

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 Theobald

For the last few years the Council has published the fact that over the Christmas period Thursday's refuse collection (this year the 25 December would take place on the following Saturday (this year the 27 December). This has always failed for some or most of the roads. Please list the roads where the Council failed to collect the Thursday refuse on Saturday 27 December and the number of days from Thursday 18 December the last collection to when the refuse was eventually collected. Will the Council consider a different approach for those whose refuse collection day is on a Thursday for next Christmas?

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

(2) Councillor McNair

Brighton & Hove City Council has oversight of the education delivered by schools in the city, in particular of pupils in its care. It also has a responsibility to ensure all children, no matter their religion, gender, race, family income or nationality have as good an education as possible. 13.4% of state-funded secondary school pupils in Brighton & Hove are eligible and claiming for Free School Meals. This is above the average of 9.5% for the Southeast (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2019>). According to UCAS, the average salary for graduates is 30% higher than for non-graduates aged 25-30. <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/student-life/why-choose-higher-education>. Helping the poorest and most disadvantaged pupils in Brighton & Hove attend university is therefore likely to help raise both pupils' and the city's standard of living. While Brighton & Hove has a higher than an average number of pupils claiming Free School Meals, it also happens to be fortunate in having two excellent universities, and potentially an excellent route for its poorest students to escape poverty.

In order to feel reassured that Brighton & Hove City Council is making the most of its relationship with its two universities, and is providing the very best service to its poorest and most disadvantaged children, could the Leader of the Council:

- 1) Provide a breakdown of data of pupils by background (ethnicity, religion, income, gender, free school meal) attending university (Russell Group and other) from Brighton & Hove state schools?
- 2) Detail how local schools and the Universities of Brighton and Sussex, in partnership with the Council, are helping Brighton & Hove's poorest and most disadvantaged students (with reference to ethnicity, religion, income, gender and free school meals) reach university?

- 3) Outline methods, and lessons learned from other Local Authorities, to increase progression of Brighton & Hove's most disadvantaged pupils to university which are due to be implemented by Brighton & Hove?

Reply from Councillor Allcock, Chair of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee

(3) Councillor Deane

Between 1st April and 31st December 2019, how many collections of illegal fly tipping have been made by the CityClean team, and what is the estimated cost to the city clean service of collections of illegal fly tipping?

For the same time period, how much income has been generated through the council's 'bulky waste collection service,' for residents – (i.e. not commercial collection?) and through fines issued?

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

(4) Councillor West

At the October ETS Committee, Members agreed a Green Amendment to "Commission a report on the feasibility of the Council establishing a carbon reduction scheme, to enable local residents and businesses to invest in woodland planting, energy schemes and other local carbon reduction and carbon capturing projects."

The Council has declared a climate emergency, and in response Labour and Greens are agreed on the need for the city to be carbon neutral by 2030. This will be a challenging task and the availability of Government funding to make the extensive changes needed is not apparent and may not be forthcoming. However, the high level of public concern about the climate emergency suggests there is good opportunity for the Council to "crowdfund" investment for local carbon reduction from local people and businesses. This could be offered as a way to off-set current carbon foot-prints while households and businesses make their own carbon reductions. The funds raised could be offered to local carbon reduction projects as grants or recycled as loans from a local green bank. These local projects would not only off-set investors carbon but also support everyone in the city to be better able to effect their own carbon reductions.

I believe the LEP are considering a scheme to harness investment to help fulfil the Sussex Natural Capital Investment Strategy developed by the Sussex Nature Partnership. This could be just one channel for carbon reduction investment raised by Brighton & Hove.

Founding and promoting a carbon reduction fund for the City will require start-up and operational funding. £50,000 would perhaps be of the right order to get this going. What budget provision is the Administration making for this initiative within the 2020/21 budget?

Reply from Councillor Yates, Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee

(5) Councillor Gibson

For the period from 1st of April 2019 to 1st of January 2020 what was:

- a) The number of bus lane PCNs issued and what has been the associated fine income?
- b) The CPZ permit income?
- c) The civil parking enforcement cost?

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

(6) Councillor Gibson

For the period from 1st of April 2019 to 1st of January 2020 what was the number of properties sold under the right to buy scheme?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Chair of the Housing Committee.

(7) Councillor Gibson

For the answer provided to my question to council on Thursday 24th October to concerning the borrowing costs please can you provide the annual repayment costs for repayment periods of 5, 7, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years (on loans of 5, 10, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 50 million pounds)?

Reply from Councillor Yates, Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee.

(8) Councillor Gibson

How much rent (expressed as a percentage) due to seaside homes for 2019/20 had the council collected as of 31st December 2019? Given that the council is required to pay a minimum of 91% of rent due to seaside if this collection rate continues how much will BHCC be required to pay under the rent guarantee agreement for 2019/20?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Chair of the Housing Committee

(9) Councillor Hugh-Jones

I refer to my question to Full Council in December 2019. The response I received referred to the Private Sector Housing Strategy adopted by Housing Committee in November 2019. Having looked again at the Strategy, I can find no specific reference to enforcement of EPC ratings so:

- 1) Can you please confirm that the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Strategy will cover this;

- 2) Indicate what resources the Council is allocating to implementation of this Strategy from April and specifically what resources will be allocated to enforcement of EPC ratings in the private rental sector;
- 3) Indicate (i) how many private rented sector properties in the city are currently F and G rated and (ii) provide an estimate of how many of these properties will be subject to an exemption because the cost cap of £3500 is insufficient to improve the property's rating to EPC E and landlords are unable to secure third-party funding to cover all or part of the cost of improving their properties to EPC E.

Reply from Councillor Williams, Chair of the Housing Committee

(10) Councillor Fishleigh

In the upcoming 2020/21 budget, how much additional money will be set-aside for the restoration of Madeira Terraces?

Reply from Councillor Yates, Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee

(11) Councillor DrUITT

It's now two and a half years since the Council unanimously passed the Green Notice of Motion on a Cycling Strategy (attached). Can we please have an update on:

- what has been done since
- what, if anything, was attempted but not achieved
- what is still outstanding pending officer time or financial resources, and what is the plan for this
- what, if anything, it has been decided not to pursue

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

(12) Councillor Mac Cafferty

Across the entire council workforce, how many staff in which departments are currently engaged in a redundancy consultation process?

Reply from Councillor Yates, Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee

(13) Councillor Mac Cafferty

The city council's target budget management has identified repeat overspend in agency costs at Cityclean. In this financial year what is this sum for the overspend itself and what is the sum allocated for dealing with such overspend; what is the nature of the overspend (times/ occasions etc); and what work is

being done through the council's audit processes to monitor this expenditure to prevent this re-occurring?

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

(14) Councillor Mac Cafferty

Further to its successful adoption at budget council in February 2019, can the Administration inform me what has happened to the £0.333m resource allocated to a newly formed Community Clean-up Fund (in Green Group amendment 2- general fund) to be used for anti-graffiti materials for community groups. And as additional resource was allocated to this, can there be an explanation as to why wipes etc are no longer provided for community tidy ups?

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

(15) Councillor Mac Cafferty

Further to its successful adoption at budget council in February 2019, can the Administration inform me what has happened to the £0.022m resource allocated to support student volunteers and belongings at the end of the student term (in Green Group amendment 3- general fund). Further can I be informed when such assistance will start to become available?

Reply from Councillor Yates, Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee

(16) Councillor Mac Cafferty

An astonishing 1 in 6 people in the city wait a whole week to see their GP with too many waiting longer; 10 GP surgeries in Brighton and Hove have now closed in the last couple of years. What representation has the Administration made about this intolerable situation to the Clinical Commissioning Group and when are these waiting figures going to decrease? A year ago, I asked this same question. Can progress in that period be documented please?

Reply from Councillor Moonan, Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board

(17) Councillor Powell

Could the Leader of the council please clarify if both council chambers, all meeting rooms in Hove Hall, Brighton town Hall, Barts House and others, are fully accessible to residents, and staff with a range of disabilities?

- How often, and to what cost have the lifts broken down?
- How often have the accessible toilets been out of order, and what timescale is given to getting them back functioning again? Who is responsible for ensuring toilet rolls and soap? I have, on more than one occasion, had to go and report the lack of facilities to the reception at the town Hall.

- Could you clarify if all hearing loops are functioning adequately, and if a given number of staff know how to actually work them? If not, can this be put in place please?

Reply from Councillor Platts, Leader of the Council

(18) Councillor Hills

While I'm aware that a large number of taxis in the city are now wheelchair accessible, wheelchair users have reported waiting up to 2 hours for taxis. What can be done to ensure all our residents can access taxis within a reasonable timeframe?

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

(19) Councillor Hills

It is mandatory for all Brighton and Hove taxi drivers to undertake disability training as part of the Blue Book requirements. Yet, I've been told by wheelchair users that taxi drivers do not always position wheelchairs correctly/strap wheelchair-using passengers safely into their vehicle before a journey begins.

What can be done to ensure all licensed taxi drivers ensure the safe positioning of wheelchairs on all journeys?

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

(20) Councillor Osborne – Council Homes

There are around 11,500 residential properties in the city owned by the council-how many bedrooms are there in total in these properties? How many bedrooms in these council homes aren't occupied? Has the council done any work, outside of the mutual exchange offer which tenants can apply for, on engaging with tenants to find out if they might wish to downsize or swap homes to one with less bedrooms?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Chair of the Housing Committee

(21) Councillor Osborne - Allotments

How many hectares of land is designated for allotments within the local authority? How many people in total are on the allotment waiting list and what is the expected waiting time for someone on this list to get an allotment?

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

(22) Councillor Osborne – Storage Facilities

Does the council own any of its own storage facilities? Where are they located and how well used are they? How much spare room is there in these facilities?

Reply from Councillor Yates, Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee

(23) Councillor Osborne – Usage of Lawn Mowers and Leaf Blowers

Lawn mowers and leaf blowers have a detrimental effect on air quality- are these used by the council and, if so, how many are used and what is the overall cost of the equipment?

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

(24) Councillor Osborne – Pest Control

How many pest control inquiries has there been to the council over the past year? How many of these inquiries has the council followed up? How do both of these figures compare to previous years?

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

(25) Councillor Osborne – Dog Poo Fines

How many fixed penalty notices have been issued by the environmental enforcement team as a result of catching dog owners not picking up after their dogs? How many of these FPNs have been paid and therefore how much income has this generated for the council?

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

