

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

A period of not more than fifteen minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for questions submitted by Members.

The question will be answered without discussion. The person who asked the question may ask one relevant supplementary question, which shall be put and answered without discussion. The person to whom a question, or supplementary question, has been put may decline to answer it.

(i) Councillor Marianna Ebel

(1) Pesticides Used at Hollingbury Golf Course

Following the lease for Hollingbury golf course being agreed with Circle, concerns have been raised about recent chemical damage to the greens. The chemical seems to have been used inappropriately and completely damaged the grass. Can you please confirm:

- a) what type of chemical was used on the golf course
- b) whether Circle are allowed to use this chemical under the terms of the lease
- c) whether Circle held the correct licence to spray this chemical
- d) that Circle complied with the relevant health & safety regulations when this chemical was applied
- e) that the Council has been carrying out checks to ensure any weed killers are used in line with the relevant regulations

(2) Brighton & Hove Seafrost

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic pubs and restaurants are closed and it is unlikely that they will fully reopen with no restrictions over the summer. As a result of this residents and visitors to the city will increasingly use the city's open spaces, and in particular the beach, Hove Lawns & the promenade. Whereas pubs & restaurants are licensed establishments controlled by the license holder, this does not apply for the city's open spaces. Even in a normal year without a pandemic it is a difficult task to keep beachgoers safe.

The Seafrost Team currently has only a limited number of staff. Can the administration look into increasing the team size to ensure the team has the capacity to keep beachgoers (visitors to our city as well as local people) safe?

(ii) Councillor Stephanie Powell

1. Written Question on the City's Charity Sector:

Local charities are at the heart of supporting some of our most vulnerable communities. They, like all of us, are adapting to new ways of working which present challenges. Given that the council's Equalities team provide some support to them, they will have some useful feedback on how charities are coping at this time. Could the Chair therefore detail how the council has supported local charities with the challenges presented by covid-19 including:

- A) Decrease in funding
- b) Adapting to new ways of working, including different ways of service delivery
- c) Providing training and support to staff
- d) Increase in Service Users
- e) Increase in new and/or complex needs from service users
- f) Operational challenges of charities and their staff
- g) Furlough, and minimised staff levels

2. Written Question on Deployment:

A number of staff who work in tourism roles have been deployed to services including Bereavement Services, and those residents receiving all levels of care through Adult Health and Social Care. Working in these areas would no doubt mean difficult, challenging and often distressing phone calls between the Service User and the council employee - some of whom may have never worked in a frontline capacity in this way before.

Could the Chair describe to the committee the types of training and support that staff are being offered at the outset, and on an ongoing basis during the pandemic to deal with this type of work?

2. Written Question on Equalities:

Last year, Resources Committee heard a report on the Council's fair and inclusive action plan, produced in response to a second Global HPO report. The report was triggered as little action had been taken between the 2013 report and the 2018 report. Could the Chair please assure the committee that the fair and inclusive action plan is in progress and commit to a future report to this committee?

(iii) Councillor Clare Rainey

Libraries Plan

At the Library Plan meeting in November 2019 it was agreed that a public survey, intended to inform the strategic plan for libraries in Brighton and Hove for the next four years (Libraries Plan 2020-2024) and an updated Stock Policy, would run for six weeks. The dates agreed for this survey, from Wednesday 26th February to Friday 10th April, were unfortunately affected by the COVID-19 lockdown as all libraries have been closed since 18 March. The intention was for other engagement work to take place with local community organisations, partner organisations and other stakeholders during this time as well as focus group work, to capture more specific qualitative feedback. This crucial six week engagement period was also cut short due to COVID-19. We appreciate that efforts have been made to compensate for this loss of consultation time. However according to the revised Libraries Plan timetable circulated in May a draft strategic plan will be prepared before any further consultation takes place. This is different to the original agreement of a six week consultation taking place before the plan is drafted, so the results of the consultation can inform the plan. Taking the need for social distancing into account can the administration commit to completing the consultation process as agreed before the strategic plan is drafted and if so, please can you explain how?

(iv) Councillor Robert Nemeth

(i) Lifeguards

Will the Chair urgently write to the members of this committee giving a full explanation as to why lifeguards are not in place (or were not in place if the problem has been resolved by the time of the meeting) on the beaches of Brighton & Hove?

(ii) West Brighton

Given the recent strength of feeling that was expressed by the public when Hove was downgraded to simply being a western suburb of Brighton by the Council, will the Chair commit to pushing for funding for 'Hove' boundary signage as existed in the past?

(iii) Planning Rules Relaxation

What plans does the Council have, if any, to examine which planning rules might be relaxed to stimulate the economy during/after the Covid crisis?

(iv) Madeira Drive

Will the Administration commit to the continuation of historic motoring events on Madeira Drive regardless of the street's future with regard to car use?

(v) Planning Enforcement

Please provide up to date statistics for this service which show the effect of the Corona virus on new cases, overall case numbers and solved cases.

(vi) Waterhall

How much has now been spent on mothballing Waterhall Golf Course since its closure by the Council at the end of March?

(vii) Hove Lagoon Pump

Will the Council publicly commit to putting in place a maintenance contract for the pump at Hove Lagoon, as per industry standards, to avoid unnecessary expense and closure as has now taken place at least twice at the Lagoon in the past two seasons?

(viii) Bee Bricks

Given the inevitable difficulties that exist in checking that bee bricks have in fact been installed on new developments as per the wishes of this committee, will the Council commit to writing to those who have gained planning permission after the relevant date last year to ensure compliance?