


Appendix 10

Questions and Responses from Civic Meetings to the Budget Proposals for 2017/18

A decorative graphic consisting of a grid of overlapping circles in various shades of red and pink, set against a solid red background. The circles are arranged in a pattern that fills the lower two-thirds of the page, creating a textured, modern look.

Addendum to Full Council papers – 21st February 2017

Questions and Responses from Civic Meetings to the Budget Proposals for 17/18

Throughout the consultation and budget setting process for 17/18 there has been a great deal of valuable input from elected members, members of the public and representatives of groups and organisations. The Corporate Strategy Consultation Response was published as part of the 24th January Cabinet Papers, which shared the views of the survey and many other public meetings undertaken during the 3 month period. Since that point, there have also been a number of Civic Meetings where questions and issues have been raised by elected members and the public and considered by Cabinet. These questions and statements have formed a key part of the considerations of the Mayor and Cabinet in both finalising their recommendations for the Budget but also informing their thinking with officers regarding how the work should move forward beyond the Full Council decision.

The statements, questions and responses from these sessions are compiled in this report for ease of access and transparency.

1. Overview and Scrutiny Comments to Cabinet Regarding the Council's Revenue Budget for 2017/18

Overview and Scrutiny played an active role in reviewing the City Council's Corporate Strategy 2017-2022, as well as the savings and investment proposals that form the basis of the Council's Revenue Budget for 2017/18 and Capital Programme for 2017 – 2022. Discussions took place at a number of Scrutiny Commission meetings between October 16 and January 17 and the reports and minutes from these sessions can be found on the City Council's website at the following links;

[Business Change and Resources Scrutiny Commission](#)

[Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission](#)

[People Scrutiny Commission](#)

[Place Scrutiny Commission](#)

At the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting on 19th January 17, Members considered the information that had been provided during the course of the budget discussions and requested that the following comments regarding the proposals be submitted to Cabinet;

Budget Process

- a. Members commented on the process to date for setting the budget, acknowledging that it had been a very complex task for all parties to gather the relevant information, particularly due to the levels of savings that needed to be identified.*
- b. The Board suggested that scrutiny could be a useful forum for developing any proposals that require more work for this budget.*
- c. Concern was expressed about the timescales and rapidly changing nature of proposals and it was suggested that lessons could be learnt from this process for the future.*
- d. The Board agreed that scrutiny would like to play more of an active role in setting future budgets and hoped they could work with the Mayor, Cabinet and senior officers to improve the level of engagement and information flow in subsequent years particularly with communities and external partners.*

- **Impact of Proposals specifically the Equalities Impact Assessments**

- e. *The Board considered the Cumulative Equalities Impacts Assessment (EqIAs) that had been prepared to accompany the budget proposals. There was strong consensus that the impact of service changes on equalities groups needed to be carefully assessed if the Council were to continue to serve and protect those most in need of services.*
- f. *It was felt that in future a breakdown of equalities impact by directorate (not just by individual proposal) would be useful but that this must feed into a robust overall picture. In addition the impact of proposals taken forward should also be tracked cross council to create a 'whole council' view of the impact. There was concern that proposals may have been developed in directorates and impacts in other areas had not been fully considered.*
- g. *Members agreed that EqIAs were an essential part of any review of spending and suggested that they needed to be prepared earlier in the process, during the early design stage, so they could shape emerging ideas, rather than assessing the impact of a decision once it was close to the point of being made.*
- h. *Concerns were raised about the quality of the impact assessments available. It was acknowledged that these were being updated and this was a reflection of the tight timescales being worked to by officers.*
- i. *Members also highlighted concern about the process for engaging other service providers and partners during the design of the proposals. It was felt this should be strengthened in future and brought in during the early design phase.*

- **Prioritising spend across the council**

- j. *Consideration was given to the scale of proposed reductions to the People directorate budget, which included Children's Services and Adult Social Care. Members noted, with reluctance and unhappiness, that there would be significant cutbacks in some areas, which would inevitably affect service provision for some residents. There was particular concern about the proposed reductions in funding for early intervention schemes, such as Children's Centres and housing for the vulnerable, since stopping spending on preventative measures often resulted in additional spend later down the line.*
- k. *Members accepted that the savings required in the current financial year meant that reductions were necessary across all directorates. However, they were concerned that overtime the Council could find itself channelling the vast majority of its budget into supporting the People directorate at the expense of many other important elements of the Council's work, for example infrastructure provision, community amenities and so on.*
- l. *The Board suggested that a debate should take place to agree the longer term strategy around spending priorities that explores the balance between investment in the economy, provision of statutory services and early intervention. It was highlighted that a cross directorate approach should be taken and consider both the short, medium and long term implications. Certain areas, if protected from savings, could have longer term benefits that could be transferred to supporting other services. It was raised that once certain facilities or amenities were lost they would not be regained and consideration should be given to the longer term implications of this.*

- **Specific savings proposals - Council tax, Neighbourhood Partnerships, Libraries & Parks**

These points were highlighted specifically by a number of members of OSMB. This is however not a reflection of unanimous support for all the remaining proposals.

- m. The Board considered the proposals in relation to increasing Council Tax by 5%. Members were concerned that the rise could affect the most vulnerable residents but reluctantly acknowledged that it was necessary in order to produce a balanced budget.*
 - n. There was strong opposition to the plans in relation to changes to Neighbourhood Partnerships (NPs). Members were firstly concerned about the suggestion that NPs be replaced with other mechanisms for community engagement as some had been very effective at facilitating the relationship between the Council and local residents. Secondly, Members were disappointed to see that the NPs appeared to be winding down before any formal decision had been made, and they expressed concern about timing and communication around the proposed changes to enable communities to adjust as required.*
 - o. Members were also disappointed to see the plans in relation to libraries. The Board agreed that the current network of libraries provided vital community assets across the city and once they had been scaled back they would never be replaced. Members expressed regret that the plans to develop libraries into community hubs that offered shared services from a number of providers had not fully materialised and saw this as a missed opportunity.*
 - p. Members were also concerned about the extent of the savings proposed for the Parks service and questioned the deliverability of this level of savings and self-financing options.*
- ***Income generation and commercialisation***
 - q. The Board went on to consider the role that income generation and commercialisation should play in future plans for the Council. There was universal agreement that whilst income generation inevitably required some investment it was essential for the Council to develop other sources of income if it was to become more self-sufficient. Members suggested that Scrutiny would be the ideal vehicle for exploring new opportunities for generating income and hoped the Executive would embrace joint working in this area.*

2. Overview and Scrutiny Questions Submitted to the Mayor

In order to increase their understanding of the budget proposals and inform their discussions, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board submitted a number of questions to the Mayor in advance of their meeting on 19th January 17. Below is a summary of the questions and the answers provided;

No	Question
Q1	Can Members be provided with the total budget line by line?
A1	Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report published on 17th January 2017 for the Cabinet meeting to be held on 24 th January 2017 contains more detailed budget information by Service Division and Area. Additional information is also provided on spend type, for example employee or premises.
Q2	Can Members receive a summary of any changes made in these proposals compared to the proposals previously shared with Scrutiny and also if there are any changes between the information provided to OSM and the information in the Cabinet Report?
A2	<p>There are no material changes to the savings proposals provided to Overview and Scrutiny for this meeting and the Budget Report.</p> <p>Within the Budget Report to Cabinet, Section 23 - Consultation and Scrutiny Input, includes a list of those savings ideas that formed part of the public consultation. After consideration of the consultation feedback, a number of savings were not endorsed for progression, totalling £7.2m. The details are included in paragraph 23.2 on page 27.</p> <p>Appendix 6 of the report includes a full summary of all the savings proposals recommended for approval. The final column on this appendix identifies if this is a new or existing proposal.</p> <p>For clarification a “New” status is a proposal which is either completely new or has not been published in this format before. Some of these were counted under a ‘Business Efficiency’ total in our October consultation without publishing their full description.</p> <p>Business Change Response;</p> <p>See Corporate response above</p> <p>Neighbourhoods Response;</p> <p>Business Efficiencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business efficiencies in terms of planned restructures in parks, neighbourhood enforcement, Citizen redesign, Housing Solutions • As part of looking at reducing costs to the council, Bristol Waste Company was asked to put forward savings options for their delivery of their services. The 4 proposals were not part of the original suite of savings and can be delivered without any negative impact on the delivery of their recently agreed business plan. <p>Changing how we fund and provide services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a reduction in the value of savings from Third Party payments in 19/20 to £4.4m in 19/20 to reflect savings captured through separate budget lines e.g. waste • There is a significant increase in the savings identified for Parks to £3.9m with a clear direction of travel to make parks cost neutral to the council.

No	Question																																																							
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The saving range for Neighbourhood Partnerships is proposed at the higher end• Recommissioning of housing related support for homeless household is now included• New ways of providing public toilets is now included• In house enforcement now has a higher savings target for 17/18 as further work has identified a greater opportunity• Reducing the use of temporary accommodation is now included following a reshaping of the team and new approach <p>Increasing our income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase our income from Cems and Crems through additional sales of remembrances• Staff supporting approved licensing schemes to be funded from that income stream rather than the General Fund• Increase income from Bulky waste collections following increase in fees in line with other authorities• Increase in income from litter fines as part of new enforcement team restructure• Increase income from translation and interpreting service• Faster recovery of Housing Benefit debt in line with DWP best practice <p>Reducing or stopping services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Library service redesign was originally a range of savings but is now proposed to be £1.4m over 3 years• Local Crisis & Prevention fund reduction of 55% - a range presented to Scrutiny• Limit Partly Occupied relief for business rates added as an option• Reduce funding for PCSO’s originally identified as a range of savings. £181k to be saved in 17/18 which will equate to losing approximately 10 PCSO’s from the currently funded 20• Reduce Discretionary Rate Relief for business rates added• Alternative funding models for Aston Court Mansion added• Reduction in Wellbeing Grant added• Remove council subsidy from Jubilee Pool added• Seagull prevention added• Subsidy for salary costs for wildlife programme added• Remove council contribution to Bristol in Bloom added <p>People Response;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• See corporate response and Appendix 6 of the Cabinet Report <table><tr><th>Changed</th><th>17/18 £’000</th><th>18/19 £’000</th><th>19/20 £’000</th><th>Total £’000</th></tr><tr><td>Changed</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Reshape Children’s Centres Services – increased by £400k</td><td>750</td><td>750</td><td></td><td>1,500</td></tr><tr><td>New</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Reduced Education Service Grant Investment (See Appendix 5)</td><td>500</td><td>1,320</td><td></td><td>1,820</td></tr><tr><td>Charge for some Community Links services</td><td>50</td><td></td><td>50</td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>Reduce supporting people services</td><td>643</td><td>1,157</td><td></td><td>1,800</td></tr><tr><td>Reduce funding for employment support services</td><td>100</td><td></td><td></td><td>100</td></tr><tr><td>Remove subsidy for adult education at Stoke Lodge</td><td>55</td><td>55</td><td></td><td>110</td></tr><tr><td>New but previously in Business Efficiency</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Respite Policy Review</td><td>454</td><td></td><td></td><td>454</td></tr></table>	Changed	17/18 £’000	18/19 £’000	19/20 £’000	Total £’000	Changed					Reshape Children’s Centres Services – increased by £400k	750	750		1,500	New					Reduced Education Service Grant Investment (See Appendix 5)	500	1,320		1,820	Charge for some Community Links services	50		50	100	Reduce supporting people services	643	1,157		1,800	Reduce funding for employment support services	100			100	Remove subsidy for adult education at Stoke Lodge	55	55		110	New but previously in Business Efficiency					Respite Policy Review	454			454
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Q3	<p>What are the 5 highest risk savings in your directorate and what are you doing to mitigate against them?</p> <p>Business Change Response</p> <p>A3 There are three savings regarded as a risk which are shown as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cross council ABS restructure £1.046m. We are currently identifying the ABS restructure as a risk because it is due to be transferred into the Resources Directorate in April and therefore the detail and delivery plans need to be reviewed to ensure that savings are delivered on schedule.• Transport efficiency via the Region’s Mayoral combined authority £2m. There will be continual negotiation with partners to deliver this saving and we will be seeking opportunities for external funding to deliver the objectives.• ICT £569k. There are currently two risks highlighted for ICT. In the first instance the risk relates to unforeseen costs that may incur as service propositions are developed which may relate to one off pressures or ongoing delivery costs such as licensing. The second relates to unforeseen costs in relation to implementation of statutory or regulatory requirements that will bring about an unknown and natural pressure against the service. <p>Neighbourhoods Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neighbourhood partnerships – New approach to Neighbourhood Partnerships is required. Whilst £500k will come out of the budget in 17/18 feedback from councillors has been that we may need to look at the profiling for future years savings in order to support any transition to a new model. A cross party councillor working group has been set up to help steer what a new model may look like and there is an event planned on 4th Feb to look at models from across the country which is being externally facilitated.• Parks – To move in the direction of making our parks cost neutral we will need a robust exploration of the options available and a detailed plan. The plan will be delivered in the summer utilising external expertise and working with partners. This will need to link in with the MTFP refresh.• Libraries – We already hold a lot of information following the extensive work that was undertaken through Libraries for the Future. We will need to work with the city to deliver a smaller high quality library service, looking at how we might also deliver a different offer in some communities.• Local Crisis & Prevention Fund – This is a reduction in short term help and we will need to revisit how this is currently allocated to ensure those in the greatest need have greatest access. <p>People Response</p>																																																							

No	Question
	<p>Service Impact Risks and Mitigation</p> <p>1) Supporting People ensuring that service users in preventative services don't tip into more costly statutory services <u>Mitigation:</u> We are working with both providers and service users to co-design and are planning to take a smaller saving in 2017/18 and preparing for 2018/19.</p> <p>2) Youth Links - where the proposed saving is £1.2m which is about 25% of the current total. <u>Mitigation:</u> We are taking time to make the savings with new contracts not in place till 2018/19. We have a strong Children Young People and Families Strategy and a framework to work with providers to access other funds. We have already started joint working with the youth voluntary sector to plan for savings.</p> <p>3) Services for people with disabilities <u>Mitigation:</u> This is cross cutting, but in Social Care we are implementing the 3-tier model to ensure we can best meet growing demands in the city.</p> <p>4) Loss of the Education Services Grant <u>Mitigation:</u> We are mitigating through the Learning City Partnership working and through the investment made to taper the Education Services Grant reduction over 2 years.</p> <p>5) Managing the increasing demand for adult social care <u>Mitigation:</u> Implementing our 3-tier model of care and investment into supporting adult social care including using the full social care precept and grant.</p> <p>Service Delivery Risks and Mitigation</p> <p>We have well established governance in place to oversee the delivery of savings proposals within the People Directorate comprising all Service Directors, HR and Finance Business Partners. And regular reporting to and monitoring by both Cabinet Members and People Scrutiny This predates the current spending review, and new proposals were submitted with full visibility of our existing commitments.</p> <p>Even in the context of the recent round of voluntary severance, we have retained a high number of long-serving staff whose expertise and knowledge in the areas that represent most risk will be an key mitigation in the reduction of impact to service users.</p> <p>A full range of Relevance Checks or Full EqIAs have been produced for each proposal. In addition, our input into the Cumulative EqIA has further informed our understanding of the impacts across the full range of savings across the Council, allowing us to feed this directly back into the design and delivery of our own work.</p> <p>Refreshed Corporate governance and oversight of savings delivery will provide challenge and assurance that individual proposals are 'on track' as well identify and seek to mitigate any corporate level risks emerging from the implementation of such a wide reaching range of savings.</p> <p>Place Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BE2 Review our property savings (£2,500k). The Property Realisation Board is charged to deliver this but will require the corporate support of all departments to contract their needs and asks of the corporate estate and facilities. • IN01 Reviewing on-street parking charges (£1,077k income). Mitigation: the tariff increase will follow statutory Traffic Regulation procedures which will ensure any objections are fully taken into account. • IN04 Establish City Centre business rate development team (£480k). Mitigation: This saving is dependent on legislative change which presents a challenge to the delivery of this project. Upfront costs during 2017/18 and 2018/19 need to be recovered against income yielded from 2019/20. We will widen the

No	Question
	<p>focus on those buildings across the wider city that represent the highest prospect of delivering a positive outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RS11 Reduce funding to key arts providers (£380k). Mitigation: The budget reduction has been aligned with the contract cycle i.e. 2018/19. All Arts organisations will have the opportunity to bid into the reduced pot. • BE16 Reduce staffing in Museum Service (£200k). Mitigation: We are working on a full Business Case and how it can be achieved to minimise the impact on the public and there will be a full consultation with staff. There will be public consultation if there is a significant impact.
Q4	What are the 5 highest opportunity areas for income generation in your directorate? What are you doing to take these forward? Is there any impact on these from the savings proposals?
A4	<p>Business Change Response;</p> <p>There are three areas of income generation in the Resources directorate and all have savings targets against them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registrar's • Mansion House • Legal services <p>The only potential impact is in the area of registrar's and this will be kept under review.</p> <p>Neighbourhoods Response;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opps Centre – part of the savings proposals following a business case and previous cabinet approval. Building work currently underway to create the facility at Temple Street and income opportunities generated for example through selling space to other public sector services and expanding telecare services • Parking – part of the savings proposals to increase/introduce parking costs at Ashton Court and Blaise and Oldbury Court. Will need some investment where we need to introduce <p>People Response;</p> <p>1) Social Care Contributions We currently already charge the maximum we are able to under legislation for contribution to care costs and access to Care services.</p> <p>2) Carers Income Local Authorities are able to charge carers for access to carer's service, this was put forward in the budget consultation as a potential saving, however this was withdrawn following the Consultation process.</p> <p>3) Trading with Schools Currently the Council has a traded schools service which generates a surplus which supports delivery of other education services provided by the local authority. Due to the changing Education landscape and cuts to Education Services Grant there is little scope to increase the level of surplus further at this point. We are working in partnership with schools to look at future models for a Learning City traded service.</p> <p>Place Response;</p> <p>IN01 Reviewing on-street parking charges (£1,077k)</p>

No	Question
	<p>The tariff increase will follow statutory Traffic Regulation procedures.</p> <p><u>IN03 Residents' parking income (£696k)</u></p> <p>Income from the existing Residents' Parking Schemes is ring-fenced to cover operation costs and to pay back capital borrowed for implementation; any surplus in future years can by law only be used for transport functions.</p> <p><u>IN04 Establish city centre business rate development team (£480k)</u></p> <p>As the government moves to retention of business rates, there is a direct link between economic development and council income. Establishing a team to promote empty premises could lead to an uplift in retained business rates. This project will examine in detail the opportunity and put in place a team dedicated to ensuring an uplift. This is dependent on a change in government policy and an indication that Bristol can benefit from uplift in the expected way.</p> <p><u>IN05 Increase income from museum buildings (£236k)</u></p> <p>The main areas we are focussing on are retail, cafes and events business, exhibitions and site permissions. We will build on the growth of the past 2 years and we will continue to be more commercial in our outlook and practice. Increased income is included within the forecast budget from 2017/18.</p> <p><u>IN07 Reintroduce Sunday charging for parking on-street (£200k)</u></p> <p>The tariff increase will follow statutory Traffic Regulation procedures.</p>
Q5	<p>What are the biggest five areas of spend in your directorate that have been protected from efficiency savings and why?</p>
A5	<p>Appendix 1 of the Budget Report provides an analysis of the savings by Division and Service Area, which may provide a guide to areas that currently have no savings aligned to them.</p> <p>Business Change Response;</p> <p>No areas in the directorate have been protected from efficiency savings. All areas have been subject to efficiency reviews.</p> <p>Appendix 1 of the Budget Report provides an analysis of the savings by Division and Service Area, which may provide a guide to areas that currently have no savings aligned to them.</p> <p>Neighbourhoods Response;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food safety – Statutory function in terms of inspections and we are underperforming in terms of numbers. Therefore we have not taken any staffing efficiencies through this process and have increased the investment through Public Health • Voluntary & community sector grants – no additional reduction in VCS grants over and above the taper contained in the agreed Prospectus • Commissioned Safer Bristol services (hate crime, domestic violence) – core services that support tackling hate crime and victims of domestic violence which are key priorities • Women's Commission – Small £5k budget that supports the Mayor's Commission which delivers more than £5k worth of benefit <p>People Response;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All areas of spend are subject to delivering efficiencies in the way we work and the contracts we hold.

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	<p>Place Response;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Appendix 1 of the Budget Report provides an analysis of the savings by Division and Service Area, which may provide a guide to areas that currently have no savings aligned to them however all services in the Directorate have been considered and reviewed at depth in terms of savings and income as part of the budget process. The following area which was included in the consultation proposed 2017/18 budget has not been progressed: <p>Companion Concessionary travel (£400k) Discretionary time period for concessionary travel (£70k) Community transport concession (£195k)</p> <p>All changes to the concessionary scheme where it exceeds the statutory minimum need to be agreed by three out of the four West of England authorities; additionally this function is being transferred to the MCA and we need to ensure consistency across the wider area. Also the impact on people with disabilities of reductions in this budget is deemed to be high and therefore the previously proposed savings were not taken forward.</p>																														
Q6	For each staff saving, what percentage of FTEs does the saving represent and what are the grades in each case?																														
Q7	What is the percentage of lower graded officers being impacted upon vs the management structure?																														
A6/7	<p>At this stage, it is not possible to provide an overall percentage of FTE savings and grades in each case. This is due to the fact that many of the proposals will be subject to further consultation with the affected staff groups which will not commence until the proposals are approved. However, reviewing the voluntary severance process to date may give us a possible indication of where future workforce reductions may fall, the table below sets this out for members information:</p> <table><tr><th>Equivalent Grade</th><th>FTE</th><th>% of cohort</th></tr><tr><td>BG2-4</td><td>1.30</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>BG5-6</td><td>27.05</td><td>4.47</td></tr><tr><td>BG7-8</td><td>70.14</td><td>4.65</td></tr><tr><td>BG9-10</td><td>59.80</td><td>3.74</td></tr><tr><td>BG11-12</td><td>51.80</td><td>4.90</td></tr><tr><td>BG13-15</td><td>38.58</td><td>6.75</td></tr><tr><td>Senior Managers/Professional</td><td>11.14</td><td>5.56</td></tr><tr><td>Service Directors</td><td>1.00*</td><td>4.54</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>260.81</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>* 2 further Service Director posts were also deleted as part of this exercise</p> <p>It is proposed that the organisational redesign (Line EE7) will lead to a significant reduction in the senior management structure over and above wider workforce. The redesign will need to be undertaken by the incoming Chief Executive and could impact on all of the senior management posts, set out in the table below:</p>	Equivalent Grade	FTE	% of cohort	BG2-4	1.30		BG5-6	27.05	4.47	BG7-8	70.14	4.65	BG9-10	59.80	3.74	BG11-12	51.80	4.90	BG13-15	38.58	6.75	Senior Managers/Professional	11.14	5.56	Service Directors	1.00*	4.54	Total	260.81	
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Q8	What percentage of the overall directorate budget does each saving equate to?																																
A8	 <p>Summary Appendix 1 with % saving information</p>																																
Q9	What amount and percentage of each directorate budget is ring fenced for specific areas?																																
A9	<p>There are certain services where there are restrictions on how the resources can be utilised. This includes, for example, Public Health Grant Funded Services, Parking and Licensing. The Council has limited flexibility on how these resources are used, but the Council can align main stream services within that flexibility e.g. leisure services can deliver Public Health Outcomes.</p> <p>In addition, there are statutory ring-fenced services, including for example the Housing Revenue Account and Dedicated Schools Grant which are much more restricted.</p> <p>No ring fenced services have been excluded from efficiency review and budget process.</p>																																
Q10	What amount and percentage of each directorate budget is spent on statutory services?																																
A10	<p>A response was provided to a question to Full Council on 13th December 2016 on the spend relating to statutory services, as follows:</p> <p>Local authorities do not, and are not required to, account for statutory and discretionary services. To undertake a thorough exercise that would be reliable would require a review of each service area provided with the service managers, legal and financial colleagues to identify the statutory and discretionary elements of each the various services and in what depth the service is provided.</p> <p>This is impossible to do as there is no absolute cast iron definition available and we would also need to refer to case law.</p> <p>Libraries are a really good example of why it is impossible. The council has a statutory responsibility to provide a comprehensive service but there is no detail of how the service has to be provided.</p> <p>Neighbourhoods Response;</p> <p>The two key areas for Neighbourhoods are the ring fenced public health grant of £33.3m for 2017/18 and the</p>																																

No	Question
	<p>revenue budget for the ring fenced Housing Revenue Account of £121.9m. These are separate from the net general fund budget for Neighbourhoods of £67m.</p> <p>People Response;</p> <p>The People gross budget includes ring-fenced grants such as Dedicated Schools Grant, Troubled Families Grant, Skills Funding Agency Grant and Better Care Fund.</p> <p>Place Response;</p> <p>See corporate response however:</p> <p><u>Ring fenced Grants (£)</u> Arts Council funding £2.2m Energy grants £1.7m Transport grants £9m</p> <p><u>Income (£)</u> Parking to support parking services costs / transport related expenditure) £17.7m</p>
Q11 A11	<p>Can full EqIAs be provided for each saving? OSM would like to highlight that we have concerns about the quality of the EQIAs.</p> <p>Business Change Response;</p> <p>Where relevant all EQIAs/relevance checks have been completed for resources.</p> <p>Place response;</p> <p>Either an Equality Relevance Check or a full EqIA have been completed and signed off by the Equalities Officer for each proposal.</p>

3. Questions to Cabinet 30th January 17

At a meeting on 30th January 17, the Cabinet considered the budget recommendations that would be going to Full Council, as well as the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy. Councillors and members of the public submitted a number of questions in advance of the meeting. The following is a summary, including the responses provided;

Questions from Councillors;

No	Question
Q1	<p>Cllr Anthony Negus</p> <p>The criteria for identifying and defining the listed savings is unclear but it is assumed that it was ultimately a cross-departmental process.</p> <p>Nevertheless even checking first the Neighbourhoods' savings and then reviewed as a whole there appear to be many areas where the impacts (and financial consequences) are either included as a net assessment within each primary saving item, or ignored.</p> <p>It seems that the latter is the more likely as following through some of the items highlights a number of unresolved issues. This may achieve a numerically-balanced budget but it will be neither deliverable or sustainable.</p> <p>1. Has this crucial overview and risk audit been undertaken and if so by whom?</p> <p>2. How can this budget be seen to be robust if only the primary saving element has been identified?</p>
A1	<p>As outlined in the budget report, there will always be risks inherent in any budget process - what is important is that these are identified and mitigated / managed effectively. The overview and risk audit has been undertaken and considered by the Service Director - Finance</p> <p>The risk associated with the delivery of the propositions has been assessed and provision made for partial non-delivery for those items with lower confidence level due to their stage of development. In some instances further public consultation may be required in relation to a new proposal or specific implementation of an existing proposition within the approved cash limits. The decision (and consultation) in respect of detailed operational proposals will be considered by myself and Cabinet; and we will decide how best to allocate funds within the designated cash limits and whether any call is required on the consultation element of the risk reserve.</p> <p>2. The proposals for savings vary in their value and complexity and as part of the ongoing assessment of the propositions during the concept phase and readiness to deliver; account has been taken of the estimated cost and savings attributed to each, with net savings reported where applicable.</p> <p>For projects considered more complex, or where it is anticipated that project management skills and specialist resources will assist, a central resource has been established with a proposed governance approach designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable officers to make timely decisions; • keep projects on track; • highlight and act upon any risks and issues quickly; and • ensure optimum costs / benefit is realised. <p>This will ensure that we are always getting best value for the city from the changes we are making, whilst looking to make swift decisions to ensure the momentum behind these initiatives is maintained and culminates in timely delivery.</p>
Q2	<p>Cllr Carla Denyer</p>

No	Question
	<p>Reminders for voter registration: I am shocked by the proposal to stop sending reminders to register to vote. Although this is not going to result in actual harm to vulnerable people's wellbeing, as some of the other proposed cuts surely will, it is likely to further increase voter disenfranchisement. If people feel disempowered, they are less likely to push back when politicians do things they don't like, like cut their services, and so the cycle of local government destruction goes on.</p> <p>1. I would like to know whether any other Councils have stopped sending household notification letters, and if so, what was the impact on the number of people registered to vote a few years later, especially in young and/or transient areas?</p> <p>Potential expansion of approved licensing schemes: I welcome the potential expansion of landlord licensing schemes into other areas of the city, as you know – I've been banging on about this for a couple of years now.</p> <p>However, I am confused about the budget implication. The description of this line item explains that the staff costs will be funded by the license fee, implying it will be cost-neutral to the Council. But then the Savings column says £95k will be saved by expanding the licensing scheme.</p> <p>2. Please could we have some explanation of how, especially since I presume the license fee is not allowed to be used as an income-generating scheme. Was it that the fees for the current discretionary licensing areas were not sufficiently covering staff costs?</p> <p>A2 <u>Reminders for voter registration:</u></p> <p>I believe all political parties have a role to play in the continual and constant need to grow and improve voter registration.</p> <p>Specifically regarding the Household Notification Letter, councils in Liverpool, Leeds, Newcastle, Manchester and Nottingham will no longer be sending HNLs citing budget pressures.</p> <p>Also, for the Combined Authority election in May, it is important to have consistency of communication to the electorate across the areas. South Gloucestershire Council and B&NES do not send an HNL and do not have the budget to do so for May 2017.</p> <p>There is however the statutory annual household canvass process, through which Household Enquiry Forms are sent to all 197,000 households inviting them to register.</p> <p>Non-responders are followed up with two reminders and eventually making a personal visit.</p> <p><u>Potential expansion of approved licensing schemes:</u></p> <p>The saving is created as officer posts are deleted from the general fund. The posts will transfer into property licensing and these will result in a general fund saving of £95K in 2017-18. Property licensing raises income from licence fees which is ring-fenced to pay for scheme costs.</p>
Q3	<p>Cllr Clive Stevens</p> <p><u>Regarding the proposed changes to Planning</u></p> <p>In the future there is likelihood that Government will empower the private sector to process some planning applications. How this will be done is not clear, but we have a chance to shape the Planning Department and the local market to be able to take advantage of this. A threat can be turned to an opportunity. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition would normally start with simple applications, if so and to compete the Council needs an efficient and effective system for simple applications, perhaps a fast track system to do this.

No	Question
A3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PreApps are a way to simplify the process by ensuring the developer gets things right for a speedy full application. Any PreApp therefore that gets a fast approval will be most valuable to a developer. It looks like you are progressing something like this at BE33. There may be more opportunity for other business ideas such as considered a sub-committee to consider a PreApp, a simple “guidebook” of priorities (e.g. with affordable housing top of the list), or an insurance policy that developers could buy alongside a PreApp. • To shape the local market to be advantageous to the Council, we will need tighter enforcement. That increases the care which the architect and developer will need to take, to avoid delays they would be more likely to invest in a good PreApp. This would encourage the product we are selling. Yet RS20 looks like the Council plans to cut enforcement. <p>I would therefore like to ask:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Could the Cabinet Member for Place share with me please the strategic plan for developing the Planning Department, making it fit for the future and so it can thrive? 2. If a strategic plan is not yet in place, what scope is there for councillors to contribute to developing one? <p>Despite rumours to the contrary, Planning is a core competence of the Council, it adds much value and if structured and nurtured well could be a real money spinner, even with competition.</p> <p>I am aware of Central Government’s intentions to test competition in the processing of planning applications and I agree that this apparent threat could be turned into an opportunity. DCLG consulted on this in the first quarter of last year and, whilst DCLG’s response to the consultation is still awaited, the Council’s Planning service reacted immediately in order to put ourselves in a good position to deal with this challenge.</p> <p>The savings proposal in question (BE32) is the full year effect of the re-design of the Development Management (DM) service implemented in 16/17. Whilst there is a saving associated with this, a key driver behind the service re-design was to make the DM service more responsive to both customer needs and also the specific types of applications being submitted to us.</p> <p>I believe that the redesigned DM service will be able to respond quickly to any pilot proposals for competition in this area, and in general will improve our consistency in delivering this service across the city.</p> <p>These proposals were shared with the DC Leads group (DC Chairs, Vice Chairs & party leads) in 2016 and received support.</p> <p>Following a successful pilot, and with my support, the DM service has recently consulted on and implemented a refreshed pre-application service. A key element of this is a “premium” service where developers can pay a higher fee to receive a dedicated service to an agreed programme. The additional income (full year effect) that this will generate is, as you say, included as savings proposal BE33. I am however, also reassured that the impartial nature of this regulatory service will be maintained and that the Council’s high standards for community involvement will continue to be promoted as part of this service.</p> <p>I also concur that the credibility of the planning service depends on there being an effective enforcement function. The enforcement team is funded through planning application income so we have a duty to ensure that this function operates as efficiently as possible. Savings proposal RS20 seeks to do this by maintaining the reactive enforcement service (response to complaints) but ending the proactive monitoring of development sites. Instead, sites will be monitored for commencements as this generates CIL payments to the Council.</p>
Q4	<p>Cllr Jerome Thomas</p> <p>Would it be prudent to delay key proposed transport savings for 17/18 until it is clear whether the new combined mayoral authority could fund some of this expenditure that BCC is struggling to afford?</p>

No	Question
A4	<p>1. The Government has yet to publish the financial order which is the statutory instrument setting out the financial arrangements of the new West of England Combined Authority (although the draft order for setting up the authority has been published).</p> <p>2. The budget report sets out current budget assumptions, the net impact of which are currently estimated to be neutral for 2017/18.</p> <p>3. A number of assumptions as set out in the report were prepared in advance of the draft order setting out the final arrangements for the new authority, and these are currently being reviewed. Our initial view is that none of the proposed transport savings relate to the functions or funding transferring to the Mayoral Combined Authority although supported bus services will become a joint function.</p> <p>4. The Council has already started the tender process for supported bus services, following the consultation exercise in the autumn of 2016. The timescales for awarding new contracts to commence in September 2017 are already tight, so any delay until the MCA is in a position to influence this would risk services not being in place.</p>
Q5	<p>Cllr Paula R'Rourke</p> <p>As the Mayor has invested so much effort in building relationships with the City Partners and has put so much emphasis on health, is it not concerning that a good example of sharing services is being prejudiced by a decision made to withdraw funding of 15K from Bristol Zoo?</p> <p>I refer to the withdrawal of the grant to the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Trust. This is just a small example, in financial terms, but it exemplifies how the planned cuts will result in a withdrawal of services which will, in turn, damage the health of the people of Bristol.</p> <p>I am not asking the Mayor to take the 15K from elsewhere, as there is no fat elsewhere to cut, I'm asking the Mayor to acknowledge that Central government must revise how local government is funded</p>
A5	<p>1. The council invests £25k in the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife project - this funding was due to be tapered in 2017-18 and the budget proposal removes the council contribution.</p> <p>2. We recognise that the trust does a lot of excellent work through education programmes and conservation work in the Avon Gorge and Downs area. The money that the council invests supports the salary costs of a conservation officer employed by the zoo and a casual employee who contribute to this work.</p> <p>3. The council's Parks and Green Spaces service is moving towards a model of being self-funded through income generation and commercialisation. This means that the service is no longer going to have the capacity to contribute to other organisations that have the chance to fundraise for themselves. The Zoo and the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Trust are both set up as organisations that can receive donations and fundraise and I would suggest that they are in a strong position to do so.</p> <p>4. Council officers will continue to work with the zoo and the trust, but the council is no longer able to offer the cash contribution to the project.</p>
Q6	<p>Cllr Charlie Bolton</p> <p>The parks forum have sent a statement to us stating that:</p> <p><i>In our view managing parks on a cost neutral basis is totally unrealistic and undeliverable. We simply don't believe it can be done – if it could then undoubtedly other cities would be doing it.</i></p> <p>Given the proposed £4m of savings, can you advise me what the plan is to meet these savings?</p>
A6	<p>1. This budget proposal signals a direction of travel for Parks and Green Spaces which is about maximising the</p>

No	Question
	<p>potential income from council assets and using this income to subsidise and maintain the assets, and also to look at different models for management of parks and green spaces that could involve more community ownership or other relevant models that allow different sorts of financing.</p> <p>2. The first step will be to undertake a comprehensive piece of work to assess the realistic income generation potential of the Parks and Green spaces assets. Taking the view that because others haven't done something, it can't be due to the wrong approach. To the contrary, there are examples across the world of successful income generation models in parks, our task is to look at these and see how far they can go in generating enough income to manage parks across a whole city. This will start immediately and will be complete in 17/18 financial year, and will provide the plan needed to maximise the income from parks and also the likely levels of income that can be realised.</p>
Q7	<p>Cllr Martin Fodor</p> <p>Restructuring and service re-designs:</p> <p>Shorter hours such as six hour days or four day weeks are often found to be as productive as the current five day full-hours working week.</p> <p>1. What flexible and reduced hours options have been looked at instead of using redundancies to 'restructure' services and would the Mayor agree to propose a shorter working week in dialogue with the trades unions and workforce?</p> <p>Partnership working grants:</p> <p>Small sums for project initiation and small grants for local groups typically unlock many times more in other funds and resources. The added value can be what provides vital services and facilities. It stimulates partnership and match funding.</p> <p>2. Will the Mayor undertake to ensure there are local small budgets and/or small grants funds so that it is demonstrated to community groups and local partners that we really do want to support involvement and help them unlock grants and donations?</p>
A7	<p><u>Restructuring and service re-designs:</u></p> <p>As part of service redesign our managing change policy contains a provision which enables managers and employees to consider reduced working hours to avoid redundancies. This is a requirement of the policy.</p> <p>Reducing working hours and the working week for all employees would potentially require a large scale and lengthy re-negotiation process and would mean staff could suffer a pay reduction due to this. It could also disproportionately affect lower paid staff, many of whom already work part-time.</p> <p>We continually seek to avoid compulsory redundancies and the recent Voluntary Severance scheme has mitigated the need for compulsory redundancies.</p> <p><u>Partnership working grants:</u></p> <p>1. We recognise that small amounts of seed funding can unlock other grants and donations. However, given the budget pressures on the council, discretionary funding such as small grants must be considered and it is proposed that £100k is removed from a budget of £371k.</p> <p>2. There is no intention of removing all money related to small grants, remaining funding will be concentrated in</p>

No	Question
	<p>areas that most need this funding in order to raise prospects and reduce deprivation.</p> <p>3. Crowd sourcing and other online donation platforms, and other, more traditional forms of local fundraising, have been successful in other parts of the country in enabling neighbourhoods to raise their own money to support local initiatives. Grants are also available to local communities through some businesses and commercial organisations.</p>
Q8	<p>Cllr Stephen Clarke</p> <p>One of the items in the document called 'Budget Saving Proposals' is entitled 'Review our property services'. This item says that BCC will 'complete a major review of our property estate and seek operational efficiencies to identify the best strategic options to deliver those services'. The savings anticipated are £2.5m.</p> <p>In common with a number of other items in the list, this is a very big number with no detail behind it. I appreciate that no firm decisions may have been made about the operational impact of these cuts but there must be some 'workings' behind these figures.</p> <p>1. Can the Mayor please explain -in broad terms- how such a large saving can be made as soon as 2017/18?</p> <p>Another of the items in the document called 'Budget Saving Proposals' is entitled 'Local Crisis and Prevention Fund reduction'. This proposes the reduction of the budget for this emergency fund of £1.05m in 2017/18.</p> <p>This seems to be a classic case of a false economy. People who are denied this final emergency financial safety net may well end up on the streets or in prison where they cost both the City and the nation far more.</p> <p>2. Would the Mayor be prepared to utilise this city's considerable financial reserves to continue to provide this vital service?</p>
A8	<p>The £2.5m savings in 17/18 from the property estate comprise reductions in the size of the operational estate, efficiency savings in facilities management and increased income from the council's portfolio of investment properties. Preparatory work to realise the savings and income is in-hand or is complete:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has identified buildings that it no longer requires to deliver operational services and these will be let, sold or redeployed. • The costs of looking after the council's buildings and accommodation will reduce by streamlining working practices and getting better value from procuring works, goods and services. • Income from the investment estate will increase as a result of lease renegotiations and new income streams such as from the recent purchase of the City Point building and digital advertising hoardings on council land. <p>The consultation process outlined a range of options available including the total removal of the fund. The proposed reduction while significant does enable vulnerable citizens to still access and receive support through this fund. There are also other options available such as the Discretionary Hardship Fund which provides support for vulnerable citizens struggling to meet their housing costs.</p> <p>2. Reserves</p> <p>No - The Council holds a number of reserves as part of its approach to maintaining a sound financial position; these are one-off in nature and not the answer to balancing the Councils ongoing budget deficit. The actual balance within these reserves for 2017/18 will not be determined until the 2016/17 accounts are closed; however are estimated to be as follows for 2017/18:</p>

No	Question
A10	<p>'The proposal to remove £475k from the local crisis and prevention fund is compounded by the proposals to remove a further £575k, which is nearly all of the current budget, on the assumption that partnership work will enable other sources of funding to be found for this work. If this is not found, this will have a negative impact on the majority users of household good services (single parent/women households, large families, disabled people and BME people) and of emergency payments (younger people. Specific attention will be needed to identify how people living in hostels and refuges will be able to source essential goods such as beds and make provision for cooking when moving into unfurnished accommodation'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to the first the question of alternative funding stream; these have been explored but none are easily accessible at present • In response to mitigation to protect 'vulnerable groups', who would normally rely on this fund, we would be looking at an approx. 1/3 and 2/3 split respectively and scaling back on total possible awards per year and total grants/goods awarded plus a reclassification of 'essential' items. We will also look at further maximising the use of second/recycled goods, noting this isn't possible in all areas of household goods supply. • There are a limited amount of charities that provide limited provision of household goods to specific groups of people and will again look at maximise the use of these, but noting cut backs in some of these areas. We are also starting to see if there is an scope to look at potential further/greater use of food banks. • We will be looking at scaling back/less frequent awards as opposed to ending awards for specific classes/types of persons
Q11	<p>Cllr Jos Clarke</p> <p>1. Whilst I understand that the council have some very tough decisions to make. I feel the proposed cut to the neighbourhood partnership budget will have a detrimental effect on the local community and their ability to make positive changes to their own area. How will you ensure that effected communities will not be disadvantaged if they are left to fend for themselves and what support will be available to communities to prepare them for the model where they will need to be self directed, if the neighbourhood partnership model is to survive in their area.</p> <p>2. Can you tell me what criteria you will use to decide which areas will still get council resources and will any budgets still be devolved to neighbourhoods, if so which ones and what will be the mechanism to apply for them.</p>
A11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On 4th February the consultation will commence about how to implement the reduction in the neighbourhood partnership budget. The consultation will include working with Neighbourhood Partnerships to determine what is right for that area and what support they might need to get there, and using this to reshape the team to offer the right support to neighbourhoods that most need it. 2. The criteria for how to apportion remaining resources and budgets, and the methods for doing so will also be considered in the consultation.
Q12	<p>Cllr Chris Davies</p> <p>REMOVAL OF COUNCIL SUBSIDY FROM JUBILEE POOL</p> <p>After a previous strong campaign by both residents and local councillors to ensure the survival of the Jubilee Swimming Baths, it is a great pity, following huge local demand for this pool, that its continuation could be threatened at the end of September when the council subsidy is to be removed. Can the mayor tell me -</p> <p>1) How many school visits have there been over the last year; how many membership cards are currently in use and what is the level of attendance for all groups and public users?</p>

No	Question
A14	<p>1. Can the mayor please explain what services will continue to be paid for by the council in our parks after the next 3 years ,who will provide them and what the costs are.</p> <p>2. Can the mayor please provide the details, or even good estimates, of income that he is proposing to raise these funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This budget proposal signals a direction of travel for Parks and Green Spaces which is about maximising the potential income from council assets and using this income to subsidise and maintain the assets, and also to look at different models for management of parks and green spaces that could involve more community ownership or other relevant models that allow different sorts of financing. 2. The first step will be to undertake a comprehensive piece of work to assess the realistic income generation potential of the Parks and Green spaces assets. There are examples across the world of successful income generation models in parks, our task is to look at these and see how far they can go in generating enough income to manage parks across a whole city. This will start immediately and will be complete in 17/18 financial year, and will provide the plan needed to maximise the income from parks and also the likely levels of income that can be realised.
Q15	<p>Cllr Ruth Pickersgill</p> <p>Many disabled and older people’s groups believe that our strategic aims to ‘promote independence and support people to live as independently as possible in the community’ and to ‘tackle inequality’, will be unachievable with the proposed £1,459k cuts to targeted support for older and disabled people, (community meals and day services to adults) and a £7,204k cut to Care and Support to adults (including Supporting People, community support, respite care, dementia support etc.)</p> <p>Within Supporting People, a 50% reduction in mental health floating support, older people’s floating support and generic support, a 20% cut in physical and sensory impairment support support, a 40% cut in wardens and sheltered alarms and 100% reduction in HIV support, will inevitably lead to increased need for more expensive residential placements, or will add pressure to crumbling NHS services and the ‘humanitarian crisis’, as people require more medical interventions and hospital beds.</p> <p>Supporting People services, adult day centres and drop ins and also respite services enable many older and disabled people (particularly those with learning difficulties) to live independently and contribute to society at a relatively low cost. These cuts, coupled with national government cuts to Independent Living Fund, Employment Support Allowance, Access to Work, Disabled Living Allowance etc., and with increased rationing of direct payments (numbers are already reducing locally), are going to make it impossible for many older and disabled people to live independently or in supported settings in the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please can we be told exactly how each of the cuts to these areas of the People budget will impact of the ability of disabled and older people to live independently, how we mitigate any adverse impact in terms of equality, and how we can be sure none of them leads to additional costs elsewhere in the NHS or social care system? Please can further consideration be given by the Cabinet to prioritising maintaining the level of funding to adult social care in this round of cuts to allow adequate services for the most vulnerable in our City to survive, while pressure can be built nationally to get the Government to invest adequately in social care and the NHS? <p>A15</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council has looked at all areas of spend in arriving at this budget for 2017/18 and the next few years and are aiming to balance savings across statutory and discretionary services. 2. There are savings across Care and Support Adults which impact on service users but this is also balanced by investments in the budget to mitigate the impact of demographic pressures on social care, and cover

No	Question
	<p>some of the costs of growing demand. These are set out in Appendix 5 of Cabinet budget report.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The Cumulative Impact Assessment sets out in summary the impact of savings proposals and I would draw your attention to page 3 of Appendix 7 – the Cumulative Impact Assessment, which sets out some of the initiatives under way in re-design of services for people with disabilities in particular. 4. The Council will work with social care providers to review impact and to ensure continued good use of the resources we have. As part of this we are proposing to invest £1.355m to meet the costs of the national living wage as part of this commitment to working with our providers and supporting social care workforce. <p>We do not underestimate impact of changes and I and my senior officers in People are working with Carers, Service Users, Health and Social Care partners to manage this process well and in collaboration, and officers are planning further partnership and engagement events to start following tonight's decision.</p>

Questions from Members of the Public;

Q16	<p>Simon Garrett and Bryan Carroll</p> <p>Questions to Cabinet regarding proposal RS28 Remove the subsidy for salary costs for the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Programme - from Simon Garrett (Bristol Zoological Society).</p> <p>The Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project is a partnership project, co-ordinated by Bristol City Council.</p> <p>Launched in 1999, the project works to protect this internationally important and nationally designated wildlife site through wildlife surveying and monitoring and habitat management. It also enables citizens to discover and learn about the wildlife and landscape, and take advantage of the known health benefits of access to green spaces.</p> <p>In 2001 the project employed a full-time Education Officer to provide an education programme and other activities for people of all ages and backgrounds. Since 2008, a Seasonal Education Officer has been employed to help meet demand for events and education sessions during the peak months and to further increase the range and diversity of people visiting the site. Through our community work, and since the start of the 'Your Downs' initiative, the project has been very successful in attracting people from many areas of deprivation through working with health groups and the Inner City Health Improvement Team. To date, 95,568 have directly engaged with the education programme on the Downs, equivalent to a quarter of Bristol's population.</p> <p>Other partners in the project include Bristol Zoological Society (BZS), Natural England, University of Bristol, the Merchant Venturers and Downs Committee. Each partner in the project supports and funds specific areas of the project's work. On behalf of the project partnership, BZS has hosted and managed the education officers (an in-kind contribution valued at £12,000) and part-funded the Education Officer with a £15,000 contribution. In 2016/17 Bristol City Council's financial contribution to this partnership was £25,804 towards the costs of the Education Officer's post, and a part-time Seasonal Education Officer post.</p> <p>Last August, Bristol City Council advised the partnership that the £10,000 funding for the Seasonal Education Officer post would be cut from the 2017/18 council budget, but we were told that the £15,000 contribution to Avon Gorge & Downs Biodiversity Education Officer would be maintained. On behalf of the partnership, BZS began seeking alternative funding for the seasonal post, so that the education programme could continue in 2017.</p> <p>Cutting the project funding by a further £15,000, and at such short notice, makes the delivery of the planned programme impossible, for a project which overall is worth £50,000. A wide range of events and activities have already been planned for 2017 including: eight events with the Bristol City Council Inner City Health</p>
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	<p>3. The proposals set out have taken account of the high costs, per service user, compared to other floating support services. The council is proposing that we do not purchase small, very specialist services, where the needs of these service users can be met through support from more generic services. This has been the approach taken previously in homeless services, for example.</p> <p>4. We will consult with providers, service users and carers to agree how best to implement this reduction in floating support service provision. This will include reviewing equalities data to ensure that remaining floating support services are targeted to, and can meet the needs, of all appropriate communities across the city.</p>
Q19	<p>Francis Greenacre, Member of the Downs Committee</p> <p>Question to Cabinet, 30th January 2017 from Savings propositions (App. 2, p.11). Neighbourhoods: remove salary costs for Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife education programme, £25,000 (15K education officer, 10K seasonal post).</p> <p>Members of the Downs Committee heard indirectly in July that consideration was being given to cutting the £10,000 supporting the seasonal education officer's post. Only on Friday, last week, was the Downs Committee informed (in the committee papers for our next meeting on January 23rd) of proposals to end support for both posts. There had previously been no contact, consultation or information whatsoever concerning this proposal between officers and the Downs Committee. This is the committee to which the education officer reports and from whose budget these two grants come. There is serious concern that the recommendation has been made without proper enquiry.</p> <p>The Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project, an initiative of the Council through the Downs Committee, set up the Downs education programme in 2001. A full-time education officer was appointed for a three year period and the post was funded through sponsorship generated by Bristol Zoo Gardens. Since 2004 the funding has been shared equally between the Zoo and the Downs Committee and since 2008 a part-time seasonal education officer has also been appointed.</p> <p>Over 95,000 people have taken part in talks, walks, courses, family events and over 600 formal education sessions. Nature trail guides, guided walk pamphlets and permanent information panels have been written and have reached a still wider audience. An exceptional amount of publicity, local and national, drawing attention to the Avon Gorge and Downs has also been generated.</p> <p>The Downs Committee's basic grant of £15,000 supports a programme costing at least £40,000 annually and benefiting children, families, university students and a wide variety of community groups from across the city, including those working with people with learning difficulties and disabilities. Over 6000 hours of voluntary help has given vital support to the programme and an excellent team has been established.</p> <p>The present education officer has been in post for fifteen years and has continually developed and advanced the award-winning programme. She is universally admired. And she has been increasingly successful in reaching schools, groups and families far beyond the area immediately surrounding the Downs.</p> <p>It is, of course, accepted that the Downs Committee must contribute to the council's spending cuts. With the generous assistance of Bristol Zoo Gardens it may be possible to find alternative sponsorship for the seasonal post, but the removal of the grant of £15,000 towards the education officer's post threatens the programme as a whole, which will be unable to survive beyond the summer.</p> <p>Can you and your fellow members of Cabinet not recommend that support is reduced from £25,000 to £15,000 and thus enable a project of such proven success to continue?</p>
A19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As I said in my answer to question PQ 1 from Simon Garrett, we recognise that the trust does a lot of excellent work through education programmes and conservation work in the Avon Gorge and Downs area. The money that the council invests supports the salary costs of a conservation officer employed by the zoo and a casual employee who contribute to this work.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council's Parks and Green Spaces service is moving towards a model of being self-funded through income generation and commercialisation. This means that the service is no longer going to have the capacity to contribute to other organisations that have the chance to fundraise for themselves. The Zoo and the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Trust are both set up as organisations that can receive donations and fundraise. Council officers will continue to work with the zoo and the trust, but the council is no longer able to offer the cash contribution to the project.
Q20	<p>David Melling, Director, Centre for Deaf People</p> <p>I have been made aware of a proposal to cut funding for the Sensory Support Services (SSS) which is a concern as it will have a negative impact on the Deaf community of Bristol. I therefore would like to ask the following questions:</p> <p>1. At what ratio or percentage would the funding cut before for this service. And will the cuts be reduction of staff, reduced services or change of location?</p> <p>3. How do you propose to replace access to the services needed by the Deaf community. If they need to visit the general service, the cost of interpreters would increase spending. Are there similar cuts to services within Housing department that the SSS provide support in, and how does the Council propose to inform the Deaf Community of the changes (if it happens) and lessen the impact?</p>
A20	<p>The financial position of the Council makes it necessary that we consider our discretionary spend, which in this case are the preventative services formally funded under supporting people and arrangements made through Service Agreements. All reductions outlined in the proposals will be subject to further consultation which will include service users and carers.</p> <p>1. The proposal does outline that floating support services provided directly by Bristol City Council, for this client group, are subject to a reduction of 20%. We are already discussing this proposal with the Sensory Support Services about how they can deliver some of these reductions through efficiency savings but with a reduction of 20% it is unlikely that this can be achieved without some reductions to staffing.</p> <p>2. We want to work with providers during this period to look at ways to mitigate the impact of these reductions wherever possible. However, it is acknowledged that reductions of this extent to supporting people services will have an effect on the services provided across a range of service user groups.</p>
Q21	<p>Claire O'Mahony</p> <p>Regarding the proposed cuts to the Sensory Support Service: I have a few questions about these proposed cuts and I am very concerned at the impact of these cuts on the deaf, hearing impaired, visually impaired and deafblind community as so many people from these groups rely on services that specialise in their specific area of sensory support such as the Sensory Support Service.</p> <p>1. If cuts are being made to staffing, I would imagine this could also impact any in house interpreters. If in house interpreters were to be affected by these cuts, it would mean a greater cost to the council because the cost of a freelance interpreter. For example, considering the cost of a freelance interpreter would average at £300 per day x 5 days per week x 52 weeks per year this would cost a further £78,000. This would be the cost for only one interpreter. Surely this would mean the council would still spend more in the long run and it would be more financially liable to employ an in house interpreter?</p> <p>2. A vast majority of BSL users find the information that is accessible to the public inaccessible to them due to</p>

	<p>delivery options moving forward, with the reduced budget envelope.</p> <p>3. Whilst we can't rule our reductions in staff, we do want to engage with providers, users and wider stakeholders to look at what options may look like, as outlined above.</p>
Q23	<p>Claire Wickham</p> <p>The Trustees of the Centre for Deaf People have today received information that the Sensory Support Service will have cuts of 20%. We have no further details but understand that there will be a public meeting on Monday January 30th. We further understand that the deadline for questions for this meeting is 17.00 today (Jan 24th) and the deadline for statements is 12 noon on Friday Jan 27th.</p> <p>Our first request is for further information about both the cuts and the proposed meeting.</p> <p>Without more information we can only ask generic questions. Our questions therefore are:</p> <p>1. How will the Council ensure that these cuts do not result in a loss of professional expertise and effective communication in the delivery of services to Deaf people?</p> <p>2. What plans does the Council have to support the voluntary sector to enable them to mitigate the effects of these cuts on the lives of Deaf people; and how will the Council monitor and assess the impact of the proposed cuts on Deaf people and the Deaf Community?</p>
A23	<p>1. The financial position of the Council makes it imperative that we look at both efficiencies within our statutory responsibilities and look to reduce discretionary spend which, in this case, are the preventative services formally funded under supporting people.</p> <p>2. Our proposals, at this stage, do not include specifics about how the reductions will be delivered and we want to work with service providers as part of the wider consultation period to discuss with them the best service delivery options moving forward, with the reduced budget envelope.</p> <p>3. We want to work with providers during this period to look at ways to mitigate the impact of these reductions wherever possible. However, it is acknowledged that reductions of this extent to supporting people services will have an effect on the services provided across a range of service user groups.</p>

Public Forum Statements

At each of the aforementioned meetings that have taken place to consider the budget proposals, Councillors and Members of the public also had the opportunity to submit statements commenting on the suggestions. These are attached at appendix A

Appendix A – Budget related public forum statements.

Budget Consultation

Public Forum received (chronological order)

Meeting	Date	Number of Public Forum Statements received	Pages
People Scrutiny Commission	20 10 16	2	2 - 5
Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission	27 10 16	1	6 - 13
Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission	26 01 17	1 (the statement had originally been incorrectly sent to the People Scrutiny commission but then referred to the Neighbourhoods')	14
Cabinet	30 01 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x Cllr statement (corporate strategy) • 46 x Public Forum statements (Budget recommendations to Full Council) • 9 x Cllr statements (Budget recommendations to Full Council) 	18 19 - 85 86 - 95

People Scrutiny Commission

20 October 2016

Public Forum items



1. **Judith Brown – Budget Consultation Agenda Item 7**
2. **Julie Boston – Budget Consultation Agenda Item 7**



People Scrutiny Commission 20th October 2016

PS 01 Judith Brown

Public Statement to the 'People' Scrutiny Committee 20.10.16

Following the publication of the Mayor's list of proposed cuts, in the 'Post' I have deluged by comments from members of B.O.P.F. While I am grateful to be allowed to speak as 'Expert Witness', rather than take up all your time I have summarised them as follows.

1. people not online are not able to take part in the consultation on the Budget cuts.
2. If there is telephone number to ring for a paper copy on the website, people don't know what it is because they are not online. The Council should publicise the number so that as many citizens as possible can state their view.
3. The Budget cuts seem to fall mainly on the vulnerable.
4. Changing the time of the bus pass use from 9.00 to 9.30 not only directly contradicts previous statements from elected Councillors but will disadvantage pensioners as follows:

People will not be able to get to early morning hospital appointments and will have to re-schedule which could put their treatment back weeks if not months.

People will not be able to get to G.P. early morning appointments ditto.

People will not be able to get to the 'walking' groups in the city for the 9.30 meeting time which will react adversely on their health since such walks make people healthier, fitter, less lonely and isolated, more stimulated.

People will not be able to volunteer for morning shifts because they will have started. Volunteering keeps people healthy and stimulated.

People are more alert earlier on, and more willing to leave the house then.

The Council says it is centralising things at 100 Temple Street, If buses are cut and the times to use buses are restricted, it will affect how people get there. A centralised point should be central to buses and be easier to get to.

5. The Council spends money on making Sunday special and giving children breakfasts their parents should pay for but not on care.

6. CF4. Delivering how highways information and Guidance is delivered is suggested to deliver more through the Council website. Once again, this will discriminate against people not online.

7. Assisted Digital hubs- again, more digital exclusion.

8.RS7. This should be kept open as it stops many large lorries coming into the city, which is polluted enough, parking on pavements which hinder blind and disabled people.

8. Once again Carers are being penalised, these are the people who should be supported. If Carers and their loved ones don't get the support they need, they may decide they can't cope any more and put their loved ones into residential care which will cost the Council more money.

9. There were strong feelings that the cuts will make life worse for pensioners and disabled/vulnerable people.

10. How can you charge a disabled person 2000 for a parking space outside their house? This is not right.

I have not mentioned the people who felt that the new Mayor was reneging on his promise to make the city more caring and egalitarian, by acceding to the Government's desire for more cuts, but this is strongly felt.

At the last Scrutiny, I asked whether the Director was actively working with others in the Association of District Councils, and other national organisations, to put the case for more funding for Social Care to the Government. I want to repeat that question, and to urge the Mayor to work with all our Members of Parliament to make the case for Bristol. It must be clear that while the Accident and Emergency Wards are saying they are overwhelmed because of people not going to G.P.s, and people say they don't go to G.P.s because you have to wait for an appointment, and hospitals say they have no beds for people in A & E because old people can't be released home for lack of care, that the system is at tipping point. Governments have our money, it depends what they want to spend it on. More must be spent on Social Care.

Judith Brown on behalf of Bristol Older People's Forum.

People Scrutiny Commission 20th October 2016

PS02 Julie Boston

The debate so far has been polarised between ‘accept the government’s cuts’ or ‘set an illegal budget’. I suggest we extend the debate.

Ideally local councillors lead a discussion in our libraries, schools, pubs and meeting places so that those who want to can challenge the government.

The next 3 months

Councillors will draw up their budgets between now and the budget setting meeting in February 2017. We need to know what progress, if any, Mayors from the core cities have achieved by meeting with government ministers. Whatever the response, I would like to make these points.

The government has chosen to make cuts by hitting the vulnerable.

There is no shortage of money. The government could stop projects such as

- road building – billions on an underpass at Stonehenge
- academies and free schools
- Trident and weapons of mass destruction

They could

- tax those who earn over £60k
- impose restrictions on new buildings. In Berlin, for example, local government insists on standards such as insulation of new buildings which benefits residents not speculators.
- Introduce the Robin Hood Tax.
- Provide free recreational facilities especially for young and old.
- Oppose the Bus Bill. <https://weownit.org.uk/act-now/we-want-buses-people-not-profit>
-

Economists such as Thomas Piketty, Paul Krugman and Joseph E. Stiglitz have argued against the austerity agenda in books which are stocked in Libraries West which can be reserved free of charge.

Don't go back to the thirties.

I remember the thirties and remember more clearly the war. The government insisted on a standard loaf, food rations for everyone, Lord Walton's Pork Pies and school dinners. 1946 is in my mind because I was friendly with a girl who lived in my street passed the 11 plus to Aylesbury Grammar School. As she was one of a family of about 12 children she could not afford the school uniform so my mother paid for it. This girl died of TB at about 15 years of age. Don't go back to the thirties.

Julie Boston 18 October 2016

SAVING
MONEY ON
PUBLIC SERVICES

From David Redgewell
IAN Beekes
Jenny Rayet
South West Transport
Network

Public Statement Neighborhood Strategy Commission

27. Oct 2016
at 10 am.

Budget Items

FAO IAN Hind Democratic Services

We are Concerned about
the Loss of PCSO
With the City and their
Work on the Transport Network
Support First Group and
Wessex Buses especially at
times of anti social behaviour.

In recent times Bus Service
St Bristol city Centre to
Whitchurch via Knowle and
Hengrave.

We Wish to See full consultation
With Passenger Groups over their
Proposals British Transport Police

and the Port of Bristol Police

We Must have a Safe
City Region and Transport
Network and Community
Streets and Bus network and
Bus STATION

We Welcome a Citywide
Inhouse enforcement team

The Centralised Citizen
Service Point at 100 Temple
Street do not Work for
Communities and is an
OLD Socialist Model
of Local Government

The Council should follow
North Somerset Council and
BANES and set up
Community Hubs The Fishpond
Model is correct

With Libraries and Council
 Offices in the same building
 The Police should also
 Move into Fishpond offices

The Community Hub should
 be in building alongside
 Libraries With Staff Training
 handle all Council
 enquiries.

North Somerset staff deal
 With Council enquiries
 Libraries West issues and
 Police.

The staff that remain within
 City Council should be trained
 in cross service skills

This will still save Taxpayers

Money but provide Front Line
 Services in Communities

Libains need to become
Council and Public
Service Community Hub.

We Would Welcome
Longer opening times With
Scrip Cards, and Book
Issuing Machines eC-TV
and Mobile Security offices
Reshaping enforcement for
Waste and Traffic
offices

In Main Local Authorities
Traffic enforcement officers
would also report fly tips
Pavement and footway
blocked Pavement ~~day~~ foully
THIS THE Case in Many
Authorities. We need to Join
up enforcement Schemes and
SAVE TAXPAYERS MONEY

We Would Welcome a
review in the number of Middle
Management Posts in the Service
and the Reduction in the
Number of Service Directors
With the City Council

The number of Service Directors
have been reduced to Save
Money and protect Public
Services to the Community,
This has happened in South Gloucestershire
and BANES

We Would Welcome a
review of Community Parks
and Trusts

But even the Friends of Parks
Groups require Full time
Council or Contracts to look after
Parks and Gardens.

SAVING Could be Made
by re-tendering Parks Contracts
or Share Maintenance With Street
Care in South Gloucestershire

We Would oppose Cuts to
Neighbourhood Partnership as
they Work Like Parish
Councils in Communities
With Other Public Services.

Do THE POLICE Pay for
Community Partnership Work?
or Fire Service.

The Partnership area Could
have a Boundary Review

The City Council Could
Parish the City and set
Local Neighbourhood
Council to run Local
Services,

Such as Parks, Street Cleaning
Local Libraries.

PARISH Council Can Still
Set budget

BRISTOL WASTE Company
Should bid for Market Work

Such as Working for other
Public Authorities, and Private
Sector Clean Contacts

Such as First Group
BRISTOL Airport, South
Gloucestershire, BANES and North
Somerset Council

We Must have full and
open Consultation not
Just on line Similar to the
Public Transport Review Consultation
and Public Meeting in
and around the city

Capital Whilst Supporting
Speedwell New Pool at this
Stage With Saving, Should
We not look at closer
Working with South Gloucestershire
on the Joint use of Seaview
Pool Kingswood one Mile
Away

Whilst keeping the project
as a future Target

Support charging in the
Parks Heritage estate
OLDBURY ESTATE Blues
and ASHTON Court example
blue badge Holder other Parks
could be considered.

operation Centre for emergency
control could include services
to other Local Authorities
NHS Housing Associations
and other public bodies

These are a few views to
start public consultation
on Neighbourhood Services
Libraries and Information Points
also provide Public Transport
and Information Services. In Swindon
The Tourist Information Centre is in
the Libraries. Why not in Bristol central
Libraries.

Name: Julie Boston

Received: Thu 19/01/17 08:10

Democratic Services

People Scrutiny meeting on 23 January 2017.

Bristol City Council Service Points

Bristol pensioners urge the Mayor and councillors to defend Bristol Service Points in Fishponds, Hartcliffe, Southmead and Ridingleaze .

before the BCC Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 24 January or after it ?

Without a Neighbourhood Partnership scheme or a Service Point, people will be stranded plus burdened with an increased 5% council tax.

CABINET – 30 JANUARY 2017

PUBLIC FORUM ITEMS

Statements have been received as follows (full details are attached):

Re: Agenda item 8 – Corporate Strategy

Councillor statement:

CS 8.1 Cllr Clive Stevens – transport infrastructure

Re: Agenda item 10 - Budget recommendations to Full Council

Public statements:

- PS 10.1 Sandy Hore-Ruthven - impact of budget savings
- PS 10.2 Jack Penrose - Avon Gorge and Downs wildlife education programme
- PS 10.3 Robin Haward - Avon Gorge and Downs wildlife education programme
- PS 10.4 Robert Rowe - Supported living services
- PS 10.5 Simon Garrett - Avon Gorge and Downs wildlife education programme
- PS 10.6 Steve Crawshaw, Bristol Unison – impact on services and jobs
- PS 10.7 Kerry Bailes - CSP and library, Hartcliffe and Withywood
- PS 10.8 Statement originally submitted has been withdrawn
- PS 10.9 Judith Brown - impact of budget savings on older people
- PS 10.10 Jane Memmott & Nicholas Wray - Avon Gorge and Downs wildlife education programme
- PS 10.11 Wendy Stephenson, VOSCUR -budget reductions - impact and implementation
- PS 10.12 David Redgewell - transport investment
- PS 10.13 Joanna Brown - Culture team/museum service
- PS 10.14 Martin Collins - Avon Gorge and Downs wildlife education programme
- PS 10.15 Claire Williams - Supported living services
- PS 10.16 Rob Acton-Campbell - Parks and green spaces maintenance

- PS 10.17 Julie Boston - impact of budget reductions
- PS 10.18 Alderwoman Glenise Morgan - Avon Gorge and Downs wildlife education programme
- PS 10.19 Alice Archer - sensory support service
- PS 10.20 Jayne Whittlestone - supported living services
- PS 10.21 Dr Patricia Smith - neighbourhood partnerships
- PS 10.22 Bernadette Tamsitt - sensory support service
- PS 10.23 Heather Banks - sensory support service
- PS 10.24 Dai O'Brien - sensory support service
- PS 10.25 Eileen Stonebridge - parks funding
- PS 10.26 Hilary Sutherland - sensory support service
- PS 10.27 Ben Whitehouse - parks funding
- PS 10.28 Len Wyatt - parks and green spaces funding
- PS 10.29 Sharon Hunt - sensory support service
- PS 10.30 Sam Thomson - parks and green spaces funding
- PS 10.31 Justin Rodway - supported living services
- PS 10.32 Anna-Marie Reilly - sensory support service
- PS 10.33 John O'Mahony - sensory support service
- PS 10.34 Rami Ghali - equalities impact assessment regarding the proposal to decommission the HIV support service
- PS 10.35 Simon Cox - sensory support service
- PS 10.36 Keith Way - Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership
- PS 10.37 Julie Parker - Parks funding
- PS 10.38 Kevin Molloy - Parks funding
- PS 10.39 Lynn Stewart-Taylor - sensory support service
- PS 10.40 Matthew Carey - opposition to budget cuts
- PS 10.41 Martin Hughes - sensory support service
- PS 10.42 Gill Behenna - sensory support service
- PS 10.43 Laura Welti - budget impacts on disabled people and their families
- PS 10.44 Stephen Pill - parks funding
- PS 10.45 Alderman Brian Price - education issues
- PS 10.46 Eileen Francis - mental health floating support service

Councillor statements:

- CS 10.1 Cllr Ruth Pickersgill - budget impacts
- CS 10.2 Cllrs Harriet Bradley and Mike Langley - library service
- CS 10.3 Cllrs Mark Brain and Paul Goggin - Hartcliffe CSP
- CS 10.4 Cllrs Mark Brain and Paul Goggin - funding Wham

- CS 10.5 Cllr Tony Carey - reduction of subsidies for bus routes with low numbers of passengers
- CS 10.6 Cllr Gary Hopkins - parks and the budget
- CS 10.7 Cllr Mark Wright - RPZ budget
- CS 10.8 Cllr Carla Denyer - museum service
- CS 10.9 Cllr Anthony Negus - landlord services

STATEMENT CS 8.1**STATEMENT TO CABINET – Mon 30th Jan 2017**

SUBMITTED BY GREEN COUNCILLORS

Agenda Item 8: Corporate Strategy

Councillor Clive Stevens

I refer to page 39 of the business plan (p46 of the papers). The author mentions that money to invest in transport infrastructure is hard to come by, of course it is, which is why the infrastructure we do put in needs to be effective.

In my ward we have four pretty new, raised level, bus stops - some with the flashy led displays and all of which are now completely unused because the bus operator decided to reroute the buses because the routes weren't making enough profit. Buses don't stop at any of them now. This must be £60,000 plus of stranded transport infrastructure, for which we are now looking for creative ideas to reuse.

I have since been informed there is a similar newly unused bus stop in the neighbouring ward of Clifton, so now we have five.

As this is a statement I can't ask questions, but if I could have, I would have asked please if the Cabinet member for Transport could find out please whether there are many more stranded (expensive) bus stops in Bristol. And also I would have asked please, whether the Council could negotiate with the private bus companies so they contractually use new stops for a reasonable time period after they have been installed - thank you.

Sandy Hore-Ruthven

The proposals being put forward for cabinet approval today will have a huge impact on the vulnerable and disadvantaged in our city. Not just the young but across the board. Many people I speak to say this is now the time when the voluntary sector can no longer carry on filling the gaps in local authority funding. We have managed, largely, over the last 5 years to do that, raising funds from elsewhere, becoming more business-like, generating our own income and working more efficiently but there is a point at which we cannot stretch our services any more.

There is a real danger that because cutting early intervention services, like Bristol Youth Links, will not lead to immediate chaos on the streets or homelessness or school drop outs, that the local authority will feel it has 'got away with' the cuts. But we need to learn our lessons from the past. Successive governments of all political colours disregarded the need for new housing which has left us in a crisis 20-30 years later. The same will be true if we cut our front line services now.

But I also understand many of these cuts are being forced onto you and you have little choice and very difficult decisions to make. I would therefore like to offer our help in any way to highlight with you the impact of these cuts to central government in the hope that campaigning for early intervention and front line services will, in the end, help central government to see the light and understand that investment now will save lives and money in the future.

STATEMENT PS10.2

To the Mayor of Bristol

Re Cabinet, January 24th 2017 Savings Proposition (App2, p11)
Neighbourhoods: remove salary costs for Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife education programme, (£25,000)

Sir

The City Council is a partner in this project with the Zoo which established a programme of education about the Downs and its wildlife in 2001. It has been an outstanding success for the children of the whole city under the leadership of an enthusiastic and highly effective officer who has worked closely with us. We have particularly been involved with her efforts to reach the disabled and disadvantaged, and with the growing understanding of the improvement in health that walking on the Downs provides.

We accept that the city has to make cuts, but believe that they should be done in a way that encourages alternative sources of funding to be found. There has been no consultation with either the Downs Committee or Bristol Zoo, and thus no opportunity to seek grants elsewhere for this important work.

We hope that you may find it possible to delay the implementation of this cut, which is for you a trivial sum so that alternative funding can be found in time to save a project which is of importance to the whole city.

Yours sincerely

Jack Penrose

Chairman Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge.

STATEMENT PS10.3

Dear Mayor Rees and Cabinet,

Re Proposal to cut the funding for the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Education programme.

I understand that you are forced to make cuts in City Council expenditure but I would ask you to reconsider this particular 'saving'.

The project, through the Education Officer and seasonal assistant, has yielded a great deal more value for the people of Bristol than the grant figure suggests.

The Education Officer's programme has been extensively used by schools as well as by the Bristol public (through evening meetings, courses and lectures).

In addition special groups have benefitted enormously - for example Easton Family Centre, groups with special needs (for example the deaf) and those recovering from heart attack or stroke. The strength of the project lies in its inclusivity and its celebration and education about the Downs and Gorge - surely a major Bristol asset. The project echoes Green Capital and certainly sits perfectly with Bristol as a Learning City.

It is my view that this project should be maintained as it brings enormous and evidence based value to the people of Bristol and to Bristol's standing as a leading City.

Robin Haward

Primary School Governor

19/01/2017

STATEMENT PS10.4

Dear Sir/Madam

Supported living services formally funded under Supporting People consultation

I am very much aware of the funding pressures that Bristol Council are facing. However, our organisation is rapidly heading toward a tipping point of viability which can only be avoided by engaging in constructive dialogue with you about alternatives rather than imposing cuts to supported living services formally funded under Supporting People without the consideration of other options.

You will know that all social care providers have already absorbed huge cost pressures relating to statutory increases in the National Living Wage (NLW), Auto Enrolment, increases in National Insurance and costs associated with case law around payment for sleep-ins and holiday pay. In the coming year, these statutory increases are only set to rise further alongside the addition of the Apprenticeship Levy and the ever-growing cost of regulation.

We urge you not to impose cuts on organisations like ours, we believe it will exacerbate the financial problems that you face and would ask you to consider dialogue between us and other providers in our area to seek other solutions.

Robert Rowe Chartered FCIPD

Acting Chief Executive

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Company Registered in England and Wales Number: 2365487, VAT Registered Number: 108262925

STATEMENT PS10.5

Re Agenda item 10 – Budget recommendations to Full Council**Statement to Cabinet regarding proposal RS28 Remove the subsidy for salary costs for the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Programme - from Simon Garrett (Bristol Zoological Society).**

The Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project is a partnership project, co-ordinated by Bristol City Council.

Launched in 1999, the project works to protect this internationally important and nationally designated wildlife site through wildlife surveying and monitoring and habitat management. It also enables citizens to discover and learn about the wildlife and landscape, and take advantage of the known health benefits of access to green spaces.

In 2001 the project employed a full-time Avon Gorge & Downs Biodiversity Education Officer to provide an education programme and other activities for people of all ages and backgrounds. Since 2008, a Seasonal Education Officer has been employed to help meet demand for events and school education sessions during the peak months and to further increase the range and diversity of people visiting the site. Through our community work, and since the start of the 'Your Downs' initiative, the project has been very successful in attracting people from many areas of deprivation through working with health groups and the Inner City Health Improvement Team. **To date, 95,568 have directly engaged with the education programme on the Downs**, equivalent to a quarter of Bristol's population.

Other partners in the project include Bristol Zoological Society (BZS), Natural England, University of Bristol, the Merchant Venturers and Downs Committee. Each partner in the project supports and funds specific areas of the project's work. On behalf of the project partnership, BZS has hosted and managed the education officers (an in-kind contribution valued at £12,000) and part-funded the Education Officer with a £15,000 contribution. In 2016/17 Bristol City Council's financial contribution to this partnership was £25,804 towards the costs of the Education Officer's post, and a part-time Seasonal Education Officer post.

Last August, Bristol City Council advised the partnership that the £10,000 funding for the Seasonal Education Officer post would be cut from the 2017/18 council budget, but we were told that the £15,000 contribution to Education Officer would be maintained. On behalf of the partnership, BZS began seeking alternative funding for the seasonal post, so that the education programme could continue in 2017.

Cutting the project funding by a further £15,000, and at such short notice, makes the delivery of the planned programme impossible, for a project which overall is worth £50,000. A wide range of events and activities have already been planned for 2017 including: eight events with the Bristol City Council Inner City Health Improvement team (adults and families from areas of the city with high indices of deprivation); three walks for Headway (a charity that works with people with head injuries); schools have booked education sessions for the

spring and summer (schools from all over the city come to the Downs for our sessions); and walks, talks, courses, children's and family events have been published in the spring – summer Avon Gorge and Downs events programme (bookings have already been taken).

We were shocked and dismayed that the project partners were not consulted before the proposal to remove the funding for the Education Officer was published in the budget cuts document. The timing of the proposed cut does not allow us sufficient time to find alternative sources of funding; we will need 6 -12 months to apply to grants and trusts. Since we received this devastating news the partners have been consulted and are unable to provide additional funding to support the education programme fund (their funds are already committed to different aspects of the project's work). If the funding cut for the Education Officer post can be delayed, we are confident we can secure alternative funding to enable this well respected education programme to continue.



Bristol UNISON: Statement to Bristol City Council Cabinet: 30th January

Steve Crawshaw

Branch Secretary

We would like to refer the cabinet to our submission on the Corporate Strategy starting on page 135 of Appendix 8 which sets out our concerns in terms of impacts on services and our members' jobs.

We understand the scale of the politically imposed financial challenge that the council faces, and also the Mayor's desire to work with partners to identify solutions. However, as a trade union we cannot be in the business of suggesting different areas to cut than those proposed. Our membership covers all grades of employee within the council and over 280 employers in the city, many of whom rely on direct or indirect funding from the council. Hence cuts that do not fall on one group of members are likely to fall on another.

We call on Cabinet members to be robust in challenging the cuts that fall disproportionately on vulnerable people. We ask members to be realistic about the prospects of running services in neighbourhoods such as parks and libraries with volunteers. We ask them to trust (with appropriate challenge) the advice of officers when considering the design of services. We also remind the council of its responsibility to mitigate compulsory redundancy through e.g. voluntary severance and transferred redundancy. We ask for resources for training to ensure that employees who are made compulsorily redundant and who want to continue to work can attain high quality work, either in different roles in the council or elsewhere.

Finally we must state that further attacks on our terms and conditions will be resisted. Local government workers have experienced severe pay restraint, attacks on pensions, removal of allowances and changes to contracts in the last 7 years. Further erosion of our T&C's will damage industrial relations and the ability of trade unions to work in partnership with the council in effecting change.

STATEMENT PS 10.7

As an active community member and recently elected residents rep for my local NP Dundry view I along with others are extremely concerned about how some of the proposed cuts will affect the area of Hartcliffe & Withywood which is and always has been a very deprived area of Bristol

Two of my main personal concerns is the possible closure of our Library Service And Customer Service Point. The Library is not just a Library but a vibrant part of the Community Hub which serves a vast amount of the local people, its a meeting place, a source of reference and knowledge and many services are run from the same building including the Domestic Violence Service Southern Link. Domestic Violence is 4 times higher in Hartcliffe! Our Library is also a source of access to the internet for many people especially those that claim benefits such JSA Etc. as a large number of claimants cannot afford internet access in their own homes and should the Library close they will become further isolated from the employment and Benefit help available as well as keeping the job centre aware of their daily activities. If this service is taken away it will have a devastating effect on many families and others. Taking away such an important facility is a double edged sword if the job centre isn't satisfied with claimants entries on their very strict universal gateway the claimant is very likely to suffer sanctions through no fault of their own, meaning they will have no money to feed themselves or pay they bills, Clearly this could then have a knock on effect on the wider communities causing the crime rate to increase.

I fear that closing of the Customer Service Point will also have a detrimental affect on an area that is already suffering from previous cuts to services again a great deal of people rely on the internet access to pay there bills such as rent and community charge and the cutting of this service may well cause people to fall in to arrears, also the Social Services is located at this facility and a number of people again rely on the use of this department. Public transport is unaffordable to many living on low income and in poverty, why should we be continually penalised for being less fortunate than other areas of the City. There is a risk that losing these two important facilities could have a knock on effect with the Children's Centre which does an amazing job within the local community again we have no assurances at this time that this facility will not become part of the cuts programme.

Another concern is the proposed funding cuts to transport services like the community cat bus and concessionary bus pass users. Since the 36 bus has been cut users of the cat bus rely on this service to keep themselves independent and active, taking it away will make them isolated and possibly housebound and unable to socialise or do their shopping. Many grandparents across the country provide free childcare whilst their family work meaning concessionary bus pass users often take their grandchildren to school on the bus , cutting the hours that passes can be used will mean that OAP passengers will then have to pay the fare which is extremely unfair and unaffordable 5 days a week.

I and many local residents feel that these cuts and so many other proposals especially cuts to drug and alcohol misuse services will cause massive disadvantages to our area, these cuts are murderous when you consider just how deprived Hartcliffe already is and always has been. We have worked hard with very little council funding to make the best of our area, we have a strong community spirit that you wont find anywhere else. If anything we need an injection of money for redevelopment so that we can thrive and prosper as the rest of Bristol does we have always fought to be given the same chances in life that everyone else is given but personally I feel that its often fallen on deaf ears so I urge you not to take away our services but give us more. The Harcliffe riots were as a result of depravation and lack of facilities and investment are we about to set sail on another collision course? Sadly imposing such cuts on this community could well lead to the implosion

Kerry Bailes



Judith Brown
Chair
Bristol Older peoples Forum
judithirenebrown@blueyonder.co.uk

Cabinet Members
Bristol City Council

24 January 2016

RE: Proposed Budget Savings affecting older people in Bristol

Dear Cabinet Member

Bristol older People's Forum and Age UK Bristol understands the difficulties the council faces responding to unfair central government cuts. We know it is impossible for you to make savings of this magnitude without it affecting quality of life in Bristol. We speak to you as important strategic partners in the city who believe some of these measures undermine our joint ambition to protect those most in need of our support. We believe the cuts referred to below will often mean service users having to present at other more expensive locations within the health and social care / NHS system, which as we know is already in crisis.

We have examined your latest savings proposals. Many, which most adversely affect older people, have just been added. I would like to bring to your attention those we are most concerned about. I note that many of these have very large savings attached to them, which while delivering savings will have the potential for significant adverse impact.

Some proposals have descriptions, which are difficult for people outside the council to understand or assess their impact. Some of the proposals descriptions suggest no adverse impact while delivering substantial savings. Without knowing any of the detail, it is difficult from outside to assess how realistic this is.

While we hope you will seriously reconsider the proposed savings outlined below, Bristol Older People's Forum and Age UK Bristol are committed to continue to work closely with the council to mitigate as far as possible the effects of all these savings and better understand and share their impact, both long and short term.

Implementing a new model of care and support for adults. (Name of proposal)

Description: As part of our response to the Care Act, we are moving to a 3-tier model of providing care and support to adults. This means helping people to help themselves as much as possible before engaging council services. We will improve the information, advice and guidance available online and introduce pre-payment cards for people who receive Direct Payments. We will also review service users of adult care and support and our Resource Allocation System to make sure that we are providing the right services in line with need.

Bristol Older Peoples Forum and Age UK Bristol supports the 3-tier model and will support the council in its delivery. However, these are very ambitious savings and at short notice and lack of

information, it is hard to see how these savings can be applied without a major impact on the most vulnerable older people.

Younger service users are more likely to be able to engage with this model. They will increasingly benefit from their increased engagement with their own health and wellbeing. Older people on the other hand will find it far more difficult to adjust to this 3- tier system and benefit from on online information systems, which are at its heart. You will know that many older people do not have access to the internet and those that do can find it difficult to navigate the information provided. We urge you to limit your savings ambitions where this proposal affects older people. We offer our support in developing how this proposal is taken forward.

Reduce Supporting People services (Name of proposal)

Description: We will refocus our efforts on supporting those people who would require a statutory service were they not receiving Supporting People services. This will result in reduced access to floating support services, sheltered housing, supported living and other advice and guidance services.

In Mark Baker (CEO Age UK Bristol) letter, which looks at how your savings proposals directly affect Age UK Bristol clients, he outlined how important Age UK Bristol's Supporting People service is and presented you with case studies. Reducing funding to other Supporting People Services, which support older people, will have a similar adverse effect.

Proposed savings to Supporting People services, which will have significant adverse impact on older people, are:

- Reductions to Floating Support: 50% reduction older people floating support (£172k) – voluntary sector”- This affects Age UK Bristol and Brunelcare.
- Reductions to Floating Support: 50% reduction generic floating support (£344k) – in-house
- Reductions to Floating Support: 20% physical/sensory impairment support (£55k) – in-house
- Reduction in Sheltered Housing: 40% reduction in all sheltered housing services – voluntary sector

We believe older people benefitting from these services will be diverted to much more expensive interventions if the Supporting People services are reduced.

Review provision of day service to adults (Name of proposal)

Description: We propose to change the way we use Bristol Community Links and Adult Drop-in Centres to deliver day services to adults. This could mean closing one or more of the centres, commissioning external partners to run them or combining with other services. People who use these services would receive an appropriate alternative. We will work with key stakeholders to co-design a new service model

The description implies no adverse effect on older people. This will be challenging given the level of savings required. Bristol Older People's Forum and Age UK Bristol would be pleased to be involved in any review and support the council redesign. However we consider the size of the savings unrealistic and would urge you to reduce these.

Recommission Community Support Services (Name of proposal)

Description: Community support services help people to be as independent, improve wellbeing and aim to reduce the need for more care later. We will recommission these services to get the best quality and value from new contracts.

The tendering and recommissioning of these services is currently underway and day services for older people are just a part of this. In terms of the older people day services, we worry that the savings are over-estimated. The level of frailty of those referred is continuing to rise. We are aware that some older people day service providers, delivering spot purchase contracts, are already subsidising the service and have indicated they are not willing to continue doing so. Please note the financial model presented in the retendering will generally result in lower payments to providers. For example Age UK Bristol's Service in Withywood can continue under existing funding but would be put at risk if funding were to be seriously reduced. In this situation, Age UK Bristol would be forced to close the service. We believe other service providers would behave similarly.

The recommissioning of Community Support Services has been extended to December 2017. At this moment, we do not have confidence it will deliver better services for older people or the savings you hope for. We believe there are five organisations delivering significant day services to older people. All of these services will be at risk if funding is reduced.

Reduce Discretionary Rate Relief for business rates (Name of proposal)

Description: *We are proposing to reduce the Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) awarded to charities, voluntary groups and not for profit organisations. This means they may pay the full cost of the Business Rate bills.*

The proposal does not make it clear to what extent this measure will be applied. At present Age UK Bristol and other charities, receive an 80% reduction. For example if this measure were imposed to the maximum, it would increase Age UK Bristol's costs by £18,000.

The council has accepted its decreasing role as a provider. Charities who share council values and recognise the cities priorities will be vital going forward. Increasing tax on charities while reducing their funding will put many out of business.

In the last 5 years, the council and voluntary sector have increasingly aligned their vision and ambitions. An example of this is Age UK Bristol's leadership of Bristol Ageing Better (BAB, £6million lottery programme) where Bristol Older People's Forum and the other 200 BAB partners have agreed a joint strategy with the city council. The development of the council's voluntary and community sector Impact Fund is another excellent example of co-production. If the council increases business rates on their partners it is likely to diminish this growing sense of common purpose and decrease the charitable resources to deliver vital services.

Change the way reablement, rehabilitation and intermediate care services are provided in the city (Name of proposal)

Description: Develop a new reablement, rehabilitation and intermediate care offer through our existing partnership. The council will look to consider all options in the provision of these services.

The description implies no adverse effect on older people. This will be challenging given the level of savings required which may be unrealistic. Again Age UK Bristol and Bristol Older people's Forum are willing to help explore alternatives with the council including how voluntary sector organisations can help.

Reduce 3rd party payments (Name of proposal)

Description: *To consider our third party payments to deliver improved efficiency in delivery of £88m services for the local authority by external partners. Sports contracts, trees, waste, Voluntary and Community Sector grants.*

Age UK Bristol has worked with the council and other key voluntary sector agencies to co-design the Impact Fund (*Voluntary and Community Sector grants*). We are sad that funds available will decrease, but have confidence that the new strategic direction will better impact on the cities priorities. Some voluntary sector agencies who have been in receipt of council grants will lose their funding. This may have an adverse effect on these agencies sustainability and their loss may be keenly felt.

Agree the best future for the provision on Community Meals

Description: *We are proposing a review of our community meals provision. This may involve us no longer directly providing the service and instead signposting to other providers in the market*

This is an important service. The savings required are ambitious. We hope there is a way to meet the savings without an adverse impact on quality and numbers who have access to this service.

In summary, I would like to highlight the following:

- The cuts proposed affect older people disproportionately (£6m of £34m).
- The largest cut proposals contain too little information to be able to comment properly.
- Supporting people cuts will hit a largely hidden but really needy cohort hard- and push them onto all kinds of other statutory services
- Proposals for adult support, day services and re-ablement describe re-patterning and redesign- with no details and very significant cost savings. These will damage older people.
- No charities in Bristol will be able to pay for increased business rates without severe pain and it not threatening their very viability.

Mark Baker and I would welcome the chance to meet with you to discuss this further.

Yours Sincerely

Judith Brown



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20th January 2017

Statement to Cabinet regarding proposal RS28 Remove the subsidy for salary costs for the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Programme - from Professor Jane Memmott & Nicholas Wray (University of Bristol).

To the Mayor of Bristol, Marvin Rees,

We would like to express concern at the threat facing the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project Education Programme. The University is a partner in the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project and has sat on its advisory panel since its foundation (represented by Professor Jane Memmott, Professor Simon Hiscock and currently Nicholas Wray, Curator of the Botanic Garden). The University Botanic Garden is adjacent to the Downs and over the years there have been joint initiatives and regular contact between the Education Officer via staff and students at the University School of Biological Sciences and Botanic Garden. The proposed withdrawal of funding undermines the partnership.

Bristol is a very special city on the biodiversity front and the Avon Gorge and associated habitats are the jewel in its crown. Consequently the University has a long history of research in the Avon Gorge, this ranging from heavy metal pollution, to the conservation of rare trees and other plants, to work on pollinators; we also teach field ecology on the Downs each year to 270 first year students and the Education Officers help has been enormously useful here. We would be concerned that the withdraw of funding could impact on Bristol City Council's legislative compliance, undermining Biodiversity Action Plans and educational & public engagement work as part of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

The Education Officer's position has contributed substantially towards showcasing the Avon Gorge & Downs and interpreting this part of the city to many thousands of school children and tens of thousands of other visitors, both locals and tourists. There is a real body of enthusiasm for the conservation and enjoyment of biodiversity in the Avon Gorge and on the Downs and this has been spearheaded by the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project Education Programme.

We realise that the Council is currently in a very difficult position, but this project is funded from a variety of sources and, for a relatively small contribution from Bristol City Council, an excellent job has been done over the years and represents great value for money. Is there an opportunity for seeking alternative funding streams if the Council cannot continue to contribute?

Yours sincerely,

Voscur statement to Cabinet 24.1.17

Voscur has submitted a comprehensive response to the Mayor's initial budget proposals, describing our concerns and detailing how we can work with the Council to manage change, support community asset transfer and co-location of services, promote Social Value and continue to support the voluntary sector to play a key role in the city.

We note the subsequent changes to the initial budget proposals and the actions included in the report 'Draft Cumulative Impact of the Indicative Budget Savings 2017/18 – 2021/22'. We welcome the commitment to retaining as much funding as possible to protect voluntary sector investment, and the acknowledgement that the sector is best placed to support those at risk in our communities.

It is of concern, therefore, that the Council is proposing to reduce the Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) awarded to charities, voluntary groups and not for profit organisations in 2018/19. This is a valuable source of in-kind support to the sector and we would expect to see full consultation on this proposal.

We also welcome:

the proposed investment to support community asset transfer to ensure that community assets are fully accessible

targeted support for organisations with equalities expertise to ensure this is shared with wider community groups

recognition of the value of projects delivered by and for BME communities

the decision to protect the Bristol Impact Fund

the Council's commitment to ensuring that services will be located for the best possible benefit of any at risk communities.

We remain concerned about:

the implied reliance on social action and volunteering (neighbourhoods, parks, community hubs, libraries) given the acknowledgement that some communities find it harder to self-organise into social networks and groupings that allow people to do things for themselves. We would want to work with the

Council to ensure that individuals and groups will be appropriately supported in any such ventures.

the future of Community Transport provision given the removal of commercial bus services subsidies, and we hope that this will be addressed through the Bristol Impact Fund.

Many of these proposals impact the most vulnerable people in the city. We note that the Council is planning to set a one year budget and that this allows more time for consultation in relation to specific changes. Voscur can work with the Council to ensure that Voluntary and Community Sector organisations are fully consulted in relation to specific proposals impacting them and their service users.

STATEMENT PS10.12

SWTN, Railfuture and Bus Users UK wish to make the following points :-

We are very concerned over the loss of bus services if the Council's in the proposed combined authority cut bus services especially in East Bristol, Bath and Keynsham where routes under threat could include service 16 UWE - Hanham, 18A Emersons Green - Shirehampton via Bristol Parkway, 17 Keynsham - Southmead Hospital , 19/10A Bath - Cribbs Causeway, 36 South Bristol, 37 Bristol - Bath. Many of these routes are evening and Sunday services.

500 group services in Bristol and rural buses in BANES re: service 267.

We would urge the cabinet and council not to cut services or local rail investment at a time when we are trying to build MetroBus and MetroRail.

We are also very concerned about services 50 & 51 in South Bristol City Centre - Whitchurch and South Bristol Hospital and a need to find a solution for the replacement service 6 & 7 in Bath using the Swainswick shuttle.

We are worried over the loss of PCSO's on the transport network in Bristol and money for Ashley Down and Portway Park and Ride stations in the capital programme and the need to maintain funding for tourism initiatives in Bristol and Bath.

Thanks
David Redgewell

STATEMENT PS10.13

To the Mayor and Bristol City Councillors

As Chairman of the Friends of Bristol Art Gallery I am writing in the strongest terms to Bristol City Council regarding the proposal to impose a further £200,000 of cuts over 3 years on the Culture team of the Museum Service on top of the £400,000 of savings already achieved by the Head of the Service and her senior staff. That reorganisation has been successfully completed so without details of the present proposal it has to be presumed that further cuts will inevitably fall on the curatorial, conservation and documentation areas

The very substantial cuts of 2009 reduced the staff in these areas to a bare minimum. Nonetheless the standards achieved by the City Museum & Art Gallery are outstanding, raising its profile nationally, internationally and above all providing education and enjoyment for all our communities of all ages. It is accepted that the cultural life of a city is crucial to its success and wellbeing.

To have achieved all this with an already reduced staff is laudable, but to introduce further cuts amongst curators and other backroom staff who produce the exhibitions, etc. which it is hoped will engender income in the order of £286,000 can only be self-defeating. We respect the efforts which are already bearing fruit, but to impose further reductions of a 'set to fail' nature appear to the Friends to be less than sensible.

Finally my committee finds it repugnant that a sum in the order of £100 million is being set aside for the construction of an arena when cuts of the proposed size are likely to be imposed on all aspects of the City's life and trusts that further consideration will be given to the above comments.

Joanna Brown
Chairman, Friends of Bristol Art Gallery

STATEMENT PS 10.14

To the Mayor of Bristol, Marvin Rees,
Sir,

Cabinet, January 30th 2017

Savings propositions (App, 2, p.11). Neighbourhoods: remove salary costs for Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Education Programme, (AGDWP): £25,000 (£15,000 education officer + £10,000 seasonal post)

Like tens of thousands of Bristolians, who have benefitted enormously from its contribution to their lives, I was horrified and dumbfounded to read of the proposal to withdraw the modest, yet vital, financial support given towards the post of Education Officer for AGDWP by the Bristol City Council (BCC).

Make no mistake, this would be a threat to the very survival of the post and to the initiative, the loss of a resource whose value far outweighs the money given to it, and the effective dismissal of someone whose passion for her role and loyalty to you as her part-employer has been a by-word for commitment and professionalism for 16 years,

The decision, should it be implemented is in my opinion wrong for so many reasons, most of which will have been brought to your attention by letters from the general public and from members of the partnership of organisations involved in this imaginative initiative whose brain- and heart-child was the AGDWP (including Natural England, Bristol Zoo, the Merchant Venturers and the Universities of Bristol and of the West of England as well as BCC)

However I will start with its complete abnegation of the principles which led to Bristol being celebrated throughout Europe and in many other parts of the world as European Green Capital for 2016.....just one year ago. It was the practical realisation of these principles by Bristol's natural environment movement, and pre-eminent amongst them the current AGDWP Chief Education Officer – Mandy Leivers - that this honour was bestowed on the city.

THIS IS WHAT YOU WOULD BE ABANDONING BY ADOPTING THIS PROPOSAL

Next your socialist manifesto, to paraphrase, spoke of being committed to social justice and to creating a society in Bristol which cares about the environment; of someone whose political platform included the aspiration to provide opportunities for people of all ages, creeds, ethnicities, physical and mental abilities, economic circumstances and social backgrounds to perhaps escape from the stresses of their every-day circumstances, perhaps to learn to appreciate and value the natural world and, in some cases, perhaps to become involved in maintaining this precious heritage. – the very aspirations are that has always informed everything done by Mandy and AGDWP.

THIS IS WHAT YOU WOULD BE ABANDONING BY ADOPTING THIS PROPOSAL

Next, if your ambition is still to share access to educational experiences and opportunities more equitably to all members of Bristol's diverse communities, there must be a singular and significant lack of awareness amongst city councilors and their officers of the work done by AGDWP and by Mandy Leivers in particular over many years towards achieving this. Her thorough monthly and annual Reports to BCC via the Downs Committee, bear detailed documentary evidence of what has been achieved and make inspirational reading in the light of which the current proposal seems even more "puzzling"

THIS IS WHAT YOU WOULD BE SACRIFICING BY ADOPTING THIS PROPOSAL

...and next, as a founder member of the Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge (FOD+AG) set up as a voluntary body at the behest of BCC in 2008, and still a member of the Committee with responsibility for the natural environment of the Downs and Avon Gorge, I have had the privilege and pleasure of working with Mandy on numerous occasions and am constantly humbled by just how much of herself she gives to her role. I am always inspired by her enthusiasm, energy, imagination and flair in reaching out to, and touching the lives of, people across the social spectrum of the city and beyond and of opening their eyes to the wonders and joys of the natural world

THIS TOO YOU WOULD BE SACRIFICING BY ADOPTING THIS PROPOSAL

As must be evident, this letter could easily become a treatise on the dangers of making short term economic decisions on the basis of insufficiently informed or inadequately researched knowledge and understanding. To my mind the sacrifices described cannot be justified even in the current financial circumstances in the name of political expediency. I would therefore request and hope that the cabinet will decide to continue to support this highly successful project

Yours sincerely,

Martin Collins



Support service to sheltered housing residents

A briefing note from Anchor Retirement Housing

Introduction

We have noted Bristol's plans to look at making further changes to the way support is provided to sheltered housing residents through the Supporting People programme in the area.

Anchor Retirement Housing is the largest housing association provider of sheltered accommodation for rent in England with over 23,000 residents living in 700 sheltered housing schemes. In this area we have 1 sheltered housing scheme, Penfield Court, Mina Road, St Werburghs comprising of 22 properties, the Tenants of which are likely to be affected by any further changes you may make. Tenants eligible for funding are already having to pay a 'top up' as there is a shortfall between the level of funding provided by the Council and the cost of the support service provided.

We understand the financial pressures Supporting People commissioners are under in delivering a high quality support service, but we are not convinced these proposals will allow us to maintain the quality of our service to residents. We have particular concerns about the impact of the current plans on the scheme manager service we (and other sheltered housing managers) provide in our locations.

This short briefing note sets out those concerns and our views of how new ways forward might be achieved which will meet South Gloucestershire's ambitions for the service, and ensure Anchor residents continue to receive the best quality service we can provide.

What Scheme Managers do

The Scheme Manager role is not always well understood. Anchor believes that it remains an absolutely essential component of the service to older people that Anchor wants to provide in sheltered homes.

Scheme Managers are crucial to the provision of high quality services in sheltered housing for a number of reasons, including:

- The sense of security, safety and 'help at hand' they impart to residents who are often becoming more vulnerable with age.
- They offer a pro-active service, including very rapid response and support in the event of a resident needing help; a much quicker physical, comforting presence to the vulnerable person than could be achieved in any other way.
- The Scheme Manager becomes vital to the 'personality' of the scheme; the ambience and sense of friendliness and belonging residents get, which cannot be achieved by off-site or visiting manager

provision. This can prolong active life and delay the onset of higher care needs.

- Because they see most residents most days, Scheme Managers are able to note even minor changes in a person's physical or mental wellbeing and take the appropriate steps with relatives or carers.
- The daily, consistent, high quality, low level support Scheme Managers provide prevents many residents needing higher levels of support and care at much greater cost to local commissioners.
- Their presence also enables earlier discharge from hospitals and prevents emergency re-admissions in many instances, again at considerable saving to the public purse.
- They ensure residents do not become isolated or institutionalised in a way off-site or visiting provision cannot deliver. The Scheme Manager's presence helps residents maintain their independence, decision-making over their own lives and dignity in old age.
- Because they live at the same place as the residents themselves and are often active in the local community, they are excellent sources of local information and advice for residents – about new or changed local services or about how residents can meet their health, shopping, social, welfare or other needs – and they facilitate access to those services.
- Scheme Managers perform important housing management roles as well. Not only acting as a first point of contact and liaison on tenancy matters, but noting maintenance issues around the building and in people's flats which off-site or visiting support may well miss.
- Their presence is a crime deterrent, helping ensure unwelcome visitors are not admitted and acting as a 'gatekeeper' to the building – a role otherwise unfulfilled, often at the cost of real anxiety to residents.
- The presence of an on-site Scheme Manager is frequently a core reason why the older person (and their relative) chooses to live at a particular scheme – moving to a different form of provision would be seen as 'reneging' on the agreed service level.

Further to the most recent Customer Satisfaction survey 90% of Anchor Retirement Housing residents are satisfied or very satisfied with the service that we provide.

Sheltered housing is a low-cost, high impact service that keeps older people independent for longer and saves money for the state

The implications of the proposed service changes

Anchor is committed to providing a Scheme Manager service in all of its sheltered housing schemes. Our view is that this is the service current residents signed up to when they came to live at our local scheme and that the Scheme Manager role has too many important benefits to residents for it to be right to either withdraw or dilute that service. The Scheme Manager is a completely crucial part of ensuring we can deliver the quality of service we wish to provide.

The changes to the support service and the possibility of further reductions in funding would make it difficult for Anchor to provide the quality of service to older people in our homes which we feel is essential.

An ageing population, coupled with pressures on local authorities and the NHS, mean specialist housing for older people has a crucial role in meeting our communities' needs. Yet potential changes threaten the sector's ability to maintain current levels of specialist support, let alone develop to meet increasing demand.

Sheltered housing helps older people maintain their independence for longer. It improves their quality of life, while freeing up larger properties for families and managing demand for social care and the NHS.

Sheltered housing helps older people maintain their independence and reduces the risks of them needing higher-cost social care and health services. It does this by:

- preventing falls and allowing existing conditions to be managed
- heading off crises that would otherwise end up in A&E
- allowing safe discharge from hospital and preventing re-admissions
- tackling loneliness and isolation

There is a proven link between poor quality housing and poor health, especially among older people. Poor housing costs the NHS £2.5bn a year across all age groups. Cold and damp homes contribute to England having 40,000 more winter deaths than would otherwise be expected, while falls cost the NHS upwards of £600m a yearⁱ. In those aged 65+, there is also an association between lower socio-economic status and more physical, psychological, cognitive and overall frailtyⁱⁱ.

Sheltered housing is safe and fit-for-purpose. In 2014, 99.1% of homes owned by private registered providers of social housing (including sheltered) were at a decent standardⁱⁱⁱ.

Alongside good quality housing, sheltered housing providers deliver vital services which support older people to remain in their communities for longer, including support with tenancy management and financial wellbeing, practical support to manage health conditions, access to healthy living initiatives, social engagement, sign-posting to local support, early intervention, crisis support and help with hospital discharge. There is growing evidence for the positive impact of these activities on older people's health and wellbeing, and on health and social care budgets.

In addition, the government has indicated a desire to improve mental health and retirement housing is a low-cost option. A recent report from ILC-UK into retirement villages, a particular form of retirement housing, found that a large proportion of people avoid loneliness and isolation and have a higher quality of life.^{iv}

The proportion of households where the oldest person is 85+ will grow faster than any other group. By 2037, there will be 1.42m more such households. By 2040, 1 in 4 people in the UK are projected to be aged 65 or over, and there will be a 100% increase in the over 85s by 2035.

The National Housing Federation estimates nearly 50,000 specialist properties are needed over the next decade to meet changing demographics. Without this growth, older people will be increasingly housed in private rented accommodation. Older people relying on private rented accommodation which is not adapted to their needs will contribute to increased isolation and health problems among frail older people^v.

Moving forward in a constructive way

If funding is not forthcoming, providers will have to review their services. This is likely to lead to reduced support for vulnerable elderly people, including the closure of schemes, which will clearly have a huge impact on all tenants, including those who are not in receipt of Housing Benefit.

A survey of housing associations by the National Housing Federation shortly after the changes were first proposed found that an estimated 156,000 homes across the supported housing sector would become unviable and be forced to close.

Anchor is very keen to help Bristol City Council explore all avenues to ensure the best solution for the future is achieved for service users, for the council and for providers of homes and services.

We believe taking the views of residents on board fully before any final decisions are made will be vital to achieving a lasting settlement. Older residents have a right to be fully involved in decisions affecting their homes and services for several reasons:

- The current proposals would mean changes in services which residents did not know about or agree to when coming to live at the schemes.
- Changes, even relatively small changes, can cause major trauma for older and more vulnerable residents, on occasions with significant health consequences.
- Most residents are on very limited incomes and for some there will be personal financial consequences if the proposed changes are implemented.

We also have considerable concerns about how our residents will react if further reductions were made in the grant allocated. Anchor sheltered housing residents are often very independent, vociferous, determined and keen to be involved in all decisions affecting their homes and support. However, they are also old and, in some cases, becoming increasingly vulnerable.

We think that any further changes will lead to a mix of fear, anxiety about the future and anger among our residents. We would expect the council to find

similar reactions for other providers of sheltered housing. This is a combustible mix which will not only spoil the atmosphere in several local schemes where ambience is a key aspect of continued health and wellbeing, but could spill into the public domain as that fear and anger is vented.

In these circumstances, we think it is vital to open a debate with local older people who use the relevant services before any official proposals come forward. It is important people understand the context for any coming decisions and have awareness in advance of the pressures and difficulties inherent in the Supporting People system. It is also important to show how alternatives have been properly explored, with an open mind, and how conclusions have been reached.

ⁱ Future of an Ageing Population, Government Office for Science, p58

ⁱⁱ Ibid, p81

ⁱⁱⁱ The Economics of Housing & Health, The Kings Fund, p12

^{iv}

http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/ILC-UK_Village_Life_FINAL.pdf

^v <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/latest-news/squalor-and-distress-life-for-older-people-in-the-private-rented-sector/>

^v <https://kfcontent.blob.core.windows.net/research/696/documents/en/2016-3770.pdf>

^v Future of an Ageing Population, Government Office for Science, p58

^v Ibid, p81

^v The Economics of Housing & Health, The Kings Fund, p12

^v

http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/ILC-UK_Village_Life_FINAL.pdf

^v <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/latest-news/squalor-and-distress-life-for-older-people-in-the-private-rented-sector/>



Bristol Parks Forum

representing resident led park groups and citywide organisations involved in protecting and improving Bristol's green spaces

Statement to Cabinet – 30th January 2017

Bristol City Council Corporate Strategy & Savings Proposals

Parks & Green Spaces Maintenance

from Bristol Parks Forum Committee

Key Points

- Parks and Green Spaces are one of Bristol's key attractions they need to be treated as a vital asset, not as a burdensome cost liability
- Core parks budget needs to be maintained as there is no viable proven alternative available
- Cost neutral budget is unachievable

We welcome Cllr Asher Craig's statement at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that 'we need to look again at whether the savings targets can be achieved'. We look forward to further discussions on parks funding in the near future.

In the interim we call on the Mayor and Cabinet to declare their continued ongoing commitment to maintaining Bristol's parks & green spaces. The Corporate Strategy should be revised to make it clear that while all options for reducing costs & increasing income from parks will be considered the Council will continue to provide the necessary core funding if other options do not close the gap.

The statement below was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting on 19th January but was not listed in the Public Forum due to a BCC IT glitch; though we understand it was later circulated to members. It explains why we consider the current proposals to be unachievable.

Bristol Parks Forum Committee is aware of the budget pressures that the Council is facing as a result of the cuts imposed by the Government. We are also aware that the Parks are not a statutory service – see our submission to the Communities and Local Government Committee, Public parks inquiry - www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/CLGCsubmissionFinal.pdf

We therefore anticipated that cuts would be proposed for parks in these budget proposals, but the scale is for greater than we anticipated and in our view unachievable.

The proposals state in relation to parks:

"We want to work towards making the cost of running our Parks Service cost neutral to the council. There will be a robust exploration of the options available resulting in a detailed plan for the long term future. This might include looking at commercial business models, increasing our income and working with communities."

Budget savings over the next 3 years are proposed to be:

2017/18 - £425,000; 2018/19 - £632,000; 2019/20 - £2,862,000

Total over 3 years = £3,920,000

During the consultation period we met with Cllr Asher Craig and made it clear that we were open to looking at new models for managing parks (including trusts); exploring ways in which community groups could take a more active role and ways in which income could be increased. That remains our position; we are willing to take part in 'a robust exploration of the options'.

These proposals envisage that a way will be found to ensure that the current level of maintenance of parks can be maintained at zero cost to the Council.

In our view managing parks on a cost neutral basis is totally unrealistic and undeliverable. We simply don't believe it can be done – if it could then undoubtedly other cities would be doing it.

The Government Parks Inquiry has been considering the funding of parks and is due to report soon. Submissions to the inquiry came from all parts of the country, including many Local Authorities. At one of the oral sessions considerable time was given to looking at whether trusts could take on running parks. It is clear that a trust is only viable with sufficient funding, either in the form of a large endowment or in the form of a guaranteed income from the Local Authority.

You will be aware that Bristol Parks Forum, Bristol City Council, and LUC secured funding from the UK 'Rethinking Parks' Programme run by Nesta in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund in 2014, it was one of 11 projects to have received funding from 209 Expressions of Interest. See www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/parkwork/

Rethinking Parks was specifically aimed at finding ways to bring new funds into parks or reduce the cost of running them. ParkWork was one of the more successful projects in that the value of work being completed is significantly above the cost of running the project. But in terms of the overall Parks budget the savings are small – and that is true of all the other projects.

The submissions to the Government Inquiry and our experience working with Nesta support our view that a cost neutral budget is unachievable. Examples from around the country include:

Liverpool's attempts to achieve a zero budget came up with no clear answer (no overriding answer or silver bullet) after a twelve month investigation jointly led by local entrepreneurs, local government officers, academics and horticultural experts.

Sheffield estimated that they would require an endowment of at least £100m to establish a viable trust; they worked with the National Trust to review this option and concluded that there were too many unanswered questions and risks.

Parks in Milton Keynes are managed by a trust – a trust that was given a large endowment (in the form of investment property) at the time that the City was established.

Even if sufficient funding could be found to allow the establishment of a trust to manage Bristol's parks then the time that it would take to put together funding, the legal processes and the number of other partners that would need to be engaged in such an activity would make a three year timing unattainable.

There is no magic wand. Whatever model is used core funding for City parks needs to come from the Local Authority.

Bristol's parks and green spaces form a key part of Bristol's attraction for residents, business and tourists. Parks are the most used leisure resource in the city; used by more than 80% of Bristol Residents. Parks also provide documented health benefits and have huge potential in the developing field of 'social prescription'.

The level of investment required for our parks and green spaces is on a par with that of our new arena. Arguably providing more benefit for all.

The current proposals need to be revised; parks need ongoing funding from revenue or a large capital investment to set up an endowment. The council is duty bound to approve a workable/achievable budget and if these proposals are followed that will not be achieved.

 Bristol Parks Forum Committee
 Mark Logan (Chair)
 Sam Thomson (Vice Chair)
 Rob Acton-Campbell (Secretary)
 Derek Hawkins (Treasurer)
 Hugh Holden
 Fraser Bridgeford
 Sian Parry

For Bristol Parks Forum
www.bristolparksforum.org.uk
info@bristolparksforum.org.uk

25th January 2017

STATEMENT PS10.17

Statement for Bristol City Council Cabinet meeting on Monday 30 Jan 2017.

I urge Mayor Marvin Rees, Bristol MPs, Bristol councillors, Bristol Trades Union Council and Neighbourhood Partnerships to debate Bristol City Council's response to the government's proposed £100 million cuts with the aim of defending what's left of the public sector.

Many people don't know what's going on.

They do not realise that BCC Corporate Strategy's ambition means closing Bristol City Council Citizen Service Points in Fishponds, Hartcliffe, Southmead and Reddingleaze. .
(The closure will save £238,000. Bristol Post 13 January 2017).

Leaflets saying 'Your Housing Office is likely to close', for example, would have alerted BCC tenants that in future they would have to go to 100 Temple Street which -

- Has no BCC logo so is hard to find
- Has a map of Bristol which cuts off Hartcliffe and Withywood !
- Has a poor bus service and costly service
- Has limited car parking space
- Has workers standing on a mushroom all day.

We should keep Citizen Service Points, Neighbourhood Partnerships where they are needed and all Bristol libraries as these provide 'hubs' for local communities.

The plan to increase Bristol Council Tax by 5 % while privatising public assets is not in keeping with BCC Corporate Strategy's ambition.

If councillors feel so threatened that they vote for the £100m cuts they are also voting for a fractured society divided between the rich and poor.

Gated communities and ghettos could be the future but it doesn't have to be.

Julie Boston.

Statement to Cabinet regarding proposal RS28 Remove the subsidy for salary costs for the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Programme – From Alderwoman Glenise Morgan, former member of the Downs Committee

I wish to support in the strongest possible terms, the request from Bristol Zoological Society to delay the Council's budget cut of £15,000 that supports the Biodiversity Education Officer post. If I were not away from Bristol, I would certainly be present to speak to my statement.

I was a Councillor member of the Downs Committee from 2009, with one short break, until 2016. During that time I was also a member of the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project (AGDWP) Working Group. I am therefore very familiar with the work of the Education Officer, and was proactive in seeking more secure funding for a Seasonal Education officer. I have been deeply shocked to learn that not just one but both posts are at risk.

I know others are submitting statements. I therefore wish to focus on the consequences of losing the current Education Officer, Mandy Leivers, who has held this post for the past 15 years.

I can't think of anyone who has such a **broad knowledge** of the Avon Gorge and Downs, its flora and fauna, its history, its international reputation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and its value to the city. Mandy attends Downs Committee, AGDWP, FODAG (Friends of the Downs & Avon Gorge) and sub-group meetings to provide information, reports and an informed opinion. Committee members and officers come and go but Mandy has been present over the 15 years of her employment. She is therefore a font of knowledge that cannot be easily replaced. She has built up **relationships** with partners, schools, volunteer groups, local organisations from across the city. She has trained and managed the seasonal officers and managed the project budget.

She has **excellent interpersonal skills** which mean that she is a most effective communicator, friendly and enthusiastic and a great ambassador for the Downs, regularly submitting articles on the Avon Gorge and Downs or appearing on local and national TV. Her activities are fun and engaging as well as educational. She is also a most **efficient organiser**, ensuring publicity is updated when necessary, activities and events are planned well in advance, but also ready to take part in new initiatives at very short notice.

Every report Mandy presents shows more **outreach** than the previous one (See the Avon Gorge and Downs education programme review 2001-2016) and have been universally applauded by the Downs Committee. Two bits of feedback: "Excellent delivery of session by Mandy – incredibly informative! This is what education should look like!" (St Michael's on the Mount) and "Just to say thank you to Ana and Mandy ... for the great session the children took part in. For some of them coming to play scheme is all the holiday they get and experiences like this make it a memorable holiday." (Project Manager at Working in Southmead for Health)

Others have pointed out her work with **public health** and addressing **inequalities**, priority areas for this Cabinet. All the progress made and relationships established could be lost. If funding ceases in April, the **programme** for this coming year, already published with activities booked, may have to be **cancelled**, bringing reputational damage and loss of income.

I believe the arguments for retaining funding of this post for one more year are overwhelming. Efforts could then go towards seeking, not just an alternative funding source, but also ensuring the future sustainability of this most valuable partner project.

STATEMENT PS10.19

I wanted to write to you after receiving information about the proposed cuts / relocation of the sensory support service.

The Sensory support service provide a vital service to Bristol residents with sight loss ensuring independence and support, much of which is early intervention. This helps me in my role by ensuring that service users have the support they need to gain greater financial stability and independence before entering into employment. Many of the services they provide around benefits and housing prevents or lessens financial hardship and crises for clients, the reduces the more intensive services they might otherwise need in the long run. Their presence in the RNIB building fits with the other services on offer here from RNIB and Action for Blind People and gives people with limited mobility greater access to the range of services available, as well as offering a 'one stop shop' without the need for clients to travel to different locations for different services. This is very useful for those who have sight loss as mobility and travelling to unfamiliar locations is often challenging for them. Without their service and presence in the building, I feel there would be a detrimental impact on blind and partially sighted people in Bristol who may have not have equal access to benefits and housing.

Outside of my role here, I am also involved in the Deaf community. I know that the sensory support service is a well known within that community and many people rely on the support provided by the team to continue living independently. The services provided both by the team here and at Buckley Court support the Deaf and Deafblind community in their own language, allowing better access to services and again earlier and more successful interventions to support independence.

Kind regards

Alice Archer

STATEMENT PS10.20

We are contacting you to request you reverse a funding decision made by BCC to make substantially cuts to service formally funded under supporting people. This funding allows us to deliver service to BME Elders at Roshni Ghar. The scheme consists of 26 homes that are owned and managed by United Communities, a locally based housing association.

Roshni Ghar is in the heart of the Easton Community, just off Stapleton Road, and it opened in 1993 to address a specific housing requirement, which was to support the needs of older BME residents in the city. Within the scheme there are over 11 languages spoken including Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, Punjabi, Chinese, Cantonese, Polish and Swahili. We feel this is a very special community and the funding we receive from Bristol City Council supports this vital service.

The £35k annual funding we receive from Bristol City Council enables us to employ staff to assist residents to live independently, to break down barriers regarding isolations, encourages residents to remain active citizens within their own community and to support an out of hours emergency alarm service that is a life line for many whom live at the scheme. Without this service we estimate over half of the residents will need residential care which will add further pressure to the public purse. Over 50% of the residents have no family support and 75% have serious health issues. Roshni Ghar is used as a hub for other minority groups in Easton including the Chinese Women's Group and Dhek Bhal.

We are well aware of the pressures facing Bristol City Council Budgets however we don't believe the elderly should bear the burden of these cuts and we are concerned that Bristol may lose the only specific BME accommodation in the city. Therefore we are asking you to reconsider your position and not to impose these cuts to the Supporting People funding. We have been advised this needs to be submitted for the cabinet to consider before 27th January 2017.

Many thanks for reading this and I hope to hear from you soon.

Jayne

Jayne Whittlestone
Communities and Neighbourhoods Manager

Richmond Area Residents' Association (RARA)

c/o 11 Richmond Hill, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1AT rara-clifton@hotmail.com

**Democratic Services
City Hall
College Green
Bristol BS1 5TR**

26th January 2017

Neighbourhood Partnerships

Statement to Cabinet Meeting, 30th January 2017

The Richmond Area Residents' Association represents an area of c.750 homes in the Clifton Ward. RARA is a Partner within the Central, Clifton and Hotwells Neighbourhood Partnership.

RARA greatly values the Neighbourhood Partnership framework. It supports Bristol's democratic process for individual citizens and for the Members who represent them.

We understand the need to manage the Partnerships more efficiently, but the existing Partnership Meetings and Forums should continue uninterrupted until such time as a new system has been consulted on and put in place.

Dr Patricia Smith
RARA Committee Member

STATEMENT PS10.22

We are gravely concerned about the proposal to reduce the Sensory Support Team at 10 Still house Lane, Bedminster. This team have worked amazingly well with my team here at Action for Blind People for years now.

The team are friendly, approachable, supportive and 100% Person focused in everything they do. We rely on this team heavily for support as our own services are going through changes. We make more referrals to this team than we have ever done previously.

The Clients they support would not be able to access our services as we only support people with a sight loss specifically. Having that dual sensory services in this building means that we are a one-stop shop for people with sensory loss across Bristol.

The team work extremely hard and give everything they can to support every individual that comes to their service for help.

It would a devastating loss to the current teams, like us, at Still house lane if any reduction in service was to happen.

This would also add to the already stretched services for people with sensory loss across the city.

Please make every effort to save this wonderful team from any reduction in service provision as it would desperately affect the dual sensory Customers of Bristol that depend on the service and team so much.

Kind Regards & thanks,

Bernie

Bernadette Tamsitt

STATEMENT PS10.23

I am writing in response to the current consultation about the Council's Sensory Support Team and the possibility of them being moved from the building they currently share with Action for Blind People and RNIB. As an Engagement Officer and previously an Employment Co-ordinator for Action, I have found tremendous value in being able to offer a seamless service to blind and partially sighted customers by sharing our office space with the Sensory Support Team and being able to cross-refer customers to each other's services. I would ask you to reconsider your decision to relocate this team.

Kind Regards

Heather Banks

STATEMENT PS10.24

My name is Dr Dai O'Brien, Lecturer in BSL and Deaf Studies in York St John University. I was the Primary Investigator in a year-long project in Bristol funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council called Lost Spaces from 2015 to 2016. The aim of the project was to investigate the effects of the closure of the Deaf Club in Bristol on the deaf community in the city, and how the community responded to the loss of their community places.

The findings of the project clearly show that there is a great feeling of loss, of disconnection and fragmentation within the community. There is confusion about where to find information and support, services which used to be readily available in the Deaf Club. Now that the Club has gone, many people are at risk of isolation and are disenfranchised from wider society. Closure of the Sensory Support Service would further isolate and disempower this community, who have very specific communication and access needs.

I hope you will reconsider any plans to cut the very valuable services offered by the Sensory Support team.

Best wishes,

Dai O'Brien

STATEMENT PS10.25

Statement from the Friends Of Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve for the meeting
30 January

The Friends of Old Sneed Park Nature Reserve fully endorse the views of Bristol Parks Forum Committee and remind the Council of John Ruskin's words

“....a measure of a city's greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and squares”

Community groups cannot take the place of an adequately funded parks service.

Submitted by Eileen Stonebridge (vice Chair FOSPNR)

STATEMENT PS 10.26

Dr Hilary Sutherland (Acting Chair for Board of Trustees)
 Centre for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People
 Vassall Centre
 Gill Avenue
 Bristol BS16 2QQ

Sensory Support Service

I would like to stress why this service is so necessary is because they have a specialised team that comprises of Deaf and hearing staff who are very experienced in supporting their Deaf clients in a way that their needs are being appropriately met.

One of the strengths of this service is that they have Deaf staff who are very Deaf aware and are able to communicate with a range of different communication needs, especially those with limited communication/language. Not only are they able to support Deaf people but they are also able to signpost them in the right direction. It is essential that Deaf people feel empowered and are encouraged to be as independent as possible so they can make important decisions and have informed choices, that is, if they are given appropriate information to do this.

The venue that they are using is very accessible for Deaf people and they have been going there for over 15 years. It is also a place where Deaf people feel comfortable and have the expectation that they will be fully understood and be supported as appropriate. With many Deaf people not having the adult-appropriate reading skills, simple letters from health services or from Councils can appear to be quite frightening or stressful and even in some cases Deaf people do not the confidence to deal with or simply do not have the basic knowledge to know which letters can be ignored as being part of the junk or scam scheme. Many people are not aware of these particular difficulties that most of us would take for granted.

Their emotional well-being is also very important as they are four times more likely to be at risk in developing mental health problems as compared with the general population. Therefore it is really important that support, however big or small, is given at a time where they can be signposted to appropriate organisations immediately. This would be more cost efficient in the long run than if we were to ignore this particular group of vulnerable people, should an emergency intervention become necessary then communication will become an important factor that could act as a barrier rather than as part of preventative measures.

Understanding Deaf people's health issues is also another important factor, the Sensory Support Service is a place where they can learn to understand and how to ask appropriate questions that may answer some of their concerns without delay and

in their own language. Even a simple thing such as making a request for BSL interpreters to be present for their health appointment so that they can participate in making decisions concerning their treatment is one good example of how the Sensory Support Service support Deaf people.

Many Deaf people leave school with very little or with no qualifications and are often not well equipped to deal with adulthood and again it is vital that this particular group are not overlooked to the extent that they may become withdrawn from the mainstream society, especially if they are not able to converse through their first language-BSL. The Sensory Support Service help to be that bridge in which they can learn to develop different strategies from the various role models so that they can in turn become better equipped. Therefore it is really essential that this service is to be exempt from any threat of cuts so they are able to carry on with their good work that cannot be provided elsewhere.

STATEMENT PS 10.27

I have just found out about the proposals to withdraw funding completely from Bristol's parks.

This is completely outrageous.

The urban environment is tough - congestion, pollution, swathes of concrete. Parks provide urban residents with an essential sanctuary - green space, fresh air, trees, wildlife, as well as recreation and leisure. They are also an important sanctuary for urban wildlife - birds, squirrels, insects - and the concentration of trees contributes towards cleaning Bristol's polluted air (recognised as a serious problem that actually kills people)

Bristol's parks contribute greatly to the physical and mental wellbeing of your citizens. Don't pull the funding or you will end up spending more elsewhere on dealing with an unhappier and unhealthier population. It is a false economy.

I realise there is pressure on funding but, please, don't take away our FREE and open green spaces. I feel really emotional at the thought of losing my lovely local park (Horfield Common) or it slipping into shabbiness and decay through neglect - or, God forbid, sold off for even more housing in this already intensely developed city.

Bristol needs breathing spaces. It cannot be wall to wall concrete. You are risking a serious diminution in the quality of urban life. Don't do it.

Yours

Ben Whitehouse



The Northern Slopes Initiative
www.northern-slopes-initiative.co.uk

27 January 2017. By email only.

Statement to Cabinet – 30th January 2017

Bristol City Council Corporate Strategy and Savings Proposals

Actions to make Parks and Green Spaces Cost Neutral

Northern Slopes Initiative

As the voluntary group involved in maintain and improving the Northern Slopes in South Bristol, we are writing to make the following points:

- 1) We support the Statement from the Bristol Parks Forum of 25th January 2017, including recognition of situation that the Council finds itself.
- 2) We would like the Cabinet to consider the following points:
 - We believe that the proposals as they stand are too much, too fast for the Council and other parties to be able to reach cost neutrality.

A slower and more measured timetable should apply; and budgets allocated for when “having no money” is not possible to use as a reason for inactivity.

- There should be more details now of what is involved in taking forward the proposals, what is continued and what changes when – even if a slower and more measured timetable is applied. Rather than leave groups and users wondering what is going to happen next.
- There should be a statement clarifying, as part of agreeing the scope of the review, whether the Council intends to remain as landowners for parks and green spaces, or will lease or even sell off to third parties relevant areas.
- There should be full consideration of the effects of the changes on other agendas in the Corporate Strategy of the changes to the Parks and Green Spaces.

The Northern Slopes – one of Bristol’s brilliant green spaces for people and wildlife – now and in the future.

The Northern Slopes even though not the most well-known of green spaces, with its problems and opportunities, contributes significantly to the health and well-being of Bristol as it provides a place for:

- Exercising – including walking the dog
- Exploring, playing or just relaxing
- Education – forest schools, pre-school groups, school visits
- Company and organisation awaydays
- Countering isolation – through group activities
- Capturing carbon and providing mitigation for air pollution
- Slowing down and storing water running off of built up areas
- Picnics
- Admiring stunning views over Bristol
- Experiencing nature
- Cycling
- Foraging for blackberries and other wild food
- Seeing hot air balloons and firework displays
- Sledging in snowy winters

We are sure other parks and green spaces provide similar services to Bristol; and these will be even more important as our population increases and the area of housing and density of that housing increases.

Finally, while not strictly part of the Strategy can we speak up for staff involved in the Parks Department, who over many years – regardless of the differences of opinion and disagreement on some items, have been professional, supportive and committed to what they are doing.

Long may that positive relationship continue.

Thank you for your time.

The Northern Slopes Initiative's aim is to actively seek to improve the environment and facilities for all individuals living and working in the area of benefit.

Its vision is to “maintain, conserve and enhance the Northern Slopes in order to encourage involvement and appropriate use by the surrounding communities, for recreation, education, relaxation, and for opportunities in employment and training – while maintaining its unique character.”

Len Wyatt
Secretary
For the Northern Slopes Initiative.

The Northern Slopes – one of Bristol's brilliant green spaces for people and wildlife – now and in the future.

STATEMENT PS 10.29

I am a registered Sign Language Interpreter and I work regularly with the Sensory Support Service. I vehemently believe that there should be no cuts within this team and they should remain at the RNIB building. As a professional interpreter working in various Counties, including my home County of Somerset, it is a terrible shame that these Counties do not have this kind of specialist service. Any reduction in staffing levels or cuts would have a detrimental impact on the Deaf community in Bristol. This is a specialist team with the specific skills to support Deaf people in their own language. I meet many Deaf people in my work and they know that if there is a problem with communication, housing, benefits etc then they go to the RNIB building to get support. The Deaf community rely on this service and know where to find them. There is no other service in Bristol (or the surrounding areas) who can provide this kind of specialist service.

In my role as an interpreter I work with the Deaf staff under the Access to Work scheme but I also work in the community with clients who are being supported by the Sensory Support Service. I have also interpreted at Buckley Court for training and tenancy agreements. My role as an interpreter is to facilitate communication, in some circumstances the Deaf client will have additional needs, mental health issues or minimal language skills. This is where the Sensory support staff excel and support me in my role, thus making the communication more fluent and reduce the need for repeat appointments. For example, if a client has complex language which is not standard BSL then invariably the support worker has worked with them over time and knows how to communicate efficiently so that we can work together professionally to ensure that no information is missed and all communication is understood, thus minimising costs of repeat appointments or reducing the impact on their wellbeing or in many cases, their mental health.

In my experience this is an efficient, superbly led team whose knowledge and expertise should be coveted around the country. They have a rare and an enviable ability to support the Deaf community of Bristol in their own language; breaking down barriers and empowering them.

I truly believe that if this service was to have fewer staff then this would impact on other teams, that is, other services would need to book English/BSL interpreters to communicate with Deaf clients and possibly Deaf relay interpreters. Notwithstanding the extra pressure put on mental health services and social care to name but two.

As a professional I implore you to look at the bigger picture and comprehend the valuable service every member of this team provides.

Yours Faithfully

Sharon Hunt



Statement to Cabinet – 30th January 2017

Bristol City Council Corporate Strategy and Savings Proposals: Actions to make Parks and Green Spaces Cost Neutral

Friends of Horfield Common is the voluntary group affiliated with Bristol City Council and supporting maintenance of and improvements to Horfield Common in North Bristol.

We support the Statement from the Bristol Parks Forum of 25th January 2017, including recognition of the situation that the Council finds itself in.

We believe that the proposals for Bristol's Parks as they stand are unachievable. The timescale being proposed for the Council and other parties to be able to reach cost neutrality for the management of Bristol's Parks is unrealistic (if achievable at all, without provision of a significant endowment).

There need to be more details made available of specifically what is being proposed before taking forward proposals to reduce the budget for Bristol's Parks.

There should be full consideration of the effects of the changes on other agendas in the Corporate Strategy of the changes being proposed for funding of Bristol's Parks and Green Spaces.

Bristol's Parks contribute to the health and wellbeing of communities citywide; they are spaces where communities can meet, they provide space for exercise and activities which support improved public health (including mental health), they help to reduce flood risk and the other impacts of climate change, they provide places for children and families to play, explore and relax. Bristol's Parks are also well used a education resources, for Forest Schools and many other activities.

Horfield Common is a very well-used community space which contributes significantly to the health and wellbeing of local and wider Bristol residents as it provides all of the above - ongoing availability of a maintained public park is supporting the reduction of social isolation (specifically identified as an issue in this area through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2015) amongst older residents.

FOHC volunteers collectively contribute thousands of volunteer hours annually to support BCC to achieve its corporate objectives. The contribution of volunteers to support BCC to achieve the budget savings required is crucial, and we are playing our part in supporting this but we can only do this if there is a BCC parks service we can work with.

Reduction of staffing within BCC parks will mean it is not possible for our group (& the many other members of Bristol Parks Forum citywide) to contribute - including through external grant capture - to improvements to the park.

In practical terms, we need to agree permission for projects and improvements which we fundraise for (currently, for example we have secured external grant funding for a new path to improve access for people with disabilities to areas of the common which are inaccessible for significant parts of the year); we need to seek advice from professionals about the scope of projects and volunteer-led work parties which support practical improvements in the park.

Over the last 2 years our group has raised more than £100k to support improvements to the park, and has contributed thousands of volunteer hours to support enhancements. It will not be possible for our volunteers to continue to contribute in this way if BCC proceeds with the proposed budget cuts to BCC's Parks Service.

If BCC does not have Parks officers we can work with we will not be able to continue to fundraise for, or contribute this funding to support improvements to the park for the benefit of all local people and wider Bristol residents. We will not be able to lead volunteer-work parties in the park, without advice and guidance from professionals in BCC Parks - who can support us with appropriate guidance and direction - to undertake this work.

The cuts to BCC Parks being proposed will mean the potential loss of the hundreds of thousands of hours of volunteers time citywide which is currently contributing to the maintenance and enhancement of Bristol's Parks for all residents.

We understand the pressures that BCC is facing but believe that proposals to cut funding to BCC Parks without having fully articulated and defined plans which objectively consider how the negative impacts of this decision may amplify rather than help to resolve the issues the city is facing will be detrimental.

Sam Thomson on behalf of Friends of Horfield Common
Chair

Friends of Horfield Common / www.friendsofhorfieldcommon.com

Correspondence Address: 16 Oak Road, Horfield, Bristol BS7 8RY

STATEMENT PS 10.31

I am writing to respond to the proposals to set out the impact on our service users.

Our service is fairly unique, in that we are unable to claim exempt housing costs through the HB benefit system. This means that we have to use the support funded by SP to provide this element of our service users placements. For example, this means that for our SP hourly rate of just over £16 per hour, we not only have to provide the hour of support, we have to provide the IHM on top of that to ensure the service user maintains their tenancy. RPs can claim this through Housing Benefit.

In addition, efficiency savings are impossible when you have already had to make them every year since 2003 (apart from last year- when we received a modest inflationary uplift). In real terms, our funding has been cut every year for the past 13 years.

So we have already gone past the point where the housing element of the service is unviable. With an additional 5% cut (which would be more like 7% in real terms), then we could not continue to provide the housing element of the service. This would mean we would regrettably need to seek re-possession of around 16 units of housing, as our costs are not being met.

With respect to your second proposal; **That we will cease to fund new placements under the current funding mechanism. Any future placements into supported living will only be made for service users with eligible needs under the terms of our Community Support Services Framework. Existing service arrangements for existing service users will be maintained.**

This is understandable and acceptable to us. In fact, we have only been offering vacant support hours under this contract to the support planning team for the last 18 months in any case. So almost half of our existing service users would have come through the CSS framework if it had been operational.

We do understand the persistently difficult financial situation the council is in, so we are prepared to meet to discuss what else we can do to help. For example, we could reduce our overall grant by 5%, but only if there was a corresponding reduction in the support hours we are contracted to provide. Continuing as is, but with 5% less grant isn't viable.

Regards

Justin Rodway, General Manager



STATEMENT PS 10.32

I am a Deaf citizen who lives in South Gloucestershire but I work in the City of Bristol. Bristol is a vibrant and diverse City with a large Deaf community due to its strong history and infrastructure such as a school for Deaf children, Deaf church, and until 2014, a strong and well attended Deaf Club. Bristol's media scene has embraced the Deaf Community by ensuring more access to events at places such as Watershed and having strong links with BBC See Hear, which is now produced in Bristol. Deaf people have been attracted to Bristol because of its reputation for good access and strong support network. I am proud to work in a City which embraces and provides access to all its citizens.

The Sensory Support Service is a vital line of support for Deaf, Deafblind and blind people in Bristol. The service offers support with daily issues that people may face such as accessing benefits, dealing with debts, housing related issues and translating correspondence to list just a few. The citizens that use the Sensory Support Service feel safe and assured that their needs will be dealt with at first point of contact by a member of staff who can communicate in British Sign Language (BSL).

All staff have a depth of Deaf awareness and an understanding of the issues and barriers faced by Deaf people on a daily basis. Some citizens may have complex needs, specific communication needs (such as Deafblind communication) or minimal language skills, which Sensory Support staff are experienced in accommodating.

Forcing Deaf people to attend a generic Customer Service Point where communication is an instant barrier is adding an unacceptable layer of stress to an individual who may already be concerned about asking for support. Booking a BSL/English Interpreter not only adds a significant cost and delay to each appointment, it also reduces the Deaf persons experience of being dealt with directly by the member of staff. By attending the Sensory Support Service, the need for interpreters is removed and provides Deaf people with a direct face-to-face experience from which they can learn to become empowered in dealing with their affairs.

This self-help education also reduces the likelihood of that individual returning for similar support in the future. The move towards online facilities and digital inclusion is not an option for some Deaf people as the content is heavily English based. Written English is a huge barrier for many Deaf people and results in the Council's website for example being inaccessible. Having to seek clarification would result in the Deaf person having to again attend a Citizen Service Point, request an interpreter and therefore wait another two weeks for an answer to a simple query.

I believe the proposed budget reduction to the Sensory Support Service will have a devastating impact on the Deaf Community. As a resident of South Gloucestershire, I have experienced first-hand the impact of not having sufficient support for Deaf people living in the county. South Gloucestershire has always had an insufficient level of support for Deaf people in comparison to Bristol with the South Gloucestershire Deaf Association being the only point of support. This service saw its funding withdrawn last year and Deaf residents are now faced with no support.

As a member of the South Gloucestershire Users BSL Forum, I have received many complaints from Deaf people who are struggling to receive the right support from generic One Stop shops. They have to request that an interpreter be booked, which inevitably causes a minimum delay of two weeks. Often, deadlines for applications are then missed, benefits stopped and additional stress is placed on the Deaf individual.

I believe that a reduction in budget for the Sensory Support Service will see a rise in apathy from the Deaf community who will become less able and willing to face the stresses of seeking support from Bristol City Council. This is likely to see an increase in reliance on Bristol Social Care, a decline in mental health for Deaf people living in Bristol and a long term adverse effect on the budgets of a Council trying to deal with matters after they have reached crisis point. The Sensory Support Service by comparison, would offer a more cost efficient solution in its early intervention and prevention support.

I hope you will reconsider any plans to cut the very valuable services offered by the Sensory Support Service.

Best wishes,

Anna-Marie Reilly

STATEMENT PS 10.33

I am writing to express my concern on hearing that the Sensory Support Service may be reduced and/or relocated.

I work with visually impaired people in Bristol and have worked with the Sensory Support staff on numerous occasions to benefit the lives of visually impaired individuals in the City, some with an additional hearing loss. Staff in the Sensory Support team have amassed a wealth of knowledge and understanding of the needs of visually impaired people and many rely on them to support their independent living. I am also sorry that the team may have to leave the RNIB building in Bedminster which has developed a reputation as a centre of excellence due to the many services that operate from the building and where collaborative working between teams is well established.

I would ask you to consider the impact of a reduction/relocation and recognise that it would not be cost effective as it would lead to hardship and dependency amongst a vulnerable group who would need the support of other services.

Yours sincerely

John O'Mahony



Statement to Cabinet Meeting on 30th January 2017

This statement relates to the Equalities Impact Assessment regarding the proposal to decommission the HIV Support Service

People living with HIV are specifically covered under the Equality Act due to stigma, discrimination and inequalities that they can face. They often have multiple protected characteristics. Support for people living with HIV has already been cut through the recent retendering of sexual health services by Public Health. The proposal to decommission HIV support will mean that the only option left will be mainstream services. We know that many people will not access these services due to their mental health problems and fears around confidentiality and disclosure.

Both the proposal and the Equalities Impact Assessment have been completed without any consultation. As a result, Bristol City Council has not taken proper account of relevant information.

Our confidence in the value of any forthcoming consultation process has been undermined by this approach. It feels questionable to us whether Bristol City Council has taken due regard for the Public Sector Equality Duty.

We urge the Cabinet not to proceed with this proposal given the inadequate information on which it is based and the adverse impact it will have on people living with HIV.

Rami Ghali

Project Coordinator

Brigstowe Project

Easton Community Centre, Kilburn Street, Bristol, BS5 6AS

STATEMENT PS 10.35

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed cuts to the Sensory Support Service based at the RNIB building in Bedminster. I work as an Independent Living Coordinator for Action for Blind People and have a collaborative working relationship with this service. I refer a significant amount of clients to this valuable service for benefit checks, form completion and housing support. This team has extensive knowledge around making benefit claims for people with sensory loss which is very effective. We are able to communicate effectively and I take on responsibility for challenging incorrect decisions by DWP to support clients with mandatory reconsiderations and representation at appeals. If this service were to be reduced it would significantly impact on the amount of successful benefit claims and appeals for our mutual clients, waiting times for clients would increase and quality of service, for both organisations, would be reduced.

Kind regards,

Simon Cox

Proposal to close down Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership.

Dear Councillors,

I am a resident of Hartcliffe. I have been involved with the Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership since it started and with the Hartcliffe and Withywood Community Partnership before that, going back to 2004.

I grew up in Hartcliffe and it was a good place to live. It has had problems and still does, but there are people trying to make it better.

The Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership provides a format for local people to work together with their councillors, BCC officers from a number of departments, and other organisations on local issues and to get things done in our area.

A current example is the project we have started on the Macey's area. This involves local resident groups working with the DVNP, Knightstone Housing Association, Bristol Waste and BCC Parks to improve this green space and make it useable for local people. This could not have happened without the DVNP as a focal point.

The Neighbourhood Partnership is extremely important. Shutting it down would have a serious impact on our area and it would severely reduce the involvement and ability of local people to influence local and city-wide issues. I would suggest you come to some of our meetings and see for yourself how it works.

I have been told there is a suggestion that a replacement could be run by local people and be self-funded. But how can we match the funding required to pay for meeting rooms, to make phone calls, to produce leaflets and distribute information?

We do not have the resources for this, especially in Hartcliffe which is an area with high levels of deprivation. We could effectively be denied any opportunity to debate local issues, have any influence on decisions and hold BCC to account.

I understand that in other areas of Bristol the Neighbourhood Partnerships have not been very successful. In which case it makes sense to close them down. But this is not the case in Dundry View. This Neighbourhood Partnership has worked well and though there may have been some problem, this does not warrant shutting it down.

This could be the time chance to refine and improve it.

So I would ask Councillors to find a way for Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership to continue.

Yours sincerely

Keith Way

I would like to submit comments on the proposal to "make the maintenance of Bristol's parks "cost neutral".

No plan has been specified which details exactly who will be responsible for routine and exceptional maintenance of the Parks, though a "robust exploration" will take place. In this respect, the proposal is like Brexit, and we see the mess that has resulted from a failure to think through the proposal to leave the EU, to specify clearly the consequences of doing so, and the choices over the nature of future engagement with the EU.

If Bristol's parks are to remain in public ownership - which they must, as a public good - then who it is proposed should cut grass, manage trees (including pruning, keeping safe, removing dead trees and replacing them, as well as carrying out autumnal leaf collections). Who will keep weeds in check? Who will collect litter and fly tipping?

Who will maintain park furniture? Who will maintain paths? And, when ash dieback kills ash trees, who will pay the very considerable costs of removing stricken ash trees?

If it is assumed that "community groups" will manage all of this, then I think the plan is unreasonable and unworkable. Reliance upon voluntary labour is not an effective and reliable option to either routine and regular, or one-off maintenance and care. Volunteer labour by its nature cannot be relied upon to be consistent, regular and long term - especially if not managed, and there are, of course, costs of managing volunteers. Who will manage volunteers? Who will be responsible for health, safety and for public liability insurance? Who will provide the specialist equipment needed for routine and specialist care of Parks' assets?

Parks are essential to the physical and psychological well being of urban dwellers, and Bristol's parks are well used by residents (survey showed 80% of residents use our parks). They offer places to exercise (away from the direct impact of vehicle emissions), for quiet reflection, and serve as meeting points for locals who might not otherwise meet each other (eg my local park is a meeting point for dog walkers and for young parents). They thus serve an important purpose in social cohesion. Their trees are essential for urban cooling, and for absorption of carbon dioxide. Parks offer wildlife some habitat (vital in this overdeveloped and overcrowded country), and enrich the biodiversity of our cities, also something many people take pleasure in and a positive contribution to psychological health.

Parks are therefore not an "optional extra" as the Council's proposal implies: something which can be discarded when times get tough. They are essential to urban living, mitigating the effects of noise, pollution, overcrowding and high population densities, but also social isolation.

Any proposal to make commercial entities out of Parks is unthinkable. To restrict access to them to local permit holders, or to charge entrance fees, or to erode their value by developing private commercial assets on them as revenue raising entities is entirely unacceptable. It is difficult to see how a commercial entity could have any interest in managing green spaces without intending to make money from them, and this could only be through means such as those just listed.

The Council has proposed to focus its spending on social care. This is all deficit spending - that is, addressing the negatives in people's lives (poverty, illness, age and so on).

Parks offer citizens a positive - rather than remedying deficits, they provide positive value to people through the services they provide us. It is a huge mistake to think that the benefits they provide are not important, or can be dispensed with.

The Council must continue to be responsible for the maintenance of Parks and drop this foolish idea that, because they are "benefit spending" rather than "deficit spending"

the Council can abnegate responsibility for them. We need our Parks, and we need them to be maintained and cared for. This needs to be done by the Council, and the Council needs

to retain its long term role of responsibility for our Parks, for all the reasons outlined above.

Julie Parker

I am opposed to the proposal to save GBP 661k in the upcoming year.

Our parks and green spaces are a key part of what makes Bristol a city with fabulous environmental and well-being credentials. A saving of this order - particularly if it impacts on the ability of local neighbourhoods to support and improve their local amenities - would be a terrible strategy and a false saving.

I make regular use of several parks and Badocks Wood for walking, bird watching and playing with my grandchildren in the playgrounds and would hate to see any deterioration in the provision.

Please bear my thoughts in mind during your budget discussion on 30 January.

Regards,

Kevin Molloy

STATEMENT PS 10.39

Lynn Stewart-Taylor
Deaf Consultant/RAD Advocacy

27/01/17

I am a Deaf citizen who lives in South Gloucestershire but I work in the City of Bristol and in the South West.

Sensory Support Service in Bristol is the only unique specialist team in the UK providing support to 16+ citizens who are Deaf, blind or Deafblind. They have a team comprised of both Deaf and hearing staff, with specialist skills in Sign Language and Guide Communication. This service is very Deaf aware and the staff are able to communicate with its citizens who come from different backgrounds and have a range of different communication needs, especially Deaf adults with limited communication/language. This is a vital service in a City that has an estimated Deaf British Sign Language using population of 1,033. Many Deaf people move to Bristol because of the equality of service that is provided by Bristol City Council through its Sensory Support Service.

Deaf children have always found learning to read very difficult and have never become comfortable with written English. The Conrad report in 1979 stated that Deaf children have low expectations in reading. Using the tests and measures of its day, this report showed that large numbers of Deaf children were leaving school with very poor reading skills and often, without the ability to cope with even the basic reading of everyday life. The Deaf children in the study had an average age 15 years 9 months but an average reading age of 9 years old. This has a massive impact for Deaf children when they leave school with little or no qualifications. This often leads to Deaf young people transitioning into the adult world ill-equipped to deal with simple daily tasks independently.

As a Deaf Engagement and Advocacy Officer for the South West, I meet with Deaf adults who are struggling with a number of issues. To date, 100% of my Bristol case-load has been referred to Sensory Support Service for their expertise in supporting people to develop the skills to manage independently with everyday tasks. For example, one client has recently been referred to Sensory Support Service after it was identified that he had misunderstood a letter in relation to his rent. Had the Sensory Support Service not been involved and educated the Deaf person in his tenancy responsibilities, he would have left the letter un-actioned and risked being sent to court, fined and evicted from his home.

It is essential that the Sensory Support Service maintains its current profile and service capacity. Without it or in a reduced form, many Deaf and Deafblind people will return to being reliant on social care for support. They will never learn the self-help skills and obtain the knowledge to deal with matters independently. The Sensory Support Service provides early intervention and prevention support to ensure that problems or barriers do not escalate to higher level consequences and

more costly support needs. With their specialist knowledge, awareness and communication skills, Sensory Support Service staff are able to identify early issues or warning signs that would otherwise go undetected. This early intervention results in a reduced likelihood of matters escalating and support needs increasing at a far greater cost to the public purse.

Please consider the consequences of making cuts to the Sensory Support Service and the specialism that they provide. Without it, Deaf/Deafblind people will have no other service to support them in Bristol.

Best wishes

Lynn Stewart-Taylor

STATEMENT PS 10.40**Statement to Bristol City Council Cabinet extraordinary meeting on Monday 30th January from Bristol & District Anti-Cuts Alliance**

Bristol & District Anti-Cuts Alliance (BADACA) re-state our opposition to the £101 million of cuts set out in the Corporate Strategy and the first wave of these cuts in the proposed budget for 2017/18.

We also re-state our support for Bristol City Council workers including those represented by Unite, Unison & GMB. We believe that local public services are always best provided by public employees with proper pay, pensions and terms & conditions guaranteed.

We thank the mayor again for meeting with us in the autumn and listening to our concerns and ideas for fighting the cuts. But we are disappointed that he hasn't made more progress in uniting with other Labour authorities against these cuts.

As we said last year, we believe that the ten biggest British cities outside London, (the 'Core Cities',) which are now all controlled by the Labour Party, should take a stand against the cuts in 2017. Using reserves & prudential borrowing, we believe the Labour Party should, perfectly legally, suspend the cuts for 2017/18 and lead a mass campaign to force the Tories to end austerity. The alternative is the horrendous cuts we see outlined in the budget report.

We support the Mayor's anti-austerity beliefs, and we implore him to unite with us, the people of Bristol, the Trade Unions & the Labour Core Cities to take a stand against Tory austerity in 2017!

But either way, we at BADACA will keep building for our March & Rally against the cuts to Bristol City Council (11am – Saturday 18th February – College Green.) and work with single issue campaigns as they arise to protect local services.

Matthew Carey,
Organising Secretary,
Bristol & District Anti Cuts Alliance.

My name is Martin Hughes; I live in City of Bristol.

I feel that there should be no budget cuts to the Sensory Support Service.

My reasons for this belief are:

- The Sensory Support Service staff are able to communicate with Deaf people in their preferred language which is British Sign Language (BSL).
- The Sensory Support Service staff have the skills to work with people who are blind, deaf and deafblind.
- Other services may have people with level 1 or 2 BSL who assume this will solve the issues that Deaf people attend with. This is not true as deaf people find it very difficult to communicate with people who are not fluent in BSL as the flow of the communication is stilted and there are lots of misunderstandings due to the lack of communication skills and the mis-use of facial expression within the language. Many hearing staff outside the Sensory Support Service assume that deaf people are angry or rude which is a total misunderstanding. Many deaf people choose not to engage with non-experienced staff who cannot sign their own language.
- Many Deaf people's appointments to meet at the Citizen Service Point are delayed or postponed owing to a lack of awareness and understanding how to book an interpreter. These delays have a detrimental impact on Deaf people and put them at a higher risk of impacting their mental wellbeing, that is, increased stress levels of having more time to worry, going further into debt or misunderstandings which result in serious outcomes.
- Without the support from the Sensory Support Service, the other service will have to use interpreters for all of the appointments for Deaf citizens and this is not a cost effective way of working, that is, for every appointment you will be paying a member of staff and an interpreter. As BSL is their first language and not English, many deaf people are unable to fill in forms; are the Bristol City Council prepared to support deaf people in completing forms with an interpreter present each time to ensure what has been written is fully understood by the deaf citizens?
- I am not surprised that you do not receive many complaints from the Deaf community about Bristol City Council services. Deaf people are historically renowned for accepting poor service as they have faced barriers all of their life and they are tired of fighting for their rights. Deaf people also find it very difficult to complain as there is not a suitable accessible way for them to complain. Deaf citizens often say to me that they are unhappy and when I advise them to complain they say 'oh, the Council won't help' or they say 'the customer service is rubbish and they know nothing' this causes frustration and stress. They always feel happier when they have been to the Sensory Support Service as they can communicate in their preferred language.
- One of the common support needs is to understand correspondence and bills. For example a letter from the DWP or a Council tax letter which may be a generic letter or statement. You may feel that this is nothing to worry about but lots of people come to the Sensory Support Service to check what these letters actually mean. Would the Citizen Service Point be happy paying £90+ for an interpreter to translate a standard letter? To me it seems a waste of money but it is very important that these Deaf citizens have clarification so they do not spend time worrying, thus affecting their wellbeing.

- The Sensory Support Service staff are highly skilled in ascertaining the correct information from citizens to ensure all application forms are completed correctly. They have knowledge of the citizens they support and the barriers they face on a daily basis. Generic Council staff do not have the necessary Deaf or blind awareness to fully support these citizens.
- If the Bristol City Council are prepared to lose the Sensory Support Service then Deaf people have a right to an interpreter, under the DDA and the Bristol Deaf Charter 2004, for Bristol City Council services. You do the maths – an interpreter charges £90+ for a call out or up to £300 a day X 5 days a week. In one year that total would be...? see what the calculator says. I am pretty sure you will agree that Sensory Support Service is value for money.
- The Sensory Support Service provide excellent service as there are no barriers there which in turn reduces stress, frustration, anxiousness which is better for the individual's wellbeing rather than no service or a poor service with staff with no experience in dealing with Deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind or blind people. The standard of other services are poor which are the reasons why lots of Deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind or blind people do not bother to go. They are tired of complaining and trying to break down barrier after barrier.
- Reducing cuts on the Sensory Support Service will have a huge impact on the organisations that refer to them and in the long term will have an adverse and damaging effect on other services within social care. There will be a massive impact on Deaf, blind and deafblind people with a huge risk to their economic wellbeing.

Yours faithfully,

Martin Hughes

STATEMENT PS 10.42



Diocese of Bristol | Chaplain with the Deaf Community

27th January 2016Statement to Bristol City Council Cabinet Meeting 30th January 2017**Proposed cut of 20% to Supporting People – Physical/Sensory Impairment**

This proposal was brought to my attention recently by Deaf people who are, naturally, very concerned. The proposal threatens those in our community who are most vulnerable. A 20% cut in services will mean that Deaf, Blind and Deafblind people will have less access to the support services they need. For Deaf and Deafblind people this may mean losing the support of someone who can truly communicate direct with them in their own language, BSL, and who understands their particular stresses and frustrations of living in a hearing, sighted, dominated world.

I was pleased to note that a Full Impact Analysis was carried out concerning this proposal. That being said, this cannot truly express the human impact on individuals of the reduction in terms of human support to a client group for whom *face-to-face* communication is essential. The Impact Analysis recognises this when it states that greater use of assistive technology is unlikely to mitigate the impact.

Some of the staff employed in supporting Deaf and Deafblind people are, themselves Deaf so able to empathise well with clients. Should the cuts mean a loss of jobs for those particular staff, it should be noted that they are a group with protected characteristics. I also note that the “Cumulative Equality Impact” summary doesn’t even mention the fact that Deaf BSL users have particular needs around the whole issue of communication.

Ten years ago I was proud to work in the Diocese of Bristol because I could see that Bristol City Council took the needs of Deaf and disabled people seriously. Bristol City Council was the first Authority to sign up to the British Deaf Association BSL Charter in 2003 and, at that time, employed a Deaf Equality Officer and ensured their website was accessible through over 100 BSL videos on their website. This is no longer true and over the years we have seen support for Deaf and Deafblind people eroded little by little. The Charter states that the Council will: “Consult with our local Deaf community on a regular basis” and yet I am not aware that any direct consultation with Deaf people regarding these proposals has happened. Instead, I read that a consultation will be taking place to assess how best to implement the cuts – not *whether* to implement the cuts.

I urge the Council to reconsider this proposal. I’m aware that the need to make spending cuts is urgent but a 20% cut in this particular service and a 5% cut in Physical and Sensory Impairment Supported Housing may represent real hardship to vulnerable people.

Rev Canon Gill Behenna
Chaplain with the Deaf Community
Diocese of Bristol

STATEMENT PS 10.43

Bristol Disability Equality Forum
Statement to Cabinet
30th Jan 2017

Bristol Disability Equality Forum calls upon you forego making a decision on the budget until you have given more serious consideration to the disproportionate impact upon Disabled people and their families, the indirect discrimination that some of the proposals constitute, and the alternatives the Mayor called for but has apparently dismissed without due consideration.

Whilst we understand that the Council has a legal duty to produce a balanced budget, we are deeply concerned at the manner in which the Mayor and Council has approached this task.

We were extremely disappointed that, after stating that he is committed to addressing inequality and transparency, the Mayor:

1. released a Corporate Strategy that almost totally excluded Disabled people from his vision and aspirations for the city;
2. decided that the vast majority of the proposed cuts would be in those services and support that Disabled people need, regardless of the fact that they are also being the group that has been hardest hit by welfare reform, leaving them to experience even greater disadvantage and inequality;
3. has exposed the Council to (potentially successful) legal action for failing to comply with the Equality Act 2010, by its failure to consider the impact of proposals upon those with protected characteristics **before** deciding what to include in the Corporate Strategy – despite our attempt to be a ‘critical friend’ in warning him of this;
4. took the unprecedented decision to provide too little information regarding the ‘coal-face’ impact on services for informed response to be possible - despite our attempt, as

'critical friend', to warn him of this and offer a solution to get it back 'on track';

5. has produced a revised Strategy that has simply dropped mentioning certain cuts (other than in the financial information) and is couched in language that seeks to give the impression that far more of the cuts have been dropped, when they clearly have not, and a Cumulative Impact Assessment that is solely a justification for his decisions, not an analysis of impact.

The conduct, and content, of the consultation has produced the least transparent budget consultation we can recall ever contributing to.

Furthermore it sends out a very strong message to Disabled people that they don't count enough to be included in the aspirations of the city and that they should bear the vast majority of the burden of the budget cuts.

The lack of transparency, and the failure to give due consideration to the alternatives he undertook to take seriously, reflects very badly upon the Mayor and the claims he has made for his administration.

We therefore call upon you to suspend any decision-making at this Cabinet meeting and start properly assessing the value and viability of the alternatives proposed before finalising the budget to be put to Full Council.

Failure to do so will leave Disabled people with little alternative but to seek legal redress.

STATEMENT PS 10.44

Statement to Cabinet, 30.1.2017

I write as a private individual, better informed than the average, more concerned than the average to play a part in democratic process, more involved than most in volunteering (in Bristol's allotments and Parks) and – as a GP - more aware than the average of the positive physical and mental health benefits to individual humans of the Parks of our land.

This statement is necessarily abbreviated to meet the deadline in only minutes' time.

In essence:

- I think the analysis given in the public documents fails to account the full – even the partial - positive health benefits of well-run parks to the city's citizens, and therefore a narrow accounting approach fails to do them justice.
- The need for such measures to boost the psychological and physical health – and so to sustain - sustain communities under the current stresses has perhaps never been greater.
- The 'cost neutrality' proposed is not realistic – I have examined Liverpool's attempts at this and these provide lessons that have not been learnt in Bristol.
- So the Council must recognise the need to provide the core funding for maintenance of Parks, for the income generating elements of a private model are inimical to obtaining the necessary health benefits, and the limitations on responsibilities volunteers can adopt prohibit a full voluntary model.

I am happy to amplify if wished, what I recognise is a spare argument. Please consider this.

Yours faithfully.

Dr Stephen Pill.

STATEMENT PS 10.45

Statement for Cabinet 30th Jan 2017-01-27

Dear Mr Mayor

I make this statement as a governor of 'Hope', the Virtual School for Bristol's Children in Care and Care Leavers. I'm chairperson of Finance and Personnel Committee.

On Page 18 of today's Package you make reference to what the Local Authority **must do**, including Looked after Children and Head Teacher for the Virtual School.

You identify commissioned contracted, or shared services (BCC as client) saying "This is a mix of services we must provide and some where we have no legal obligation but are choosing to continue them. This doesn't mean that we have to run them ourselves, so in this tier we will commission other organisations to run things on our behalf or work with partners to run things together." You give examples:

Placement of Children in Care

YoT

0-25 SEN & Disabled children and Young People

Meeting Social Care needs

Carers (I'm not sure if this includes Foster Carers and Young Carers

Waste Collection and Disposal

AND Virtual School for Children in Care (Should included Care Leavers, those in Further Education and Higher Education. The FACT that these are not included highlights that those providing the service were not consulted).

Although I know that Foster Carers can be In House or Independent and Waste Collection has a history of All In or All Out; placing the Education of your Children and Young People in the same Category as Waste Collection has come as a surprise.

I hope for some Clarification today so that any fears can be allayed.

You must learn to appreciate the significance of the Virtual School and its functions, one is improving outcomes.

On Page 28 you mention Improving outcomes

Use our leadership and influence with key partners to improve educational outcomes for children, young people and adults, championing the cause of those who don't currently enjoy such good

outcomes. This includes disadvantaged learners, ethnic minority groups, children in care and those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.

The Virtual School and its staff are the way in to the dark places.

On Page 553 It would be prudent to have an advisory link from DLT to the Services so that the USER of ther service can contribute to TRANSITION/CHANGE

I note that GREEN BOOK principles does not Include Scrutiny

Alderman Brian Price

STATEMENT PS 10.46

I am writing on behalf of Places for People Mental Health Floating Support Service re the proposal cut in funding.

Our contract started on the 1st April 2015 and our remit was to offer Tenancy Support to 116 people across Bristol with Mental Health who are struggling to sustain their tenancies. We have we have worked with a large number of people who Mental Health was such that they were on the brink of losing their tenancies, through either non-payment of rent/ct, not in receipt of any benefits or their benefits has stopped because the benefit system has changed and they were having difficulties understanding the system. This is a common occurrence for a lot of our customers.

With our support, we assist the customer to make a benefit claim, attend the medical appointment (for benefits) with them, and act as an advocate for – we will also support our customers in making an appeal if the medical decision goes against them and attend the appeal hearing with them. we have great success in this area.

We get a lot of customers who are in private let and a are facing eviction or the property is in 'deep poverty' or the tenant is facing eviction because the landlord is selling the property . We will work with the landlord to hold off any eviction procedures until we can secure more appropriate accommodation for our customers. We will also engage with the landlord to carry out the necessary repairs so our customers can live in peace.

We carry out a lot of assessments with our customer group and often we will find that they have been struggling for a long time and not able to ask for support. at this point we will suggest making an appointment to see their GP and accompany them to that appointment. We will advocate for the GP to make a referral to the Mental Health Team for an assessment. Though the Mental health assessment can be a lengthy process, we will continue to support our customer giving emotional support. we will attend the MH assessment with them and ensure that they can a service.

The staff team is very experience in working with people with Mental Health and get great results. We never give up on any of our customers until the job is complete. We work tirelessly to support our customers. We work with a lot of people with the most enduring Mental Health and who are very vulnerable. We make sure that their tenancies are safe, they are in receipt of the correct benefits, link them into mental health services (some of our customers has never been assess until we start working with them.

I am asking that when the committee meet to discuss the cut in funding to our service, that you consider the good working we have been doing for the past two years. the different our service make to the lives of our customers, the long term effect this will have on their lives and avoid more impact on the NHS

and the Mental Health Service. You can ring and visit our office to speak to me, my staff and our Area Manager Peter Stafford about our work

We are very committed and will continue to be so

Thank you for your time

With kind regards

Eileen

Eileen Francis
Scheme Manager
Mental Health Floating Support
Places for People Individual Support

STATEMENT CS10.1

I recognise that the budget setting process this year is particularly painful, as our key services have already been stripped to the bare bones by Government austerity measures. However, we are committed to promoting equality, ensuring the no one is left behind in the City's success, and to safeguarding vulnerable people. These are the principles that need to underpin our budget decisions.

Disabled people (and older people who tend to acquire impairments) have been disproportionately hit by Central Government cuts (thirteen times more than non-disabled people). Cuts have been made to the Independent Living Fund, Disability Living Allowance, Employment Support Allowance and Access to Work –all increasing disabled people's reliance on local authority and VCS services, meaning they cannot take any more-there is no slack. It is now the case that 50% of disabled people or families with disabled members live in poverty, and 46% are unemployed (Joseph Rowntree 2016) . Yet it also costs more to be disabled.

We say that our values are to be **bold and caring**. These revised proposals take £17,697,000 out of the People budget in the next three years (£10,734,000 this year). More than half of this will come directly from disabled people's services. I am not convinced that increasing eligibility criteria (implementing a new model of care), reviewing day services provision, re-commissioning community support services, and reducing supporting people services can be done without causing extreme hardship to disabled people, as well as increasing expenditure elsewhere in social care or health services. For example, the Supporting People proposals for a 50% reduction in floating mental health support (when we are prioritising mental health as an issue), 50% cut in older people floating support and 20% cut to sensory impairment support, can only lead to additional costs elsewhere in the system.

To be **bold and caring**, we need to do three things:

- **Acknowledge that vulnerable people really are our priority**, and that the People Directorate cannot sustain this proportion of cuts without causing catastrophic impact on disabled and older people, and look to bringing back some of the rejected proposals relating to other Directorates
- **Set income generation targets for all service areas for the next 3 years** to reduce the need for cuts (the VCS has had to do this for years and many useful proposals worth considering have come forward in the consultation).
- **Invest in a small team of entrepreneurs** who will work with officers in each area to come up with creative ways to raise money to meet targets (not charging service users for more). Nottingham raised £9 million from a levy on parking spaces, Wrexham tried rigorous enforcement of littering fines which raised £263,000 in the first six months. Other authorities are looking at a

social care lottery to raise money for key non-statutory services-all quick wins and not impossible to achieve.

Ruth Pickersgill

Councillor for Easton Ward

STATEMENT CS 10.2

Statement for Extraordinary Cabinet Meeting January 30th

As a child I used to visit my local library every Saturday morning. It triggered a love of reading and research that set me on the road to academic success and a career. I believe every child should have the opportunity to share the riches I found in books through easy access to a library.

While I of course understand that the cabinet is in a dreadful situation faced with implementing Tory cuts and bound by constraining Tory legislation, I believe the decision to cut library provision is one that must be reconsidered and either limited or rescinded. Libraries, like parks, are the gift of a state to all its citizens. They are a collective good, accessible to all, but particularly loved and useful to children and to the elderly. While other economy measures proposed in the draft budget (such as increased parking charges or cuts to meals on wheels) can be reversed in a time of greater budgetary freedom and public service regression, once a library is closed, its premises used for other purposes and its books disposed of, it is gone for ever.

Modern libraries, however, are not just book repositories, but serve a wealth of purposes. They provide residents with computers and newspapers, access to photocopying, films and music via DVDs and CDs and provide a base for all sorts of community groups and activities, from choir practice to local history. The idea that they should act as a hub for community activities is actually welcome, but it should be acknowledged that local libraries are already evolving in that direction.

For example, Wick Library in Brislington, which is used by many of the residents of my ward, is almost the only community space within the West Brislington boundaries (aside from Hungerford Community Centre which is not within easy walking distance). It is thus growing in importance. With a substantial children's section, it provides holiday activities and reading clubs for children; it is used by a craft group and by a campaign to develop the shopping area. I hold my councillor surgeries there. When I was last there, between 11 and 12.30 on a Saturday, 32 users entered the library, many of whom were children eager to rummage among books and DVDs. One user I spoke to said he went there two or three times a week. The library displays children's art, has a community notice board (otherwise lacking in the area) and holds a summer fete to raise money for local charities. Currently the library space is quite small which limits its use to smaller groups, but if the back premises were converted and slightly extended it would be able to host larger meetings and provide room for more community-building activities. Indeed the library has the land behind it and to the side of it that can be used for extensions. The recent campaign that saved the library under the previous Administration of Mayor Ferguson had two versions of possible extensions professionally drawn up; they were shown to Mayor Rees whilst a candidate and he was very favourably impressed. The drawings would be available for current cabinet members to consider.

I am all for extending the functions of local libraries or developing them into community hubs with library facilities, but please do not take such facilities away from us. I have been informed that when Brislington gave up its Community Hall many years ago for a much-needed school, the Council made a promise to replace the lost facilities, as some senior colleagues may recall. The loss of the library would be a blight to the area, and set back the process of community development which has been successfully fostered by the Neighbourhood Partnership and its officers.

Harriet Bradley
Councillor for Brislington West
and Councillor Mike Langley, Councillor for Brislington East

STATEMENT CS 10.3

Statement from Cllrs Mark Brain and Paul Goggin regarding Hartcliffe CSP

As councillors for Hartcliffe and Withywood Ward we are asking Cabinet to look again at the CSP service it proposes to offer our constituents in Hartcliffe and Withywood.

The impact of the closure of Symes House would be devastating for the community. We have a higher than average number of older people in our ward. It is one of the most disadvantaged parts of Bristol and some of its super output areas are in the 1% most disadvantaged in the country. The result is that the proportion of those with no access to information technology is much higher than in most of the city.

We accept that there are parts of the inner city that are similarly disadvantaged but those living there will still be relatively close to a central CSP whereas Hartcliffe and Withywood is several miles away. Those wishing to go to the Temple area by public transport will need to catch two buses to get there. For those paying off rent arrears in cash this is significant disincentive.

Those who will be disadvantaged by this closure will be the most vulnerable in our ward and those least able to speak up for themselves therefore we are asking for a fresh look at how a service can be provided.

Clearly Symes House itself is mostly empty now and should close as it is uneconomical and sits on a site that could be used for housing. However we believe there are other options that have not been explored. A facility consisting entirely of customer interface could be located at another, much smaller site in the area. Here are number of suggestions:

@Symes

The Gatehouse Centre

Job Centre Plus

The Withywood Centre

A small shop unit in Imperial Park.

There might be a capital cost involved in taking this course of action but there will be income accruing from the sale of the Symes House site therefore a portion of the receipts could be used to finance the facility.

With regard to revenue budget implications then the current revenue budget must already include the cost of increased officer time in the city centre therefore much of the officer time necessary to staff a new facility must be included in the current proposed budget.

We strongly urge Cabinet to reconsider their position and not to abandon those in need in Hartcliffe and Withywood simply because they live on the edge of the city. This is not equality of treatment which as ward councillors is all that we are asking for.

STATEMENT CS 10.4

Public Forum Statement from Cllr Mark Brain and Cllr Paul Goggin on funding Wham!

As part of the need to reduce expenditure to fill the funding gap cause by the Tory Cuts and the way in which the previous administration managed council finances a great deal of funding for neighbourhood partnerships is to be cut.

We understand that reductions in expenditure need to be made. We further understand that the current system which sees 80% of neighbourhood expenditure being spent on administration rather than communities is not defensible. However, we have a concern that the funding reductions are happening too quickly to allow communities to make the changes necessary to continue to function once funding has ended.

The particular focus of this statement is funding for the Wham magazine produced by the Hartcliffe and Withywood Community Partnership for the Dundry View Neighbourhood Partnership. HWCP would like to continue to produce the magazine and are enthusiastic about doing so commercially.

The Wham is part of the social glue that holds the community together. In an area where free papers are not delivered and sales of the local newspaper are low this is a vital form of communication. It is part of what makes Hartcliffe and Withywood what it is and the proposed revenue budget sees Wham falling over a funding cliff edge because it has not been given adequate time to find a way to take control of its own future.

We are asking that half year funding be found to continue to produce the magazine for the first half of 2017/18. This we believe will provide the breathing space needed to obtain alternative funding and to become commercial.

We recognise that if this funding is found then it would have to be cut from elsewhere but we do not believe this would be a difficult task. Six month's of funding would cost Bristol City Council fifteen thousand pounds. Even in a much reduced budget this is a relatively small amount of money. It could be funded from bringing forward five thousand pounds worth of cuts from next year's budget from three other areas. In truth if one council officer handed in their notice and took ten months to be replaced that would in all likelihood cover the cost.

It is perfectly practical and prudent to find the six month's funding for Wham to allow it a chance to stand on its own two feet. Our proposal would make little difference to your budget but a huge difference to Hartcliffe and Withywood. Please reconsider your proposals and fund the Wham!

STATEMENT CS 10.5

EXTRAORDINARY CABINET MEETING, MONDAY, 30th JANUARY 2017**PUBLIC FORUM STATEMENT on Mayor's Revenue Budget proposals, from Councillor Tony Carey (Brislington East)****Budget saving proposal (£450k) in Place Directorate, Reduction of subsidies for bus routes with low numbers of passengers**

Firstly, can I say that I appreciate the challenging financial position confronting the Authority and the fact that, moving forward, this necessitates making some difficult decisions and hard choices over what the Council chooses to spend its resources.

Notwithstanding the constraints imposed upon the Mayor and Cabinet to deliver a balanced budget, may I, with respect, draw to the Mayor's attention the critical situation experienced by the elderly and those with limited mobility should sponsored bus services be lost for certain routes running in the east of our city.

The bus services 513 and 514 are the only way that a great many people in Greater Brislington can get to Knowle for banks and shopping, to the surgeries at Brooklyn Health Centre or the hospital in Callington Road. Their loss would also negatively impact hugely on access to Brislington Tesco now that the Abus and First Bus services have been withdrawn.

There are no banks in Brislington East other than one small branch of Barclays on the similarly inaccessible Brislington Trading Estate. Supported bus services were initiated over 30 years ago precisely because of the otherwise inaccessible nature of the Brooklea Health Centre in Wick Road. This caused councillors of that time to take the decision to make sure there was some public transport provision available. Now, with the creation of the new St Anne's Boardmill and the Latimer Close estates, these services are even more critical to the needs of this community.

Other public amenities and local businesses such as libraries, chemists, supermarkets, travel agents etc, all require and rely upon the threatened bus services. It is also obviously important that Bristol retains a comprehensive public transport offer as an alternative to the car. This is needed not only in terms of sustainability, cutting congestion and pollution but also to ensure that all those who may have mobility problems are able to easily move around our city.

For all of the reasons given above, I urge the Mayor to proceed carefully before withdrawing any funding from these specific buses currently operated by Wessex. Failure to do so would leave many people stranded and simply entrench the commercial dominance currently enjoyed by First Bus.

Cllr Tony Carey
Conservative Councillor for Brislington East.

STATEMENT CS 10.6

Parks and the budget

This has without doubt been the most chaotic budget setting process that I have witnessed in all the time I have been on this council.

There are a whole list of areas where budget decisions have been made without proper analysis but surely the parks budget is the most bizarre of the lot.

To completely remove the budget for Bristol's much valued parks is vandalism of the worst sort.

It is clear that those making the decision have no experience of how parks work and I urge the Mayor to think again and speak to those who have experience before it is too late.

A petition is underway.

Councillor Gary Hopkins

Statement on the Budget 2017-18

I am concerned that we again see opaque financial changes being proposed for the RPZ budgets.

Over the last few years, under both Mayors, changes to the financing of the RPZ have been made to release money for spending elsewhere. The law is very clear on the issue of RPZ finances: any surplus made on permit schemes must be plowed back into transport measures in the locality. The surplus finances are not available to be spent on the wider transport budget, and they are certainly not available to be spent on non-transport budgets, or vired into other departments.

At the previous two budgets, the Labour Party has passed amendments that effectively refinanced the loans taken out to fund the installation of the RPZs. This refinancing pushed the pay-off date for the loans many years into the future, and then the freed-up revenue was simply spent elsewhere.

This year under budget heading "*Residents' parking income*" there is £684k cash appearing in year 2020/21 from the RPZs. The accompanying text says the money is freed "*when this [loan] is paid back*", even though the pay-off dates are now far in the future.

It's becoming increasingly clear that the administration's goal is to mainstream the citywide RPZ budget surpluses, which are now known to be quite substantial. While the mainstreaming of this surplus to be spent on general Council expenditure might not seem like a bad thing to some people, the crucial point is that this money is coming entirely from a small sub-set of Bristol residents. By coincidence, there are very few Labour councillors in these areas.

What we are ending up with is a general parking tax that is levied only on those residents in certain parts of Bristol - the parts with RPZs. This tax is typically ~£150 per year, added on top of Council tax per household. Not only is this not legal, but this Council made explicit promises in 2008 to concerned residents that this situation would never arise.

Finally, I couldn't help but smile at the plan to cut the seagull-control budget. At Budget Council two years ago, the Green Party proposed cutting this budget to spend on something typically worthy. We were all treated to impassioned speeches and pleas from the Labour Party (Cllr Hibaq Jama in particular) telling us that countless hardworking people would suffer terrible loss of quality of life if the seagulls weren't kept under control. So what changed?

Cllr Mark Wright (Lib Dem)
Hotwells & Harbourside ward

STATEMENT CS 10.8**STATEMENT TO CABINET – Mon 30th Jan 2017**

SUBMITTED BY GREEN COUNCILLORS

Agenda Item 10: Budget recommendations to Full Council

Councillor Carla Denyer

Thank you for listening to our feedback regarding museum opening hours. We were worried about the Council inadvertently passing the tipping point where reduction of museum opening times would actually reduce both earned income (due to lower footfall) and grant funding (due to falling beneath a minimum hours criterion).

However, we did not call for the maintaining of the current opening hours to be paid for by cutting staff – this has come as an unwelcome surprise. With Bristol Museum, for example, having lost 9 staff in 2014 to voluntary redundancy, and another 13 in December 2016 to the same, we question whether there is the capacity to absorb these cuts and operate an acceptable service.

There are minimum standards to adhere to in museums, which if not met jeopardise other avenues of funding. Bristol Museum is regarded as a Major Partner by the Arts Council, which means it receives a decent slice of the cake. The next five-year funding cycle commences in 2018. Having fewer Collections Team staff could become an issue when allocating what will be another Arts Council austerity budget. Already exhibitions are on show for longer, and events are fewer. This proposal further threatens not only the standing and efficacy of the Museum, but also its contribution to the local cultural, heritage and tourist economy.

STATEMENT CS 10.9**Statement to Cabinet 30th January 2017****From Cllr. Anthony Negus (Cotham ward, LibDem)****Landlords Services**

The Lib Dem group regrets the raft of measures that have combined to wreck the ability of this Council to deliver a sustainable business plan for the maintenance of our council homes.

We support the creation of a separate housing delivery organisation, as recommended at the 2015 Housing Inquiry day largely because of the failure to deliver through our in-house team.

We also welcome the long-overdue review which has been forced on this organisation to achieve a business plan that can sustain our activities for some years. This has at last taken on board recommendations to improve delivery and serve more people in need that were made during the Lib Dem administration; but it is clear that we need to do more. This Council should commission a radical reappraisal of the overall operation, optimum use of land and best use of resources. A report clearly indicating how the effectiveness of our organisation compares with those of similar councils, and those who operate through commissioned organisations.

We should build on the greater efficiency achieved in house as shown in this budget report to deliver an organisation that maximises its potential to deliver more and better housing for those not yet in council accommodation as well as those who are.