

Question: CQ11.01 & CQ11.02

Cabinet – 24th January 2023

Re: Agenda item 11 – Bristol Beacon Update

Question submitted by: Cllr David Wilcox

Background: Bristol Beacon and Risk Reporting. Today is absolutely the last day when a decision can be taken to meet a September 2023 opening for the Bristol Beacon. The Bristol Music Trust has already announced the opening date; it looks like this is a done deal, and members can do little to influence the decision to saddle Bristol City Council with £2.5 million pounds of debt repayment for the next 50 years. It should have had a much higher profile so that adequate scrutiny by members could be given. Simply passing the risk to our strategic partner Arcadis looks like it's brushing it underneath the carpet.

Question 1: Why is the Bristol Beacon project hidden in a generic risk: CRR41 – Capital Portfolio Delivery? It should have had a much higher profile so that adequate scrutiny by members could be given. Simply passing the risk to our strategic partner Arcadis looks like it's brushing it underneath the carpet.

Background:

In June 2022, Bristol City Councils external auditors Grant Thornton made 13 recommendations (<https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/auditors-criticise-city-council-over-7277889>) to improve and facilitate the delivery of the Bristol Beacon.

Question 2: Can the Mayor provide those 13 recommendations and whether they were implemented, as they were not shared with the audit committee?

Question: CQ11.03

Cabinet – 24th January 2023

Re: Agenda item 11 – Bristol Beacon Update

Question submitted by: Cllr Ani Stafford-Townsend

Background:

In page 15 of the Financial report, it says:

“Bristol Beacon accounts for approximately 1 in 17 jobs in Bristol’s Creative Arts sector As demonstrated below in 2021, employment in Creative Arts and Entertainment Activities represented 19.8% of employment within the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation Industry. As of 2021 there were 1,000 employees in Bristol’s Creative Arts sector. Prior to expansion Bristol Beacon employed over 60 people, constituting around 1 in 17 local Creative Arts employees; it is a significant institution for employment in the sector.”

Bearing in mind that those involved in the Creative Arts and Entertainment sector goes far beyond those viewable on stage, the figure of 1000 people employed seems a significant underestimation of the figures.

Question 1: What data is this based on and how is it calculated? I.e. are Front of House staff being accounted for as Hospitality, are lecturers in Theatre courses being accounted for as academics etc, despite Theatre and Creative arts being at the core of their work?

Question: CQ11.04 & CQ11.05

Cabinet – 24th January 2023

Re: Agenda item 11 – Bristol Beacon Update

Question submitted by: Cllr Barry Parsons

Background:

In the papers, Bristol Music Trust are held accountable for the failures in the management of the Bristol Beacon Project and blamed for a failure to keep Bristol City Council fully informed.

Question 1: How is this possible when Deputy Mayor of Bristol City Council and Cabinet member for Finance & Culture Cllr Craig Chaney sits on the board of Bristol Music Trust?

Background:

On page 6 of the Financial report it says:

“BCC does not currently have a formal framework in place to monitor and appraise the social impacts generated by this Project. This may make it difficult for BCC to gain comfort that the significantly negative NPV can be justified by social impacts.”

Question 2: What work is BCC undertaking to introduce a formal framework to measure the social value (including wider social and environmental benefits) of projects in Bristol in order to ensure the best outcomes for Bristolians?