councillor Steve Jones

Councillor Graham Morris

Councillor Gary Hopkins

Councillor Christopher Davies



With kind regards
Tony Carey

REPLY:

We are working closely with FirstGroup towards a bus deal to double bus usage to 20% of all journeys.

This agreement for us to pay for infrastructure and highways improvements that will enable them to double frequency on some routes and extend services into less well served areas, and through increased enforcement of bus lanes and highway improvements ensure greater service stability and dependability.

This will involve more projects such as bus lanes, and prioritisation at junctions to give commuters a genuine alternative. We simply cannot pretend that people will get out of their cars without one.

As with all bus services in the city, the Council will work with the operator to ensure that the service is well publicised through timetable information at stop and online. The Council will continue to identify opportunities to install bus priority measures to contribute to improved bus service reliability. The Council also works with local bus operators to improve real time information performance, and increase ticketing options available for passengers, including smartcards, mobile apps and iPoints.

Following feedback from local residents First bus has made amendments to the proposed services so that service 96 will now continue past the Park and Ride site to Brislington Square. This will link services 36 and 96 together so that passengers can interchange between services to continue their journey.



LABOUR QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mark Bradshaw

Subject: Bus fares in Bristol

Bus fares for almost all ticket types changed in November, explained as a joint Council and First Bus move to a 'flat fare' for bus passengers. This followed the successful, publicly-led campaign for "Fairer Fares" in 2013 which did cut most bus fares and simplified fare zones across Bristol.

We should all welcome the continued increase in the number of people travelling by bus in Bristol (against the national trend) helped by a move to smart tickets and contactless payment. There are more, newer, cleaner buses being deployed in Bristol as part of a longer term commitment, but there is a growing gap in capacity and worsening bus reliability - both of which require urgent correction.

Can the Mayor, as Cabinet Member for Transport set out:

1. The estimated number of existing bus passengers now paying a) an increase in a single journey bus fare b) a decrease in their single journey bus fare ; both as a result of the recent changes, whether pay on bus, m-ticket, First bus top-up card or contactless.

I appreciate this information will need to come from First Bus as the main commercial operator but it should have been already provided as part of decision-making and impact/equality analysis by First and the Council itself.

2. What further proposals does the Mayor have for changing the costs for people travelling by bus or train in Bristol?

REPLY:

1. As I would expect the former cabinet member to be aware, the Council currently has no direct powers to set the fares for bus and train journeys, except where it directly contracts services. The Council needs to consider the impact of the First Group fare structure change in relation to its coherence with the contracted service fare structure.

The First Group decision to change to a flat fare structure is a commercial decision, the detail of which is commercially sensitive and not shared with the Council. Whilst any fare increase is regrettable, the changes being introduced by First Group have introduced a flat fare in the city for the first time. This is a welcome simplification of the fare structure that has been confusing for passengers. The First Day Rider fare remains unchanged when purchased off bus and represents good value.

2. As above, train fares are not set by the Council, although it will need to consider a likely proposal from Great Western Railway and the Department for Transport in relation to Severn Beach Line fares.

The Council is fully committed to creating operating conditions for efficient bus operations. This includes active traffic management and the continued development of bus priority schemes and infrastructure improvements. Subsequent operational efficiency and attractiveness of services will contribute to conditions where fares can remain good value.



In addition, the Bus Strategy work being led by WECA will consider the appropriate delivery mechanism for bus services in the area. This would include a consideration around ability to influence or control the fares charged across the network.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Claire Hiscott

Subject: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

PRODUCTION OF CITY'S CLEAN AIR PLAN

1. Can the Mayor confirm when Scrutiny Members get an opportunity to see this important strategy document?

TRIAL OF SEABINS

2. Will the Mayor consider using Seabins (floating rubbish containers) in the Harbourside as part of his regeneration of the area and commitment to the Clean Streets campaign?

REPLY:

1. We are currently developing a Clean Air Plan in line with my previous commitments, and this will address reducing pollution from a range of sources.

Consultants, working for Bristol City Council, are currently modelling the options approved at Cabinet in March 2018 to see which of those options will deliver NO2 compliance in the quickest time in line with Government mandate. The studies also include assessment of the financial impact of such options on communities in Bristol.

We are not expecting the results of the studies to be available until the New Year.

I confirm that once all information is available I welcome the input of Scrutiny to help us develop the Clean Air Plan.

2. In June this year I took part in a Clean Up Bristol Harbour. It was great to join all of the fantastic volunteers who came along and helped to pick up the rubbish that accumulates in and around our harbour. Throughout the afternoon, we collected 19 bags of litter, with 10 bags being recyclable – mostly drink cans and bottles. We also found shoes, footballs and even a giant inflatable beach ball. It was disappointing to see so much rubbish polluting our harbour.

But thanks to the hard work of all the dedicated volunteers, the Harbour was measurably cleaner by the end of the day.

I am fully supportive of using Seabins as part of the regeneration of the area and a commitment to the Clean Streets Campaign.

The Bristol Seabin is a piece of marine technology that collects floating refuse including oils.

The Seabin was bought and paid for by the people of Bristol through a Crowdfunding campaign in February 2018 in support of the volunteer group Clean Up Bristol Harbour. The seabin was funded for the intention of installing it in Bristol harbour to help with the amenity and pollution issues witnessed.

The Harbour Authority is currently looking to agree locations for Seabins to be installed in Bristol Harbour and it is hoped that these locations will be agreed soon.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Harriet Clough (Hengrove and Whitchurch Park Ward)

Subject: Bus Services

Given the introduction of MetroBus, First have withdrawn the 50 bus service entirely from the Whitchurch Estate. This has resulted in no practical bus service to the Asda Supermarket meaning those with disabilities and the elderly have lost access to both their doctor's surgery and one of the main fresh food providers in the area.

1. Would the Mayor assist my residents in convincing MetroBus to allow the M1 Service to stop at the bus stop on Bamfield near Oatlands Avenue?

REPLY:

The metrobus project is a three authority project that has designed services to principles of rapid transit, with particular stopping patterns and bespoke infrastructure. The three authorities, via the Metrobus Board, will consider the introduction of another stop, in terms of impact on the service and how to secure the required funding for the infrastructure.

Is it possible for you to engage Asda in providing a bus service?



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Geoff Gollop

Subject: RECYCLING AND WASTE COLLECTION CALENDAR

Last January (15th), the Mayor responded to questions raised on this issue by my colleague Cllr Eddy. *“Based on the learnings of not sending out a hard copy of revised collection dates for Christmas and New Year period (2017/18) to all households, BCC will of course review this decision with BWC for next year and further ensure that all ward councillors are fully aware of any decision made in this regard.”*

1. Can the Mayor explain why the decision has been taken to repeat the mistakes of last year and not attach to residential bins this extremely useful, necessary and popular aide-memoir? There also seems to have been a distinct lack of communication about it to all ward councillors.
2. What is the estimated cost of producing this (formerly) traditional durable plastic calendar for Bristol households?

REPLY:

1. The decision has been made not to provide hard copies of the collection calendar and this was communicated via social media. We are trying to encourage as many resident as possible to access the calendars digitally.

The calendars can be downloaded and hard copies available on request.

2. We reviewed the decision. Annual cost for the provision of this service was around £30,000 - the bulk of this cost comprising the distribution costs. It should also be noted the BCC and BWC only received 14 complaints regarding the non-provision of calendars last year and it is clear the majority of people do not want them.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Anthony Negus (Cotham Ward)

Subject: Refuse and recycling from upper floor households

Now that the additional blue recycling boxes are not being issued, and there is to be no change to the new fleet of collection vehicles will the Mayor or cabinet member explain his options for addressing the identified recycling weakness and householders' inconvenience of collections from upper floor flats above shops or others without gardens.

Bins and boxes are an unattractive footpath hazard in the ward I represent. Bristol should learn from other councils who have sought to address this issue.

1. What's your plan?

REPLY:

The plan to deal with waste and recycling collection from households comprising, multi-occupancy properties, flats above shops, converted and purpose built flats will be as previous and consistently stated.

Where it is known that a single solution will not solve all collection issues from these property types, BWC will be assessing each location on its own merits and be providing bespoke solutions in each case to ensure an equitable level of service is provided whenever possible without creating new or increased risks to residents and collectors.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Richard Eddy

Subject: PLANNED HARTCLIFFE WAY RECYCLING AND RE-USE CENTRE

1. South Bristol Councillors and the communities we serve welcome the decision of Cabinet (dated 4th December 2018) to proceed with developing a Recycling and Re-use Centre at Hartcliffe Way. Can the Mayor confirm that, subject to a new planning consent being received and feasibility work completed in 2019, it is hoped to open this facility in 2020?
2. When will the second-stage of the necessary feasibility study be completed?

REPLY:

1. Thanks Richard. I'm glad you're pleased with our progress on this project. This is an administration delivering for Bristol, where previous administrations have abjectly failed.

A number of delivery methods are being considered as part of the feasibility work and these take into account timescale and methods of construction.

Other work will include:

- RIBA Stages design work (subject to further Cabinet approval to proceed)
- Securing Planning permission – and
- Appointment of a delivery partner.

The programme is being developed to work concurrently to minimise delay and deliver a building to open in 2020.

The programme will be further developed in the next stage of feasibility work and then be reported on when the project returns to Cabinet in 2019.

2. The additionally feasibility is scheduled for completion in March will a report coming to Cabinet in April or May 2019 for approval to progress.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 10

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Smith

Subject: COUNCIL'S FLEET RENEWAL PROGRAMME

1. Can the Mayor confirm how many vehicles have been replaced since the Cabinet decision taken last December to renew the Bristol fleet?
2. Given the future implementation of a Clean Air Zone for the city, can the Mayor tell me how many of these vehicles are hybrid or electric powered?

REPLY:

1. Twenty three new vehicles have been replaced since the cabinet decision. Fleet Services have just completed a tender for a further 115 new vehicles and are working with user departments to agree the final specification.
2. Of the new vehicles replaced to date 13 are Electric Vehicles and 10 are petrol (euro 6 engines).

The Lord Mayor's car is part of the council's fleet and is changing to a hybrid in the coming weeks



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 11

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Liz Radford

Subject: FORMAL CONSULTATION ON URBAN LIVING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

1. Can the Mayor confirm he will be modifying his expressed preference for high-rise building in the city in light of the strong opposition to this form of construction revealed by this public consultation exercise?
2. When does he expect to bring forward final proposals of this draft planning paper?

REPLY:

1. The guidance in the Urban Living SPD acknowledges that whilst tall buildings are one way of potentially optimising densities, they are not the only way, and aren't appropriate in all circumstances.

Well-located, well-designed tall buildings can be a positive feature and help create successful walkable, compact neighbourhoods; as well as helping Bristol achieve its growth targets.

Tall buildings can be an effective counter-measure to urban sprawl, focussing growth on the more accessible parts of the City encouraging a healthy, pedestrian-oriented lifestyle and promoting better use of public transport.

Unlike other high-density building forms, Tall buildings can provide memorable landmarks which help people navigate their way around the city. In particular they also provide higher densities of development which enable developments to create greater levels of market sale and affordable housing provision. This is particularly the case in the city centre where land values are higher and policy compliant levels of affordable homes are more challenging financially to achieve.

2. The Urban Living Supplementary Planning Document was adopted by Cabinet on 6th November 2018 and is a material consideration for all planning applications.

It is important that we strengthen our planning guidance to ensure that we learn from successful places and do not repeat any mistakes from the past. We want to ensure that future development of the city is inclusive by design, where neighbourhoods are not isolated but interconnected so that varied social, economic and cultural opportunities are accessible to all.



Member Forum
11 December 2018
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 information/consideration.
- Statements will be dealt with in the order of receipt (subject to time).

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

CS 01 - Cllr Bolton – subject: Blue Finger Land by M32

CS 02 - Cllr Brain – subject: Logical incrementalism as a decision making tool



Statement: CS01

Full Council – 11 December 2018

Statement submitted by –Cllr Charlie Bolton

Subject: Blue Finger Land by M32

I have received reports that the 'blue finger' land may again be under threat. The 'blue finger' land is grade A agricultural land running up the side of the M32, and including the Stapleton Road allotments. It is both rare and of national importance.

I had understood and still understand that the whole of the 'blue finger' land is to be protected in the revised local plan.

However, the threat -if there is one - comes from plans for a park and ride on the M32. Queries to officers seeking reassurance over the site resulted in the following response.

We are considering a number of sites around the M32 between J19 of the M4 and J2 of the M32 on both sides of the road. We carried out an initial options assessment but are commissioning further work to ensure that all sites are fully explored. We have not committed to any specific site as yet and will consider all options, some sites have been ruled out. I expect a further update to be available following the completion of the next study in Summer/Autumn 2019.

Park and ride sites are a key element of the Joint Transport Study and mitigation for the Joint Spatial Plan and will be included in the Joint Local Transport Plan which will go to consultation in the next few months. They are a necessity to enable us to reduce traffic volumes in the city centre and mitigate the associated pollution impacts and impacts on other public transport, walking and cycling routes. Reducing traffic volumes that enter the city centre has significant benefits for all bus services that are affected by congestion and enables delivery of other infrastructure such as cycle routes and bus lanes.

I do not find this response reassuring.

Could I therefore ask officers and the mayor to confirm that this land will be retained for agricultural use?



Statement: CS02

Full Council – 11 December 2018

Statement submitted by –Cllr Mark Brain

Subject: Logical incrementalism as a decision making tool

My friends, in the light of present-day developments, let me say right away that I'd not regard existing conditions lightly. On the contrary, I have always regard them as subjects of the gravest responsibility and shall ever continue to do so. Indeed I will even go further and state quite categorically that I am more than sensible of the definition of the precise issues which are at this very moment concerning us all. We must build, but we must build surely.

Let me say just this. If any part of what I am saying is challenged then I am more than ready to meet such a challenge. For I have no doubt whatsoever that whatever I may have said in the past or what I am saying now is as to state the case, the exact, literal absolute truth.

I put it to you that this is not the time for vague promises of better things to come. For if I were to convey to you a spirit of false optimism then I should be neither fair to you nor true to myself. But does this mean that we can no longer look forward to the future that is to come? Certainly not. We should grasp it with both hands and the opportunities that are offered. Let us assume a bold front and go forward together. Let us carry the fight against ignorance to the four corners of the Earth. Because it is a fight that concerns us all

And finally in conclusion let me say that if you have made it this far you will have noticed this statement is about nothing at all. As a member's statement it will not have been read out in the chamber and it will have been largely ignored by everyone associated with today's meeting. If you are still reading then come and see me during the meeting and you will receive a small chocolate as a prize. Congratulations!

With thanks to the late great Peter Sellers

You are probably wondering what the heck this is all about so I shall explain. This 1958 'political speech' by Peter Sellers' is a work of genius in that it says absolutely nothing. Even Richard Nixon wasn't this good. The reason I am doing this is to demonstrate that councillors no longer have the ability to stand up and speak in the council chamber on a matter of their choosing. The public can submit 160 public forum statements all on the same subject but councillors are effectively silenced. I am betting that hardly anybody notices this statement and perhaps nobody will. It's a silly statement but it is making a very serious point, that councillors no longer have a means of raising ward issues or council wide issues that are of concern to them. As Chair of the Group I see it as my job to champion the rights of its members and that is what I am doing here although this applies to all members not just Labour members.

