

# Member Forum

## 10 November 2020

### Statements from Councillors



#### Procedural note:

#### STATEMENTS FROM COUNCILLORS:

- A maximum of 1 minute shall be allowed for the presentation of each statement (subject to overall time constraints).
- There shall be no debate on the statements and the Lord Mayor shall refer them to the Mayor for information/consideration.
- Statements will be dealt with in the order of receipt (subject to time).

#### The following statements have been submitted – full details are attached:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Subject</b>
CS01	Cllr Graham Morris	Housing Allocations and the Direct Offers process
CS02	Cllr Gary Hopkins	Jubilee Pool



**CS01**

**Members Forum statement from Councillor Graham Morris**  
**Subject: Housing Allocations and the Direct Offers process**

This statement is made in support of a young lady with her 11year old son who are victims of Bristol City Council's Direct Offer policy. The experience was so fraught that the resident said:

'I'm definitely 100% sure I'm not the only one who has been treated like this, this has happened from the off start of becoming homeless. It's been so stressful but even tho I have won the appeal it isn't over yet. I would be much appreciated as just agreeing I can be moved again isn't no good it's another way of them washing there hands. There hasn't been any remorse as just saying sorry doesn't cut it, this shouldn't of never happened and I should have been listened from the beginning.'

I was first made aware of this situation by a resident and I have supported this family from June onwards. They were told they were going to have to move. The son was in his last few weeks of primary school and was starting a local secondary school in September.

BCC contacted them to advise that they had been found a place to live, almost 2 miles away, on an industrial estate with very poor transport links. I won't provide full details but it was not a pleasant experience for the tenant, as you can tell by her comment above.

Knowing where they lived and where they were being moved, I felt that this was not in the best interests of the family, particularly for a boy, aged 11, whom BCC felt that requiring him to walk 2.2miles each way, every day was acceptable.

I have twins of the same age - I do not believe that it is acceptable, particularly as it was avoidable. I have spoken to the school to support the Y7 pupil who is walking around 4.5m a day to-and-from school as some days he is late.

I have now discovered that 88 families are currently being supported by the Council's Home to School Transport (HST) as a result of Direct Offers. What is more concerning is that these families are offered bus passes for two terms only. How many families in this city have been adversely impacted by the current Direct Offer strategy and left with a lasting legacy of children having to find their way to school, without support, after the bus passes cease?

Do Housing monitor the financial impact on HST budgets as a consequence of the Direct Offer situation? What do families do when the transport help runs out?

I am very concerned about this arrangement, which residents find coercive. We are letting down some of the most vulnerable in this city and I would welcome a system that listens, with compassion, rather than forces people to move and face the consequences. We need to be people focussed.



## CS02

### Members' Forum statement from Councillor Gary Hopkins

#### Subject: Jubilee Pool

Firstly I bring to the attention of this Council the Cabinet decision of 2008 (Labour) regarding the PFI for Hengrove Pool and the proposed closure of Jubilee Pool and also the subsequent investment into Jubilee under the Lib Dem administration a couple of years later. So the PFI was undisturbed by the new administration but the Lib Dems took a more positive view of future demand and the importance of the Jubilee Pool.

It is surprising that the present Mayor does not wish to claim credit for his party for the 2008 decision which was very specific.

For several years Jubilee (without subsidy in recent years) and Hengrove have operated successfully with the same company, Parkwood operating both. They are keen to carry on doing so and have said that the recent save Jubilee Campaign should improve turnover.

The Cross Party Working Group rapidly found their feet and unanimously signed and sent this communication to the Mayor. There is an existing contract in place until March 2022 and the Working Group are keen to work with the Friends Group to explore whether an asset transfer and community management are the best way forward after that.

The real reason for the planned closure has now been stripped bare. It is to force Jubilee users to use Hengrove so that the Council in the future MIGHT be able to reduce its PFI payment for Hengrove.

Even if this perverted plan against public service were to be put in place there is no guarantee of "success".

1. There are many reasons why Jubilee users will not go to Hengrove, including travel time, cost, different conditions and capacity issues.

Even if they have the necessary car, how does our environment benefit and why should we transfer costs in this way?

Closure would create a massive equalities failure.

Many would either be forced to or choose to stop swimming which is counter to council policy.

2. Many displaced swimmers if they went elsewhere would go to Keynsham or Longwell Green, so getting environmental damage with no benefit.

We have confirmed again with Officers that there would be no difference in cost in reopening when possible or keeping the pool closed until March 2022 but of course by then the going concern would have been severely damaged.

If the Mayor genuinely wanted to work with the community he would reopen when possible and frankly very few people actually believe that he wants a CAT to succeed.



Mayor you have a chance to prove them wrong.

Dear Marvin

#### JUBILEE POOL – RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CROSS-PARTY WORKING GROUP

The cross-party working group on Jubilee pool has now met on 3 occasions. We were very careful when agreeing our terms of reference to separate out the short /medium term from the long term plans for the pool, and so our initial focus has been on the reasons why the pool is currently closed.

We have listened to all the evidence from officers, particularly Guy Fishbourne who is the officer on the ground, as well as taking into account the views of the operators Parkwood.

In the light of the evidence we have heard it is our unanimous decision that we request a rapid re-opening of the pool. This request is based on the fact that the monthly operating costs of Jubilee are very similar to the cost involved in keeping it ready to open. We have also been told that re-opening could be achieved by Parkwood within 2 weeks and that they are enthusiastic to make progress. We further recognise that a continued increase in Covid-19 cases could result in a further closure, but this should not prevent us from preparing to re-open and doing so if it is still allowed.

We accept that re-opening now does not amount to a commitment to the longer-term future of the pool beyond March 2022 and that a cabinet decision to close before then is still possible. Keeping the pool closed for no good reason whilst it's long term future is considered does not seem reasonable in the circumstances, and so the option of waiting for a cabinet meeting next year was unanimously rejected by the group.

We will continue our work whilst the pool is re-opened and will be looking at all aspects and options and will take specific advice from a range of groups and officers. We will report to you as soon as we can but matters like CAT do require very careful consideration and appraisal.

Could you please confirm your response as soon as possible?

Cllr Tim Ripington  
Cllr Jon Wellington  
Cllr Lucy Whittle  
Cllr Barry Clark  
Cllr Chris Jackson  
Cllr Jos Clark  
Cllr Gary Hopkins  
Cllr Jeff Lovell

Cllr Tony Carey  
Cllr Tim Kent  
Cllr Harriet Clough  
Cllr Chris Davies  
Cllr Steve Jones  
Cllr Richard Eddy  
Cllr Graham Morris

