Brighton & Hove City Council

COUNCIL
ADDENDUM 2

2.00PM, THURSDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2026

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

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ADDENDUM

ITEM		Page
61	WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS.	3 - 22

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council **Agenda Item 61**

Subject: **Written questions from Councillors**

Date of meeting: **26 November 2026**

Report of: **Director of Governance & Law**

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Ward(s) affected: **All**

For general release

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answer detailed below:

1. Councillor Earthey:

Now that I have a bus pass I travel far more by bus and notice how often buses are stopped a few feet from their stop by red pedestrian lights. Having to stop dead at the red light only to start again to travel a few feet to the bus stop wastes emissions for the sake of a few seconds of saved waiting time by pedestrians. Please provide a progress update on the BHCC B&H Buses joint pilot project in which buses are fitted with a device that communicates with the lights at pedestrian crossings, and keeps them green long enough for the bus to pass without stopping. When is the expected rollout date of this system across the city?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor Earthey. We are presently doing this. This is a priority for our data-led administration: using evidence and advanced technology to optimise signal phasing, improve bus journey times and traffic flows, while enabling safe, convenient pedestrian crossings.

Through our Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG), we are continuing to expand bus priority technology at signalised junctions and pedestrian crossings across the city. The system enables approaching buses to communicate with traffic signals so that, where appropriate, the signals can adjust their timings to help buses pass through more efficiently, reducing unnecessary stopping and improving journey reliability.

The next corridor currently being developed is in the west of the city, running from Kingsway and Grand Avenue, along Grand Avenue, Church Road and Western Road to Montpelier Road. This will provide bus priority for services from all operators using the corridor.

We have also been working with Brighton & Hove Buses to identify the strategic corridors and junctions where extending this technology would provide the greatest benefit, and we will continue to engage with other bus operators as further locations are developed.

Our aim is to minimise unnecessary delays for everyone—not simply transfer waiting time from one group to another—and keep our city moving.

Rather than a single citywide rollout date, the technology will be introduced progressively as individual corridors and junctions are identified, designed and funded. Our aim is therefore to continue expanding coverage across the city, prioritising locations where it can deliver the greatest improvements to bus journey times and reliability.

2. Councillor Earthey:

The X Bus concept has proven very successful, but the vast majority of X services still originate/terminate in the city centre as opposed to being truly cross-city. Can you commit to looking at an X Bus-based Brighton 'Crossrail' service that runs limited stop through the city centre from Newhaven/Seaford to Shoreham/Worthing? This would save a lot of hassle for residents wanting to travel from the east to the west of Brighton without having to change bus in North Street.

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor Earthey. This is a helpful suggestion and one we have raised with local bus operators on a number of occasions.

Working with operators, our administration has supported the new 1X and 3X and strengthened the 12X, 14X and 25X, carefully considering routes and timetables to build an effective express network.

Operator feedback to date references scaling up limited-stop cross-city service to such an extent would be challenging commercially, as many passengers travelling through the city want access to key destinations such as North Street, Churchill Square and Western Road. This is also why existing express services have generally avoided operating through the central area in this way.

However, we recognise the potential benefits of better east-west connectivity and reducing the need for passengers to change buses in the city centre. This is why under this administration, the 3X takes a brand-new cross-city route, avoiding North Street, the Clock Tower and Churchill Square. It demonstrates that better connections need not mean sending every bus through the same central corridor.

Developing this network sits alongside our Bus Service Improvement Plan and Local Authority Bus Grant-funded schemes, supporting access to jobs, education and a growing economy. Our ambition is straightforward: faster, more reliable journeys with fewer unnecessary changes.

We will therefore continue to explore opportunities with operators through the Enhanced Bus Partnership, including whether future service development could provide stronger cross-city connections.

3. Councillor McNair:

The vast majority of residents in Vale Avenue would agree that cars travel far too fast along the road as they come off the A27. What measures can the council implement in Vale Avenue before there are more serious accidents than there have already been? We have reported Vale Avenue to the Safer, Better Streets Scheme.

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor McNair, for your question. I share the concerns of many Vale Avenue residents. Our data-led administration is committed to safer, better streets for everyone and reducing collisions and injuries. We are aware of concerns about vehicle speeds and road safety on Vale Avenue, particularly for traffic entering from the A27, and the request for measures will be considered through the Safer, Better Streets process.

We have made many road safety improvements across the city. Demand is high and regrettably; we cannot progress every request immediately. Schemes are therefore assessed and prioritised using a fair, transparent and data-led process, taking account of factors such as collision history, vehicle speeds and the needs of all road users including pedestrians.

Good design matters, but so does safer driving. Alongside assessing design improvements through the Safer, Better Streets scheme, we need greater awareness and consideration from everyone, particularly to protect people walking, wheeling and cycling. Drivers leaving the A27 must slow down and obey existing speed limits as they enter residential streets - not further along Vale Avenue but on entry to the speed limit. The speed limit is a maximum, not a target; conditions may require slower speeds.

4. Councillor McNair:

Despite there being funding for the new bus lane along a short stretch of London Road, no improvements have been made to pedestrian crossings across London Road and Carden Avenue at the Carden Avenue roundabout. What plans are in place to help pedestrians cross this busy junction across both Carden Avenue and across London Road?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor McNair, for your question. I recognise residents' concerns about crossing both London Road and Carden Avenue at this busy junction. Improving bus journeys and pedestrian safety must go hand in hand.

The funding available for the recent London Road bus lane was specifically provided for bus priority measures and included a new signalised crossing at Old London Road.

We are aware of the difficulties pedestrians face crossing both London Road and Carden Avenue at the Carden Avenue roundabout junction.

Improving the route is identified as a priority within the council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan or LCWIP. Our aspiration is, therefore, to extend the active travel route from Preston Park to Patcham, which would provide an opportunity to consider improved pedestrian crossing facilities across both London Road and Carden Avenue as part of a wider scheme. This is, however, dependent on securing future funding and completing the necessary design and consultation work.

Our commitment is to safer, better streets — not just moving traffic but helping people cross safely and confidently.

5. Councillor Meadows:

At Full Council in March 2026, we were told that the council's "Flood Risk Management team has commissioned a citywide Surface Water Management Feasibility Study, due for completion by the summer. The study will identify a preferred option for this area, covering both traditional highway drainage solutions and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), and will provide a business case to support funding bids to Southern Water, the Environment Agency and the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee."
Has the study been completed, is funding now being sought, and when can residents in Winfield Avenue, Warmdene Road, and Carden Avenue expect to have drainage solutions and flood protection measures such as flood gates in place?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor Meadows. I recognise residents' concerns in Winfield Avenue, Warmdene Road and Carden Avenue.

Reducing repeated flooding is a priority. For this reason, our citywide data-led Surface Water Management Feasibility Study is progressing well and is expected to be completed in January 2027. The study is assessing how Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), alongside improvements to the existing highway drainage network, can reduce surface water flood risk across the city and will identify practical options that are both technically feasible and economically viable.

The modelling undertaken as part of the study is already helping us identify areas of increased surface water flood risk and target maintenance of the existing drainage network accordingly.

Once completed, the study will provide the evidence needed to develop a prioritised programme of schemes and support applications to the Environment Agency's new

Surface Water Investment Model (SWIM). In parallel, we are working with Southern Water on a major programme of surface water improvements across the city. This is currently at the design stage, funded by Southern Water, which has already contributed around £400,000 towards the construction of SuDS schemes across our city.

For Winfield Avenue, Warmdene Road and Carden Avenue specifically, it would be premature to give a firm delivery date or commit to particular measures such as flood gates until the study and design work have identified the most appropriate solutions and the necessary funding has been secured. The intention is that this work provides the evidence and business case needed to move from identifying flood risk to delivering effective prioritised interventions in the areas of greatest need.

6. Councillor Meadows:

We were told, with regard to the broken crazy paving in Patcham Peace Gardens, on 18 December 2025 by Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries that a “repair request has been raised as a H&S concern and sent to out Premises team for quotation and immediate repair”. However, a year later, nothing has yet happened.
When are the doric temple and the crazy paving in the Peace Gardens likely to be repaired?

Reply from by Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries.

Thank you for your question, Councillor Meadows. The request for repair was recently re-submitted to the premises team, and an onsite meeting is due to take place shortly. The repair will be undertaken once the scope of the works is confirmed.

7. Councillor Theobald:

There are many important heritage sites in Patcham such as the 16th Century dovecote, Patcham Peace Gardens and the clocktower, but no information board to help the local resident or visitor learn about them. Are there any plans to erect information boards or even simple QR codes nearby?

Reply from Councillor McGregor, Cabinet Member for Economy, Heritage, Culture & Tourism.

Thank you for your question, Councillor Theobald. We don't currently have plans to place information boards or develop QR codes at these sites.

Officers from City Parks and Culture will take this away to see what is possible within the available budget. You may also wish to consider whether funding through the Better Brighton & Hove Fund could support the development of these.

8. Councillor Theobald:

According to The Argus (11th September 2026), “Contractors will be inspecting and clearing almost 600 drains and gullies on 237 roads in flood risk areas of the city as part of efforts to reduce surface water flooding during the autumn and winter.” Patcham & Hollingbury is very susceptible to flooding, for example Carden Avenue, Winfield Avenue, Warmdene Road and Old London Road, as well as many parts of Hollingbury. Which streets in Patcham & Hollingbury have had their drains cleared this autumn? Which streets are still to be cleared?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor Theobald. I recognise residents’ concerns about the risk of flooding across Patcham and Hollingbury. This is important and is why the council has been carrying out a targeted autumn cleansing programme focusing on gullies in areas identified as being at greater risk of surface water flooding.

Within Patcham & Hollingbury, this targeted programme has included Greenfield Crescent, Old Farm Road, Patchdean, Overhill Drive, Carden Avenue, Overhill Gardens, Graham Avenue and Braybon Avenue, with a fair number of gullies on these roads successfully accessed and cleansed.

However, not every gully could be completed on the first visit. Further attention is required at a small number of locations, including Braybon Avenue and parts of Carden Avenue and Overhill Drive. In some cases access was prevented by parked vehicles; in others, issues such as jammed grids or drainage defects were identified. Where defects require more substantial works, these are being addressed through the council’s citywide capital drainage repair programme.

This targeted flood-risk programme is additional to the council’s normal cyclical gully cleansing across Patcham & Hollingbury. Where gullies could not be accessed or require repairs, these will therefore need follow-up visits or works rather than being treated as completed.

Our priority is effective clearance and follow-through — not simply recording a visit, ensuring the job is done.

9. Councillor Hogan:

What practical steps are the administration taking to support independent businesses, tackle empty commercial premises and make Brighton and Hove a more attractive place to work, invest and shop?

Reply from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration.

We are proud that Brighton & Hove City Council is taking practical steps to support independent businesses and strengthen the city's economy. The council delivers the Brighton & Hove Growth Hub, which provides free business advice, workshops, networking opportunities and access to funding information for start-ups, small businesses and businesses looking to grow. The service works alongside the

Business & IP Centre Sussex (BIPC) to support entrepreneurship, innovation and business growth.

Alongside direct business support, the council is delivering regeneration and public realm improvements, including investment in transport infrastructure, seafront enhancements and city-centre projects that make Brighton & Hove a more attractive place to work, invest and shop. By improving commercial areas, attracting investment and supporting business growth, the council is helping to bring activity back into vacant premises while strengthening local centres. These projects help to build commercial confidence, increase footfall and create vibrant places.

We are pleased that Brighton & Hove has a lower high-street vacancy rate than the average for England, and that we have a thriving small business sector. However, we understand the impact that long-standing vacant premises can have on the look and feel of our high streets. Where this is the case, we will seek to work with landlords to bring long-standing vacant properties back into use and explore how powers available to councils can help tackle persistent vacancies. It is also worth recognising and celebrating the significant strengths of our small business economy, as documented in the Sussex and Brighton Strategic Authority Prosperity Strategy.

Together, these measures help create the conditions for independent businesses to thrive, supporting vibrant high streets and local centres, attracting investment and maintaining Brighton & Hove's reputation as a leading location for enterprise, innovation and creativity.

10. Councillor Hogan:

Why does Brighton & Hove City Council close most of its departmental telephone lines to residents at 1.30pm every weekday, when the Council itself continues to operate until 5pm? Can the Administration explain the financial and staffing reasons behind this decision and whether it will commit to extending telephone access until at least 5pm to ensure residents receive a fair and accessible service?

Reply from Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Public Realm & Local Government Reorganisation.

The council's approach to customer contact is guided by the Customer Experience Strategy, approved by councillors in 2023, and reflected in our publicly available Customer Offer. At its core is the need to align limited resources with customer demand, balancing access across contact channels with timely and efficient responses. Over the past decade, customer behaviour has shifted significantly, with the majority of enquiries now received through digital channels, including online forms and email. The council's key service telephone lines are therefore generally open between 9:30am and 1:30pm, with afternoons dedicated to responding to digital enquiries and completing follow-up work arising from telephone contact. These opening hours form part of a wider approach to managing demand across all channels, rather than telephone access in isolation. This allocation of capacity supports responses within expected timeframes while maintaining multiple routes into services. Customers who need to contact us by telephone can continue to do so, while those able to use online services are encouraged to choose digital channels.

Together, these arrangements support fair and efficient access to services, making best use of available resources while preserving support for residents who require additional assistance.

11. Councillor Lyons:

We were notified that an outline application for development at Toad Hole Valley was submitted to BHHC on 11 November 2025. 12 months on please provide an update.

Reply from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration.

The application remains under consideration whilst we wait for additional information to be submitted which is required to consider and progress the application. The application currently has a holding objection from National Highways whilst additional transport modelling information is submitted, this means the application cannot progress until the holding objection is withdrawn.

12. Councillor Lyons:

We were promised Planned Outdoor Event meetings for the public & councillors to attend. Could these be provided?

Reply from Councillor McGregor, Cabinet Member for Economy, Heritage, Culture & Tourism.

Yes. We remain committed to providing Planned Outdoor Event meetings for residents and councillors. We are currently redesigning the format of these meetings so that they provide a more accessible and effective opportunity for people to hear about forthcoming events, ask questions and raise concerns.

The redesigned approach will also make better use of online information and communication, enabling people who cannot attend in person to access event information and provide feedback.

We are currently finalising how the new arrangements will operate and further details, including meeting arrangements and online engagement opportunities, will be published shortly.

13. Councillor De Oliveira:

Given that escalating construction costs have necessitated additional budget approval for the Withdean swimming pool, and that the King Alfred Leisure Centre redevelopment has already seen its indicative budget increase from approximately £47 million to £65 million, will the administration confirm whether an independent financial audit and updated risk assessment will be undertaken and published before any further major contractual commitments are made, detailing the project's independently verified current cost estimate, the original assumptions and reasons for cost increases, contingency expenditure and remaining provision, exposure to further construction inflation, additional borrowing requirements and debt-servicing

costs, and the potential consequences for the Council's revenue budget and frontline services should the project exceed its approved financial envelope?

Reply from by Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries.

The September 2025 cabinet paper set out in detail the reasons for seeking a revised budget of £65m to deliver the new King Alfred facility. In brief, the paper explained that the proposal presented in September 2025 represented a much larger facility than the outline proposal presented in July 2024, complemented by extensive public realm improvements, making the project a wider-place making piece to complement hove Beach Park and other seafront developments. The updated business case work presented at that time showed that the enhanced facility is expected to generate significantly higher levels of revenue than the July 2024 proposal, which would in turn reduce the net annual borrowing cost for the council. The final agreed delivery cost for the new facility, along with associated borrowing costs, will be set out in the paper to be presented to Cabinet in January 2027.

14. Councillor De Oliveira:

What timeline can residents expect for the Parking Consultation and implementation in Hollingdean?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor De Oliveira. We have brought forward this third phase of consultation for North Hollingdean in response to residents' petition to Full Council in July. As a listening council, we want to get this right and respond to local feedback.

Parking Services will shortly recommence consultation on proposals for a controlled parking scheme in North Hollingdean.

We intend to move directly to consultation on a detailed scheme design covering the whole North Hollingdean area following the previous consultations. Residents will have six weeks to comment on the proposals, and we are aiming to begin the consultation before the end of this year.

Once the consultation closes, we will review the feedback and decide whether to proceed and, if so, the appropriate boundaries and whether the scheme should operate as a standalone zone or as an extension of Zone 14.

If a scheme is progressed, the next stage will be publication of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), which provides a further 21-day statutory consultation period. Any representations would then need to be considered before the TRO could be finalised.
Subject to the outcome of these stages, once the TRO has been agreed and sealed, we would expect implementation to take approximately eight weeks. It is therefore not possible to give residents a firm implementation date at this stage. However, we

will progress the process as quickly as the statutory consultation and decision-making requirements allow, listening to residents at each stage.

15. Councillor Shanks:

For years residents have complained about the malfunctioning lift at the back of Brighton Station. Owned by Hyde. Also lighting in that area is also the developer's responsibility. As a partner how can we make sure these are sorted?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor Shanks. A working lift and adequate lighting are essential—not optional extras. This is why the council secured access rights for the public to the lift and the pathways through and around the Fenchurch Walk development through a S!106 agreement linked to the Brighton Station redevelopment and the lift was installed in 2015.

Officers have continued to work with Hyde to find interim solutions to the numerous issues that are faced by the lift, including flooding of the shaft, vandalism and frequent repairs due to the high levels of use. I share residents' frustration by these circumstances. The lift is currently out of service whilst Hyde's contractor undertakes a further investment of £100k in repairs, upgrades and replacement parts, with the lift expected to return to service before Christmas. The lighting issue has also been raised with them and a response is awaited.

Councillor Sankey has recently written to the Chief Executive of Hyde inviting them to meet, along with representatives from Network Rail and Thameslink Southern Great Northern Limited, to explore what options are available to deliver a long term sustainable solution. This will include work to develop feasibility studies, detailed cost estimates and to identify potential funding sources for the significant capital investment that will likely be required.

We recognise how much this matters to residents, visitors and local businesses. Working with our partners, we are committed to resolving the immediate issues and securing a sustainable, long-term solution that works for everyone.

16. Councillor Hill:

Gutter clearing on Park Crescent is a crucial part of avoiding further flooding on the road. Cars parked on gutters has led to cleaning not being possible which is worsening the situation. I believe the council has used temporary measures to remove parked cars from the side of the road which has the gutters. Will this be happening this year and are there any further measures being taken to ensure the gutters on Park Crescent will remain clear at this time?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you for your question, Councillor Hill. I recognise residents' concerns. Parked vehicles must not prevent essential gutter and drain clearance on Park Crescent.

Park Crescent is recognised as a priority drainage location and forms part of our pre-storm inspection arrangements. When significant rainfall or a named storm is forecast, our drainage crews inspect priority locations, including Park Crescent and the surrounding catchment, and will clear gullies where necessary.

Park Crescent was last cleansed as part of the cyclical programme in January and February 2026. We recognise that parked vehicles can make it difficult to access and properly cleanse gullies. Where parking prevents access, we can use targeted temporary parking suspensions to enable cleansing to take place, and we are improving the advance notice and coordination of these arrangements to maximise the number of gullies that can be accessed.

Park Crescent will also continue to receive attention through our pre-storm arrangements over the autumn and winter. Where inspections identify blocked gullies or other drainage issues, these will be cleared or referred for the appropriate follow-up work.

Our priority is clear: effective action – inspection to ensure gullies are clear — not recording an attempted visit.

17. Councillor West:

The construction of Withdean Pool was allocated a budget of £6.8m in December 2025, yet the administration is now having to increase funding. We haven't been told by how much, but we learned from a media release that the increase is apparently due to rising costs of construction caused by the conflict in the middle east. That may be so, but since Brexit, Covid, the cost-of-living crisis, and the ever-expanding appetite for materials of countries like China, construction costs have been rising remorsely. The administration also says they are responding to public expectations for facilities. I'm glad they are. Nevertheless, all this was predictable. Why is it then that the administration has allowed themselves to get caught on the hop, as they have with King Alfred. Are they simply unable to provision and budget properly?

Reply from by Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries.

The conflict in the middle east has had a significant impact on capital projects beyond what could reasonably have been forecast. The detrimental effect on oil prices has a direct impact on a range of costs such as delivery of materials and plant running costs. Essential construction components such as steel have also risen in price from US applied tariffs and retaliatory tariffs. In general construction costs have risen ahead of inflation and the conflict has pushed interest rates much higher than expected and kept them there, meaning that not only do capital costs increase, the financing cost of borrowing the funds has risen higher than expected too.

18. Councillor West:

Residents of Roundhill are living in distress. For 18 months they've been subjected to constant high pitch whining from non-compliant air conditioning on Holden Court. At 80 metres, one couple is experiencing a noise increase above ambient of 4dBA, that's an uplift of 25-30%. Moreover, the whine sits in a frequency range, like the sound of a baby crying, the brain is unable to ignore. Despite constant contact with Planning Enforcement, no progress has been made in resolving the problem. In May Cllr Hill and I raised the issue with the Leader of the Council during a ward visit. Cllr Sankey agreed the situation was unacceptable and suggested it was time for officers to step up action - yet the lack of progress doesn't respect the Leader's concern. A campaign is forming as residents want this blight to end and fear 'acoustic creep'. What can the Leader do to help?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council.

Planning Enforcement and Environmental Protection have been working together with the owners of Holden Court to investigate residents' concerns about noise from the rooftop plant.
Environmental Protection officers have visited both Holden Court and the complainants' property and confirmed that the plant contributes to the sound being experienced. However, based on the conditions observed during that visit, officers did not consider the noise to amount to a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
That is separate from whether the plant complies with the relevant planning condition. The acoustic evidence provided by the owner requires further verification, particularly because it assumed the plant would not operate between 11pm and 7am, whereas there are no controls currently preventing overnight operation.
The Council is therefore seeking further acoustic evidence covering representative daytime and night-time operation. Residents' technical evidence and observations will also be considered. Environmental Protection will support Planning Enforcement with technical advice and, if necessary, targeted independent verification.
I appreciate how frustrating the length of time this has taken for residents. Once the additional evidence has been obtained and assessed, Planning Enforcement will determine whether the planning condition is being breached and what further action is appropriate. We will continue to progress this so that residents have a clear conclusion.

19. Councillor Barton Ahmad:

As you will know from their objections at a recent planning committee, residents in Palmer House have been without a pedestrian and accessible entrance for over a year now since their front entrance was sold by developers before going into administration. I have been raising some of these concerns with planning for months, but no progress being made. Meanwhile residents are struggling to access their homes every day. Please can you ensure that planning enforcement does everything in their power to ensure that the developers are held accountable for reinstating the accessible entrance to Palmers House as soon as possible, and investigate the structural issues of planning and building control that has let down these residents? I would like to suggest an open meeting for residents in these blocks to discuss their concerns with the planning team and councillors so that lessons can be learnt.

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing.

We know this issue is a huge concern for the residents living in the block. However, this issue does not fall within the remit of planning enforcement but something that falls within the remit of Building Control. Given the height of the building, any issues relating to building control would not fall within the remit of the council's building control team but falls within the remit of the Building Safety Regulator. Unless directed by the Building Safety Regulator, our building control team cannot investigate or enforce this. The matter has been referred to the Building Safety Regulator and officers are chasing a response.

20. Councillor Barton Ahman:

Several residents in my ward who are members of the Tidy Up Team have reached out to me with concerns that due to budget cuts they will no longer have hi-vis vests distinguishing them as volunteers and will instead be equipped with standard council ones. They are worried that this provides a false narrative they are working for the council, leaving them exposed to unwarranted harassment or questions. This small change undermines the hard work of volunteers. Will you reconsider?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services.

This was first brought to my attention a few weeks ago and has now been resolved. I believe some council hi-vis vests were issued as a temporary measure, but that will not be the case going forward.

It is important that volunteers are not presented in public as council staff. The Tidy Up Team do amazing work helping to look after our city and I want to thank them all for everything they do.

21. Councillor McLeay:

Given that coach services were relocated from Pool Valley to Stroudley Road to create a more integrated public transport hub, without corresponding provision for safe pedestrian access, and given that the site now accommodates 38 scheduled National Express and FlixBus coach calls on a typical weekday, generating frequent movements of large vehicles past residential properties from early morning until the early hours, why did BHCC not include funding for safe pedestrian crossings as part of the scheme, and does the Cabinet Member accept that the removal of refuge islands and the lack of safe crossing points has left residents, particularly older people, families with young children and those using prams, having to negotiate an increasingly busy road network, undermining both pedestrian safety and public confidence in the ETRO?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor McLeay. Better transport connections must come with safe pedestrian access.

The changes to coach services were made because Pool Valley had become unreliable as a coach station with the situation at the adjacent Royal Albion hotel. Additional capacity therefore needed to be found. Moving to the train station also provides a positive opportunity to enhance facilities for people travelling to and from the city by coach.

The changes were introduced under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to allow them to be monitored and amendments made during this period. Indeed, they have been with a section of one-way reverted back to two-way at the request of residents. The changes to the pedestrian island were temporary and made on a quicker than usual timescale to allow coaches to enter Stroudley Road from the south which was necessary to allow all operators to use the new facility. It was recognised that the junction would benefit from a permanent design change, for which funding has been identified and design work is progressing.

A decision on the ETRO will be made following the end of the current consultation period.

22. Councillor McLeay:

Last year, during periods of heavy rainfall, local businesses were forced to clear drains outside their premises themselves in order to prevent blockages and flooding, while responsibility appeared to be disputed between BHCC and Southern Water. Given Met Office predictions that the impacts of El Niño are likely to bring wetter and stormier conditions to the UK in the coming months, what joint work has the Council undertaken with Southern Water since last year's flooding incidents to identify drainage weaknesses, establish clear lines of responsibility and deliver preventative measures, so that residents and businesses are not left facing the same flooding and disruption this winter?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor McLeay. Residents and businesses should not be caught between organisations over responsibility for drainage.

Thank you, Councillor McLeay. I recognise the concerns of businesses and residents affected by flooding last year. Since those incidents, the Council has been working more closely with Southern Water to improve our understanding of flood risk, clarify responsibilities and strengthen both preventative maintenance and our response to severe weather.

The respective responsibilities are clear. The Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority and Highway Authority, is responsible for managing local flood risk and maintaining its highway drainage assets, including more than 22,000 gullies and 4,000 soakaways. Southern Water is responsible for its foul and combined sewer network. We recognise, however, that during severe rainfall the two systems interact, which is why effective joint working is essential rather than simply looking at individual assets in isolation.

Following the flooding, we have reviewed how we work together and are developing a joint programme with Southern Water to reduce the amount of surface water entering the sewer network. This includes a citywide programme of Sustainable Drainage Systems, with Southern Water undertaking design work for lower catchments and supporting additional Council capacity to help deliver the programme. Southern Water has already contributed around £400,000 towards the construction of SuDS schemes across the city.

Alongside this longer-term work, we have strengthened our preparations for heavy rainfall. Drainage asset data has been used alongside information on high leaf fall and significant tree cover to identify locations most at risk of blockage, and this informs targeted inspections and a prioritised storm-response cleansing programme. This autumn we have also undertaken targeted gully cleansing in areas identified as being at greater risk of surface-water flooding, with identified defects followed up through the Council's capital drainage repair programme.

We cannot remove all flood risk, particularly during exceptional rainfall, but the intention is clear: better maintenance of our own drainage network, clearer accountability between organisations, better use of shared evidence and modelling, and joint investment with Southern Water in measures which reduce pressure on both the highway drainage and sewer networks.

23. Councillor Sykes:

Cllr Muten will be aware of the fears of retail businesses along Western Road associated with Red Route implementation, and the distinct retail offer here is very important to local residents. Businesses state that some of their fears have been borne out in terms of reduced turnover during the recent major road reconstruction works. What steps will the Labour Administration take to meet evidenced concerns from these businesses, over and above ETRO amendments?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

Thank you, Councillor Sykes.

We recognise the importance of Western Road as a distinctive retail destination and understand the concerns businesses have raised about the impact of recent roadworks and fears of potential impacts of the Red Route.

We are conscious that businesses experienced significant disruption during the major reconstruction and resurfacing works on this section of Western Road. During this period bus services were diverted away from Western Road, affecting footfall. This is why we committed to undertaking these works within a shorter 45 days period, reopening on the 44th day. It is important that we distinguish between the impacts of those roadworks, road closure and bus diversion and any impacts arising from the subsequently introduced Red Route itself.

That is why, in addition to considering changes through the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) process, we are engaging directly with businesses. On Friday 13 November, letters were hand-delivered along Western Road offering businesses individual meetings with council representatives to discuss their concerns, provide evidence of the impacts they are experiencing and identify any practical actions or support that may be appropriate.

This ongoing consultation will allow us to understand the issues on a business-by-business basis, consider the evidence and determine whether there are further practical measures we can take alongside the ETRO process.

Our aim and ongoing commitment is to work constructively with businesses, support the vitality and distinctive retail offer of Western Road, and ensure that the Red Route operates effectively while responding to evidenced impacts where these arise.

24. Councillor Sykes:

Can Cllr Robins please provide the latest overall projected capital construction cost figure for the KALC leisure centre redevelopment, the latest planned construction completion date and the date for completion of the current phase of demolition and ground preparation works?

Reply from by Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries.

Based on the current programme of works, we expect the demolition and other enabling works to complete by the end of February 2027. Construction of the new facility will begin immediately thereafter, with expected completion in autumn 2028. We are currently working with the professional team and our main contractors to agree the final delivery costs for the project, which will reflect detailed pricing of individual work packages with Willmott Dixon's supply chain. That final cost will then form the basis of the delivery management agreement we will agree with Alliance Leisure to deliver the new facility. That will be set out in the paper we will present to cabinet in January 2027 where cabinet will be asked for agreement to proceed with the project at that price.

25. Councillor Pickett:

Currently in areas where events are held, such as Preston Park, residents are able to air their concerns at public meetings. These meetings offer critical time for residents to speak to officers and cabinet leads that otherwise would not be available to them. It has been suggested that these meetings are to be abandoned. Can you please reassure residents that they will continue and in the same Q & A format?

Reply from Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Public Realm & Local Government Reorganisation.

Yes. We remain committed to providing Planned Outdoor Event meetings for residents and councillors. We are currently redesigning the format of these meetings

so that they provide a more accessible and effective opportunity for people to hear about forthcoming events, ask questions and raise concerns.

The redesigned approach will also make better use of online information and communication, enabling people who cannot attend in person to access event information and provide feedback.

We are currently finalising how the new arrangements will operate and further details, including meeting arrangements and online engagement opportunities, will be published shortly.

26. Councillor Pickett:

Why is it seemingly impossible to get clear figures on what this council earns from events held in green spaces? Cities such as Leeds seem to make excellent profits and the green spaces used are given a portion of the profits to improve the vicinity. Why doesn’t this happen in Brighton & Hove?

Reply from Councillor McGregor, Cabinet Member for Economy, Heritage, Culture & Tourism.

Thank you for raising this. We agree that the income generated from outdoor events, and how that income benefits the city, needs to be communicated more clearly.

Brighton & Hove already generates significant income from its outdoor events programme. Income increased from £470,836 in 2023/24 to a forecast £679,320 in 2026/27. After forecast direct staffing, contractor and electricity costs, the anticipated net contribution for 2026/27 was approximately £374,870.

We regularly benchmark our charges against other major event cities, including Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow, and Brighton & Hove's fees are broadly comparable. Approaches vary considerably between councils. For example, Leeds City Council manages around 4,000 hectares of green space and also has a Leeds Parks Fund supporting community-led improvements through charitable contributions.

Currently, Brighton & Hove's event income contributes to wider council services rather than being automatically ring-fenced to the individual park where it was generated. Event organisers are, however, responsible for the costs of repairing damage caused by their event.

We recognise that communities hosting major events should see a clearer local benefit. The new Outdoor Events Strategy therefore includes work to develop local contributions from events, with residents, ward councillors and local groups helping to identify priorities for investment.

We are also looking at how we report event income and expenditure more transparently, so residents can more easily see what events generate, what they cost and how their communities benefit.

27. Councillor Strong:

The branch GP surgery in Islingword Rd is proposed for closure by its parent surgery Stanford Medical Centre. This would remove the nearest and most accessible surgery for many residents of Queen's Park (as well as Hanover & Elm Grove). There are no GP surgeries in Queen's Park ward and in general East Brighton has low provision, in part due to lack of suitable buildings. How is the council working with the ICB and other groups within the NHS to try to address this, for example by considering council assets as possible sites for a surgery?

Reply from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration.

The Council continues to collaborate with our Public Sector Partners including the NHS on property matters via the SPACES property collaboration group (covering East Sussex and Brighton & Hove) and via the OPE (One Public Estate).
We are not aware of this requirement having been raised by the NHS, however, we have requested this to be added to the SPACES tracker to be shared across public sector partners. Currently, we are not aware of any BHCC sites being suitable for any reprovision. However, we will raise any future opportunities with the NHS and they are always welcome to discuss any sites we bring forward.

Most GP practices/surgeries are owned by GPs, often under partnership arrangements. The ownership structure can vary but are generally classified as private businesses. Therefore, any property ownership structure and location requirements are often driven by the GP decision/business viability against funding agreements with the NHS.

28. Councillor Strong:

Much is being made of the Pride in Place funding for the area covered by the Whitehawk MSOA. While the majority is in Whitehawk and Marina ward, it also includes the Craven Vale Estate as well as Pankhurst. However almost all publicity gives the impression that the funding only applies to Whitehawk, and the Board does not include representation from other areas. I have not been formally informed of Pride in Place events such as the Community Gathering on 21 November. How will the council ensure that all wards in the Pride in Place area are treated fairly and that councillors from other wards are kept informed?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council/Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing.

Whitehawk Pride in Place, was named by MHCLG. The elected Member representation on the Neighbourhood Board is from Whitehawk & Marina Ward as agreed by MHCLG, reflecting that most of the Pride in Place area falls within that Ward. However, decision making and the programme for the Whitehawk Pride in Place area is led by the Neighbourhood Board.

The Council is required by MHCLG to act as the Accountable Body for Whitehawk Pride in Place. As such the Council provides the financial, legal and governance framework that allows the community-led programme to operate, this means administering the Pride in Place funding, putting in place appropriate governance, financial management and MHCLG monitoring arrangements.

All communities in the Whitehawk Pride in Place area have been able to bid for community grant funding and the Board members are expected to act in the interests of the whole Pride in Place area rather than any individual neighbourhood. The Neighbourhood Board will be announcing on 20th November 2026 the projects that have received the funding following the applications review that was held at the Neighbourhood Board meeting on 16th November 2026. The Craven Vale Community Association has been awarded a capital and micro grant.

Event organisation and communications are led by the Neighbourhood Board and those they have appointed to carry out the engagement activities to develop the Pride in Place plan and delivering it. Community Organisers were appointed by the Neighbourhood Board to engage with the communities of Whitehawk, Bristol Estate, Craven Vale and Pankhurst Estate to identify local priorities for the Action Plan and Vision and encourage participation in the programme. We have enquired about the event on 21st November and have been advised by Community Organisers that all Councillors within the Whitehawk Pride in Place area have been invited to attend and further engagement with councillors will be taking place over forthcoming months to shape the Action Plan.

Whitehawk Pride in Place programme information is currently shared through dedicated Pride in Place social media channels on instagram and facebook, community networks and public events. All of the Board meeting papers, with associated documentation about the establishment of the Neighbourhood Board and the Whitehawk Pride in Place area map, are held on the Accountable Body's website https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/people-and-communities/community-support-and-grants/pride-place-board-minutes-and-supporting-documentation.

29. Councillor McLeay:

Given a recent Secretary of State appeal relating to a property on Trafalgar Street, seeking to overturned the Council's refusal of a change of use from a dwellinghouse (C3) to flexible use as a dwellinghouse or short-term holiday let, despite acknowledgment that previous objections raised "numerous mentions of noise disturbance and antisocial behaviour" associated with the existing use of the site, what further action could the Council take to strengthen protections for neighbourhoods such as North Laine as the growth of the short-term holiday let sector increasingly puts pressure on residential communities while locally made planning decisions are at risk of being overturned on appeal?

Reply from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration.

As work progresses on our new City Plan, one of the areas we will be looking at closely will be the visitor economy and short term lets. The policy team, as part of

their work in progressing the plan, have already commissioned a Visitor Economy study and this investigated the short term let industry in the city. The next steps of the plan process are to review the evidence-based studies and start to draft policies which will form the basis of the next consultation in the summer of 2027.