

Member Forum

15th March 2022

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: Ukrainian Refugees

1. Please can the Mayor provide details on the work the Council is doing to support Ukraine, including whether we are prepared to take in unaccompanied young asylum seekers?
2. What actions does the Government need to take to allow cities to accept more refugees, and what representations has the Mayor made to the Government regarding this, given that we are a City of Sanctuary?

REPLY:

Q1.

We recognise the crisis particularly affects Bristol residents with Ukrainian family members, and so we have promoted mental and emotional support for our affected staff.

We are ready to support Ukrainian refugees who come to Bristol through resettlement routes, and will issue a plea to landlords if a Ukrainian resettlement programme is announced. We have delivered our resettlement pledge in relation to families from Afghanistan, and will pledge to resettle Ukrainian families in addition to our existing commitments.

If refugees come to the UK as asylum seekers and are dispersed to Bristol, the Resettlement Team and Bristol refugee charities will work to assist them and will need everyone's support in the way of volunteering, funds and aid donations when and if they arrive. Residents who can offer accommodation in their homes can apply under the government's Homes for Ukraine scheme. We'd particularly welcome members of Bristol's Ukrainian and Polish people to get in touch with us to help us understand the needs of people arriving in the UK, and to help us coordinate a welcome for new arrivals to Bristol.

Bristol meets our duties as a City of Sanctuary for unaccompanied asylum seeking children and is an active player in the national transfer scheme, caring for additional children who spontaneously arrive in our city. This group of vulnerable children automatically become children in care in Bristol and we care



for them as their Corporate Parents as we would for any other child in care in the city. Currently unaccompanied children make up 11% of our children in care population.

In any situation, it's never just about what Bristol City Council are doing – it's about what the city can do.

I want to thank Bristol residents, like you, who have helped organise collections and other support for Ukrainians. In addition to these practical interventions, we have also expressed solidarity through lighting our City Hall in the colours of the Ukrainian flag, and coming together as a city at the peace vigil and rally in recent weeks.

Q2.

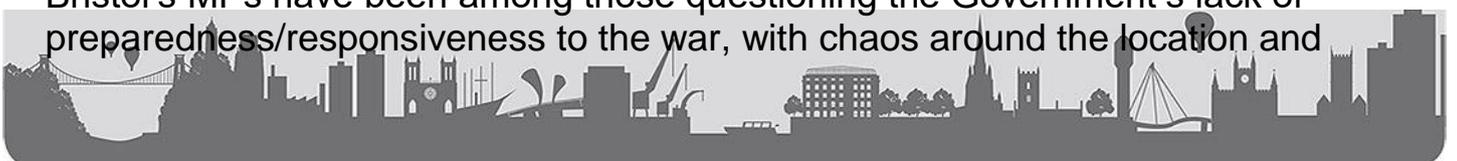
As set out in the public joint statement of solidarity with Ukraine from the Global Parliament of Mayors, and remarks at Cabinet two weeks ago, we stand ready to support Ukrainian families arriving through resettlement programmes – but the Government must give us the funds to do this effectively.

As we have seen through previous resettlement schemes we have participated in, we need funding to support with housing in particular, as we anticipate there may be overcrowding issues as family members join Ukrainian relatives and partners already in Bristol. We need funding for schools to welcome additional children, funding to provide extra English classes and funds for our health partners. I am pleased the government have confirmed additional funding for local authorities to help us ensure new residents have access to public services and to welcome them to our city.

We have asked the Department for Housing, Levelling Up, and Communities (DHLUC), who are leading the national approach to supporting Ukrainian refugees, whether families arriving on the new family visa will have to satisfy the Habitual Residence Test. If they do need to satisfy this test, this means their Bristol families will need to support them financially for 4 months. This was waived for Afghan refugees and we have asked for this to be waived for Ukrainian refugees and people on family visas.

We have also sought clarity as to the rights to public services for Ukrainian family members who have applied for family visas, and are working closely with South West Councils, who act as a conduit on migration issues between local authorities and Government departments on refugee and migration issues.

Bristol's MPs have been among those questioning the Government's lack of preparedness/responsiveness to the war, with chaos around the location and



availability of pop-up Visa Application Centres evident in recent weeks despite the urgency of the situation – making the process for those who can apply fraught with delay and further uncertainty.



GREEN QUESTION 1

Question to the Mayor from Councillor Barry Parsons **Subject: Pedestrian Route Closures**

The Bristol to Bath Railway Path is currently closed at the junction with Russell Town Avenue while Sustrans carry out improvement works as part of the OnePath project. These improvements are very welcome, and should make the path a safer and more welcoming environment for walking, wheeling and cycling.

However, the closure has made the zebra crossing on Russell Town Avenue unusable. It is a key crossing for hundreds of children going to City Academy and Easton Community Children's Centre, and without it there is no safe walking route between Easton and Redfield at any point between Lawrence Hill roundabout and Devon Road, a kilometre away. A pedestrian crossing on Easton Road agreed under a previous Community Infrastructure Levy funding round has also not been delivered, meaning there is no safe crossing for children travelling along Brixton Road towards Felix Road Adventure Playground and Bannerman Road Community Academy.

After I and others contacted Sustrans and the council, they responded swiftly to create a safe walking route. But the fact that these problems weren't anticipated shows that we have a long way to go before we can say we prioritise safe walking, wheeling and cycling effectively.

When roads are closed, contractors are required to provide alternative driving routes. However, unlike other local authorities such as Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol has no such requirement to provide alternatives when walking routes such as footways are closed, often at short notice. The result is that pedestrians often have to navigate busy roads to get around building work without effective signage, protection or kerb ramps for wheelchairs.

Questions:

1. Can we improve our permissions process to ensure that contractors are required to provide safe alternative routes when footways and other walking routes are closed?
2. Will the administration commit the necessary resource to ensure that the previously agreed crossing on Easton Road is delivered?



REPLY:

Q1

For pedestrians, the lack of provision has now been resolved through the installation of portable (temporary) traffic lights on the diversion route to provide a wider footway.

We know why this situation initially arose. The Bristol to Bath Railway Path is classed as a park and therefore did not go through normal highway processes. This should have been flagged up, however, and a discussion will be held with Parks regarding any future works on the Railway Path that may involve a diversion onto the highway.

Strict guidance is applied to all roadworks and streetworks in Bristol as per [‘Safety at Streetworks and Roadworks, A Code of Practice’](#).

Footways are not allowed to be closed in Bristol unless there is a suitable and safe alternative. This is applied rigidly across the city and any work site found not to be compliant is required to install appropriate measures.

Regular meetings are held with Utility Companies where temporary traffic management, amongst other things, are discussed.

Q2

Funding for the crossing was requested by the Area Committee, but transport officers advised at the time that the crossing was not technically viable.

The area committee’s request also included improved crossing points with continuous footways and build outs, and public realm improvements with trees, planting and benches. These will be taken forward, and we continue to be in contact with the community group over these plans.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Richard Eddy (Bishopsworth)

Subject: CLOSED PUBLIC TOILET BLOCK RE-USE

1. At the December 2020 Members' Forum, I quizzed the Mayor (again) about the disposal strategy and timescale he envisaged for the public lavatory facilities his Administration had closed- specifically asking about the closed facilities at the A38 Bridgwater Road, Bedminster Down. He stated to me subsequently that the Bridgwater Road toilets were among seven which were being transferred into a Community Asset Scheme. What has happened with this project?
2. Neither of the two local consortia of people who expressed a business offer for acquiring or leasing the Bridgwater Road toilets have heard anything from Bristol City Council. Is this the Labour Mayor's notion of listening to and working with local communities?

REPLY:

Q1

We have held off transferring any toilet blocks (including the facility at Bridgwater Road), as we are considering alternative uses for these sites. If these ideas are taken forward, then planning applications will come forward in the usual way for members to comment.

Q2

Our initial proposal was to group a number of sites together to lease them out to community enterprises. However, given the amount of investment required to develop these sites for alternative uses, and the availability of staff resources, it was not possible to progress this proposal further.

Nonetheless, as I have set out, we are actively pursuing alternative uses for these sites, including using them to support council-run services.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 1

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

Subject: Sikh Memorial Site and Langton Road Improvements

1. I recently had the honour of meeting with the Bristol Punjabi Forum International, a multi-faith organisation that have contributed so much to the city in terms of cultural understanding and community cohesion. A great recent success has been the new Sikh Soldiers' Memorial in Castle Park, commemorating Bristol Sikhs who died in the two world wars.

Something the Forum have been calling for in recent years is a suitable site in the city where the ashes of loved ones can be scattered in the river. The site would simply need a small shelter where mourners could gather on rainy days. Is this something the Mayor could support, and if yes, could he task officers to investigate suitable sites?

2. Way back in January, 2019 Cllr Clark and I led a successful campaign and secured funding for pedestrian improvements on Langton Road by St. Anne's Infants School in Brislington West. We were promised these improvements would be within the year, but over three years later and nothing has materialised. Understandably, many jobs were put on hold due to the pandemic and council officers did consult on new plans, which led to a further delay. Late last summer, council officers told us that new proposals were almost ready to go out for consultation but we have heard nothing since then. For the sake of local residents, can we please have an update with time lines?

REPLY:

Q1

Bristol City Council Bereavement services aims to meet the needs of its local communities. However, the service does not have direct access to facilities which can offer the scatter of ashes along a river or open water.



The Bereavement service are liaising with the Bristol Punjabi Forum and other faith communities who scatter into open water and have made contact with the council's harbour master to see if the harbour can accommodate the request by identifying a suitable location.

Q2

This scheme has been paused as a result of capacity issues in the team, and the need to prioritise other projects. There is an urgent review of the team's resourcing in progress.



KNOWLE COMMUNITY PARTY QUESTION 1

Questions to the Mayor from Councillor Davies

Subject : No 2 bus route consultation

1 Can the Mayor give an assurance that highways officers will come back and consult with local Councillors with revised suggestions before repeating the process of publishing cycle route plans that caused so much local upset.

2 Can the Mayor confirm that the main cycle route will be routed through the new Broadwalk (Redcatch quarter) development that will be heavily cycle orientated, rather than through Redcatch Park near to the very popular playground for young children.

REPLY:

Q1

This consultation is for a project which seeks to prioritise bus use. Decisions taken about the scheme will be in line with that priority. We are reviewing the outcome of the consultation and will publish an Outline Business Case in due course and you will have every opportunity to feed into that process.

Q2

The comments on the cycle route proposals have been taken on board and consideration will be given to other routes away from the park. We will be exploring other options for cycle provision including opportunities arising from the Redcatch Quarter development.



LABOUR QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Pearce, St George Central Ward

Subject: Committee System / the Arena

1. Considering that Labour has faced criticism for incorporating cross-party amendments into the budget, from the same people calling for more cross-party working and even rainbow cabinets, how does the Mayor expect a budget to be passed in a committee system, when some councillors won't look beyond their own party lines?
2. Moving the Arena to Filton has saved Council Tax payers well over £150m. Full Council has recently passed our 22/23 capital programme – what can the money saved from the arena instead be spent on?

REPLY:

Q1

I would hope that all parties would welcome the fact that we have – for the sixth year in a row – passed a balanced budget for Bristol.

Sadly, despite the fact that we took on a number of constructive amendments from across the chamber – there's rather more evidence of a "winner takes all" attitude than an appreciation for cross-party compromise in some parties' responses to the budget.

Nonetheless, we will continue to deliver for Bristol with a budget for homes, inclusion and decarbonisation, and we'll continue to take the urgent action we need to on those agendas. It's for those advocating an alternative model to come forward with how they'll match that pace of delivery.

Q2

As you set out, having the private sector take responsibility for the delivery of the arena has enabled us to avoid a financial and reputational catastrophe, and not to create space in our capital budget, it has also enabled the development of



infrastructure to support both the arena and the significant housing growth on Bristol's North Fringe through the Cribbs-Patchwood New Neighbourhood.

In terms of our capital programme in the budget, our priorities are clear:

- Delivering on our ambitious carbon and ecological goals (which all parties agree is an urgent priority)
- Moving us close to get the modern flood defences we need to unlock land for 13,000 homes.
- Creates new school provision (particularly for children with SEND).
- Invests in our leisure facilities.
- Supports Bristol's cultural offer including renovation of Bristol Beacon.
- Allows us to address maintenance and repairs of key city infrastructure that has been ignored for decades.



GREEN QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Townsend

Subject: Residents Parking Schemes

1. Now the budget has included the extension of residents parking schemes please can the administration confirm what the process will be for deciding which new schemes are delivered and when it will be shared with the Council, so ward councillors can take this forward with their residents?
2. In some parts of Bristol officers have already done much of the work needed for new RPZs, including for the Bedminster West scheme which forms part of our ward and which this administration had promised to consult on in last May's election campaign. This should reduce the costs associated with introducing a new scheme. Will RPS projects be prioritised for areas where council officers have already worked on plans and councillors have already found support from residents?

REPLY:

Q1

The budget has allocated funding for the potential development of one new Residents' Parking Scheme. We need to be satisfied that there is a need for a RPZ, and that any proposed scheme has overwhelming support from residents across the whole area.

Q2

Time and resource is dedicated towards delivering on the pledges we set out in our winning manifesto. This includes encouraging modal shift and bringing forward sustainable and reliable public transport options through our bus deal – working towards a sustainable mass transit system which will give people a viable alternative to the private car.

The Bedminster scheme has not demonstrated overwhelming support for a RPS, but has shown strong support for a Match Day Parking Scheme which we are taking forward.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 2

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

Subject: STANDING WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE UKRAINE

There have been various statements, symbolic gestures (such as the illumination of City Hall/The Council House in the colours of the Ukrainian flag) and humanitarian appeals made to demonstrate our city's solidarity with the people of the Ukraine.

1. As part of this on-going process of support does the Mayor agree with me that there could be a future role for a new 'twinning' association to be formed to create closer links between Bristol and a comparative city in that currently besieged country?

If so, will the Mayor agree to action the steps proposed in the Conservative motion tabled on this issue

REPLY:

Shows of solidarity – like this suggestion, and the lightings up of City Hall – are powerful moments of symbolism. Through the Global Parliament of Mayors, we have already sent a joint statement of solidarity to people living across Ukraine, including in Kyiv.

Going forward we need to stay focused on practical support for Ukrainians. We have seen that across the city, with people arranging collections and donations – thanks to Cllr Brenda Massey for her efforts alongside many others.

We will send out information on the formal programmes from the UK government as they arise for how citizens and businesses can support Ukraine including how to financially support Ukrainian families. The Government needs to step up its efforts and allow more Ukrainians to find safety here.

I have said that publicly a number of times, as a City of Sanctuary, stands ready to support in the resettlement of refugees. We will use opportunities to send clear messages to government on the resources needed to ensure we have the right resources in place.



One of the 4 strands of our international strategy and programme is related to the links of our international diaspora. We are already engaging with the representatives from the Eastern European diaspora and we will ensure that Ukrainian representatives are connected in going forward. The focus of this is on practical ways cities can work together as opposed to more general twinning arrangements.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 2

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

Subject: Libraries

1. In the past year, how many days have the Whitchurch Library been closed due to the unavailability of staff – please provide this as a number and as a percentage of the overall number of days that the library would normally have been open.
2. Over the same period, which other libraries have been closed due to staff availability issues, and how many total days have been lost in those libraries – again, please provide this as a number of days and as a percentage of the number of days the affected libraries should have been open.

REPLY:

Q1

As in many workplaces, the Library Service has been experiencing an unprecedented level of staff sickness since March 2020 and we have kept the public service at the forefront of scheduling staff at all times, as we are aware of the impact on residents.

Whitchurch Library has been closed 9 full days due to staff unavailability since 1 April 2021. This is 4.23% of the days that the library was planned to be open between 1 April and 10 March.

Q2

Other libraries that have been closed for at least a day due to staff availability issues are as follows:

Days of unplanned closure (1/4/21 – 10/3/22)	Unplanned closure days as a percentage of total days that were planned to be open
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		(1/4/21- 10/3/22)
Bishopsworth	1	0.56%
Clifton	3	1.33%
Filwood	1	0.68%
Horfield	1	0.60%
Knowle	1	0.44%
Lockleaze	7	5.51%
Sea Mills	3	1.11%
Shirehampton	1	0.49%
Southmead	2	1.41%
Stockwood	6	2.14%
Westbury	1	0.47%



KNOWLE COMMUNITY PARTY QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Hopkins

Subject: traffic enforcement.

1 Government are about to devolve some traffic enforcement powers to local authorities which were previously a burden on the police.

Can we get a list of the powers that BCC will apply to be transferred and a business plan for this service.

2 We clearly want effective and fair enforcement so can the mayor please explain what steps, given the fact that Bristol has one of the highest rates for successful appeals through the independent tribunal against parking tickets and the unfair treatment of many at Bristol bridge, are being taken to ensure that in future standards are improved.

Q1

We are in the early stages of considering this matter and have expressed an interest to the Department for Transport in taking on Traffic Management Act 2004, Part 6 powers. However, it is currently too early to say what moving traffic offences specifically (and in which locations across the city) will be included in the formal application to DfT.

For information, the powers will not come into force until June 2022 (at the very earliest) because the legislation is still to be passed through Parliament. In addition, part of the application process will include a public consultation exercise, where we share with people in Bristol the specific moving traffic offences that we intend to enforce, and whereabouts in the city. It is also recommended that the sites that we choose for enforcement are audited to make sure that the Traffic Regulation Orders and associated signing are correct.

Because of these issues, and the fact that the powers are new, advice from DfT is to choose a small number of sites to begin with where we know that there are existing compliance issues. Sites will be identified in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport before we carry out public consultation.

In view of all of the above, timescales are likely to be 12-18 months before we successfully apply for these devolved powers.



Q2

Bristol City Council will enforce any moving traffic contravention in a fair, reason and proportionate way, as it currently does for any contraventions issued under the Traffic Management Act 2004 for parking.

Contrary to your assertion, Bristol is not one of the highest ranking authorities for successful appeals. Furthermore, nobody has been treated unfairly at Bristol Bridge. The bus gate has been fully signposted in accordance with government guidance, and we have given amnesties for first-time receivers of enforcement notices at Bristol Bridge.

We are awaiting statutory guidance from the Secretary of State for Transport as to how new moving contraventions enforcement is to take place. Initial indications are that the processes will be as currently used to enforce parking and bus lane contraventions under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and Transport Act 2000. In addition to this, new moving traffic enforcement will likely have a period of 6 months “soft enforcement” where warning notices are to be issued in place of any penalty.



LABOUR QUESTION 3

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

Subject: Domestic Abuse Support Services / Castle Park Energy Centre

Domestic Abuse Support Services

1. Can the mayor give an update on the commissioning of domestic abuse and sexual violence support services?

Castle Park Energy Centre

2. Can the Mayor provide details on the winning design for the Goram Homes development on Castle Park Energy Centre?

REPLY:

Q1

Thank you for asking about this issue – these services are crucial for the support we offer those experiencing domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The bid & clarification process (tender publication) opened on Friday 4th March for two lots of the domestic abuse support services. The 2 lots currently out to tender are:

1. Accommodation Based Domestic Abuse Support
2. Specialist Domestic Abuse Services

The closing date for the tender is 3rd May. The notification of the decision will be 1st June and the contract award will be the 1st July. The new service start date will be 1st October.

We are working towards aligning timelines and joint commissioning of therapeutic sexual violence services.

Q2

The winner of the design competition was announced this morning. The winning design was from Groupwork and the Bristol-located McGregor Coxall.



The design incorporates almost 200 units (with 40% affordable) and will comprise of two buildings either side of a new public space.

The design includes new community facilities, a café, community toilets and a community kitchen. The design has been created with bio-diversity in mind, with area to grow up to 350kg of seasonal fruit and veg.

Goram Homes will now appoint a team to RIBA stage 2, and prepare a pre-application advice submission for the scheme, before procuring a delivery partner. There will be opportunities to engage the local community through formal engagement and consultation to gain further feedback on the scheme.



GREEN QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Denyer

Subject: Climate Emergency Action

1. Is Bristol City Council working with other councils on joint decarbonisation projects where we stand to benefit from economies of scale via joint purchasing etc?

The '*Lewes model*' does this for house retrofitting. By teaming up as a group of 7 councils they have been quoted a 30-40% reduction in cost of heat pumps from provider, for example. See <https://greenworld.org.uk/article/lewes-model-explained>. Much more detail available on request.

I know we already do some things with neighbouring councils in a formal way via WECA, e.g. transport. But what about mass house retrofitting and any other large scale carbon reduction rollouts that are the responsibility for individual councils but where we could choose to team up?

2 *Preamble*: Because of the delay in adopting a new Bristol Local Plan, all developments being granted permission now are only held to the old target of 20% carbon reduction, despite our citywide commitment to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. This is very frustrating given that all of the buildings being constructed now will still be standing in 2030 and probably in 2100. However, planning officers have told me that there is little they can do until the new Local Plan is adopted.

Question: Would Cabinet consider bringing in a voluntary '*Developers' Climate Change Declaration*' while we wait for new Local Plan to be adopted?

Sheffield has done this, and I understand that although voluntary it is doing some good. See: <https://sheffieldgreenparty.org.uk/2021/12/15/developers-and-climate-change/>

Or would this take just as long to instigate as the Local Plan as a whole?

REPLY:

Q1

This kind of collaborative working across local authorities is one of the reasons we joined WECA. Councils all over the country are taking this approach.



Operationally we are collaborating with other local authorities to achieve economies of scale through several projects, including funding from the Sustainable Warmth bid to deliver energy retrofit to low-income, low-efficiency homes. This paper came to Cabinet this month.

More strategically we are collaborating with UK Core Cities and London Councils in the UK Climate Change Investment Commission which seeks to bring efficiencies and scale to investment in climate action.

City Leap is of course aiming to achieve economies of scale through our collaboration with the private sector. We have also formed the Social Housing Decarbonisation Forum for Bristol to improve collaboration and joint procurement may emerge from this if appropriate.

All of this is because we know it takes more than political will alone to decarbonise Bristol, or any of the world's cities.

Q2

Current local plan policy BCS14 requires developers to do **more** than meeting the 20% reduction in residual emissions, for example:

- Showing that energy demand has been reduced through improvements in energy efficiency
- Providing heating and hot water systems that comply with the heat hierarchy
- Achieving a 20% reduction in residual emissions (i.e. emissions calculated after energy efficiency measures).

We therefore do not consider that a voluntary commitment would be better than this formal planning requirement. We wish to focus our resources on working with the industry to be able to deliver it.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 3

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

Subject: Clean Air Zone Commencement & Mitigation Grants

1. As the Mayor will be aware, there has been some speculation as to when the Bristol's CAZ is to come into operation. Late summer/September seems to be the reported favoured option, but residents would benefit from as much notice as possible to prepare for this event. Is the Mayor now in a position to advise when the CAZ scheme will commence?
2. Can the Mayor confirm how many enquiries have been received from individuals and businesses interested in applying for a grant or loan from the £42m financial support fund?

REPLY:

Q1

We are expecting the Clean Air Zone to start in late Summer/September. We are working with DEFRA's Joint Air Quality Unit to agree a start date, so we are not completely in control over the timetable. Our Clean Air Zone will be a local implementation of a national programme.

Q2

We have had significant interest in our Clean Air Zone support scheme. As of 9 March, we've received 2852 expressions of interest for financial support from individuals and businesses.



LIBERAL DEMOCRAT QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tim Kent - Hengrove and Whitchurch Park

Subject: NHS Dentists

1. How many NHS dentists do we have working in Bristol and how many patients, on average, does each dentist see?
2. How many people are without an NHS dentist here in Bristol and can this figure also be broken down more geographically? Are any NHS dentists in Bristol currently taking new NHS patients?

REPLY:

Q1.

We do not have access to this data within the City Council. NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) commissions primary care dentistry. However, I recognise the problem here and note with concern the difficulties many residents have in accessing NHS dental treatment.

Q2.

We do not have access to data on the number of people without an NHS dentist in Bristol, or the NHS dentists that are currently taking new NHS patients. This data is held by NHS England. If you would like Public Health to obtain this information you are welcome to contact the Director who could make enquiries with NHS partners as appropriate.



LABOUR QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Breckels, St George Troopers Hill Ward

Subject: Roadworks

1. The Highways Department changed the contractor they use for roadworks. This has left the previous contractor with no incentive to complete the works already assigned to them. One of the affected works is the safety improvements on the crossing at the start of Conham Road. Constituents lobbied me for years about this, a cost effective scheme was drawn up in 2020 and the consultation on it ended in January 2021.

It's unacceptable for my constituents to be made to wait indefinitely over a change of contractors. What action is being taken to ensure these essential works are completed in a timely manner, either by the previous contractors or the contractors that replaced them?

REPLY:

The final detailed design was approved on the 17th September 2021 and the work ordered on the 28th September 2021.

These works were ordered under the then-current term contract which expired on the 30th September 2021 as this was considered the quickest option given the mobilisation period for the new contractor under the new term contract.

It has proven difficult to get the previous contractor to commit to delivery despite numerous reassurances and expected start dates. Officers continue to press for a start date but will consider rescinding the order and reissuing it to the new term contractor if they cannot provide these.

This would add further delays and costs as the new contractor assesses the package of work for themselves and inserts this into their current programme. However we recognise this could be the best option to obtain a reliable start date.





GREEN QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Mack

Subject: Community investment bonds, planning portal

1: Council Planning Portal

Why is there a prolonged period of downtime for this service between the 3rd of March and the 22nd of March and what arrangements are being made for members of the public to access the information about applications being considered by the DCA committee on 16th March? Please provide a technical answer, that IT professionals can critique.

2: Community investment bonds

Greens have been pushing for green community investment bonds for many years. Camden Council have just announced they will raise funds through this method. I understand provision has recently been made by the S151 officer so Bristol could offer these types of bonds. What is the timescale for this to happen?

REPLY:

Q1

The system is being upgraded. This has caused some unavoidable disruption.

For DC A Committee on 16th March, Planning Online was available 7.00 to 18.00 on Friday 11th March and then from 7.00 on Monday 14th March until 18.00 on Thursday 17th March, as previously notified. The Committee report and supporting documents will have been available on the BCC website throughout the downtime.

Additional measures have been put in place to mitigate the downtime including extending consultation periods on planning applications impacted and advising the public that they can still email their comments when the system is down.

Q2



Camden Council are at a similar stage to Bristol City Council as they have agreed as part of their recent budget setting process to explore Community Municipal Investment (CMI) opportunities.

The Council has made provision in its Capital Strategy (approved by Council on 7 December 2021), Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy (approved by Council 2 March 2022) to explore CMIs for zero carbon initiatives.

It should also be noted the capital programme for 2022/23 included the creation of a De-carbonisation Fund of £19m, of which £2m is for 2022/23. This fund could be used in conjunction with, and/or to manage the risks associated with, any Community Municipal Investments.

Following approval at Council officers have discussed opportunities with the Council's treasury management advisers and undertaken an initial market assessment of potential organisations offering CMIs. During the course of the spring and summer 2022 council officers will further explore and assess CMI options with the recently established Strategic Climate and Ecological Emergency Board.

City Funds has allocated £5m to leverage greater investments in environmental initiatives for the city, and is working with WECA to see if we can utilise their fund to grow additional investment.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 4

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

Subject: Regulatory Road Markings

Last Summer, Coombe Lane in my ward was surface dressed. Coombe Lane is a main thoroughfare, which connects to Canford Lane and subsequently to the A4018. Prior to being surface dressed the middle of the road was delineated by white lines, which are important for the safety of road users, given how busy this road is. Sometime after Coombe Lane was resurfaced, only a few white lines were repainted - acceptable possibly for quiet estate roads, but not for Coombe Lane. This was drawn to the attention of the Road Safety and Engineering team, who confirmed by e mail on 9th November 2021 that ALL the white lines would be repainted. Despite numerous chasers Highways have failed to do this.

1. Can the Mayor please ascertain when the white lines are going to be repainted - hopefully before any road accidents occur?

Notices went up some time ago by the shops at the bottom of Stoke Hill and Druid Hill in my ward advising that there would be a maximum 1 hour of parking permitted. This will help the shops by ensuring parking here is for their customers and not commuters. Unfortunately, the yellow line required to make the parking regulations enforceable has not been painted.

2. Please can the Mayor advise when the yellow line will be painted?

REPLY:

Q1

The reinstatement of the lining has been programmed to be installed in the next 2 weeks, dependant on fine weather which has been limited in recent weeks.

Q2

These parking restrictions are part of the Seamills Area Parking Review. The contractor has stated that all the parking restrictions have been installed along with the appropriate signing across the whole scheme, including this area.



A traffic engineer will be visiting the site to confirm this and will liaise with the contractor to correct any errors or omissions they identify.



GREEN QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Fodor

Subject: e-scooter trial

In summer 2020 the government accelerated the Future Mobility initiative and brought forward the Voi E-scooter trial in the west of England. At the time I asked a series of questions in July 2020 and more in September. This helped clarify various uncertainties but also raised some challenges about a trial. One of the purposes was to replace bus travel options during the pandemic.

Since autumn 2020 the legal use of Voi e-scooters has been underway with trial extensions, most recently until November 2022. The west of England uptake has been the highest in the country and 3.4m trips were reported in Bristol alone recently.

There are many positives about the trial and it's clearly transformed mobility for many people, for both commuting, work and leisure. It's also created many safety and obstruction issues including through its *laissez faire* approach to parking on pavements and some limitations of the technology, as well as abuse of the rules.

I recognise many positives and also receive many complaints. But extending the trial with so little access to monitoring and no consultation or debate is frustrating. Last we heard more people switched from walking and cycling to e-scooters than from cars. This can't be good for city health or the top transport priority: active travel. The widespread uptake of licensed, regulated, insured and tracked hire scooters has also made widespread use of illegal, uninsured, unregulated and unmonitored e-scooters ever more prevalent.

Question 1: Will the Mayor share all the assessment and monitoring of the trial to date with members of the council and other stakeholders, both statutory and community, as a matter of urgency?

Question 2: Can the mayor explain how different upsides and downsides of the trial will be weighed up as part of a city conversation with stakeholders and councillors before any further commitment is made to support permanent use of hire or private e-scooters?

REPLY:



We fully support the trial of scooters in the city, having initially called for the trial in Bristol.

WECA are managing the e-scooter trial, including the monitoring and evaluation and reporting to the Department for Transport.

They are working with the operator to produce a 12 month report which should be finalised soon.

WECA have recently appointed a partner to independently evaluate the impacts of the scooter trial. The detailed framework for the evaluation will be by finalised and shared by WECA in due course.

Q2

At the moment we don't know what will happen after the trial ends in November.

The government may decide to legalise e-scooters, but we do not know if that will come with any powers to regulate schemes, which authority any powers would be granted to, or even if authorities will get a say in whether to have rental schemes or not.

There will be a wider conversation with Members and stakeholders on any future scheme, but the specific scope of any consultation will depend on the legislative framework and regulations that are being proposed.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 5

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

Subject: CAR CLUBS

1. What plans are in place to introduce car clubs to the suburban parts of Bristol? This would be a clear way of helping families with the cost of living whilst supporting residents to find alternatives to full car ownership.

REPLY:

The four Car Club providers who operate in Bristol all run commercial operations and do not have contracts with Bristol City Council.

They operate where they can run a commercially viable service, typically in denser residential areas. Suburban locations can be more challenging for them. Council officers are in discussion with operators about expanding into new areas, but it is up to the operators where they choose to locate vehicles.

Some locations may be able to get a Car Club through the Planning process where there are larger residential developments (there is usually a requirement for developers to provide a Car Club vehicle for 3 years included in Planning Conditions), but these are less likely to be in suburban areas.

If enough local residents request a Car Club then the operators may consider introducing one. Residents could also set up community Car Clubs, or join one of the existing peer to peer car sharing services if there are no conventional Car Club vehicles in an area.



GREEN QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Wilcox

Subject: Planning portal and Number 2 bus route

Q1: Planning Portal

Question: How much does Bristol City Council pay each year for the Planning Portal Service available here:

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/planning-and-building-regulations/look-at-and-track-planning-applications>

Q2: Number two bus route

The council proceeded with the consultation on this bus route when they knew that components of the scheme were not compliant with LTN1/20 and would therefore would not receive a grant from either Active Travel England or Westminster.

Question: How much did the consultation on the Number 2 bus route (A37/A4018) cost?

REPLY:

Q1

The annual cost for Idox software to BCC is £104,000 per annum to cover all service areas, which includes the programmes that support the Planning Portal service.

Q2

The cost of the engagement programme was £51,348.88.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 6

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

Subject: ALLOTMENTS UPDATE

1. Can the Mayor please advise me of the total number of allotment plots in the city, the number of vacancies and the total for those currently on the waiting list?

REPLY:

The current allotment plot count is 4500. The current number of vacancies is 453 (11th March 2022). There are 6968 individuals on the allotment waiting list (11th March 2022).



GREEN QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Hathway

Subject: Energy Rebate

In February, the government released guidance on the council tax rebate scheme for support for energy bills. Bristol has been allocated £961,200 discretionary funding, transferred to the authority this month, for households that do not automatically qualify for the rebate. Support for energy bills - the council tax rebate 2022-23: billing authority guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

In my ward we have elderly residents who are in a block of flats we believe to be wrongly banded as Council Tax Band E, which means they are ineligible for the rebate. Many are living alone, on a fixed state pension, and are very concerned about the unfolding cost of living crisis and not receiving support for fuel bills. It is down to the Council to determine how to distribute this funding from government.

Questions:

- 1) Please can you advise the criteria for applying to this discretionary fund?
- 2) Please can you advise when and how this fund will be made available to residents?

REPLY:

Q1

The Council has recently received guidance from government on the criteria and process to be applied in determining the local discretionary scheme and make use of the funding to provide payments of up to £150 to other households who are energy bill payers but not covered by the initial Council Tax Rebate Scheme which could include households living in property valued in bands E to H that are on income related benefits or those where the energy bill payers are not liable for council tax.

Q2

There is insufficient funding to provide support to all households in Bands E-H and we are currently drawing up the criteria for this policy, subject to receipt of responses from the government department to our clarification questions.



Once the policy is agreed, the policy and our claims process will be made available on our website and published for Cabinet decision. We recognise the financial difficulties faced by the rise in energy bills and cost of living generally and will work to distribute this fund as soon as possible.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 7

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

Subject: DISABLED ADULT PLAY PARKS

At a recent Full Council (9th November 2021) there was cross-party support for a campaign from residents for the establishment of a dedicated play area in the city that catered for disabled adults. The annual budget meeting approved additional infrastructure spending for Parks & Green Spaces.

I believe provision of such specialist facilities are a worthwhile cause and represents an obvious candidate for some of this extra spending.

1. How can we as a Council take this idea forward and work with officers to identify suitable sites in the North/South of the City?
2. On a larger issue, in what ways can Councillors influence how this money can be spent and will Area Committees be given a role to play in this process?

REPLY:

Q1

If a project is deemed eligible or a separate source of funding is found, we would be keen to work with relevant stakeholders and experts on the right location and the right design.

Any allocation of Strategic CIL needs to be approved by Cabinet and needs to be for a project that delivers Strategic Infrastructure to support the growth of the City. So if a scheme can be identified for disabled adult play that delivers on the budget amendment and is within the boundaries of Strategic CIL uses, it can be eligible.

However it is not clear that a publicly accessible park is the ideal location for a disabled adult play park, and therefore whether the source of funds identified in the budget are applicable.

Q2

Should projects proposed by communities to members through the devolved CIL allocation process be considered to meet the criteria for Strategic CIL; these



could be highlighted for consideration by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health, Communities and Bristol One City ahead of Area Committees making recommendations.



GREEN QUESTION 8

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Fitzjohn

Subject: Ashton Vale Buses & Supporting Artists in Bristol

1. Ashton Vale buses

Preamble: Ashton Vale has an increasing population with many new housing developments coming. They are poorly served with community facilities, the nearest surgery being 1.6 miles away, and the nearest supermarket one mile away. There is one local shop.

On Feb 1 they lost the No 24a shuttle bus, replaced by the No 23 which doesn't run before 7am leaving shift workers having a long walk to West St, or after 7pm or at weekend leaving residents without means to leave Ashton Vale without a long walk to Winter stoke Road to catch the No 24.

We know loneliness does huge psychological harm, it reduces self-esteem, and according to research has a similar health impact to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Question: Will you use your influence to try to protect this essential service for a community that is facing multiple developments in the coming years and is geographically cut off from the city?

2. Supporting artists in Bristol

Artist groups in the city are looking for new studio spaces.

Artist's studios have been an important resource in most of our major cities, including the East End of London, relocating to run down areas and bringing them to life often leading the way in adding value increasing the significance of old properties.

Good examples of this include Spike Island, which now has an international reputation, and Jamaica Street. Both have led the way in heading up the regeneration of parts of Bristol.

Question: Is there a way the Council can help artists to find buildings that they can either rent or arrange an asset transfer and buy in the way that was done on Spike Island?



REPLY:

Q1

Some of the new developments in Ashton Vale do have good access to the m2 metrobus service. The introduction of service 23 reinstated a service for Ashton Vale to the City Centre, replacing the 24a shuttle bus which only provided a link to services on Winterstoke Road.

The 24 bus provides a 15 minute frequency from Winterstoke Road for earlier and later journeys. The previous operation of the 24 did include a longer route via the A370 and South Bristol link road but this was only off peak and only served the Langley Crescent stop in Ashton Vale. This makes Ashton Vale far from the worst-served area for bus services.

More generally, we need to recognise that the bus industry across the country is challenged by the slow return of previous demand and changing travel patterns due to the pandemic. Future changes to the network are likely and we will continue to work with the West of England Combined Authority and commercial bus operators to shape these changes positively.

Q2

The arts development team work directly with the property team to find assets where appropriate for cultural use. We recommend that artists contact the team directly with requests and we can work with them.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 8

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

Subject: Bloomberg Harvard Bristol Collaboration Track

Whilst many Members will welcome this collaboration with a prestigious American University, there are aspects about this citywide food waste project which merit some further clarification.

1. Who and how was this subject matter chosen?
2. Can the Mayor confirm whether any procurement process was followed?

REPLY:

Q1

A shortlist of potential topics for the Collaboration Track was prepared by the Policy, Strategy and Partnerships team. These were discussed and refined with Harvard representatives and with relevant officer and political leads, with a final decision made by me in line with the programme requirements.

Q2

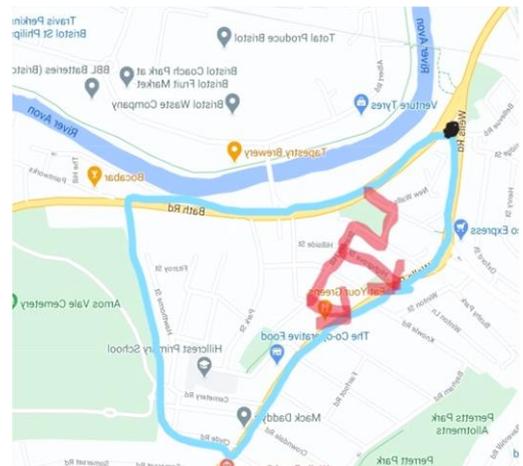
There has not been any procurement process related to the Collaboration Track because no goods or services have been procured.



GREEN QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Plowden Subject: Rat-Runs and the Highway Code

- 1) The Highway Code recently changed to make the roads safer for people walking, wheeling and cycling. Given that the Council's fleet and grey fleet drive hundreds of thousand miles within Bristol every year, what arrangements are being made to update the driving for work policy and to provide training for people who drive as part of their work?
- 2) *Preamble:* Residents of the area between the Wells Rd and Bath Rd in my ward have for many years suffered from rat-running traffic. A recent count during the evening peak counted approx. 350 cars per hour at each end of these residential streets, so were clearly using the streets to rat run rather than for local access. 9% (n=18 during 35 minute period) did not appear at each end so were assumed to be local.



This is the equivalent to one car every 6 seconds using residential streets as a rat run.

There are three major transport developments in the local area, each of which has the ability to make this worse:

- The Clean Air zone starts immediately on the edge of this area and residents are understandably worried that more dirty vehicles will be tempted to use their streets. I have previously raised the CAZ displacement issue and not had a clear answer as to what mitigation will be put in place to protect the health of local people on the immediate boundary of the Zone (I support the CAZ in principle).
- The A4 Bristol to Bath corridor improvements; WECA officers have promised to see if they can look at this issue, but it is likely to fall out of the scope of the scheme.
- The A37 Bus Number 2 route proposes to signalise the junction at the Three Lamps to facilitate vehicles exiting Temple Gate. This will lead to more cars queuing along the Bath Rd (inbound), which can only mean that yet more motorists will be encouraged to speed through the local area. Officers have said dealing with the issue is not in scope of the scheme.



There have been many calls in the past to do something about this and we are seeing one of the affected streets being proposed to be made one way (which will make the problem still worse for the other road). However the Council's response has included calling these streets a "pressure valve" to relieve congestion and all of the major projects seem to consider that this is not in scope so the situation is falling between them.

Having observed the traffic, the junction at Angers Rd with the Bath Rd is so wide that it not only encourages people to use the rat run, but also to do so at entirely unsuitable speeds. Massively tightening this junction would be a solution that might be of some help, but is almost certainly far too expensive for local CIL.



Question:

Will the Mayor commit sufficient resource, whether from one of the above schemes or standalone, to look at a systemic and satisfactory solution to this problem, including but not limited to improving the junction with the Bath Rd?

REPLY:

Q1

The Fleet Services team and Health & Safety team are currently reviewing the relevant policies to reflect the changes to the Highway Code. This includes Driving Your Own Vehicle for Work (grey fleet arrangements) policy and Transport User Arrangement policy.

In terms of staff training, our e-learning module 'Safer Driving for Work' is being updated to reflect the changes to the Highway Code, and our H&S advisors will include the changes in their health and safety training sessions.

Q2



A proposed design to tighten up the junction of Angers Road with the A4 which also banned the left turn into Angers Road was prepared in 2015 but was not deliverable within the S106 funding available. Other options have also been developed but these were not progressed as they did not offer any tangible benefits.

However, we have been looking at other interventions to reduce speeds and deter ret-running traffic through this area. The recent consultation on the proposal for making Bathwell Road one-way to help reduce through traffic showed this has good support locally. Officers will meet with local Councillors to review the results.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 9

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

Subject: Timetable For The Iron Bridge Repairs

The whole community are naturally delighted that this long-standing issue is finally being addressed. They are also eager to know more of the details regarding the restoration project.

1. Can the Mayor please outline the expected timetable for delivery of these repairs and the anticipated milestones?

REPLY:

We are looking at timetabling a listed planning consent application. Dependent on a Planning Decision, the decision to proceed with the full Project (and the resulting timetable) will be ultimately determined by resources available to deliver the project.



GREEN QUESTION 10

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Stone

Subject: Russian Finance

Can the Mayor and the administration confirm if Bristol City Council has any involvement with Russian financiers and businesses in any capacity? If so please provide a list.

REPLY:

Members should be mindful of the distinction between Putin's Russia and Russian citizens, many of whom disagree with the invasion of Ukraine and have incurred high costs for unprecedented protests against the regime's latest war. We should stand with those anti-war protestors, just as we stand with the people of Ukraine.

Our words, here and elsewhere, have consequences; and so I was concerned to see your party leadership parroting the Kremlin by describing the Donetsk and Luhansk regions as 'two breakaway republics' – rather than part of Ukraine – ahead of Putin's invasion.

We welcome sanctions by the international community against the Russian state and oligarchs. As part of our response to the invasion and its build-up, the Council has been reviewing our contracts and treasury activities.

The Council has not made any foreign currency payments in the last few years to Russian domiciled bank accounts nor any direct Treasury investments in Russian entities.

We currently have no contracts awarded to any organisations based in Russia. We are currently in the process of asking our contractors if there are any indirect links with Russian companies and markets, to assess the fullness of contractors' supply chains.

