

Question: CQ09.01&02

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 9 – Sustainable Procurement Policy

Question submitted by: Councillor Heather Mack

I welcome the addition of a number of food specific requirements, however I am concerned about vagueness of one requirement - "Initiatives such as Meat Free Mondays, plant based and culturally specific menus shall be offered".

1. How would this be assessed - if a caterer offers halal or kosher food would this be a tick, even though they don't have a specific environmental initiative?
2. When do we expect measurable progress from the policy being implemented?

Answers

These questions received a verbal reply at the meeting.

Question: PQ11.01&02

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 11 - Leisure Facilities Investment and Procurement

Questions submitted by: Paul Collins

QUESTION 1:

Page 13 of the Draft Leisure Facilities Investment Strategy states that: 'Kingsdown Sports Centre is attracting few new members and is not retaining members in a very competitive environment'.

The Mayor will see from the background information I've supplied (below) that the Council's own data does not support that statement and that all references to the centre attracting few new members and retaining members has been removed from the final strategy document and has not been corrected, or referred to at all, in the Report to this Cabinet meeting.

Could the Mayor please explain where the data to make that statement came from?

I ask that this question be answered by Mayor Marvin Rees, as decision maker for Bristol City Council, and that in addition to a verbal response I be given a written reply.

Background context to the question:

The Council has confirmed in their response to a Freedom of Information request (17 January 2021) that (1) the average monthly membership between April 2018 and January 2019 was 889 and (2) the average monthly membership between April 2019 and January 2019 was 1,173. That data does not show that Kingsdown Sports Centre is not attracting 'few' new members nor that it is not retaining members. The Council has also confirmed that membership numbers for previous years (i.e. before April 2018) is not available. Therefore, the Council has very little data on which to make the statement referred to above.

Further, Table 1 at page 31 of the Draft Leisure Investment Strategy (and now Table 1 of page 27 of the Final Draft Leisure Investment Strategy) shows a 9% increase in attendance at Kingsdown Sports Centre between 2015-20 (the highest increase in attendance of the facilities listed).

QUESTION 2:

The Equalities Impact Assessment recognises that there is a statistically significant number of young people in the ward where Kingsdown is situated (i.e. Cotham ward). According to the Council's data, of the 1,988 responses received on the draft strategy less than 20 (less than 1%) were from under 18-year-olds.

Could the Mayor please confirm what specific efforts were made to consult those young people of school age who either live in Cotham ward or attend

schools in the ward, and what evidence does the council have to support their statement that those young people would either want to, or be able to afford, using the facilities operated by Bristol University?

I ask that this question be answered by Mayor Marvin Rees, as decision maker for Bristol City Council, and that in addition to a verbal response I be given a written reply.

Background context to the question:

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) recognises that there is a statistically significant number of young people in the ward where Kingsdown is situated (i.e. Cotham ward). To mitigate that, the Council states there is alternative provision in the area, including the facilities operated by Bristol University.

The EqIA states that responses were under-represented in terms of population proportion from young people and under 24-year-olds.

The EqIA states that responses were monitored throughout the consultation and because of the low numbers of respondents from younger people, efforts were made by the council's external communications team to reach out to those specific communities.

Section 2.3 of The Consultation and Engagement Report of 21 January 2022 sets out how the consultation was communicated to 'reach as broad a range of audiences as possible to maximise response rate'.

Answers

- 1. Data is provided by the leisure operator on a monthly basis. The leisure operator also provides attendance data and narrative on the performance. It shows us that while memberships increased in 19/20, overall attendances dropped in the same period. Data shows a decline in overall attendances since 17/18.**
- 2. The council included details of the leisure investment consultation in the headteachers' bulletin on 29th September, marked for action, requesting that headteachers publicise the consultation in newsletters to their school communities on the basis that it was of relevance for teachers, parents and students.**

The consultation was targeted at young people through a specifically designed advert on Facebook pages, with the text made simple and to the point to engage 16-35 year olds. Instagram was also used.

Paper copies and posters were made available at Kingsdown Sports Centre, other leisure centres and libraries, encouraging all citizens to respond. Officers also followed up with site visits to ensure these were clearly displayed and accessible.

Officers encouraged the leisure operators to contact their gym members on two occasions making them aware of the consultation and asking them to respond.

A promotional toolkit was sent to partner organisations, including youth, One City partners, voluntary sector and equalities organisations to share via their networks.

The toolkit was also shared with local ward councillors to promote and share details of the consultation within their wards.

Question: PQ11.03&04

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 11 - Leisure Facilities Investment and Procurement

Questions submitted by: Brian Glasson

(1) Has the Mayor, since his election, ever visited Kingsdown Sports Centre?

(2) The Save Kingsdown Sports Centre Steering Group wrote to the Mayor three months ago on the 8th November and then another three times, inviting the mayor to visit the Sports Centre and to engage with the local community directly to discuss what the group or others could do to enable the Mayor to reconsider his decision. Does the mayor believe the timing and content of his response upholds the best principles of a publicly accessible and accountable leadership?

Answers

- 1. No, but I am more than familiar with the site and the provision offered there, and have used it personally.**
- 2. I have instructed officers to meet with your group to discuss potential solutions for Kingsdown Leisure Centre.**

Question: CQ11.01&02

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 11 - Leisure Facilities Investment and Procurement

Questions submitted by: Councillor Gary Hopkins

1. It finally appears that there is likely to be a six month extension to the Parkwood contract at Jubilee pool. This is to allow the asset transfer to complete. What is clearly stated is that if the transfer has not completed by September the pool will close anyway despite the fact that Parkwood are happy to carry on longer and that profits are being made despite the council providing no subsidy.
Given the previous track record on this matter what assurances can the mayor give that he will not seek to impose unfair conditions upon the transfer agreement?
2. In the reports made available for this meeting officers have failed to take any account of the dramatically improved situation at Jubilee since the community got involved with the management. Despite high energy bills there is a trading profit and at the recent 24hr swimathon 207 swimmers swam 14,216 lengths (312,752M 193 Miles) and raised over £27,000. This does not square with the negative comments and the community now demand that the mayor get up to date and recognise the positive progress? Because the council failed to run the pool well does not mean that community progress should be ignored.

Answers

These questions were answered verbally in the meeting.

Question: CQ11.03&04

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 11 - Leisure Facilities Investment and Procurement

Questions submitted by: Councillor Chris Davies

1. Will the Mayor commit to the terms of the Jubilee asset transfer being made available to the all-party working group on Jubilee so that the group can check for fairness and advise?
2. Jubilee pool makes a considerable positive contribution to public health. Now that the council is abandoning the pool will a proportionate amount of the public health grant be given to the community operators?

Answers:

1. The Community Asset Transfer will proceed according to the terms set out in the prospectus and the requirements of community asset transfer.

2. The public health grant is not distributed to leisure operators. This purpose is out with the general criteria for the grant.

Question: CQ11.05&06

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 11 - Leisure Facilities Investment and Procurement

Questions submitted by: Councillor Guy Poultney

1. What is the estimated financial saving Bristol City Council will make by not including Kingsdown Sports Centre in the leisure services procurement package?

2. On Page 237 of the document under 4.1 of the Equalities Impact Assessment it states "Although travel times and costs may increase for some users if alternative management options are not realised, conversations have been undertaken with WECA to ensure that there is sufficient public transport to alternative facilities."

What does the Mayor consider 'sufficient' and what assurances has he received from WECA that this will be delivered?

Answers

These questions received a verbal reply at the meeting.

Question: CQ11.07&08

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 11 - Leisure Facilities Investment and Procurement

Questions submitted by: Councillor Barry Parsons

Public consultation has overwhelmingly rejected this leisure investment strategy, which could result in the loss of both Jubilee Pool and Kingsdown Sports Centre. The public has never been presented with an adequate account of how the decision to stop operating these facilities was made, or what options were considered. We can therefore have no confidence that a proper assessment of the alternatives has been made.

1. Isn't it time to admit that the strategy is flawed and go back to the drawing board?

2. What alternatives were considered to stopping operating Jubilee Pool and Kingsdown Sports Centre?

Answers

1. **No. The consultation on the strategy illustrates that people are interested in their local facilities and shows us very clearly that people value investment in their own communities. For example, for the option to invest in Easton Leisure Centre, respondents from neighbouring wards to Easton all placed a high level of importance in this option. Similar local responses can be seen on the other two investment options.**

2. **The decision taken at Cabinet is about the tender process for the contracts we will look to agree for investment in our leisure centre portfolio.**

For Jubilee Pool officers have considered options which include do nothing/no change (re-procure), investment (re-procure), consider a Community Asset Transfer or closure. We have been clear with the community that we will consider a Community Asset Transfer for Jubilee Pool and this process is well underway. Arrangements have been put in place to extend the contract with the current operator to enable the conclusion of this process.

For Kingsdown Sports Centre officers have considered options including do nothing/no change (re-procure), finding an alternative operator under a separate lease arrangement or closure. This decision taken at cabinet allows us to take forward negotiations for find other potential operators for Kingsdown.

Question: CQ12.01

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 12 - Community Resilience Fund

Question submitted by: Councillor Tim Rippington

Unlike other areas in Bristol, there's almost no community buildings in Brislington. Can this funding be used towards investing in new community facilities, or can it only be used by existing organisations to carry out and enhance their work?

Answer

The intention of the fund is to build the resilience of community and voluntary sector organisations. The spending needs to be on capital expenses and on priorities which are identified by communities- the organisations, residents, and councillors within those communities.

This would include existing and new community spaces being developed by community and voluntary organisations that meet the baseline standards.

Also, in exceptional circumstances, if there are no existing community buildings within the eligible areas, buildings which serve those areas but don't sit within them would be eligible.

Whether the CRF is the right opportunity for a new facility in Brislington is likely to depend on whether there is a strong group of people already working towards this.

Advice and support is available through Voscur and BCC's Community Development Team.

Question: CQ12.02&03

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 12 - Community Resilience Fund

Question submitted by: Councillor Ani Stafford Townsend

We welcome community engagement in how funds are spent within our communities.

- 1. Bristol's Voluntary Sector organisations have already engaged in reports and workshops, how will these recommendations ensure an incentive for communities to engage with this additional process without there being a guarantee of meaningful funds at the end of it and value for money?**

Answer

We will pay a grant to VCSE organisations to research the priorities, facilitate the deliberative process and contribute to action learning. The process does depend on the willingness of VCSE groups to participate which is their choice. Any funding process requires an upfront investment. The benefits of this approach include

- a) no application forms
- b) this will help to build a picture of investment needed in community infrastructure
- c) There will be capacity and expertise available early in the process to help groups scope and cost works which will be valuable to organisations even if ultimately, they do not receive a capital grant.

- 2. How will the spending be ultimately decided, councillors across the city, ward councillors, officers or someone else?**

Answer

These questions received a verbal reply at the meeting.

Question: CQ12.04

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 12 - Community Resilience Fund

Question submitted by: Councillor Christine Townsend

We welcome the opportunity to deliver additional funding into the 30% most deprived areas of Bristol.

In our ward of Southville, we have two areas that qualify for the funding, and they cover a part of our ward that is undergoing tremendous change and disruption as thousands of homes are being built or planned.

What we are still unclear about, is who will be making the final decision regarding how funding is allocated. These concerns have also been raised with us by existing community groups.

Question:

Will it be all councillors within the relevant Area Committee regardless of whether they have areas eligible for the funding or just those ward councillors within eligible areas?

Answer:

This question received a verbal response at the meeting.

Question: PQ14.01&02

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 14 - Project 1000: Affordable Housing Delivery Plan 2022-2025

Questions submitted by: Clive Stevens

It's so exciting that we have a homes mission in Bristol, not quite landing a person on the moon, but our equivalent. Building 1000 (or more) affordable homes a year is a mission. It will have huge payoffs which I will describe in my statement (to follow). This is the opportunity for questions. Whilst I guess there will be many about the climate and ecological emergencies, I'll take on the more humdrum topics of risk assessment and budgeting approach.

Q1. The management of Bristol's Land. Regarding a key risk within R01 (Capital cost increases). Appendix 1 states that Bristol Council has enough land for just 4,600 affordable homes. Project 1000 looks to build over 20,000 affordable homes in 20 years (so 15,400 on non-Council land). Additionally estimates put the non-affordable homes targets at a further 20,000 to 40,000 over the same time period. What can and will be done to ensure that Council and private land is prioritised for the most needy?

Q2. Budgets. A recent book written by Mariana Mazzucato, one of the world's leading, good economists, describes the need for different budgeting approaches when there is a mission to be achieved. Called outcome-based budgeting, it involves, I'm told, the whole mission having a budget line which gathers the costs and benefits from different departments. How will Finance Department implement mission-based budgeting for Project 1000?

Answers

These questions received a verbal reply at the meeting.

Question: CQ14.01

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 14 - Project 1000: Affordable Housing Delivery Plan 2022-2025

Question submitted by: Councillor Tim Rippington

As sites like the Western Slopes have had their housing plans withdrawn due to ecological concerns, the numbers for housing will need to be made up elsewhere, because, as we all know, despite the administration's good work, Bristol still faces a housing crisis – something that comes up regularly in my conversations with residents. Brislington East has industrial land by the river that is currently designated as flood risk.

If flood defences are secured, does the administration have an estimate of how much brownfield land might be freed up for affordable housing?

Answer

Through work to inform the Spatial Development Strategy and Local Plan Review Bristol City Council has identified a number of proposed Areas of Growth and Regeneration (AGRs). These areas are strategically important to the redevelopment of the City.

Two of the AGRs comprise areas significantly affected by flood risk: St Philip's Marsh and Western Harbour. Parts of the City Centre and wider Temple Quarter are also affected, and delivery will be compromised without the identification and delivery of strategic flood defence infrastructure in all locations.

There is significant housing capacity across these locations with capacity for more than 13,000 new homes with 10,000 new units at Temple Quarter and St Philips Marsh alone.

The specific delivery of affordable housing secured by the release of these sites will be in accordance with our planning policy frameworks and influenced by any Council land ownership.

Question: CQ14.02&03

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 14 - Project 1000: Affordable Housing Delivery Plan 2022-2025

Question submitted by: Councillor Tony Dyer

Preamble:

The rising cost of market rate housing, either to purchase or to rent (with the latter often bearing a direct relation to the former), has a massive impact on the disposable income of thousands of Bristol residents as they find themselves having to spend an increasing proportion of their income to keep a roof over their heads. As the previous item has shown, for an increasing number of households, this has often led to homelessness.

Clearly, if the phrase “levelling up” is to have any meaning beyond a media lite soundbite then reducing housing costs has to be a major element of any strategy to reduce inequality, and I also include in those housing costs the increasing cost of heating energy wasteful homes. It is therefore good news to see these proposals come forward and I look forward to working with the cabinet member for housing delivery and homes to bring these plans to fruition, and in cooperation with ward councillors and local residents across the city.

Question 1:

Given the fanfare regarding the announcement of the Government’s “Levelling Up” strategy, has the Cabinet Member and/or housing officers, been able to identify any concrete funding proposals within the flurry of announcements made by the Government since last Wednesday that would enable more genuinely affordable, energy efficient homes to be built in Bristol, over and above the proposals going to Bristol’s budget meeting next week?

Preamble:

Sadly the term “affordable housing” has lost considerable credibility – often this has been due to the misuse of the term to describe homes that are barely affordable and offered at a rate only a relatively small percentage below market levels. For many members of the public (and some councillors) there is a concern that “affordable housing” more often or not means homes at 80% of market rate, far beyond the reach, for example, of most of the 16,000 tenants and families on the housing register.

Question 2:

Can the cabinet member clarify that all homes built for, or acquired by, the Council’s Housing Revenue Account will be homes for rent at social rent levels, and that the minimum expectation is for these new homes to have an energy efficiency rating of A?

The cabinet member may choose to make a similar statement regarding the makeup of affordable housing delivered by the Council's arms-length housing company, Goram Homes.

Answers

These questions received a verbal reply at the meeting.

Question: CQ16.01&02

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 16 - Stoke Park Estate Restoration

Question submitted by: Councillor Marley Bennett

- 1) Can the funding be used for improving active travel?
- 2) Are officers looking at the possibility of extending cycle paths through the park to join with existing infrastructure in my ward, such as the Frome Cycleway?

Answers

- 1) We are currently applying for a first phase of money that will provide funding to enable the council to develop its plans for the project into greater detail. The project does not include a car park and as such the council is committed to supporting green and active travel options. The council will use this initial grant to add detail to these proposals before applying for a larger grant to deliver the capital works.
- 2) This project is focusing on investment within the boundary of Stoke Park itself. Therefore, any improvements to cycleways more widely would need to be considered outside of this project. The project will be looking to substantially improve the quality of the footpath and Public Rights Of Way network.
We've worked with the community and users of the park on this project to improve access, while balancing their concerns about ecology and safety. We'll continue to look to improve cycling infrastructure in a sensitive way.

Question: PQ19.01&02

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 19 - COP26 Glasgow Outcomes

Question submitted by: David Redgewell

Question 1

What progress is being made:

- with the West of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council on the 27 new buses for the clean air zone in Bristol city centre, new and hybrid buses for routes into the city centre from North Somerset Towns of Weston super mare, Clevedon, Portishead Nailsea and Pill and south Bristol through Bower Ashton, Ashton Gate Hotwell Road.
- on Electrification of the Network rail western route railway line from Chippenham Bath spa Bristol Temple meads and Patchway and Bristol Parkway, electrification of metro west railway Network and hydrogen fuel trains and an electric mass transit system for Bristol and Bath city region?
- As at cop 26, the first group and stagecoach group had Electrification of the bus fleet in progress with the Scottish government and Glasgow city council, is the council on track with euro 6 Engines with stagecoach west for the Bristol clean air zone. Decarbonisation of the city region public transport fleet should be a top priority for mayor Rees and metro mayor Dan Norris for the city region what budget is being put aside for Decarbonisation of the city region public transport fleet.

Question 2

What progress is being made in supporting the city region bus network with the Department for Transport Covid-19 Bus Operators Recovery Grant and what discussions have taken place between the city mayor and the metro mayor Dan Norris with the regions MPs and Baroness Vere of Norbiton, the bus minister, through the core cities sub region Transport Board and the M10 as public transport is an essential resource of the city region in climate change (as pointed out in Glasgow) in cities across the world?

Answers

These questions received a verbal reply at the meeting.

Question: CQ19.01&02

Cabinet – 8 February 2022

Re: Agenda item 19 - COP26 Glasgow Outcomes

Question submitted by: Cllr Martin Fodor

I'm glad the council is engaged with other cities and financial institutions to mobilise climate finance. Large scale solutions need to be created – we know what needs doing and this takes resources and powers.

But smaller scale action is equally important for many reasons. Incremental and localised projects are essential and we can't wait to tap existing funds for projects waiting to be delivered. In September 2020 I first proposed* an effective way to mobilise local savings from across the city and beyond - a method that's worked well in other authorities as a way to tap existing savings and fund vital projects of around £1m on a regular basis: Community Municipal Investments. Bristol is a city with large scale ethical, social and environmental private investment resources. The CMI approach has been endorsed by the Local Government Association and CMIs are now gathering savers' funds and being invested in projects in several other places. This supports popular engagement, carbon saving, and most importantly real progress on the ground while we wait to see if City Leap can get going. We should not miss out on this relatively low risk council-endorsed private finance that complements all the other solutions.

Q 1. What study has been carried out to assess the potential for doing this in Bristol?

Q 2. When will Bristol start to mobilise funds from its own communities to tackle climate breakdown?

* motion 9 - Mobilise community investments to tackle climate change.

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/g8368/Public%20reports%20pack%2008th-Sep-2020%2018.00%20Full%20Council.pdf?T=10>

Answers

These questions received a verbal reply at the meeting.