

Full Council – 9 January 2024

Agenda item 6 b

Public questions



Procedural note:

Questions submitted by members of the public:

- Questions can be about any matter the Council is responsible for or which directly affect the city.
- Members of the public who live and/or have a business in Bristol are entitled to submit up to 2 written questions, and to ask up to 2 supplementary questions. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.
- Replies to questions will be given verbally by the Mayor (or a Cabinet member where relevant). Written replies will be published within 10 working days following the meeting.



*point of explanation - where a person has asked two questions on the same topic they are on the same line. Where topics are different they have different lines.

Ref No	Name	Title
PQ01	Mhairi Threlfall	Family Hubs & the Social Care Precept
PQ02	Claire Charras	Money for Care in all Strategies
PQ03	Katy Taylor	Will you value the caring economy?
PQ04	Troy Tanska	Time to Care with Dignity
PQ05	Sue Cohen	Social Care Workers
PQ06	Liz Potter	Nursery Provision in Crisis
PQ07	Dahlia von Carolath	Council Accountability for Contractor Performance
PQ08	Sophie Peart	Worker Conditions in Commissioned Contracts
PQ09	Bonny Chung	Coproduction with Carers
PQ10	Josephine Benefield	Gaza Ceasefire
PQ11	Hasina Khan	Gaza Ceasefire
PQ12	Suzanne Audrey	Mayor's TED Talk
PQ13	Suzanne Audrey	Fujitsu Post Office Horizon Scandal
PQ14	Jenny Etches	Uncollected Waste and Recycling
PQ15	Emma Swain	Blenheim Court
PQ16	Sally Kent	Special School Places
PQ17	Caroline Gooch	St Christopher's School
PQ18	Mubashar Chaudhry	City Hall Lights
PQ19	Jack Whittaker	Pitches for Traders in Bristol Docks and Parks
PQ20	Mike Oldreive	Value and Ethics Sub-Committee
PQ21	David Redgewell	Transport Levy
PQ22	Jen Smith	Homechoice / Housing Associations
PQ23	Danica Priest	Development Control
PQ24	Danica Priest	Committee Model
PQ25	Dan Ackroyd	Value and Ethics Sub-Committee
PQ26	Dan Ackroyd	Barton House
PQ27	Leona Dennehy	Pitches for Traders in Bristol Docks and Parks
PQ28	Shaban Ali	Barton House
PQ29	Laura Stone	Barton House
PQ30	Andy Watt	Barton House
PQ31	Cam Hayward	Daventry Road School
PQ32	Cam Hayward	Redcatch Park Tennis Courts
PQ33	Nuh Sharif	Barton House
PQ34	Jez Olpin	Tender Submissions
PQ35	Becky Watkins	Pitches for Traders in Bristol Docks and Parks



QUESTION PQ 01

Subject: Family Hubs & the Social Care Precept

Question submitted by: Mhairi Threlfall

Integrated Family Hubs offer information, advice and help to all families in Bristol, and provide a holistic one stop shop model supporting the needs of carers, care workers and those who may be cared for. It was positive to see the council awarded £4.8million to establish 3 new family hubs in Bristol. However, there is a real opportunity where childcare and social care already co-exist to expand and build on this model without a huge amount of investment required.

The Belonging Strategy set a target for Family Hubs by 2024. What will you do in the short, medium and long-term to retain and increase the provision of Family Hubs in Bristol?

Response:

This question was answered verbally during the meeting. See webcast recording here [Full Council - Tuesday, 9th January, 2024 2.00 pm \(youtube.com\)](#)

QUESTION PQ 02



Subject: Money for Care in all Strategies

Question submitted by: Claire Charras

Will you ensure that childcare and social care are articulated as infrastructure in local and strategic plans – e.g. major planning applications and all new employment, training, and regeneration developments - going forward as part of a commitment to the caring economy?

Response:

This question was answered verbally during the meeting. See webcast recording here [Full Council - Tuesday, 9th January, 2024 2.00 pm \(youtube.com\)](#)



QUESTION PQ 03

Subject: Will you value the caring economy?

Question submitted by: Katy Taylor

We call upon Bristol City Council to commit to Valuing the Caring Economy.

Caring is the fundamental infrastructure of society; it is the heart of all community. We have all been cared for before and it is highly likely we will be cared for again in the future. We've also all cared for someone, whether it was looking after a sick neighbour, family member or friend, caring for a dying parent or looking after children.

Caring is Everybody's Business and yet it is not always visible or valued.

In Bristol, 42,300[i] people have caring responsibilities. Women are more likely to be carers than men[ii] and more than a third of carers provide over 50 hours of care per week[iii].

In 2023-23, more than a third (38%) of carers in Bristol said they were providing more care because local services are reducing or closing.[iv]

More than nine nurseries have closed in Bristol since 2021, in just one example, and there we know that some children living in poverty won't get a warm meal without access to early years education.

We know that some women will never experience the same economic security their partners due to an unequal leave, and inflexible employment conditions that often mean carers must choose between caring and working.

We know there are disabled young people across the city, unable to reach their full potential because of limited care packages, based on care assessments that don't accurately note the full amount of care that's required.

We also know it is outside of Bristol City Council's gift to reverse years of central government cuts or to change central legislation. We know there is very little money for new investment.

However, we also know that a caring economy makes financial as well as ethical sense.

A caring economy invests in maternity, nursery and childcare, education, health and social care. It supports the work and well-being of all those delivering care through provision of transport, training and skills. Caring economics rewards those who work in the caring economy rather than so many having to rely on low wages and food banks.

We know there is value for money in supporting care workers so they remain in their job, provide skilled care and remain healthy and happy in themselves. There is economic research about the value of providing affordable child care, adequate social care and flexible working conditions that frees up women to enter into the workforce and still look after children, parents, others.

I submit this statement on behalf of a campaign alliance of nine organisations: Bristol Women's Voice, The West of England Centre for Inclusive Living, Chinese Community Wellbeing Society, Co-Produced Care, March of the Mummies, Bristol Black Carers, Women's Budget Group, the Bristol Women's Commission and the Women in Business Charter.



Together we have drawn up a manifesto for change across Bristol and the west of England. All of our asks are within the Local Authorities remit. All of them are informed by the voices of the diverse communities we work with and for, all of whom are impacted by the caring economy, as all in Bristol are.

We ask that you commit to the caring economy and in doing so, you commit to ensuring that the caring economy is considered as key infrastructure to all new developments, across policy, industry, places and communities.

We call upon you to commit to implementing the specifics within our manifesto, all of which are within the local authority's power, and to demonstrate leadership on this agenda.

The council already demonstrates some commitment to the caring economy, but we urge you to go further to increase all our communities' wellbeing, to address a key barrier to women's equity and to sustainably boost our economy.

My question:

1. The council sets a good example of commitment to the caring economy through its current inclusion of paid time for caring as part of their contracts. This time might be taken for caring for adults as well as, for example, childcare emergencies. However, not all employees know about this and therefore do not know to ask for it. Managers aren't consistently trained in this. For many women there is still significant stigma around asking for time off to care and, furthermore, this can lead to part time workers being prevented from accessing promotions and higher salaried work. It is notable that parental leave in the council remains at the statutory minimum of two weeks. What steps will the council take to further invest in the caring economy for those it employs so that those with caring responsibilities are support and can access equitable opportunities?

Response:

This question was answered verbally during the meeting. See webcast recording here [Full Council - Tuesday, 9th January, 2024 2.00 pm \(youtube.com\)](#)



QUESTION PQ 04

Subject: Time to Care with Dignity

Question submitted by: Troy Tanska

We know that people requiring care aren't getting the support they need. means hundreds left struggling to go to the toilet, eat, get dressed or wash because they can't do these things unaided. There is a large body of research now that evidenced the lack of dignity, humanity and effectiveness of the fifteen and short appointments, impacting on the lives of people and their families, as well as leading to longer term costs relating to isolation, loneliness and ill health.

'Short appointments also have a detrimental impact on worker well-being, and it is worth noting that the risk of suicide amongst carers is 70% higher than the national average.' [ii]

Will the council commit to ensuring all care appointments delivered as part of its contracts and those of the integrated Care Board are a minimum of one hour?

Response:

This question was answered verbally during the meeting. See webcast recording here [Full Council - Tuesday, 9th January, 2024 2.00 pm \(youtube.com\)](#)



QUESTION PQ 05

Subject: Social Care Workers

Question submitted by: Sue Cohen

The average salary for social care staff in Bristol is 8% less than the already low national average. 1 in 10 social care jobs are vacant in the city and many continue to leave the service for better pay and conditions in supermarkets and warehouses for example, with a knock on effect on primary health care, mental health services and social care provision. It is welcome news that in 2024 the council will be adopting a single commissioning framework that aims to improve standards and increase local supply so that funding is not overly consumed by those large private companies that profiteer at the expense of both social care workers and tax payers.

What commitment will the council make to improve the retention, working conditions and pay of social care sector workers in contracts that ensure a minimum of the national living wage, career progression, and include funding to backfill posts so that staff can attend training courses and not have to train in their own time?

Response:

This question was answered verbally during the meeting. See webcast recording here [Full Council - Tuesday, 9th January, 2024 2.00 pm \(youtube.com\)](#)



QUESTION PQ 06

Subject: Nursery Provision in Crisis

Question submitted by: Liz Potter

What will you do to maintain and increase nursery provision in the city which is at crisis point?

Response:

This question was answered verbally during the meeting. See webcast recording here [Full Council - Tuesday, 9th January, 2024 2.00 pm \(youtube.com\)](#)



QUESTION PQ 07

Subject: Council Accountability for Contractor Performance

Question submitted by: Dahlia von Carolath

We know the council is a signatory of the West of England Combined Authority's Good Employment Charter and the UNISON's Ethical Care Charter, which signals a strong commitment to decent and equitable working conditions for carers and care workers is to be commended.

What mechanisms are in place, or will you put in place, to ensure all your contractors or consultants are also signatories to these and the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard, so you can be sure these standards are upheld across all the council's work?

Response:

This question was answered verbally during the meeting. See webcast recording here [Full Council - Tuesday, 9th January, 2024 2.00 pm \(youtube.com\)](#)



QUESTION PQ 08

Subject: Worker Conditions in Commissioned Contracts

Question submitted by: Sophie Peart

Will the council commit to ensuring all commissioned contracts ring-fence money to allow for enhanced maternity pay and a period of full pay sick pay/mental health days/menopause support/training?

Response:

This question was answered verbally during the meeting. See webcast recording here [Full Council - Tuesday, 9th January, 2024 2.00 pm \(youtube.com\)](#)



QUESTION PQ 09

Subject: Coproduction with Carers

Question submitted by: Bonny Chung

The Care Act 2014 specifically includes the concept of co-production in its statutory guidance. What value does the council place on co-production, how does/will this be evident in practice across the provision and development of care in Bristol?

Response:

Co-production is an important principle to Bristol City Council and is an objective within our Corporate Strategy (2022-2027).

Bristol City Council's Adult Social Care service is committed to embedding co-production into the work of the directorate and is in the process of developing a co-production policy and process with people who draw upon care and support as they are 'experts by their experience'. This policy will be completed summer/autumn 2024 and will provide a guiding set of principles for co-production.

Co-production in practice can be applied in different ways depending on the situation. In all instances it is necessary for the people involved to agree their definition of co-production, their way of working, and what they hope to achieve from the relationship and process.

Examples of co-productive working might include:

- **working one-to-one with individuals who draw upon care and support,**
- **working with people to co-produce a revision of an existing policy or procedure,**
- **completely co-producing a new service.**

In the future, Adult Social Care will use the Co-production Policy to improve practice in Adult Social Care, and to work with people with 'lived expertise' to develop of services to help people fulfil their potential to live 'a gloriously ordinary life', in line with the Adult Social Care vision.



QUESTION PQ 10

Subject: Gaza Ceasefire

Question submitted by: Josephine Benefield

How many men, women and children must die in Gaza from Israeli bombardment and siege before the Mayor of Bristol, Marvin Rees speaks out and calls for an immediate ceasefire?

Response:

I've published a reply to the petition at last Full Council in which I've made clear my desire for a sustainable ceasefire based on a free and safe Palestine and a free and safe Israel.

You can read this on my blog here: [Peace in the Middle East - The Bristol Mayor](#)



QUESTION PQ 11

Subject: Gaza Ceasefire

Question submitted by: Hasina Khan

Does it make you feel powerful to know you could have saved lives by calling for a ceasefire and an end of the destruction of the Palestinian people?

Do you see Palestinians as subhuman and not deserving of your concern? If you are not haunted by the screams and cries of the Palestinians you've chosen to ignore, please tell us what you do to block out the screams, cries, suffering and bloody images? The only answer seems to be that you see them as subhuman and not deserving of your concern.

Response:

I've published a reply to the petition at last Full Council in which I've made clear my desire for a sustainable ceasefire based on a free and safe Palestine and a free and safe Israel.

You can read this on my blog here: [Peace in the Middle East - The Bristol Mayor](#)



QUESTION PQ 12

Subject: Mayor's TED Talk

Question submitted by: Suzanne Audrey

In September 2022, you said: "My Ted talk in Vancouver led to a number of live contacts, not least a tech philanthropist who will be in Bristol in the coming weeks with a commitment to working with three UK cities, meeting with our community organisations with a commitment to putting real finance into their social innovation."

Question 1. Please will you give an update on the visit from the tech philanthropist and which community organisations have benefitted from the commitment of real finance for their social innovation.

Response:

I met Guy Podjarny, co-founder of the Disrupt Foundation disrupt.org in Vancouver.

At my introduction, Black South West Network then hosted the foundation's CEO, Miri Weingarten, and various community groups at a roundtable event in September 2022.

After which, representatives of Disrupt joined BSWN's first Race and Justice Conference in the South West, with a particular focus on the topic of Access to Justice.

Some of the key actions from the event focused on an effort to educate, train, and mobilise communities in the South West in the protection/advocacy of their right to access justice, with adequate representation. This is while also recognising that race and justice remain underappreciated as a social determinant to health, and we should pursue partnerships that merge health, race, and access to justice together. In attendance on the day was Dalia Abu Yassien from Disrupt Foundation, who was interested in these key actions and the excellent forward-moving energy generated at the event. It was agreed to remain in touch and explore if the Foundation had a role to support any of these actions.

The Disrupt Foundation were hugely impressed by the work being done, so as a result of the connections, Disrupt are funding BSWN's Access to Justice pilot work with a substantial grant.



QUESTION PQ 13

Subject: Fujitsu Post Office Horizon Scandal

Question submitted by: Suzanne Audrey

I trust that the Mayor, cabinet, councillors and officers of Bristol City Council are aware of the Post Office Horizon scandal and the appalling treatment of more than 700 Post Office managers as a result of Fujitsu's faulty accounting software. A public inquiry began in October 2022 and is ongoing. In Feb 2023, just five months into the inquiry, Bristol City Council appointed Fujitsu as its digital strategic partner for 5 years in a deal valued at up to £25million.

Question 2. Given the involvement of Fujitsu in the Post Office Horizon scandal, and the dreadful impact this has had on people including residents of Bristol, what efforts were made to find a digital strategic partner other than Fujitsu for Bristol City Council?

Suggested reply:

The council is required by law to follow Public Contract Regulations for any spend exceeding the national thresholds.

The regulations require fair and transparent tender processes and as such we cannot seek to advantage or disadvantage any potential supplier.



QUESTION PQ 14

Subject: Uncollected Waste and Recycling

Question submitted by: Jenny Etches

As a resident of Ashley ward who hasn't had their recycling picked up for 4 weeks, please can you ask the Mayor what he intends to do to remedy this situation? It's unacceptable and we should get a council tax rebate as a result.

Suggested reply:

I talked to the Managing Director of Bristol Waste recently and dealt with a similar question from Cllr Goulandris. I am arranging for councillors with constituents who have had problems with collections to meet with Bristol Waste to talk through their concerns and find solutions.

I know they've been reviewing the balance of their routes, this with Christmas period has caused some problems.

I completely understand that repeated missed collections are unacceptable.

BCC and BWC will be working collaboratively to identify service failings and solutions. To inform further small-scale changes where needed to optimise the recycling collections to ensure reliable and consistent collections.



QUESTION PQ 15

Subject: Blenheim Court

Question submitted by: Emma Swain

Now that the bin collection problem at Blenheim Court appears to have been dealt with could the council advise the current situation with the sewer drain that could allow rodents to enter via the bin store?

I note that the BCC web site is showing works to the footways surrounding Blenheim Court which will be closed for remedial works from 19.1.24 to 2.8.24. The works are to the external cladding and are being managed by Unite Students who operate Blenheim Court. They have confirmed that access to the bin store will not be affected during this period. Please can BBC also confirm that this will not affect their bin collections again in any way during that period?

Response:

The sewer will be the responsibility of Wessex Water or Unite Students depending on where the access point is for the rats located.

As this is works undertaken on the building for Unite Students, it is their responsibility to ensure that access to the bins store is not blocked. The works to this address have been passed onto Bristol Waste to ensure that collections are monitored during this period,

I'll work with Councillor Farah Hussain to make sure BWC monitor these collections, because the problem has been exacerbated during the Reroute will reliability issues occurring over the past two months.



QUESTION PQ 16**Subject: Special School Places****Question submitted by: Sally Kent**

Since the Mayors Election Pledge in 2020 to create 450 new special school places by 2024, BCC has been working with partners to increase the SEND estate in the City. I understand from answers given to my questions to full council in December 2023 that the project has so far delivered 288 specialist places.

Please provide:

1. The name of the settings
2. The additional spaces that have been created within each setting
3. The date that these spaces became available at the setting
4. The type of need that the setting caters for
5. How many spaces the setting has (for each setting).

For example. Compass Point resource base, 6 additional spaces, available from Sep 2023, Autism, 0 spaces

Also, can you provide information on when the council will be in a position to offer the 162 outstanding places and in which settings they will be situated?

Response:

- **Venturers' Academy, 70 additional places, 50 places September 2021 and 20 places September 2022, ASC, 6 spaces.**
- **Shirehampton Primary School, 16 places, November 2021, SEMH, 1 space.**
- **Easton LEAP (now located at Soundwell), 8 places, September 2021, SEMH, 8 spaces.**
- **Compass Point Primary School, 24 places, 8 places in September 2021 and 16 places in November 2022, ASC, 0 spaces.**
- **Fishponds Primary School, 8 places, September 2022, MLD/ASC/SEMH, 0 spaces.**
- **May Park Primary School, 24 places, January 2023, ASC/SLCN, 0 spaces.**
- **Glenfrome Primary School, 12 places, April 2023, ASC, 0 spaces.**
- **Knowle DGE (sixth form and independent living units), 47 places, April 2022, SEMH/MLD/SLCN/ASC, 11 spaces.**
- **Elmfield School for Deaf, 24 places, September 2023, HI/ASC/PD, 7 spaces.**
- **City of Bristol College (Project Rainbow Hawking House) independent living, 12 places, October 2023, Various needs. 0 spaces.**
- **Easton CE Academy, 12 places, January 2024, ASC/SLCN, 0 spaces.**
- **We have also increased the number of High Needs Places in special schools and resource bases via the annual return to the Education and Skills Funding Agency by a total of 63 places since the mayoral pledge.**



- **We are currently in delivery of a further 98 places at Broomhill Infant School, Broomhill Junior School, Sefton Park Infant and Junior School, North Star 82, Oasis Longcross and Oasis New Oak. These projects will be delivered from January 2024. We are working to deliver further opportunities identified.**



QUESTION PQ 17**Subject: St Christopher's School****Question submitted by: Caroline Gooch**

The St Christopher's SEND Alliance have twice submitted a detailed case for registering the St Christophers' school site as an Asset of Community Value and twice been refused. Looking at the legislation, none of the exemptions around what can be listed apply, so the only question is whether St Christopher's benefits the community and has a local connection, which the Alliance feel they have more than addressed. Could the council please publish the criteria against which they are scoring as there is no public access to observe this process and very little feedback given?

Response:

The process, and links to the government's criteria, are available on the council's website.

[Community right to bid \(bristol.gov.uk\)](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/community-right-to-bid)

I understand the government has given the green light for a new free school for SEND provision for 164 pupils by 2026, could the mayor and/or the cabinet member for education outline the process by which a site will be chosen for this school, and will they work with the St Christopher's SEND Alliance on their plans to bring St Christopher's back into educational use as that free school?

Response:

Through forecasting, we have also identified the need for a new special school in our local area and have applied to the Department for Education for funding, as part of their new special free school wave. Local data suggests the need for a 164-place school providing specialist provision for children with a range of needs. We anticipate the school will be for pupils aged from 4-19 years and will support the need of our community by offering a flexible provision, catering for Trauma; Neurodiversity; Speech, Language, and Communication Needs (SLCN); Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC); SEMH (Social, Emotional, and Mental Health); Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD); and Cognition & Learning Needs (C&L).

Our proposed site for the school will be located to the north of Bristol, on the Elmfield Site. Bristol City Council are deeply committed to ensuring the new proposed school truly benefits the local community, so we ran a consultation in autumn last year which showed the vast majority were in favour of the location for the new school, with most of the responses coming from parents and carers of SEND families.



QUESTION PQ 18

Subject: City Hall Lights

Question submitted by: Mubashar Chaudhry

Question: Dear Mayor Marvin Rees Congratulations on having a title of OBE. Can you please clarify when you made a decision of lighting city hall with Israel's flag, did you follow any protocol and consulted with councillors? As this action raised conflicts even the Jewish Community whom you have shown solidarity openly condemned this action.

I also ask you what will be your response to the petition of lighting city hall with Palestinian Flag? This Petition secured more than 5K signatures, thousands on the streets are demanding it and most of the councillors are supporting this petition. Also, the Bristol Muslim community is looking forward your solidarity by lighting city hall with Palestinian Flag.

Response:

I've published a reply to the petition at last Full Council in which I've made clear my desire for a sustainable ceasefire based on a free and safe Palestine and a free and safe Israel.

You can read this on my blog here: [Peace in the Middle East - The Bristol Mayor](#)



QUESTION PQ 19

Subject: Pitches for Traders in Bristol Docks and Parks

Question submitted by: Jack Whittaker

Can you please tell me why the council is trying to sell off pitches to the highest bidder?

Can you please tell me why this has been implemented without consultation, and apparently without discussion in Council?

Response:

The council is not selling off the land. The pitches included in the mobile concessions tender are for a business to occupy land for permitted trade during the day for a three-year period.

These agreements are time limited, and we are legally required to retender periodically, to provide other businesses with the opportunity to tender and to ensure we are receiving the market value for the concessions.

Traders should be aware of their contracts. The current contracts were originally procured in 2018 and let from April 2019. To allow the market to stabilize after the pandemic and the resulting increase in living expenses, the contracts were extended for 12 months in 2022 and 2023. Licenses will be effective from 1st April 2024, and expire 31st March 2027.

The paper to commence this process was agreed at Cabinet on 4th July 2023.



QUESTION PQ 20

Subject: Value and Ethics Sub-Committee

Question submitted by: Mike Oldreive

Quite a few questions at the last Full Council weren't answered with the explanation that "These questions have already been covered at Values and Ethics committee."

Public Forum for Full Council meetings has the description "Questions can be about any matter the Council is responsible for or which directly affect

the city."

What is the basis for refusing to answer those questions?

To be clear, I think people would have hoped to have the information through other means, including asking at the Value and Ethics committee and through email communication with Senior Officers, rather than taking up the time of this committee, but people are just not receiving clear answers.

Response:

The administration, as executive, don't deal with the value and ethics committee – It wouldn't be appropriate for me to rule on it.

It's a matter for a cross party committee.



QUESTION PQ 21

Subject: Transport Levy

Question submitted by: David Redgewell

Question 1

To mayor Marvin Rees and councillor Don Alexander,

What progress is being made on Negotiations with the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council, Mayor Dan Norris on the Transport levy to pay for vital bus and Ferry services to be restored in April 2024 in the city and county of Bristol council budget using the clean air zone money and council tax levy working with First group plc Wales and West buses and stagecoach west and other bus operators

To restore bus services to Ashton vale, parts of Bristlington and St Anne's park Dings ,Easton Stapleton Broomhill Fishponds oidbury court Downend Bromley Heath, Southmead to uwe bus station Bristol Parkway railway Aztec west Hortham Alverston Thornbury, Bishopsworth and part of Hengrove and whitchurch estate ,

So of the Poorest communities of Bristol have not access work, schools and colleges universities or basic food shopping, and leisure and Tourists facilities?

Response:

Alongside the usual budget setting report, we are bringing a paper to January cabinet to set out the allocation of net proceeds from the CAZ.

The Combined Authority's budget will be agreed at the January meeting.

Question 2 ,

With the importance of the need for affordable, social Housing and council especially houses designed for disabled people, and the need bring more building and land into housing use with need Housing plan for the Greater Bristol and Bath city region.

What discussion are going on with west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council. Banes and South Gloucestershire county council. Especially in need for new council committee structure leader and Deputy leader to have a close working relationship with the metro mayor Dan Norris and West of England mayoral combined Authority and the local Enterprise partnership and North Somerset council as a west of England mayoral combined Authority member

To have a joint plan that addresses the need of housing of city region with good connection to work school College, university, heath care and shopping and leisure facilities linked to public Transport, similar to the other city Region of the west Midlands combined Authority mayor Andy street, Liverpool City Region mayor Steve Rotherham, Greater Manchester combined Authority mayor Andy Burnham.

And close working with Western Gateway partnership and Transport Board?



Response:

WECA have not produced Spatial Development Strategy, however we are working with our neighbours as we develop respective Local Plans to ensure housing in designated at sustainable locations with good transport access.



QUESTION PQ 22

Subject: Homechoice / Housing Associations

Question submitted by: Jen Smith

Most of the new developments in Bristol with social housing go on to be run by Housing Associations. These are subsequently listed on Homechoice Bristol.

Housing Associations are able to set their own requirements about what they want from prospective tenants, meaning they can disregard order of bids based on their preference of tenant.

This can include things like must be in employment, credit checks and rent up front.

Rent up front for some Housing Association properties can come in at over £1000 and be expected within two days.

Q1. Is this a fair and equitable way of doing it, and do you have a link to any form of EIA for this approach? It would appear to disproportionately affect those on low incomes, Disabled people, women and carers.

Response:

Housing Associations are highly regulated, independent organisations who operate within a strict framework of Regulatory Judgements which affect their investment partner status with Homes England

Housing Associations sign up to use Home Choice Bristol, however as independent organisations they also have their own lettings policy. Their Lettings Policies should make reference to Equalities legislation.

Bristol City Council has a Home Choice Partnership agreement with our Housing Association Partners, which sets out the obligations on both parties. This is due for review in 2024 and one element to be discussed under the review is the question of rent in advance for those placing successful bids on Homechoice Bristol for a Housing Association property.

Q2. What financial support does Bristol City Council offer to everyone on Homechoice wishing to bid on all available properties but are unable to do so because of large sums of money being a prerequisite by Housing Associations for placing a bid?

Response:

Housing Associations often respond positively when contacted regarding difficulties in paying the rent in advance. The City Council can also contact the Housing Association to support in these discussions,

The City Council is unable to offer financial support to everyone on Homechoice. However the Council can offer some financial support to households who are homeless, in the form of an interest free loan

It is clearly stated on each property advertised on Homechoice if a rent in advance payment is required. The requirements are different depending on the Housing Association.



QUESTION PQ 23

Subject: Development Control

Question submitted by: Danica Priest

Planning officers have stated that development control committee B was cancelled this month because there weren't any planning applications ready to be reviewed. I'm sure you agree this isn't ideal considering we have a massive planning application backlog and a housing crisis. I appreciate there are issues with staff shortages and a lack of experience in the planning department but can you explain what actions you have taken to ensure no DC committee is cancelled because planning officers have no applications ready to bring forward for determination?

Response:

You and your party have a track record of opposing housing, so surprising to hear you change tack.

Since the recruitment of the Chief Planner position in late May 2023 we been working with the service, as well as internal and external consultees, to rebuild capacity and improving practice to transform planning service delivery and return it to a position of providing timely and robust decisions for all applicants as soon as possible.

The LPA has rebuilt capacity this financial year, and introduced mitigation measures that are now showing significant improvement to clear cases, increasing the rate of determination to reduce the number of cases we have in hand substantially and swiftly.

Chief Planner provided an update to the Council's Growth & Regeneration Scrutiny Commission about the ongoing recovery work in late November '23, the minutes of the meeting and the slides presented at it are published on the council's website.



QUESTION PQ 24

Subject: Committee Model

Question submitted by: Danica Priest

Why has the Mayor chosen to have 9 cabinet members when the Committee Model Working Group has decided that only 8 policy committees are needed to conduct the council's business?

Response:

I've chosen nine cabinet members because of their talent, experience, and commitment to getting things done for Bristol. Decision making is delegated to cabinet members within their respective portfolios and can convene, and lead, across important sectors and policy areas in Bristol and beyond.

It's up to the committee model working group to recommend to full council how many committees, sub committees, chairs, deputy chairs etc. they think they need.



QUESTION PQ 25

Subject: Value and Ethics Sub-Committee

Question submitted by: Dan Ackroyd

At the previous Full Council for multiple questions the answer given was "These questions have already been covered at Values and Ethics committee."

Although the questions have been asked at that committee, clear answers have not been given. For example, we still don't know why the Monitoring Officer refuses to write a "Section 5" report even though Member Complaints Process was not conducted lawfully for years. This report does not appear to be optional. From the Full Council meeting 15 September 2020 at Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

<https://democracy.bcpouncil.gov.uk/documents/s19638/Report%20Under%20Section%205%20of%20the%20Local%20Government%20and%20Housing%20Act%201989.pdf>

Under Section 5(2) of the Local Government Act 1989 the Council's Monitoring Officer is under a duty to report to Council, if it at any time it appears to her that any proposal, decision or omission on behalf of the Authority has given rise to or is likely to or would give rise to a contravention of any enactment or rule of law. This provision does not give the Monitoring Officer any discretion and requires the reporting of the smallest, most inconsequential breaches of legislation, including those that cannot be remedied and for which the impact is small.

Emphasis mine.

The public deserve to have a proper report written that details exactly what unlawfulness happened with the Member Complaint Process.

My question for the Mayor is, what are members of the public meant to do, when they just cannot get a clear answer from the Officers of this Council?

Response:

The response is a matter for the values and ethics committee, it is not something I can direct or control, and nor would it be appropriate for me to.

I suggest you take up the matter with the members of the committee.



QUESTION PQ 26

Subject: Barton House

Question submitted by: Dan Ackroyd

The previous Full Council meeting was heated because a lot of Barton House residents seem to be unhappy with how they are being treated.

I don't think they are wrong to feel that way.

This Council has been terrible at providing them information, and has repeatedly chosen to keep information secret rather than publish it. Bristol City Council is refusing to answer Freedom of Information requests related to Barton House, including requests for information from years ago.

Even though this administration could see how upset people are, the answers to the written questions still didn't give very much information out and skip over answering some awkward questions such as "will you publish and share with residents the full report with its findings and recommendations?".

My understanding is that there is a meeting planned between BCC and Barton House residents on the 10th of January. Will BCC publish all information held and start answering all answers cooperatively after that meeting, or will this Council continue to act as if they have something to hide?

Response:

We've been updating residents frequently. We've got a briefing with residents on the 10TH January.

We will publish all reports at the same time, after they've been shared with residents.



QUESTION PQ 27

Subject: Pitches for Traders in Bristol Docks and Parks

Question submitted by: Leona Dennehy

Q1. Pitches for traders in Bristol's city docks and parks

Why isn't it on the councils website about the new higher ground rate and asking for a percentage of annual turnover? It states it's a bidding process.

Reply:

The council's website currently states that there's no set price for each pitch and you'll be asked to include the amount you're willing to pay per year for the use of that pitch.

This is being carried out as a competitive tender process, with the financial contribution being based on a percentage of turnover.

Q2. Pitches for traders in Bristol's city docks and parks, Cost.

"There's no set price for each pitch. If you submit a tender bid you'll be asked to include the amount you're willing to pay per year for the use of that pitch. Your financial contribution will be looked at alongside your business offer."

Why are you trying to take a percentage of annual turnover from a small coffee van, run by 1 hardworking man that has given so much to this community always with a smile on his face?

Reply:

The challenges posed by the pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis has impacted trade for our mobile traders. This highlighted that the previous arrangement of a fixed fee put additional financial strain on these small businesses during low periods. By moving to a percentage of turnover, the license fee will move in line with the trading levels of the business.

Using a percentage turnover for rent is used widely for commercial businesses and is considered a fairer way of reaching a fair and affordable rent.

In the past, we have asked potential concessionaires to propose a fixed fee for their pitch. This was recommended previously to be based on 10% of their predicted earnings, in line with industry averages. However, following the pandemic and during the cost-of-living crisis, turnovers of concessionaires dipped to a point where the previous pitch fees became unsustainable, leading to high vacant pitches and unpaid debts. Therefore, we have moved to a percentage of turnover model to allow this fluctuation to happen and reduce the burden on concessionaires. This is a model seen in other concessionary agreements across the country and within the council.



QUESTION PQ 28

Subject: Barton House

Question submitted by: Shaban Ali

Not that long ago Barton house was covered in scaffolding for months to have its roof replaced.

Weren't there structural surveys carried out before work was undertaken?

Response:

The types of surveys were different - It is not common practice to carry out structural surveys like the ones undertaken recently at Barton House as part of roof maintenance and repair.

The roof was refurbished in 2020 and a smaller roof assessment would have been completed at the time of installation.

The roof replacement improved structural integrity of the building as it removed pooling water.

Could the building have collapsed while that work was ongoing, basically did a tragedy not unfold by sheer blind luck?

Response:

No. The only danger has been if there was a fire, impact or explosion in the block.

At the time, the service was not aware of any structural issues identified by the surveys reported on in November of 2023.



QUESTION PQ 29

Subject: Barton House

Question submitted by: Laura Stone

How long will this new work take and what will it cost the tax payer?

Will Barton House residents be expected to live in the hotel for the duration of the work?

Response:

Full extent of the works required at Barton House remain under review as we assess the latest update from the surveyors.

£2.6m already allocated by Cabinet to fund the costs of supporting residents and necessary works. Our assessment of latest survey will further inform our forecasted costs and if additional funding is required this will be sought via a Cabinet decision.

Hotel accommodation will continue to be provided throughout the temporary decant of the block and residents are being asked to remain away from the block whilst necessary works are carried out.

We are meeting with residents on the 10th January to provide an update that will include the scale of works required and an estimate of how long this will take.



QUESTION PQ 30

Subject: Barton House

Question submitted by: Andy Watt

The Department for Communities and Local Government sent a letter in 2017 warning that LPS tower blocks across the country would require structural surveys and remedial works to ensure their safety. Were works or surveys carried out in response to this letter at the time, and if not, why not?

If surveys were carried out, why were the current issues with Barton House not identified at the time?

Response:

Barton House is not an “LPS building” but is an “LPS type building” with panels on the outside.

We remain in conversation with Government about their 2017 letter and the actions taken since.

Different kinds of surveys have been undertaken at Barton House and other high-rise blocks since that time, with the information on each acted on to deliver improvements where necessary.

The Council commissioned a structural survey of Barton House and other LPS (or LPS similar constructed buildings) following receipt of the 2017 letter from government on the safety of large panel system buildings this report was received in August 2022

This report flagged structural issues at Barton House. On receipt of the report, Bristol officers determined that the risks presented could be mitigated. Indeed, at the time there were already mitigations in place, including no piped gas supply to flats and a waking watch in place.

In November 2023, this report was peer-reviewed by ARUP which significantly escalated the structural risks at Barton House.



QUESTION PQ 31

Subject: Daventry Road School

Question submitted by: Cam Hayward

A new secondary school was due to open on Daventry Road in September 2023. However, this has now been delayed until at least 2025. In the meantime, its students are temporarily located at Oasis Academy John Williams.

I have heard from residents that the Daventry Road students are often unable to access facilities at the site due to priority being given to the John Williams students.

Examples I have been given include having to make sandwiches in food technology classes due to a lack of cooking facilities, and PE lessons being cancelled at the last minute.

I am concerned that students could potentially be spending half of their secondary education at a temporary site without adequate access to the facilities required for a good well rounded education.

Please can the mayor or the cabinet member for Education clarify the reasons for the delay, and outline what steps they will take to ensure the Daventry Road students get equal access to facilities at the John Williams site and receive the highest possible standard of education?

Response:

The Department for Education are delivering the two new Oasis secondary schools.

The DfE have advised that the contractor has found additional asbestos within the fabric of the existing buildings on the site, as well as further ground contamination, which is impacting the demolition of the existing buildings. This discovery means that further investigations are required to assess the extent of the issue and its full impact on the delivery of the new school, but it won't be possible to open the permanent building in September 2024.

Oasis Academy Daventry Road is committed to providing an exceptional education for its students. Where the Year 7 curriculum requires the use of facilities other than a standard classroom, students have been using specialist facilities at Oasis Academy John Williams. These have included food technology rooms, science labs, music suites, a drama studio, and a range of outdoor and indoor sports facilities.

The academies are working closely to enable access to these specialist rooms and spaces. During term one there were some isolated cases where changes to timetables were necessary due to severe weather preventing students from Daventry Road being able to either walk between the sites or use outdoor spaces. From September 2024, the additional temporary buildings will include additional classrooms, a dedicated sports pitch, enhanced dining facilities, a dedicated canteen kitchen, a science lab, and an art studio.

Oasis Academy Daventry Road is dedicated to ensuring students receive a high-quality education while the academy's permanent home on Daventry Road is under construction.



QUESTION PQ 32**Subject: Redcatch Park Tennis Courts****Question submitted by: Cam Hayward**

The tennis courts at Redcatch Park are currently free to play, but are set to move to a paid subscription service under the Parks Tennis model.

I was disappointed to see this change approved after a majority opposed it at the consultation stage. I personally responded to the consultation to say that I didn't feel the change was needed yet as the courts aren't in urgent need of maintenance, and there is already a tennis club across the road for those who want to pay for a higher quality surface. However, I understand and appreciate that the Parks Tennis model helps to secure the long term future of the courts.

Please can the mayor or relevant cabinet member justify the decision to approve this change despite the outcome of the consultation, and also give details of when the change is due to take place? At the moment, the schedule is not clear other than a vague reference to some time in 2024.

Response:

It is noted that the approach to proceed, was not supported by the feedback from the majority of residents who responded to the survey, who currently use the courts. This is understandable, as this is a significant change to the present situation and one that will result in those users who currently use the courts, having to pay in the future, albeit considerably less than the nearby tennis club. A full household membership will cost just £35 per year.

I should add that concerns expressed through the Redcatch consultation were similar to those when the Parks Tennis Operating Model was first implemented across other sites, which is now successful and sustainable.

Whilst the results of the consultation did not support this model, in the absence of an operating model the courts remain without a viable sustainable future and without funding will fall into a state of disrepair and inevitable deterioration.

Inclusion in the model will help the council manage and mitigate its budget pressures and is aligned to our strategic direction of finding new ways of funding to support service provision and estate maintenance. This approach is also like the programme of sports asset transfers for bowls and football – to third party operators in order to support and sustain these facilities going forward.

The new operating system is planned for April / May, dependant on the weather conditions, allowing the required works to be undertaken.



QUESTION PQ 33

Subject: Barton House

Question submitted by: Nuh Sharif

Is it correct information that a fire safety certificate was denied which prompted the evacuation?

Why would fitting a communal fire alarm system make building safer than having 24/7 fire wardens which barton house has had for a little while now?

Response:

No, that is not correct.

This was an emergency evacuation which took place 24 hours after senior leaders received a report that raised doubts over the structural integrity of the building in the event of a fire, explosion or high impact event.

Given the concern that report raised over building safety, a temporary decant was agreed to prioritise resident safety. Further details of the alarm system being installed will be shared with residents during our meeting on the 10th January.

In essence, the proposed fire alarm system that covers both communal and dwelling areas provides a block-wide simultaneous warning in the event of a fire. This replicates the function of the waking watch and is being installed on the recommendation of the fire safety advice given by our contractors.



QUESTION PQ 34

Subject: Tender Submissions

Question submitted by: Jez Olpin

Mr Mayor, how can the council justify instigating an overly complex tender submission and not assist ALL traders not only those with limited computer literacy but also learning issues. The system is totally unfair and leaves users of these highly regarded facilities both bitter and questioning any true customer benefits in what appears to be nothing more than a covert attempt to make money at the expense of the independent traders who run these loved communities.

Response:

All tenders that are published by Bristol City Council, including Concessionary contracts such as this Parks Contract, are subject to the Bristol City Council Procurement Procedures.

The estimated value of this concessionary contract(s) is an estimate which meets the threshold, as per the BCC Procurement Procedures, to undertake a tender exercise via the electronic tendering system (ProContract).

Prior to the tender exercise commencing, officers advertised and then held a provider session in order to give an overview of the ProContract system and specifically how an application could be made, this session was recorded and can be shared with any interested bidders. If businesses would like a further provider session, the council will be happy to arrange a face-to-face session with business, to provide further support and guidance with regards to the usage of the ProContract tendering system.



QUESTION PQ 35

Subject: Pitches for Traders in Bristol Docks and Parks

Question submitted by: Becky Watkins

The tender process outlined in this petition sounds ethically very dubious, especially given the financial pressure that most small business owners are experiencing at this time. Please can you outline a rationale that justifies asking traders like Adam to 'promise' part of their turnover in addition to a ground rent, simply to secure an area of council land on which to run their business? One that that doesn't just sound like daylight robbery and speaks to the long term impact of Bristol likely losing independent small businesses?

Response:

Not at all dubious. We have a responsibility to ensure we're getting a good market rate for the use of public land and facilities. The income generated from these concessions supports the maintenance Bristol's parks and harbourside, and after 14 years of central government austerity budgets are under pressure.

The pitch fee is based on a percentage of turnover set by the concessionaire. The fixed monthly payments serve as a ground rent (or base rent) for the pitch, which is also set by the concessionaire during the tender, and is offset against the turnover fee during the calculation.

This ensures a minimum guaranteed income to the council, while allowing a flexible fee structure to allow the rent to align with the business' trading levels. Using a base rent and percentage turnover for rent is used widely for commercial businesses and is considered a fairer way of reaching a fair and affordable rent.

We encourage traders to fully consider their finances and project forward, to enable to suggest the percentage of turnover and minimum monthly rent that they are financially sustainable.

