

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answer which will be included in an addendum that will be circulated at the meeting:

**(1) Councillor: Page**

What is the relative availability of studios/ one-bedroom council flats to bigger homes in the last period, when numbers in the highest category of housing need on the waiting list are factored in?

**Reply from Councillor Meadows, Chair of the Housing & New Homes Committee**

The lets for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 12 December are as follows

Studios	60 of which	31 sheltered
One bed	376 of which	94 sheltered
Two bedrooms	235	
Three bedrooms	94	
Four Bedrooms	10	
Five Bedrooms	2	

Demand profile on the register

	Total by bed size	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D
One bed/Studio	5144	311	299	2936	1589
Two Bed	3145	99	202	1852	992
Three Bed	1345	50	126	819	306
Four Bed	165	12	28	108	17
Five Bed	116	0	18	59	39
Six Bed	33	1	7	18	5

For information since 1 January 2017 we have removed 18,880 cases from the live, pending and suspended list

The current live list is now 9,904

**(2) Councillor Mears**

Rough sleeping figures in Brighton and Hove have increased by over 400% from 41 in 2014 since coming into Administration to 178 in 2017. At the Housing & New Homes Committee meeting on the 14th November, item 40. Appendix 1 listed 16 support services in Brighton & Hove, not including St Mungo's. What

work has this administration undertaken with all the groups to evaluate outcomes supporting the most vulnerable in the city, and on this basis I wonder how the Chair of Neighbourhoods, Inclusion, Communities & Equalities Committee feels her Party's 'rough sleeper strategy' can possibly succeed in eradicating rough sleeping by 2020?

**Reply from Councillor Moonan, Lead Member for Rough Sleeping.**

The Item 40 report at the Housing and New homes Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> November referred to was in relation to clients housed in temporary and emergency accommodation and Appendix 1 detailed support services available to support those individuals placed in this accommodation. St Mungo's is a street outreach service and works with those sleeping rough, which is why it was not included in the list. Proposals are currently being developed for a service to support those placed in temporary and emergency accommodation and this will be presented to Housing and New Homes Committee in January.

The annual count required by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to find out how many people are rough sleeping around the country has now taken place. The count revealed a significant drop in the number of people rough sleeping in the city this November. The official figure for Brighton & Hove, verified by independent organisation Homeless Link, is 64 people. This has confirmed our own local knowledge gained over the last year. Since then the 30 bed Winter Night Shelter has opened.

However, what is missing from this question is any acknowledgement that since 2014 there have been 4 more years of Conservative austerity policies, including 4 more years of local government cuts, 4 more years of almost no useful national action to tackle the housing crisis, and 4 more years of failing welfare changes, most lately Universal Credit. As a result, we are continuing to see a high flow of vulnerable people onto the streets who desperately need our help.

Only with a Labour government are we likely to see the kind of policies that will really help eradicate rough sleeping. But in the meantime we will not give up on ending the need for anyone to sleep rough in our city by 2020, and we are pleased that the strong collaborative working that has come from the Rough Sleeper Strategy means that together locally we are making a difference and seeing numbers out on the street overnight reducing.

**(3) Councillor Barnett**

I would like to highlight the important work undertaken by the previous Adult Care & Health Committee to forge cross party agreement for the benefit of residents during its time of operation until 2014. Now, with the imminent Green Paper on social care for adults which is due to detail proposals regarding integration with health and other services, carers, workforce and technological developments, among others, could Councillor Barford as the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board confirm that any discussion on this important issue will be cross-party, and if she would agree to forming a working group or, the preferred choice for the Conservative group, reinstate the Adult Care & Health Committee to study the proposals?

## **Reply from Councillor Barford, Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board**

Since 2015 the decisions previously taken by the Adult Care & Health Committee have been subsumed into the operation of the Health & Wellbeing Board. This Board has covered much of the agenda the previous committee undertook as well as providing a broader focus on health and wellbeing, engaging with formal representation from the Clinical Commissioning Group, Healthwatch and a number of other key stakeholders.

As the council is aware we are in the process of reviewing the membership and governance of our Health & Wellbeing Board with a further paper due at the next meeting on January 29<sup>th</sup> 2019.

You will recall that the Health & Wellbeing Board established a cross party working group that has been regularly meeting for over a year. At these meetings, we discuss the challenges and opportunities of closer integration and partnership working between health and social care to ensure all parties are informed of developments, and also provide insight to help officers in early stages prior to decisions being made at the appropriate committee. The existing Cross Party Group, which next meets on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> December, is the place that future discussion on appropriate governance arrangements can be brought for discussion prior to being presented to the appropriate committee for decision.

We still await the content of the Green Paper which was expected in the spring of this year but has still not been published. I remain hopeful that it will identify a sustainable solution for adult social care that fully meets the needs of local people, addressing the financial and delivery challenges that local authorities are facing across the country. Should this be the case we will look to identify an appropriate meeting forum under the Health & Wellbeing Board to explore how best this can be implemented locally. It is too early to determine but this could be through establishing a Policy Panel similar to that which has recently been meeting to oversee preparation of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy. The specific benefit of this approach would be the opportunity to include a broad range of stakeholders.

### **(4) Councillor Page**

What is the annualised cost of the Hackney Carriage (aka taxi) unmet need/demand survey?

Please also express this as a percentage of the taxi - not Private Hire Vehicle ("minicab") - licensing and enforcement budget.

### **Reply from Councillor O'Quinn, Chair of the Licensing Committee**

The Council spent £17520 on the unmet demand survey, this amounts to £5840 per annum over the three year period between surveys. In total this equates to between 5-6% of the Hackney Carriage taxi licensing budget.

**(5) Councillor Mac Cafferty**

Since 2015 per year how many fixed penalty notices for dog fouling, fly-tipping, flyposting, disposing of commercial waste illegally and littering respectively have been issued in Brunswick and Adelaide?

**Reply from Councillor Mitchell, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

FPNs issued	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Dog fouling	0	0	0	0
Fly-tipping	0	1	4	3
Fly-posting	0	0	0	0
Disposing of commercial waste illegally	0	0	29	16
Littering	27	309	423	307

Please note, the 3GS contract started in February 2106.

**(6) Councillor Mac Cafferty**

Since 2015 per year how many offenders have refused to pay any fine in Brunswick and Adelaide? How many have faced a penalty?

**Reply from Councillor Mitchell, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

FPNs unpaid	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Dog fouling	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fly-tipping	N/A	1	1	1
Fly-posting	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Disposing of commercial waste illegally	N/A	N/A	12	2
Littering	9	67	75	77

Technically, all have faced a penalty as they have been issued with a FPN. Currently it is for the enforcement contractor to decide whether to pursue an unpaid fine to court. By bringing the process in-house the council will have complete control over the end to end process, so unpaid fines will be taken to prosecution where it is in the public interest.

**(7) Councillor Mac Cafferty**

How many blocked gully grating incidents have been reported in Brunswick and Adelaide since 2015? How many of these have been down to leaf-fall?

**Reply from Councillor Mitchell, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

As Members will appreciate roads and streets straddle different Wards and records are not kept on a Ward by Ward basis. Leaf fall is however a particular issue within the City given the large number of trees that line our streets and that it is difficult to quickly sweep streets that are routinely heavily parked. This year has seen particular difficulties as the street trees did not shed their canopies until relatively late in the season, which then coincided with the heavy rainfall that frequently occurs in late autumn. Members will also appreciate that the City sewers within the urban areas are combined, that is they carry both foul and surface water, and that there are limitations to their capacity especially during heavy rainfall. The sewer capacity is a factor in that no matter how effectively Highway gullies are maintained those gullies feed into a finite drainage system which is overloaded in storm events, events that are becoming more frequent.

More generally, Members may recollect that in 2016 officers presented a study on the Council's Highway drainage infrastructure and recommended a risk-based approach to the maintenance regime to match the allocated levels of funding. The subsequently agreed maintenance regime provides for a continual programme of gully cleansing on either a 12 month cycle for exceptionally problematic locations or an 18 month cycle for all other locations.

**(8) Councillor Gibson**

Can you confirm that in November 2018 the administration decided to undertake a rough sleeper count rather than the more usual estimate? And please can provide details of how much greater in average percentage terms rough sleeper estimates have been than rough sleeper counts in Brighton and Hove averaged for all the years when both measures were undertaken?

**Reply from Councillor Moonan, Lead Member for Rough Sleeping.**

There are two methods for completing the annual count and both are subject to independent verification. The count method has been reintroduced in Brighton & Hove following discussions with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) about how other areas conduct their counts.

The count methodology covered the whole city, and followed MHCLG guidance. This count process was independently verified by Homeless Link (the organisation commissioned by the government to oversee correct practice), and found 64 rough sleepers. The alternative method to a count is an estimate comprised of data from local partners and collated to provide an agreed figure for one night in November.

To give a better understanding of the ongoing situation, the council's outreach service St Mungo's have also started carrying out other street counts. These regular counts cover most of the city, only excluding the far outlying areas where very few people choose to bed down. The most recent figure from this count recorded 78 people rough sleeping in September.

We also have a central system of recording and sharing information (b-think) with partner agencies, and these figures are again consistent with the numbers we have seen from the recent count.

The number of people facing rough sleeping and their circumstances are changing; the services being provided are being developed in response. We also have a greater level of monitoring information than previously, and are confident that we have an accurate picture of the current level of need.

**(9) Councillor Gibson**

Please can you provide figures for the HMO licences achieved by the end of the first 5 year (April 2018) licence period of HMO licensing for the 5 Lewes road wards, providing details of:

- i) How many full licences were issued?
- ii) How many conditional licences were issued?
- iii) A breakdown of the conditions for improvement of the properties by category of improvement; for example for fire safety, fuel efficiency, and poor conditions giving the numbers of properties requiring improvement for each category
- iv) A breakdown for the above categories giving the numbers of conditions that have been satisfied and the number that are outstanding.

**Reply from Councillor Meadows – Chair of the Housing & New Homes Committee**

The Lewes Road Additional Licensing Scheme which began 5 November 2012 and ended 4 November 2017:

- Applications were received for a total of 1,998 separate properties
- Full Licences were issued for a total of 1,981 separate properties
- Difference – 17, due to applications not fully made or made too late in the scheme to enable full licences to be issued

**Conditions**

We have highlighted some of the most frequently applied conditions that are applied to all licence applications received. We cannot provide a breakdown of how many properties complied with each condition 'by condition' without further analysis, but we can report where all conditions are compiled with. As highlighted in the committee report 90% of all special conditions were met.

No. of licences applications with the following conditions applied:

Structural Fire Works	1,725
Fire Alarms	1,832
Other fire works	1,669
All three of the above fire conditions	2,185
Management Repairs	1,598
Loft insulation	1,140
Ventilation	1,028

**(10) Councillor Gibson**

As on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018, please can you provide the total number of households in temporary accommodation broken down numerically between different categories of Private Sector Leased accommodation, Bed and breakfast, directly with a PRS landlord, LA and RSL TA stock, and other TA as is set out in the Housing Statistical bulletin Annual review?

**Reply from Councillor Meadows – Chair of the Housing & New Homes Committee**

From the statistics we submit to Government which are a snapshot at that time, the figures for statutory homeless in temporary accommodation are as follows:

- Private sector leased: 870 households
- Bed & Breakfast type accommodation ( shared facilities ): 52 households
- Other short term emergency accommodation: 259 households
- Directly with a private sector landlord ( Seaside Homes): 441 households
- Council owned TA: 10 households
- RSL TA stock: 32
- **Total** **1664**

We cannot pull out historic figures for all households in temporary accommodation, (i.e. including those placed under a Care Act duty or Children’s Act duty) as the records are not kept in that way. We can only report on the amount currently.

