

# Member Forum - Questions & Statements from Councillors



**Date:** Tuesday, 8 September 2020

**Time:** 4.30 pm

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

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## Agenda

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# Member Forum

## 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020

### 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.



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## LABOUR QUESTION 1

### Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Don Alexander (Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston)

#### Subject: Coronavirus (covid-19)

1. Can the Mayor outline the council's latest assessment of the spread of coronavirus in Bristol?
2. The summer saw coronavirus outbreaks at a factory in Avonmouth, in the ward which I represent, with nearly forty confirmed cases. Can the Mayor outline Bristol City Council's public health response to this incident?

#### REPLY:

1. The Director of Public Health publishes a report twice weekly:  
<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/crime-emergencies/covid-19-data-including-cases-in-bristol-and-r-number-for-the-south-west>

Bristol, along with the rest of the south west continues to have relatively low rates. There has however been a noticeable increase in cases during August. This appears to be as a result of 'un-locking', travel and general social mixing. The majority of cases are in the younger age group and there have been no recent cases of people requiring hospital treatment.

The Director of Public Health advises that the virus is still circulating and that we should expect to see cases increase over winter months. It remains important to adhere to guidance on social distancing, hand hygiene and face covering; and to be extra vigilant if you are in an at risk group.

Myself, the Cabinet Member for Equalities, Communities and Public Health and the Director of Public Health would like to thank everyone who continues to make sacrifices to keep our communities safe.

2. The outbreaks at the factory in Avonmouth were managed jointly by Public Health England and the local authority using standard, and well-practiced, procedures for outbreak control. The Director of Public Health has confirmed that follow up of cases and contacts were undertaken.

The site was visited by Environmental Health Officers and the Health and Safety Executive who were satisfied that the work place has Covid secure practice in place. The majority of confirmed cases did not live locally and it is likely that the transmission happened as a result of car sharing to and from work. Car sharing has been identified as a Covid risk in a number of outbreaks across the country. The company and employees were responsible and responsive enabling the outbreak to be quickly identified, managed and controlled.



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## **CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 1**

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

**Subject: ENFORCEMENT OF BYE-LAWS**

The recent car meet on the Downs illustrates perfectly what happens when the Downs bye-laws are not enforced. If the little things like barbecues, littering and parking are allowed to continue unchecked, it gives the impression that the Downs are a free-for-all, and potentially dangerous events like this are the result.

1. Will the Mayor join me in encouraging the Downs Committee to enforce the bye-laws in a proportionate way, and provide all necessary support to them in doing so?

### **REPLY:**

It is very important the downs are enjoyed by all Bristol citizens. However everyone has a responsibility to act in a way that ensures that everyone can enjoy them.

The Downs are managed by the Downs Committee, as per 1861 Act. The Downs are covered by the Byelaws made by the Council of the City of Bristol under Section 5 of the Clifton and Durdham Down (Bristol) Act 1861.

The Council will use the Byelaws in a proportionate way working with the Downs Committee, but in the majority of issues brought to our attention are resolved before we need to enact the use of these.

We should be more proactive in encouraging people to enjoy the Downs more responsibly to avoid the use of enforcement.



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## **GREEN QUESTION 1**

### **Question to the Mayor from Councillor Carla Denyer**

#### **Subject: Climate Emergency**

A report to June's Cabinet meeting identified a "high risk" of failure in meeting the 2030 carbon neutral target which this Council set in November 2018 following the unanimously supported Climate Emergency motion.

Question:

Further to that report, what steps is the Council taking to minimise this risk? In particular, what steps has the Council taken since that report was written?

#### **REPLY:**

The report presented to the June Cabinet was for Q4 2019/20 and was prepared in May 2020.

The particular issues which were causing the probability of failure to be rated as "Likely" were related to the impacts of Covid-19 on recruitment of BCC staff, on the capacity of BCC and partners to focus on the climate emergency whilst responding to the Covid-19 emergency and on financial aspects.

Since then:

- Delivery of actions in the Mayor's Climate Emergency Action Plan are continuing and the Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Commission will receive a progress report on these on 14<sup>th</sup> September (therefore should now be in the public domain).
- Recruitment of a new Climate Change Team Manager has been completed to develop a new climate change team, linking closely with existing sustainability work and our response to the ecological emergency. This has been possible thanks to additional funding in the Service's revenue budget of £150k this year, with a further £150k next year onwards.
- The team are developing a 3 year Climate Change Programme of work which will be considered by the Cabinet in November, with funding for specific initiatives drawn from the earmarked Climate Change Reserves provided in the 2020/21 budget.

The 2020/21 Q1 Risk Report will also be presented to the Scrutiny Commission and the risk likelihood has been reduced from "Likely" to "Possible" in that assessment in the light of the action taken above.

Delivery of our climate emergency plan takes a lot more than political will and I would be interested in Cllr Denyer's suggestions and proposals.



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## **LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 1**

### **Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Sultan Khan**

#### **Subject: Shambolic Handling of Exam Results**

Over the summer families, children and young persons suffered a lot due to COVID-19 and its management by government initially.

Confusion, dithering and delay to take bold action has cost many lives.

Government and Ministers knew that they had to handle the A- Level and GCSE results, without taking expert advice and opinion they appear to have relied on their ego, which caused stress and anxiety to millions of parents and young children while thus omnishamble and Grading 'Fiasco' unfolded.

As the uncertainty continues and many experts are concerned it may continue like this and will impact our children even next year in the same or more devastating way.

What are we doing as a local authority to support and stand with families in dealing with this unfair further disturbance in their lives? Has or will, Mayor write to the Government on behalf of council challenging their incompetence and make it clear not to play with children lives further and to rely on experts and especially teachers who know the best for their students?

#### **REPLY:**

I have written to government to express our view.

We formally responded to the consultation on the arrangements for 2020 and raised concerns about the fairness of the approach. We have been firm with representatives at the DfE that something must be done to avoid a repeat of this year's results and will continue to raise concerns on a regular basis.



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## LABOUR QUESTION 2

### Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Hibaq Jama (Lawrence Hill)

#### Subject: Further education

1. National Government incompetence has disrupted, delayed, and – in some cases – destroyed opportunities for young people from Bristol. What assessment has the Mayor made of the shambles around this year's GCSE and further education results?
2. Could the Mayor provide an update on our administration's work to increase the numbers of young people undertaking meaningful work experience, our support for new schools, and efforts to protect jobs and opportunities for all Bristolians?

#### REPLY:

1. It was clear that the proposed arrangements for the 2020 exams, would be detrimental for some of our young people in Bristol, particularly those who are black and minority ethnic and our more able disadvantaged students. These concerns were raised with Ofqual, through the formal consultation process and also fed back to the DfE through our existing escalation routes. Unfortunately, the impact of these arrangements and subsequent national moderation methods (algorithm) produced a far worse result than initially anticipated and created an unnecessary amount of stress and anxiety on our young people who were already deeply distressed with the cancellation of their exams.
2. Bristol's Education and Skills team has been supporting partner schools/academies, including new schools, and post 16 providers following publication of GCSE and FE results. Young people who have not achieved the grades they need or without a firm post 16 place have been able to contact the Council's Young Careers and Pathways Team and obtain information, advice and guidance to identify and secure their best option.

The Bristol WORKS team has continued to provide a range of remote experience of work for young people most at risk of disengaging from education, training and employment

The Council's Employment Support Team has been working closely with the DWP to provide a 'One Front Door' service for employers, providers and job seekers. Anyone at risk of redundancy or who has lost their job, or lost hours, can be supported by a Future Bright career coach and can find job vacancy information on the Ways2Work website.



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## **CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 2**

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

**Subject: SHELTERED HOUSING & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

I am dealing with a difficult situation whereby a care provider is looking after young adults. The people in care are being funded by BCC. The provision is proving particularly traumatic for neighbours who have received threats of rape and violence. There have been incidents where children have been really upset by racial and paedophile comments.

I have raised these episodes with Adult Social Care, as it appears that BCC do not wish to discuss the case with the local residents, or to provide updates.

1. What options are available to my residents to resolve this completely unacceptable situation?

### **REPLY:**

Thank you for raising this issue and it does sound very challenging for the community and those impacted.

It would not be appropriate for me to discuss the situation in detail in public, as it might identify the individuals involved.

I think the best course of action is for you to meet with the Adult Social Care team to discuss. We are of course happy to broker meeting between you.

We do take these situations seriously, but it is not always appropriate to provide public updates about individuals.



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## **GREEN QUESTION 2**

### **Question to the Mayor from Councillor Jerome Thomas**

#### **Subject: Concerns about vehicle congestion and worsening air pollution in Bristol**

##### Background:

I welcome city centre changes that prioritise active travel and use of public transport but am concerned that reducing road space for cars will create more pollution and congestion on adjacent roads as the same number of cars use a reduced number of available roads.

In order to reduce car usage, significant disincentives will need to be introduced to reduce demand for car usage and further support be put in place so that the alternatives to car usage become more attractive.

##### Questions:

In order to reduce traffic congestion, can the Mayor confirm what further measures he intends to put in place in the short term:

- 1) To reduce demand for car usage and ownership in the city, particularly any progress on the development of a workplace parking levy or congestion charge.
- 2) To give people the confidence and skills that they need to move safely around the city on two wheels rather than four.

##### **REPLY:**

I am surprised you don't support the theory of induced demand. It appears that your determination to oppose any change means you are now taking a position that is out of step with national Green Party policy.

Your proposal of a congestion charge is simplistic and out of date. We are working towards embracing changing working patterns and travel patterns. And air quality has improved substantially in recent months. It is our challenge to maintain that.

Your proposal of a congestion charge is more often than not a poor tax, disproportionately impact the lowest income and most vulnerable individuals and families.

This fact was borne out by the clean air modelling and report. In supporting your own proposal, I would be interested in how you would mitigate this disproportionate impact. Our more radical proposals mean could? to reach air quality compliance without a charging zone and by removing through traffic from the most polluted areas.

The delivery of new walking, cycling and public transport routes in recent months forms part of the longer-term transport strategy for the city which focusses on providing safe, reliable and cost-effective alternatives to private car use. This transport strategy also includes the delivery of a low carbon mass transit system that will transform transport in the city.



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The West of England Bus Strategy, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Joint Local Transport Plan 4 have all been developed in partnership with our neighbouring councils and adopted earlier this year. Together they provide a framework for investment in our transport network up to 2036 and include commitments to investigate demand management measures such as Workplace Parking Levy and Road User Charging.

Alongside the delivery of segregated cycle infrastructure in the city the council is committed to providing residents with the skills and training to cycle. Much of the support can be accessed through the TravelWest website and includes cycle training, free loan bikes, route planning advice and accompanied cycle rides.



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## LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 2

### Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gary Hopkins

#### Subject: Question: Running a city is about making the right choices

1 Which of these does the mayor feel has been/would be best value for Bristol Taxpayers?

- a) Loosing around £250,000 a week for 4 years on a failed energy supply company
- b) Investing the same Capital sum to future proof jubilee pool for years to come
- c) Paying an even larger sum in a year to the paid off manager at Bristol energy.

2 Which choice will the mayor make:

- a) Providing the extra £15000 a month needed for running during Covid restrictions for the previously trading at a small profit.
- b) spending £80,000 a month on his own political office.

#### REPLY:

This question shows your political offer up for what it is. Grandstanding.

You could have come here and brought solid recommendations about Jubilee Pool – including dealing with the consequences of the PFI you agreed.

Instead you set out false options.

I will continue to try and find sustainable solutions with the community and will still welcome any positive proposals you bring forward.



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### **LABOUR QUESTION 3**

#### **Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gill Kirk**

##### **Subject: Impact of Public Health England's abolition on Bristol**

I know that the Mayor will share my concern about the governments sudden decision to axe Public Health England (PHE) and replace it with a new agency the National Institute for Health Protection (NIHP) The new NIHP agency is to be led by a government appointee with no background in public health, and whose previous work leading the national Test and Trace scheme has been an abject failure.

This reorganisation seems risky and destabilising in the middle of a Covid pandemic and will sideline the vital role PHE played in prevention of avoidable deaths by tackling obesity, reducing smoking and harm from alcohol, and addressing health inequalities. These are the very priorities highlighted by the Prime Minister only weeks ago that will have a huge part to play in reducing future vulnerability to Covid and other diseases.

It appears that the NIHP will not be responsible for this crucial preventative work and the government cannot tell us who will lead on it in the future?

What are your concerns about the closure of PHE and how this will impact on our own public health role as a council, both in:

1. overseeing a robust local system of testing, track and trace that will avoid future spikes of Covid in our area?;
2. protecting our population's health resilience and reducing health inequalities?

#### **REPLY:**

The sudden announcement about the closure of PHE is concerning, particularly at this time and I share your concerns. There has been no detail announced and it is therefore not clear what any impacts would be on local authority public health.

The governments stated intention of the new NIHP, is to bring NHS Test and Trace and Public Health England functions together, and this would be a welcome move. However, any destabilisation of PHE staff and functions during the next 12 months would be concerning, and would undoubtedly impact on our ability to manage and contain the virus locally.

I strongly support the points made by public health and NHS bodies about the importance of maintaining a strong focus on health improvement and health inequality within the new system. All Core Cities take the view that there are clearly risks in separating a health protection response from the social determinants of health which create disease and poor health. This is an artificial separation, as indeed Covid has shown.



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### CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 3

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

#### Subject: URGENT ROAD SAFETY MEASURES

Earlier in the summer, a speeding car travelling along Kings Weston Road failed to make the left hand turn into Hallen Road and ploughed into the house opposite. This incident caused extensive damage in what was a life threatening act of driving stupidity. This is not the first time that this has happened, and it is unfair that local residents' properties are being used as community crash barriers in the absence of action by the Council.

Following this latest accident a Council spokesman assured the media that the Council was developing a plan to improve safety in the area: -

*"There are clear safety concerns between Henbury Road and Hallen Road. We want to reassure local residents that we are taking these concerns seriously and are urgently looking at interventions to make this area safer for all road users, pedestrians and nearby residences. We will look at the options and discuss a safe road solution with residents."*

<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/bristol-neighbourhood-cars-keep-crashing-4311920>

We are now two months on from the promise of these 'urgent interventions.' As a minimum, I believe we should be looking at installing boulders to stop cars hitting properties; speed bumps through the Blaise village; and the possible application of a non-slip surface.

1. What road safety interventions is the Council planning?
2. When can residents expect to see these installed?

#### REPLY:

1. We took immediate actions including installing additional 'Slow' road marking and adding bar markings to the existing 'Slow' marking to make it more visible, refreshing all existing road markings, installed a Chevron bend sign to make approaching drivers more aware of the bend, and cutting back any vegetation that is obscuring existing road sign and street lights.

We are also planning to install a Vehicle Activated Sign on the approach to the junction, undertaking a more detailed review of the road surface, reviewing existing parking restrictions, the feasibility of vehicle restraint measures, a potential crossing on Kingsweston Road, near Blaise and wider safety measures in the general area. The crossing and associated controls and marking can be very effective at reducing speed at all times. I have asked officers to accelerate these actions.

It is concerning that the police reported no previous incidents and I would be grateful if Cllr Weston could identify why reports have not been received in the past.

2. The chevron bend sign has already been installed. Lining improvements will be undertaken in September/October 2020.

More detailed feasibility and assessment of options are being carried out and I've asked transport officers to accelerate this work.

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### **GREEN QUESTION 3**

#### **Question to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor**

#### **Subject: Unresolved Parking Issues in Redland Ward and elsewhere**

Background:

Residents have heard that the council rejects calls for parking to be managed in Bishopston (Redland Ward) and nearby, following last year's survey in the area. A letter has been placed on the council website. The letter is here: <https://bristol.citizenspace.com/management-of-place/bishopston-and-st-andrews-parking-survey/>

Members and residents have not yet been briefed on this so without the full results we comment on the letter.

It appears a 39% response rate and 60-70% agreement on issues is not enough to take action – though it's well above the usual level of interaction with council surveys, online surveys, or even many local elections. Residents' groups are very disappointed, rightly, as the administration seems to be setting an unspecified higher bar than it usually responds to.

We're concerned at the lack of positive response or a way forwards.

You might 'explore' junction protection.

A 'small sub area' might be 'considered' for an extension to an RPS but evidence is needed you say. This flies in the face of officer guidance to suggest just a small extension to a parking scheme which would instantly create parking pressures in adjacent streets.

Councillors are being asked for evidence and leadership by the Cabinet member but it's the administration that has the budget for surveys or access to officers' technical support. As you know the officers won't speak to us until allocated a project budget and we have no budget!

We know parking management schemes are controversial and there are strong views. But for the first 3 years of the current administration all the RPS schemes in the city were reviewed and all were found to be wanted by the majority of residents; none were removed, just tweaked.

There now seems to be a brief they are not fit for purpose so it's implied they may again be reviewed.

There's already a limit of 3 parking permits for most homes - why say a limit may be needed? All the new thinking from government is about liveable streets and liveable neighbourhoods where through traffic and parking get managed better. The new street interventions are about prioritising walking and cycling and curbing through traffic, as council press releases show.

Most frustratingly Kye's letter doesn't give any concrete way forward. It implies the recently reviewed, self-financing parking schemes will again be reviewed but the area where a new scheme has majority support won't get attention. It talks of an 'ongoing conversation' about potential solutions. This commits to little.

Managing parking in areas with parking rage and conflicts would be so much easier while commuting is reduced and there's a government budget for innovative travel measures to be

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introduced in the city. Holding up action for several more years on a vague promise that things could be looked at again is quite irresponsible.

A commitment to some technical support to assess local evidence and work up options to manage streets better would help, as well as making the full results of the survey public. We were working with residents and trying to develop solutions 3 years ago until neighbourhood partnerships with a local budget were abolished.

Question:

When will you provide resources and a timescale for concrete actions to be taken?

**REPLY:**

What the letter explains is that we will continue to support councillors and residents to find solutions and have ruled out nothing.

We said that our commitment was not to roll out RPS without overwhelming support of the local community. In that sense the timeframe is in your hands to work with business and households to design those intervention and build support for them. You might even take on the principles of Citizen Assemblies.

We are committed to liveable communities and will develop ideas, proposals and engagement around these types of communities rather than the blunt and outdated instrument that do nothing to change transport patterns.

Resident Parking Schemes do little to encourage people out of their cars and into more sustainable forms of transport and little to tackle behavioural changes. Prioritisation of public transport will have that effect.



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### **LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 3**

**Question to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Kent**

**Subject: Pay Policy Statement and Senior officers Exit payments.**

I have been investigating the issue of officer exit payments and whether the statutory guidance of the Secretary of State has been applied correctly with regard to exit payments in excess of £100,000, of which there have been 29 so far under your administration.

Senior officers have not been able to confirm when the HR Committee approved the £200,000 pay out to Nicola Yates on her exit as required by the Pay Policy Statement? Could you confirm who authorised this payment and which HR committee meeting approved it?

### **REPLY:**

It is a matter of public record that the HR Committee received a report regarding the departure of the former City Director at their meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2016.

Further information relating to the severance package of the former City Director is exempt under the legal rules relating to access to exempt information as the information relates to the personal information of an individual and legal professional privilege.

The severance package was reviewed by the Council's external auditors and recommendations were issued by them relating to severance arrangements for Chief Officers. Historically there has never been a clear process and we have now put in place procedures that need to be followed in relation to severance packages for Chief Officers. These were agreed at Full Council on 21 May 2019.

The lack of clarity on process was evident in 2012 when the Lib-Dem administration made a pay out of £233,844 for the outgoing Chief Executive at the time.



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## LABOUR QUESTION 4

### Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Marg Hickman (Lawrence Hill)

#### Subject: Communities

1. Would the Mayor agree that community hubs and volunteers have provided invaluable support to their areas throughout the pandemic, and would he agree that standing together will be essential as this crisis continues?
2. Does the Mayor share my optimism about Felix Road Adventure Playground, Easton Community Centre, and Up Our Street coming together as a collaborative new organisation, Eastside Community Trust?

#### REPLY:

1. The community response to the crises has been tremendous.

23 community hubs mobilised across the city. Many led entirely by local people, others by well-established voluntary groups with deep roots into their communities.

The work has been deeply inspiring and shown Bristol at its best. Thank you everyone. As we face the significant challenge ahead we must continue to stand together, learning from and building on what we have achieved, each playing to our strengths.

It is without doubt that our city success in fending off hunger, countering the dangerous social isolation and loneliness, protecting people from predatory exploiters and even reaching out to support the bereaved has only been made possible because our communities have stepped forward.

2. Many congratulations to Felix Road Adventure Playground, Easton Community Centre, and Up Our Street for being brave, seeing the possibilities and acting together for the benefit of the whole community to create Eastside Community Trust.

This is an exciting development for local people and for the city. These kinds of collaborations are not easy they take careful leadership and vision. Well done to all involved. I wish you every success.



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## CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 4

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

**Subject: AREA COMMITTEES - STOCKWOOD WARD**

In 2018, £40,000 was approved to improve Cottle Road Park.

In 2019, £30,000 was granted to improve the street scene at Hollway Road shops.

To date, neither project has been delivered. The current state reflects badly on the Area Committee process.

1. Can the Mayor provide local residents with some definitive dates when these two schemes will actually be delivered?

### **REPLY:**

Cottle Road Park: The contract is being awarded and a start date arranged for September 2020. The projected completion date for this project is April 2021.

Street scene at Hollway Road shops: specification for the work is expected by mid-October 2020 and will complete the project by the end of January 2021.



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## **GREEN QUESTION 4**

### **Question to the Mayor from Councillor Fi Hance**

#### **Subject: Support for language schools**

Language schools seem to have fallen between the gap in Government schemes. They are not classed as educational institutions and so still have to pay 100% business rates. And they are not classed as hospitality - even though they are a big provider of tourism. Language schools are an important part of our local economy.

Around 44% of language schools across England are now receiving business rate relief and grants, including neighbouring authorities such as Bath & North East Somerset. Councils such as Cambridge have changed their approach and begun to offer support.

Question: Will the Mayor consider reviewing the Council's approach and offer financial assistance to language schools?

#### **REPLY:**

Language schools have fallen between the gaps and government have made no provision to support them.

But, we have used our own discretion in supporting language schools from the Local Authority Small Business Discretionary Fund because we recognise their contribution and the challenges they face.

We are aware that some authorities have considered some schools within their area to fall within "tourism" but this is a minority of councils and boroughs and subject to challenge.



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## **LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 4**

**Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Sultan Khan**

**Subject: Bristol Swimming Pools**

Swimming is one of the best form of exercises for any age group. Especially children and elderly. Without any regards to children and elderly's mental and physical well being pools are being closed. Despite the fact that the cities swimming provision reviews clearly indicate the city is under served.

I am surprised that as Mayor you are consulting on the closure of Jubilee Pool which remained in profit until recently and serves the community well.

Are you willing to revisit your decision and save Jubilee for the people of Knowle and surrounding and commit to a pool for Speedwell and East Bristol?

### **REPLY:**

There is a debate later in the meeting about proposed changes to the consultation.

It shouldn't be surprising that we have to take difficult decisions – there have been huge implications from a global pandemic, in particular for the leisure sector that on top of a PFI signed by the liberal democrats in 2010 which was built on a business case which included the closure of Jubilee Pool and Bishopsworth.

The pool had made a profit while subsidised but the operator now wants to serve notice on their contract to run the facility. Extending the consultation doesn't change that but if proposals come forward during the formal consultation period, or afterwards, then we will look at them and consider supporting any that are viable.

Speedwell and East Bristol already have access to pools, so I am not sure if you are asking for new ones? We have invested in Hengrove leisure centre, Easton and South Bristol pools to keep them open.



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## LABOUR QUESTION 5

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

#### Subject: Filwood

1. The Hartcliffe Way Reuse and Recycling Centre will be a big boost for Filwood. Please could the Mayor/Cabinet Member provide an update?
2. Please could the Mayor/Cabinet Member provide an update on the Community Infrastructure Levy, including for Filwood's local area committee?

#### REPLY:

1. The new reuse and recycling facilities are planned to open to the public towards the end of 2021, following completion of both the construction works and Bristol Waste's preparations.

Bristol Waste's Street Cleansing Services are relocating from the Hartcliffe Way Depot in advance of enabling works for the new Household Reuse and Recycling Centre commencing later this month. The site preparatory works will include clearance of existing above and underground structures, including disused fuel tanks. Bristol Waste is presently tendering the main construction works, which will be awarded this autumn.

2. As Cllr Jackson will be aware a significant allocation of Strategic CIL was allocated by Cabinet last week to fund highway improvements on Hengrove Way (up to £4.8m) and the expansion of Perry Court School (up to £10m), both of which will result in significant benefits to South Bristol.

As far as local CIL for Area Committee 6 (AC6) is concerned, a number of CIL funded schemes have recently been delivered in the Filwood area including improvements to both Filwood Library and Filwood Community Centre.

Due to Covid-19, the Area Committees have not met to allocate CIL this year, and the next CIL allocation meeting will be in 2021. There is currently approx. £225k available to AC6 to allocate, and this figure will increase further over the coming months. Consequently, there will be enough CIL funding available to deliver those local improvements prioritised by AC6 when they next meet to allocate CIL.



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## CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 5

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

#### Subject: POTHOLE ACTION FUND

I'm sure the Mayor will wish to join me in welcoming the government's £500M fund for highways and pothole repairs of which £2.64M has been awarded to Bristol City Council.

One issue frequently raised by residents is that when a pothole is repaired, the repair work is poorly executed and the pothole returns with months.

1. What is the Mayor doing to ensure contractors are liable for poor repairs so that taxpayers' money is not wasted?
2. There are some innovative methodologies for effecting pothole repairs, which involve recycled materials. Is this something the Mayor is actively looking at?

#### REPLY:

1. The Contractor is responsible for all repairs for 12 months in accordance with the contract and would return at their own cost.

We are also employing further resources to assist in the management and supervision of the contract whilst undertaking these works.

2. At present the highway team recycle 98% of its waste either back into the highway through tarmacs, aggregates and through recycling centres.

We are also developing materials and processes to further reduce the carbon impact of tarmac works. You may have seen coverage of the process used in Ashton Rise where unrecyclable plastics were used in the asphalt:

<https://www.recyclingwasteworld.co.uk/news/bristol-city-council-uses-unrecyclable-plastic-in-new-housing-development/218797/>



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## **GREEN QUESTION 5**

### **Question to the Mayor from Councillor Charlie Bolton**

#### **Subject: Parking in BS3**

It has been over 4 years since myself and Cllr Clarke first submitted a survey about parking problems beyond the border of the Southville RPS zone. We have just received notification of the results of the third survey from Cllr Dudd suggesting insufficient support for a new RPS zone.

1. Can we please see a detailed breakdown of the results of the Council's survey?
2. At what point can the residents of the area expect something to actually happen?

#### **REPLY:**

1. The results will be published following Councillor Dudd's briefing of ward members on the 10<sup>th</sup> September.
2. We said that our commitment was not to roll out RPS without overwhelming support of the local community.

As I said in reply to Cllr Fodor's similar question, the timeframe is in your hands to work with business and households to design interventions and build support for them.

In the meantime match day parking was the most popular solution and we are continuing to engage with Bristol Sport on this subject.

We are committed to liveable communities and will develop ideas, proposals and engagement around these types of communities rather than the blunt and outdated instrument that do nothing to change transport patterns.

Resident Parking Scheme do little to encourage people out of their cars and into more sustainable forms of transport and little to tackle behavioural changes. Prioritisation of public transport will have that effect.



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## **LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 5**

**Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Kent**

**Subject: Metro Bus Stop on Bamfield**

As you will recall residents continue to ask about the progress of the additional Metrobus stop on Bamfield. Can you update residents and myself on progress and when the metrobus will be stopping to pick passengers up?

### **REPLY:**

The Bamfield bus stops are an agreed part of the metrobus consolidation package. It had been anticipated that a business case would be worked up for submission in October. However, due to other priorities arising from the Covid 19 pandemic, this business case has been delayed and is now expected to be submitted in early 2021.

Full responsibility passed to the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. We will continue to support WECA in developing this business case and, pending approval, the delivery of the metrobus stops.



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## LABOUR QUESTION 6

### Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Ruth Pickersgill (Easton)

#### Subject: St Mark's Road

I was really pleased to see recent announcements of a second phase of initiatives to try and make walking and cycling more attractive in the City and to support social distancing in this crisis through the delivery of new infrastructure and road layouts. I would like to congratulate the Mayor and Cabinet Lead for taking this opportunity to address air quality, climate change and economic recovery.

I understand this is still a really early stage of the second stage proposals and am glad that Easton has been included in your thinking, and note that the Council will consult with the local community and traders to discuss the various options available before anything is implemented.

1. Please can you give us more information about the economic benefits you envisage arising from pedestrianisation to alleviate any fears local shops and businesses may have?

#### REPLY:

There is evidence to suggest that the majority of people who use high streets/local centres do so from within walking distance – i.e. they live locally – and that therefore pedestrianisation is likely to increase a centre's attractiveness to the people who use it most. Also there is clear recent evidence that, due to the pandemic, the trend for people using their local shops has increased, and the proposals are intended to build on this trend.

Research reports from Transport for London and Living Streets highlight the positive economic benefits of pedestrianisation and walking/cycling projects. For example, walking and cycling improvements can improve retail spend by up to 30%. People walking and cycling visit high streets/local centres more frequently and spend more money there compared to people in cars.

The Council is committed to ongoing engagement with local traders to understand their circumstances and promote the positive economic opportunities.



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## **CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 6**

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

**Subject: FLYING POSTING AND LITTERING**

1. Flyposting is a menace and there is one notorious company in the paving and patio business, which continues to do this right across Bristol. Officers are aware but the flyposting continues. Why is this?
2. The Downs and our parks have seen an unprecedented increase in volumes of litter in recent months. How many litter fines were handed out in August by our ethical enforcement team?

### **REPLY:**

1. Officers continue to take action against fly posters when the perpetrator can be identified. For example three paving and patio companies have received a total of 22 fixed penalty notices for fly posting since the beginning of January 2020. All three companies have been referred for prosecution. Fixed penalty notices continue to be served and council officers are exploring the use of taking civil action against the companies.
2. There is no evidence is an increase in litter. However 3GS issued 358 fixed penalty notices for littering offences in August. 3GS also issued 18 fixed penalty notices in the same period for fly posting with some of these issued to paving and patio businesses.



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## LABOUR QUESTION 7

### Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Afzal Shah (Easton)

#### Subject: Economy

1. Bristol City Council has provided enormous support to local businesses throughout the pandemic. Please could the Mayor confirm the latest figures for business rate relief and other support?
2. The cultural sector in particular, given difficulties around mass gatherings, will likely be one of the last to fully recover. Please could the Mayor set out what specific support the Council can give them, and what more he believes is needed from Government?

#### REPLY:

1. 3,317 businesses premises in the retail, hospitality and leisure sector have been given £80,052,409 in Business Rate Relief.

£4,724,133 has been paid to 874 business in the form of Business Discretionary Grant Funding

7196 businesses in 7383 business rate premises have benefited from £93,876,300 Covid Business Rate Grant.

2. We fully acknowledge that Covid-19 has had a devastating effect on the Cultural sector in the city and have carried out consulted with the sector throughout the pandemic to understand the impact and the needs and from this begun map immediate and on-going impact of COVID-19 on the creative economy and ways we can support our internationally renowned events, festivals and dynamic music scene.

We are delivering the following:

- Microbusiness support for over 150 creative economy businesses
- Financial support through our Cultural Investment Programme
- Partnership working and strategic decision-making in collaboration with the One City Culture Board
- Network support organisations such as Bristol Festivals, DIY Arts and City of Film, and national industry bodies
- Developing reopening models with partners that are profitable, safe and collaborative by creating and sharing best practice guidelines



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## **CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 7**

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

**Subject: CELEBRATION OF BRISTOL'S 650<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF GRANTING OF COUNTY STATUS**

1. Whilst we all appreciate that the present primary role of Bristol City Council is combatting the Coronavirus pandemic locally, clearly it is important that our medium-to-longer term planning goes on apace, and Bristolians enjoy the opportunities afforded by the future. Accordingly, what plans are there to celebrate in 2023, the 650<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the granting of County status to Bristol by King Edward II?
2. Many Bristolians (like me) look back with real affection and admiration to the impressive celebration of the 'Bristol 600' event in August 1973, opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. This included permanent initiatives, such as the planting of city trees, and entertainments such as medieval jousting on The Downs (much enjoyed by my boyhood self). Will the Mayor commit to seeking celebratory and commemorative ideas from a wide range of Bristolians and civic bodies?

### **REPLY:**

Plans are already in development by Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (BCDP) for a yearlong programme looking at Bristol's past, present and future. It will include much activity in communities; the publication of books and the fifth Festival of the Future City will be dedicated to the future of Bristol that year. There will be natural links with the History Commission, looking at Bristol's past.

2023 is also the 200th anniversary of the city museum; Bristol Chamber of Commerce; and St Georges as a building. It is also the 60th anniversary of the Bristol Bus Boycott.

BCDP are already working with many partners and it will be their key programme of work from the end of this year.



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## CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 8

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

#### Subject: IMPROVEMENTS TO THE No.515 BUS SERVICE

At the Members' Forum last December, you stated the following in relation to possibly extending this route:-

*"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."*

1. Please can you give an update on the proposals to provide a bus route between south east Bristol and Keynsham?

#### REPLY:

The work on cross border supported bus services is being supported through the West of England Combined Authority (WECA). This was formalised on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

They also have responsibility for integrated bus services since last summer.

The impact of Covid travel restrictions on the bus industry has been extremely significant. Many services were reduced or removed entirely in the weeks immediately following lockdown. As a result of financial support for the industry from the Government, most services have returned to operation, but those that are operating have reduced capacity. The operators are therefore targeting resources where the capacity is most needed, and this means that some services are not operating to pre Covid levels.

The Government funding operates on an 8 week notice period of reduction or cessation of this funding. This context of uncertainty will inevitably limit the opportunity for new services to be developed, tendered and operated, and as a result there has been no progress on a link between Stockwood and Keynsham.

Longer term investment in bus services will be dependent on post Covid stability and guided by the aspirations of the WECA Bus Strategy adopted in June this year.



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## **CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 9**

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

**Subject: TRIAL OF NEW CITY CENTRE ROAD LAYOUTS**

The recent traffic schemes on Bristol Bridge and in the Old City are being carried out under experimental traffic orders. The idea is to test out a change before deciding whether or not it will become permanent. However, there is a great deal of scepticism at large around this, and a belief that the Council will deem the schemes to be a success regardless of what happens.

I have tried, in vain, to get the criteria which will be used to determine 'success' published, so that people can see in advance what the Council considers this to be for these schemes, and what would be judged a failure.

1. Will the Mayor now publish clear criteria for determining success or failure of these schemes, so that people can have faith that an objective and transparent decision will be made at the end of the experimental period?

### **REPLY:**

The criteria are found in the Bristol Bridge Monitoring Report and I will circulate this after the meeting.

It provides the following:

- Sets out what the project seeks to accomplish and how.
- Establishes the area of impact that the interventions will affect.
- Summarise and presents the key data sets available that will form the baseline for the project.
- Outlines a monitoring package and programme to measure key data indicators that will help determine how the experiment is progressing whilst the interventions are in place.



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## **CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 10**

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

**Subject: ANTI-SOCIAL USE OF MOTORBIKES**

On many Sundays, in particular, motorbikes are blighting the tranquillity of residents and endangering their lives on main roads and in Stockwood open spaces. The constant droning, threats from riders, noise nuisance frightening dogs and physical damage to the local Nature Reserve has become intolerable.

1. Does the Mayor have any plans to tackle this menace either through action taken by Estate Management or a better coordinated effort with the police?

### **REPLY:**

Our Neighbourhood Enforcement Team (NET) do not have any powers to stop and deal with Road Traffic Offences.

It is likely therefore that action to deal with Motorbikes riding around the Stockwood area would need to be addressed by the Police under the Road Traffic Act. Following your question I have now raised it with the Bristol Commander.

If there are specific suggestions you or the community have about physical interventions we can make to dissuade anti-social motorcyclists please share them so we can explore their potential.



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## **CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 11**

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

**Subject: TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURES AND RESTRICTIONS**

Trade and commerce are the lifeblood of any city and Bristol is no exception. In many parts of our city, business leaders and traders have reacted angrily to ill thought out traffic changes introduced without public consultation, which are meant to be temporary.

1. Does the Mayor understand this anger and will he scrap hastily introduced road change which hurt business?

Walking and cycling are increasingly popular, but for many people forms of 'active' travel are not feasible alternatives to the car - the disabled, the elderly, and those who need to travel long distances. The Mayor has been quick to close and/or narrow roads, which made sense in 'lockdown', but now needs urgent review.

2. How does the Mayor plan to ensure the elderly and the disabled are not discriminated against as we emerge from lockdown and return to 'normality'?

### **REPLY:**

1. Which specific interventions are you referring to? It is important to understand that we have been given statutory direction by the Conservative government to enable walking and cycling as an alternative to public transport and car use.

All temporary measures are being monitored and reviewed and consultation will play a part in any permanent decision. Most of the schemes in local high streets have been amended in conjunction with the local traders, to accommodate their needs and to support their recovery and ongoing viability. Bristol's hospitality industry is making use of highway space to continue trading in Covid secure ways.

2. I appreciate your concerns and understand that elderly and disabled people want to be able to enjoy and access the city as anyone else would. Accessibility and disabled parking in the city centre is a high priority and we are working with groups such as Bristol Physical Access Chain to shape our plans.

Access for vehicles still remains, we have closed Bristol Bridge to through traffic, and private cars are able to still access Baldwin Street and Union Street.

Many of the changes should provide further accessibility benefits such as more space for people and wheelchair users in pedestrianised areas, an increase in seating and resting places and the reductions in general traffic on some streets will make it easier to cross roads.

Any further feedback is welcome and there will be full consultation before anything is made permanent and I would be open to a conversation with you about these points.



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## **CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 12**

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

**Subject: SUPPORTING LOCAL RESTAURANTS AND RETAILERS**

The Chancellor's "Eat Out To Help Out" meal deal scheme, dismissed by some commentators initially as a gimmick, has actually proved very popular with the public and extremely helpful to Bristol's restaurants, pubs, cafes and hotels.

1. What local ideas or incentives has the Mayor thought of or considered to help Bristol's economy?
2. In order to give a boost to the local retail community, and allow Bristol's retailers to compete with out-of-town shopping centres, would the Mayor consider trialling 'free city wide parking' days, maybe on Sundays?

### **REPLY:**

1. We have been working with local restaurants and retailers to assist them in the use of public space to enable them to trade safely. We have added space to make it available for high street hospitality outlets and reduced the cost of space rental.

We provided financial support to the Bristol Together campaign being run by Destination Bristol.

We have allocated Government funding to support the reopening and viability of high streets, including resource to directly engage with high street businesses to identify their needs.

We are working with regional partners around meanwhile uses for vacant premises, including for creative and cultural uses, including a look at car park roof space.

The One City Economy Board, including many leading Bristol business representatives, is leading the development of the City's Economic Renewal Strategy that will identify key priorities for recovery. Following the imminent launch of the strategy, detailed costed delivery plans will be worked up which will further support local food, hospitality and retail sectors.

2. There are no plans for free parking days.



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## CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 13

### Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Claire Hiscott (Horfield)

#### Subject: VAN DWELLING ENCAMPMENT POLICY

1. I was shocked to see vans set on fire in Horfield and I'm sure this feeling is shared by the Mayor. However, does the Mayor accept that it is his failure to tackle the growing number of van dwellers on residential streets which has contributed to tensions rising between communities?
2. When the Covid pandemic struck, the decision was taken - rightly - by the Council on public health grounds that van dwellers should be moved to sites with water, washing and toilet facilities. The pandemic is still with us and personal hygiene remains a key component in the fight against the virus. So, why has the Mayor allowed van dwellers simply to go back on residential streets without washing or toilet facilities?

#### REPLY:

1. There is a need to be careful because your question could be taken to imply the fire resulted from tensions between van dwellers and residents. We don't know that to be the case.

We know that van dwelling, which has increased considerably in recent years due to a broken housing market, is an issue across the city. It is a challenge to balance the welfare and safety of van dwellers with the concerns of the local community. The vehicle dwellers policy is our attempt to do this, and we will continue to review our approach to make sure we get the balance right.

The council's adopted procedure had to be followed in connection with this encampment, and in Kellaway Avenue in the summer we took action which resulted in three occupied caravans moving. The those remaining were not prepared to move without legal action being taken, despite being offered places at the Temporary COVID site at Hengrove.

2. Thank you for recognising the action taken, we were able to fund the site through support from Public Health England. You may be aware that majority of van dwellers took up the offer of this support.

We do not allow this, but we do not have the powers to us to simply prevent people. There are a number of vehicles, adapted to live in, that are legally parked and do not appear to be occupied and, as such, the council has no grounds on which to move them.

The processes available to us to ban, such as we have recently done in St Werburghs, rely on court time, as well as the need for supporting evidence for any legal action.



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## CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 14

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

#### Subject: BRISTOL'S TREE CANOPY

The benefits of trees are well known; they promote mental wellbeing, are visually attractive and help the ambition of cleaner air in our city. As I am sure the Mayor will agree they are hugely important environmentally. Planting more trees will help, but protecting our existing trees, especially trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) is paramount.

1. Whilst the Mayor has no direct responsibility for planning matters, are you willing to make a short policy statement endorsing the importance of trees to Bristol, which would be influential to the city planners when considering applications to fell trees and/or agree invasive tree works, especially trees with TPOs?
2. How many net additional trees does the Mayor expect to see in Bristol by 2030?

#### REPLY:

1. Yes, more than happy to restate my endorsement for increasing the number of trees in the city.

More importantly than that, we've built it into the city plan, built around a city vision, contributed by universities, business, voluntary sector, faith organisations and unions. That's a public statement of the tree canopy, give us more impetus than the planning function of a local authority alone.

2. It is estimated that we have some 600,000 trees in Bristol, making up about 12.6% of the city's land area. In order to double the city's tree canopy cover, taking it from 12.6% to 25.2%, depending on different planting scenarios, we are going to need between 138,600 and 277,200 new trees planted in Bristol.

This is the commitment that has been made in the City Plan. We are working with City Partners to achieve this.



Member Forum  
8 September 2020  
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:**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>
CS01	Councillor Gary Hopkins	Jubilee Pool
CS02	Councillor Jerome Thomas	City Leap
CS03	Councillor Paula O'Rourke	Charging In Clifton



**CS01**

**Members Forum statement from Councillor Gary Hopkins**

**Subject: Jubilee Pool**

There have been attempts to confuse and distract from the real issues regarding the planned closure of jubilee pool

I attach 2 sets of documents

1. The report and decision of the 2008 Labour Cabinet committing to the PFI with an Australian Bank to fund Hengrove Pool and to the closure of Jubilee Pool.
2. The 2011/12 Lib Dem Cabinet papers showing how despite that PFI being in place, we were able to invest in and rescue Jubilee Pool (also incidentally, putting in £4M for a new Speedwell Pool).

This recent Save Jubilee Pool Campaign, that I have been proud to be a part of, is the third time in ten years that we have fought against Labour closure plans for Jubilee Pool

[https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/201201261800/Agenda/0126\\_6.pdf](https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/201201261800/Agenda/0126_6.pdf)

Capital Programme 2012-2015 & Treasury Management Strategy 2012-2015 & Fourth Capital Monitor  
2011/12 Cabinet 26th January 2012

[https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/200907301800/Agenda/0730\\_9.pdf](https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/200907301800/Agenda/0730_9.pdf)

Hengrove Healthplex - Selection of Preferred Bidder and Authority to Enter into Contracts – Cabinet 31  
July 2008

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=135&MeetingId=6456&DF=31%2f07%2f2008&Ver=2>

Hengrove Healthplex - Selection of Preferred Bidder and Authority to Enter into Contracts – Decision  
Recording Form - Cabinet 31 July 2008

***\*please see documents referred to, published as a supplement.***



**CS02**

**Members' Forum statement from Councillor Jerome Thomas**  
**Subject: City Leap**

I note that after the failure of the previous City Leap procurement that the new City Leap procurement has been launched.

This specifies that the City Leap procurement has a tender value of £12 billion without specifying in the accompanying glossy video or the associated paperwork, what this procurement might involve, to any level of useful detail.

It is very concerning that significant sums of money are still being spent on a procurement that has already failed once at great expense, and that little appears to have been learnt from the excessive secrecy involved in the failure of Bristol Energy.

I call on the administration to be more open with the public about what City Leap involves. Only then will we be able to see whether this 'emperor is wearing any clothes.'

**CS03**

**Members' Forum statement from Councillor Paula O'Rourke**  
**Subject – Charging in Clifton**

Charging businesses in Princess Victoria St in Clifton £20 per day (that adds up to over £7,000 a year) to use parking bays is legally and morally wrong.

Let me put the context for the legal argument first.

To allow for social distancing, councillors, Clifton BID and highway officers agreed a design which created 'parklets' at pinch points for traders to move their tables from the pavement into parking bays. This was to stop people queueing for shops obstructing pedestrians. This offer was agreed by the cabinet member for transport, Kye Dudd and accepted by the BID. They then offered to purchase planters, at a cost of £10,000, to enhance the scheme. This offer was accepted by the Council.

This created a contract with Clifton BID, as, for a contract to be legal all that is needed is an offer, an acceptance and a 'consideration' - in this case, the consideration is the money spent on the planters. At no time during the negotiations did the council say that there would be a daily charge to trade from the bays, so I think that BCC is in breach of this contract and the BID will be getting legal advice to support this argument.

The moral argument is even clearer than the legal one. While I accept that making quick decisions in a rapidly changing situation was challenging, it seems clear that internal communications was inadequate. The decision to charge was imposed by the Finance/Business departments retrospectively and they are deaf to the argument that the situation in Clifton is different to other places due to the purchase of the planters.



We asked businesses to remove tables from pavements so that the elderly population could have the social distance required as they access their shops. In most cases, traders have a licence or planning approval for tables on the pavement. So, asking struggling traders to pay to move the tables, which they would have normally had on the pavement, is punitive. This is compounded when one considers that the same struggling traders have already spent £10,000 of their BID fund to make the area look more attractive to entice shoppers back and are then asked to pay over £7,000 a year for the right to do so. This is morally wrong and we have over 1,100 signatures to a petition which Jerome set up which shows that people agree with us.

I have been trying to get politicians and officers to understand these compelling points for over 2 months now; I hope that, by putting it in this public forum, it will make the Mayor realise that the right thing to do is to amend or reverse this decision.

