

Member Forum - Questions & Statements from Councillors



Date: Tuesday, 17 December 2019

Time: 1.00 pm

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

Distribution:

Councillors: Mayor Marvin Rees, Peter Abraham, Donald Alexander, Lesley Alexander, Nicola Beech, Charlie Bolton, Nicola Bowden-Jones, Harriet Bradley, Mark Bradshaw, Mark Brain, Fabian Breckels, Tom Brook, Tony Carey, Craig Cheney, Barry Clark, Jos Clark, Stephen Clarke, Harriet Clough, Eleanor Combley, Asher Craig, Chris Davies, Mike Davies, Carla Denyer, Kye Dudd, Richard Eddy, Jude English, Martin Fodor, Helen Godwin, Paul Goggin, Geoff Gollop, John Goulandris, Fi Hance, Margaret Hickman, Claire Hiscott, Helen Holland, Gary Hopkins, Chris Jackson, Hibaq Jama, Carole Johnson, Steve Jones, Anna Keen, Tim Kent, Sultan Khan, Gill Kirk, Cleo Lake, Jeff Lovell, Brenda Massey, Olly Mead, Matt Melias, Graham Morris, Anthony Negus, Paula O'Rourke, Steve Pearce, Celia Phipps, Ruth Pickersgill, Kevin Quartley, Liz Radford, Jo Sergeant, Afzal Shah, Paul Smith, Steve Smith, Clive Stevens, Mhairi Threlfall, Jerome Thomas, Estella Tincknell, Jon Wellington, Mark Weston, Lucy Whittle, Chris Windows and Mark Wright

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Date: 16th December 2019



Member Forum

17th December 2019

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.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Hibaq Jama, Lawrence Hill Ward

Subject: DEMOCRACY IN BRISTOL

1. Can the Mayor provide an update on the Council's work to register voters in Bristol ahead of the recent general election, together with an estimate on the number of Bristolians without photographic identification cards?
2. Would the Mayor back a return of automatic voter registration, including for sixteen and seventeen year olds?

Reply:

1. The annual canvas of all people and properties took place between 1 July and 1 November. 165,089 (82%) of properties responded (53,065 by post; 55,287 by internet).

In the 9 days before the deadline for registering for the General Election, approximately 30,000 people individually applied to be registered.

Data on the method of providing ID is not collected as part of the current registration process. The majority of people are matched against the Department for Work and Pensions via their address, the National Insurance Number or Date of Birth.

2. In an area of high voter turnover, automatic voter reregistration can create problems for people being automatically registered at the wrong address, but I support any initiatives which maximises voter registration in the city.

I support lowering the voting age to 16.



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

Subject: VEHICLE DWELLING ON THE HIGHWAY

1. The new Council policy of assessing van dwellers on a case-by-case basis, coupled with attributed statements from the Cabinet Member for housing that “in terms of people in vehicles, if it’s causing no problems to anybody then quite frankly leave them there” will, I fear, be a recipe for inaction and non-intervention. This effectively amounts to condoning behaviour likely to cause a public nuisance.

Does the Mayor recognise that such an approach risks leaving public sites like Durdham Downs vulnerable to continued unauthorised encampments?

2. When does the Mayor anticipate the current community living there al fresco ever being sufficiently incentivised to seek more appropriate housing?

Reply:

1. Significant levels of enforcement action have been taken using the case by case assessment approach. To date over 250 vehicles have been moved from over 20 highway encampment sites. Injunctions prohibiting encampments in 3 areas have been issued by the courts and evidence is currently being gathered for injunction applications in 3 additional locations.

Regular monitoring and inspections of encampments on the highway are being carried out by the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team and any change in the way an encampment is being managed that could be detrimental is recorded and acted on.

A web report for reporting encampments on any land, including the highway, is now available on the council’s website. This will make it easier for citizens to report concerns, to get regular updates on enforcement action in specific sites and for gathering evidence in support of enforcement action.

[This map](#) shows the over 80 street locations where Neighbourhood Enforcement Team (NET) have received reports about encampments and are being actively monitored and where initial stage enforcement action may be taken. The black flags are locations where NET has gone to court for removal orders/injunctions. 8 site (green flags) are not on the highway

2. We will continue to build houses in line with our commitment and look forward to support from the new Conservative government. Our Housing Festival continues to look at innovative ways of providing alternative methods of housing to tackle the housing crisis.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor, Redland Ward

Subject: THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND MASS CONSUMPTION

It's just over a year since Greens successfully passed a historic motion at this Council – which you voted for – declaring a Climate Emergency and setting a new target for the city to go carbon neutral by 2030.

The resolution required a council response and your initial stake take report found almost 60% of carbon emissions in Bristol are caused by imported consumption. On top of contributing to self image, envy, and mental health issues, corporate mass advertising is a major driver of consumption. Billboard advertisements like the large video screen on the M32 into Bristol are also visually intrusive and distracting. They also continually consume a substantial electricity load that has to be generated. Sometimes the council is also the instigator of selling advertising sites through property deals as well.

If the city adopted a strong and equitable amenity policy as well as a resolution not to be the driver of selling off new sites then certain neighbourhoods and routes would not be prey to repeated applications for more large scale advertising.

Q: What are you going to do to tackle our city's consumption emissions?

Q: Will you consider a council ban on billboard advertising in the city on ground of wellbeing, equity, and mass consumption as part of the response to the climate emergency?

Reply:

1. Greens didn't pass the motion. The motion was carried by the chamber which relied on the majority of the Labour vote.

Reducing carbon emissions from consumption of goods and services from outside Bristol is a fundamental challenge. City government, corporations and citizens all need to take urgent action to change behaviours. As the biggest consumption is inevitably in the biggest houses, some of the wards of which are represented by Green councillors, what are you doing to lead this challenge? We are taking steps towards sustainable food production as a method of reducing consumption emissions, e.g. Going for Gold and our ambitions for local food production in every ward.

2. No. We are rebuilding all bus shelters and bringing them into council ownership. We are reliant on future advertising income to pay off the borrowing we've incurred in order to do this. If we restrict out of home advertising in the way you propose, where do you suggest we get the money from to build bus shelters? If there are issues with the lights or electricity consumption of large billboards given permission this is the responsibility of Bristol as a planning authority and therefore outside my control.



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

Subject: EAST BRISTOL/SPEEDWELL SWIMMING POOL

East Bristol is deprived of many public and community resources. Nearly a decade ago the only public swimming pool was closed (following a recommendation of an all-party Swimming Pool Working Group).

Plans were made for new replacement pool, and funds allocated in 2012. However, the last administration did not do anything about it.

- 1) During your tenure as Mayor you haven't built the East Bristol pool either. Why not?

I understand that there is a swimming pool provision review underway. And I am sure it will be a recommendation.

As you live in East Bristol you are very much aware of the deprivation in the area.

- 2) Within the next few months of your tenure, will you look in to it personally, as a matter of utmost urgency and do all you can, so that the money is found and ring fenced, so that finally - we as residents of Bristol East get a swimming pool?

Reply:

1. The projected need for additional pool space has previously been highlighted.

In relation to a new East Bristol pool there were financial uncertainties related to the construction and ongoing operational cost, challenges with site location and the need to consider other existing provision. Easton Leisure Centre tends to serve a lot of people in the east of the city. We will be investing in modernising and expanding this site. Jubilee Pool and Hengrove Pool as well as pools in South Gloucestershire also serve citizens in East Bristol.

In the event there is a clear need to address pool water provision this must be considered carefully and in the context of other potential facility requirements.

Over my tenure work has been ongoing to better understand this and Bristol now has a full assessment of needs and opportunities, and a Built Sports Facility Strategy to support our thinking.

2. The Everyone Active leisure management contract expires on March 31st 2022 and the Council is exploring how it can optimise the impact of any future arrangements.

As part of this work officers have been undertaking further supply and demand analysis and gathering additional local insight to understand the current picture and level of need to address any shortfall. The findings from this work will inform future decision making.



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

Subject: SOUTH BRISTOL

1. Does the Mayor share my concern about the planned cuts to bus services through Knowle and Filwood by First Bus, including the 91 and 96, which are important to the local community; and would he outline the scale of the Lib Dem-Tory austerity which has affected Bristol, which limits the funding available to us to subsidise such services?
2. Would the Mayor/Cabinet Member for Waste agree that the Hartcliffe Way Reuse and Recycling Centre represents a great example of something that Bristolians have long been promised, and that Labour are delivering after years of inaction from other administrations?

Reply:

1. I share this concern – which is why we have taken direct action to make sure the 36, 91 and 96 received council investment. £60,000 from the council will save these three routes for three months whilst the authority works with First Bus and other transport partners to put in place longer term services for the area.

We have taken this step to invest in saving these routes because we want to find sustainable solutions for local transport in these areas but don't think residents using these routes should suffer any loss of service whilst we do that. Our recently announced bus deal will look to deliver better, more reliable commuter journeys across the city and provide more reasons for people to jump on the bus. We will continue to work closely with local bus providers to find solutions that secure the future of services and ensures operators aren't being expected to run loss-making routes.

Bristol's own budget for supported bus services has been reduced as we grapple with 9 years of Lib-Dem and Tory austerity. But we know the value of local bus networks because of the vital role they play in connecting communities and delivering opportunity for residents across the city.

Getting people to jobs, education, family, friends, and appointments – for many the local bus network is a lifeline that ensures they can go about their daily life.

2. Hartcliffe Way is not only emblematic of the council delivering on commitments and keeping promises, it also shows how we are improving services and driving better sustainability in what the council does.

As we have repeatedly said - this administration is committed to the delivery of a third facility for the city so that South Bristol has access to this important service, reducing fly tipping, improving the service to citizens and bringing jobs.

Despite inheriting a long-term stalled project we have been able to get this back on track, develop plans and commit the budget to make this happen. We are now expecting enabling works and construction to start in the spring, and operations to start on site the year after.



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

Subject: VEHICLE DWELLING ON THE HIGHWAY

1. There are a range of motivations behind this alternative lifestyle; can the Mayor confirm what assessments have taken place to ascertain the individual circumstances of each occupier?
2. How often are these impromptu campsites visited?

Reply:

1. People living in vehicles are offered a welfare assessment when any enforcement action is being taken and information about Housing Options and homelessness support is provided to all vehicle occupants at this stage also. If someone identifies as a traveller of a Gypsy or Roma community they would be offered support from the GRT service and could access a transit site if they wished.

St Monica's rough sleeping outreach service currently operate a monthly, vehicle dwelling outreach session with two teams of workers in areas of the city that have been identified as having significant levels of vehicle dwelling. The teams target caravans rather than motorised vehicles due to likelihood of vulnerability of caravan occupants.

Additional resources for outreach will be available from St Monica's in the New Year. Also some additional resource for engagement with those living in vehicles will be available from BCC's Neighbourhood Services Team.

2. The Neighbourhood Enforcement Team has begun monthly inspections of encampments across the city and will visit sites as required when complaints or reports are received.



Question to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Clarke, Southville Ward

Subject: BRISTOL AIRPORT EXPANSION

You are one of the few remaining major stakeholders in support of the airport's plans. In the light of the facts below and your declared understanding of the vital importance of the Climate Emergency in this City, will you reverse your support for the expansion, and if so will you write a letter to North Somerset Council to that effect?

If the current planning application for 2 million extra passengers a year by Bristol Airport is successful, the extra flights alone will generate over 600,000 tonnes of CO₂. The impact of this carbon is at least doubled (1) because it is emitted in the high atmosphere, meaning the net impact is 1,200,000 tonnes. For comparison purposes, the total Bristol City internal carbon emissions are 1,546,000 tonnes (2) and the total North Somerset CO₂ emissions in 2015 were 1,149,000 tonnes (3). North Somerset and Bristol have declared a Climate Emergency and much of North Somerset is especially at risk from rising sea levels. (4)

You have said that you support the application because 'flying local' saves carbon as people won't have to drive to Heathrow. This is 'greenwashing', not backed by evidence and completely incorrect. Firstly because Bristol Airport plans to poach passengers from Exeter, Cardiff and other 'local' airports – the vast majority of those people will drive from their homes to the airport thereby producing more emissions. Secondly, because the majority of routes from Bristol airport fly east into Europe – so it's quite possible that many journeys would produce less Co₂ overall by driving to Heathrow first before flying from there.

The airport expansion would also mean an additional 9,500 polluting car journeys a day in already congested roads and an additional 4,550 car parking spaces including a five storey car park on the Greenbelt. The current position has led to a major problem with 'rat-runs' around the airport and illegal parking on local rural land.

If the application is successful, there will be 4,000 unrestricted night flights between 23.30 and 6.00. Various health studies have shown that aircraft noise at night can be especially damaging to health and can result in the dysfunction of blood vessels and cause long-term cardiovascular disease. (5) The elderly and the young are particularly at risk.

And for what benefits? Research from the New Economics Foundation (6) has demonstrated clearly that the economic benefits of the planned expansion have been greatly overstated. The Airport have consistently over-estimated the number of jobs that will be created by the expansion, widely quoting figures such as 10,000. In fact, the correct figure (as stated in their own documents) is 1000 in the whole region and only 95 in South Bristol. The NEF report's overall conclusions are that because of the methodology used the report produced for Bristol Airport 'grossly overstates the economic benefits'.

The airport claim there is significant local support evidenced by a survey response, but the survey question they asked referred only to the benefits and none of the disadvantages and was very misleading.(7) In fact, there are an unprecedented number of objections against this planning application lodged by residents (4002 formal objections) and many of the local communities, parishes and town councils have sent formal letters of objection (including Bath and NE Somerset Council and Weston-Super-Mare who had previously written a letter of support but changed their mind and objected in the light of further information received).

The airport say they will be carbon neutral by 2025 but this only refers to their internal operations and does not include either the planes arriving and leaving or the cars to get the passengers there. (8)

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) is a Government appointed, independent scientific advisory board. Their September 2019 report to the Government stated that it is likely that no long haul electric flights will be in service by 2050 and planned hybrid planes (electric/conventional) will make up less that 10% of the total miles flown.

Just to be clear; I am not asking that the airport be closed, or that families are stopped from taking their annual holidays. The airport still has 'headroom' for growth of more than a million passengers a year under its existing permission and it is simply large enough already.

Question:

You are one of the few remaining major stakeholders in support of the airport's plans. In the light of the facts about the application and your declared understanding of the vital importance of the Climate Emergency in this City, will you reverse your support for the expansion, and if so will you write a letter to North Somerset Council to that effect?

Reply:

This is a planning application that is quasi-judicial and the decision will be made by the Planning Committee at North Somerset as they are the planning authority.

This means the decision is way out of my responsibility and would be even if it were within Bristol's boundary.

North Somerset Planning Committee will make the decision based on planning policy and legal advice not on yours, mine or anyone else's opinion.

On the basis of your false premise, the majority of councils have responded favourably and at the start of this year a [YouGov survey](#) found that 71 per cent of South West residents were in favour of expansion.

And before I am misrepresented, my position is that Bristol Airport should be allowed to expand in a context of increasing global passenger numbers. If the government fails to act to reduce the increase in flights nationally, they will take off from other airports in the South East, and people will travel from the South West and South Wales past Bristol airport, using extensive levels of carbon. However, if the government taxes frequent flyers demand may go down.



In addition the only formal response the Council has made on the subject of the airport is to broadly support the economic growth and jobs it will bring, along with an assessment of the transport proposals. These are effectively:

- Proposed A38 Travel Improvements
- Gyratory Road with Internal Surface Car Parking
- Multi Storey Car Park
- Operational Extension to the Silver Zone Car Park (Phase 1)
- Extension to the Silver Zone Car Park (Phase 2)



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

Subject: SEND

On 5th December you published a blog post entitled 'Women in Leadership'. In this post you stated:

“In fact, even on the challenge of SEND, the recent inspection said that while Bristol was not where it should be (a consequence of both local and national failures that have been building for many years), it is since Anna became the lead that the green shoots of recovery began to appear.”

Could you confirm which recent report you were quoting from and can we see this report in full?

At a similar time to your blog post it was revealed that the Quarterly Statistics reported to the Peoples Scrutiny Committee for EHCPs completed (BCP227) were incorrect. Where it had been stated that 169 had been completed in fact only 36 had. It also incorrectly stated that 2 had been completed on time when none had been completed on time in the 1st quarter.

Could you explain why only 36 EHPCs were completed in a 3 month period; publish the total amount of EHCPs currently waiting to be finalised and the average time it has taken to complete EHCP?

Reply:

1. I'm delighted you've raised my blog, demonstrating its growing reach. Also, you provided a perfect opportunity for me to repeat the fact that historically Local Government has been dominated by white men and we've reaped the consequences. In my cabinet we have 5 women and four men with one woman as Deputy Mayor. Between me and my cabinet we have 13 school aged children meaning we can see the city through parents' eyes and that we face the same challenges as many of our citizens in balancing work and parental responsibilities.

It is this structure of leadership reflecting gender, race and class that has meant we have prioritised and delivered on:

- Homes;
- A child friendly city;
- A Children's Charter;
- Celebrating children in care;
- Building new schools;
- Period Friendly;
- School streets



The inference I used, in paraphrasing the green shoots of recovery, relates to the findings of the draft Ofsted report. The final report, and its findings, will be published by Ofsted shortly.

2. The issue is that BCP227 is set up as a rolling year indicator, so shows an annual figure updated each quarter (the % of EHCPs completed on time in the current quarter and the previous 3 quarters combined).

The detailed Service data shows:

For the year up to and including Q1: 4 EHCPs completed on time, out of 172 completed in total = 2% (rounded from 2.3%)

NB within Q1 itself, 0 of 36 on time

For the year up to and including Q2: 1 EHCP completed on time, out of 234 completed in total = 0% (rounded from 0.4%)

NB within Q2 itself, 1 of 137 on time

This indicator was set up in 2016, and is not a particularly helpful way of reporting current and historic data.

Further robust quality assurance processes are taking place in readiness for the forthcoming SEN2 statutory return. This will then be used to create an accurate and transparent database, which will demonstrate monthly progress, both in terms of backlog and completion numbers.

This will be worked up into a clear dashboard will be updated and reported through People Scrutiny meetings.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Pickersgill, Easton Ward

Subject: ST MARKS ROAD

I am sure that you are as thrilled as Cllr. Shah and myself that St Marks Rd in Easton has been awarded the status of best UK street by the Academy of Urbanisation- beating other worthy finalists Rye Lane in Peckham and Belgrave Rd in Leicester.

1. Would you agree that St Marks Rd's businesses, places of worship and community groups thoroughly deserve this accolade and reflect the best of Bristol in terms of community cohesion, and could you tell us what else you think the Administration could be doing to support and enhance this sort of unique local high street moving forward?
2. The recent allocation of £60k Community Infrastructure Levy to improve lighting, safe cycling and walking in St Marks Rd is an example of how this Administration is proactively directing resources to less affluent areas of the city. Given the impact of austerity, past under-investment and neglect of our most disadvantaged wards, what more could you do to address this historic inequality in infrastructure funding allocation?

Reply:

1. We are trying to raise funding through Love Our High Streets and the Future High Street Fund, that focusses on city centre high streets. The walking element of LCWIP will support high streets and of course we know all of our 47 high streets are at risk from the retail crisis. Of course as can be seen the St Mark's Road example businesses, communities and residents have a role to play in supporting their high streets.

I certainly agree that St Mark's Road fully deserves this honour and congratulate all those involved, and I couldn't agree more with the Urbanism Awards judges when they say St Mark's Road is a "perfect example of community-led urbanism". Research clearly demonstrates that when all stakeholders on a high street commit to working together, that high street becomes a special place, and I would urge others in the city to learn from the example St Mark's Road has set.

2. The funding referred to forms part of the local component of the Community Infrastructure Levy, with decisions over its spend devolved to the relevant Area Committees. CIL Regulations and Guidance are clear that the local component of CIL is to be spent on measures in the area within which the development that paid the CIL occurred, with the intention being to support those communities that are impacted.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Peter Abraham, Stoke Bishop Ward

Subject: VEHICLE DWELLING ON THE HIGHWAY

1. Can the Mayor explain why existing traffic regulations limiting stopover times are not currently enforced?
2. Will the Mayor consider the creation of a specific bye-law explicitly prohibiting overnight sleeping in vehicles at specified locations which will be upheld?

Reply:

1. Where there are marked parking restrictions in place, Parking Services are able to take appropriate action against any parked vehicle that is observed contravening a parking restriction. However, if it is apparent that the vehicle is being lived in, then a report is provided to Neighbourhood Enforcement Team for their attention and further action to be considered.

Parking Services have recently undertaken enforcement action (issue of PCNs) against vehicles, reported as being lived in, which were parked on marked restrictions in the Parry's Lane area of The Downs.

These vehicles were observed contravening the limited waiting restrictions that are in place at this particular location. Details of action taken at this location between June and late September are outlined below:

- Parrys Lane 42 visits 70 VRMs entered 26 issued
- Saville Rd 12 visits 40 VRMS entered 19 issued
- Ladies Mile 24 visits 64 VRMS entered 30 issued
- Stoke Rd 28 visits, 94 VRMs entered, 46 issued
- Circular Rd 10 visits, 24 VRMs entered, 11 issued

Total for area: 116 visits, 292 VRMs entered, 132 issued. "VRMs entered" means the officer entered the vehicle details in to their handheld computers to issue a PCN but before they can issue the vehicle drives away, demonstrating that vehicles are moving as a result of enforcement activities.

Officers have recently recommended that changes need to be made to the relevant Traffic Regulation Order to reduce the length of permitted parking time so that more effective action can be taken. However this aim needs to be balanced against restricting the legitimate use of the parking in the area by visitors. These discussions are ongoing and we would welcome your involvement.

2. NET have also advised that injunctions have been granted prohibiting encampments in 3 locations in the City and 3 more are in the process of being applied for. These can be enforced by the police and Council and will provide greater sanctions including arrest.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Eleanor Combley, Bishopston and Ashley Down Ward

Subject: BLACKLISTING

In your 2016 manifesto you pledged to “refuse to give work or contracts to companies guilty of blacklisting workers”. Kier group and Skanska UK have both admitted their involvement in this scandal and been forced to pay compensation to blacklisted workers.

Q: Why is Bristol Council working with both of them on significant developments in the city?

Reply:

Firstly welcome to the party on the fight for workers' rights.

I did pledge to refuse to give work or contracts to companies guilty of blacklisting workers and have taken action to address this. We have adopted the Construction Charter which places stringent obligations on suppliers to recognise and promote trade union membership and recognition. This is being integrated as part of our procurement processes.

The Council does have long term and established contracts with both Keir and Skanska but these pre-date my administration. These are complex contracts which cannot be easily exited or terminated without exposing the Council to legal and financial risks. In one case, the contract spans the period 2008 to 2034.

We take our obligations around how we tender and contract very seriously and responsibly. Officers have written to these suppliers seeking assurances that they have outlawed Blacklisting in their respective organisations.

We will liaise in full with Unite on this matter going forward.



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

Subject: COTHAM AND NORTH BRISTOL

There will be a lot of entirely foreseeable circumstances that will happen as soon as the Clean Air Zones are in place.

Apart from the urgent need to provide mitigation for the many people in the inner zone who need support, ignored in the massive report that announced from the outset that deprivation was to be the key criteria, there will also be displacement of private and particularly commercial vehicles from all parts of the zones.

Much of this traffic will journey between key points such as motorways outside the charging zone on small suburban roads entirely unsuitable for such through traffic.

- 1. Will the Mayor take this opportunity to explain to residents in Cotham ward and other parts of North Bristol, and elsewhere, how the effects of this increased traffic are being assessed and resources earmarked to resolve issues of safety, crossing points, traffic lights, signage, other means of traffic calming and other infrastructure and increased local pollution in an area of high residential density, schools and nurseries?**

Cotham ward is by far the most densely populated in Bristol with the largest number of HMOs and student occupation. Nine years ago Article 4 directions were brought in here and in other stressed areas to ensure that family houses could not be turned into HMOs without planning approval. The larger of these premises were licensed and this has now been extended to smaller HMOs in the current review. Anomalies are now being revealed of historic failures to obtain licences and the required planning approval and this has led to serious under-recording of these premises, fundamental to regulating our community balance.

Ignorance of the law, or trying to sidestep it to personal advantage, should not be rewarded especially when this distorts the council's database which impacts on other proper applications.

- 2. Confronted with an undermining of the system through retrospective planning and licensing applications which should have been properly made at the right time, will the Mayor give an assurance that he will take appropriate steps to re-affirm to planning officers and committee members that the present arrangements are to be properly followed having regard to audited checks on the up-to-date number of nearby HMOs?**



Reply:

1. We are still finalising plans for the zone, its boundaries and what the charges, bans and exemptions will be. This will become clearer as we develop the full business case. We have committed to working with neighbourhood committees, local members and local people to address the potential and actual impacts of traffic diverting around the clean air zones.

The impacts may not become clear immediately or before the zones are implemented so some income generated from the scheme will be set aside for delivering local highway improvements to mitigate the impacts around the zones. However, the modelling is clear that compliance in areas outside of the zone will not be breached.

2. I can assure the Councillor that the new information obtained about HMOs across the city, through the expanded HMO licensing scheme that we have introduced, is being shared between services. This will ensure that properties that have now obtained or applied for an HMO licence, will also have their planning status checked. This is likely to result in retrospective planning applications that will be assessed on their merits, and which will be the subject of consultation with local communities and local members.

If any properties that have an HMO licence do not receive planning permission, then follow-up enforcement action will be taken.

Systematic checks will be undertaken to ensure that all properties requiring a property license, submit a valid application. Appropriate action will be taken if a landlord does not comply with the licensing requirements.



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

Subject: SPORTS INVESTMENT

Please could the Mayor provide an update on the impact of investment by the Council and Lawn Tennis Association in Eastville Park, including the new free coaching provided?

Reply:

There are 253 members of the Eastville Park LTA who have a BS5 & BS6 postcode.

There have been 405 individuals who have made a pay and play booking at Eastville Park at least once and approx. 1000 participants in total.

To date Tennis for Free has not taken place at Eastville and this is due to the initiative requiring 4 courts to deliver their programme. Eastville has just two courts, but a Tennis for Free 'lite' version now exists and is hoped be delivered at the Eastville courts next year.

The courts started operating in April 2019. A household membership costs £35 / per annum which then allows free access thereafter. Concessionary rates are available.

Including courts at Canford and St Georges Park, there are currently 1499 citywide individual members (a total of 748 household memberships) which is ahead of projected numbers.

Tennis for Free coaching is currently provided at St George's Park courts, with a total of 338 attendances at these sessions.

In January however, a free new organised weekly tennis session is starting at Eastville Park, specifically for local asylum seekers



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

Subject: COST OF PUBLIC FUNDING OF MINOR COUNCIL ASSETS

1. I'm sure the Mayor agrees with me that, especially in these cash-straitened times, the Local Authority ought to do everything possible to encourage the Bristolian populace, wherever possible, to contribute towards funding Council facilities. Can the Mayor kindly summarise current Council policy, particularly with regard to our Parks & Open Spaces?
2. Having recently obtained a quote from the Bristol Parks Manager - South in respect of funding a dual-purpose (i.e. general litter and dog-waste) park litter-bin, I was astonished that we are actually charging residents and other bodies £700.00 for a bin; £383.38 installation costs; and £3670.58 for the emptying and maintenance of it for five years, making a grand-total of £4753.96.

Does the Mayor think such a 'menu' of prices encourages the Bristolian public to help us purchase minor Council assets when a meagre litter-bin comes in at almost a whopping £5,000?

Reply:

1. We are implementing a programme of work to improve our green spaces in order to make them more accessible, enjoyable and sustainable. At its meeting on the 1st May 2018 Cabinet approved a way forward for its Parks and Green Spaces Service which included generating income, reducing grounds maintenance where appropriate and looking for opportunities for community groups and organisations and businesses to manage, maintain or enhance local green spaces. The council's successful £900K Future Parks Accelerator bid to the National Heritage Lottery Fund is enabling a project to deliver this agenda over the next 18 months with support from a range of external partners and local communities.
2. I agree with you - these costs make it difficult for the public to contribute. The primary audience for the Parks Prospectus is not the general public. Rather, we are looking to secure local, national and international partners to unlock the potential of our green spaces and deliver at least £20m of green infrastructure investment.

The costs are £14.12 per week for emptying and maintenance (£3,670 for 5 years = £734 per year = £14.12 per week).

The Parks Service frequently receives requests for the cost of providing new parks infrastructure; from community groups and others. A request for a new litterbin rather than replacement of an existing bin includes the cost of maintenance as these are expensive to manage. Other infrastructure requests may not generate significant maintenance costs or could result in a maintenance saving.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jude English, Ashley Ward

Subject: CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

It was good to see you posting on twitter about your trips around Bristol on an e-bike as part of a two week 'challenge'. Of course for people who commute full time by bike the challenge doesn't just last for two weeks. Data from Friends of the Earth found about 8% of commuters in Bristol travel by bike and said we need to more than triple that to 30%.

1: What have you learnt about cycling in Bristol?

2: Why does new infrastructure like the Temple Meads routes prioritise car drivers and lump cyclists and pedestrians into 'shared space' – something which already causes confusion and conflict at busy parts of the city like the fountains?

Reply:

1. I commute to work every day by bicycle or on foot. I did not learn anything about cycling in Bristol that I didn't already know. The evidence suggests that people who use electric bikes do use them more often and for longer journeys and that older people are also able to use them both to start and continue to cycle. Our scheme to loan bikes to businesses recently won a national award and is helping more people commute and do business trips using e-bikes.

The experience of Bristol is that if we build cycle lanes then more people feel able to cycle and this is particularly the case for women, where we have a higher share of women cycling than other major cities. Our experience is also that we have to piece together continuous routes over time and this incremental approach, whilst not ideal, does help people cycle and there are a number of examples where routes are now being pieced together to offer a good level of continuity.

2. The redesign of Temple Gate had three main objectives:

- Improve access for sustainable transport modes;
- Improve the 'gateway' to the city;
- Release land for development.

The scheme has delivered increased pedestrian space, new segregated cycle routes, bus priority measures and improved facilities for bus passengers. This is alongside releasing space for development that will contribute to the growth of the local economy. All this whilst maintaining the existing capacity for general traffic.

The simplification of the road layout was part of enabling space to be reallocated to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. It also resulted in a more efficient set of junctions that is easier to navigate through for general traffic and cyclists who are prepared to share the carriageway with general traffic.



There is still development to take place on the land released by the scheme and the existing old hotel buildings. This means that some pedestrian and cycle routes are not fully complete and open yet as some scaffolding and site hoardings remain in place around these development sites. Some sections of 'shared space' are therefore only in place on an interim basis until the development projects come forward.

We believe that Temple Gate has for a long time been a barrier, particularly for people who live along the Bath and Wells Roads, and this arrangement is part of addressing that, offering a much better route for people on bike and foot than previously, whilst accepting that more will need to be done in the longer term.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gary Hopkins, Knowle Ward

Subject: BRISTOL ENERGY

1. What guarantee has been given by this Administration to Bristol Energy Company to allow it to continue to accumulate losses for Bristol taxpayers, now passing £30M?
2. Whilst the performance of Robin Hood Energy owned by Nottingham City Council is not exactly great, the performance of Bristol Energy is massively worse.

Why?

Reply:

1. The company was set up in 2014-15 in advance of this administration.

Having inherited the company the total cash funding envelope for Bristol Energy (BE), agreed by Cabinet on 2nd April 2019 to support its set up and growth of its core energy supply business, from inception in 2015/16 to 2023/24 is set at £37.7m. The actual funding provided to BE to date, stands at £33.7m.

BE is focused on ensuring that its customers, particularly those in fuel poverty, get a fairer deal on their energy bills and delivering wider social, economic and environmental value to Bristol. BE has a green mission and is actively involved in buying power from local renewable sources and the Company will play a key role in supporting Bristol to become carbon neutral by offering green energy tariffs and developing heat network retail services.

2. Robin Hood Energy and BE are operating in a fiercely challenging environment, competing to attract customers away from the Big 6 suppliers, giving greater value and choice to customers. Whilst we can't comment on the performance of another company what we can state is that BE have achieved steady customer growth with an ongoing focus on margins and minimising costs to serve their customers as they grow to scale.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Don Alexander, Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston Ward

Subject: DELIVERING HOMES

1. Can the Mayor provide an update on his 2016 election pledge to get Bristol building 2,000 new homes per year – including at least 800 affordable homes – by 2020?
2. Would the Mayor agree that the Hengrove development represents a historic step forward for housing and urban design in Bristol?

Reply:

1. 1,800 homes were completed in the financial year 2018/19. That was an increase of 160 from the previous year. It is expected that over 2,000 homes will be built in 2019/20, completely achieving our target as we promised the city.

As part of the housing delivery, 210 Affordable Homes were delivered in 2018/19, and a total of 148 Affordable Homes have been delivered in Quarters 1 and 2 of 2019/20 with an estimate of a further 267 by the end of the financial year, so an overall projection of 415. Through a number of initiatives including the Bristol Housing Festival we will increase this number steadily to reach our target. Large developments are coming on stream will help with affordability.

2. I am strongly of the view that the redevelopment of Hengrove Park is a historic step forward for housing and urban design in Bristol. I believe it will create a high quality, sustainable new place which will meet the needs of existing and new residents.

As well as Hengrove, the Council is focussed on the delivery of new homes now and in the longer-term, including affordable on sites across the city, examples including Lockleaze, Southmead and Bedminster. And we will deliver on other major infrastructure and housing projects, from the Temple Quarter to St Phillips Marsh and climate resilient housing at Frome Gateway alongside the university campus and Temple Island.



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

Subject: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

1. Can the Mayor please advise what consultation was done around the re-location of the Number 2 bus stop at Temple Meads?

The current result for Stockwood residents, and for many in the south and east of the city, is that it has made the city's transport infrastructure less integrated, harder to access Temple Meads and harder to get on the hospital bus upon which many residents rely.

2. Can the Mayor please advise how the discussions are progressing over the no.515 Bus Service and whether we can see an improved bus service in the foreseeable future?

Reply:

1. The relocation of the bus stop is part of the wider Temple Gate scheme. Public consultation for the scheme was completed in early 2015, with construction commencing in the summer of 2017.

The Service 2 has been allocated to the new stop on Victoria Street, which is approximately 300 metres to the side entrance of the station on The Friary. Although the Victoria Street stop is approx..100 metres further away from the station than the old Temple Gate stop, the pedestrian environment has significantly improved compared to the old arrangement and involves a single stage crossing, and a gentler gradient along the Friary, both of which are more accessible compared to the previous two stage crossing.

The proposed northern entrance to Temple Meads was delayed and will connect well with this new bus stop.

The stopping arrangements for the hospital bus are currently being reviewed, and the proposal is to allocate the service to the bus stop on Temple Way outside the Hilton Garden hotel - a distance of approximately 160 metres from the Victoria Street bus stop. This is anticipated to come into effect in April.

2. We have been working with colleagues in Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES) and they are currently completing a specification for a service between Stockwood and Keynsham that will connect to or integrate with service 515.

They are proposing to commence the procurement in January and would expect the service to commence in September.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Fi Hance, Redland Ward

Subject: VOTES AT 16

In July 2017 Greens passed a motion at Full Council that called on the Mayor to:

1. Publically support votes at 16 and join the Votes at 16 Coalition;
2. Inform local MPs and the media of this decision and work with them in support of this campaign;
3. Promote this policy through council communications;
4. Run activities to raise awareness of and support for Votes at 16 in Bristol;
5. If Bristol pilots e-voting, to commit to including 16 and 17 year olds for demonstration purposes, and further extend e-voting to Bristol City Youth Council elections, demonstrating innovation in digital democracy;
6. Formally request to government that Bristol be used as a pilot to trial Votes at 16 in council elections.

Can I ask for an update from the Mayor on this – what’s been done?

Reply:

The Green Party don't have enough councillors to pass motions at Full Council. The chamber passed this motion and that relies upon the Labour votes.

I support lowering the voting age to 16. Bristol City Council is a supporter of the Votes at 16 Coalition.

I have worked closely with all four of Bristol's Labour Members of Parliament to lobby for the lowering of the voting age. Darren Jones is championing e voting in Parliament. However, this is not supported by the government, and is unlikely to be in a Conservative government. More work needs to be done on the impact of e-voting on democratic engagement and voter turnout, some e-voting systems have not proved to be fully secure.

For the youth elections in 2019 we asked the schools that normally take part in elections and the feedback from them was that they would prefer to keep the election as a paper election as they would have much more oversight and turn-out.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Chris Davies, Knowle Ward

Subject: COST OF THE MAYORALTY

Recent figures obtained by the Lib Dems show that the cost of the Mayor's Office is a massive £800,000 per year. In addition to this, we have the cost of the Press Office at many tens of thousands of pounds a year.

1. As the Mayor is constantly complaining about shortage of funds, would a good place to start balancing the books be a reduction in the size of his spin machine?

The failure of the Mayor system in Bristol is very clear to the majority of Bristol citizens, with even the Tory party, the first elected Mayor and city Labour MPs agreeing with us that the system has not worked.

2. Is it not time for the Mayor to acknowledge the overwhelming public opinion and back the right to remove the post obtained by Liberal Democrat actions?

Reply:

£800,000 is extremely good value when you measure it against the administration has delivered. The mayor's office has supported the huge amount of delivery that this administration has brought. As a quick example these include:

- Building homes (in fact, at the recent Built Environment Networking conference, Kelly Hillman Head of Land Acquisitions at Homes England said "Bristol is leading the way in the UK with planning, the environment and effecting positive change" She said this was "down to the city leadership").
- Providing beds to tackle homelessness
- Delivering apprenticeships and work experience placements
- Protected children centres
- Building three new schools
- Delivering on the transformation £1 billion city leap prospectus
- Cleaning our streets
- Growing sports participation
- Developing the Colston Hall as a cultural hub
- Protecting parks and green spaces
- Saving and modernising libraries
- Strengthening families
- Adopting and promoting the Children's Charter

You can table silly insults which is the default position of the opposition. We will continue to deliver on our promises to the city.



This chamber does represent the opinion of the city and it is overwhelmingly Labour for a reason.

You can continue to play silly political games with leadership, the approach that has led to decades of failure in the city. We won't be drawn into this nonsense and will continue to deliver for the citizens of the city.



Question to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Jones, Stockwood Ward

Subject: CALLINGTON ROAD LINK ROAD

1. When will plans and evidence be forthcoming regarding the proposals for the Callington Road Link Road?

Reply:

We are still awaiting a response from the government regarding our bid so currently funding and therefore the scheme is not guaranteed.

We will engage with the public when we have more detail of what we will be proposing. As the funding is not yet agreed, progress on the scheme has been delayed. We are expecting a decision from the government and will engage when we have that decision.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Fi Hance, Redland Ward

Subject: PARKING PERMITS FOR VISITORS

Visitor's parking permits are now digital only – councillors have already started receiving complaints from residents about accessibility issues for older people or those with disabilities. Why was this rolled out without consultation?

Reply:

The ability to issue paper permits/visitor scratch cards has been retained for certain permits (i.e. Essential Care Permits) and they are also available to issue to residents who do not have access to a computer or similar devices (smartphones). While our residents and visitors' permits (scratch cards) will be primarily digital in the future, existing paper/scratch cards in circulation are still valid and can continue to be used until they have expired. Once existing paper permits expire and supplies of scratch cards have been used up, digital permits can be applied for via the BCC website.

We have a dedicated Call Centre that can assist anyone who is unable to use the application process or if they are having difficulties in managing the day to day processes, such as activating a visitor permit. Full details are shown on the Council website or can be obtained via the Council Call Centre or Customer Service Point. The number for residents is 0345 520 7007.

The underlying rules and requirements to obtain a residents or visitor permit have not changed. The changes are only in the management and application process. This process/operational update will enable the Council to ensure an improvement in the control of all permits is achieved, forecasted saving from the decommissioning of Salesforce are realised and a better customer experience is delivered to the resident and businesses. In addition, there are a number of operational knock-on benefits that will be realised. This includes better data management, improved statistical information and tighter control on the use of permits, in particular visitor permits.

Prior to the new systems going live on 11 November 2019, a press release (<https://news.bristol.gov.uk/news/parking-permits-set-to-go-digital>) was issued, our website was updated and back office staff undertook training in the new processes. We will also be advising all permit holders of these changes and what they will be required to do in future, as and when their current permits approach their expiry date. To date we have issued over 2500 virtual permits, which are a mixture of new permits and renewal.

These modern processes have also been in operation in other cities for some time and these changes have been an aspiration for the service and the Council for a number of years, especially as these changes will also reduce the Council's carbon footprint.



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Jones, Stockwood Ward

Subject: PLANNING APPLICATION 15/04614/F: MAJOR DEVELOPMENT OF 60 SELF-CONTAINED FLATS

Can the Mayor please advise why the Section 106 funds obtained from this development does not have the standard one mile restriction on it?

Local people are wondering why are these funds have been allocated for Area Committee 6 and question whether all future s106 agreements in the city will be treated on this new basis.

Reply:

This matter has been the subject of email correspondence between officers and Cllr Jones' Stockwood ward colleague Cllr Morris.

In respect of planning consent 15/04614/F, the solicitors drafting the Section 106 Agreement used slightly different wording from that usually used. The wording in the Section 106 Agreement is that the money is to be spent "to mitigate the loss of trees on the Application Land", rather than the usually used wording of "...within a one mile radius of the Application Land".

Although the wording used is slightly different from usual; there is no reason why AC6 could not decide to spend this money on tree planting within a one mile radius of the development.

The specific wording in respect of 15/04614/F is considered to be a one-off and the usually used "...one mile radius" wording continues to be used to this day in respect of tree planting Section 106 monies.



Member Forum

17 December 2019

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:

	Name	Title
CS01	Councillor Claire Hiscott	Vehicle Encampment, Rosling Road, Horfield
CS02	Councillor Mhairi Threlfall	Royate Hill and Road Safety Issues
CS03	Councillor Jerome Thomas	Residents and Visitors Parking Permits

CS01**Members' Forum statement from Councillor Claire Hiscott****Subject – Vehicle Encampment, Rosling Road, Horfield**

The Mayor will be aware that my councillor colleagues have tabled a series of questions to you on the efficacy of the Council's "Policy for vehicle dwelling encampments on the highway". This is also the subject of questions from the public as part of today's Full Council Meeting.

Essentially, local residents have been concerned that at the first test of the new approach to these encampments, the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team (NET) have been found wanting. The site in question has hosted vehicle dwellers for well over four months, presumably because it was categorised as being of 'low impact', in spite of various reported incidents of anti-social behaviour. You may recall that in a joint statement to Cabinet on this issue (3rd September 2019), I raised many misgivings over the obvious shortcomings of the case-by-case assessment process. It seems that far from introducing certainty and clarity into these kinds of proceedings, the Authority has simply substituted one set of ambiguous rules with other equally mysterious and malleable criteria for determining intervention.

Rather prophetically, we previously pointed out that:-

"The categorisation of 'low' or 'high' impact incidents remains highly subjective and relies upon factors which are defined so vaguely that it is still unclear when enforcement action will be deemed appropriate or warranted. For example, concepts such as the 'level' of damage or nuisance, and 'proximity' to residential properties are so broad as to reintroduce uncertainty into the strategy." Not only has the above encampment been permitted to stay in situ for too long, the NET should have done much more to keep nearby householders informed. Instead, people have been left in the dark over what – if anything – was happening to move these vehicles along.

In the case in my ward the NET changed their minds, first promising removal, then deciding to leave it, without informing residents of their decision change. Finally a further change of plan to remove last week was not implemented and residents left in limbo by a latest email to residents stating 'it's on the NETs radar' .

Residents' constant reporting of problems of ASB, human waste and litter was not believed because, on the one occasion the NET visited the site, it wasn't evident. Local business has been affected, even staff from the Royal Mail are forced to empty Post Boxes near human waste. Children are subjected to intimidation and even wood smoke in their bedrooms from the caravan every evening. The current lack of action is an insult to council tax paying residents who feel abandoned and ignored. Even the local police are frustrated having to constantly visit a source of vandalism and ASB.

Again, I would draw the Mayor's attention back to the ludicrous timescales appended to the policy document itself. For instances classed 'low impact', we are given in Scenario 3, the possibility of no

attempt at removal for up to three months and beyond. Given the health hazards associated with this kind of living arrangement both in terms of physical and/or psychological well-being, this does not strike me as a sensible grace period for anyone in need of assistance to find more suitable or sustainable housing options. In Rosling Road the caravans have been there for over four months now, showing even this part of the policy is ignored.

The new policy has failed local people very starkly - poor communication, poor monitoring and tardy action. It has also failed those caravan dwellers in need of assistance. I urge the Mayor to review the system urgently.

CS02

Members' Forum statement from Councillor Mhairi Threlfall

Subject - Royate Hill & road safety issues

I would like to show my support for the petition to sort out Royate Hill.

This issue is long term and is not related to solely to the number of accidents but related to:

- congestion
- pollution levels
- traffic queuing in bike lane
- narrow & inaccessible pavement
- route to school

I support the residents petition and would like to see one of the viable options implemented.

At peak times the queuing of traffic is severe, impacting on the local air quality. I disagree with officers that there are other local priorities - this has been an issue for a while.

At the very least, a signals project (which would cost £75k) would at least alleviate the congestion at peak times as well as offering a crossing point for school children.

Currently, children do not walk to school because of this busy road that does not have an adequate crossing point and many are driven, adding to the congestion. There is also accessibility issues for those in wheelchairs or with buggies.

I would urge officers to reconsider their recommendations and work with residents to improve our local area.

I would also welcome the repainting of the no left hand turn sign which has still not been repainted 18 months after the original request and a very serious review of the new McDonalds junction which is causing already safety issues



CS03

Members' Forum statement from Councillor Jerome Thomas
Subject – Residents and visitors parking permits

I am concerned that electronic residents and visitors parking permits have been introduced by this administration without consultation and at the same time as getting rid of the paper parking permits. I find it extraordinary that this shift which could impact so disproportionately on older people without IT skills, and on people who may not be able to afford internet access has been undertaken without an equalities impact assessment and without consultation.

Elsewhere in the country e parking permits have been introduced to run alongside paper parking permits. I would like an explanation as to why that option has been rejected. I would also call on the administration to look at the opportunity created by the introduction of e parking permits to bring in not just daily visitor parking permits, but hourly or half daily visitor parking permits, within the existing allowance of visitor permits. Older people living on their own often have a number of family and friends visiting them during the day who currently use one paper visitors permit to cover those visits. This proposed change to include hourly or half daily visitor parking permits would disadvantage them less than the current proposed system.

