

Member Forum

8 November 2022

Questions and replies



Procedural note:

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. A supplementary question must arise out of the original question or answer given.
- Via the group leaders / whips, questions have been submitted in priority order.
- At the forum, the asking of supplementary questions will be rotated between the political groups that have submitted questions, taken in priority order.



LABOUR QUESTION 1

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

Subject: Refugees

- 1) Last year, the Labour Group put forward a motion about the 'Support Don't Deport' campaign, which stops the council and its commissioned partners from making referrals to the Home Office under immigration rules – which could see someone deported solely on the grounds of being homeless. **Can the Mayor provide and update on that motion, and confirm whether its conditions are now in place?**
- 2) Recent news of conditions at the migrant processing plants in Kent are incredibly disturbing. While the Government may make the decision of accepting refugees, it comes down to local government to house and support them. **Have any of the last three Home Secretaries made an effort to reach out to Bristol, or other councils, to see how we can coordinate efforts – to ensure we do our best to house vulnerable people rather than keep them in squalid conditions in processing facilities in Kent?**

REPLY:

1. The motion was very welcome and in line with our Labour values. The council and provider organisations, commissioned to provide support and advice to rough sleepers in Bristol, have signed up to Homeless Link's *Support Don't Deport* campaign, continuing to refuse to refer people under on the rules introduced by the government.

It is clear that the policy will drive people who are already vulnerable - including victims of modern slavery - away from the support they need, hampering work to end rough sleeping.

2. The attitude of the Conservative government to these migrants has been shameful.

The Home Office is in the process of implementing its South West Dispersal Plan. Bristol City Council attended a Chief Executives' meeting with Home Office and South West Councils on 22nd September 2022 to discuss this. Although a number of local authorities present, including us, expressed concerns, the current plan is that Bristol's dispersed accommodation (DA) for Asylum Seekers will increase from 415 to 732 bedspaces (for adults and children) by December 2023.

Dispersed accommodation is usually sourced by the Home Office's contractors, Clearsprings Ready Homes, from private owners and takes the form of suitable flats and houses.

The Home Office's intentions are to reduce stay in immigration centres and to reduce the use of hotel accommodation (currently provided to c. 40,000 Asylum Seekers) in favour of increasing the amount of the UK's dispersed accommodation.



GREEN QUESTION 1

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor David Wilcox

Subject: 'State of the City' commitments

1) In the 'State of the City' address last month, you talked about committing a further £15 million to take the Overground and Underground Mass Transit Project to the next stage.

Will you share the strategic outline business case, along with the technical reports relating to geology and the carbon impacts of building tunnels, so that citizens and council members can give it the due diligence of scrutiny before further sums of public money are committed to taking this idea further?

2) In last year's 'state of the city' address, you talked about closing Park Street to private cars. Will you provide an update on that scheme, please?

REPLY:

1. It's a WECA project. Those documents will be released as part of the upcoming consultation on this key transport intervention.
2. It is important to be accurate – in last year's State of the City the Mayor proposed a consultation on the possibility of closing Park Street to private cars.

The consultation has taken place as part of a wider review of the A4018 and bus prioritisation. This is being reviewed and is due to progress to cabinet with a final decision.

The Park Street element of the consultation received a mixed response including from traders and wasn't seen by the bus companies as a major priority. Some sections of the A4018 are more fundamental to bus prioritisation.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 1

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

Subject: A4018 'IMPROVEMENTS'

Cabinet recently approved funding to deliver a series of 'improvements' along a section of the A4018. The measures include:

- Introducing a new 30mph speed limit at Crow Lane to cover the whole of Passage Road
- A new signalised pedestrian crossing north of Dragonswell Road across to Brentry Lane and upgrading of the one south of Crow Lane
- A segregated cycle route, north - and south - bound, between Crow Lane and Charlton Road (up the Brentry Hill)
- Inbound and outbound bus lanes, operative all day, from Crow Lane to Charlton Road (these are the ones that proved controversial as most of us argued that they were not needed as this wasn't where the bus got stuck - although the lanes are shorter than first proposed they are still going in)
- New bus stops between Crow Lane and Charlton Road
- Installation of a pedestrian crossing on Passage Road close to Westbury-on-Trym Primary School

Most of these are supported by residents and communities however it is the fourth point that is proving particularly problematic.

We have made reservations regarding the proposed new bus lanes previously. Our concerns are as follows:

- This isn't actually a stretch of road that buses get delayed on - feel free to ask the local bus users who on the whole agree
- It is a 24-hour bus lane without 24-hour buses and only the no. 1 uses that stretch of road
- The stretch of road suffers from natural pinch points that will cause real mayhem if this plan is proceeded

As you travel north towards Cribbs Causeway the traffic crests Brentry Hill and moves from one lane to two lane. This allows a large amount of traffic to flow. Without this increased capacity the traffic will back up and over the hill - delaying the north bound buses. We have seen this previously when the bus lane was first installed by the White Tree roundabout. It was too long and caused massive congestion. We in North Bristol remember this and I can assure you this isn't nimbyism - we understand how the traffic flows in our part of the city as we live with it all the time.

By contrast, if you are travelling south into the city you arrive at the Crow Lane roundabout on two lanes of traffic. If you then move on and suddenly move to one lane (because the bus lane has been installed) then you will create congestion and cause the traffic to back up onto the roundabout as it tries to filter from two lanes to one lane. Again, this is predictable.

My questions to the Mayor are:-



1. In light of the serious probability of causing gridlock along this stretch of road, will he look again at the length of bus lanes on A4018 and preferably abandoning this part of the scheme?
2. If the Mayor presses ahead, what justification would he give to those that live in the north of the city that know the problems this scheme will cause?

REPLY:

1. I appreciate your concerns. Can I suggest we discuss them further and take a fresh look at the proposals.
2. If we don't take action to improve public transport on the A4018 we know congestion will get worse because of the CPNN development.



LABOUR QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Massey, Southmead Ward

Subject: 'Navy Cut Road'

Cllr Eddy recently said the decision to review a street being named after a cigarette brand that 'more reflects the disproportionate and tyrannical status of the Bristol Mayor [...] than any invented and bogus argument about the health properties of cigarette-smoking'

Does the Mayor think the well-established fact that smoking tobacco causes cancer, among other illnesses, is 'invented' or 'bogus'?

Is the administration yet to make a decision on whether to allow the street to be named after a cigarette brand?

REPLY:

1. No. I respect decades of medical science. There is no serious body of evidence to contradict what is widely accepted as scientific fact.
2. The administration has made a decision that we will not name streets after tobacco brands. We'll announce the name of this road in due course.



GREEN QUESTION 2

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Ed Plowden

Subject: HGVs and yellow lines

Preamble

Along with other councillors along the A37 we are picking up anecdotal evidence of increased use of HGVs on the busy Wells Rd. Residents in Totterdown were sufficiently concerned to conduct two counts of 44 ton lorries in both directions, and then seeing how many of these trucks headed out of Bristol on the M32. This gives a figure of 32 '44 ton' lorries per hour going through a residential area. This is in addition to the smaller lorries, the buses (when they run) and other traffic. Recent shorter periods of observation at different times of the day suggest the figures are not an over-estimation.

Almost 90% destined for the M32 and driving straight out of Bristol meaning that these lorries are using a residential road as a cut through to the wider motorway network. All of the number plates were checked on the CAZ portal and none of them surveyed would be charged by the CAZ.

Local residents are concerned about the safety of these vehicles passing through a residential area, with many families taking their kids to school and playgroups. Given that this is effectively the local High Street with almost all local shops and amenities are on this busy trunk road, residents are concerned at the impact of this intimidating environment.

1) What are the possible options to mitigate this issue?

Preamble:

Across the city the paint that so many people rely on to help interpret the rules of the road is faded to the point of being virtually useless.

For example, the double yellow lines on Angers Road have been so faded for so many months (with a brief respite in the spring of this year when a transport officer used temporary spray paint as a fix) that they are unenforceable. At the top of Angers Rd the painted bike lane gets worn out every 18-24 months, but despite a promise to fix both of these "this summer" (a good season for applying thermoplastic paint) nothing appears to have taken place.

Road markings might seem a small thing but they are important for protecting the safety and quality of life of local people and people passing through the area.

2) When are we likely to see this paint being replaced, and what is the prioritisation process for this?

REPLY:

1. The A37 is a key regional A Road that links the South Coast to Bristol and beyond and always has been. There are limited options for HGVs coming from that area to reach the strategic road network. The A37 is a key radial route serving south Bristol and as such is an acceptable route for HGV movements.

Options to remove these movements would require road building elsewhere to provide alternative links such as to the ring road. I don't understand what you think has changed.



2. Where we receive enquiries relating to faded or missing road markings, we add them to a programme list.

We prioritise sites in the following order:

- Surfacing sites, where all existing lining has been eradicated.
- Maintenance at Pedestrian Crossing or School Keep Clear markings.
- Safety Junction markings
- Parking Enforcement markings
- Disabled Bays
- Others

Sites are awarded points based on the above priorities, with additional points awarded based on how long they have been on the list, otherwise items which are low priority would never be scheduled for work to be carried out.

The sites referred to are on our list of works. I suggest you contact the Strategic Highways Maintenance Team for a timetable.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 2

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

Subject: STOKE LODGE PLAYING FIELDS SECRET SURVEILLANCE

1. The Mayor will be aware of the latest provocative actions by Cotham School in resorting to covertly filming this shared community green space. Does the Mayor share my - and our MP's - anger and concerns over this completely unjustified move?
2. As the Authority remains landlord for this site, can the Mayor confirm whether or not any Council officials were notified of the tenant's intention to install hidden cameras?

REPLY:

1. It's disappointing that trust and relationships have broken down to such a point that this is happening. I had heard about examples where people had filmed the pupils arriving for their PE lessons, so sadly little surprises me in this saga.
2. I am not aware of anyone at the council being advised.



LABOUR QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Hussain, Central Ward

Subject: City Centre Regeneration

- 1) In his State of the City speech, the Mayor hinted at plans for the now-unused Debenhams site. Is he yet able to reveal any more details about the proposals?
- 2) With the new Debenham's site, the Galleries proposals, and the Mary Le Port scheme, there is clearly a lot of interest in revitalising the city centre. Can the Mayor provide more details of the Council's involvement in master planning for the area, to ensure we get balanced communities and much-needed homes alongside the retail offer?

REPLY:

1. We're in conversation with the group which owns Debenhams. We are using the leverage of our freehold ownership to influence and reflect our own requirements on employment space, active frontages and affordable homes.
2. Our economic regeneration team works with the Mayor's office to ensure that we're providing more affordable accommodation, reflecting employment land needs and working with developers for mixed developments that include active frontages. The work has been extremely successful in the sites you mention to this point, and we have a developing a masterplan for the whole Broadmead area.



GREEN QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Ani Stafford-Townsend

Subject: Support for Council staff

Bristol's Housing Officers are at the front line of the impacts of continuing austerity. They were at the front line during the height of the pandemic, putting themselves at daily risk to keep our most vulnerable residents safe. Our Housing Officers were and still are the ones supporting residents following awful fires in our city's tower blocks. Our housing officers have recently gone out on strike, not for more pay – although they deserve to have more pay – but for better conditions, support and realistic workloads.

- 1) What support and actions will the administration be providing for housing officers (and by extension our vulnerable residents who need our officers to not be broken under the strain)?**
- 2) Our Caretakers are also at the front line, over-burdened and struggling. What will the administration be providing as support for our caretakers?**

REPLY:

1. We won't take any lectures on how to "support council staff" and their wellbeing from a councillor who refuses to take responsibility and apologise to staff for disrupting their work and putting them at risk.

We've met with unions and staff representatives and continue to negotiate on their workloads and prioritisation. Housing demands have changed substantially in the last decade and we are well aware of the changing needs for housing officers and recognise the increased demands on our workforce. These needs must be balanced with those of our tenants and the visibility of housing officers in our estates is an essential change to their terms and conditions.

We are confident that both the service for our tenants and the conditions of our housing officers will improve.

2. Caretakers and housing officers have demanding jobs and we are working with all of them to ensure we can provide the best service to our tenants within manageable workloads. We are currently recruiting more housing officers, despite the council wide recruitment freeze, as part of recognition of the need to support these officers and our caretakers.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 3

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Steve Smith (Westbury on Trym & Henleaze)

Subject: REGULATING PARKING AROUND DURDHAM DOWNS

In the lead-up to the 2021 Mayoral election, you wrote to multiple residents in my ward offering to support two proposals to deal with the growing van and caravan site on the Downs. These were:

- Reviewing parking restrictions around the Downs to make them easier to enforce; and
- Considering the closure of the “Parrys Lane slip road” where many vans are permanently parked and returning it to the Downs

1. Following consultation as part of the A37/A4018 (No. 2 bus route) project earlier this year, when will a decision be made on the potential road closure?

2. When will the review of parking restrictions start?

REPLY:

1. The proposals on the A4018 will come forward shortly and include the closure of Roman Road and the relevant section of Parry’s Lane.
2. Review of parking restrictions will follow the A4018 proposals. However, these will be improved by the closure of these two roads.



LABOUR QUESTION 4

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

Subject: Government Funding

The new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said in the summer that he inherited a formula from Labour that gave Government funding to 'deprived urban areas' and he started changing the formula so that he could instead give 'areas like this' 'the funding they deserve' - he was speaking in the Tunbridge Wells. This is obviously very worrying.

Would the Mayor be willing to use bodies such as Core Cities to apply pressure on the Government to ensure this doesn't happen?

REPLY:

We wrote to the last Prime Minister in September offering to work with her on deprived urban areas and the cost of living and cost of operating crisis along with our partners in Core Cities.

We will be renewing that offer to the newer Prime Minister who the Mayor met at the COP reception at Buckingham Palace. Core Cities meets this week and will discuss the approach to the new Prime Minister in more detail.



GREEN QUESTION 4

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Emma Edwards

Subject: RPZs and modal shift

From your previous answers about RPZs, it would seem that we do actually share a common goal of wanting to create a modal shift away from private car ownership, and to free up residential streets of parked cars.

A recent meta-analysis of efforts to reduce car use in European cities found that parking and traffic controls are the second most effect tool after congestion charging.

As you will know the alternative to controlled parking is paid for or free parking zones, where residential areas are frequently used as parking by those that don't live there. In this case there is also no limit to the number of cars people can store on the public highway for free.

As has been raised before by Greens many residents who live in areas of uncontrolled parking and within walking distance of the city centre regularly contact us asking when we can control parking in their areas.

We believe there is evidence to suggest RPZs can support modal shift, especially as a precursor to enable other measures, such as repurposing space for parklets, bike hangars and electric car club spots.

At last Full Council you claimed there to be a body of evidence that "Resident Parking Schemes drive car ownership and do not support modal shift".

Questions:

- 1) Can you provide members with the evidence that supports your view that RPZs prevent modal shift or encourage car ownership?**
- 2) In this year's budget, an amendment was passed to allocate £0.65m to establish at least one new Resident's Parking Scheme. What is happening to that funding?**

REPLY:

1. The whole purpose of a resident's parking zone is to allocate parking spaces, facilitating car ownership.
2. The budget provided allocation for up to one amended area. That was subject to overwhelming support in one area, led by communities. No such area had overwhelming support and that allocation will be removed for the 2023/24 budget as a saving.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 4

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

Subject: HOUSING OFFICERS STAFFING

Housing Officers are at the forefront of the support we provide to existing council tenants. I have dealt with a few of them and have worked collaboratively and closely with them on issues of local importance to our council tenant communities.

Can the Mayor please provide the following information:-

1. When was the last review undertaken to determine the numbers of Housing Officers required? (This should have been included in the answer for last month's Member Forum question on Housing Officers)
2. Has a comparison been undertaken between the forecasts as predicted at the time and the current numbers and ongoing forecast please? If so, what are those numbers please.

REPLY:

1. The last staff review was in 2017. We are currently recruiting to fill the full complement of staff levels.
2. We have just commissioned an independent review of the housing service and the senior management team will be working with that review to ensure the service is benchmarked against other cities and efficient.



LABOUR QUESTION 5

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

Subject: Capital Projects

With the Bristol Beacon nearing competition and the essential repairs on the new cut bridges underway, I'm pleased to see investment into Bristol's infrastructure – both cultural and structural.

Which other capital projects will the administration look to prioritise, once these are complete?

REPLY:

We'll be completing the repair of all the key infrastructure bridges as our priority, these are in progress.

We have undergone a review of the crumbling and damaged harbour wall and we will be affecting repairs to this essential infrastructure. The bridges and the harbour wall have been neglected for decades and this administration is ensuring the city is resilient and connected for the next century.

Following these we continue to repair our highways and are facing the key challenge of concrete roads. We have budgeted for the repair of the non key infrastructure of the Kingsweston Iron Bridge – where some cities are removing bridges. We are working towards flood mitigation schemes for the Avon and the Frome and continue to prioritise bus and active travel infrastructure.

The key transport infrastructure remains the mass transit scheme. All the key work on this is done and both WECA along with Bristol's next committee based administration is able to complete that transformational project.



GREEN QUESTION 5

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Martin Fodor

Subject: Bus timetables and Planning applications

Bus timetables

Live bus timetable information services are essential to ensure passengers can be confident buses due are buses running. But recently a large number of buses shown at live information displays at stops have been vanishing as buses come due. This leads to missed appointments and lost confidence in bus services. While waiting at a bus stop recently I saw three services vanish when supposedly due.

1) What can the council do to get more accurate live information?

Determination of planning applications

Recent high profile instances of non-determination of planning applications have caused appeals to the Planning Inspectorate such as proposals at Brislington Meadows. This has also affected residents in my ward where a scheme was never concluded leading to appeal.

2) What measures are being taken to ensure the backlog and the slow process of planning applications is tackled and the authority can make its own decisions on planning applications?

REPLY:

1. The Real Time Information (RTI) system is managed and delivered by WECA.

There are issues at present with operating services to the full timetable due to a lack of drivers. We have been working with WECA and First Bus to address these issues so that buses are more reliable. We will raise the issue of RTI screens and displaying correct information with WECA as part of our ongoing discussions.

2. The Development Management planning application service is experiencing a significant mis-match between workload and fee income which, along with existing corporate budgetary pressures, means that the service is unable to fill existing vacancies or bring in additional capacity from consultancies.

The nationally set planning application fees mean that individual fees don't necessarily cover the cost of processing, and these fees have not been increased by Government for a number of years. As a result, the service has a significant backlog of planning applications.

The service management team has been working up and implementing a Recovery Plan in order to better use the resources that it has and to more efficiently process planning applications. The measures contained within this plan include swifter decision making, rather than negotiation, and producing shorter reports.

Whilst these measures will have a positive impact, the shortfall in resourcing will continue to have an impact on application processing timescales and increase the risk of appeals against non-determination.



As we have often discussed, one of the results of 12 years of austerity from central government is that of a lack of back-room capacity for Local Authorities. We need to prioritise the front line services but recognise that it is the planners and lawyers we also need to keep the process of development for our city turning.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 5

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

Subject: STREET-NAMING OF CURO HOMES NEW 70-DWELLING DEVELOPMENT AT IMPERIAL PARK, BISHOPSWORTH

1. According to news organisations, the Mayor's Office has intervened in the proposed street-naming of the new Curo Homes development at Imperial Park after consultation with ward councillors and the Housing Association to 'review its suitability'. Assuming the reasoning behind the move is not knee-jerk resistance prompted by it being in an Opposition councillor's ward, can the Mayor publicly explain his rationale and provide another example of when he or his Mayoral Office has intervened in a similar street-naming proposal (something which is well beneath his 'pay-grade')?
2. Will the Mayor seek to persuade his former Mayoral rival George Ferguson to rename the 'Tobacco Factory' (in Southville) on similar grounds, or campaign to change the name of the 'Miners' Arms' pub (at Bedminster Down Road, Bedminster) - which, of course, does not reflect modern concerns about fossil-fuels?

REPLY:

1. We have intervened in the street naming process. While the mayor and this administration thinks that naming new streets after tobacco brands is questionable, the names proposed (Strand Road, Passing Clouds Road, Gold Flake Road, and Navy Cut Road) would all contravene the street naming policy due to 'current commercial connections.' The name of the new street, where 70 new homes (100% affordable) are being built, will be announced in due course.

Navy Cut Tobacco was a brand of cigarettes discontinued in 2016. It was initially manufactured in Nottingham by John Player & Sons, who merged with WD and HO Wills and other companies in 1901 to form Imperial Tobacco. Wills Navy Cut is a current brand of cigarettes. It was manufactured by WD and HO Wills until 1988, but remains a registered, trade-marked product of ITC Limited – one of the world's largest companies. ITC Limited began as Imperial Tobacco Company of India Limited, succeeding WD and HO Wills in 1910. Wills Navy Cut continues to be imported to and sold in the United Kingdom.

The same is true of Gold Flake, another ITC product. Strand cigarettes, a defunct former product of WD and HO Wills named after a road, remains owned by Imperial Tobacco – who continue to trade as one of the world's largest cigarette companies. The same is true of Passing Clouds cigarettes.

2. There is clearly a substantial difference between the redesign of an existing building keeping its initial usage and the naming of a new road. Therefore, the Mayor has no intention of intervening in the examples you used.



LABOUR QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Cllr Goggin, Hartcliffe and Withywood Ward

Subject: Welcoming Spaces

I'm relieved to see Welcoming Spaces opening up across Bristol – they'll be a lifeline for many, including in my ward of Hartcliffe and Withywood. I would be interested to know about how successful the scheme has been so far.

Are you able to share any statistics regarding the number of people who have accessed them, and is anything more needed to spread awareness, or staff / resource the Welcoming Spaces?

REPLY:

I am proud to share that we now have 55 Welcoming Spaces open across the city, with more to come. We are now sending a weekly survey to all Welcoming Spaces to help us understand the impact of them and will have data to present next month.

Despite the mild weather so far, people are attending the spaces already and we expect them to get even busier when the temperature starts to drop.

Not only are community centres set up as Welcoming Spaces but churches, children's centres, leisure centres and care homes are opening their doors. All Welcoming Spaces have varying opening times - day time, evenings and weekends included. What each venue offers varies per venue and is listed out on our website.

In terms of helping spread awareness:

- Please direct people to our cost of living webpage – www.bristol.gov.uk/costofliving – they can find a map and list of all of the Welcoming Spaces here as well as signposting for key cost of living support
- For those offline, please give them the We Are Bristol helpline - 0800 694 0184, Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm. Call handlers can let people know where their nearest Welcoming Space is and provide signposting
- In the coming couple of weeks there will be resources available for you to share with residents – both in relation to the Welcoming Spaces and the cost of living crisis in general
- All volunteering opportunities are listed on Can Do Bristol – www.candobristol.co.uk



GREEN QUESTION 6

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Christine Townsend

Subject: Gaol Ferry Bridge

Can the Mayor confirm that the repair work on Gaol Ferry Bridge remains on track for the predicted 6-9 month completion, and the date by which the bridge is currently set to re-open for public use?

REPLY:

Our contractors, Griffiths, closed the bridge in late August. They have since put up a complete support working platform of scaffolding under the bridge to enable repairs, the first major programme of works in the almost 100 years since Gaol Ferry Bridge was erected. The full old bridge decking has been totally removed and a structural inspection has taken place to enable design, repairs, and beam replacement.

Some further works will be carried out by Griffiths before the bridge is encapsulated in stages, to ensure that too much weight is not added to the structure – especially if it is caught by the wind. This will enable paint and corrosion to be grit blasted without pollutants entering the New Cut below. This will be followed by the structural repairs, adding the new decking and repainting Gaol Ferry Bridge.

Griffiths and our own highways team officers indicate that we remain on programme, and that a forecasted completion date will be available once all high-risk elements of the bridge have been investigated and repaired. We want to reopen the Bridge, repaired for many decades to come, as soon as we can.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 6

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

Subject: STOCKWOOD LANE CROSSING

In 2021, Area Committee 6 agreed to provide £60K of CIL funding for the provision of a new crossing near the BS14 Club on Stockwood Lane. At present Bristol City Council have yet to start designing this important and much needed road safety improvement.

1. Can the Mayor please advise when the designs will be made available?

REPLY:

The Area Committee allocated funding for a crossing on Stockwood Lane on 29th November 2021. The bid for this funding included an indicative programme for design in 2022/23 and construction 2023/24. The Committee were informed that in order to complete the schemes approved in previous years as quickly as possible, it was unlikely work on any new schemes agreed at the meeting would start before late summer 2022.

Due to staff shortages in the Road Safety and Local Engineering team they were unable to start the new projects as early as anticipated. However, some schemes have recently been completed and this enabled resources to be allocated to this project in October.

Surveys of traffic volumes and speeds have already been commissioned and the team will be in contact with the ward councillors this month to review the aims and to collate any other information that will help with the design.

There are currently 50 live local projects across the 6 Area Committees including Neighbourhood Partnership legacy projects. The majority of schemes allocated by the Area Committees in 2022 have now had resources allocated to them.

The delays we've seen in the last decade to carry out CIL schemes are frustrating, but won't change if we continue to try to meet them in house. We are looking at the possibility of outsourcing these schemes to accelerate delivery. However, its possible that this process may include referring back to CIL committees to allocate more money.



GREEN QUESTION 7

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Tom Hathway

Subject: Access to bins

Kings Parade Avenue in our ward is a narrow single access lane behind Whiteladies Road.

Over recent years it has had several infill developments including one awaiting planning decision. There are faded double yellow lines at the top of the lane and on Kings Parade Mews, but parking on the lane itself is not managed. Cars park on either side and this has meant bin lorries cannot collect residents and businesses waste, but more seriously, that fire crews were unable to reach an incident in October, thankfully a false alarm.

Businesses with outdoor hospitality structures and seating introduced under emergency Covid legislation were sent letters instructing them to remove them this month. They have since received a letter stating "Businesses with existing structures will be given time to retrospectively apply for the necessary licences or planning permission."

- 1) What actions can the council take to ensure safe access for emergency vehicles and bin lorries along Kings Parade Avenue?**
- 2) I read that Liverpool Council has recently installed the first of its new underground "super-bins" in densely built-up areas to tackle issues like fly-tipping and litter.**

Would these be suitable for areas of Bristol?

REPLY:

1. I recognise this is an issue and welcome your proposal of a solution.

Double yellow lines seems to be one option.

2. It's a great idea and we should work in the next year on a proposal to introduce them. They, as well as the refuse equipment, would need to be funded.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 7

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

Subject: FIXING LOCAL MONUMENT

Tagart's Fountain Memorial is a Grade 2 listed monument in the heart of Stoke Bishop Village (bottom of Stoke Hill) and adds considerably to the local visual amenity. Maintenance is the responsibility of the Highways Department. Residents have reported on 'fix my street' that repairs are required from a health and safety perspective and local Members have chased as well. Nevertheless, there is no response as yet to residents as to when repairs are likely to happen.

- 1. Would the Mayor agree that, if residents are to have confidence in 'fix my street' and similar Council apps, replies from Highways need to be timely?**
- 2. Is it possible to have an approximate timescale for the repairs to be effected?**

REPLY:

1. I do agree that people should have timely updates.
- 2 Given the current pressures on our budget, with our capital budget oversubscribed, it is highly unlikely that this can be prioritised for repair.

We acknowledge that this was donated to the local community by Francis Tagart, Stoke Bishop resident, rather than a Bristol City Council structure. Perhaps you may wish to consider a local funding scheme perhaps facilitated by the residents' association.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 8

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

Subject: PARKING CHARGES

The Cabinet has recently approved a huge increase in parking charges in the city. Parking for four hours on-street in the City Centre will increase from £6 to £12, an increase of 100 per cent.

Off-street car park fees for shorter stays will rise by two-thirds from £1.50 to £2.50 an hour, with parking up to four hours costing £10 instead of £6 at present.

These increases will be unhelpful to businesses in the city, particularly the hospitality industry. The Council have justified these increases by saying that people should walk, cycle or use public transport instead. For many who live in the outer suburbs, particularly the elderly, walking or cycling into town is obviously not an option. And it is universally acknowledged that the bus service is in crisis.

Many people do not currently have access to alternative forms of transport that are practical, safe, and reliable.

1. Will the Mayor therefore please reconsider these increases or will the Mayor at least postpone these rises until there has been a clear and demonstrable improvement in the provision of public transport in the city?

REPLY:

Agree that it is important we have better bus services for the suburbs, which is why we're looking at bus prioritisation on the A4018 Number 2 route.

I don't think £3 an hour to park in our city centre is unreasonable and is consistent with other cities.

We've had to respond to inflationary pressures in part caused by government policy.



CONSERVATIVE QUESTION 9

Question(s) to the Mayor from Councillor Sharon Scott (Westbury on Trym & Henleaze)

Subject: Sharon Scott (Westbury on Trym & Henleaze)

The Cabinet report on the new commissioning contract for delivering SEND Information Advice & Support Services (SENDIASS) revealed a remarkable statistic:-

“As of January 2022, there were 63,254 children on roll in Bristol schools and 11,689 pupils with special educational needs (SEN). 3,639 children and young people (0–25-year-olds) in Bristol have an EHCP.”

1. Even accepting this figure (18.5% of the school roll classified as being on the SEND spectrum) covers a broad range of behaviours and conditions, how does this level or proportion of cases compare with other Core Cities?
2. Can the Mayor confirm what work is being done to identify the causal factors which are involved here in creating a seemingly growing demand for these specialist educational services in our city?

REPLY:

1. In terms of English Core Cities we are no means an outlier:

Liverpool	20.2%
Manchester	18.8%
Bristol	18.5%
Birmingham	17.5%
Sheffield	17.4%
Nottingham	17.4%
Newcastle	16.9%
Leeds	15.8%

[Local area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities report for unknown | LG Inform](#)

2. There is increasing demand. As you note, this covers a wide range of behaviours and conditions, and so there is likely to be several different causes. This is a national trend, and some point to advances in life expectancy, more awareness and better diagnoses. The Children’s and Families Act 2014 raised the expectations of parents and carers.

The Bristol joint strategic needs assessment looks at local and national trends to assess detailed information on local health and wellbeing needs. It looks ahead at emerging challenges and projected future needs and recognising the inequalities and social factors which drive health outcomes. This will continue to consider the local trends in Bristol city region, combined with other national data, such as [OFSTED’s report](#) on the pandemic and SEND.

