

Member Forum

9th November 2021

Questions and replies



Procedural note:

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS:

- Councillors are entitled to submit up to 2 written questions each.
- The questions submitted and written replies are enclosed.
- Councillors are also entitled to ask a maximum of 2 supplementary questions at the forum.
- All supplementary questions must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. There is a maximum of 2 supplementaries, one per question asked.
- Questions have been submitted in priority order, via the group leaders / whips. Questions are rotated around the political groups, in order.



LABOUR QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Massey, Southmead ward

Subject: A4018 Traffic Issues

1. There has been significant press coverage on the traffic around the A4018. There is currently single lane traffic from Old Crow roundabout towards the Mall, which is causing severe congestion in Henbury and also my ward of Southmead.

The administration has been aware of these issues and former Cllr Dudd put forward mitigation measures, that were vehemently opposed by local opposition councillors.

Will the administration consider bringing forward these measures again, or similar measures that could help alleviate the transport problem in the area?

REPLY:

The current traffic issues are being caused by development works in South Gloucestershire to support new homes on our border, which involves lane and road closures. This is causing some congestion and we are working with colleagues in South Gloucestershire Council to minimise the impacts where we can.

We previously consulted on proposals for bus priority improvements along the A4018 between Crow Lane roundabout and Westbury on Trym. Plans were developed to advance some of the works on the northern section between Charlton Rd and Crow Lane but paused while funding issues were examined. We will be revisiting the delivery of these proposals in the light of recent developments - the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and the development of our plans for the 2 route.



GREEN QUESTION 1

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Emma Edwards, Bishopston & Ashley Down ward

Subject: Blocked street drains

Preamble:

Recent heavy rainfall has highlighted how many drains across the city are in need of clearing and maintenance. Some of these have needed attention for a while, I have had residents in one road having issues for the past two years. With such heavy rain drain overspill results in deep water in streets and roads, often blocking access, including in Cotham and Ashley down wards and locations on Shaldon road, Muller road, Glenfrome road, Whiteladies road, Commercial road and the Lawrence Hill underpass.

When rainwater can't drain away quickly and leaves such overflow it creates problems for pedestrians, cyclists and those using mobility devices. As urban flooding is a symptom of climate change and something we are seeing more and more around the world this year, it seems an important problem to solve.

Questions:

1. It is my understanding that a new contract has been procured for future drain maintenance, one that works at a lower cost than the previous one. With this in mind what is the plan for monitoring the effectiveness of the new company and its ability to keep drains clear during bad weather?
2. If the new company is not able to perform well enough due to its capacity, or because of extreme wet weather conditions, what is the council's contingency plan for dealing with surface water blocking streets, roads and the underpasses?

REPLY:

Q1: The new contractor will be monitored by the means of regular contract meetings and the scoring of KPIs with respect to their performance. As part of the tender process, the new contractor was assessed by means of a quality submission, on social value and not on price alone. They are an experienced contractor, carrying out similar work in other cities.

Q2: Most gullies are cleaned following inspection where silt levels are within 125mm of the gully outlet, except on main roads where inspection is considered dangerous and so these are cleansed annually. We also cleanse gullies in response to reported incidents of flooding. Some of our subways do have old infrastructure and will require work to update pumps and renew existing pipework. This will form part of our annual work programmes.

The majority of gullies are connected to a Wessex Water sewer, some of which have capacity issues which limit the flow of surface water during a rain event. As rain subsides the water will drain as capacity returns.



The Autumn presents a challenge where leaf fall may cover the gratings to some gullies, so preventing the escape of surface water. Our colleagues at Bristol Waste do work incredibly hard to remove dropped leaves from the highway.

Should the new contractor fail to perform following the performance monitoring and warning the contract would need to be re-tendered.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor John Goulandris (Stoke Bishop)

Subject: PROPOSAL TO CLOSE PARK STREET

1. The proposal to close Park Street to private motorists will still presumably allow buses, coaches, taxis, delivery vans and lorries, bicycles, electric bicycles, motorcycles, mopeds, and e-scooters to use Park Street. Given the number of users still permitted, does he agree that this list should be extended to include private motorists with blue badges, whose advanced age and/or disability often means they are unable to use public transport, even if it's free of charge?

2. Clean air is an important ambition for Bristol just as is better public transport. Rather than discriminating against all private motorists, regardless of what vehicle they drive, by banning them from the city centre because of closing Park Street, would it not be more environmentally ambitious and intelligent to ban all fossil fuel polluting vehicles from using Park Street but allow all electric, environmentally friendly vehicles to use this route?

REPLY:

Q1: We are planning a consultation that considers a number of options, of which one is the potential closure of Park Street to through traffic while still providing access for residents and shoppers. All options will be aimed at reducing bus journey times and making bus journeys more reliable, as well as delivering public realm improvements.

Q2: We are only consulting on the option to close Park Street to through traffic. There would remain access for residents and shopping.

This is not a clean air intervention – that is being delivered through the Clean Air Zone. This is a bus improvement and public realm intervention.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Andrew Varney – Brislington West

Subject: Callington Road Link

Brislington residents were justifiably angered by the announcement of Homes England to proceed with their plan to develop the ecologically important Brislington Meadows for housing.

This is despite your promise 20 days before the Local Elections in May that the site would not be developed. You also made another pre-election promise to the people of Brislington; that there would be no road along the former Brislington railway alignment, namely the Callington Road Link.

How confident can local residents be that you will keep this promise?

REPLY:

Homes England have only announced a consultation. It is noticeable that as part of our earlier announcement, they have acknowledged that any development needs to positively impact the ecology of the area.

We remain opposed to the development.

As I clearly said during the election, our priority for Brislington and the rest of Bristol East is for a low-carbon Mass Transit System.



LABOUR QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Pearce, St George Central Ward Subject: Old City Commercial Waste

1. Please could the Mayor or Cllr Beech update me on the success of the Old City commercial waste pilot, and whether it will be rolled out to other areas of the city?

REPLY:

The pilot to remove trade waste bins and reduce waste related clutter from the Old City is underway and officers are currently engaging with businesses and waste contractors to help businesses find alternative solutions to their current waste collection requirements.

This process of engagement has been positive and will continue over the Christmas period so businesses have ample time to get services in place during what is an important time for businesses.

Early in the New Year we will take appropriate action against businesses that continue to make use of their bins on the highway and have failed to engage or find alternative solutions for their waste, although we anticipate that there will be few businesses that fall into this category.

The lessons learned from the pilot will be considered for the roll out of the programme across the rest of the city over the following twelve months.



GREEN QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor David Wilcox, Lockleaze Ward

Subject: Electric Vehicle support

Preamble:

Electric Vehicles are part of the solution for reaching Bristol City Councils zero carbon goal by 2030. A one to one replacement of electric vehicles is not feasible in terms of the cost of the vehicles, of the resources used, and there is not enough space on the road for vehicles at present. We need to reduce road space to prioritise active travel and public transport.

However, there is a growing call from early adopters for charging infrastructure close to their homes.

Questions:

- 1. Can Bristol Council please detail what steps it has explored to provide charging infrastructure on the street for electric vehicles, predicated that all new charging points should take up road space, not pavement space?**

I am particularly interested in:

- Lamppost charging points
- Grooves cut into the existing pavement to allow the temporary routing of charging cables that are safe to be negotiated by pedestrians, wheelchair and child buggy users
- Shared on the street charging infrastructure
- Car Club Electric Charging bays
- Whether disabled drivers and blue badge holders are prioritised for getting on street charging bays

- 2. Can you please also detail the timescales for implementing any of these changes?**

REPLY:

Q1: Since the end of 2020 the Streetlighting and Energy teams have been considering a number of options for increasing the scope of on-street charge-points. We have carried out detailed market testing across a range of potential products, and carried out site surveys with our electricians in order to understand any technical restrictions and identify what solutions might be available. The result of this work is that we have developed a site selection matrix for lamppost charge-points which can be applied to streets across the City.

Grooves in the footway would not be acceptable as this would form a weakness in the pavement structure, and also collect silt and detritus. There is also no way of ensuring the cable remains in the groove and ensuring the cable does not become damaged. There are also electrical safety risks. The meantime the council's position on this issue is available on our [website](#).



At present, the majority of charge-points located on the public highway are those in use by car clubs, see next note. The Council's Revive vehicle charging network operates Rapid and Fast charge-points which are accessible to the public across 250 charging bays at a range of sites, including car parks and leisure centres. 2 rapid charging units are publicly available at the east end of Victoria Street in Central Ward.

As part of the Replicate project, the Council installed 9 Fast charge-points (22kW peak power) adjacent to Co-Wheels car club bays. These units continue to be operated by the Council, for use solely by Co-Wheels' members.

As part of the due diligence process for residential charging solutions, the Council is working to ensure charge-points are accessible to citizens with protected characteristics, through an Equality Impact Assessment. The delivery teams have demonstratable experience in making charge-points as fully accessible as possible, for example designing charge-point sites for wheelchair access by considering bay width and orientation.

Q2: Government have offered a grant to local authorities to meet up to 75% of the cost of on-street charge-points, and an application is currently being drawn up, which will include a short-list of site names and match-funding options.

The application for the government's On-Street Chargepoint Scheme will be submitted in November. If successful, it is anticipated that a trial of lamppost chargers or similar products will start by April 2022 with a programme of installations to run through to March 2023.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Richard Eddy (Bishopsworth) Subject: PLANNED LOCATION FOR THE SOUTH BRISTOL YOUTH ZONE

1. Can the Mayor confirm whether the extremely important wildlife haven in my ward – Crox Bottom – will not be included as an alternative site for the planned Youth Zone in South Bristol?
2. If the Mayor is to be true to his word on protecting our remaining green spaces, would he not agree that it makes much better sense to locate this facility on brownfield land either on the soon-to-be demolished Hengrove Leisure Park or at least nearer to the new Hengrove Leisure Centre?

REPLY:

Q1: I can confirm that Crox Bottom will not be included – this was originally identified within a survey of potential land sites and quickly ruled out as it is a valuable nature reserve.

Q2: The site proposed is the best geographical and least ecologically disruptive of the options that were identified.

In our appraisal of sites considered, we looked at all potential brownfield sites in the area and these were either not viable or are being considered or prepared for alternative development.

The Youth Zone will provide a safe, welcoming space for children and young people from all walks of life and from different areas of South Bristol. There is a briefing for Councillors to find out more about the project scheduled for 24th November. I hope you will attend and that you will welcome this proposed £8.4 million investment in young people in Bishopsworth and South Bristol.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jos Clark – Brislington West

Subject: Sandy Park Road Signage

Like much of the city we have learnt to appreciate our local amenities and particularly our shopping streets in new ways during lockdown and as we come out of the restrictions. In Brislington West we have seen businesses really step up and serve their communities well; this no more so than on Sandy Park Rd.

As local councillors we do not want to keep this hidden gem all to ourselves but want to let people travelling along the A4 know where we are. Currently, we have a very old and out of date sign on the junction of the A4 and Sandy Park Rd. the signage is on the sandy park depot which is a grade 2 listed wall owned by the council. We have previously tried to get it renewed to reflect the local businesses but met a number of barriers to achieving our objective.

Can I ask the mayor if he will support the renewal of the sign by assigning the local councillors the council staff to progress this project? This would include a listed buildings application and the support to get the sign installed. The actual design and appearance of the sign would be done with input from local residents.

REPLY:

I am sure that the Council's Economic Development team would be happy to help progress this and coordinate other input from other departments

Local CIL could be used to pay for Officer design time, submitting a Listed building application, as well paying for the sign itself.

The [Welcome Back Fund](#) is open for applications until the end of November 2021. The fund can cover the cost of all, or part of, any activities, events, marketing and promotion of events, that will help safely attract people to the city centre and high streets.



LABOUR QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Goggin, Hartcliffe and Withwood Ward Subject: Temporary Accommodation

1. The Mayor will know that the number of families in temporary accommodation has recently reached 1,100. Does the Mayor have an estimate of what the number of families in temporary accommodation will fall to if all housing targets are met?
2. Can the Mayor tell us a) how many houses are needed to be built to meet requirements, taking into account Bristol's growing population b) the estimated housing capacity of all brownfield sites in the Local Plan?

REPLY:

Q1: There are currently 980 households in Temporary Accommodation. However, we are seeing high levels of homelessness in Bristol which could lead to more households in Temporary Accommodation

Additional affordable housing is essential in addressing homelessness, however new affordable housing has to meet a range of needs not just households in Temporary Accommodation. In addition to our ambitious plans for new accommodation we are focussing our efforts on early interventions to prevent households from becoming homeless in the first place.

There are thus too many variables to provide an estimate at this stage of the impact of development on the numbers of those requiring temporary accommodation. However, it is clear that the delivery of affordable homes is crucial to meet our urgent need for housing and accommodate the city's growing population.

Q2: Bristol and our neighbouring authorities are working towards the Combined Authority Strategic Development Strategy (SDS). The WECA area housing requirement will take into account the Local Housing Needs Assessment which uses the Government's standard method for calculating Local Housing Need. The standard method figure calculated for Bristol is currently 63,000 over a twenty year period and considerably exceeds the likely capacity of Bristol to deliver that number over the twenty year period of the SDS. This will result in an unmet figure for Bristol which the SDS will need to consider the need to distribute to the other WECA authorities.

The current estimated capacity for sites allocated for housing development in the 2014 adopted Local Plan and not yet developed which were previously developed is approximately 2,700 homes. These numbers include Western Slopes and Brislington Meadows, agreed by Full Council in 2014.

The reality is that the vast majority of Bristol's new housing completions occur on brownfield land and much of this is delivered outside of identified Local Plan allocations (91.5% of completions between 2006 – 2020 were on previously developed land). We anticipate this is



likely to continue with our new Local Plan, aimed to come to Full Council in 2024, setting out a brownfield-first policy approach.



GREEN QUESTION 3

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Heather Mack, Lockleaze ward
Subject: Green Finance

Recognising the scale of the challenge of financing the activity necessary for the whole city to achieve carbon zero it is my view we need members from all parties involved in making decisions around this, so they have long lasting agreement.

Question:

Does the Mayor agree with the principles of my motion on this submitted to full council?

REPLY:

The principles reflect many of the points I have been raising recently and working on in COP, attempting to pull together the finance required. The key challenge for all cities is raising the funding, and when you set that against the financial crises cities are facing to meet our own challenges, it's more important that we engage with the government and private sector to fund the action necessary.

While a committee of councillors may add value, our priority is working with those institutions in the city which are able to help – Triados, Hargreaves Lansdown and Lloyds are all within close proximity to this building.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mark Weston (Henbury & Brentry)

Subject: REINSTATEMENT OF CROW LANE CCTV & INSTALLATION CRITERION

1. Bus services were recently suspended on Crow Lane due to vandalism. Please can the Mayor advise the exact date when the cctv monitoring at this location will recommence with repaired or replaced surveillance equipment? This is something which has been long promised but still nothing is being done and my residents are suffering as a result.
2. Similar anti-social behaviours have been experienced in Station Road, Henbury. Activities include vandalism, incidents of violence and criminal damage to bus stops. What are the levels of criminality reached in an area (or any other criterion) needed to trigger the installation of a cctv unit?

REPLY:

Q1: Bus services at Crow Lane were suspended for a single night as a result of vandalism and anti-social behaviour but were resumed the following day and are currently running.

Technical issues at Crow Lane have hindered the planned CCTV upgrade. These technical issues have been resolved. However, we recognise the delay in this work has an impact on the community. Officers anticipate that new cameras will be installed and operational before the end of February 2022, and I have asked them to look into whether this can be brought forward.

It is important to note that CCTV should only be one element of a wider public safety problem solving plan when addressing community safety issues such as vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Q2: There is no simple formula for levels of criminality or anti-social behaviour triggering the installation of a CCTV unit. Often CCTV is not the most appropriate response to criminality or anti-social behaviour in a particular area.

In order for a CCTV solution to be approved, CCTV needs to be judged to be an appropriate response to the criminality taking place in a community safety problem solving plan, a privacy impact assessment needs to be undertaken, a budget for the camera, monitoring and ongoing maintenance needs to be identified and local residents and stakeholders should be consulted.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Alex Hartley – Hotwells & Harbourside

Subject: River Avon Flood Strategy

Given the recent re-classification of much of the Harbourside and Central Bristol as Flood Risk Category 3, which means risk of life to all, can I ask the Mayor how the River Avon Flood Strategy is progressing; when is it likely to be agreed and the necessary measures to come on stream?

REPLY:

The Flood Map for Planning was recently updated and includes greater extents of Flood Zone 3. Note that the Flood Map for planning disregards the presence of existing flood defences. For more detailed information about the flood risk in the area, go to <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/postcode>.

The Bristol Avon Flood Strategy Strategic Outline Case was approved by cabinet in March 2021. We are now progressing the Outline Business Case stage working with our strategic partner and in partnership with the Environment Agency.



LABOUR QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Bennett, Eastville Ward

Subject: Night Time Economy

1. Can the Mayor provide an update on the work the Council is doing with its city partners to tackle drink spiking?
2. What has the Council been doing to support the Night Time Economy in Bristol?

REPLY:

Q1: A partnership between the Bristol @ Night Panel, Avon and Somerset Police, Bristol City Centre BID and Bristol City Council was set up to raise awareness and tackle drink spiking across Bristol venues.

This work began before drink spiking hit the headlines, meaning we were in a strong position to respond to an apparent rise in cases.

Venues have been provided with clear guidance on how to respond to suspected drink spikings, supported by posters so those enjoying a night out know that staff will take them seriously and look after them if they think they or one of their friends may have been spiked.

Initially there are 400 test kits being distributed for venues to use to gather crucial early evidence to support the police in their investigations.

The campaign was launched ahead of one of the busiest weekends for the night time economy, Halloween, and over 100 venues have already joined the campaign across the city so far.

We've had other local authorities get in touch to request to use our resources and approach as a template. Industry bodies and the Home Office have also reached out to learn more and thank us for this work – it's a real example of partnership working at its best.

Thanks to our partners for working with us on this, especially the police, the BID and to Carly, our Night Time Economy advisor, for highlighting this issue and driving the work.

For more information, visit the campaign website www.bristolnights.co.uk.

Q2: We are doing a huge amount of work to attract people back to the city centre and support out businesses. For example:

- **Support through Covid:** we have worked with those working in the night time economy throughout the pandemic to ensure they could access all the support they were, and continue to be, entitled to. We recognise this has been one of the hardest hit sectors of our economy and we sought to influence government where support was lacking.
- **Night Time Economy Advisor:** in addition to our Bristol@Night panel, which is now well established, we appointed the city's first NTE advisor earlier this year. Carly is



working to champion the sector, providing a stronger link between us and stakeholders in the city's night time industries.

- **Safety campaigns:** we have had two successful campaigns this year to ensure everyone in our city can enjoy a night out safely – our Bristol Rules campaign, which has been nominated for an international award, and the current drink spiking campaign. This is one way we can improve customer confidence so more people return back to bars, pubs and clubs.

We are also looking specifically at how we can support and protect culture as our city grows, for example through the use of the Agent of Change principle in planning. We are about to launch a new piece of work with city partners to map the social, cultural and economic impact of the night time economy in our city, and look at supplementary planning guidance that will support cultural and music venues. We will be sharing more on this in the coming weeks.



GREEN QUESTION 4

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Lisa Stone, Windmill Hill ward

Subject: Walking in the city

The One City Plan sets out grand ideas regarding travel in our wonderful city of Bristol. It wants an integrated public transport system including a mass transit network across the city, an attractive walking and cycling network, stronger and more frequent rail and bus services, improved traffic management systems, automated vehicles, low-emission technologies and more will all play a part in significantly reducing congestion whilst making connectivity as clean and green as possible.

It goes on to say that for Bristol to meet its carbon neutrality aim, we need to provide sustainable alternatives to private vehicle use. This needs people to change the way travel, moving to more active, healthy, accessible, and sustainable modes of transport. Our work in 2021 will focus on rebuilding confidence in public transport, continuing to encourage behaviour change and promoting the benefits of walking and cycling. We will aim to provide better connectivity across our public transport network and a network aim to develop a comprehensive cycling and pedestrian network to begin to shift away from car based travel.

These are no mean words.

However, what is really going on – pedestrians are continuously marginalised and never prioritised when transport is considered. Local plans often prioritise cars and push cyclists onto footpaths making walking dangerous, especially when car owners get away with pavement parking.

Questions:

- 1. When will the council address the appalling problem of pavement parking which has become a scourge in our city?**
- 2. Will the council prioritise walking by providing public notices in all wards that give citizens the correct information to make knowledgeable decisions to be able to walk to their destination safely?**

REPLY:

Q1: Bristol City Council Parking Services enforce parking restrictions under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and local Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO). Under this Act and TROs the Council can only take enforcement action against vehicles parked on a pavement that are parked in contravention of a parking restriction and that is on land classified as adopted highway and is covered by this Act and TROs. The restrictions have to be marked and signed in accordance with the Traffic Signs Regulation and General Directions 2016. Examples of these are double yellow lines, residents parking bays, bus stops and pavement/footways with appropriate signs.



Where there are no restrictions present, (as mention above), only the Police can take action and issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for “Obstruction”.

There are also sections of land that may look like a footway, but are private land. These areas are the responsibility of the land owner and cannot be enforce by the Council Parking Services.

We are aware that this subject has been looked at by the Government and that a [consultation](#) took place recently, which the council responded to. To date Parking Services is not aware of any outcome or changes to the above-mentioned enforcement policies set out by government.

Q2: We are committed to promoting active travel as a means of travelling around the city.

Major infrastructure projects, such as the redesign of Temple Way have increased and improved accessibility for pedestrians, and we look forward to bringing forward similar public realm improvements at Bedminster Green – we hope we’ll have your support for these initiatives.

Our work to bring forward Liveable Neighbourhoods will also improve active travel facilities in residential areas.

Advice including maps, a journey planner and route information is available on the TravelWest website at www.travelwest.info/walk.

Ultimately, however, it is curious that you are raising this question here when your colleagues so often ask us to prioritise initiatives such as Residents Parking Zones which ask us to dedicate sections of our highways for car drivers rather than pedestrians.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Henry Michallat (Stoke Bishop)

Subject: DELAPIDATED DINGLE CLOSE TENNIS COURTS

1. The Mayor will recall that I have contacted you in the past, and the Council more recently, regarding the unacceptable state of the tennis courts situated on Dingle Close, Sea Mills. I have been told in simple terms that there is 'no money' to allocate towards the upkeep of them.

This is a peculiar situation given the supposed commitment to promoting sport and active lifestyles as part of the 'One City' plan. How is it your Administration can fritter tens-of-millions away on speculative commercial ventures but cannot find a small sum to refurbish an important local community tennis court?

2. Would the Mayor accept an invitation from me to come to these tennis courts and see for himself the sorry state that they are currently in?

REPLY:

Q1: Linking the sports budget to the failures of the previous administration in investing in speculative and risky ventures is meaningless. In the last few years we have renovated many tennis courts in the city and improved the city-wide tennis offer significantly. Many of our parks now have tennis courts that are available at extremely low cost by use of a city-wide app. There are parks currently outside of the city-wide offer that will soon be added to the group that provides tennis players in the city an opportunity to play anywhere in the city.

In addition, we are in conversation with the Lawn Tennis Association about the prospect of commissioning a full technical survey of remaining sites, including Dingle Close to consider further widening of the city offer.

However, you are correct that finances remain a challenge. On that basis, one real opportunity for the community is to look at a Community Asset Transfer. I would suggest that you engage with the Ardagh Community Trust who have worked closely with the council as a community group to bring back dilapidated tennis courts into use on Horfield Common. This may well be an excellent opportunity for the community to take ownership and responsibility for a community asset and will provide the opportunity for funding that isn't available to the council.

Q2: I am well aware of some of difficulties of our tennis courts, which is why we are working with the Lawn Tennis Association.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Andrew Brown – Hengrove & Whitchurch Park

Subject: Corporate Parenting Panel

Since the start of the civic year, there should have been two meetings of the Corporate Parenting Panel. In June, this got cancelled as the Mayor asked the then Cabinet Lead, and therefore Chair of the panel, to sit on a selection panel. In September, when the Mayor was the Cabinet lead for Children's Services, he was unable to attend the panel and a Councillor member had to stand in as chair at very short notice.

Can the Mayor acknowledge the importance of the Panel's work, and confirm that the new Cabinet Lead for Children's Services will attend the panel scheduled to be held on 22 November?

REPLY:

This meeting is in the Cabinet Member's diary.



GREEN QUESTION 5

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Wye, Ashley ward

Subject: Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

I have recently been talking to local residents in St Andrews about parking controls. Our Local MP Thangam Debonnaire has been closely following and is supportive of the issue. Following an answer to a previous question I put to Member Forum, I have explained that the administration's preferred option is for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, something I would support. However, my understanding was that the preferred site of any LTN pilots would be South Bristol.

I was therefore very pleased to get an email from Thangam saying that she had "raised St Andrews at the BCC senior leaders meeting today, and they will follow up with me about whether St Andrews can be part of a pilot of 'liveable neighbourhoods'."

Questions:

1. Is it the case that St Andrews will indeed be part of a liveable neighbourhoods pilot?
2. Can you provide an outline of the criteria that will be used to make the decision as to where LTN or Liveable Neighbourhood pilots will be set up? I think this is a positive move that will provide transparency to the process of choosing the best location for an LTN pilot.

REPLY:

Q1: The only area agreed to be trialled ahead of the Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy is in St George (Bristol East).

Q2: We are developing a Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy that will determine all criteria for Liveable Neighbourhoods. This is programmed to go to public consultation early next year and to cabinet for decision. It will make the case that the Liveable Neighbourhoods is applicable to all areas of the city. The aim of the strategy is to outline the key design principles, engagement methods and prioritisation tools for delivering Liveable Neighbourhoods.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor John Geater (Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston)

Subject: KINGS WESTON IRON BRIDGE

1. With the Iron Bridge at Kings Weston having been closed for 6 years and struck again recently, can you please provide an update on the work the urban design team have been doing - notwithstanding that the Council has now withdrawn its latest planning application (with no communication to the community or local councillors)?
2. Your Deputy has stated that new parking charges at the Blaise Castle and Oldbury Court Estates will generate vital funds to take 'care of natural and heritage assets across the city'. Does this policy shift mean that the application in respect of the historic iron bridge will now be expedited?

REPLY:

Q1: We are working up various concept options for the bridge to be reinstalled in a new elevated raised position and are in further ongoing discussions with Historic England to find a workable solution acceptable to HE. Once this is achieved a new revised planning application would then be again resubmitted and the new consultation would need to recommence.

Once a planning application is in place, we would need to find the budget funding for the works. Given the amount of pressure on key infrastructure projects that are taking place, this bridge does not currently have a funding commitment or timelines against it.

I'm sure you will agree that key infrastructure items such as the Chocolate Path, the Sea Walls, sluice repairs, St Philips Causeway, St Anne's Bridge, Redcliffe Bridge – all of which need urgent repairs – are higher priority.

Q2: The income will directly support the parks operations. Kingsweston Iron Bridge does not form part of the parks infrastructure.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Sarah Classick – Hengrove & Whitchurch Park

Subject: Underpass Flooding

A number of residents in my ward have contacted me about the underpass on Hengrove Roundabout and how blocked drains have led to flooding on the pathways which is obstructing walking and cycling access to and from the area. This was first reported at the beginning of October and currently has not been fixed meaning that for a whole month pedestrians and cyclists have been prevented from using that path. A search of council reports shows that there are currently 1099 open reports of blocked drains/gullies awaiting attention and anecdotally as someone who walks and cycles as a primary method of travel around the city. I am frequently coming across pathways obstructed by water forcing me to either walk in the road or suffer from uncomfortably wet feet for the rest of the day! As a city we should be focusing on improving walking and cycling access and ensuring those traveling around the city are unobstructed in doing so.

Given the amount of wet weather to be expected over the winter months is enough budget being allocated to ensure drains are routinely maintained to avoid build up that leads to flooding and obstruction of pathways?

REPLY:

The subway flooding at Hengrove Roundabout is caused by three separate faults, any of which can cause flooding to this complex of four subways at this roundabout. These four subways are all drained by submerged electrical water pumps which pump the water from the lower level subway gully pipework, into the existing higher level gravity drainage network pipework in the road above. Three area of faults can therefore go wrong at any time all of which will cause flooding in subways.

- The gullies within the subways can be blocked with debris and fallen leaves.
- There can be an electrical fault with the pumps, causing them to stop working.
- There can be a mechanical fault with the pumps, causing them to stop working.

There had already been in place a specialist subway drainage routine programmed maintenance (including reactive flooding visits) drainage clearing and maintenance Contract, however during Covid 19 the Main Contractor undertaking this work decided that they would no longer perform this function and ceased trading. Therefore, in the intervening time the Council has been managing as best we can utilising other available non-specialist Contractors on a case-by-case reactive basis, with very limited available Contractor resources.

The good news is now that we have successfully retendered this Subway Drainage Contract and have now appointed a new specialist Contractor to undertake these routine duties and attend to all subway flooding events, so the frequency of flooding events should now diminish significantly, as the normal service will be reestablished.



Subways do not form the long-term plan for the city, and the 21st century solution is at-grade crossings. These will be reviewed as part of the future transport capital programme.



GREEN QUESTION 6

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Ani Stafford-Townsend, Central ward
Subject: Safe play areas and Women's Commission report

1. Later this evening we will consider a petition brought by Michele Morrice on behalf many Bristolians calling for much needed safe play settings for people aged 16 years and older with additional needs.

Will the Mayor and Cabinet member for Parks commit to including an Adult Play Area as part of the Castle Park redesign?

2. Bristol Women's Commission will be bringing a report this evening regarding the health impacts of events such as the menopause, childbirth and Long Covid on women and those assigned female at birth.

What action will Bristol City Council take on the back of the Women's Commission report?

REPLY:

Q1: As part of the City Centre Development and Delivery Plan a specific piece of work is being carried out to develop and design a future for Castle Park. This work involves an engagement process and a public consultation to help determine what is right for the space and what has support.

Castle Park is a complex site and serves a growing city centre residential community as well as visitors from across the city. We expect many proposals to come forward - some will work well together and be suitable for the space and others may not.

Q2: The Council has embedded an Equality and Inclusion Strategic Leaders Governance Board chaired by the CEO and attended by the Executive Directors, Trade Unions and Staff Led Groups. The Board has been created to ensure Equality and Inclusion is a golden thread that runs through everything we do and to ensure parity and equity in Council decision making. This structure ensures the most Senior Officers have oversight, and accountability.

It is intended that any matters relating to Mayoral Commissions will be discussed and progressed at the Board. This will include reports for information and policy recommendations. In January the Board will meet to agree the Memorandum of Understanding between the council and the Mayoral Commissions. Any gaps identified within the report and feedback from Full Council, will be discussed within this forum.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Lesley Alexander (Frome Vale)

Subject: NEW PARKING CHARGES AT BLAISE ESTATE AND OLDBURY COURT

1. Can the Mayor confirm what percent of the revenue raised through this measure will be spent on the two parks where this levy is being introduced for the first time?
2. Your Deputy Mayor has suggested this funding stream will be used to 'improve' (amongst other things) 'toilet facilities'. Given this concession, please will you look again at re-opening any public conveniences still standing which were built to serve our local parks?

REPLY:

Q1: The Parks Service generates income from a range of sources that is used to maintain and improve parks overall.

Blaise Estate and Oldbury Court Estate are important and high-profile parks and as such they receive regular investment and a higher level of staff resources. For example, the play towers at Blaise Estate were recently refurbished, and in September Cabinet allocated £190K to Oldbury Court for footpath improvements along the River Frome.

Q2: Toilets remain open in parks, along with newly opened public toilet facilities at Eastville Park and St George Park.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Kent – Hengrove & Whitchurch Park

Subject: EHCP's

1. EHCPs

Could the mayor please inform us how many applications for an EHCP remain outstanding as at 31st October 2021? How many are over the 20 week decision time period and how many are now over 40 weeks?

2. What additional actions have been agreed to increase the services capacity to deliver decisions more timely and ensure this backlog is reduced?

REPLY:

Q1: The information you have requested is publicly available on the [Open Data website](#). Data on Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments is published 2 months in arrears in order to allow for appropriate verification and to follow our quality assurance framework and appropriate governance structures.

Therefore the most up to date information we have available is from 31st August 2021 and is as follows:

Date	Total open assessments	Within 20 week timescale	Outside 20 week timescale
31st August 2021	625	305	320

Q2: Educational Psychologist teams, as with all SEND Local Authority services, have been impacted by Covid-19. National and local estimates suggest that there has been a 20% reduction in capacity due to COVID.

A submission has therefore been made to increase the size of the SEND and Educational Psychologist teams in the next round of budget setting.

A range of wider measures have been implemented in order to retain staff, increase capacity and continue to improve the overall quality of the plans. These include:

- Upgraded roles for SEND Assessment caseworkers
- Weekly co-ordination meetings to ensure close monitoring of performance and priorities
- Recruitment of interim plan writers
- Strengthening leadership capacity in the SEND team
- Strengthened processes for Educational Psychologist allocation and increased use of locum and associate EPs where available.



GREEN QUESTION 7

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Ed Plowden, Windmill Hill ward

Subject: Clean Air Zone

If we are to make the CAZ a success we need to ensure walking and cycling routes are high quality and pleasant. Currently the route up Bath Road between Cattle Market Road and the Three Lamps is substandard due to its narrow width, and this is exacerbated by the advertising hoardings which encroach on the space. Removing these would make a significant difference and improve overall amenity for walking and cycling due to the hoardings being overbearing.

Questions:

1. Can the removal of these hoardings be considered to improve this route on road safety and overall quality grounds, potentially using proceeds of the CAZ to compensate for any loss of revenue to the public purse?
2. What process is in place to respond to the potential downsides for residents at the edge of the CAZ in Bristol and will this response be put in place as soon as possible, where an increase in traffic is predicted or high likely, ideally before rather than after it has already happened?

REPLY:

Q1: Removal of the advert panels could be considered as part of improvements to pedestrian and cycle movement, set against the revenue loss which CAZ cannot compensate for.

Q2: The modelling work carried out suggests there will not be significant increases in traffic levels in roads surrounding the CAZ, as compliant and non-compliant vehicles will both adjust their journeys to respond to the changing congestion levels and the restrictions created by the CAZ



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor James Scott (Avonmouth & Lawrence Weston)

Subject: NEW PORTWAY RAIL STOP

1. Can the Mayor provide an update on the status of the promised new platform at the Portway which remains part of the region's strategic rail investment programme?
2. With the capital costs of this project almost certain to rise, is the Mayor as confident of securing the necessary funding for its completion as he appears to be in relation to his planned hybrid underground mass-transit system?

REPLY:

Q1: The Portway Park & Ride Rail Station project is progressing with detailed design now complete. Network Rail is currently preparing to commence construction over the coming weeks. Some initial works to the tracks have commenced and on-site activity to construct the platform and associated facilities are expected to commence in December.

The station is due to open in Spring 2022.

Q2: Funding to complete the project has already been allocated.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT. QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Gary Hopkins – Knowle

Subject: Brislington meadows

This authority under the present Mayor assembled three owners of land on Brislington meadows, improved the access to the site and negotiated a sale to Homes England for the purpose of building houses. Homes England were advanced enough in April this year to submit a planning application but were prevented from doing so by the upcoming election. Despite it being made clear from senior officers of this council that the statement had no legal standing the mayor flanked by 2 local Labour candidates and Kerry Mc Carthy trespassed onto the land and announced there would be no house building there. Homes England were prevented from issuing a correction but of course the announcement was nicely timed to get to the postal voters.

The largest piece of the land (7.43 h) was owned by O and H properties and was sold to Homes England for £11,921.453 plus vat. The value and saleability of their land were enhanced dramatically by the council working on the land assembly and clearing access by demolishing the former housing office and police station.

1) Will the mayor now disclose the cost of the officer time and any outside costs involved in negotiating the land assembly and sale and the cost of demolishing the former community building of Sinnott house.

2) Given the value added to the holding of O and H properties by the council's actions under the mayor's control can we know what fee was paid by O and H properties to this council or any associated organisation or individual.

REPLY

Q1: Our Property team worked on the project between June 2019 and March 2020. The BCC land transactions were dealt with by the internal property department and the contracts were dealt with by the legal team.

The O&H land was purchased by Homes England directly and their property department handled the negotiations.

Sinnott House was demolished by Homes England after they acquired the land.

Q2: O&H Properties did not pay a fee to Bristol City Council.



GREEN QUESTION 8

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Barry Parsons, Easton ward Subject: Planters and street amenities

Residents in my ward of Easton often ask me for support to obtain permission to install and maintain planters on their residential street, at their own expense. In an area with very little green space and no street trees, planters can bring precious green amenities and biodiversity to otherwise grey surroundings, contributing to the ecological emergency strategy and improving the street scene. Such permission has been granted in the past for other streets, but unlike in other local authorities, there is no agreed process for such requests.

Questions:

1. Does the Mayor recognise this as a positive process which ensures greener and calmer streets?
2. Please can the council develop an application process to allow residents and community groups to apply for a licence to install and maintain planters and similar street amenities?

REPLY:

Q1: We support any measures to create greener and calmer streets and have approved many planter schemes across the City in recent years. We are also keen to enable communities to develop and implement local ideas directly.

However, we have to ensure that our statutory duties in regard to health and safety are delivered and need that everyone in the street has a chance to have their say on these ideas.

Q2: In terms of planters, we need to ensure that any installed have a safe design for road users and are safe for residents to maintain and plant them. We have already looked into options to help achieve this, but do not yet have a solution that does not place unrealistic burdens on communities or leave them financially or legally exposed.

As you are aware of plans in other authorities, I would welcome you proposing a clear and detailed plan about how this process would work.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Kevin Quartley (Bishopsworth)

Subject: EXTRA FUNDING TO SUPPORT FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

I am sure the Mayor will welcome the £200m of additional funding for families announced in the Chancellor's budget statement.

1. Has there been any indication how much or what proportional of this will be available to Bristol?

2. Would the Mayor consider using this extra money to pay for or contribute towards establishing another specialist life skills centre for young people and adults with autism and other learning difficulties?

REPLY:

Q1: Information on the allocation available to Bristol under this funding is not yet available.

Q2: Should any funding from this announcement come to Bristol, we will analyse what conditions are attached to this grant and how it can be best used to deliver positive outcomes for residents, including those with special educational needs and disabilities and their families.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jos Clark – Brislington West Subject: Community Buses

At the risk of repeating myself I asked a question at the last full council on the 12th October for a bus service to one our most cut off and deprived areas of Brislington West, the Hungerford estate. Many of the residents are elderly and infirm and find the walk to the buses on the A4 too far, thus leaving them cut off from shops and a social life. I have chased the executive member for a meeting but still not received any concrete information or dates. Can I ask the mayor to press the executive member to arrange a meeting so that we can start making some progress for this community?

REPLY:

I understand that officers in the transport team have now reached out to you to find a date to discuss this matter with you.



GREEN QUESTON 9

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor, Redland Ward Subject: Rewilding Bristol

With the declaration of an Ecological Emergency in the city and the council's own Ecological Emergency Action Plan [EEAP] the city is committed to making sure 1/3 of the land is managed for wildlife.

There have been many valuable schemes and more space for wildlife with the support of officers, and most positively local groups coming forward with proposals. It seems however that each project needs individual support and initiative. I understand that there are many considerations to take into account. There can be concerns about a reduction in traditional services, people worried about scruffy and unsafe areas to walk through, and the need to educate residents about the value of diverse wildlife. It seems that procedures setting out all the considerations would make life easier for everyone concerned. It would also enable debate about the parameters and what can be expected, plus any funding mechanisms.

Questions:

1. Will the council introduce a clear procedure for rewilding parks and open spaces with timescales and routes into the council for such proposals?
2. What is the strategy for supporting community groups and finding funding for the changes needed to achieve the target in the EEAP?

REPLY:

Q1: We have recruited an officer lead to help drive the change to manage our parks and green spaces better for nature and to do this in an intelligent way that engages with communities on what change is appropriate locally. It is absolutely true that changing our approach to maintaining green spaces must take into consideration all the other functions and benefits that residents expect from their local parks.

Please keep updated on the council's [Ecological Emergency web pages](#) where we will be providing more information about how to be involved and make a contribution.

Q2: We will be launching a small grant programme for community groups to support action addressing the climate and ecological emergency. Where we become aware of additional grant schemes we will promote those to community groups in the city.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Jonathan Hucker (Stockwood)

Subject: COUNCIL INVESTMENTS

1. Slough Borough Council has been taken over by ministers after blowing a [£100m black hole in its finances](#) following a string of major property investments. Other local councils are also sitting on large losses after investing in property. Has Bristol City Council acted similarly?
2. I believe Bristol City Council historically adopted a policy of never selling freeholds. Does this policy still exist? Would there be any merit in selling some freeholds to raise finance?

REPLY:

Q1: The Council has a commercial property portfolio of £276m as of 31 March 2021. This is up from £253m on 31 March 2020, with an annual income stream of circa £11m that supports the delivery of Council services. This is a historic commercial property portfolio that is actively managed by an in-house professional property team with a significant amount of local knowledge that is supported by external property advisors when appropriate.

Q2: There is no policy to not sell freeholds. Freeholds are sold to support the financing of the Capital programme. However, sales of property (capital receipts) cannot finance the core revenue budget.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Andrew Varney – Brislington West
Subject: School Streets

Could you tell me what costs are involved in the establishment and operation of school streets?

REPLY:

The main work (and therefore costs) associated with establishing a School Street are monitoring, the legal traffic regulation process, engagement work, material and contractor costs, consultation, and promotional work.

The cost for each school street will vary depending on the size of the scheme being proposed, but on average for a simple scheme the cost would be around £45k per school.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 10

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Chris Windows (Henbury & Brentry)

Subject: STATE OF THE CITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. In your 'State of the City' speech you mention that you believe Bristol will have an underground system to rival that of other (much larger) cities. When do you envisage that the government, whose finances have been so adversely impacted by Covid, will give its agreement to fund the £4billion required?

2. The Mayor's address also mentioned 'free bus tickets' to transport Bristolians into the city centre. Who will be eligible under this scheme, from whom will the money be taken to pay the bus companies and what will be the annual cost?

REPLY:

Q1: I am delighted you saw my speech.

I did not mention "rivalling" any other cities, but it is a fact that Bristol is the only core city without a mass transit system – we are working to put that right.

We're in the process of working through the combined authority and with the Department for Transport to develop our strategic outline business case. Options assessment work has taken place and we are now moving ahead with the next section of the business case, looking to identify a preferred option for each corridor.

Bristol is a net contributor to the treasury, and if we are to build back better as a country, level up and achieve our carbon reduction targets, government must reinvest back in Bristol and our transport infrastructure.

Q2: In my speech, I referenced free bus tickets as part of the mitigation package we have negotiated with government to support the introduction of a Clean Air Zone and a transition to a cleaner fleet.

I am pleased that we have been awarded £5.9 million to be spent on helping people switch to public transport and make more journeys by walking or cycling with free bus tickets, free electric bike loans and cycle training.

We are also exploring how we can give free bus travel to under 25's in the region, supported by WECA.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 10

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Andrew Brown – Hengrove & Whitchurch Park

Subject: Bristol Energy Advert

There is an advert for Bristol Energy on the side of the Council Offices at 100 Temple Street. I am led to believe that this was initially left up as part of the agreement with Together Energy at the time of the sale of the company to them but that it was due to be removed in September. Can the Mayor confirm when this will be removed?

REPLY:

Workplace support are in the process of removing the advertising currently on the Temple Street building. This is expected to be completed by the end of this month.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 11

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Geoff Gollop (Westbury on Trym & Henleaze)

Subject: SMART ROADWAYS

1. Rather than using a sledgehammer to crack a nut by closing Park Street to all Bristol private car users, which could have a very serious financial impact on our city centre, why not provide bus priority by simply removing the parking for cars on Park Street and creating a bus lane? Bus lanes are tried and tested. Closing major roads is not.

2. In similar vein, instead of closing roads would it not make more sense to seek ways in which our roads could be prioritised for public transport at key times, but shared at other 'off-peak' periods? A good example of this is the Whiteladies Road bus lane, which operates as a bus lane (with car use prohibited) during designated hours of high demand, thus obviating congestion issues for buses, but reverts to a 'normal' roadway at other times. This allows buses to be prioritised when appropriate but equally meets the needs of shoppers outside the operation of restricted lane use. The best of both worlds!

REPLY:

Q1: The A37/A4018 project proposes many changes along the route 2 corridor to improve not only reliability and journey times for buses but also conditions for pedestrians and cyclists and the opportunity to increase and upgrade the public realm. Our proposals seek to encourage people to use the bus rather than the private car. Closing Park St to through traffic is one option we will consult on, we welcome views on other options including bus lanes.

Q2: Peak time bus lanes are an option in certain situations. However, more and more, vehicle usage is increasing outside of peak times and causing delays to buses. Therefore peak hour bus lanes are providing less of an overall benefit.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 12

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Sharon Scott (Westbury on Trym & Henleaze)
Subject: GARDEN WASTE COLLECTIONS

1. I welcome the resumption of garden waste collections on 11th October. I also note that neighbouring councils also had to suspend their collections of garden waste. However, in those cases the suspensions were for weeks and not months. Can the Mayor explain this disparity?

REPLY:

I agree with you. The failure in Bristol's waste collections was unacceptable. My senior team is in discussion with Bristol Waste to review their operational management.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 13

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Graham Morris (Stockwood)

Subject: HGV TRAFFIC ON WELLS ROAD

We have recently seen and heard a significant increase in the volume of Heavy Goods Vehicles using the A37 Wells Road.

1. Can the Mayor please confirm if the volumes are monitored by BCC?
2. Do the Council's transport officers understand what is causing this increase (potentially the Bath CAZ) and are there any plans to mitigate?

REPLY:

Q1: While we do monitor overall traffic flows, the flows are not split into different vehicle types so we cannot comment on specifics of HGV volumes along the A37.

Q2: We don't have the data to know if this is accurate or what causes any mitigations could address. I will ask officers to see if we can assess better data, and to review any potential impacts of the Bath Clean Air Zone.

