

Member Forum

15 January 2019

Questions and replies



Procedural note:

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS:

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



LABOUR QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Marg Hickman

Subject: Public health

1. Today's golden motion highlights the interplay of housing, health, jobs, local services, and national Government policy in our Labour administration's work in delivering for Bristol.

Will the Mayor give his view on the Government's half a billion pound cut to public health funding since 2015, and the potential for the One City Plan to improve health outcomes for Bristolians?

REPLY:

We share the view of leading public health charities, who have been very vocal in opposing this further cut by the Government. We back the calls of Cancer Research UK and others pushing for more sustainable public health funding.

At a time when life expectancy has stalled generally and fallen for the poorest, the Labour motion is right to highlight these inequalities.

The pioneering One City Plan was launched with around 200 city partners on Friday. Health and wellbeing is a key theme in the strategy, with a board bringing together the resources, influence, and impact of Bristol's organisations to deliver improved health outcomes.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Graham Morris

Subject: STOCKWOOD LANE ROAD SAFETY

1. In the last 18 months there have been 6 serious road traffic accidents on the one stretch of road. Two houses have been damaged and cars have crashed and flipped over. This road does not have one safe place to cross. Can the Mayor please advise, short of a fatality, what I can do to get the council interested in making this road safer?

REPLY:

A feasibility study undertaken in 2011 on behalf of the Neighbourhood Partnership recommended a series of safety measures to address local concerns. This included a series of crossings.

The Neighbourhood Partnership approved funding for a light touch scheme consisting of white lines and traffic signs to try to encourage lower speeds. This was completed in 2017.

Can I suggest Cllr Morris considers a scheme in line with the original feasibility study for consideration of CiL funding through the new Area Committee process.



GREEN QUESTION 1

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Stephen Clarke

Subject: Sims Hill

1. Could the Bristol Mayor explain to Mayor Bowles and the leaders of South Gloucestershire and BANES Councils that it is not acceptable for WECA to use the extremely valuable agricultural land at the Sims Hill site for a Park and Ride at the very time when we need to be increasing Bristol's resilience around our food security?

REPLY:

We want to make sure that a park and ride decision for the M32 is based on the best outcome for Bristol's transport and congestion problems and our clear preference is for a site further north, nearer the M4 junction, than the Sims Hill site.

The Sims Hill shared harvest site is outside of the Bristol City Council boundary in adjacent South Gloucestershire. The site is under consideration for Park and Ride having been identified in the emerging findings document which has gathered such public interest.

In line with this commitment, we recently recognised the nearby Stapleton allotments and holdings (which are within our boundary) in the Bristol Local Plan and designated it as specially protected Local Green Space in recognition of its special importance for food growing and community use.

Any developments which are inconsistent with this role will not be permitted and the current designation of the land safeguarding it for transport infrastructure will be removed.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 1

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

Subject: Dumped Rubbish on The Greenway, Brislington

You will see below a map of the area affected by a large amount of dumped rubbish. During the summer the area below had a traveller encampment on it and in October the site was cleared of the travellers and their vans.

The gates from Tramway Road were then secured with a padlock. I was promised by Officers that the site would then be cleared and secured with a boulder and padlock. This gave the local residents a degree of security that they would not be able to return. However this has not happened despite numerous emails from me asking when the site would be cleared and secured.

I was then told the job was too big for Bristol Waste to cope with and a private contractor is needed to carry out the work.

1. Can the Mayor tell me when the work will be carried out and assure me that the site will be left clear and secure?

(I am happy to submit my email correspondence separately if required).





REPLY:

The site has been secured with new locks and boulders to prevent further access and dumping of rubbish.

Unfortunately as you state the job was too large for Bristol Waste to carry out so we have asked a private contractor to clear the site.

The contractor has confirmed that the council owned parts of the site will be cleared by the end of January and the gates will then be secured again with a padlock and boulders.



LABOUR QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Don Alexander

Subject: North Bristol

1. Last year, the Leader of the Opposition (Conservative Group) proposed a disproportionate council tax hike for the very poorest in the city by slashing the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

This would have made almost 1,000 households in Henbury & Brentry, which the leader of the opposition represents, and even more in Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston, which I represent, significantly worse off. Both wards, along with Southmead and Lockleaze in Bristol North West, already have areas amongst the 10% most deprived in the whole country.

Only Labour votes protected the last fully-funded scheme of its kind in the core cities, while all other parties voted against our progressive budget which protected frontline council services while cutting senior management at City Hall.

Does the Mayor agree that, with such a voting record, the Leader of the Opposition's claim in a leaflet to 'understand how our City works and what it needs' isn't worth the paper it was printed on out in Cleeve, North Somerset, and that, while we will keep an open mind on cross-party amendments as we did last year, any repeat attempt to further impoverish the poorest Bristolians should be swiftly voted down by our Labour administration?

2. The Leader of the Opposition is standing for Parliament yet again, in another part of Bristol. He has recently used a leaflet to call on you to reallocate more than £50 million to a project which has yet to submit a planning application, after spending much of the last year arguing against the development even happening at all.

Will you comment on the Tories' u-turn proposal to massively increase council taxpayer borrowing?

REPLY:

1. My administration are proud to have protected the Council Tax Reduction Scheme – in full. We are the only core city to have done so, and it is only because of Labour votes in the chamber that the poorest Bristolians still receive up to 100% council tax relief.

Figures from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation show that the number of children living in poverty has risen by half a million since 2011/12. Thanks to the Conservative Government – which has presided over stagnating wages, and changes to tax credits and benefits – child poverty is rising after historic falls under the last Labour Government. Child poverty in Henbury, where over 32% of children grow up in poverty, is higher than the Bristol average.

Poverty rates for workers are at their highest for two decades. The growth of in-work poverty over the past five years have, according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, been almost entirely driven by the increase in the poverty rate of working parents. That's why we have



prioritised delivering the real Living Wage and are working towards making Bristol the UK's first Living Wage City.

2. Transport improvements for North Bristol are already planned and funded for the former airfield. Network Rail has committed to fund and deliver a Temple Meads rail link to the new Brabazon station in 2021. Metrobus have confirmed a future route through the neighbourhood as part of their phase two.

The funding I believe he referred to was planned borrowing by Bristol City Council, to be paid back to the Local Enterprise Partnership.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Richard Eddy

Subject: BRISTOL ENERGY COMPANY

1. As the Mayor is aware, several senior employees of the Bristol Energy Company have recently left the fully-owned Council Company. How many senior staffing positions are now being covered by Interims or Consultants and is there any further financial cost to the Bristol taxpayer of these changes?
2. What is the latest estimate of the total potential financial liabilities to the Bristol taxpayer of maintaining this 'white-elephant'?

REPLY:

1. As a non-executive director, the previous chair was not an employee of the company. The current interim chair (also not an employee of the company) was an existing non-executive director of the company, and the interim changes at the executive level in relation to the MD have generated efficiency savings with acting up arrangements in place.
2. I don't agree that Bristol Energy should be described this way – our investment is aligned to an investment plan and the company's business case, the next iteration of which will be considered by Cabinet in March. Monies which have been put in are an investment and we are confident that the new business plan. Losses so far are expected within the business plan.

We are confident that the company will be a financial and social asset for the city. The support we have provided to date reflects the commitment we have to delivering social impacts such as fighting fuel poverty, supporting transitions to cleaner energy and being part of Bristol's ambition of being a carbon neutral city. Over the current financial year we are seeing the business grow, attracting more customers and creating more jobs in the city.

Our 2018/19 investment is in line with our financial plan and the next iteration of Bristol Energy's business case will be considered by the Council's Cabinet in the coming months.



GREEN QUESTION 2

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: Street Scene

The Mayor made an election commitment to achieve a measurable improvement in the cleanliness of streets. The Clean streets campaign has been a priority since 2016. Dealing with fly tipping costs the council about half a million pounds a year, so prevention here is obviously a priority, and with limited resources, volunteer activity must be maximised.

However resources for local small grants given by the former neighbourhood partnerships have been ended – funding which was often used for volunteer street scene activities like graffiti removal and litter picking. Alternative funding such as community infrastructure levy is generally not considered allowable for these activities. Some support for local action has come from Bristol Waste Company, but this is limited – for example BWC will no longer clean graffiti larger than 1 square metre without charging for the work, which means larger problems will likely accumulate.

The Mayor has introduced contractors to do some environmental enforcement, and in theory this should free up council led enforcement to tackle fly tipping, litter, and other related work.

Ward members were asked to lead the prioritisation of local improvements but there has been no regular liaison about either the cleanliness of streets, the prevalence of graffiti or the focus of the enforcement work. Local volunteers no longer receive the level of support they used to and some have therefore reduced their activities.

1. How are the outcomes of ‘cleaner streets’ being measured and in the absence of regular member liaison from either Kingdom or Neighbourhood Enforcement Teams, how are local priorities going to be incorporated into the campaign?

REPLY:

There is regular member liaison related to clean streets via a monthly service bulletin from the Neighbourhood Management service. This bulletin contains enforcement information as well as clean streets activities, with an invitation to members to contact the team with any input or queries.

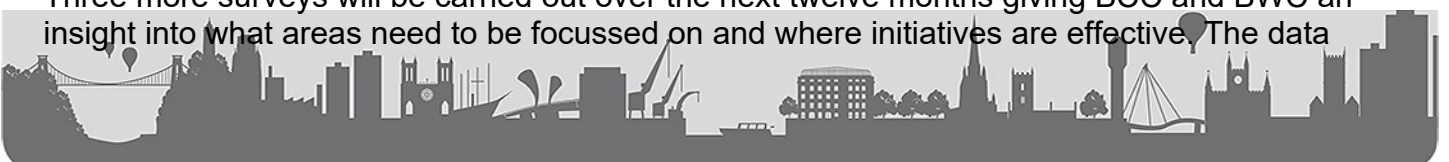
Bristol City Council and Bristol Waste Company have restarted independent Local Environmental Quality Scoring for the first time since 2015.

The research carried out in November 2018 by White Young Green, covered areas including Filwood, Brislington West, Cabot, Hengrove, Kings Weston, Redland and St George East amongst others, and rated them on their cleanliness.

More than 90% of Bristol’s streets/areas surveyed passed an inspection which looked at levels of litter, graffiti, detritus (silt, mud, gravel etc.) and fly-posting.

The number of areas that were given an ‘A’ rating - the top level an area can get - rose by 48% across the city since the survey was last carried out in 2015.

Three more surveys will be carried out over the next twelve months giving BCC and BWC an insight into what areas need to be focussed on and where initiatives are effective. The data



will inform where to place resources and where further support is needed to ensure that Bristol streets are kept clean and clear.

The Clean Streets Forum meets quarterly and is attended by residents from across the city and key agencies. The meeting focuses on identifying and addressing Clean Streets related priorities. Councillors are welcome to attend this meeting.

The Graffiti Action Group is a sub group of the forum and meets to focus on identifying what more can be done to address graffiti.

When the new enforcement service starts later this year Clean Streets will build in opportunities for councillors to share priorities and have regular engagement with the Enforcement Service.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 2

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

Subject: Disabled Parking Bays / Blue Badge Enforcement

Can the Mayor provide the number of Disabled Parking Bays for public use and free of charge (a) on-road (b) off-road in (i) the city centre and (ii) the whole of Bristol; the number of Blue Badges we - as a city - have currently issued, and the number of enforcement actions taken for misuse of a Blue Badge in the past (1) 12 months, (2) 24 months, (3) 5 years and (4) 10 years?

REPLY:

The number of Disabled Parking Bays for public use and free of charge

(a) on-road

- No data is held detailing the total number of marked on street disabled parking bays in the city of Bristol.

(b) off-road in:

- the city centre
 - No data is held on the total number of marked disabled parking bays that are available in off street car parks in the city centre.
- the whole of Bristol
 - No data is held on the number of marked disabled parking bays that are available in the whole of Bristol.

The number of Blue Badges issued by Bristol City Council to its citizens: 16,755

The number of enforcement actions taken by Bristol City Council for misuse of a Blue Badge in the past:

- 12 months – 2 cases taken to Magistrates Court.
- 24 months - none
- 5 years – 6 cases taken to Magistrates Court.
- 10 years – none



LABOUR QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Brenda Massey

Subject: Brexit

1. The Tory circus in Parliament continues, with the Local Government Finance Settlement delayed for a Brexit vote that never came. Billions of pounds of public money have been spent on no deal planning, which should have been better spent on public services and the NHS.

Can the Mayor provide an update on Bristol City Council's planning for a no deal, and other potential scenarios?

2. The Mayor committed in his State of the City speech to fund the cost of Bristol City Council employees' applications for settled status after Brexit. A family of four could face a bill in excess of £200 to confirm their status here in Bristol.

Can the Mayor provide an estimate for how many families in Bristol will benefit from his pledge?

REPLY:

1. Bristol City Council has submitted several reports examining the potential impacts of Brexit to the Government and Parliament since 23 June 2016, when the country and 90,000 Bristolians voted to leave the EU.

A draft report setting out details about the risks of No Deal was published in December 2018: <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s27635/DRAFT%20Bristol%20City%20Council%20Brexit%20No%20Deal%20Scenario%20Assessment.pdf>

2. There are around 110 EU citizens employed across the council and I am pleased we can offer this for our colleagues. I hope other city institutions can follow our lead, including the care providers across the city who are more reliant on the EU workforce compared to internally provided services.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mark Weston

Subject: THE IMPORTANCE OF CPR TRAINING

It has recently been announced that the Secretary of State for Education is working on making health education compulsory in all schools, equipping every child with life-saving skills. First Aid training is extremely important.

At the moment, if a person suffers a cardiac arrest then there is only a 6-8% chance that the person will survive in Bristol. This low figure is down to the fact that it is unlikely that a person will be nearby who knows what to do and can get to them in time. By increasing the number of people who have the right training you increase the chance of survival. For example, some cities such as Seattle or Stockholm have the chance of survival at nearer 25% - all of it down to the amount of training on offer.

I am sure that the Mayor recognises the important role that the Council could play in this regard.

I therefore have the following questions:

Q1. Just £10,000 would buy numerous sets of CPR dummies that could be based in community centres around the City. These could then be used by volunteer groups such as the Scouts or Guides to support CPR roll out. Would the Mayor consider committing a modest sum in his Capital Budget, possibly from the CIL reserve that has accumulated, to support this aim?

Q2. Will the Mayor also consider promoting this vital training amongst City partners and how can Councillor's assist in this endeavour.

REPLY:

Thanks Mark, of course this is a priority and I know you've raised it with the council. Deputy Mayor and Head of ACE Jacqui Jensen are working with you on a solution.

I will help to promote this – I'd be delighted if you could highlight potential targets for us to approach.



GREEN QUESTION 3

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Jerome Thomas

Subject: Roadworks at Temple Circus

Roadworks at Temple Circus have been underway for a year and a half now. These are major works at a key gateway to Bristol so a certain amount of disruption is perhaps inevitable – but the works feature long and awkward pedestrian routes which frequently change, and 2 unmarked car lanes with no provision for cycling whatsoever. This has made the area difficult for pedestrians and dangerous for those on bikes – just last month a cyclist was struck by a car at Temple Gate.

I am sure that once the roadworks are finished the result will be a safer and more accessible transport interchange at Temple Meads. However in the meantime there is a long timescale on these works, which come June will have been a feature of our city for two years.

1. As I'm sure we are all aware, the best transport policy for less congestion, pollution and better air quality is to prioritise active travel – cycling and walking – so why has the least priority been given to pedestrians and cyclists in these roadworks?

REPLY:

The assertion is incorrect – we have to do everything at the same time.

When complete the scheme will substantially increase provision for pedestrians and cyclists and I would expect you to be supportive.

The previous road layout provided very little space for cyclists. The new layout will include a number of segregated cycle routes through the area and a simplified junction to navigate. However, given the constraints and congestion in the area it is inevitable that works to improve it will cause some disruption and inconvenience.

Throughout the works we have monitored the pedestrian routes and diversions. Where possible, we have instructed our contractor to make changes, such as widening crossing points to accommodate large groups waiting to cross.

We have also worked with Bristol Physical Access Chain to improve the temporary pedestrian routes for those with mobility and visual impairments.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 3

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

Subject: Crossing outside nursery in Archfield Road, Cotham.

Would the Mayor explain the process whereby a condition is attached to a planning application that supersedes or trumps a Neighbourhood Partnership high-priority Highways Improvement scheme without consultation with local residents and councillors or another independent operator whose business will be affected?

REPLY:

Local concerns have been expressed about the proposed crossing in this location. The nursery have also employed consultants to make detailed representations about the proposals. The consultation process has now concluded and all of the comments will be taken into account before a decision is made.

I am informed the proposed crossing is part of a package of measures secured as part of the planning permission granted in 2017 for the expansion of Cotham School. The measures will improve the safety of children walking to and from the expanded school.

The proposals for a crossing were included in the planning application documents, which were subject to full consultation, including letters to local residents and businesses, site and press notices within the vicinity of the school, and it appeared on the weekly list of planning applications distributed to all Members. The planning application was decided at the Development Control Committee in November 2017 and the proposals for the crossing were referred to in the officer report.

Further details of the crossing proposals have been considered when planning conditions have been discharged and also during the recent consultation on the buildout, which has been relocated to better facilitate movement and to overcome safety and engineering considerations. I understand that the nursery have been directly contacted during the process and that modifications to the crossing proposals have already been made in response to their earlier comments.

You will be aware that whilst the Neighbourhood Partnership funded a feasibility study looking at existing issues in the vicinity of the proposed crossing, no funding for any works was identified.



LABOUR QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tom Brook

Subject: The environment

1. At last year's budget meeting, we reached across the aisle and incorporated almost £1 million of opposition amendments into our progressive budget.

The Green Party Group voted against their own amendments and against our progressive budget. By voting against our progressive budget, they also voted against funding Labour's Council Tax Reduction Scheme, the last fully-funded one of its kind in the core cities, and against the multi-million pound investment in low emission vehicles for the council's fleet, and new electric charging points.

Does the Mayor agree that, this year, opposition groups should take off their blinkers, look at the whole picture, vote for our golden motion today and then also back our budget which invests in and delivers for Bristol?

2. In a leaflet last year the Green Party Group attempted to claim credit for our progressive budget, which they voted against. They try to champion their environmental credentials, yet voted against our Labour administration's tens of millions of pounds investment in renewable energy and heat networks to tackle climate change and reduce fuel poverty.

Interestingly, their Green Party leaflet, which claimed to be 'principled' and 'practical', was printed on up to 20% non-recycled paper.

Should they – and Bristol's other opposition parties – put their money where their mouth is and follow Labour's lead in producing leaflets with 100% recycled paper content?

REPLY:

1. Last year our Labour administration backed all of the reasonable amendments which were put forward by other parties. We will keep an open mind again this year, and have once again invited opposition parties to meet with us and share their ideas.

Despite the Green Party Leader's continued claims to do politics differently to all the other parties, her party were whipped and sought to use the opportunity to grandstand. I too hope this year will be different.

Actions – votes in the chamber – matter so much more than words.

It's easy to put out press releases. It's much harder to bring the financial discipline required to the local authority to safeguard local democratic control and key services at a time of continuing national Government austerity. Labour united to do the latter. We protected the Council Tax Reduction Scheme when it came down to it, the Greens voted against up to 100% council tax relief for the poorest Bristolians – just as they voted against tens of millions of pounds of investment in cleaner technologies and renewable energy.

Yes – as I said before the opposition's behaviour ended the cross party cabinet – all parties should pull together to deliver for Bristol. So far, only Labour are focused on doing so.



2. Our Labour administration is leading the way on fighting the interdependent challenges of climate change and economic inclusion. It's in our manifesto promises in a stronger way than others and we voted to upgrade the city's ambition on carbon neutrality.

Meanwhile, the Green Party, voting with the Tories yet again in February, opposed our much-needed investment in renewables and efforts to reduce fuel poverty in Bristol.

Again, actions speak louder than words.

I'm proud of our latest city leaflet, which highlights how much we're delivering for Bristol. It's welcome that we used 100% recycled paper – once again highlighting Labour's practical and principled commitment to sustainability.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Graham Morris

Subject: HIGH STREETS

1. At the last Budget, the Government announced an additional £675m for our high streets or 'town centres'. I am sure you will agree we need to do what Bristol does best, be creative and innovative. Can the Mayor tell me what information has been shared with Bristol as to how we can bid for a share of this money?

REPLY:

The Government launched the Future High Street Fund prospectus and call for proposals on 26 December 2018. The prospectus sets out the scope and objectives of the fund, further detail on the nature of projects that are eligible for funding, and assessment criteria.

Government expect bidding local authorities to put forward a single, transformative submission covering **one** high street or town centre in their area.

The Fund will operate as a two-stage application process. The government have advised the next steps are:

- Early 2019: launch of the High Streets Taskforce to support local leadership.
- Spring 2019: during the Stage 1 application window for Expressions of Interest, MHCLG will undertake market warming, and local authorities build and develop private sector partnerships to deliver capital projects.
- Summer 2019: gateway assessment, with bids to be taken to Stage 2 of application and local areas working up more detailed business cases.



GREEN QUESTION 4

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Charlie Bolton

Subject: Blue Finger

1. Does the mayor oppose the loss of part of the 'Blue Finger' (which will also impact on Sims Hill) to a possible park and ride? If so – what steps will he take to prevent the loss of such valuable agricultural land?

REPLY:

As outlined in my letter to local MPs and to your Green Party colleague's earlier question, we have taken steps to recognise and protect the Blue Finger land that is in Bristol's jurisdiction in our Local Plan.

I've set out our preference for a Park and Ride site to be located nearer to the M4.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 4

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

Subject: South Bristol Ring Road or Orbital Road

In December I asked the following questions and the following answers were given:

Subject: *South Bristol Ring Road or Orbital Road*

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

REPLY:

- 1. We have, working with BANES colleagues, undertaken high level options assessment of transport proposals related to the Whitchurch Strategic Development Location to feed into the ongoing BANES local plan consultation. This is available at the BANES local plan consultation web page. We will forward this comment to be considered as part of the consultation.*
- 2. Modelling of the orbital road carried out to date is at a very strategic level and significant further work will be required to determine realistic expected changes to vehicle volumes and impacts on individual junctions. There will be further consultations as this work is developed and BCC expect to consult in Summer 2019 on further developments of the proposals and impacts within Bristol including Whitchurch Lane and the existing junctions.*

1. Now that a month has passed would the Mayor like to reconsider his answer and provide the full data as requested?
2. Why did the Mayor agree to a plan that would cause such damage to a neighbourhood of the City of Bristol and now that he can fully understand the negative and sever effect it will have will he promise to veto any new South Bristol Ring Road, Orbital Highway or as everyone else calls it South Bristol Wrong Road connecting to Whitchurch Lane?

REPLY:

1. The original answer still stands. Further work is still needed to determine realistic expected changes to vehicle volumes and impacts on individual junctions. The intention is to provide further detail in summer 2019.
2. The new orbital highway link is needed to support the delivery of housing growth identified in the Joint Spatial Plan.

The scheme will lead to an overall reduction in congestion throughout south east Bristol. The scheme will also remove unsuitable traffic from Ridgeway Lane, Maggs Lane, and Stockwood Lane. People in Stockwood will benefit from a reduction in through traffic and improved access.

We understand the concerns from residents on the edge of Stockwood and around Whitchurch Lane. I am visiting this week.



We will continue to work with BANES to develop and adjust the proposals to solve the city's congestion crisis. We will of course take action to address situations where those solutions are felt to impact negatively on people's lives



LABOUR QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mike Langley

Subject: Brislington

1. Bristol has placed the largest bio-gas bus order in the country, invested tens of millions in cleaner energy through our capital programme, and have prioritised investment in cleaner vehicles for the council's fleet. The clean air zone plan will do more still to improve our air quality. The Labour council is leading from the front, though there is still more to do.

In Brislington, the Callington Link Road would enable much needed transport improvements along the Bath Road corridor, further improving air quality – can the Mayor provide an update on the Callington Link and clean air planning?

2. While the potential for a dedicated bus route would cut congestion and improve air quality in the area, longer term transport aspirations are also important. Can the Mayor provide an update on current such plans and studies, including through WECA, which would benefit Brislington?

REPLY:

1. We fully support the roll out of cleaner buses and the council has successfully secured funding as you note to support the purchase of Bio-gas buses as well as upgrading existing buses to cleaner exhaust systems

We are developing designs for the Callington Road Link and associated public transport improvements to the A4 corridor as part of our Housing Infrastructure Fund bid which will be submitted in March. We expect to find out if we have been successful in the summer.

Modelling work is ongoing for our clean air plans to determine the necessary infrastructure and the likely impacts of any proposals. While we await the outputs we are continuing to work with stakeholders to improve air quality through improvements to public transport vehicles, electric vehicle charging points and other measures

2. The proposals for bus prioritisation on the A4 Bath Road would provide better public transport. This would improve air quality and support housing growth identified in the Joint Spatial Plan.

This is tied in with the feasibility of the Mass Transit System and the delivery of a south Bristol Orbital.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Smith

Subject: FUTURE OF LIBRARY SERVICE

Q1. As the Mayor will be aware, a previous Lib Dem Administration considered selling the Central Library site and relocating this primary public lending and reference library. Can the Mayor give me an assurance that following the latest Library Consultation process there will be no such proposals to either sell or lease any other parts of this historic building?

REPLY:

We have no plans to sell the building. As you note, part of the basement has already been leased by the Lib-Dem administration

You have however highlighted an important point that the Lib-Dem administration's record is poor and bears no comparison to the things the promise in opposition.

This administration has protected all 27 libraries and we are now in conversation with community groups about bespoke sustainable solutions for all libraries.



GREEN QUESTION 5

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: Bristol Energy

The council owned energy company Bristol Energy has more customers than ever, and is offering practical support for those in fuel poverty, plus green energy offers.

But the council investment is substantial, and taking a long time for the financial return to be made.

1. Can the Mayor provide an assessment of the social, economic and environmental position of Bristol Energy to show how its social and environmental value are being accounted alongside money?

REPLY:

Cllr Fodor is correct to point out that Bristol Energy's latest trading position is one of growing strength. The company nearly quadrupled its turnover in the past financial year, delivering a growth in residential customers on supply by over 62,000 in the same period and almost doubling its business customer on supply.

Aside from the company's growing commercial strength it is also growing its social, environmental and economic value, every penny of which is as valuable as cold, hard profit.

In total the company is delivering significant value to the city and residents in terms of economic and social value. This includes:

- Providing 125 full time equivalent jobs plus three apprentices
- 818 total hours of volunteering work in places such as schools and local charities
- Around £1m of contract benefit for Bristol based businesses
- Carbon savings from green supply in the region of £1.5m
- Savings of approximately £176 p/a per customer, many of whom are Bristol residents, not mention investment directed back to Bristol City Council



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 5

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

Subject: Road Safety in Knowle

Despite energetic local lobbying at the time and since, a section of road that is part of Redcatch Rd (Hill) and Axbridge Rd were designated as 30mph despite the fact that they are a busy school route, have several difficult junctions, a zebra crossing and are surrounded by 20mph zones . The recent correspondence following the 'review' was confused and did not give any reassurance that this stretch of road would be made 20mph.

1. Can I get an assurance from the Mayor that this change can be advanced rapidly?

Knowle residents have been waiting a considerable time for a Road Safety Scheme on Redcatch/Woodbridge Rd. Original funding was reallocated and we were grateful that after years of delay colleagues Cross Party endorsed this last year as a priority for CIL funding. Design and consultation work had already been done but we are now told there is a further year's delay due to capacity problems.

2. We appreciate that money is tight but when it has been rebound should the public not be able to have confidence that the scheme will be delivered speedily?

REPLY:

1. The section of 30mph on Axbridge Road leading onto Redcatch Road (hill section) has been included within the 20mph review. Officers are currently completing the analysis of the data collected during the consultation on all of the roads listed and will provide recommendations that will form a report to come to Cabinet in April/May.
2. Officers have been working on this since the funding for the scheme was confirmed by the Area Committee in September 2018. The anticipated completion date of February 2020 reflects:
 - The time it takes to review the designs previously consulted on,
 - complete the detailed design,
 - undertake the statutory consultation required for the traffic orders,
 - appoint a contractor
 - for the contractor to mobilise and complete construction.



LABOUR QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Carole Johnson

Subject: Recycling

1. Everyone in Ashley ward and members of all parties will have been pleased to see the latest figures from the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs, which show Bristol is well ahead of all other English core cities when it comes to recycling household waste.

Given Bristolians recycle more than twice as much as some other English core cities, will the Mayor thank the city for their conscientiousness and congratulate everyone involved at Bristol City Council and Bristol Waste Company for their hard work?

2. In Bristol, recycling rates are rapidly increasing and the amount of general waste per household is rapidly falling. The amount of waste sent to landfill has dropped to just 12.5% last month.

It's been reported that the 'Slim My Waste – Feed My Face' campaign has seen a 16% increase in the collection of food waste since June, equivalent to taking almost 150 cars off the road for a whole year while also generating enough additional biogas to power 180 households for a whole year.

Will the Mayor confirm our latest figures and that we are on track to meet our ambitious 2020 recycling rate goal?

REPLY:

1. Bristolians have shown real and increased commitment to recycling and the environment over recent years.

They and everyone at the Bristol Waste Company, as well as Councillor Kye Dudd, deserve real credit for achieving the best recycling rate of all English core cities, reducing annual residual waste by 36kg per household, and reducing waste sent to landfill by 8%.

That our recycling rate of 46% in November was more than double some other English core cities speaks volumes about the conscientiousness of Bristolians.

Further investment in Bristol Waste, in the form of new, cleaner vehicles, and the protection of the frequency of bin and recycling collections despite the efforts of other parties, should see our figures continue to improve.

2. Opposition politicians attacked the award-winning campaigns which have delivered these incredible figures, showing a misunderstanding of the commitment of the city to the environment. Public campaigns such as the ones you mention are crucial to delivering on our 2020 target. We are on track.

Food waste is not only an environmental issue but also one of social justice, as Bristol East MP Kerry McCarthy has shown in Parliament and through work on inter-connected work such as Feeding Bristol.



Our campaigns raising awareness about food waste are reducing food waste, saving Bristolians money, and increasing the amount collected to generate more energy for Bristol.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Kevin Quartley

Subject: FUTURE OF ASHTON COURT MANSION

There is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding this publicly-owned building and its parkland.

1. Can the Mayor state what the latest plans are for Ashton Court Mansion?
2. Does the Mayor think it is sensible to look at one piece of the estate jigsaw in isolation (as appears to be the current approach) instead of conducting a review of the whole estate?

REPLY:

1. The mansion is not being looked at in isolation, it is being considered in the context of the whole estate. A vital part of the solution will be that any future use of the mansion complements the plans for the whole estate.

2. We are in the process of completing a study for the options of the future of the mansion will be considered.

We expect to consult on the rest of the plan by end of this financial year at the latest.



GREEN QUESTION 6

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Charlie Bolton

Subject: Cycling Strategy

The Ferguson administration adopted a cycle strategy, largely based on the Bristol Cycling Campaign strategy for a full cycle network.

1. Does the administration endorse this, and if not, what is its over-arching strategy for cycling?

REPLY:

Bristol City Council is currently working in partnership with West of England authorities to produce the first West of England wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). We have received a grant from Central Government to produce the plan, which follows a methodology set out by the Department for Transport to identify and prioritise local and strategic walking and cycling routes for investment when funding becomes available. The process of identifying routes has followed the prescribed methodology in partnership with key stakeholders including the Bristol Cycle Campaign.

The LCWIP is due to go out to public consultation in summer 2019, after which work will begin on refreshing the Bristol Cycle Strategy to focus on the detail of cycle infrastructure, training and engagement on a local level and to challenge low levels of cycling in many wards in the city including those in deprived areas.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 6

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

Subject: Langton Court Road Bridge

In 2016 a number of residents and St Annes Infant School in Brislington West contacted me raising concerns about Road Safety for children getting to school.

A number of years ago the footpath on one side of the road bridge was closed, this forced pedestrians to cross the road on a blind corner. With this in mind I contacted the council to ask if under the safer routes to school scheme we could have a pedestrian crossing.

I finally received a response from the Highways and Traffic Officer telling me that there was not enough money available to deliver the scheme.

1. In view of the fact that the pedestrian footbridge has now been removed can I ask that the Council look at installing a safe crossing for residents?

REPLY:

Two new permanent pedestrian crossings will be designed and installed in the coming financial year 2019/20.

Existing Temporary Pedestrian crossings still remain in place until these are delivered.

The Footbridge was removed over Christmas 2018 by Network Rail Contractors. It had previously been closed because of safety concerns over the structure of the bridge.



LABOUR QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Marg Hickman

Subject: Bristol Energy

1. Bristol Energy recently posted its annual accounts; to give the full picture, please could the Mayor or Deputy Mayor provide an update on the changing nature of the business and its impact for Bristolians, including social value?

REPLY:

One of the primary reasons for setting up the company was to deliver social impacts such as fighting fuel poverty, supporting transitions to cleaner energy and being part of Bristol's ambition of being a carbon neutral city. From the solid base the company has established, delivering a growth in residential customers on supply by over 62,000 in 12 months, we believe Bristol Energy is at a turning point where it can now begin to play a greater role in the city's journey towards a carbon neutral future.

The development of the exciting City Leap prospectus and growing interest in the ambitious programme of work underway in Bristol to deliver cleaner, greener and more sustainable energy systems offers new opportunities for Bristol Energy. Our ambition is for the company to press ahead with exploring these opportunities to achieve the aims behind its foundation whilst continuing to operate as an energy supplier to its growing customer base.

In total the company is delivering significant value to the city and residents in terms of economic and social value.

This includes:

- Providing 125 full time equivalent jobs plus three apprentices
- 818 total hours of volunteering work in places such as schools and local charities
- Around £1m of contract benefit for Bristol based businesses
- Carbon savings from green supply in the region of £1.5m
- Savings of approximately £176 p/a per customer, many of whom are Bristol residents, not mention investment directed back to Bristol City Council



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Jones

Subject: ASHTON COURT ESTATE

1. Can the Mayor confirm whether or not any other enterprises have expressed an interest in some exclusive use of some of the site? For example, would UWE's Bower Ashton Campus like to extend its footprint or could another public /private partnership deal be struck to finally return Ashton Court to its former glory?
2. What work has been done on looking at alternative money creating or innovative schemes on the estate? Have the Estates and Marketing Team approached schools to see if they might like to put a pitch on Ashton Court for their weekday use and public's weekend and evening access? Alternatively, are there any farmers who may like to rent land there?

REPLY:

1. We haven't had any expressions of interest on exclusive access to the site.

2. We have successfully introduced foot golf to the Estate already and further income generating measures are being considered. The heritage and habitat importance of the Estate, protected under national legislation and local planning regulation, requires us to thoroughly test the feasibility of ideas and a number of works have been commissioned to do this.

The use of part of the Estate as a football pitch would require comment through planning from both Historic England and Natural England and our judgement is that it would be refused as not in keeping with the historic landscape. In addition the income available would not provide the financial reward for the effort required.

The Council already manages part of the Estate on an agricultural basis and draws government subsidies to support this, lowering overall costs. Much of the site is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and land management practice strictly controlled. We use deer to graze parts of the Estate as an appropriate management regime and there is currently no scope for further agricultural practices from third parties.

We are however in discussion with organisations to host major events.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 7

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

Subject: Treatment of graffiti and tagging.

Will the Mayor explain and reconsider the disconnection between the Kingdom approach to public abuses and the reasoning behind the decision for Bristol Waste Company to charge innocent victims of this antisocial activity for dealing with all but the smallest offending markings - when there is ample evidence to show that to deal with it speedily discourages offenders and maintains neighbourhood well-being?

REPLY:

As part of our Clean Streets campaign we believe working with communities to remove graffiti speedily will have the positive benefits of:

- discouraging offenders and further incidents
- improving the street scene and local pride

The Bristol Waste Company has agreed to work with BCC and local communities to change its approach in dealing with graffiti going forward and is:

- Providing free paint to community groups;
- Providing free paint to the Broadmead Business Improvement District;
- Will remove graffiti free of charge from residential homes and small businesses; and
- Regularly attends a joint working group with BCC, the police and local communities to identify ways tackle graffiti.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tony Carey

Subject: ASHTON COURT ESTATE

1. In the Ashton Court Estate Strategic Management Plan - May 2009 many targets are set. The document clearly says that:

“Financially the estate has a good balance sheet and is well subsidised by the Council. Income streams are diverse which prevents over reliance on one particular source. This is further enhanced by the general entrepreneurial attitude of the Estate team, all of whom seek to maximise income as much as possible. Given the size and the complexity of the estate and the recent additional of two new catering contractors, there is perhaps a need to consider the wider business model....It is anticipated that a more detailed business plan will be required in the future to ensure both capital and revenue requirements are considered at a strategic rather than an operational level.”

Is the Mayor in agreement with this statement, considering Ashton Court Estate is the most visited free attraction in the south west (2007)?

2. When can Members expect to be consulted on or sight of any updated detailed business plan?

REPLY:

1. The statement is no longer correct. The financial context has changed significantly since 2009.

- The council is no longer able to heavily subsidise the estate.
- Staff cuts since 2009 have meant that there is no longer a team that looks after heritage estates, the management of the estate is done within the South Area Parks team.
- The catering contractors were not successful and the catering business was closed down in 2016 as it was incurring losses to the council which were unsustainable.

2. We recognise the need for a more up to date business plan that can reflect the need for more profitable commercial activities on the Estate as a response to the reduction in funding available due to the austerity regime brought in by the coalition government in 2010 and continued by the Conservatives since 2015.

Ground work for a business plan has already taken place in the form of work commissioned that helps clarify the practical, management and regulatory limits to commercial activity within the Estate and the mansion. This is a work in progress and we will keep members informed when there is something to review.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 8

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

Subject: Bamfield Road/Oatlands Avenue Bus Stop

As the petition my colleague has submitted to the Council shows, there is a demand for this bus stop to be incorporated into the Metro Bus route.

When the M1 service was originally conceived there was an intention that the service run alongside the local buses, but First Bus has steadily reduced and removed services in this area, in part, one can only presume, to drive passengers onto the M1; there is approximately 1mile/1.5km between the bus stops the M1 will serve on Bamfield; adding in the stop at the bottom of Oatlands Avenue would reduce that to 750m, which is a standard spacing of bus stops on other parts of the service.

Much of my ward is still reliant on car journeys to get to services and employment; if the Mayor genuinely wishes to reduce air pollution in the city centre it is precisely my residents that he needs to coax out of their vehicles and onto public transport?

Could the Mayor please give me an update on the decision of the Metro Bus Board on the addition of this stop to the M1 route?

REPLY:

The Metrobus Board will be considering the addition of this stop at its next meeting, on the 18th January this week.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Liz Radford

Subject: CHANGE TO GREEN BIN WASTE COLLECTION

1. The Council have a contract to fulfil bi-weekly collections and has for the second year running broken this contract, by changing the service for which residents have paid for in advance. The collection schedule on-line confirms that green waste is suspended for two weeks, where in reality some residents are actually missing up to six weeks.

Please can the Mayor confirm how the Council can justify the suspension of Bristol green waste bin collection over the Christmas period with no prior warning or notification to residents?

REPLY:

The garden waste collection service was suspended from 24 December 2018 to 18 January 2019, as communicated on our website. Some residents will not have a garden waste collection for up to six weeks. We will ensure that communications in relation to signing up to the garden waste service in future state that there will be a suspension of two collections over the Christmas period.

It should be recognised that garden waste is much reduced in the Winter/Christmas period, while waste and recycling is massively increased. Between December and March, the amount of garden waste collected reduces by 65% whilst the amount of recycling collected over the Christmas period increases by 30%.

Suspending the garden waste collection service in this way enables the Bristol Waste Company to manage the increase in waste and recycling from other sources associated with the Christmas period. This ensures the impact across these services is minimised for all residents. It also enables the free collection of compostable Christmas trees from residents.

