

Member Forum

8 December 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:

	Name	Subject
CS01	Councillor Hopkins	Jubilee Pool
CS02	Councilor Stevens	EWS1 Form
CS03	Councillor Seargant	Statement on the Wessex Water 'Avonmouth Incident'



CS01**Members Forum statement from Councillor Gary Hopkins****Subject: Jubilee Pool**

A successful consultation actually asks open questions and pays attention to the answers. In designing a business or providing a service it is a fatal mistake to decide upon a course of action and then try to force the public into accepting against their will. The consultation, if properly designed and conducted, will also gauge the level of support for a service and work out whether it can realistically be provided.

This Council set out on a predetermined plan to close Jubilee Pool, with the assumption that users would transfer to use Hengrove Pool.

This course of action was embarked upon with little understanding of the differing reasons why different people use Jubilee or Hengrove and if the transfer would happen.

The “consultation” fails in that it does not provide information objectively and leads the respondents. Bizarrely, part way through, there was an overprint, prompted by furious response, that said that options that were rejected as impossible in the consultation, were now being considered by the Mayor.

The “consultation” period was extended to early November despite saying it closed in early October but as of today the Working Group set up to examine options has not been able to get any results at all.

Even after evaluating the response to the official consultation there will be little idea of the number of people who will transfer and of the effects on public health and wellbeing.

Here is the result of a snap online poll of Jubilee users, which gives a small clue to what would happen in reality.

The question was simple: What would you do if Jubilee does not reopen?

We had a total of 219 responses.

The options and responses were as follows:

• Stop swimming	180	82%
• Swim at Hengrove	15	6.8%
• Other options	10	4.5%
• Swim at Easton	8	3.6%
• Swim at Longwell Green	2	0.9%
• Swim at Bristol South	2	0.9%
• Swim at Keynsham	2	0.9%



CS02

Members' Forum statement from Councillor Clive Stevens

Subject: EWS1 form

Dear Mayor

I thought one scandal by RICS (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors) was enough. But the EWS1 form looks like it might be a second one.

The first RICS scandal was, is, allowing developers to escape affordable housing commitments. They changed their guidance to allow developers to deduct stamp duty from their viability statements for rental flats. Stamp duty is payable when one buys property, not when you rent them out, but buy a clever sleight of hand, RICS allow it to be included in the financials for new flats built to rent. This results in less affordable homes and higher profits for some of their members. Interestingly, before bringing out this new guidance, I am told they only consulted their members and not more widely.

So I now see from the Silver Motion that this EWS1 form is accused of being another RICS scandal.

I appreciate this is a statement, but may I suggest please that our Mayor task an officer to look into both these scandals and take appropriate action. Maybe write to the SofS citing this evidence and any other evidence out there that RICS seem to now exist to just benefit their members rather than a public benefit to society as a whole. I think on the basis of what I have seen they should lose their charitable status.

CS03

Members' Forum statement from Councillor Jo Seargent

Subject – Statement on the Wessex Water 'Avonmouth incident'

The loss of four lives in an explosion at the Wessex Water treatment plant is an utter tragedy and my thoughts and condolences go out to the families and friends of: Michael James, Brian Vickery, Raymond White and Luke Wheaton.

As a representative of Bristol residential communities adjacent to the Avonmouth & Severnside Enterprise Area (ASEA), I must also express concern about the number of incidents that have occurred over the years and their impact on local residents.

Dust, flies, smells, fires, explosions and this most recent event, along with higher rates of Covid, have taken their toll on my ward residents, particularly in the localities of Lawrence Weston and Avonmouth.

It is recognised that the Avonmouth and Severnside is a crucial economic driver for the City of Bristol and the West of England region. It is also accepted that waste management (including water treatment) is an absolute necessity and has to be conducted somewhere.



However the continuing culture of ‘self regulation’ is clearly not working in the best of interests of our citizens (and other workers) or those living closest to the ASEA. We can no longer leave it to business to ensure that health and safety is always put ahead of profit.

We need greater active (and proactive) regulation for the safety of staff and contractors on individual sites, as well as for the wellbeing of nearby residents.

I would therefore ask that our local and regional authorities lobby the UK Government to increase resources and power to our monitoring officers, the Environment Agency, the Health & Safety Executive and any other relevant regulatory bodies, to ensure that we avoid further loss of life and reduce the negative impacts on nearby communities.

