PP 01 Nico Scarlett - Fix Stapleton Road's Bus Seating (128 signatures)

We the undersigned want Bristol City Council to take seriously that the bus seating on Stapleton Road (next to the post office) is needed for the residents and visitors of Easton who are disabled, elderly or pregnant. We want Bristol City Council to understand that it's not okay that we have to either: sit on the floor; sit on the cold metal base (under what would be the seat); or stand for periods of time which they would not do otherwise. We want Bristol City Council to take our concerns seriously and to not neglect residents and visitors of Easton.

We have tried reporting this issue to the council, and have back and forth emails with the Public Transport Team from Bristol City Council, but they are refusing to replace the seating that was taken out due to 'anti-social behaviour'.

We believe that seating is a minimum requirement, that needs to be available for everyone but especially people who are disabled, elderly or pregnant. This means that people unable to stand, or can only stand for small amounts of time, have to stand, or end up sitting on the cold and thin metal base of what was the bottom of the seat.

We believe this is unfair to people who are unable to stand, or can only stand for small amounts of time.

Dear Nico,

Thank you for bringing this issue to Full Council.

You're right to raise concerns about a lack of seating restricting accessibility and making residents' journeys more difficult.

I'm aware that this issue has been brought to the attention of Cllr Don Alexander, Cabinet Member for Transport. He has asked officers to take steps to reinstate the seating and inform all relevant stakeholders of the progress made.

I will take steps to ensure you are updated as this happens.

Submitted by John Stansfield

Title: Plant Based Treaty

The combination of a growing world population increasingly keen to adopt the 'western' diet of high meat, dairy and fish intake is enacting in a scenario where the production of these products (certainly meat and dairy) entails vast - and unavoidably - inefficient land usage. The availability of land is coming into short supply as a result, meaning that humanity's very survival will inevitably involve a wholesale shift towards a (much healthier) plant based diet. That is simple fact that receives the wholesale support of global scientists and institutions from the UN downwards (will provide the respective statements from these bodies). As the UK's first European Green Capital, and the first UK city to declare a Climate Emergency, as well as its clearly stated commitment to improve the health of its citizenry (will provide BCC's respective statements and declared policy) it would be remiss in the extreme for BCC to ignore the 30% contribution of agriculture (mainly animal agriculture) to the world's GOC emissions - and irresponsible in the extreme for BCC to ignore the powerful bodies of evidence testifying to the burgeoning human health problems directly attributable to the consumption of meat, dairy and fish products (with fish now containing large amounts of metals and plastics). These problems include obesity, hearth disease, cancers and strains of diabetes (will include pertinent pronouncements by the medical profession on this). These problems, of course, also impose huge additional pressure on NHS funds. In light of this it is incumbent on BCC to accept the inevitable shift towards increasingly plant based nutrition - and absurd, in view of its credentials - if it does not. The request is therefore that the Council joins other forward-looking councils and bodies by signing up to the Plant Based Treaty - and if it is not prepared to do so - to proved robust reasons why not.

Bristol has been leading the way on sustainable food production - as well as decarbonisation in general – as is evidenced in it being only the second city in the UK to achieve Gold Standard for food sustainability. While I agree that emissions from animal agriculture do need to be tackled, I have some reservations that some of components of this treaty will harm society's poorest.

Changing behavioural habits, such as diets, takes time. Blunt instruments such as a tax on meat could well have no effect on meat consumption but will make already-struggling low income families struggle even further. The focus should instead be on making fruit and vegetables as cheap as possible, so that healthy, sustainable diets are an option for everyone – this is the approach we're taking in Bristol.

However, I would stress that the principles in the treaty are a matter for central Government rather than local. I suggest you email your Member of Parliament about this – three of Bristol's four Labour MPs are vegan, so I'm sure will have sympathy with the treaty's aims.

On a local level, the Labour administration is committing significant resources to make our food systems more sustainable. As I stated, we've received Gold Standard Award for food sustainability – only the second city in the country to do so – for our efforts to reduce food waste, grow the city's good food movement, address food inequality, increase urban food growing, improve catering and procurement, and tackle the impacts of our food system on public health, nature, and climate change. We also have a commitment to growing sustainable food in every ward in the city. It is absolutely right to have a focus on local food production, as doing so massively reduces the airmiles of our food which is one of the main contributors to Co2 emissions from agriculture – both animal and otherwise.

Submitted by Jen Smith

Title: Delivering Better Value in SEND and Safety Valve application

Bristol City Council Safety Valve

At Bristol Schools Forum on 12 July 2023, The director of education presented paper Delivering Better Value in SEND Programme.

There was an update on 26 September 2023 by the same director.

A further update took place on 28 November 2023 by the same director.

There appears to be no update at the meeting on the 16 January 2024. Unfortunately, after the meeting on 12 July 2023, no other Bristol Schools Forum meetings are available to view on YouTube to confirm this.

It seems extraordinary that Bristol City Council gave the appearance of working on the Delivering Better Value in SEND programme when it was already working with the Department for Education on its application to join the Safety Valve Programme from 28 July 2023.

Cabinet papers say that following the invitation to join the Safety Valve, the council 'entered a development period with DfE advisors who worked with us to provide a robust and deliverable DSG DMP and the underpinning financial modelling. On completion of this process the Council's Safety Valve application was formally submitted to the DfE on 12 January 2024 following engagement with Cabinet Board and the Council's Finance Scrunty Task Group. The submission was supported by the Chief Executive, the Director Education and Skills and the Council's Section 151 Officer.'

This covered a period of time, tinkering with Send when the council did not even have an Executive Director of Education.

The paper to approve Bristol's application for the Safety Valve was uploaded the day before the Cabinet meeting. There was no opportunity for members of the public to ask questions or submit statements.

This paper should never have been allowed to go to Cabinet when Bristol had not been upfront and transparent about its application to the Safety Valve. This is something which will have a huge impact on Send children and young people for years to come.

I am unaware of any other local authority which has taken such a cloak and dagger approach to something so important to the point it disregarded all democratic process.

The agenda item was allowed through under APR16 Special Urgency on account that the taking of the decision could not be reasonably deferred.

Well it shouldn't have been allowed. Sometimes people need to say no. There are huge concerns by campaigners in other parts of the country about the impact Safety Valve agreements will have on the provision of Send in local authorities.

If Bristol is harbouring under the illusion that people will go quietly over this, it's wrong.

In accordance with the usual process, the chair of OSMB gave agreement for the paper to be considered urgently at the March meeting. A further paper was tabled for April to provide more information. Both of these have been considered at a combined OSMB and People scrutiny meeting.

Any future administration has the prerogative to refuse membership of the Safety Valve and send back the funding for the Dedicated Schools Grant budget.

Submitted by Lucy Holburn

Title: Bus to Stapleton

Dear Democratic Services,

As a member of the Lower Stapleton Residents Association I would like to advocate for the many people that raised this as a significant issue to them at the last residents meeting.

Removing the bus service to Stapleton has disproportionally impacted people on lower income, people with mobility issues, and is pretty wild considering we are in a climate crisis (people forced to use cars if they have them). It is isolating people.

This is a public health issue, an active travel issue, an Economic issue, a climate issue, and a social justice issue.

We are calling on Bristol City Council and WECA to do everything in your power to address this and put it right - we have been without appropriate public transport for too long.

With thanks Lucy Holburn

Thank you for raising this issue with me.

I agree with you that Bristol's bus services are not what we need them to be. East Bristol has long been ignored by strategic bus routes. They fall short of being the reliable transport option residents deserve, despite their importance for keeping local communities connected. Viable public transport is the backbone of sustainable travel.

Operation of bus services have been deregulated in the United Kingdom since the 1980s, giving local authorities limited powers to influence the way bus operators work.

Supported bus services in the region are managed by the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), who will be delivering improvements through the Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP). You may be interested in reading about the work being done to improve transport in Bristol here: Bristol streets – Transport Corridor Improvements - Travelwest.

Despite limited powers, we've worked hard to implement bus prioritisation where we can. Our recently completed road improvement scheme on Bristol Bridge is supporting a fast, reliable and sustainable travel option for residents to access the city centre. We also have plans for major road improvement works on the A4 Portway, increasing the effectiveness of our busses.

To solve Bristol's transport issues, we need transformative change. We need a segregated mass transit system, separate from other modes of transport to ensure its reliability and to connect people to jobs and opportunity. This must include underground sections where there is no reasonable other option, to prevent crippling road closures that would take our city's transport system back to square one.

I hope this information has been useful, good luck with your campaign.

Submitted by Sally Collins

Title: Bus service for Stapleton

I am writing to echo Councillor Bennett's concern for the people of Stapleton who live on or near a this main road into Bristol and yet are still without any buses to serve them. It seems extraordinary that so many buses frequent Fishponds Road and yet not one cannot deviate along Manor Rd and on through Stapleton. I object most strongly to the loss of a service. Firstbus originally claimed that it was underused. I would argue that it had become so unreliable in terms of punctuality (or not arriving at all) that this contributed to a loss of passengers.

Please find away to allow these citizens of Bristol who live less than three miles from the city centre to allow us to access it! Thank you.

Thank you for raising this issue with me.

I agree with you that Bristol's bus services are not what we need them to be. East Bristol has long been ignored by strategic bus routes. They fall short of being the reliable transport option residents deserve, despite their importance for keeping local communities connected. Viable public transport is the backbone of sustainable travel.

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I hope this information has been useful, good luck with your campaign.

Submitted by Megs Smith

Title: Call for debate around Green agenda and NetZero emissions

The Green agenda supports Net Zero emissions, the eradication of petrol and diesel vehicles and the uptake of Electric Vehicles, but how 'green' this agenda is in reality is up for debate. Councils all over the country are being held into account by residents for their actions around Net Zero and it would be useful for debate to take place in Bristol too.

The Full Council agenda is not set by myself, but through Party Group Leaders and the Lord Mayor.

As a city, we have together set ambitious goals of becoming a carbon neutral, climate resilient, and nature rich city. In the One City Plan, Bristol committed to becoming carbon neutral and climate resilient by 2030. Therefore, as a city we need to act now to reduce direct and indirect carbon emissions to net zero, since we are facing a climate emergency. One goal we are aiming to reach by 2030 is that Bristol will have a sustainable, carbon neutral transport system with a modal shift to significantly more people walking, cycling, and using low carbon transport.

On account of this and the governments directive for us to reduce air pollution to legal limits as quickly as possible, we implemented Bristol's Clean Air Zone (CAZ). Since implementing the CAZ in November 2022, we have seen vast improvements in the air that we all breathe. Nitrogen dioxide pollution is down by ten percent across Bristol, and this is almost thirteen percent lower inside the CAZ. Outside the Bristol Royal Infirmary and Children's Hospital, nitrogen dioxide is down by about twenty percent. This improvement in air quality will have an important impact on our health and our children's health, now and in the future.

Submitted by Tina Holmes

Title: Statement on Council Consultation on Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy Agreement

I will not be able to attend in person, but here is my statement.

Whilst I object strongly to the new allotment rent charges, my concern is that should an Allotment Association chose not to adhere to your new rent and water increases, you will force them by revoking their leases, then just issuing new ones at a higher rate.

Obviously associations do a lot of the leg work themselves using volunteers, requiring minimum input from the council, so shouldn't be forced to charge the same as one directly managed by the council. I hope this is taken in to consideration.

Bristol is a leading city in terms of our approach to sustainable food growing and food equality. Everyone recognises the importance of a thriving network of accessible spaces for local people to grow healthy and sustainable food.

Allotment rents have not been raised for seven years and the current rental income does not meet the cost of running the service. This means that allotments are currently subsidised by council tax payers who do not benefit from an allotment, which is not financially sustainable or fair. This also creates financial pressure for the Parks service, detracting from investment in parks across the city. The rental uplift that was proposed and carried in March's Cabinet, while not meeting full cost recovery, would have improved the financial sustainability of allotments and the service received by tenants.

Submitted by Tess Price

Title: Statement on Council Consultation on Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy Agreement

This is a collective statement from a number of allotment site-based community groups and projects, who have come together to state our concerns about the impact on our groups of the allotment rent rises recently agreed by Cabinet.

Bristol has a fantastic range of motivated and committed community groups/projects on allotment sites, and collectively we bring huge benefits to the city including on access to healthy food, physical and mental health, reducing isolation, building community and opportunities to connect with nature and land.

The Council acknowledges this in its PGSS Food Growing and Allotments strategy, and claims to want to encourage and support us: Page 44 states: "Collective growing plots are a great way to enjoy the benefits of an allotment plot without having to commit to an individual allotment tenancy or join the waiting list for a plot. These have been established by a group or organisation to satisfy a particular community need and interest in food growing, providing social interaction and community cohesion.

There is great opportunity for these initiatives to encourage the participation of under-represented groups, and to be a stepping- stone for everyone to progress from an interest in food growing to taking on their own allotment plot. Increasing opportunities for collective food growing will require a collaborative and creative approach, but it has the potential to reduce pressure on our allotment waiting list and ensure the benefits of food growing are accessible."

But in fact these rent rises will be really damaging to us and they risk closing many of us down.

- The rent rises are huge, ranging from around twice as much to almost 6 times as much as
 current rents. The rises are higher on larger plots, disproportionately affecting our projects.
 Many of us rent multiple plots for our projects, the new rents for many of us will be in the
 region of £500 to over £1000 per year. These are huge sums for community-led,
 volunteer-run projects to find.
- Your proposed 50% discount won't work to make the rent rises manageable for us. Some of us are already receiving discounts of 50% or even 100%. Even with the discount, one Community Orchard has calculated it will have to pay £605lyr under the new rent regime.
- The discount scheme itself will involve a large extra administrative burden on groups and
 potentially large extra costs. In order to receive the discounts, groups may have to keep
 records of all participants/visitors including date/time of visits, equalities monitoring data,
 records of food yields and maintenance activities. GDPR law is likely to apply to these
 records. Groups may also have to set up Public Liability Insurance if they don't already have
 it.

The potential impacts on us are as follows:

 Some of us will be forced to close our projects, or parts of our projects, because they are no longer financially viable. Many of us provide free hands-on food and fruit growing learning opportunities; we give away surplus produce to our local communities, and to local Food Banks; and we provide outdoor healthy spaces and community to people who may otherwise be unable to access such things. Does Council really want us to charge for such services? If so you will make these services unaffordable and inaccessible to many of these people.

- Some of us who raise funds through member subs will have to increase those subs by a large margin to cover our costs, effectively closing our groups to those on a low income.
- Some of us will be forced to seek new or additional grant funding to cover our costs. This will increase our workload, make the future of our groups vulnerable to cuts in grant funding, and prevent us from planning for the longer term. It is also extremely hard to find grant giving bodies willing to fund ongoing running costs such as rent.
- We all rely largely or entirely on volunteer labour to keep our projects running. The extra administrative burden is likely to be impossible to sustain for many of us, already struggling to balance this work with paid employment, family and caring commitments. As a result some of us may have to close because key organisers and volunteers won't be able to continue to run and manage the projects.
- Potential new groups/projects will be disincentivized by the new rents and the need to meet stringent requirements to obtain the 50% discount. New groups of this kind never start out fully formed with lists of volunteers, and are rarely able to obtain grant funding in their early stages. They are nearly always the result of the hard work of a few committed individuals, often for years, in order to get the group up and running and get plots safe and ready for the intended use. Your rent and discount scheme proposals will act as a very high barrier for any new groups of this kind.

We are asking the full Council to reverse and rethink these damaging rent rises as soon as possible, before any of our projects are forced to close.

We are asking that the Council works together with us and other community groups/projects to develop new rent proposals that can support a viable allotments service and enable us to flourish as well.

Furthermore the Council needs to back up their stated encouragement for community groups by looking to work with us and support us. We can help support the allotments with support and training, resources and organisation, but we can only do this if our projects are themselves sustainable. From this could come the innovation which is more important than rent rises to bring about improvement to access and maintenance of allotments.

Groups who have co-written and signed up to this statement:

- Alive Dementia-friendly Allotment
- Beaufort Road Community Growing Collective
- The Birch Collective
- Easton Community Garden
- Edible Bristol
- Fishponds Community Orchard
- The Haven Project
- Herbalists Without Borders Bristol (Herb Allotment)
- Metford Road Community Orchard

- Redland Green Community Orchard
- Royate Hill Community Orchard
- Street Goat
- Thingwall Park Community Chickens
- Woodcraft Community

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Submitted by Caroline Dalcq

Title: Statement on Council Consultation on Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy Agreement

Firstly, the proposed rents are not reasonable and need to be reassessed.

The recent allotment consultation results show that 78% of respondents disagreed with the proposed rent increase. Section 10 of the Allotments Act 1950 provides the power for the Council to charge "such rent as a tenant may reasonably be expected to pay for the land". The definition of reasonable is defined by case law and The National Allotment Society (NAS) gives a number of guidelines for setting reasonable rents. One of which is comparing to leisure facilities. It also suggests that the "present level of rent and its historic tradition" should be taken into account and also the "likely effects of rent levels on plot take-up".

Rents are due to rise between 7 and 492% depending on the plot. This inconsistent rise is not reasonable: it is not on line with the increase to local leisure facility prices, nor does it have any historical precedent.

The councils EIA confirms that people may be priced out of the allotments and the councils risk assessment in the report put to cabinet admits that these price rises will push people off their plots. Is the Council taking into account this effect on plot take-up?

The only argument the council has that their new rents are 'reasonable' is by comparing the rent rises to a few other local authorities (carefully selected for their high rents). In policy 103, the NAS specifically says it "does not endorse the use of benchmarking against other allotment providers".

Secondly the budget supporting the need for these rent increases is unexplained and obscure.

The council has argued time and time again that rents need to rise because allotments are being massively subsided by the parks authority. Its is clear looking at the allotment budgets for 2017-22 that allotment spending is usually higher than income and I accept rents need a SMALL rise to negate this.

However, there are no budget figures available for 22/23 and the budgets for 24/25 suggest that for this year at least the allotments don't outstrip spending, with the spending being £191K and the income being £337K.

Going forward the budget includes a massive and unprecedented spending of £301K per year for the next 15 years on infrastructure. From my understanding it is this figure that is being used to justify the need for the huge rent increases, rather than a smaller rise. However it is very unclear what this money will be spent on.

What allotment infrastructure will cost £4.5 million in the next 15 years? Please can details of this be released and clarified.

When discussing these matters, can we all remember that allotments are a service that the Council has to provide to all, not a luxury we should beg for.

Thank you for listening

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Submitted by Sue Crimlisk

Title: Objection to proposed changes to allotments consultation

Dear Council

I would like to submit my objection to the current proposed changes to the allotments consultation

Yours

Sue Crimlisk

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Submitted by Christopher Faulkner Gibson

Title: Allotment Rents and water Charges

I fully understand that allotment rents need to increase. The fact that previous agreed increases were not implemented is the fault of Bristol City Council, not the allotment tenants who are now facing punitive increases to compensate for this failure.

However, we want to work constructively with the Council, and we all agree that improvements are needed and must be paid for: the current staff levels are totally insufficient. We do not disagree with you on the principles but on the detail and the means of implementation.

Your decision to phase in the increases over two years is welcome, as is making monthly Direct Debit payments available but this does not go far enough.

79% of respondents to your consultation (many of whom live in the two most deprived deciles of the city) said that they either disagreed or disagreed strongly with the rent rises.

This is not reflected in your EIA, and I cannot see how you can justify the rent increases given this level of opposition.

Whilst I was pleased to see the new rules and additional fees postponed for further review and consultation, I do not believe that the responses to the consultation on rents have been properly considered.

Various suggestions have been put forward as to how the allotment charging regime can become fairer, but this is not reflected in your consultation report – you seem determined to go ahead regardless, ignoring both the level of opposition and the constructive suggestions that have been put forward.

In common with many other tenants, I believe your proposals will, if implemented as they are, be vulnerable to Judicial Review. The Bristol Allotmenteers Resist group is actively investigating this, and it is believed that the costs could be met through a Crowdfunder appeal with little difficulty.

I also find it astonishing that so much anger is being stoked up across the entire city so close to an election. I am aware of several people who are vowing that if these increases go ahead they will no longer vote Labour, saying they feel betrayed that a Labour Council is penalising working people in this way.

Please, step back from this and take an altogether more imaginative and collaborative approach.

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Submitted by Samara Flaherty-Rigg

Title: Statement on Council Consultation on Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy Agreement

Hi there,

Just to inform you we sent our BellHill Allotment petition to CEO Mr Peacock and our MP representative-Kerry McCarthy..stating our concerns..still awaiting response.

As a council to public services how do you plan to honour the equality act 2o10 and your duty to fair tariff, where these rents increases cease to be inclusive and Benifit subsidies do fail to accommodate the broader community..if failure to do so in its approach..does directly discriminate, your rent increases be distributed as over two years is still unrealistic and still will have the exact same negative impact on allotment people and shares holders ..how do you wish to proceed in view of your obligations to the above?

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Submitted by Melanie Riley

Title: Bristol allotment price hike

I disagree with the potential increase in allotment fees throughout bristol. Allotments should be affordable for all and with the current increase people will be forced to give up their plots. People use allotments for many reasons beyond just growing fruit and veg such as for wellbeing purposes and for a sense of community. Preventing people on lower income from access to this is outrageous. I love bristol for its village like/community feel however increasing the allotment prices will take this away from many. There is a joy in having an allotment so close to home whilst living in a small terrace house with a tiny back garden. It is not fair to take this away from people!!

More land should be allocated to allotments within the local plan instead of price increases. With allotment fees increasing people are more likely to opt for a private allotment company instead of the council owned allotments. These currently provide more services than the council run allotments (we only get access to water!) and are therefore a more desirable option and also availability.

I honestly think you should re-think the plans on increasing allotment prices before it is too late and everyone boycotts bristol council allotments!

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Submitted by Kelly Allen

Title: Statement on Council Consultation on Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy Agreement

I just want to register my objection to the rent increases.

This is awful and unsustainable and undemocratic. It has been pushed through by the council with no real consultation with the allotment tenants.

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Submitted by David Adams

Title: Statement on Council Consultation on Proposed changes to Bristol Allotment Rent and Tenancy Agreement

Fees:

- 1. The rent rises are massive, way above inflation.
- 2. It is unreasonable to have extra fees for installing sheds, fruit cages and ponds. New tenants will have extra fees to pay if they want to install these things, which is just too much on top of the raise in plot fees.
- 3. It is unreasonable to have fees for getting a key so you could have an allotment but not get a key to access it without paying extra money
- 4. I don't trust that BCC is able to reliably contact me via email £50 for a rental reminder is unacceptable.
- 5. It is not acceptable to ask people to pay for a site inspection challenging a Notice to Quit.
- 6. Fees for clearing a plot-holder's overgrown plot after having left are extraordinary.
- 7. Likewise fees for removing structures these may have been there on the plot before current owner took over

Is the point to a lot of money from these fees - mediation included?

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Submitted by Annette Cath

Title: East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood

I have been unable to find any evidence of funding or a budget to remove or alter street furniture after the ebln trial according to public feedback. This seems to suggest it is not a trial but a permanent scheme. This appears to be a dishonest approach by the council.

In March, the decision was made to proceed with the East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood trial scheme.

You can find more information about the scheme in these blogs: <u>Delivering the East Bristol</u>
<u>Liveable Neighbourhood - The Bristol Mayor</u>, <u>East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood to be trialled - The Bristol Mayor</u>.