

Member Forum

16th July 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 Don Alexander

Subject: Feeding Bristol/One City

This administration, led by Councillor Anna Keen beginning from the Labour backbenches, pulled together committed stakeholders across Bristol to create Feeding Bristol. Last summer we saw charities, including FareShare South West, and volunteers through 25 schemes distribute some 14,000 free meals to children who might have otherwise gone hungry over the summer holidays. In Bristol's more deprived wards like Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston, this is a Godsend for families who are already struggling and unable to access free school meals outside of term-time.

1. This summer, the target is to provide enough food for 40,000 meals. Does the Mayor agree that it is a scandal that children are going hungry thanks to Dickensian Tory austerity in modern-day Britain, and does he agree that it is the duty of every councillor and reporter in this chamber to promote the work which we are doing to reach our goal?
2. Does the Mayor agree that the council can achieve so much more when working with city partners through a One City approach, including on projects like these tackling poverty and injustice, and can he provide an update on 5 July's City Gathering?

REPLY:

1. Thank you for recognising this important work. It has shown Bristol partnerships at their best: bringing together generous donations from business; cooking expertise from our city's chefs; a huge volunteer base and multiple providers of youth services, childcare and education: all working together this summer to ensure Bristol's children are nourished over the long school holidays.

The number of meals is closer to 50,000 now. Central government decisions are increasing pressures on these families. The charity's aim is to lift people out of food insecurity by supporting them and campaigning to prevent families having to struggle with this.

I would welcome the support of all councillors and local media in supporting this important initiative.

2. At our recent City Gathering over 200 city leaders came to hear updates on key city activity, engage with 'Offers and Asks' and consider how to help refresh the One City Plan.

The One City Approach is gathering momentum and the city is coming together around key shared challenges and opportunities with more people attending.

With so many organisations working together on common goals, we can influence and call on far more resources that we will need to make change in the city than the Council ever could acting alone.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Abraham

Subject: Cost of Policing Illegal Traveller Encampments

1. Once again, Durdham Downs and its surrounding environs have experienced the annual incursion of unlawful traveller encampments. Can the Mayor confirm the cost to Bristol City Council of conducting eviction and repossession proceedings?
2. What would be the comparative cost to the Authority of securing injunctions against this trespass – covering named sites or a wide geographical area?

REPLY:

1. The legal costs associated with the unauthorised encampment removal process are a court fee of £355 per claim, plus between 2-12 hours of solicitor time. If it is necessary to issue a warrant the county court bailiff warrant is £121.

There have been four encampments on the Downs and surrounding areas to date:

1: Durdham Downs, Parrys Lane:

Arrival date 15/4/2019, 12 x caravans 24 adults and 20 children. Leave date 22/4/2019. The group left voluntarily before the Council went to court

2: Clifton Downs, Ladies mile: Arrival date 23/4/2019, 5 x caravans 10 adults and 10 children. The City Council started the legal process to obtain a possession order to evict the group. Police used their powers under the Criminal Justice and Public Order powers to remove the group. 3/5/2019 the group left.

3: Durdham Downs, the Circular road near the sea wall:

Arrival date 25/4/2019, 2 x caravans 4 adults no children. The City Council applied for a possession order but on the 3/5/2019 the group left voluntarily.

4: Clifton Downs, Ladies Mile

Arrival date 28/5/2019, 4 caravans and 1 camper van 11 adults and 6 children. The Council started legal proceedings to obtain a possession order. Group left voluntarily on the 15/6/2019.

2. We are unable to predict exactly the cost of applying for a high court injunction as many factors influence that. The issue fee would be £255.

A Downs wide or City wide injunction would require specific supporting evidence which would be highly time consuming for officers and solicitors. Such an injunction has recently been considered but has been rejected for the time being because Legal Services understand that a number of these blanket ban injunctions are under challenge as being unlawful and at least one challenge is being progressed through the courts. Legal Services have recommended that Bristol await the outcome of those proceedings before considering our evidence and determining whether there was sufficient evidence to apply for an injunction.



GREEN QUESTION 1

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Fodor

Subject: Climate Emergency

The Mayor, in his response to the Green Party Climate Emergency motion, mentions asking government for funding part of his response.

In 2015, in a motion approved at Full Council, I called for Divestment and Diversification of the Avon Pension Fund, APF, a move that was supported by Bristol Unison (the largest staff union). This motion called for the fund to heed the warning of the Governor of the Bank of England and avoid the risk of stranded fossil fuel assets. It called for investment in sectors we want to grow and support new climate-proof jobs and prosperity. This is essential for the just transition of old jobs to new ones that we want to see.

Labour amended the original motion to ask for a report about the implications of divestment if such action were to be taken, instead of actual action to divest and diversify. Since then shares in the sectors I proposed have boomed, the sector has grown exponentially, and a growing number of world wide fossil fuel projects have been abandoned as renewables and energy storage undercut them. Many global funds have already divested and more are following.

APF remains invested in fossil fuel shares apart from an initial investment in a small 'lower carbon' fund which has less exposure to carbon stocks. The London Stock Exchange now identifies many traditional energy majors like BP and Shell as 'fossil' stocks to help funds avoid them, despite their token renewables divisions. Engagement with the old fossil companies has continued for decades, but they have never done much more than talking about new energy developments, while lobbying against pollution controls and for tax breaks for oil and gas exploration.

Meanwhile the council has not called on the Avon Pension Fund to divest from fossil fuel investments and diversify into energy efficiency, renewable energy, energy storage, and smart energy systems. Other local authority pension funds are already making this switch. Some have put funds into local community energy projects to grow local solutions. The main staff union, Bristol Unison, have this year again committed to support divestment (and it's also their national policy).

Q: When will the Mayor support a progressive shift out of fossil fuel investments in the pension fund to help this transition as part of our climate response?

REPLY:

As you know, the governance of the pension fund is beyond my scope as Mayor. Legal responsibility rests solely with the administering authority not the individual employers making up the fund. The trustees of PF have a fiduciary duty to their members.

The City Council has an elected Member representative on the Pension Committee and we will ask them to engage with the Pension fund and provide an update on the matters raised. However, you should keep in mind that pensions belong to employees, not politicians. Playing politics with pensions without fully consulting staff is anti-worker and risks failing to understand the crucial need for social and environmental justice to go hand-in-hand.

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 1



Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Negus
Subject: Delivering Clean Streets

Bristol has recently gone through the student Moving Out experience. Every year this means that in Cotham ward (with a Friday collection), and other areas bins and boxes are filled to overflowing with all manner of rubbish and put out on a Saturday morning and left out for the summer. This is in spite of the provision of the British Heart Foundation 'Big Give' collection bins. In the past there has been some attempt, at taxpayers' expense, to provide additional Bristol Waste Company collection services for this excessive detritus which often includes discarded household goods.

1. Will the mayor please confirm the cost of this bi-annual additional service provision and what attempts have been made to enforce and/or recover this cost from the landlords and the universities that derive an income from students but make no contribution whatsoever to the services, including additional rubbish collection, provided by this council and financed by its taxpayers?

The number of complaints that I have received from residents in Cotham ward about missed collections, increasing littering during collections, unresolved graffiti and excessive weed growth has increased significantly in 2019.

2. Is the mayor satisfied that his Clean Streets priority project and the Bristol Waste Company's business plan are delivering a good and improving service to taxpayers?

REPLY:

1. This disrespectful and uncaring, persistent behaviour by some students is really disappointing. Not only does it cause significant disruption and distress for residents and neighbours, but it impacts our already stretched resources and services.

As you know we had put out extra vehicles to support in the clean-up of the student move out. This started using an additional Refuse truck and a 7.5t truck to collect extra waste and provide extra support for standard collections. The indicative costs are below:

	Hourly rate	Hours /day	Day	Week
LGV Driver	15.14	8	121	606
Loader	14.45	8	116	578
Truck/fuel	1	150	150	750
Nset Driver	15.14	8	121	606
Truck/fuel	1	60	60	300
			568	2839
Margin	5%		28	142
Total			£ 596	£ 2,981



We have to work with the university and we are currently engaging with both universities to explore mechanisms to recover costs. However the way to have most impact is to putting the responsibility of the student's behaviour back on to them and their landlords.

Cost effective measures have been put in place this year to managed the student clear out to minimise the impact on residents living in areas with a high student population

Any discarded household goods collected will be reuse or recycled where possible.

2. Bristol Waste Company and the Clean Streets project are making changes that are improving the service to residents. However, they are also engaging with the public to make behavioural changes to stop dropping litter (Litter Hurts campaign) and are tackling the issues face by the City with greater enforcement, e.g. the recent increases in Fixed Penalty Notices.

Missed collections - There has been a small increase in the number of reported miss collections of recycling. With the roll out of the new vehicle fleet in May and June it is anticipated that the number of missed collections will drop along with the associated litter.

Graffiti - The Council and the Bristol Waste Company have improved their reporting on the on removal of graffiti. In the Cotham ward the incidents of graffiti has nearly double in the first 6 months of 2019 compared to 2018, with 83% being removed on time.

If you have any areas of concern with weeds in your ward please notify my team and we will get Officers to look into it.

Statistics on missed collections, graffiti removal and litter:

Cotham Ward	Jan – Jun 2018	Completed within SLA	Jan – Jun 2019	Completed within SLA
Reported Missed Recycling Collections	175	86%	244	99%
Reported Missed Refuse Collections	85	84%	17	82%
Reported Missed Collections Total	260	88%	261	98%
Reported Graffiti Incidents	45	98%	88	83%
Reported Litter Incidents	15	100%	23	100%

N.B Graffiti removal targets are 24hrs for offensive, or 3 working days for non-offensive



LABOUR QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Celia Phipps (Councillor Mark Bradshaw, Councillor Stephen Clarke, and Councillor Charlie Bolton)

Subject: Parking

1. Following many complaints and much comment in the area about the issue, an independent survey was recently commissioned by the two Labour Councillors in Bedminster and the two Green Party Councillors in Southville concerning parking and road safety issues in Bedminster, Ashton and Southville.

Advice was sought from council officers concerning the design and methodology of the survey and the then Cabinet Member who was responsible for parking issues (Cllr.Mhairi Threlfall) confirmed that we were asking the 'right questions' in the survey. We are confident that the survey is statistically representative of local views.

The results of the survey are at <http://www.ratebs3.com/parking> and they make very worrying reading. Over 1200 people responded. There was a high response rate and a large majority confirmed that they had various problems with both road safety and parking. Certain areas were overwhelmingly in favour (82%) of a new RPS or an extension of the Southville scheme.

We met with the current cabinet member responsible for parking (Kye Dudd) on 4th April 2019 and we were promised that the council would be responding formally to the survey as soon as possible.

Whilst we understand the complexity of the parking problems in our combined area, can we request that we receive a council response in order to address the matters raised by our respondents as a matter of urgency?

REPLY:

Thank you to the local members for their useful survey and report, which we accept shows some support locally for residents parking from those who responded. The report did not make clear what the response rate was for the areas looked at, so the overall position is still unclear.

As set out in our manifesto, there needs to be demonstrable "overwhelming local support" for new Residents Parking Zones, we are now planning that the council's Consultation and Engagement team will follow up this work with a local survey to all relevant residents, businesses and other stakeholders in the area.

We are also exploring the approach in Bishopston where a similar report was produced.

Cllr Dudd will be able to update you on timescales.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Hiscott

Subject: Urban Rewilding

1. With more councils around the country lending their support to campaigns aimed at allowing roadside verges to become mini-meadows, does the Mayor accept that we could do much more to help insect pollinators in our city?
2. In Rotherham, they now have an eight-mile long 'river of flowers' next to a major road route. This would be an extremely attractive feature entering or leaving our city. Will the Mayor consider looking into the possibility of running a pilot Bristol roadside scheme?

REPLY:

1. We are already been sowing pictorial meadows in green spaces and road verges across the city several years, and we look to increase this amount every year. So we are starting from a good position, but I agree we can do more.

The Council has over 12,500m² of pictorial meadow across the city with over 5,500m² along our adopted highways.

The process began through the Council's engagement in the Bristol Urban Pollinators Project and the Parks Service attends a steering group that oversees action to deliver against the Greater Bristol Pollinator Strategy. Pictorial meadows are visually attractive and good for pollinators but for good results the ground requires proper preparation and sites need to be re-sown every 3-4 years. This places an upper limit on the amount we can do. They are also quite weather dependent for good results.

In addition to pictorial meadows the Council also manages nearly 2 million square metres of hay meadow. Although not usually as visually attractive, as pictorial meadow, it is also very good for pollinators.

2. As you will have seen in my recent speech I've announced that we will be investigating vertical gardens and other opportunities to green BCC property and will be interested in any suggestions you might have.



GREEN QUESTION 2

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Lake

Subject: Welsh Back development

I understand from campaigners that you have decided to pay off and relocate a residential boat owner in order to for a developer to turn the O&M sheds at Welsh Back into a bar / restaurant.

Given that Cllr Cheney said he would consider compulsory purchasing Hamilton House for millions of pounds it is strange the council can't see through a vision like Hamilton House at say A Bond that you own, or support a vision for a memorial and interpretation centre to the survivors victims and legacy of Transatlantic enslavement and Bristol's involvement in that.

I am aware of the round table discussions but I am unclear on what commitment the current administration is giving to this matter.

Q: Can I make a final plea that the sale of O & M Sheds which includes an expensive move for the residential boat, be re thought and that the space be reserved and allocated for a memorial interpretation centre and community space?

REPLY:

I am not sure I fully understand your question as these projects are not mutually exclusive.

Councillor Cheney is in conversation with Co-Exist and the council's finance team are reviewing the business plan they've shared with us. We are supportive of their vision for community space, however this must represent value for tax-payers money.

The Council is in negotiations to buy the residential boat to facilitate re-development of O & M sheds.

These derelict and neglected buildings need investment to provide jobs which people of Bristol need. It is a condition of planning consent that the boat needs to be moved before development can take place and the Council is under an obligation to move the boat under its contract with the developer. If the boat is not moved regeneration of this strategic location in the City will not move forward.

Cllr Asher Craig has recently held two roundtable discussions chaired by Olivette Odele, a historian from Bath Spa University with community representatives, as a Transatlantic Slavery Trade legacy project. A steering group is in the process of being set up as a result of the round tables to form part of the work around what a permanent legacy would look like.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Kent

Subject: MetroBus

1. Can the Mayor update us on the progress for the delivery of the Thurlestone Bus Stop on Bamfield for the MetroBus; we have provided ways to reduce cost but residents want to know when will the project proceed and the stops used?

REPLY:

The funding for Thurlestone Bus Stop (and other Metrobus consolidation works) will be part of a bid to WECA's Investment Fund and is therefore subject to their processes.

On Friday's WECA committee meeting myself and other local authority leaders from the West of England will consider further investment in Metrobus.

While I wouldn't want to predetermine our decision I am hopeful that funding for the Thurlestone Bus Stop will soon be secured. Metrobus services will call at these stops, ahead of the completion of the upgrade works.

This has been achieved by our officers working closely with the combined authority, as well local support and your own efforts.



LABOUR QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Brook

Subject: Environment

1. With our efforts across the board, from the emerging clean air zone proposals, to the UK's largest biogas bus order, to the transformative City Leap programme, to new electric car club vehicles, to ensuring that all new developments under the new Local Plan are carbon neutral, it's clear that the city, and this administration, are serious about tackling the environmental problems which we face.

One key aspect that is key to decarbonisation and improving air quality is getting people into less polluting forms of personal transport, such as bikes or electric vehicles. That's why it's so great that the council is investing, through the Go Ultra Low West scheme, in new electric vehicle charging points for the city, in order to encourage people to make the transition.

Residents are understandably keen to know when these charging points will be installed and where they will be located. Can the Mayor/cabinet member please give an update on this project and advise of the timescales involved?

2. The recent "War on Plastic" TV programme, which concentrated on the many issues surrounding single use plastics, was partly filmed in Bristol, and was made with the help of Bristol Waste.

As we know from our own efforts within the council, such as banning single use coffee cups and promoting refill stations, reducing our single use plastic waste is an important way of helping the environment.

A key issue raised within the programme was the exporting of recycling overseas. Can the Mayor/cabinet member confirm where Bristol's recycle is processed, and that none is sent to developing countries?

REPLY:

1. The Go Ultra Low West project will be installing 48 public charge points between October 2019 and March 2020. Not all sites have been fully investigated yet, but the full shortlist of sites being progressed will be published on Travelwest.info in September 2019.

The site shortlist has been prioritised according to criteria developed through a market research report produced in 2018. One of these criteria is site suggestions from the public, and site suggestions can still be provided through Travelwest.info.

In addition a charging hub of 4 rapid charging points in Eastville Park car park will be completed in October, and 10 electric vehicle car clubs are now available in the Ashley and Easton areas.

This project is aiming to develop a network that is self-funding and will continue to grow in future years.



2. All of the BWC processors are within the UK, with the exception being that some of our cardboard is sent to Europe to be processed at the cardboard processors own mill. This depends on where the demand for the raw materials occurs and if their mills in the UK have capacity.

Bristol Waste ensures all of the recycling processors are appropriately licensed and wherever possible works with UK-based processors, reducing our carbon footprint. BWC takes every effort to ensure the processors used meet the environmental standards the Bristol Waste Company hold themselves to.

Bristol Waste are producing a map showing their outlets which will be published on their website to improve transparency and awareness.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Weston

Subject: TEMPLE ISLAND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

1. Can the Mayor confirm that a tendering process took place before Legal & General (L&G) were chosen or identified as appropriate partners to take forward this important development?
2. The Cabinet report (and Cllr Cheney) states that the bespoke arrangement with L&G consists of non-binding commitments around such matters as the Council's 'affordable' housing policy. This mixed-use site is potentially extremely lucrative. Can the Mayor tell me what is the point of striking such a partnership, supposedly based on an **agreed** set of objectives, if these are not legally enforceable?

REPLY:

1. No tendering or procurement process has been undertaken in the selection of L&G as development partner because the proposed agreement will be a property transaction, rather than a public contract, and so a procurement process compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 will not be required.

We have chosen L&G to partner in this project due to their financial and other resources, their previous experience and proven track record in delivering significant projects of this kind.

Although the recent cabinet decision is held up by opposition parties, I am confident that L&G are the right development partner to work with us to deliver this important, sustainable city centre development which will create jobs, homes and work-spaces Bristol needs to be a thriving economy.

Councillors will have from now until later year to scrutinise this project, and as such it is disappointing that the leader of the opposition has used a bureaucratic procedure to stall progress.

2. The voluntary partnership with L&G is based around collaboration and an ambition to realise shared goals for our city. It demonstrates L&G's commitment to our city that they are willing to enter in to such a partnership to deliver this key project.

The Strategic Partnership is not limited to Temple Island and it offers us the opportunity to work with L&G and realise our wider social, economic and environmental objectives across the city.

While under the current proposals, there will not be any obligation on L&G to execute works on the Temple Island site, the Council will have the right to re-purchase the land in the unlikely event of non-construction. L&G and this administration are focused on delivery and we are fully committed to getting this done in a way that will benefit Bristol and make best use of this land.



GREEN QUESTION 3

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Fodor

Subject: Road safety budget

There is widespread demand for safer streets across the city including safe routes to schools, shops, health centres and so on. At present there is no budget for any of this. All local schemes are reliant on the local area having adequate CIL (community infrastructure levy) funds from new development, which have to be shared across 6-ward Areas. Some areas have little CIL and with all the other calls on their capital cannot even budget a single expensive crossing or road project in a year.

There is little support from highways staff, whose expertise is needed to evaluate and work up options for the community. In fact last municipal year highways asked Area committees to fund their own departmental projects, not the community ones.

Objective criteria are needed for assessing road safety schemes, e.g. a record of collisions and injury accidents, but this process needs to be transparent to show communities what their prospects are. While local councillors have been called community leaders devolving the lack of budget to them does not empower either councillors or communities.

Q: Does the Mayor agree that the city should support safe routes to school and other destinations, and will he agree to an identified road safety budget that local communities can apply to for funds, separate from highway project funds that are planned centrally?

REPLY:

The council does support safe routes to schools and other destinations and we are already working with communities and partners to make these route as safe as possible. It's not true that there is no budget for this, road safety is a fundamental consideration in every one of our schemes delivered on the Highway and not just the dedicated Casualty Reduction (£258,103 p.a.) and Safer Routes to School (£158,000 p.a.) programmes.

We've adopted a Safe Systems Approach to Road Safety, which considers how safety can be improved for all users, on all routes, in all situations across the City to help us achieve our ambitious target in the One City Plan to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in road collisions in the City to zero by 2040.

Local Communities and Local Councillors can assist this by raising local safety concerns through the Councils 'Improve My Street' webpage, and can apply to the relevant Area Committee to allocate Community Infrastructure Levy to highway projects that could address their concerns. The intelligence developed by local people using this webpage is also used by the relevant major schemes to identify local issues that need to be addressed, combined with evidence based evaluation of RTC data.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Kent

Subject: SEND

1. What provision is provided by Bristol City Council to meet the needs of children with Specific Learning Difficulties?

REPLY:

We are committed that every child in Bristol gets the best possible start in life. And, for those children who face additional challenges, support them, their families, staff and communities that support them. We accept that we are failing the most vulnerable children in our city and know we have more work to do to improve our performance in this area. At the root of this is government underfunding, and we have recently pledged £1.57m to improve the service.

However, Bristol has deeply concerning issues that go beyond the experiences of many other local authorities. The causes of this problem goes back 9 years and these have not always been fully open to elected members and the severity of the issues facing families has not always been transparent.

Cllr Anna Keen has announced an independent review of the processes and practices to be urgently carried out. This review will report directly to the Head of paid Service and to her and the recommendations will be delivered by a steering group of senior officers and Anna, with independent support.

In line with the SEND code of practice all schools are expected to be able to respond to the needs of children and young people in their schools, including Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD). For those with more significant needs, the school should identify, assess and make provision at the school support level of the code of practice.

Local Authority Top Up Funding may be provided to enable access to more specialist interventions within mainstream schools. Some children with significant needs in this area have Education Health and Care plans.

Most children and young people with a SpLD profile will be educated in mainstream school. Some have more complex needs where SpLD is only one part of their profile. Those with such a complex profile may be educated in a specialist setting.

We do not have specialist settings specifically for SPLD. Each school has a link educational psychologist who can assist in the identification, assessment and suggested interventions for children and young people with additional needs in this area.



LABOUR QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Shah

Subject: Libraries

After Labour votes kept open every single library in the city, despite the opposition of all other parties, would the Mayor and cabinet member for communities agree that the extension of opening hours at St George Library is a great move for my constituents in Redfield and a welcome step forward in our strategy of protecting and modernising these council services?

REPLY:

I do agree that the extension of opening hours is a great move for those citizens who want to use them.

The extension of opening hours now means that three Extended Access Libraries (St. George, Stockwood and Westbury) are now open Sunday afternoons from 1-5pm.

Our original pilots from 2017 have been really successful and welcomed by communities who would like to access buildings and library services outside staffed hours.

We have just finished a citywide engagement process and Library Service colleagues will be briefing all elected members from mid-September on the progress made on over 1,000 ideas and suggestions which were received.

We've been able to keep our libraries open thanks to our strong financial management. This administration can now bring forward a model fit for the 21st century where communities lead on innovation and be part of the redesign of a sustainable and thriving service.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Morris

Subject: South Bristol Sports Centre

For the third time I have had to organise meetings between the trustees of the South Bristol Sports Centre and the council to maintain the planned timescale of the rebuilding works.

1. Can you please advise whether the contractors of Bristol City Council will deliver the site to the trustees in time for fit out to enable an early September opening?

REPLY:

The current programme has completion of the ground floor on 10th September and the first floor in October. This is still the agreed timescale for the handover of the bar with the design changes.

As you are aware, conversations are ongoing with the trustees given their concerns about the time table.

I am committed that the sports centre will be restored as soon as we can, and I appreciate the frustrations of local community and trustees who want this important resource up and running.



GREEN QUESTION 4

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Lake

Subject: 5G

It seems that Bristol as a leading SMART city is both a blessing and a potential curse. The Former UK Minister for Digital, said:

“To stay competitive we must be at the cutting edge of new technology and we are determined to be one of the first countries in the world to use 5G. In these very early stages we want all ideas, from all parts of the country, that will help us get the technology and the roll-out right to have a nationwide network of 5G innovators.

It’s all part of our determination to make Britain the best place in the world to start and grow a digital business, and deliver for all citizens now and in the years to come.”

I would ask innovation for what though?

Trial investment would have come to Bristol through the City Council and Bristol university test bed project ‘Bristol Is Open.’ At the launch Mayor Marvin Rees said:

“This is great news for the city-region. In Bristol we know the importance of developing new technologies in order to empower our citizens and create a well-connected city. Our work with the University of Bristol to develop the city’s platform for cutting edge 5G research was mentioned recently when Bristol was announced as one of the world’s leading smart cities of the future.

“This announcement of further funding will help Bristol to continue being an internationally recognised testbed for new technologies which is already helping us to find real new innovative solutions to help our city pave the way to become a more inclusive and fairer society.”

Well Bristol may be open. I have searched for results from the pilot to understand what 5G might do for the city (I mean beyond the desire for faster streaming for those who own an expensive 5G enabled device) but struggled to understand all the benefit to citizens. It is important to bear in mind how the council might adopt technologies to improve services for as many citizens as possible. So far I’ve found methods to avoid drunk drowning, an app for avoiding air pollution on pedestrian routes (although I’m not sure this helps those without a 5G device) and a £5m 5G Smart Tourism project led by the West of England Combined Authority. What are the other plans or who do we ask?

A petition is coming to the council expressing the health and environmental concerns of 5G. There are numerous reports and guidelines issued by ICNIRP International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). With children (and others) deemed more vulnerable to absorbing radiation some guidelines advise against erecting masts near public spaces frequented by children, such as schools.

Public opinion on 5G regarding the health and environment concerns is split.

Q: Can the Mayor confirm whether 5G masts need to go through planning permission and what the process is for safeguarding health and environment concerns and keeping citizens informed of locations and activation times?



REPLY:

Yes masts are subject to the planning process, and 5G planning applications have been received. Details of these are publicly available through the planning portal in the usual way. Some requests are approved through the route of 'permitted development', and it is not always clear that requests relate specifically to 5G.

Requests for large mast require planning permission and an application. Applications are usually accompanied with certificates stating the site operates safe levels of ionising radiation, issued by ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection):
<https://www.icnirp.org>.

National Planning Policy Framework states with regard to telecoms development at para 116: "Local Planning Authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only. They should not seek to... set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure."

Given increasing public awareness of 5G, several FOIs have been directed to our Public Health colleagues when questions and challenges have been made regarding health and Public Health England have recently updated their guidance to clarify how their advice about radio wave exposures applies to 5G systems:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phone-base-stations-radio-waves-and-health/mobile-phone-base-stations-radio-waves-and-health>.

The council does not operate a 5G network. Network operators would be best placed to inform citizens informed of locations and activation times.



LABOUR QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Hickman

Subject: Clean air

1. The Mayor's recent speech on Clean Air Day highlighted our administration's continued commitment to air quality. Parents and young people in Lawrence Hill, which sits within the current AQMA, have been particularly enthusiastic about Marvin's announcement that we will be piloting road closures near schools. Please can the Mayor and/or cabinet member for young people/transport confirm where we are in this process?
2. The recently opened clean air consultation contains some of the most radical measures in the country for improving air quality, complemented by the Mayor's speech of 20 June. Would the Mayor encourage members to promote the consultation and its events, and members of the public to respond/attend before 12 August?

REPLY:

1. It's great that people in Lawrence Hill are interested in the school streets scheme. Both primary and secondary school communities are invited to express an interest in trialling the initiative in their area. It could mean enforcing road closures in some locations using signs, flashing lights and bollards, subject to agreement and support from residents.

There is significant interest and we have been contacted by several schools already. We are working with them to develop plans further. I am grateful for the work Helen and Kye are doing on this.

2. Yes, please can all members promote the consultation so we can engage people in this important conversation. Air pollution affects everyone in Bristol. Protecting the most vulnerable from pollution is central to our plans and we have developed the two options which we think strike the right balance, reducing toxic fumes in the shortest possible time but in a way that does not adversely affect the people with lowest incomes or widen the inequality divide in the city.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Eddy

Subject: Hartcliffe Way Recycling Centre

1. Can I thank Bristol Waste Company for arranging a very positive and insightful exhibition of the plans for the Hartcliffe Way Recycling Centre on Tuesday 11th June 2019, which I was delighted to attend. Is it still the intention to submit a full planning application for this by late summer 2019?
2. Whilst I fully support the plans for this important local facility, I am concerned that, as commercial waste is unable to be recycled at household sites such as this, commercial fly-tipping could be encouraged at the entrance to Manor Woods Valley Local Nature Reserve (only 100 metres from the new Hartcliffe Way Recycling centre). As I have already suggested, the likelihood of this threat could be reduced if a small planning obligation could be attached to any forthcoming planning consent erecting a secure perimeter barrier for some ten metres to the south of the stone gateway feature. Is the Mayor prepared to ask officers to investigate this possibility?

REPLY:

1. Yes, a full planning application for the new Household Reuse and Recycling Centre at Hartcliffe Way will be submitted by the end of this summer.
2. At the moment it is not proposed that the planning application will include fencing at Manor Woods, however the statutory planning consultation period provides opportunity for this recommendation to be submitted for consideration as part of the assessment of the application.

A short length of fence is a limited deterrent to a committed commercial or other fly tipper from depositing their material. Other approaches such as surveillance equipment and prosecution can be more effective tools where problems arise.



GREEN QUESTION 5

Question to the Mayor from Councillor O'Rourke

Subject: Environmental Sustainability Board

Q: Can I see the Terms of Reference for the newly established Environmental Sustainability Board?

REPLY:

Yes, the Terms of Reference will be published shortly. Terms of Reference were discussed at the inaugural Environmental Sustainability Board meeting on 10th July 2019, and there are minor amendments being made. My office can send you the link once they are online.

I was pleased that over 70 people expressed an interest in joining. The applications were reviewed by a selection panel made up of a senior representative from Bristol City Council, a Bristol Green Capital Partnership director and an academic specialising in environmental equality issues from one of the city's universities.

I am sure you recognise that even with Bristol City Council achieving its carbon reduction target two years early, we need to bring the whole city together on this challenge. The Board's meeting marks an important milestone in realising Bristol's ambition to be a fair, healthy and sustainable city by 2050 and the commitment to making the city carbon neutral by 2030.



LABOUR QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Bradley

Subject: Housing

I am delighted that the Labour administration is developing policy to control and regulate the spread of HMOs (houses of multiple occupancy), especially where high volumes of student occupancy create environmental problems, and I am pleased that the area of regulation includes Kensington Park, which is part of my ward of Brislington West. However, I am very disappointed that the boundary for the extended regulation specified in Article 4 seems to stop arbitrarily at the Bath Road and does not include the areas of terraced housing in Sandy Park plus the small streets of Arnos Vale. The spread of HMOs into these densely populated areas is already causing problems and these will almost definitely increase once the new university campus opens up by Temple Meads. I therefore request that Cllr Smith gives serious consideration to the future inclusion of these areas into the area of regulation.

REPLY:

The boundaries of all Article 4 areas will be kept under review and Cllr Nicola Beech will be interested in your feedback.

It is vital that as we try to make Bristol's communities resilient and mixed, we take appropriate action to regulate HMOs. The boundaries of proposed Article 4 Direction areas have been subject to detailed consideration and have been informed by a three stage data-led approach:

1. Sub ward areas, (Lower Level Super Output Areas [LSOAs]), across Bristol with higher proportions of HMOs were identified. A proportion of 8.5% or above of dwellings occupied as HMOs within a LSOA was considered a higher proportion area.
2. Individual HMOs within identified LSOAs were plotted and a 100m buffer drawn around each HMO. The edges of all the buffers combined, adjusted to follow map features and to exclude non-residential uses, were used to determine the boundaries.
3. A further adjustment was made to the boundary of the southern Article 4 area to reflect the potential for conversion of larger dwellings to HMOs in neighbourhoods close to the proposed University of Bristol Temple Quarter Enterprise Campus.

HMOs are a symptom of the lack of supply in our housing market, my administration is working hard to address this, our HIF bid and the support of councillors on development control committee which consider application are key to achieving this.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gollop

Subject: 'One City' Environmental Sustainability Board

1. The establishment of yet another politically 'exclusive' management board is becoming a disturbing 'monopolistic' characteristic of this Labour Administration. Can the Mayor provide me with a definitive list of all such strategically important panels – together with their membership?
2. On what basis has the Mayor made the determination that only one Party needs to be represented on these city-wide, decision-making bodies?

REPLY:

I am disappointed that you seem to be politicising an effort to convene and bring together partners from across the city and perspectives to deliver on common goals.

A report on the thematic Boards, which will be discussed at OSMB on 17 July, has been published at: <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s34204/Thematic%20Boards.pdf>

Only a single new One City Board has been established, the Environmental Sustainability Board, with an Economy Board currently in development.

For the other four themes, Health and Wellbeing, Connectivity, Homes and Communities and Learning and Skills, existing multi-agency Boards have agreed to take on the task of delivering and refreshing goals in their sections of the One City Plan.

As we are participate in these boards our membership and terms of reference of them is dealt with by our constitution.

A definitive list of all established thematic Boards and their membership is already available on the City Office website as well as in the OSMB report above.

2. Membership of the existing Boards is a matter for those Boards and their Chairs, with different arrangements depending on the differing status of the Boards. Members of the Environmental Sustainability Board were chosen through an open and transparent recruitment process, widely advertised in May 2019.

These are multi agency boards, some of which are administered by the council. It is important that partners receive the representation they merit and Council is not overrepresented.

While it is constitutionally possible to take key decisions at some of these boards, it has been my administration's practice to take key decisions at cabinet meeting wherever possible to ensure full public transparency.



LABOUR QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Sergeant

Subject: Flies

Given that one waste management company is storing large amounts of RDF in bales outside its plant, landlords are cramming people into their properties to maximise profit, with inadequate household waste storage and fly-tip sites are taking at least several months to clear, what measures are being taken by the Council to ascertain the cause(s) of the prevalence of flies in and around Avonmouth?

Reply:

I recognise the issues with RDF and our Pollution Control team specifically monitored fly numbers before and during RDF live loading at the Port and confirmed that this no longer presents a risk.

A shipment of up to 3000 tonnes of RDF from New Earth (is due to be exported between 13 and 14 of July) occurred through the Port and up to then there was a significant amount of bales stored at New Earth ready for export.

In 2014 RDF was stored in poor conditions at the Port for extended time periods, and enabled flies to breed. This resulted in enforcement action by our Pollution Control Team restricting storage at the Port and only permitting live loading. This extended to control of the wrapping of the bales and management of any damaged bales so that flies are no longer able to gain access to the waste and breed.

There have been 40 separate complainants to us this year from Avonmouth and the surrounding area and this far exceeds complaints of flies from other parts of the City and I have sympathy with residents who are suffering this.

There is unlikely to be one particular source but these will include a combination of domestic and commercial waste and facilities, where these are processed, together with the natural habitat and the fly's ability to reproduce quickly in warm weather across the City.

The Pollution Control Team have visited with and continue to liaise closely with the regulator of this and other waste sites, the Environment Agency, to ensure they are compliant with their Permits and in particular this year have proactively visited and required pest management practices (insecticidal treatments) to be adjusted to predict potential increase in fly numbers ahead of spells of warmer weather.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Carey

Subject: Deterrents To Dog-Fouling

1. As the Mayor may be aware, neighbouring South Gloucestershire has recently consulted and introduced on-the-spot fines for dog owners caught on protected public spaces without waste bags or the means of cleaning up after their animal(s). Aside from the revenue generating potential behind this action – does the Mayor agree with me that this is a sensible precautionary measure which most reasonable and responsible pet-owners accept is necessary to prevent or police dog-fouling?
2. Will the Mayor consider consulting the public on introducing a similar initiative in our city?

REPLY:

1. I think this is an interesting idea and I'll be keen to follow the impact it has on South Gloucestershire's sites. I've asked officers to monitor their outcomes.

2. To replicate what South Gloucestershire has agreed we will need to introduce new Public Space Protection Orders PSPOs or revise our existing PSPOs.

Our current PSPOs will end in October 2020, and therefore we will need to make a decision around then whether to continue, revise or end our current PSPOs. The process for doing this will create the opportunity to add powers such as those agreed by South Gloucestershire and I would welcome your help in engaging the public in this.



LABOUR QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Afzal Shah

Subject: Sport

Would the Mayor agree that initiatives like the sport activity day we are organising in Castle Park for 21 August – empowering and reaching out to young people through a One City approach with major sports clubs, youth workers, employers, and wider city partners – are crucial to ensuring that the city harnesses sport not just for Bristol’s economic benefit but also for improved community cohesion and safer streets?

REPLY:

Yes, sport is able to contribute towards achieving many social outcomes by providing positive diversionary activities for young people. The sport activity day sounds like a great way to connect with the activities in the city and inspire everyone to participate in sport and active lifestyles.

We are harnessing the power of sport in the city. Our third annual sports gathering held in city hall recently was a big success with over 60 representatives of sports teams, clubs and organisations attending.

These organisations have been key part of our one city approach, able to draw on resources and networks to help support work on city priorities such as holiday hunger and period poverty. Through partnerships such as this, sport can help increase family and community connectedness, improve community networks, and importantly enhance social skills and self-esteem.

You’re right that sport has the ability to benefit our communities and the local economy and I am pleased to support this through the Bristol Together Championships which builds connections across the city’s children and schools. This really is the most pro-sport administration in decades.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Windows

Subject: Proposed Scrappage Scheme (Up To £2,000) For Diesel Cars

1. Please can the Mayor clarify where the funding is to be sourced to establish this local scrappage scheme?
2. The public consultation on Traffic Clean Air Zone options suggests that a grant would be provided towards a new vehicle or an alternative mode of transport. Will this be repayable on terms or constitute a gift?

REPLY:

1. The local scrappage scheme is part of the mitigations set out in our current consultation, which will inform our bid to the Government's Joint Air Quality Unit as part of the Outline Business Case for funds from the Clean Air Fund. I would welcome your support in engaging people to respond.

2. As noted above the detail of the grant will be further discussed with Government and informed by the Public Consultation. Birmingham City council has been successful in bidding for such support from the fund.

However I am committed, along with other city leaders to a national scrappage scheme. Protecting the most vulnerable from pollution is central to our plans and we have developed the two options which we think strike the right balance, reducing toxic fumes in the shortest possible time but in a way that does not adversely affect the people with lowest incomes or widen the inequality divide in the city.

We know from experience how popular previous scrappage schemes were in Bristol and we would appreciate your support in lobbying government for action to ensure people can transition from diesel engines to cleaner, more efficient vehicles.



LABOUR QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jo Sergeant

Subject: One City Plan 2019

“Develop an affordable childcare and nurseries scheme within three local neighbourhoods”

Like many working parents, I was delighted that this commitment was chosen as one of the three ‘first among equals’, to benefit from a ‘strong collective focus’. Could we please have an update on where we are in achieving this goal and which three neighbourhoods will be the first to benefit from a scheme to be rolled out city-wide in 2022?

REPLY:

I agree that this is a crucial issue for Bristol, and I was pleased that the city gathering took on this challenge. Since the One City Plan was published, new research from Childcare.co.uk has shown that when a minimum wage worker has to pay the average cost for childcare in Bristol, they only take home 63p an hour. It is vital that we improve wages and reduce childcare costs in order to build an inclusive economy open to everyone.

We still need more employers to join the conversation, and at the July City Gathering we reiterated the ask for contributions through subsidy as an employee benefit, guaranteeing numbers of spaces for employees, leasing floor space to providers, or helping them with financial and business coaching. Since then we have had expressions of interest which we will progress.

We are optimistic that the City will deliver the goal, but there is still a lot to do.

There are two new community childcare provisions in a developmental stage, coming forward in St Pauls and Easton. Building on the work of the Women of Lawrence Hill Project, the University of Bristol is treating affordable childcare as a strategic priority for the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone. These are initiatives are building on work which has emerged from separate projects in the city.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Lesley Alexander

Subject: Parks Funding Consultation

1. Under the proposed future funding options being considered by Officers, my local bowling club will see its costs for hire and maintenance rise by over 229% (increase from £5,480 pa to £18,000). Does the Mayor think that this is a realistic or fair figure for its members to find?
2. Please can the Mayor explain how some of these extraordinary valuations have been arrived at or calculated?

REPLY:

The consultation ended on the 9th July and we will now consider the responses made and the next steps. We have engaged with bowls clubs ahead of the consultation as well as during it and we will continue to do so.

Deputy Mayor Asher Craig has been in conversation with many of the clubs and I am confident that we can find a reasonable and fair resolution.

We have been clear that given the unfair and unrealistic cuts passed on by government's austerity we have had to adopted a principle of providing sport in our parks only when there is no cost to the council tax payers.

We have consulted publicly for a six-week period as to how this might be achieved and have received 600 responses. In order to help people respond and consider the options, we provided indicative costs for maintaining facilities.

For bowls this included the green, pavilion and surrounds taking into account their daily and seasonal maintenance, services costs, insurance and compliance inspections costs and infrastructure repair and replacement costs over the long-term. Clearly true costs may vary from this to some degree and between sites.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 10

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Morris

Subject: Quality Of Life Survey And Accessibility To Public Transport

The Bristol Quality of Life Survey shows that Stockwood Ward has the highest percentage for whom inaccessible public transport prevents them from leaving their home when they want to; it is significantly higher than the second place ward (over 25% worse and impacts almost a third of Stockwood Ward residents).

I was advised last week that BCC were unable to come to an agreement with BANES on working collaboratively for the existing No.515 bus route with an agreement to extend to Keynsham.

This is really disappointing as the route could:

- transport children to the Keynsham schools;
- provide local residents to an alternative train station in Keynsham; and
- provide a car free alternative to the South Bristol Community Hospital for Keynsham (thus reducing car volume in this corner of Bristol).

1. Will the Mayor actively intervene and support officers and local councillors in our efforts to deliver this much needed improvement?

REPLY:

I recognise the impact of poor transport connectivity that Bristol suffers and the specific circumstances of Stockwood in accessing public transport. This can be a significant challenge for people who are isolated from the rest of the city, its economy and opportunity.

Officers continue discussions with colleagues in BANES Council regarding options to bring forward improved bus connections to and from the Stockwood. In addition, officers are working with bus operators on improvements to existing services to/from Stockwood as part of the Bus Deal.

We will also be working with WECA to improve our collective ability to manage supported bus services. They have mine and Cllr Kye Dudd's full support as they negotiate this transformative Bus Deal to improve services to get Bristol moving.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 11

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jones

Subject: Inequities Of Community Infrastructure Levy

1. As you may be aware, the current system of allocation does not compensate communities in respect of new build social housing, whether these homes have been commissioned by the local authority or a charity. Does the Mayor agree with me that this funding model needs to be reformed?
2. Can the Mayor please advise whether or not there is scope within the existing regulations governing this scheme to allocate additional monies to those parts of the city where significant developments have taken place?

REPLY:

1. The operation of CIL is tightly controlled by government regulations. These specifically exempt social housing from having to pay CIL, because the development of social housing is not a viable form of development. CIL is predicated on the principle that development types that are viable will pay CIL, whereas those that are not viable will not pay CIL.

Given our commitment to social housing and our plans to deliver affordable homes, any increase in our costs would have a negative impact on our ability to build much needed homes.

2. The CIL Regulations do not allow for the local component of CIL to be redistributed to parts of the City where social housing has taken place. It is acknowledged that there are cases where new developments comprising solely of social housing are built, meaning that no CIL will be accrued.

As above, the delivery of social housing is one of the main priorities of my administration. Therefore a reform of the CIL regulations resulting social housing having to pay CIL is not something that we would support.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 12

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Melias

Subject: Latest Avonmouth Fly Infestation

1. The Mayor will be aware of the massive dissatisfaction felt by local residents over the inaction and seeming inability to get to grips with this reoccurring nuisance – particularly affecting those households nearest to the waste treatment plants. Can the Mayor confirm what detailed analysis of this outbreak has taken place to identify the species, root cause/food source and future practical preventative measures?
2. Can the Mayor confirm what steps he has/is taking to clean up the Avonmouth village and reduce the fly problem.

REPLY:

1. I am aware of this ongoing problem which is a cause of frustration and concern for residents and I am keen that the council and partners does more to investigate and prevent the causes.

Our monitoring has concentrated on Housefly and Bottlefly as nuisance species associated with human activity. The Housefly has been previously been identified as the main cause for complaint and these feed on any decaying organic matter and are the species commonly seen at waste processing sites, amongst other sources. Fly numbers will increase naturally in warm humid conditions.

Officers continue to investigate complaints liaising closely with the Environment Agency in relation to the waste sites which the EA regulate. (Residents had also posted videos of Bottlefly in baited traps but these are attracted to such traps and then breed inside the traps rather than identify an underlying population).

Bottlefly feed on decaying flesh such as dead animals, animal faeces or meat in bins so using bins correctly and keeping lids closed is key. My Environmental Health Officers advise that the weekly food bin collection is unlikely to allow time for the full fly lifecycle and the recent Bristol Waste 'Slim my Waste' project was timely as 2 weeks is sufficient for the full lifecycle if food is placed in the black wheelie bins.

Officers have visited food and residential premises in response to complaints due to a recent spike of complaints but although there was no evidence of excessive flies at the time they understand the concerns and aware that fly issues vary depending on a number of factors.

We will look to see whether more can be done to determine whether this is a citywide issue.

2. Following the complaints to Local Councillors and Bristol Waste regarding problems with waste, poor conditions and overcrowding at privately rented properties on Gloucester Road a number of teams have been involved in a working group.

Bristol Waste through their Community Engagement Officer have provided advice to tenants in multiple languages and continue to assess options to resolve issues with the presentation of



waste including the possibility of weekly collections or a communal recycling area. Where there are serious and or continued breaches of licence conditions of Licensable HMO's enforcement actions may be taken by the Licensing team and could result in the revocation of the Licence.

Longer term the Waste Team are working on a strategic approach for managing waste storage arrangements and collections from HMOs, houses of multiple occupancies and student accommodation, working with planning, private housing and highways.

The fly tipping process has been reviewed and a new process has been implemented this year to ensure that the collection of fly tip is prompt for those on the highway and council land.

Fly tips on private land are managed on a case by case basis and the costs will be looked to be recovered by the property owner. The Contracts Manager ensures Bristol Waste has procedures to deal with missed collections quickly.

