

Member Forum

19 July 2016

Questions from councillors



Procedural note:

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS:

- Councillors are entitled to submit up to 2 written questions each.
- 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.
- Replies to all questions will be given verbally. A follow-up written reply will be provided within 10 working days of the meeting.
- Via the group leaders / whips, questions have been submitted in priority order.
- At the forum, the asking of questions will be rotated between the political groups that have submitted questions, taken in priority order.



QUESTIONS

The following member questions have been submitted:

A. Questions from the CONSERVATIVE Group (listed in order of priority):

CON. QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Richard Eddy
Subject: The Council House

1. Can the Mayor clarify for me the legal status of your predecessor's idiosyncratic and unilateral decision to re-brand the Council House – City Hall – a move or Americanised derivation which has not proved popular or been accepted by the vast majority of ordinary Bristolians?
2. Does the Mayor intend to revert to using this historic building's original and traditional name as indicated during his Mayoral election campaign and, if so, when will this change formally take effect?

CON. QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tony Carey
Subject: Bristol's bus services

1. I understand the Mayor has previously favoured bringing the city's buses back into public ownership. Do you still support this potentially very expensive option as a means of improving Bristol's bus services?
2. Can the Mayor elucidate what he means exactly by promising to 'make better use of devolved bus powers... to meet Bristol's needs?' [This pledge implies a form of re-regulation, either immediately or incrementally, as routes come up for re-tendering. How does he envisage accomplishing this end?]

CON. QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Lesley Alexander
Subject: Delivering on housing

1. Whilst on the election trail, the Mayor committed to build 2,000 (800 affordable) new homes a year of all tenure types. When can we expect further details to be released on the progress made in achieving this ambitious target?
2. Can the Mayor outline what changes he envisages will be necessary to the planning process in order to actually get this extra housing built?



CON. QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Matt Melias

Subject: Progressing capital projects

1. Can the Mayor confirm whether or not he intends to adhere to or change any of the previous administration's Capital Programme that was agreed by Full Council at its budget-fixing meeting held on 16th February 2016?
2. One of the important items moved into tier 1 of the Mayor's Capital projects at that time concerned the building of a third Household Waste Recycling Centre at Hartcliffe Way. Can the Mayor confirm where we currently are with this development?

CON. QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Liz Radford

Subject: Priority banding for rehousing

When can victims of domestic violence expect to be accorded Band 1 status in the Council's housing register pursuant to the motion passed by Full Council on 15th March 2016?

CON. QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Graham Morris

Subject: Scotland Lane

Further to my email to your office on 31st May 2016, are you able to provide me with an update regarding the next steps in finding a permanent solution to the ongoing and historic problems with this key route linking Brislington West with Stockwood?

The delays in resolving this issue are potentially impacting on the safety and wellbeing of thousands of children on a daily basis.

CON. QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Jones

Subject: New Bristol East pool

In February, Full Council decided to reprioritise the building of a new swimming pool on the Bristol Brunel Academy site. To this end, £4.5m was earmarked in the last Mayor's capital programme for its construction. Please can the Mayor tell me what work has been undertaken since then to realise this leisure facility?



B. Questions from the GREEN Group (listed in order of priority)

GRN. QUESTION 1

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Jude English

Subject: RPS review

It has been 10 weeks since the announcement that RPS schemes will be reviewed in Bristol. In Ashley and across Bristol, residents are asking how the review will happen and what the timescales are.

Residents and councillors alike would benefit from clarity about the resourcing, scope and timescale of the review process.

1. Can the Mayor describe what the process will be and how it will be managed, including whether neighbourhood partnerships will receive additional resources in order to conduct an effective and useful review process and how appeals will be managed?
2. How should I respond to residents when asked what is happening about the parking issues?

GRN. QUESTION 2

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: Neighbourhood partnerships

Can the Mayor explain the plans he has for Neighbourhood Partnerships?

Currently work is proceeding on all the usual annual priority planning and budget prioritisation processes around the city. We have extra responsibilities from proposed RPS and 20mph reviews, but are not sure how to resource these, or the support available. We expect budgets to be cut or redistributed to prioritise areas of need.

There are rumours of a restructuring of NPs

Please could the Mayor explain what the plans are for Neighbourhood Partnerships?

GRN. QUESTION 3

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Charlie Bolton

Subject: Inequality of waste

At a meeting on waste shortly after the election, Councillor Hickman announced that 'inequality of waste' is central to what this administration does'.

1. Is it and what does this mean?
2. How will this change how the council will operate?



C. Questions from the LIBERAL DEMOCRAT Group (listed in order of priority):

LD. QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gary Hopkins

Subject: Councillor involvement

The Mayor was very clear during his election campaign and since that he intends to improve on the practice of the previous regime by involving local Councillors in decisions and taking into account their local knowledge. These were welcome statements, however:

Can you explain why Cllr Bradshaw has failed to even acknowledge a request for a meeting with myself and Cllr Davies concerning Arena parking and related issues after 6 weeks and a reminder sent to Cllr Bradshaw, Cllr Holland and yourself following our 1-1 meeting?

This is a vitally important subject on which we have considerable knowledge and there is widespread concern that we are heading for another Southmead Hospital mess.

Despite initial opposition from some of the Mayor's party colleagues we have agreed and progressed the sale of some green land adjacent to Salcombe Rd for social housing with the proceeds coming into parks. Cllr Davies and I were very active in providing assistance, local information to residents and encouraging agreement.

Developers are now on site and it is only now that we have found out that part of the remaining park, which includes a vital school route, is to be unusable for 13 months. We have asked Parks Management for information on how they are using the citywide funds that we have raised and if they will make contributions to our local investment and other questions. No reply!! If the Mayor, like me, finds this unsatisfactory, what will he do about it?

LD. QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Anthony Negus

Subject: Bristol City Council accounts – Green Capital and port land sale

I welcome the Mayor's announcement that he has established an enquiry into the Green Capital accounts and use of public money. Can the Mayor please give us details of who will be carrying out the enquiry, when will they report and what conditions or guidance have been given to them on their investigation?

The Mayor's enquiry into the Green Capital accounts is welcome but there are many questions also over the issue of the Port Land Sale, including issues over fracking revealed in the last few weeks. Will the Mayor also launch an enquiry into the sale of this land and whether value for money was achieved for the public purse?



LD. QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mark Wright

Subject: Low emissions zone

I welcome Mayor Rees's Manifesto commitment to a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in Bristol city centre (p19), which I have been requesting for 3.5 years now. The Mayor is likely aware of the following:

- a) Bristol is one of 40 cities in the country which is breaching safe levels for PM2.5, according to the WHO.
- b) The new mayor of London has unveiled plans to substantially increase the size of London's LEZ, and to bring forward to 2019 the implementation of the Ultra-LEZ.

Given these, can he now outline to Council his timetable for LEZ implementation in Bristol; with an implementation date ahead of the 2020 date that Labour councillors voted down in March on the grounds that it was "too slow"?

LD. QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Harriet Clough

Subject: Bus services (36, 50 and 51)

Hengrove, Whitchurch and other local communities that are served by the 36, 50 and 51 bus currently suffer from one of the poorest performing public transport services in the city. The Mayor talked about taking back control of local bus services if he was elected.

Can he tell us what is the timetable for this and will he work with councillors whose communities currently have some of the worst bus services in the city?

LD. QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Kent

Subject: Special education needs funding and provision in Bristol

What action will Mayor Rees take to ensure those in receipt of Top Up funding for Special Educational Needs provision do not suffer cuts to funding and the additional provision they need to access learning as they have done in this summer term when our most vulnerable children, those with special educational needs, found top up funding slashed, in year?

LD. QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Kent

Subject: South Bristol recycling centre

The previous Mayor failed to act on cross party calls for a new recycling centre in south Bristol. Will Mayor Rees commit to meeting local councillors to discuss this proposal and put its development into the 2016 Capital programme so we can open it next year?

