

Member Forum

13 September 2016

Statements from councillors



Procedural note:

STATEMENTS FROM COUNCILLORS:

- A maximum of 1 minute shall be allowed for the presentation of each statement (subject to overall time constraints).
- There shall be no debate on the statements and the Lord Mayor shall refer them to the Mayor for consideration.
- Statements will be dealt with in the order of receipt (subject to time).



STATEMENTS

The following member statements have been submitted – full details are attached:

CS 01 - Cllr Fabian Breckels – East Bristol pool

CS 02 - Cllr Nicola Beech – East Bristol pool

CS 03 - Cllr Steve Pearce – East Bristol pool

CS 04 - Cllr Brenda Massey – Grammar schools



STATEMENT CS 01

Keeping our Election Promises – the East Bristol Pool

At the last budget over £4 million was allocated for the replacement East Bristol Swimming Pool. This was after two years of the Bristol Labour Group successfully keeping the money in the annual budget despite attempts to delete the funds and drop the idea. Of course we must not forget the campaigning for a replacement for Speedwell Pool that was championed for years by our late colleague Cllr Ron Stone. The plan was always to build it at the BBA school in Speedwell.

We are all aware that the city has been left with a £29 million black hole in our finances by the last regime so keeping promises like the East Bristol Pool requires some more imaginative thinking.

I am aware that at least one company can provide a 25 meter demountable, above ground swimming pool that is fully Equalities Act compliant, with changing rooms, plant and lockers for under £1 million. This completely avoids the excavation costs involved with a traditional pool. Maybe other companies can provide similar for a similar price, maybe not.

It is now entirely possible to fulfil our long standing promise to provide East Bristol with a replacement pool for a fraction of the cost we have allocated. There is a procurement process, of course, but other councils have already taken advantage of the possibility to build pools at an affordable cost. We really can make stuff happen if we have the courage to look at new ideas and options that are out there.

If we allow the financial mess the last regime left us to stop us keeping our promises, they win.

That can't happen. Affordable solutions for the East Bristol pool really do exist, let's explore them and get our swimming pool – which I hope will be called the Ron Stone Memorial Pool – built.

Cllr Fabian Breckels
St George Troopers Hill

STATEMENT CS 02

In February this year I rejoiced as Councillors amended this years budget and progressed plans for a replacement pool in East Bristol into tier one funding.

Councillors from across the St George Wards and Eastville are working together to find new and innovative ways to deliver this much needed public amenity in our community noting the current financial challenges the city faces. £4.5 Million was allocated towards the replacement pool but we believe this can be delivered for between £1-3million at the BBA school in Speedwell.

East Bristol has for 11 years now been without a pool. A generation of children have been excluded from this provision and the over subscription of Easton Pool means waiting lists make swimming impossible for many kids.

I was concerned in July to hear that an alternative plan to upgrade Easton Pool was being considered. I cannot see how Easton Pool can be expanded - it is a hugely congested area and thanks to really poor public transport connections and parking is simply inaccessible to many of the people who are intended to benefit from this investment into East Bristol.

Our East Bristol councillors fought for years to get to this stage and it is now our duty to do everything we can to deliver. We can overcome our financial challenges by looking for innovative market solutions not simply placing the pool project in the "too hard to deliver" box.

Nicola Beech
Cllr for St George Central

STATEMENT CS 03

My late colleague Ron Stone fought long and hard for a swimming pool in East Bristol, specifically in Speedwell. It is now time to deliver for the communities of East Bristol. And I know we can deliver, affordably and in good time.

Swimming Pool News tells us:

"UK drowning statistics show not enough people can swim
The latest figures available show that in 2010 there were 420 water-related deaths from accidents or natural causes across the UK, according to the National Water Safety Forum. Children and young people aged 0-19 accounted for 57 of the deaths, of whom 19 were under 10 years old."

ASA Call to Action

"Children at risk as report finds more than half cannot swim – A.S.A. 23 May 2012.
According to a report released by swimming's governing body, the ASA and Kellogg's entitled 'Learning the Lesson : The Future of School Swimming', more than 1.1 million primary school children are reported to be unable to be safe in and around water.

3,501 primary schools were surveyed on how many of their children have attained Key Stage 2 swimming requirements. It found 51% of children aged 7 to 11 cannot swim the length of a typical swimming pool (25 metres) unaided.

The average state school pupil spends just 8 hours and 15 minutes a year in swimming lessons at school, which is far less than the 22 hours study time the Department for Education recommends in the current National Curriculum.

With drowning amongst the leading cause of accidental death of children and young people in England (according to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents), experts are worried these numbers could increase in future if the current issues with school swimming programmes are not addressed.

In 2011, there were 407 deaths from drowning reported across all age groups, of which 47 involved children and young people under the age of 19 years old."

We can and must do better.

Cllr Steve Pearce

STATEMENT CS 04

Unfortunately I cannot be with you today, but I would like to submit this statement. Given the recent announcements about the potential of bringing back Grammar Schools, can I please urge the Mayor and the Cabinet to do what they can to prevent the imposition of such schools on Bristol - a city with a proud tradition of opposing selective education.

Reducing inequality in education is one of our key aims as a Council, and the potential return to selective education, with all the accompanying issues for the children who are unsuccessful in achieving a place at a grammar school, including the psychological impact of being judged as second class, is something that I would hate to see return to this City.

Can I ask that as a Council we oppose this proposition, and continue to seek equality of provision across the entire City?

Cllr Brenda Massey