

Public Forum

Date: Tuesday, 9 July 2024



Agenda

1. Public Statements Received

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PS01	Colin Smith	Alderman William (Bill) Payne
PS02	Gary Hopkins	CAT Transfers
PS03	Nigel Varley	Fire Risk

2. Public Questions Received

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Ref No	Name	Title
PQ01	David Carslake	Closing Cycle Lanes
PQ02	Gary Hopkins	Jubilee Pool
PQ03	Irene Evans	Gilton House
PQ04	Jeff Sutton	Tower Block Fire Risks
PQ05	Sue Smith	Gilton House
PQ06	Helen Hughes	East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood
PQ07	Melissa Topping	East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood
PQ08	Stuart Phelps	East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood
PQ09	Matt Sanders	Bus Gates and Lanes
PQ10	Laura Chapman	Urban Living SPD
PQ11	Caroline Lee-Smith	Permitted Development
PQ12	Helen Evans	Member Training
PQ13	Suzanne Audrey	Filton Airfield footbridge
PQ14	Ben Staples	East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood

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STATEMENT PS 01

Submitted by Colin Smith

Title: Alderman William (Bill) Payne

Alderman William (Bill) Payne 1950 - 2021

Some of you will remember our friend, colleague and fellow councillor Bill Payne who was Member for Frome Vale on two occasions. You may also probably remember that Bill suffered lifelong ill health as a haemophiliac, who sadly died in 2021 aged 70. Bill was a great family man as well as a diligent, caring and compassionate councillor.

What you may not know is that Bill was a victim of the Infected Blood Scandal, who campaigned for so many years on behalf of the community of victims for justice as well as compensation. He died before that campaign was concluded and the Public Inquiry Report published, but you may have noticed that Bill's name was mentioned on BBC Points West as one of the many victims who were unknowingly given contaminated blood transfusions and Factors 8 & 9 derived from such transfusions. To us his friends and former councillor colleagues, Bill was a lovely man, a gentle man who cared about his fellow man as well as his family. He was our quiet, humble and understated hero, who never sought the limelight or attention for himself, only his cause and the pursuit of justice.

We would request Full Council to give proper recognition to Bill's service to the City of Bristol, to Frome Vale, to his cause and campaign and to his friends who also died or suffered from contaminated blood and contracted Hepatitis C.

He was a great man, humble to his core, a proud Bristolian, and steadfast in his campaign for justice. We ask that Bristol City Council finds a suitable way to pay tribute to his life, his cause and his achievements.

STATEMENT PS 02

Submitted by Gary Hopkins

Title: CAT Transfers

It is urgent that the terms of CAT transfers and interaction with organisations that serve the public interest in Bristol are reviewed(as an example jubilee pool was handicapped from accessing central government funds specifically designed to assist swimming pools). BCC is not awash with funds and fully recognising the good that organisations can do in terms of social value would be far more productive than just looking at part of the short term financial effect of the council . This matter should have been debated last year but can i get an assurance that this will now be reviewed urgently as many of the voluntary organisations are requesting.

STATEMENT PS 03

Submitted by Nigel Varley

Title: Fire Risk

Bristol City Council is committed to open, inclusive and transparent government as is required by new legislation. However, our experience in dealing with the Council in the past two years leads us to believe that a lot of work needs to be done.

Fire Risk Assessments are important documents. However, few tenants know about them, the link on the Council's website is obscure and, for a long time, requests for FRAs were ignored. The Council does not pro-actively inform tenants of the FRAs for their block and the problems they reveal, potentially placing us at risk.

At our request, Avon Fire & Rescue Service conducted a fire safety inspection of Gilton House and sent a report to the Council. It has taken three months and a Freedom of Information request for us to get a response to our original submission. We should not have to wait so long, make repeated requests and use Freedom of Information for information on such an important matter of fire safety. Finally, we have been unable to get clear information on why compensation for extra heating costs caused by insulation removal has not yet been paid. We should not have to keep asking. If the Council is to achieve its commitment to inclusiveness and transparency, there has not only to be a policy change but also a cultural one.

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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 affects the city.
- Members of the public who live or own a business in Bristol may submit up to 3 written questions, and may ask a maximum of 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 Leader or Chair of a Policy or Regulatory Committee. 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	To	Title
PQ01	David Carslake	Cllr Plowden Chair Transport & Connectivity	Closing Cycle Lanes
PQ02	Gary Hopkins	Leader	Jubilee Pool
PQ03	Irene Evans	Cllr Parsons Chair Homes & Housing Delivery	Gilton House
PQ04	Geoff Sutton	Cllr Parsons Homes & Housing Delivery	Tower Block Fire Risks
PQ05	Sue Smith	Cllr Parsons Chair Homes & Housing Delivery	Gilton House
PQ06	Helen Hughes	Cllr Plowden Chair Transport & Connectivity	East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood
PQ07	Melissa Topping	Leader	East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood
PQ08	Stuart Phelps	Cllr Fodor Chair Environment & Sustainability	East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood
PQ09	Matt Sanders	Cllr Plowden Transport & Connectivity	Bus Gates and Lanes
PQ10	Laura Chapman	Cllr Brown Chair Economy & Skills	Urban Living SPD
PQ11	Caroline Lee-Smith	Leader	Permitted Development
PQ12	Helen Evans	Leader	Member Training
PQ13	Suzanne Audrey	Cllr Plowden Chair Transport & Connectivity	Filton Airfield Footbridge
PQ14	Ben Staples	Cllr Plowden Chair Transport & Connectivity	East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood

QUESTION PQ 01

Question submitted by: David Carslake

To Cllr Plowden, Transport and Connectivity Chair

Subject: Closing Cycle Lanes

Contractors often close cycle lanes, requiring cyclists to divert over a short length of footway, and this is always accompanied by the putting up of "cyclists dismount" signs. This is despite the fact that the potential for cyclist-pedestrian conflict is often considerably less than exists in many areas which are shared-use by design. A recent example where these signs were used is the Temple Quarter site on Cattle Market Road, where cyclists were diverted over a wide pavement which rarely has any pedestrians on it at all. I suspect that contractors put these signs up to cover themselves if something does happen, but they have harmful consequences for the public perception of cyclists. People see cyclists (quite rightly) ignoring the instruction to dismount and it feeds into the narrative of cyclists as rule breakers and the consequent disregard for cyclists' safety. There's also a risk of a "crying wolf" effect if there were ever a real (but hidden) need to dismount.

Does council guidance to contractors allow these signs only in special circumstances when they are absolutely necessary, or does it rather encourage their universal use regardless of the negative consequences for cyclists?

Are alternative signs available?

In the vast majority of cases a more appropriate sign would be "Cyclists proceed with caution" or "Cyclists give way to pedestrians".



QUESTION PQ 02

Question submitted by: Gary Hopkins

To the Leader

Subject: Jubilee Pool

Since being transferred to local control through an asset transfer Jubilee pool has performed brilliantly, membership is up, more schools are using it, a greater variety of sessions are taking place and improvements to the fabric are progressing. This is all despite the terms of the CAT, which the new pool management had to accept as the only alternative was closure, certainly not being generous to the pool.

The pool is a wonderful local asset serving many people in knowle and surrounding areas.

1 Now that the mayor is no longer in charge can I get an assurance that the new administration of BCC will review the terms of the CAT to allow the pool to not only operate into the future but to invest for the longer term without facing additional costs?

2 last financial year the area 5 area committee was prevented from making a local CIL grant to jubilee pool by an intervention from the Mayor's Office with the statement that the terms of a previous cabinet decision prevented the granting of local CIL funds. Is this healthy? not only in terms of local democracy but also in terms of support for work that was in the interests of the city and our environment.

3. Can i now get an assurance that in future jubilee pool will not be specifically penalised in this way and that the future committee will have these handcuffs removed?



QUESTION PQ 03

Question submitted by: Irene Evans

To: Cllr Parsons, Homes and Housing Delivery Chair

Subject: Gilton House

Gilton House is a block of 46 flats and is supported housing for the over-60s undergoing renovation works including the replacement of inflammable insulating cladding. Replacing the insulation began in February 2023 and finished in March 2024. For two winters we were without insulating cladding having either to endure the cold or pay hundreds of pounds extra in heating costs.

On 28th February, the Council agreed to include in this year's budget £150,000 to compensate tenants in blocks that had been without insulation. To date we have received nothing. We now understand it is being referred to the Homes and Housing Delivery PCCB (whatever that is) on 15th July. If we are to receive anything it will be in August at the earliest, six months after the decision.

Will compensation still be paid and, if so, how much each and when, and why have we been given no clear explanation of what is causing the delay?



QUESTION PQ 04

Question submitted by: Geoff Sutton

To: Cllr Parsons, Homes and Housing Delivery Chair

Subject: Tower Block Fire Risks

Will the Council recognise and attempt to resolve through negotiation problems created for residents of tower blocks with mobility issues caused by the enforcement of fire regulations?

These require the removal of mobility scooters from landings. In Gilton House there is nowhere else to put them: flat entrances are too small and there is no charging room. The effect is to imprison elderly and disabled residents in their homes which, besides being cruel, is discriminatory. Fire hazard removal notices given without discussion or provision of an alternative have caused much distress. Disabled residents are also at risk from the lack of Personal Evacuation Plans and refuges.

Gilton House Tenants' Association has proposed a quick, easy and cheap solution to the problem in our block by requesting the creation of a charging space in the foyer. We hope the Council will support this.



QUESTION PQ 05

Question submitted by: Sue Smith

To Cllr Parsons, Homes and Housing Delivery Chair

Subject: Gilton House

It is the second anniversary of the scaffolding going up for the renovation of Gilton House. We have been told it will be finished in October but few of us hold out any hope.

The whole project has been dogged by delays and slow progress. There have been weeks on end when no work was being done. At the moment work seems to stop at 3.00pm and can't be done when it is windy or raining because the cover protecting workers has been taken off. We have been given lots of excuses for the slow progress but few of them are convincing.

When they started removing the inflammable polystyrene cladding it blew over a wide area of Brislington. Some new windows were fitted badly so builders had to return to fix them. Internal decoration was done before building work started so then had to be re-done when it was messed up. Now two, sometimes three blokes are sticking tiles the size of a mobile phone on the outside, one at a time.

Our lives have been disrupted for two years by cold, noise, dirt, nowhere to sit outside and limited parking for residents with mobility difficulties. The centre of Brislington (which the community is trying to improve) looks awful. The whole project must be way over-budget.

Will the Council learn the lessons of Gilton House and ensure that the lives of residents of the other blocks having cladding replaced are not as badly disrupted as ours have been?



QUESTION PQ 06

Question submitted by: Helen Hughes

To Cllr Plowden, Transport and Connectivity Chair

Subject: East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood

1. On the Liveable Neighbourhoods page of the Bristol City Council website it is stated: "Designing changes with the local community means they'll meet local needs, this is known as co-design". Community engagement and "co-design" is emphasised throughout the council literature on the EBLN scheme, for example in the Decision Pathway Report of 4th April 2023. Special funding for this purpose was even drawn from the EU. Can the chair please say why, if the intention was to "co-design" and "meet local needs", the funding from WECA was only available for blocking roads, putting in cameras (known as "bus gates"), providing bicycle hangars and removing parking spaces, rather than for whatever creative ideas the residents themselves might have had to meet their needs?
2. Can the Chair of the committee state honestly that it was the council's intention to truly listen to residents of the area and not simply to carry out pro forma "consultations" heavily nudging people towards the council's own plans?
3. Many residents of Barton Hill, including people with disabilities, members of the Somali community and people running local businesses, are upset and angry about the decision to implement the project despite their objections, because they fear their lives will be made much more difficult, if not intolerable, and their concerns have been brushed aside rather than listened to. What is the Chair of the committee going to do about this?



QUESTION PQ 07

Question submitted by: Melissa Topping

To the Leader

Subject: East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood

Why are you not listening to the voices of Lawrence Hill, Redfield and Barton Hill regarding the negative effects of EBLN Road blockages and very poor consultation process?

Why are you continuing to spend such a ridiculous amount of money on this despite a huge majority being against the scheme in an area with such high levels of poverty and low traffic use?



QUESTION PQ 08

Question submitted by: Stuart Phelps

To Cllr Fodor, Environment and Sustainability Chair

Subject: East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood

Implementing traffic restrictions in the East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood was partly made in response to concerns about air pollution levels in the area. Please provide details on the specific air pollution data that informed this decision.

Specifically, I would like to know:

- What types of pollutants were measured?
- What were the timeframes for the data collection?
- What were the sources of the data (e.g., monitoring stations, modelling)?

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to receiving your response



QUESTION PQ 09

Question submitted by: Matt Sanders

To Cllr Plowden, Transport and Connectivity Chair

Subject: Bus Gates and Lanes

QUESTION 1 Undersized Signage

Since it started in January, the Cumberland Road Bus Gate has issued 40,000 Penalty Charge notices - putting it on course to become this year's highest-grossing Bus Gate in the entire country.

Coincidentally, ALL of the Advance Warning Signs are SMALLER than the sizes specified in the Traffic Signs Manual, Chapter 3 Appendix A, and Chapter 7 Appendix E.

I have repeatedly submitted diagrams and measurements to prove this claim, and received NO counter arguments from anybody.

As the Council is aware, the Traffic Penalty Tribunal sets a very low bar, when it comes to adjudicating the "adequacy" of signage, so was always likely to turn a blind eye to these irregularities.

Regardless of this, the Transport Department COULD have specified signage which MET, or even EXCEEDED, the official specifications - yet it chose NOT to.

If the Council's genuine priority is to PREVENT drivers from contravening this Bus Gate - then WHY did they specify undersized signs?

QUESTION 2 Bus Gate Refunds

On May 17th, I submitted a document to Councillors, outlining twenty-five design faults, at the Cumberland Road Bus Gate.

I also flagged that drivers were being sent MULTIPLE fines, for contraventions which ALL took place before they received their first letter.

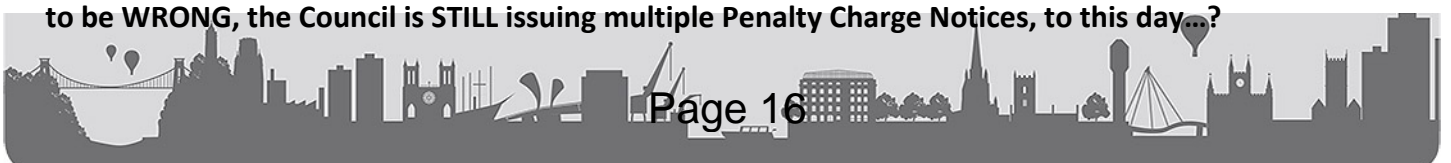
Since then, I've helped three drivers appeal to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal, by providing evidence of the non-compliance of signage, etc.

In every case, the Council refunded or cancelled most of their fines - for contraventions dating back to January 5th.

Perhaps these fines were cancelled, to prevent my evidence being seen by the Tribunal's Adjudicators.

Unless of course, this policy of refunding multiple fines ALSO applies to all OTHER drivers, too.

Therefore, please clarify WHO is eligible for this refund policy - and explain WHY, if it is now deemed to be WRONG, the Council is STILL issuing multiple Penalty Charge Notices, to this day...?



QUESTION 3 Red Surface Dressing

While not a legal requirement from the Department for Transport, the Council’s policy document “Designing for Buses” stipulates that Bristol’s “24-hour bus lanes are implemented with a red surface dressing”.

Therefore, in August 2022 the Council’s designers specified this measure for the Cumberland Road Bus Gate.

A year later, in August ’23, the Council issued a Press Release, which confirmed that a red surface WOULD be applied during its installation.

Four weeks later, the installation was completed - WITHOUT a red surface dressing.

The Transport Dept claims this was due to “Contractor Availability”. But the contractors were there on site for a month, installing EVERY other element of the Bus Gate.

Enforcement commenced on January 2nd. But a red surface was not added until April 5th, following adverse publicity in March.

Published data shows that contraventions in April were 60% less than those in March. So the previous LACK of red surfacing was responsible for around 18,000 ADDITIONAL contraventions, in January to March.

WHEN was the decision taken, to OMIT the red surface dressing - and WHY?



QUESTION PQ 10

Question submitted by: Laura Chapman

To Cllr Brown, Economy and Skills Chair

Subject: Urban Living SPD

Does BCC consider that the Urban Living SPD has (or will be) incorporated into the new local plan?

If the SPD will cease to exist, do you feel satisfied that the new local plan offers an equivalent (or improved) level of protection against inappropriate development?

During pre-app consultations for privately owned sites, do BCC ever advise/impose a minimum quantum of housing development (units)?



QUESTION PQ 11

Question submitted by: Caroline Lee Smith

To the Leader

Subject: Permitted Development

Can you clarify that PD rules do not apply to full planning applications?

Surely this is a waste of officers time and they have better things to do than squabble over 0.7m on a domestic extension, when they should be spending their time dealing with the more pressing planning issues in Bristol?



QUESTION PQ 12

Question submitted by: Helen Evans

To the Leader

Subject: Member Training

Are there any minimum proficiency standards a cllr should reach/maintain in order to sit on their respective committee(s)?



QUESTION PQ 13

Question submitted by: Suzanne Audrey

To Cllr Plowden, Transport and Connectivity Chair

Subject: Filton Airfield Footbridge

With regard to the proposed pedestrian bridge linking the former Filton Airfield and the Brabazon Hangar site over the Henbury Loop railway line, Bristol City Council planning website currently indicates:

Construction of a new pedestrian bridge linking the former Filton Airfield and the Brabazon Hangar site over the Henbury Loop railway line, including earthworks and associated development.

Arnold Laver Brabazon Hangar Railway Bridge West Way Bristol BS34 7DU

Ref. No: 23/00055/F | Validated: Fri 06 Jan 2023 | Status: PENDING CONSIDERATION

However, South Gloucestershire Council planning website currently indicates:

P22/06722/F|Construction of a new pedestrian bridge linking the former Filton Airfield and the Brabazon Hangar site over the Henbury Loop railway line, including earthworks and associated development (amendment to previously approved scheme P19/16742/F).

WITHDRAWN

While this may be considered a planning issue, the transport plan for YTL's proposed arena is an issue for Bristol's transport officers and the Transport committee. The movement of pedestrians, and the proposed pedestrian bridge, are important elements of the transport plan.

Question. Please will you give an update, providing as much information as you can, on the proposed pedestrian bridge linking the former Filton Airfield and the Brabazon Hangar site over the Henbury Loop railway line?



QUESTION PQ 14

Question submitted by: Ben Staples

To Cllr Plowden, Transport and Connectivity Chair

Subject: East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood

With a mandatory consultation being issued for the East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme, in which the results showed an overwhelming majority response of the community being against this scheme coming into place, how can the council justify still going ahead with this scheme; ignoring over 1000 negative comments or requests for changes where so many people will be negatively affected by this scheme.

What makes the council think it doesn't have to represent the community in this issue?

To the Leader:

The council has been elected to represent the people of Bristol, listen to their concerns, fears, worries and act on behalf of the best of interest of those that believed you would speak and act for them - giving a voice to those who struggle to have one.

So, after you have heard all of the concerns this evening for the East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood, reading over 1000 comments from the official consultation asking for this to stop; what makes you think you are still acting on behalf the community by voting in favour of and pushing forward this scheme?

