

Full Council -6th July 2021

Agenda item 6 b

Public questions



Procedural note:

Questions submitted by members of the public:

- Questions can be about any matter the Council is responsible for or which directly affect the city.
- Members of the public are entitled to submit up to 2 written questions, and to ask up to 2 supplementary questions. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.
- Replies to questions will be given verbally by the Mayor (or a Cabinet member where relevant). If a reply cannot be given at the meeting (e.g. due to lack of time) or if written confirmation of the verbal reply is requested by the questioner, a written reply will be provided within 10 working days of the meeting.



Ref No	Name	Title
PQ01 & PQ02	Johanna Spiers	Council's Green Spaces
PQ03 & PQ04	Julie Milton	Management of Council Land for Wildlife
PQ05 & PQ06	Roxanne Ismail	Council's plans for green spaces for wildlife
PQ07 & PQ08	Grant Mercer	A connected wildlife network in Bristol & management of the Councils verges and green spaces
PQ09 & PQ10	Tim Mason	Pesticide Policy
PQ11 & PQ12	Sarah Watson	Non-Council green spaces and landowners
PQ13 & PQ14	Sarah Thomas	Pesticide-free Council land and managing land for wildlife
PQ15 & PQ16	Dan Geerah	Management of the Council's own green space
PQ17 & PQ18	Robert Smart	Bristol City Council grassland and Environmental Emergency Action Plan
PQ19 & PQ20	Nicola Earnshaw	Rapid Response to the Ecological Emergency
PQ21	Our Air, Our City (Nigel Shipley)	Clean Air Zone implementation
PQ22 & PQ23	Suzanne Audrey	Access to Temple Island/ A4
PQ24	Andrea Mackay	Cycling Gloucester Road
PQ25	Katrina Billings, Bristol Clean Air Alliance	Clean Air Zone Update
PQ26 & PQ27	David Redgewell, South West Transport Network and Railfuture Severnside	Stakeholders and Passengers consultation & review of WECA



QUESTION PQ 01 & PQ02

Subject: Council's Green Spaces

Question submitted by: Johanna Spiers

The One City Environmental Emergency Strategy has as one of its key strategic goals that at least 30% of land in Bristol should be managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030.

The council owns a lot of land in Bristol. Its green spaces (woodland, grassland and so on) have the most potential for wildlife management.

Question 1: What percentage of the council's green spaces, by area, is currently managed for wildlife?

24% percent of Bristol City Council land is protected from development and committed for wildlife under these designations:

- **Sites of Nature Conservation Interest**
- **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**
- **and Local Nature Reserves**

This equates to 1,246 hectares of land.

We also manage the city's wildlife corridors such as rivers, river banks and scrubland which are important spaces for wildlife to flourish.

In addition to this, our parks and green spaces account for a further 6% of council land. We haven't built on any of our parks and green spaces.

It is important, however, that we don't set up a binary between nature and development. The declaration of the Ecological Emergency can't be separated from our need to tackle our housing crisis – it means we need to do good development, such as the work we're doing to deliver a net gain of biodiversity at schemes like Bonnington Walk and making spaces like the Bearpit able to support urban pollinators and bees.

QUESTION 2

As mentioned above, the One City Environmental Emergency Strategy includes a key strategic goal that at least 30% of land in Bristol should be managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030.

The council is itself a major landowner in the city, and owns a great deal of green space (woodland, grassland, etc.). Ideally, it would have a set of policies to guide its officers in the management of that space for wildlife, and the policies would be in a public document.

Question 2: What are the council's current policies for managing its own green space for wildlife, including for pollinators?

This is one of the challenges we've given Nicola Beech as cabinet lead for climate, ecology, energy and waste, and the Bristol One City environment board, working with



our other boards, Homes, Children, Economy, Transport, Health and Wellbeing - who are all dealing with interconnected city crises.

First we have statutory environmental duties and obligations. These include ones related to the European conventions, national legislation and national, sub-regional and local policy. These set out the protection of habitat and wildlife.

On top of this we have:

- **Locally developed management plans (e.g. Troopers Hill Nature Reserve),**
- **A Countryside Stewardship agreement where management actions are prescribed,**
- **released agri-environment payments, such as at Stoke Park Estate where we've introduced grazing animals.**

The Council's Ecological Emergency Action Plan, which we aim to publish by the end of August, will set out the ambitious steps being taken by the council to embed nature into all decisions.



QUESTION PQ 03 & Q4

Subject: Management of Council land for wildlife

Question submitted by: Julie Milton

In February 2020, the council declared an ecological emergency and in September 2020 published its One City Ecological Emergency Strategy. One of the key strategic goals in that document was to have at least 30% of land in Bristol managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030.

It is important that the council itself manages its own green space for the benefit of wildlife, where short grass is not needed for recreation, preserving sightlines for traffic, and so on. A 'low-mow/cut-and-collect' regime for grassland is ideal, in which grass is mown less often and the cuttings are removed so that the soil becomes less fertile, which favours pollinator-friendly wildflowers.

This approach offers not only ecological benefits but also cost savings, so it should in principle be possible to roll out this regime quickly and widely across council land.

However, areas of Bristol that seem to be excellent candidates for this approach are still being mown frequently.

The grassy slope between Clifton Hill and Lower Clifton Hill is an example. It covers 1,500 m² and is so steep and inaccessible that people don't walk on it. If it were managed for wildlife, it would provide a substantial area to support pollinators, would be beautiful, and would provide an example for local people and visitors in terms of what they could do themselves in their own gardens and land.

In previous years, the council has mown the slope frequently and kept the grass short. Recently, some of the area has been left unmown and wildflowers have sprung up. But that area covers perhaps only 5% of the slope.

The reasons for not managing all of this slope for wildlife may apply to other council green space in Bristol, and it would be helpful to know why so little of it has been given over to wildlife management.

Question 1: What is preventing the council from managing all of the grassy slope between Clifton Hill and Lower Clifton Hill for wildlife?

Suggested reply:

We'll look at Clifton green – thank you for the suggestion. We welcome your ongoing input.

Within the city we already manage significant areas of land for nature. Twenty four percent of our land is protected for wildlife.

The ecological strategy gives us a whole new framework and set of challenges for how we manage the city - The One City Ecological Emergency Strategy Project Board is currently analysing the city's ecological network to identify gaps and opportunities. This work will inform both the council and other landowners in future management of land to enhance the network.



The council’s One City Ecological Emergency Strategy includes key strategic goals to have at least 30% of land in Bristol managed for the benefit of wildlife and to reduce pesticide use in Bristol by at least 50% by 2030.

The council is a large landowner in Bristol, and achieving these goals will therefore involve it in applying these policies to its own land. But there may be barriers to doing so. For example, some areas where the council might want to adopt a ‘low-mow’ regime on grassland might be subject to litter; the council might not yet own enough grass mowers that can remove grass cuttings after mowing, which is necessary to reduce the fertility of the soil to favour pollinator-friendly wildflowers; and the council might not yet have in place systems to replace the use of pesticides.

The council emphasises its ‘One City’ approach – bringing together public, private, and third-sector partners within the city – to problems that are too large for the council to face alone. The Ecological Emergency Strategy document says (p.2-3):

‘... the key focus must be to find new ways for people from every part of the city to get involved with this work... We call on you, as people who live, work, visit and invest in Bristol, to join with us... to restore the natural systems on which we depend’.

Members of the public all over the UK are already supporting their councils in their work to reduce pesticide use and better manage green space for wildlife. For example, Cambridgeshire County Council runs what is essentially an ‘adopt a verge’ scheme [1]. In Bristol, Bristol Waste are giving community litter-pick packs to people who request them and use them to tidy up their local areas [2]; volunteers organised by Matt Brierley of Butterfly Conservation removed grass-cuttings to nutrient-strip an area of land in the city[3]; and in High Kingsdown, residents are hoeing, hand-weeding and sweeping in local lanes to remove and deter weeds so that there’s no need for the council to use glyphosate [4].

However, these actions by the public aren’t organised across the city or coordinated in response to the council’s need for support. There is scope for Bristol to go wilder faster if the council identified areas of land where it needs the support of volunteers from the community and was systematic in seeking their help. There are many community groups across the city that focus on gardening or the environment: the Bristol Green Capital Partnership and VOSCUR each maintain a list of hundreds of voluntary organisations in the city that include such groups. And there are ways to reach out to local communities via social media, local magazines, and so on.

Question 2: Will the council reach out to the public for help where necessary in managing council land for wildlife and for pesticide reduction?

Suggested reply:

The city’s green spaces benefit hugely from the work of volunteers and by working with community groups and other partners.



We know we can achieve much more and our Parks Volunteer Co-ordinator is working with others such as the Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation and successfully growing volunteering opportunities.

Working with residents is particularly important because for any site that might be changed to benefit nature, we need to make sure we make change that is acceptable for residents and that doesn't create other problems such as littering and dog fouling.



QUESTION PQ 05 & PQ06

Subject: Council’s plans for green spaces for wildlife

Question submitted by: Roxanne Ismail

Bristol City Council has declared an ecological emergency. The council said in its One City Ecological Emergency Strategy that at least 30% of land in Bristol should be managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030, and it emphasised the importance of ‘low-mow’ in managing council verges and green space for wildlife.

An important aspect of ‘low-mow’ is ‘cut-and-collect’. Grass pulls nutrients out of the soil into its leaves and stems as it grows. If grass is mown and the cuttings are left on the grass, they compost back down and re-fertilise the soil. Fertile soil favours coarse grass and suppresses the wildflowers that would help support pollinators and other wildlife.

But if mown grass is collected and removed, the soil’s fertility falls. Grass then grows more slowly and needs less cutting, and wildflowers start to appear. After one or two years of three cut-and-collect mowings a year, only annual cutting may be needed and the land will have been transformed from coarse grass to a mix of pollinator-friendly fine grass and wildflowers.

To do this at any scale, mowers are needed that can cut and collect grass. They are expensive: the Grillo mower with trailer costs approximately £35,000. But the mower creates cost savings by reducing the fertility of the grass so that it grows more slowly and needs to be mown far less often. In North Dorset, the savings due to using the Grillo mower and trailer have meant that they paid for themselves within 3.5 years. Their lifespan is roughly 7–10 years. (Source: <https://youtu.be/yyELRwKVG9E?t=702>).

Conventional mowing produces no cost recovery at all, with an unending amount of grass to cut.

Some councils are renting cut-and-collect mowers and conducting trials of them over a number of years. Lengthy trials seem unnecessary when data is available from other councils, and seem to lack the urgency needed for an ecological emergency.

And renting seems to make no financial sense, especially as borrowing is extremely cheap now. Some councils are investigating the use of grass clippings as biofuel, to help with cost.

It would seem to make sense for Bristol City Council to buy now the cut-and-collect mowers it needs to manage its grassland for wildlife, in those areas where that would be appropriate.

Question 1: What are the council’s plans for getting enough cut-and-collect grass-mowers to manage its green space at a speed and on a scale fit for the ecological emergency?

The Council already operates cut and collect ‘hay cut’ mowing on 200 hectares of our land. We are working through the One City boards to plan in the protection and recovery of nature as our population grows.

I appreciate the point you make about areas this is appropriate for. Our green spaces serve a whole range of purposes: sports, play and events and picnic areas for example.



Furthermore, it is important we talk to the whole range of people in the city and bring them with us. Many residents continue to contact us to tell us that longer grass is not acceptable.

As councils all over the UK start to manage their verges and green space for wildlife by mowing less often, many local people are delighted. However, some complain that the grass looks untidy and neglected. Some are even abusive to council workers as a result.

Organisations such as Plantlife recommend communicating with the public about the purpose of managing the land in this new way, in order to get buy-in and reduce complaints and the abuse of staff. An obvious and often-used method is to put a sign in each unmown area, explaining that the grass is being mown less to encourage wildflowers and support wildlife.

Question 2: Does the council plan to put signs in unmown verges to explain to the public that they're being left unmown for the benefit of wildlife?

It is certainly something we could explore and will be looked at by the One City boards. Officers in our parks team are aware of the need to communicate with residents and stakeholders and provide the right way of giving information about ongoing projects so that residents know what we are doing and why.



QUESTION PQ 07 & 08

Subject: A connected wildlife network in Bristol & management of the Councils verges and green spaces
Question submitted by: Grant Mercer

The council's One City Ecological Emergency Strategy states (p. 10):

'...we need to stop destroying wildlife habitats.... We need to ensure that wildlife is able to move between these habitats, moving from a patchwork of isolated green spaces to a connected ecological network.... We will also need targeted action to improve habitats in locations that will fill gaps in the connectivity and functioning of Bristol's ecological networks. Preliminary mapping of habitats in the West of England is now complete. This work has identified strategic sites and opportunities to expand a Nature Recovery Network across the whole West of England region. The next step is to zoom in and make plans on a Bristol city level.'

This is important work, and a large task. And, in the ecological emergency that we face, speed is of the essence. But speed and scale cost money. If resources are limited, perhaps there is a role for local people in crowdsourcing the necessary knowledge to populate the map for Bristol, or using their gardens to help restore the network in areas where it's broken.

Question 1: Does the council plan to involve the public in restoring a connected wildlife network in Bristol – for example, by inviting them to crowdsource information for the mapping of habitats, or to restore areas where the network is broken?

We are fortunate that Bristol has a very strong voluntary and community sector that routinely carries out projects that benefit nature in parks. They have been key to the development of the One City Ecology Emergency Strategy, and we'd welcome more involvement going forward. Supporting volunteering and community ownership of green spaces will be central to a revised Parks and Green Space Strategy we will adopt in 2022.

With regards to the mapping of the wildlife network, one of the key actions from the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy is an analysis of Bristol's ecological networks to identify gaps and opportunities to enhance their functionality and resilience.

Work to progress this action is underway and the output will further develop what the Nature Recovery Network looks like at the Bristol level. We are working closely with Avon Wildlife Trust (which is a volunteer-supported organisation) as we develop our response to the Ecological Emergency.

Traditionally, councils' grass verges, greens and parks have been managed for road safety and public amenity, including recreation and a tidy appearance. But priorities have shifted in the ecological emergency, and the council's One City Ecological Emergency Strategy includes the goal of 30% of Bristol's land being managed for wildlife by 2030.

The council's own large holdings of green space will be important in reaching this goal, and it will be crucial to have the right expertise to inform their management. Ecologists have the appropriate knowledge and training.



Question 2: In this ecological emergency, what role are ecologists playing in the management of the council's verges and green spaces?

From the council's perspective our work is being led by the Council's Nature Conservation Officer, informed by up-to-date habitat data collated through the commissioning of ecological consultancies, and mapping work carried out by Geographic Information System experts in the Council.



QUESTION PQ 09 & PQ 10

Subject: Pesticide Policy

Question submitted by: Tim Mason

Paris has been pesticide-free for more than ten years. All public spaces in France are managed without the use of pesticides. Ghent in Belgium, with a quarter of a million residents, has been pesticide-free for over 20 years. Barcelona, Hamburg and other large European cities have stopped using glyphosate, a pesticide of particular concern.

Bristol City Council's One City Ecological Emergency Strategy has the key strategic goal of reducing the use of pesticides in Bristol by at least 50% by 2030.

In January 2019, a council motion was passed to 'request the Mayor to set up a stakeholder forum/task force... charged with planning and delivering a phased withdrawal from the use of glyphosates over a period of three years'. (Source:

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/g3187/Public%20minutes%2015th-Jan-2019%2014.00%20Full%20Council.pdf?T=11>). That period will end in seven months' time.

The council itself is a major landholder in Bristol, and reducing its pesticide use on its own land will therefore be an important part of reaching its own strategic goal on pesticide, and complying with the council motion.

Ideally, the council would have a set of policies to guide its officers in reducing the use of pesticides on council land, and the policies would be in a public document.

Question 1: What is the council's current pesticide policy for its own land?

Our 10-year One City Ecological Emergency Strategy sets the target of reducing pesticide use by 50 per cent by 2030.

This is not just a target for the council but for the whole city. There are lots of people who manage land, pathways and structures, including the NHS, Universities, Businesses, private households and landlords.

We continue to trial suitable, cost-effective alternatives and share the results with the city, and we are looking at the approached of other cities.

We have put a million pounds into the council's response to the ecological emergency and I've asked Cllr Nicola Beech to explore every way possible to exceed the target in the strategy.

Pesticides are poisons, and they can affect organisms other than those that they are aimed at. Children are especially susceptible to the effects of pesticides because their bodies are still developing, their exposure is greater relative to their body weight, and they tend to be in closer contact with sprayed areas such as playgrounds, parks and sports fields and pitches.



A 2017 poll carried out for the Pesticide Action Network UK showed that 68% of the public want schools, parks, playgrounds and other local open spaces to be free from pesticides. Glyphosate is of particular concern and is the subject of bans in many cities.

Question 2: Has the council instructed schools in Bristol to stop using pesticides – including glyphosate – on their land? If so. what is the extent of implementation at this time?

We don't have the powers over the management of school grounds directly, so we have to bring people with us. This is something we are going to raise with the Children's Board and Health and Well being Board.



QUESTION PQ11 & PQ12

Subject: Non-Council green spaces and landowners

Question submitted by: Sarah Watson

One of the key strategic goals listed in the council's One City Ecological Emergency Strategy is that at least 30% of land in Bristol should be managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030.

It is therefore important to know how much green space (particularly grassland) there is in the city, because this is the space in which such work can immediately start.

The council will of course know how much green space it owns itself. But it will need to play a leadership role in encouraging other landowners to start managing their own green space for wildlife. In order to do this, the council presumably needs to know what green space exists in the city other than its own holdings, and who owns that space.

Question 1. Does the council have a map or list of non-council green space in Bristol indicating the size and owner of each plot?

Suggested reply:

We do not have a comprehensive map or list of private non-council green space with details of landowners where there is no public access or joint interest. We do have access to ordnance survey data, which shows green space that is designated protected green space and green infrastructure that has public access.

The point you make about leadership and encouraging other landowners is embedded in the One City approach. The city is not run by any one single organisation. It's a collective act. The whole idea was driven by Avon Wildlife trust CEO Ian Barratt at a one city environment board when he pointed out the danger of solving the climate emergency, but failing to tackle the loss of nature. Climate does not automatically save nature.

So this is not the council's ecological emergency strategy, we were a core partner, but written by a collection of partners led by Avon Wildlife Trust through the One City Environment Board.

When we launched the emergency at cabinet Feb 2019 we had other organisations there to adopt it at the same time including We The Curious, University Hospitals Bristol Foundation Trust, North Bristol NHS Trust, University of Bristol and the University of the West of England.

Bristol City Council's One City Ecological Emergency Strategy calls upon everyone in the city to work together to restore our natural systems. One of the key strategic goals listed in the document is that at least 30% of land in Bristol should be managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030.



This will involve not only the council managing its own land for nature, but also other landowners in Bristol, including public, private and third sectors, doing the same. Although the council can't control the management of that land directly, it has an important leadership role to play.

How many landowners in Bristol has the council approached directly to encourage them to manage a portion of their green space for wildlife and to reduce pesticide use on their land?

Question 2: How many landowners in Bristol has the council approached directly to encourage them to manage a portion of their green space for wildlife and to reduce pesticide use on their land?

Suggested reply:

The delivery of the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy is being co-ordinated through a Project Board that includes Avon Wildlife Trust, Bristol City Council and other partners. It sits under the Environment Board in the city office which engages all of the key organisations in the city, coming together to agree on priorities. Hundreds of organisations are involved in the one city approach, and the boards are constantly talking to each other about their work and goals.

The Environment board is currently analysing the ecological network to identify gaps and opportunities to identify and prioritise the most appropriate sites for enhancement or habitat creation. Regarding the reduction in use of pesticides, the Project Board is coordinating wider action with partners including landowners.



QUESTION PQ13 & PQ14

Subject: Pesticide-free Council land and managing land for wildlife

Question submitted by: Sarah Thomas

Bristol City Council’s One City Ecological Emergency Strategy includes the key strategic goal of reducing the use of pesticides in Bristol by at least 50% by 2030. As a major landowner in the city, the council could be a key contributor to that goal, both by reducing its pesticide use and setting the example for others to follow.

A case in point is glyphosate, a pesticide of wide concern that is no longer used in Barcelona, Hamburg and other large European cities. In January 2019, a council motion was passed to ‘request the Mayor to set up a stakeholder forum/task force... charged with planning and delivering a phased withdrawal from the use of glyphosates over a period of three years’.

(Source: <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/g3187/Public%20minutes%2015th-Jan-2019%2014.00%20Full%20Council.pdf?T=11>). That period will end in seven months’ time, and going glyphosate-free would be a very important step towards achieving the strategic ecological goal.

It would also help the council go beyond its stated goal and, rather than reach a pesticide-reduced status, instead reach the pesticide-free status that other cities have enjoyed for many years. According to Pesticide Action Network UK, Paris has been pesticide-free for more than ten years; all public spaces in France are managed without the use of pesticides; and Ghent in Belgium, with a quarter of a million residents, has been pesticide-free for over 20 years. (Source: https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/pft_public_briefing)

Cost of course is an important issue but innovative funding strategies can help councils to recoup the cost of buying the equipment needed for non-chemical approaches. For example, ‘hot foam’ (hot water insulated in a biodegradable, organic foam and applied precisely to weeds, moss and algae) is very effective. After the initial outlay for the equipment, councils are finding its costs to be equal to or less than a pesticide regime.

And, unlike glyphosate, the equipment can be used in all weathers. And because councils don’t tend to need such equipment from more than 50 days a year, the cost of buying a hot foam machine can be shared with one or more adjacent councils; local companies can ‘sponsor’ the purchase of one; councils can hire their machine out to other councils or local land managers; the council’s contractor could buy a machine; and so on. (Source: https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/pft_public_briefing)

The ecological emergency and questions of public health both make it important to rapidly and drastically reduce our use of pesticides, and many other cities have found it possible to go pesticide-free.

Question 1: Does the council plan to go pesticide-free on its own land?

Suggested reply:

We plan to go pesticide-free as soon it is feasible. Our review of the use of pesticides will continue to investigate suitable, cost-effective alternatives, and work is ongoing



with city partners to bring institutions with large estates together to reduce pesticide use in Bristol by 50 per cent.

As with all chemicals our policy is to reduce use where we can and always safely use the minimum amount possible.

One of the key strategic goals listed in the council's One City Ecological Emergency Strategy is that at least 30% of land in Bristol should be managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030.

As a major landowner in the city, it is important that the council manages its own land accordingly and sets an example for the rest of the city.

An important element of managing land for wildlife is to use a 'low-mow/cut-and-collect' regime on grassland that doesn't need to be mown for recreation or road-safety. But some councils are reporting that they are locked into contracts with external contractors that prevent them from reducing the frequency of mowing, or from requiring the removal of grass cuttings to reduce the fertility of the soil to favour pollinator-friendly wildflowers.

One possibility for councils in this position would be to renegotiate such contracts. At worst, a council might pay the contractor as much as it does now, for less mowing. But even this would be a win-win situation: the council would lose no more money than it currently spends on mowing, and would gain the ecological benefit of a low-mow regime, to address the ecological emergency. The contractor would lose no money, and would have to do less work. At best, a council might be able to negotiate a full low-mow/cut-and-collect regime and/or the purchase of suitable equipment for an appropriate market price.

Question 2: If contracts are stopping progress on Bristol City Council managing its land for wildlife, will it renegotiate them?

There are no contracts preventing the council from managing green spaces for nature, where it is appropriate and beneficial to do so. If you have a specific example in mind, please share the details with us.



QUESTION PQ15 & PQ16

Subject: Management of the Council's own green space

Question submitted by: Dan Geerah

In February 2020, Bristol City Council declared an ecological emergency.

In an emergency, speed and scale of action are important. Since the eco-emergency was declared, what additional percentage of the council's own green space has begun to be managed for wildlife? We must aim to follow Lawtons principles of conservation to be successful; Bigger, Better, More and Joined up.

Question 1: Since the eco-emergency was declared, what additional percentage of the council's own green space has begun to be managed for wildlife?

We have 1,246 hectares of land that we've designated as having a protected nature conservation status, which amounts to 24.3% of land that BCC owns.

Much more land that we own doesn't have that designation, but will be green space (such as road verges) and this is much harder to calculate.

We are auditing and analysing Bristol's ecological networks to identify opportunities to enhance their functionality and resilience and find opportunities for strategic habitat creation.

We are working on improving the metrics to measure and track our progress, but since the declaration of the Ecological Emergency in February 2020, the council has:

- **changed the mowing regime at Ashton Court Estate to support its orchid population,**
- **increased the number of floral meadows,**
- **reduced the frequency of grass cutting in some green spaces to support invertebrate populations**
- **introduced grazing to Stoke Park Estate as a long-term measure to support important grassland habitats.**

Bristol City Council declared an ecological emergency in February 2020.

In an emergency, speed and scale of action are important. Since the eco-emergency was declared, what percentage fall in pesticide use has there been on the council's own land?

Understanding the extent of pesticide use will help us better understand how serious this council is taking the provision of resources for our ever declining invertebrate populations.

Question 2: Since the eco-emergency was declared, what percentage fall in pesticide use has there been on the council's own land?



Again, we are developing our metrics in this area so we can share our progress against this goal.

The Parks Service has already stopped our use of herbicide for our 'convenience spraying' so along the base of fences, bins, signs etc in parks. This is citywide.

We previously used 'convenience spraying' to stop us having to trim as it is time consuming, so it is worth noting that this decision does come at a cost of operational time and resources. This is obviously something that we deem worthwhile, but it is worth highlighting that decisions we take come at a cost when local government is still bearing the brunt of austerity and cuts in funding.



QUESTION PQ17 & PQ18

Subject: Bristol City Council grassland and Environmental Emergency Action Plan

Question submitted by: Robert Smart

The One City Environmental Emergency Strategy was published in September last year. One of its key strategic goals was to have at least 30% of land in Bristol managed for the benefit of wildlife by 2030. Bristol City Council is a major landowner in Bristol. It is important that the council manages its own land for the benefit of wildlife, understanding that public safety remains a priority, so that this strategic goal can be met.

Grassland has immediate potential for being transformed by 'low-mow/cut-and-collect' regimes into more biodiverse, wildflower-rich habitat. The council will be ultimately be judged on the speed and scale of its emergency response over the next few months.

Question 1: How much grassland (verges, parks, greens, etc.) does Bristol City Council own within the city?

1,246 hectares - 24% of our owned land - is designated under nature conservation status such as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance or Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

The Council's parks and green spaces are made up of a number of natural features and habitats which may be broadly categorised by woodland, wetland (including streams/rivers) and grassland.

But in addition to this, the council owns land which is informal green space, natural green space or spaces for play and sport.

Bristol City Council declared an ecological emergency in February 2020 and published its One City Environmental Emergency Strategy in September.

The strategy document said, 'This strategy is not an action plan.' But in this emergency, an actionable plan is urgently needed, as part of our joint response.. Apparently, a draft plan has now been prepared. The council will be ultimately be judged on the speed and scale of implementation of its emergency action plan over the next year.

Question 2: When will the council's Environmental Emergency Action Plan be made public?

Suggested reply:

Through the One City Environment Board, we have published the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy, setting out in consultation with city partners the steps we collectively need to take in order to make Bristol an ecologically resilient and wildlife-rich city by 2030. The Council's own Ecological Emergency Action Plan (which we aim to publish by the end of August), will set out the ambitious steps being taken by the council to embed nature into all decisions.



QUESTION PQ19 & PQ20

Subject: Rapid Response to the Ecological Emergency

Question submitted by: Nicola Earnshaw

Bristol City Council declared an ecological emergency in February 2020. An emergency requires urgent action, but nearly 18 months later, no action plan has been agreed. This raises the question of whether the council has the decision-making structures and processes to allow it to respond with suitable speed to this emergency. 'Business as usual' timescales and structures may not be appropriate.

Question 1: How has the council altered its decision-making structures to enable a rapid response to the ecological emergency?

We have statutory considerations about how we make decisions. For instance, we need to ensure our decisions pay due regard to equalities and public finances. We are aiming to publish our Ecological Emergency Action Plan by the end of August, which will set out the ambitious steps being taken by the council to embed nature into all decisions.

However, through One City Approach, we have brought a new approach to city decision-making which acknowledges the council is not the only shaper of life in the city. That is why we the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy was developed in consultation with city partners to agree the steps we collectively need to take in order to make Bristol an ecologically resilient and wildlife-rich city by 2030.

The ecological emergency the Bristol City Council declared in February 2020 requires urgent action, and urgent action requires a clear decision-making structure. From outside the council, this structure is unclear, and it is unclear who the decision-makers are.

Question 2: Which person, board, committee or group has the power to make council policy decisions for rapid implementation to tackle the ecological emergency?

The council created a new Ecological Emergency Project Manager post and Cllr Nicola Beech has been appointed to a new Cabinet role with responsibility for Climate, Ecology, Waste and Energy.

The Council's Ecological Emergency Action Plan will set out a council-wide 5-year programme of activities to deliver on the ambitions of the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy and relevant aspects of the One City Climate Strategy.

It sets out work that is already in progress, what we are aiming to do and the means by which we intend to do it. We will progress activities where funding has been secured. For some activities listed we have yet to secure or confirm funding availability but we are committed to exploring options.

The council Climate and Ecological Programme Steering Group oversees delivery of the council's Ecological Emergency Action Plan. Decisions on policy are through the council's normal decision pathway process.



QUESTION PQ21

Subject: Clean Air Zone implementation

Question submitted by: Our Air, Our City (Nigel Shipley)

When will a Clean Air Zone be implemented in Bristol? In June 2018, the Council proposed a CAZ (<https://news.bristol.gov.uk/news/clean-air-day-marked-across-bristol-2>), and before the recent election we were told that it would be implemented next October. Three hundred Bristol people die each year from our dirty air. We cannot wait any longer for action to clean up our air.

Even though the start date has gone back, it is important to note that compliance is still set to be delivered by 2023.

The later start date for the Clean Air Zone allows businesses and the city more time to prepare without affecting compliance.

We have announced a strengthened package of financial support for upgrading vehicles. In addition, we've protected lower-income families by ensuring exemption for people paid less than £27k who work in the zone, as well as hospital visitors and blue badge holders.



QUESTION PQ22 & PQ23**Subject: Access to Temple Island/ A4****Question submitted by: Suzanne Audrey**Background

Residents of Totterdown, and other areas of south Bristol, have long suffered the inadequate and potentially dangerous shared walking and cycling (and now e-scooter) route on the footway between Three Lamps junction and the Temple Meads area. Over the years we have been informed that any improvement to the route would be expensive and would have to be linked to a major development. We were pleased when the city-centre arena transport plan included a southern entrance that would alleviate the pressure on the existing route and provide an alternative through Arena/Temple Island. We note that a decision has been taken to 'de-scope' the southern route. We have been in touch with the Mayor's office and are grateful that more information has been provided, but we are still unclear of the details and implications of de-scoping the southern access.

The information we have in relation to the A4 and the southern access to Temple Island is as follows:

Approval sought to de-scope EW2: Southern Access, £6.45m, from the initial cost profile and programme. It's now partially replaced by the L&G scheme proposed masterplan which currently includes access from A4 to TI (subject to planning). An internal briefing note detailing the descope of Southern Access has been prepared and appended to this Form.

A4 Vehicle Protection study - £65K: BCC Highways have requested a study of the existing crash barrier and a design of solutions to reduce risk.

Southern Gateway Ped/Cycle link Study - £29K: Feasibility study of additional infrastructure to run alongside the A4 between the Southern Access and SG Transport Hub.

Details of alternative options considered and rejected: Southern Access was considered to be kept in scope, however with new scope identified and required and the L&G scheme now partially replacing the Southern Access with access from A4 to TI (subject to planning), it's deemed as unnecessary. The funds are proposed be brought back into the contingency.

The surveys on the A4 boundary have been identified by BCC TDM and Highways, and have been added, subject to approval, in order to identify opportunities to synergise between ongoing highways works in the wider TQEZ development.

Question 1

Please can you clarify details of the access that is now proposed, from the A4 to Temple Island, in the L&G proposed masterplan?

The L&G scheme provides access from the A4 to the Temple Island site (subject to planning).

Because of this, and the amount of land the solution would have taken up with concrete, we've removed the so-called "southern entrance".



Question 2

This is a bit cheeky, but I wondered if the Mayor would consider cycling on the shared footway along the Bath Road between Temple Meads and Three Lamps junction at around 5.00pm in order to gain first-hand experience of this route? This might help to emphasise the importance of improving the route as part of the developments occurring in the Temple Meads area.

REPLY:

I am confident the master plan will improve active travel options for people living and moving through the area.



QUESTION PQ24

Subject: Cycling Gloucester Road

Question submitted by: Andrea Mackay

My question is about cycling along Gloucester Road. As an experienced cyclist, I still find that travelling into town by bike from Horfield can be an unpleasant and sometimes dangerous experience. The A38 is heavily polluted, and there is no continuous, uninterrupted cycle Lane, or path dedicated to cyclists. In addition? the markings which should give cyclists precedence, such as cycle boxes at traffic lights, are barely visible in many places. What specific steps will the council take in 2021 to make this very well used route much safer for cyclists?

Suggested reply:

We are well aware that Gloucester road remains a gap in the cycle network. This needs to be addressed in a future local cycling walking infrastructure plan and work will be carried out to identify future options.

Work to implement cycle boxes at junctions is being considered for the maintenance team's work programme.



QUESTION PQ25

Subject: Clean Air Zone Update

Question submitted by: Katrina Billings, Bristol Clean Air Alliance

Please can the Council give an update on the Clean Air Zone. With the lack of any public communication of progress, it is feeling unlikely that the October 2021 implementation date will be met. Is it not about time for the Council to tell the public whether there has been a delay, and if so to justify the reason for the delay?

Answer:

Even though the start date has gone back, it is important to note that compliance is still set to be delivered by 2023.

The later start date for the Clean Air Zone allows businesses and the city more time to prepare without affecting compliance.

We have announced a strengthened package of financial support for upgrading vehicles. In addition, subject to the government's agreement of our Full Business Case, we have protected lower-income families with one year exemptions for people paid less than £26k (raising to £27k in 2022) who work in the zone, as well as for hospital visitors and blue badge holders.



QUESTION PQ 26 & PQ 27

Subject: Stakeholders and Passengers consultation & review of WECA

Question submitted by: David Redgewell, south west transport network and Railfuture Severnside

Will the mayor please explain what progress is being made by the west of England combined authority metro mayor with North Somerset council on plans for stakeholders and passengers consultation forums working with Bristol Transport board on bus back better the National bus strategy and on bus service improvement plan for the city region as per the buses minister Baroness Vere and department for transport requirements and bus service consultation such as on bus 17 Keynsham to Kingswood Hillfields Staple Hill Fishponds Eastville Park Southmead hospital bus station which is being changed in September 2021 into routes without passengers consultation including Southmead hospital staff.

The West of England Combined Authority is the Transport Authority responsible for the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for the sub region, including the consultation and stakeholder engagement.

The National Bus Strategy has been discussed at the One City Transport Board to formulate feedback on aspirations for this Plan.

We are supporting the Combined Authority as required to assist in the delivery of the BSIP within the tight timescales given by the Government.

The Combined Authority has advised that there are currently no proposed changes to service 17.

Question 2 .

Will the mayor and the leader of North Somerset council Banes and South Gloucestershire council work toward a governance review of the West of England Combined Authority and North Somerset council becoming a full member with a devolution deal

With Mayor Dan Norris to set up full integrated transport authority to run Bus and rail light rail coach and ferry services like Liverpool City Region Greater Manchester and the West Midlands.

And transfer all public transport officers from the 4 Unity Authorities to a Regional Transport Authority work including making the Western Gateway Transport Board more regional effective.

Along with other leaders within the Combined Authority, I requested a Governance Review at the West of England Combined Authority meeting on Friday 26 June – this was not taken forward. We asked the new WECA Mayor to work with us to learn how we can improve to better deliver on our climate, transport, jobs and skills goals, and deliver value for money for taxpayers. We will continue to press for collaborative and ambitious action.

