

QUESTION PQ 01

Subject: Understanding Bristol's Past and Bristol History Commission

Question submitted by: Thomas Pearce

1: Only through education can we come together in understanding Bristol's past, learning those lessons around class, race and gender, and work together for a more equal Bristol. Education is for all, even if adult education budgets have been decimated by the Government. I welcome the Mayors announcement of a "Bristol history commission" as the start of a city-wide conversation. Please can you provide any more detail on the members of the commission and the focuses of their work?

Reply:

1. The History Commission is key to the way forward.

We have had our first exploratory meeting with historians based in the city and others who will help convene and guide us as we tell our story better and in all its fullness.

The historians will work with our museums to be a convening point to which the many history societies and other Bristol enthusiasts across the city can direct their research and contribute to a collective telling of who we are and how got here.

The Commission will give us a steer but I'd like us to look at Bristol's Black and Brown history and issues such as Bristol's work class, women, gay people, disabled people, people in the care system. I think we could also develop a fuller understanding of our story by looking at particular industries such as aerospace, Tabaco, the port and broadcasting and particular buildings such as Wesley's chapel and areas such as Blaise, Henbury, Hartcliffe or Hillfields (one of the oldest council estates in the country).

This isn't an emotional task, although it may cause emotion, this is just about doing good quality history where we know the facts and are aware of the different ways of interpreting them. This will put us in a better position to make decisions about who we are and what we chose to honour and our values.

We will reach out to people with many different perspectives. Those elated at the statue being pulled down, those who sympathise with it coming down but don't like the way it happened and those who were dismayed at it coming down and feel they've lost a piece of Bristol.

Like many cities, our history is complicated and contradictory and we shouldn't hide from that.

We will make an announcement shortly on membership.

QUESTION PQ02

Subject: Understanding Bristol's Past and Bristol History Commission

Question submitted by: Thomas Pearce

A current councillor has referred to a slave trader who played an active role in the enslavement of over 84,000 Africans (including 12,000 children) of whom over 19,000 died en route to the Caribbean and America as a "hero". What are your views on this?

Reply:

He's not my hero,

But everyone is entitled to decide who their heroes are.

I suppose they'll chose them based on their own values - you can make their judgement about them by what they say.

QUESTION PQ 03

Subject: Merchant Venturers

Question submitted by: Ollie Fortune

Can this council please explain why the society of merchant venturers were able to coerce the Downs committee to allow visitors to the zoo to park on the Downs until 2038 when the permits are usually reviewed every 5 years?

Reply:

This is a question best made to the Downs Committee.

QUESTION PQ04

Subject: Merchant Venturers

Question submitted by: Ollie Fortune

How many elected councillors here are members of the society of merchant venturers?

Reply:

I can't speak for other members, or the previous Mayor, but I'm not.

The register of interests for members is available on the council's website, and I would ask any councillors to declare their membership voluntarily.

QUESTION PQ 05

Subject: Public Transport and WECA

Question submitted by: David Redgewell

1: Would the Mayor ask the metro mayor and combined transport authority WECA - in with the recent statement by the secretary of state for transport on public transport services uplifts for the 4th July reopening of the economy for Public House s Restaurant Hotels and Guest Houses and hairdressers - when he intends to reinstate bus services on the following routes in the Evening s and weekends:

- **178 Bristol Bus station Bristol Temple meads, Brislington, Keynsham, Marksbury, Paulton, Midsomer Norton and Radstock.**
- **96 Brislington , Knowles, South Bristol Hospital for minor injuries unit.**
- **X2 local Stopping service from Bristol Bus station to Ashton gate, Backwell, Yatton , Worle and Weston Super Mare.**
- **Y2 Bristol bus station to Yate and Chipping Sodbury.**
- **To provide an evening link to and from Fishponds from Yate for evening and night shift workers.**
- **T2 Bristol to Thornbury to provide a link between Gloucester road area Montpelier Station, Bishopston, Horfield, Filton and Cribbs Causeway Bus Station.**
- **Connection from Severn Side for evening and night workers.**
- **Route 19 Cribbs Causeway bus station to Bristol Parkway, uwe , Downend, Staplehill**
- **Hillfields, Kingswood ,Warmley, Cadbury Heath , Bitton , Kelson , Weston , RuH back entrance and Bath spa bus and coach station. No evening service for key workers.**

The following 7 day a week services are not running:

- **37 the important link - Bristol Bus Station, Lawrence hill station, St George park, Hanham, Longwell Green, Bitton, Kelson, Weston, RuH back entrance, Bath Spa Bus Station.**
- **Service 35 , Bristol City Centre, Lawrence Hill, St George, Kingswood, Warmley and Marshfield so people can get to and from work.**
- **X5 Weston super mare, Clevedon, to Portishead and Cribbs Causeway Bus station bus reinstate to Cribbs Causeway Bus Station.**
- **126 Wells Bus Station, Cheddar, Weston Super Mare .**

As these are very important links will mayor push North Somerset Council and WECA mayoral transport authority to reinstate these services urgently and give a date for reinstatement and if needs be use contractors to run these bus service if First West of England do not have enough resources?

Reply:

I've raised this with our transport team. We will talk with the members of the Combined Authority too and I will talk to Tim Bowles.

Of course you can raise these issues direct during the public forum element of WECA meetings too

QUESTION PQ 06

Subject: Public Transport and WECA

Question submitted by: David Redgewell

2: Will the Mayor of Bristol ask the metro mayor as Local Transport Authority to set up a customer service line for public transport enquiries - similar to the combined transport authority in the west Midlands, Liverpool City Region and Greater Bristol and to open up the WECA transport board to meeting in public and in line with Department for transport regulations and guidelines provided stakeholders consultation on changes to local bus, coach, ferry and rail services via public forum on Zoom, including stakeholders progress on North Somerset council transport department joining WECA mayoral transport authority.

Reply:

I'll raise it with our transport team to see what we've got and then speak with the Metro Mayor. TravelWest is still the source of information for public transport in the area.

QUESTION PQ 07

Subject: Rail Investment

Question submitted by: Jake Emsley

I was concerned to read the Cabinet Member for Transport's rather 'luke warm' words on rail investment.

Can the Mayor please confirm as to whether he wholeheartedly supports the reopening of a Horfield Train Station?

Reply:

We are committed to improving rail services- both in Bristol and across the region.

Cllr Dudd was expressing his concern at firstly the low number of additional passengers for every pound spent on rail – we should be concerned about that because there are other ways to increase public transport growth.

That's not a case for not spending – it points to the importance of driving behaviour change

Second – the substantial time lapse that occur between initiation and delivery of the infrastructure and then the behaviour change

I'm not an unqualified disciple of any infrastructure scheme – you have to continually measure it against its impact.

We're working on a transport strategy that Bristol's never had, and launching a 15 year transport plan to drive enhanced bus travel which will build the case for a mass transit system which will be integrated with our suburban rail services.

That's how we grow suburban rail – an improved public transport offer means stronger case for rail investment.

It's through this we can consider new stations, and restoration of stations such as Ashton Gate, Ashley Down and Henbury. Our 15 year transport plan includes more stations, like a Horfield/Lockleaze station near Bonnington Walk where the site of the closed Horfield station for 1962.

QUESTION PQ 08

Subject: Van Dwellers

Question submitted by: Jake Emsley

The community of Horfield are constantly having to deal with the problems arising from van dwellers along key roads of the community. Many of these vehicles are now in an exceptionally poor state of repair.

Can I ask what the Mayor intends to do for local residents to finally fix this problem.

Reply:

Across the city:

There are a number of vehicles, adapted to live in, that are legally parked and do not appear to be occupied and, as such, the council has no grounds on which to move them.

Kellaway Avenue:

- We took action at the end of June – which resulted in three occupied caravans moving.
- The remaining caravans, that appear unoccupied, are being moved.

New sites:

- We've made sites available for vehicle dwellers during the pandemic and we are exploring how this can be continued.
- The pandemic arrangements have shown that many are willing to live in sites if available. We are looking at how we can source sites, which could include meanwhile use of future developments.

Council:

- Council staff continue to reach out to individuals and understand where people are especially at risk.
- Parking restrictions can be looked at – but there needs to be long term solutions instead of just moving it.

Details of the policy and the vehicle dwelling location map are found at:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/people-communities/report-an-unauthorised-encampment>

QUESTION PQ 09

Subject: Bristol Energy

Question submitted by: Suzanne Audrey

A recently published written response to my question at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting on 26th May 2020 indicates:

1] the total amount of money Bristol City Council invested in Bristol Energy Company before 5 May 2016?

Reply: £12m earmarked for investment prior to the 5th May 2016.

2] the total amount of money Bristol City Council has invested in Bristol Energy Company since 5 May 2016 when the current administration came to power?

Reply: £23m has been invested in Bristol Energy since the 5th May 2016.

However, through democratic services, I received clarification from the Mayor's Office stating the following:

1. Bristol City Councils investment (funds transferred to) Bristol Energy stood at approximately £3.8m on the 5th May 2016.

2. This was out of a total earmarked investment (funds allocated) of up to £15.8m which the estimate of the funds which the company would require to reach profitability.

3. In June 2020, the councils total investment (funds transferred in total since the establishment of the company) sits at £36.5m.

There is a discrepancy in figures provided for the funds invested in (transferred to) Bristol Energy by Bristol City Council since 5th May 2016 i.e. £23m or £32.7m

Question

Please can you confirm the correct figure for the total funds transferred to Bristol Energy since 5th May 2016?

Reply:

At the 5th May 2016, Bristol City Council had invested approximately £3.8m of a total earmarked limit of £15.8m. The full £15.8m was invested in line with the inherited business plan. It was reasonable of us to assume that plan was robust.

We then set a new business plan since which led to an investment of a further £20.7m.

Question submitted by: Suzanne Audrey

Background

For the public forum of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board meeting on the 8 July, written questions must be received at the latest by 5 pm on Thursday 2 July.

However, the agenda indicates:

City Leap: This report will be made available on publication of Cabinet Papers on 6 July 2020.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme: This report will be made available on publication of Cabinet Papers on 6 July 2020.

This means members of the public will not be able to access the papers in time to ask questions at OSMB. This appears to be a regular occurrence and undermines public participation in OSMB meetings.

The Bundred Report (2017) raised concerns about the accountability of officers to Members other than the Mayor and Cabinet and stressed their responsibilities to the whole Council. I understand you accepted all the recommendations of that report including the recommendation that relevant officers be reminded of their responsibilities to backbench and Opposition Members.

Question

Please can you explain why papers for the agenda of OSMB meetings are frequently noted as being published in time of the following Cabinet meeting and consequently are not available until after the date when members of the public are required to submit their questions?

Reply:

This is a matter for OSMB, who can undertake both pre and post decision scrutiny of decisions.

I know the Chair of OSMB is aware of this and has taken the view that's it's preferable to take reports at Scrutiny at late notice so that Members can still consider them and share any comments with Cabinet as appropriate.

The Chair of OSMB has agreed to extend the public forum deadlines for OSMB so that questions and statements on the late reports will still be taken. If there isn't time for the questions to be answered in advance they will be sent on to Cabinet and picked up as part of that process.

Of course, we also welcome any public forum submissions direct to Cabinet which is best place for them to be considered.

QUESTION PQ 11

Subject: Bristol's Clean Air Zone

Question submitted by: Colin Davis

When will Bristol's Clean Air Zone commence, and how many Bristolians are projected to die between now and then as a consequence of air pollution?

Reply:

We remain committed to delivering clean air compliance. However it is important to recognise that our challenge is achieve clean air compliance – not to start a charging clean air zone.

Our original compliance date was 2025, through revised modelling we've brought that down to 2023.

As we have always acknowledged a CAZ is a very blunt instrument for dealing with pollution. A charging zone is often considered a "poor tax" – a tax on people with the oldest cars, or small businesses with the least ability to upgrade.

We must protect the most economically deprived in our city, because while air quality contributes to early deaths, we must also challenge the biggest killer: poverty.

These two health challenges must be tackled together and this drives our desire to not apply a simple charge without mitigation or acknowledgement of the impact of such a decision.

We are currently in discussion with government for a more radical solution. The first step towards this is the pedestrianisation of the old city and the closure of Baldwin street to through traffic. By making similar interventions in other central areas we could accelerate clean air compliance further.

QUESTION PQ 12

Subject: ELT Schools

Question submitted by: Andrew Varney

Following on from my public statement in this meeting on the importance of ELT schools to the Bristol economy, could the mayor or his representatives agree to meet with the directors of ELC Bristol, and other language schools based in the city, to discuss what financial support the council can offer in order to help them survive the next few months until international students begin to return to Bristol?

Reply:

They are very welcome to meet with Cllr Cheney to discuss this further.

We do appreciate the serious financial challenges faced by language schools and recognise their valuable contribution to the wider local economy, but have to administer national schemes within the guidelines that have been set.

As we set out in our correspondence with those affected, language schools are not eligible for the Expanded Retail Discount Scheme or the associated Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund Scheme under central government's eligibility criteria as they are not considered mainly and directly active in the retail, hospitality or leisure sectors.

The ESLs aren't currently part of our family of schools. Consequently we can only offer that they would be treated the same as any other private sector organisation who experience challenges due to the diminution of foreign students/ visitors.

There is a range of support available for businesses throughout Bristol to help them cope with the effects of the Covid-19 lockdown, more information is available on our website.

Question submitted by: Andrew Varney

Across Brislington West over the last few weeks, pavements have been top dressed using the slurry seal process. However, as each pavement is treated, emails and phone calls come in from local residents complaining about the quality of the work. (See attached photos taken on Salisbury Road and Langton Court Road). Can the mayor assure local residents that the work will be inspected and any issues will be dealt with in a timely manner?

Reply:

The slurry seal process is to stop the ingress of water into the bituminous footways. This prevents potholes and preserves the life of the footway. The work has been carried out well by the team and it is important to be seen as a preventative covering and not be seen as a new surface. The slurry seal is a thin top coat stopping depreciation of the asset. This is a nationally widely recognised system which can extend the life of the footway by a further 10 to 15 years. The program of works covers in the region of 200,000 meters squared of footway annually at 10% of the cost of full replacement. All works will be inspected and the photos attached have been sent to the team for consideration and investigation.