

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

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

**(1) Councillor Yates: Housing**

Can the lead for housing please update members on proposals to:

- Fully reinstate housing scheme managers
- Enable residents to access residents' community facilities
- Enable tenants' associations to access their dedicated facilities at Eastergate Rd Housing Offices.

**Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

The seniors housing service is trialling a hybrid operating model in line with other council and housing services. Our scheme managers have worked their normal hours during the pandemic and continue to do so. A hybrid model is allowing scheme managers to work more flexibly, and whilst they are now predominately on-site, this model allows some time for tasks to be done off-site where this makes sense to do so, such as supervision, training, data record updating, or daily calls.

Some staff are also more vulnerable to COVID-19 and we are working in line with the corporate risk assessment process to look at their front line roles – as a result some tasks may be shared within the team.

The communal areas are open to residents except for the guest rooms where we are working with our cleaning contractor to ensure that reopening these facilities is done in a COVID safe way. The service is also re-establishing social activities in communal areas where this can be done safely.

The service continues to see sporadic cases of COVID-19 and working in a cautious way enables us to provide a service whilst managing the on-going risk to residents and staff. If we fully reinstated the pre-pandemic service, we risk undoing all the good work we've done controlling this dangerous virus in our schemes.

We are also piloting a return to some in person meetings with resident groups subject to the relevant risk assessments, and with an offer of a hybrid option for those who still may wish to proceed virtually. Our initial risk assessment indicates Hove Town Hall as a safer option for meetings than the Housing Centre (Eastergate Road) owing to ventilation concerns.

**(2) Councillor Hamilton: Public Toilets in Victoria Rec**

There are no public toilets in Victoria Rec in Portslade anymore. It is a very busy recreation ground where many people, especially young people, go for football training and other exercise. There is money to modernise some toilets but surely providing them where needed should be a priority. Please can new toilets for Victoria Rec be included in the 2022-3 capital programme?

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

Thank you for your question.

Unfortunately, there is no money available, either capital or revenue, to build and maintain new toilet facilities in the city.

It was recommended to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee on 24 November 2020 to initiate Traffic Regulation Order consultations to introduce car parking charges for car parks in several city parks. This included the car park at Victoria Rec. An amendment to this recommendation was moved and subsequently agreed and so the TRO was not progressed.

Had the original recommendation been approved and car parking charges explored further for Victoria Rec, this would have provided an income stream which could have assisted the notion of toilets in the area and/or their maintenance.

New toilets cannot be developed without an ongoing management/maintenance plan by a third party such as a café, and this would only be possible if capital money was available for the build.

The new bowls centre does provide toilets for its members.

**(3) Councillor Grimshaw: Mental Health Emergency Services**

I'm particularly interested in those detained under the mental health act as they are a danger to themselves and others. How many are admitted but then sent home? How many are actually sent for long term inpatient treatment? How many emergency mental health cases have not been able to access the Haven as it's full? How many are just then taken to A&E and then sent home? How many are sent home with the promise of additional support? How long does it take for additional support from ASC to be put in place? What are the waiting times? What is the person supposed to do to get support whilst they are waiting?

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

Please note that where we have not had the answers to this question, we have contacted partners, but more comprehensive replies may be available through them.

***I'm particularly interested in those detained under the mental health act as they are a danger to themselves and others***

It would be helpful to highlight that The Mental Health Act is designed to give health professionals the powers, in certain circumstances, to detain, assess and treat people with a mental disorder who are at risk of harm to themselves or others.

***How many are admitted but then sent home?***

Please see below, as requested. Brighton & Hove residents were identified from their CCG:

**Admissions under the MHA of Brighton and Hove residents: 12 months to end June 2021**

	Total Admissions to Hospital
Section 2	173
Section 3	74
Section 4	2

**Discharges from detention of Brighton and Hove residents: 12 months to end June 2021**

	Discharges from MHA and Hospital	Discharges to Informal Status
Section 2	61	61
Section 3	89	54
Section 4	1	0

***How many are actually sent for long term inpatient treatment?***

Patients are assessed and cared for in the most appropriate environment to meet their needs, long term inpatient treatment is not terminology that we would recognise.

***How many emergency mental health cases have not been able to access the Haven as it's full?***

The Haven is well utilised by B&H residents. Should the facility be fully occupied, patients are assessed and treated in alternative settings.

***How many are just then taken to A&E and then sent home?***

Taking people to A&E, is an option that is clearly defined in the current amendment to the s136/135 policy and guarantees a place of safety for someone in mental health crisis detained under s136. As with the Havens/Urgent Care Lounge, the police remain with the person throughout their entire s136 period in A&E. If patients are sent home the decision is taken collaboratively by a team of assessing professionals.

***How many are sent home with the promise of additional support?***

Patients are assessed and provided supported appropriate to their needs. If there is no evidence of a mental disorder, then individuals will appropriately be discharged. For patients where a mental health need is identified they will be signposted to other services, such as housing, social care, alcohol and drug support, etc. by the assessing AMHP.

***How long does it take for additional support from ASC to be put in place? What are the waiting times? What is the person supposed to do to get support whilst they are waiting?***

Mental Health Services within Brighton and Hove are integrated between Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Brighton and Hove City Council. This means that there are a number of co-located Social Workers and other social care members of staff embedded in both community and acute mental health services. If an individual is already known to mental health services, then the request for additional support will be passed onto their Social Worker or Lead Practitioner to act upon. If for any reason the Social Worker or Lead Practitioner is absent from work, then these concerns should be passed onto a duty worker to manage. If the individual isn't known and requires support for their mental health, then they can approach the Mental Health Rapid Response Service. Waiting times are dependent on incoming work, staffing and risks. However, all new referrals are screened by triage and prioritised based on risk to self and others and needs - 4hrs, 5 days or 20 days. Anyone known to the service and who is having active input should receive a prompt response which again should be based on risks.

**(4) Councillor Williams: Afghan Refugees**

I'm sure we all want to help the Afghan refugees as much as we can who have arrived in our city. I know many charities and community organisations have mobilised to assist which is wonderful. What is the council doing to help with their needs and what Government funds are available to finance this?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

The council responded to an urgent request from the Home Office and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government made to all local authorities in the UK on 13<sup>th</sup> September. This asked that we make an offer to

participate in the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) which are the government schemes to fund local authorities to receive and support the Afghans evacuated from Kabul during the summer as well as more Afghan citizens whom the government plans to bring to the UK over the coming years.

The council's response was to confirm our commitment to participating in the ARAP/ARCS by welcoming Afghan citizens and their families to our city. Our response pointed out that we have a nearly unique situation here in the city with four Afghan families already identified for settlement into the city due to one of the adult family members being a Chevening Scholar with a place at the University of Sussex. The City Council therefore confirmed that it would support, under the ARAP/ARCS scheme, the settlement of these families. Officers are working hard in partnership with the University, the local community and voluntary sector and private landlords to secure accommodation as quickly as possible and set up support for these families and future ones although we have not yet had confirmation that these four families have Thanks ARAP or ARCS status. The city council also confirmed that it expects to participate in the programme beyond these four families however this will be led by available property. We have reached out to local private landlords, philanthropists, VCS and our economic partnership to assist with property and are confident of securing more.

The draft government funding instructions for the ARAP and ACRS were only published on 14/10/21 and officers are working through the detail of these documents. We know that the government has committed to providing funding on a per head basis for Afghan refugees. Over a three-year period these amount to £20,520 to cover the local authority welcome, integration offer and provision of services, up to £4,500 per child to cover education provision (it is not yet clear whether this is for one or three years), £850 to cover English language provision, for adults requiring this support (year one only) and £2,600 to cover health provision (year one only). The Government announced a further £17 million fund for additional housing support where subsidies are needed. The draft guidance suggests that the fund is to be used to help local authorities find properties quickly for large families currently in the bridging hotels by providing top-up funding to meet the gap between the Local Housing Allowance and market rents and also to cover shortfalls in Universal Credit payments which impact on a family's ability to cover their rent.

#### **(5) Councillor Platts: Bulky Waste Collections**

Will the Council consider preventative action on fly tipping by putting signage on communal bins that outlines how residents can dispose of bulky waste? Can this information include what constitutes fly tipping and information for residents who leave usable items by bins thinking those items might be helpful to others, the level of fines for such fly tipping, the website address and phone number for arranging bulky waste collection, contact information for Freegle, Tech Take Back and other low cost means of disposing of waste?

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

Thank you for your question.

I note that a similar question was put in 2017 at the time when 300 new communal bins were rolled out with new signage. The then lead Councillor Gill Mitchell agreed such signage, signposting people to Freegle and others, would be important to have on the new communal bins, when that round of bins was introduced.

Through the City Environment Modernisation Programme, improvements are still being made to the communal bin system.

As part of this work, Cityclean are looking at signage. The team will consider the ideas as part of the new signage design. This could include, for example, the use of QR codes to direct people to the council website where they can find more information on bulky waste and other services.

In addition to this, promotion of council waste services continues to be a priority of the Managing Waste Responsibly Project, with Cityclean officers working closely with the Communications Team to ensure this is met.

Cityclean has recently started a research project with Keep Britain Tidy specifically regarding student waste. One of the main focuses of the project will be looking at fly tipping and ways to reduce this. The learning from this project will be able to be implemented to drive change and improvement within this population.

Officers are appreciative of these ideas around this.

**(6) Councillor Platts: Garden Waste Collections**

Some addresses are still not able to access the Council's garden waste scheme; have no space for home composting and no access to a local composting scheme. Of these some don't have cars and can't get to the tip. I have asked a couple of times, on their behalf, how they are supposed to get rid of garden waste and received no reply. Can the Council please answer this question and confirm when all postcode areas across the City will have access to the garden waste collection scheme or a composting scheme within easy walking distance of their homes?

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

Thank you for your question.

It is acknowledged that some addresses in the city are not suitable for the council's garden waste collection service via the current wheelie bin system.

Cityclean is looking to expand the service and considering alternative viable options such as paper sack collections or pay-as-you-go schemes.

Initial research of councils that offer sack collections demonstrate there is a need for comprehensive IT systems to schedule ad-hoc collections that suit residents needs and timescales and which integrates and aligns with garden waste operational resource and round structure. As you are aware, Cityclean does not yet have a comprehensive IT system to manage the service and therefore it is unlikely a solution can be offered by the council until the Digital Cityclean project is delivered.

In the meantime, an internet search for garden waste collection services yields a number of companies operating in Brighton & Hove which offer garden waste collection services to residents.

Cityclean continues to work on expanding the reach of the community composting scheme in collaboration with Brighton & Hove Food Partnership. Four new sites have opened so far this year and all locations can be found on the Food Partnership's website.

#### **(7) Councillor Platts: Card Incentive Scheme**

The Labour Group submitted a Budget amendment £0.010m one-off allocation to evaluate the creation of a city wide 'Carbon Partner' card incentive scheme to encourage residents to move to lower carbon living through Council and private sector support. One of the intentions was to support residents who are getting rid of their cars but still need to get rid of bulky waste and garden waste but can't access the Council's garden waste scheme; have no space for home composting and no access to a local composting scheme. Can the Council update with progress on this scheme, given we have identified a solution that would reduce car use and contribute to the circular economy?

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

Unfortunately, officers have not had the capacity to progress the evaluation of a city wider 'Carbon Partner' card over the last few months. However, such a card would be part of the wider Climate Engagement work we do as a city council, and now that a Climate Communications and Engagement lead post has been created there will be more capacity to take forward climate change related behaviour change work. This will be in collaboration with transport, city environment and other relevant services. It is anticipated that this evaluation work will start in 2022.

#### **(8) Councillor Platts: Electric Scooters**

Will the Council publish a clear statement of policy about the use of electric scooters in Brighton & Hove? Due to pilots taking place in other areas and the continued sale of scooters to the public, there is some confusion about whether

they are allowed on the public highway. Residents are asking about the process for making them legal, especially now there is a petrol crisis; they also want to know how the Council will be involved in the decision-making process and if the public will be consulted. Can the Council give the date by when such a statement can be published?

### **Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

Brighton & Hove is not taking part in the current trials of e-scooters in England. These trials are for hire fleets only and will run until Spring or Summer 2022. No new trials are permitted, so E-scooters will remain illegal to use on the public highway in the city until Parliament passes legislation to legalise them in late 2022 or early 2023.

Privately owned E-scooters may only be used on private land with the permission of the owner or occupier, and this is the case even in authorities where trials are taking place.

The Council has previously taken part in a Department for Transport consultation on e-scooter use. No Government plans to consult the general public have been announced.

E-scooters will be considered as part of the Bikeshare reorganisation. A report is planned for the 18 January 2022 Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee setting out the legal position, stakeholder responses to date, proposals for a voluntary code of conduct for operators, and changes to existing byelaws which might strengthen police powers to enforce responsible use.

### **(9) Councillor Platts: Minibus Route**

The Labour Group submitted a Budget amendment for a circular minibus route around the eastern part of the City to encompass the hilly areas with poor bus services such as Wilson Avenue, Queen's Park Rd and parts of Hanover & Elm Grove. The idea was for this to run every 15 minutes and link up with the main arterial routes so that people could reduce car use or even feel able to get rid of their cars completely. Please can I have an update on progress?

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

Officers are drawing up a specification for a route prior to carrying out soft market testing with operators. A concern in drawing up any route is whether it is commercially viable, and if not, it would require continued support from the Council. It may also abstract passengers from existing routes affecting their viability at least in the short term. The costs of a frequent service are as yet not quantifiable but £20K allocated would only be a fraction of the amount needed to run this service annually.



Under the draft BSIP approved at ETS in September it is proposed that a review of all the supported services be undertaken once future demand is clearer and we know what funding the council will receive from government, such a review will be undertaken in parallel with local bus operators within the Enhanced Partnership. It is also a long-standing aspiration that improvements are made to the frequency of existing supported bus services and that there is more consistency between Sunday and weekday services, and this could bring considerable benefits to parts of the city you refer to.

**(10) Councillor Platts: Community Workshop Proposal, Southwater Close, Craven Vale**

The Council is responsible for a disused storeroom on Housing land at Southwater Close, Craven Vale. According to residents it has been unused for at least thirty years. Craven Vale Community Association wishes to bring a large proportion of the building back into use as a Community Workshop. It was first raised as a possibility with the Council in late 2014, and in April 2015 EDB commissioned a feasibility study for it to be converted, but it was not done as requested.

Members of the Craven Vale Committee met with the Council on site in September 2017 when no insurmountable problems were raised.

EDB commissioned a detailed report from Podium in April 2018. Its report of September 2018 agreed the project was feasible, and CVCA agreed that it would raise the funds to convert the building, with the Council to cover the basic costs of making the building watertight. CVCA was then granted £10,000 by EDB in April 2019 towards the cost of upgrading the building.

Little has happened since. The Council said that it would need a minor planning application because of the change of use, and that it would now need level access from the pavement - not an easy task in Craven Vale but the CVCA Committee suggested a small extra ramped path which was agreed by the Council. In September 2019, the Council obtained a grant of £2,500 from the Environmental Improvements programme to pay for the ramp but said it would need detailed drawings as requested by the Planning Officer.

I believe these drawings are still awaited, and that it has still to go to a preliminary planning meeting more than two years later. Craven Vale CA has had no information now for more than two years and so far, the plan has been awaiting approval for more than six years. Please can we have an update on whether the project is still moving forward? If so, please will the Council set out a clear, written plan of action and undertake to brief Craven Vale CA on the process and expected timeline for completion of the project?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

Thank you for your question.

We understand the lack of progress of your longstanding proposal to create a community workshop in Southwater Close has been the source of frustration for the Craven Vale Residents Association.

However, the pandemic has had a significant negative impact on our ability to progress many less urgent projects owing to other pressing Covid-19 priorities.

Our approach under the Estate Development Budget and Environmental Improvement Budget has been to empower residents to take the lead whilst supporting with technical advice and input.

However, this is challenging with a project as complex as the CVCA proposal which will require dedicated council officer resource in order to support it.

Some good initial work has been done to establish if the proposal is technically feasible. Officers have worked through legal issues and consulted with the community on the proposal which is broadly supported .

Post pandemic, we now propose to make contact with Craven Vale Community Association to review what resource is required to take this forward and whether this is available at this time in light of our other significant recovery and renewal programme priorities.

**(11) Councillor Platts: Community Drug Impact Co-ordinator and Drugs Summit**

The Labour Group submitted a Budget amendment for a Community Drug Impact Co-ordinator and a Drugs Summit. Please can I have an update on when we expect this post to be filled and an approximate date for holding the Drugs Summit to hear directly from residents about their experiences?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

The post has been recruited to and the new drug impact co-ordinator will start on 1st November. We anticipate that the drugs summit will be held spring next year.

**(12) Councillor Platts: Printed Papers for Councillors**

Can the Council confirm the total annual saving that was identified if all Councillors shifted from using printed papers of agendas and reports for working groups, Committees and Full Council and used only online systems instead? Can the Council state the number of Councillors who have successfully made the transition from paper to digital copies and the actual saving that has been realised?

**Reply from Councillor Gibson, Joint Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee**

The response could not be provided in time inclusion with the addendum and will be provided to the Councillor following the meeting and listed in the minutes.

### **(13) Councillor Platts: Kite Place**

The residents of Kite Place in East Brighton have suffered many problems since moving into their new properties. These have included ongoing problems of water pressure with residents reporting it can take up to 15 minutes for hot water to come through and up to 2 hours to run a bath as well as toilets not flushing properly. Attempts to fix the water pressure has caused leaks in communal areas. Residents report significant overheating in many flats and communal areas, which makes some residents feel unwell, some need to use fans to cool their flats and this has increased their electricity bills. The overheating has also caused lifts to breakdown and breakdowns have become a common experience, leaving some residents with disabilities trapped in their flats. Residents have also reported that the floors in their flats are 'dropping'. Councillors requested a meeting was held with officers and residents and this took place in August. Can the Council give a clear timeline that shows when the problems will be fully resolved?

#### **Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

Thank you for your question.

We are very concerned that some residents have encountered these issues at Kite Place and the Housing and Regeneration teams are working closely together to investigate and resolve them.

#### **Kite Place East**

Inspections are continuing to be undertaken in the properties. Water pressure and the supply of hot water would appear to be the only issues in this block and the remediation upgrade is awaiting a date from the contactors to be confirmed.

Approved works, the replacement of primary pumps and subsequent pipework and electrical alterations to facilitate a better flow rate on the primary pipework circuit. This is to address the issues of the poor hot water supply to the properties within this block.

#### **Kite Place West**

Inspections that have been undertaken have shown that the circulation central heating within the block is being interrupted by the entraining of air into the system. Various solutions are being developed to alleviate this problem and a full schedule of remediation will be released shortly. This work is expected to be completed by mid-December 2021.

In addition, and in order to fully understand the issues and lessons we can learn Housing's Property & Investment team are undertaking a procurement exercise to appoint independent building surveyors to undertake condition survey of defects noted and reported by residents. We are currently going through the procurement process with the aim of undertaking full surveys early in the New Year followed by a report in spring 2022. This will be shared, and actions taken to resolve the issues in line with the survey's findings.

External consultants will complete the following surveys:

- Flooring issues to flats
- Balcony issues with system adopted
- Review of hairline cracks and minor movement - internal and external
- Ventilation to flats
- Overview of windows
- Overview of solar gain issues
- Review of the plumbing installation
- General condition survey

As part of the consultant investigations we will review whether any of these issues are latent defects or covered by warranty.

We are sorry that residents have experienced these issues and want to undertake a thorough investigation to ensure the correct measures are taken to fully resolve them and lessons learnt is taken forward to future projects.

**(14) Councillor Platts: Percival Terrace**

Can the Council confirm whether it is accepted practice for the staff at Percival Terrace to request that residents pay 'fees' to them in cash? Can the Council confirm what these fees are for? A resident has been told they are for 'maintenance'.

**Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

Thank you for your question.

I can confirm that there is a service charge of £12.50 per week for a single person at Percival Terrace. This is a contribution towards utility costs. This can be paid directly to the managing agent via cash or bank transfer.

As part of the re-procurement exercise, service charges have been reviewed and will be capped for future contracts. This will also make the process more transparent for our residents.

**(15) Councillor Platts: East Brighton Park**

Can the Council explain why the upper pitch area has been locked up, preventing residents from accessing it? The wire around the outside has now been damaged as people have bent it back to use the area. Will the Council agree to repair this and unlock the pitch?

Can the Council confirm that the toilets in East Brighton Park pavilion have now been added to the cleaning contract as promised?

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

The 3G pitch at the Stanley Deason Leisure Centre has been closed for refurbishment the contractors are due to hand it back to the Council on the 19th of October

The gardening staff at East Brighton Park have been instructed to clean the toilets following the fun run as they would for a sports booking.

To confirm - the 3G pitch at Stanley Deason Leisure Centre is being upgraded and whilst these works were taking place the area around the pitch was fenced off, as the perimeter fencing to the pitch was itself removed in order to carry out the works.

The fencing to the pitch has also been improved and the renovation is almost complete and will be handed back to Freedom Leisure who manage the facility on behalf of BHCC. The hand over is scheduled for Tuesday 19 October. Please note, if residents wish to use the pitch they will need to hire it from Stanley Deason Leisure Centre.

The team that manages the public toilet cleaning contract is not aware of a request to clean the toilets at East Brighton Park pavilion. Any additions to the contract will need a corresponding budget provided to ensure resources are available to clean and maintain them.

#### **(16) Councillor Platts: Beach Huts**

The Labour Group submitted a Budget amendment for investment in Beach Hut infrastructure and replacement. Beach huts and chalets continue to be in great demand and increasing the numbers available was agreed by all political parties as a way to offer those on the waiting list some hope of one day being able to rent one. Can the Council give an update on progress?

#### **Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

The beach chalet feasibility study identified areas of the eastern seafront where it might be possible to build new beach chalets for rent. The study looked at different styles of huts and chalets that could be adopted for the new sites. In order to progress this project an architect will need to develop the concept design to the point of delivery and undertake site investigation works. A brief for this role is being developed and it is hoped that an architect will be appointed by the end of this year. Once the detailed design and construction costs have been determined the project proposal will be brought to the TECC Committee for approval to proceed.

#### **(17) Councillor Platts: Safety on Madeira Drive**

I've had cause to raise concerns about public safety on Madeira Drive on several occasions during recent outdoor events. This has included providing photographic evidence of cars and motorbikes in bike lanes, cars and bikes

travelling in the wrong direction on the area marked out for vehicles, pedestrians being forced into the road because the pavements have been taken over by scooters and extended café seating areas resulting in cars then encroaching on bike lanes to avoid pedestrians and a lack of safety measures such as clear signage or marshals. Can the Council confirm whether safety measures have been reviewed in light of this information and what action will be taken at future public events to ensure the safety of all users?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

Officers are continuously reviewing safety arrangements for all Madeira Drive events given the new layout and operational requirements of the road. Future actions will include beginning the installation of event infrastructure and erection of signage earlier on the first day of event installation to avoid the peak flow of pedestrians and cyclists on Madeira Drive.

Officers have already met with the manager of the Volks Tavern and the organisers for the Mod Weekender to review arrangements for their event. This event does not currently receive Landlord's Consent from the Council but is organised, on an ad-hoc basis, by local businesses and individuals. Officers have indicated that for future events of this type, a stretch of the new cycle lane ( 200 to 300 metres long ) would need to be suspended for the day to accommodate the safe display and parking of scooters. The parking arrangements must be managed by the event organisers, the council can assist by providing barriers. It should not be necessary to close Madeira Drive to accommodate the event providing the safety requirements requested by officers are put in place. The closure of Madeira Drive on a Bank Holiday weekend would be unpopular with traders - potentially damaging their trade and losing income to the Council through parking revenues.

**(18) Councillor Platts: Welfare Benefits**

Can the Council confirm the numbers of people in Brighton & Hove:

- > Likely to be affected by the loss of the £20 uplift to Universal Credit? An estimate will be acceptable.
- > Who remain in the City but have not secured pre-settled status without recourse to public funds? An estimate will be acceptable.

**Reply from Councillor Gibson / Druitt, Joint Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee**

Unfortunately, the information requested is not straightforward to obtain locally but with regard to the number of people likely to be affected by the withdrawal of the £20 per week uplift to Universal Credit, the latest information available from the Department of Work & Pensions shows that as at May 2021 the city had 29,573 claimants. The £20 per week uplift was therefore worth approximately £30.8 million annually to local claimants. Hopefully, Universal Credit claimant numbers are beginning to reduce as some economic and visitor activity has

clearly begun to recover across the city but this is clearly a significant loss of benefit. The recently announced Household Support Fund will only provide £2.1m locally and is clearly not a significant mitigation of the withdrawal of the uplift.

Regarding applicants for settled status, up to the scheme deadline of 30th June 2021 there had been 31,040 local applications with 13,320 of those applicants being granted pre-settled status. However, unfortunately we do not have information about people still needing to submit an application but I am advised that EU citizens are still able to submit a late application to the scheme if they meet the criteria for “reasonable grounds” for missing the deadline.’

Support is still available to EU citizens needing to apply to the scheme with details available on the council’s webpages: <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/brexit-brighton-hove/eu-settlement-scheme> including signposting to a Migrant Help adviser who will be able to assist with developing late applications, particularly where complexities have become apparent.

As immigration advice and caseworker support has been identified as a critical element in assisting people at risk of having no recourse to public funds, the council is also funding application caseworker and outreach support for EU citizens still needing to apply to the scheme. Development of this support has been led by Cllr Ebel, as the council’s Brexit Leader Member, in partnership with Citizens Advice Brighton & Hove and Voices in Exile. Funding for this support will come from the council’s remaining Brexit funding. Signposting information will be shared with all key city stakeholders, including members, and publicised by the council once the support goes live.

#### **(19) Councillor Platts: Cleaning and Graffiti in the East of the City**

There has been much coverage of cleaning the City centre as the entrance to visitors; however, the outer Wards are also being blighted by graffiti and stickers. Can the Council confirm what the plan is to tackle graffiti and what preventative action is being taken?

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

Thank you for your question.

The council removes offensive graffiti from all types of property across all parts of the city and aim to do this within 24 hours of it occurring. However, for other types of graffiti, Cityclean is only legally able to remove where it is on public property.

At Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee in September 2020, the Environmental Enforcement Team were given new powers to issue Community Protection Notices for graffiti which enforce property owners across the city to take greater responsibility to remove graffiti or face fines and legal action for not doing so. Procedures to manage these processes are currently being developed and once finalised, the new enforcement approach will be

implemented. This new approach has been designed to encourage the timely removal of graffiti from private property across all areas of the city.

The Environmental Enforcement Team also use mobile CCTV units which are placed in graffiti hot spots to act as deterrents and to fine and prosecute those caught committing offenses.

A report on fly-posting, which includes stickers, is to be brought to a future meeting of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee. This will include options for further enforcement measures relating to this. At present, a person has to be caught in the act of fly-posting or stickering, which makes it difficult to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice to the culprits. Other means are being explored such as issuing fines to the company or promoter pertaining to the poster or sticker.

These activities are being delivered alongside the continued implementation of the Graffiti Reduction Strategy.

**(20) Councillor Platts: Brighton Marathon & 10k**

Brighton Marathon weekend was a joyful occasion, it was good to welcome its return and I was pleased to participate. I was, however, concerned by news reports that the Marathon distance was measured incorrectly and to receive an email from the organisers to say they had not applied for UKA (UK Athletics) affiliation. I understand this was due to the event being organised at short notice and the organisers were hoping to put in place a license retrospectively. UKA affiliation will be important to those hoping to qualify for other events. Can the Council confirm what action has been taken to resolve both issues which could affect future participation?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

Officers have spoken to the Brighton Marathon organisers about this year's event. They are upset and apologetic that the course was too long. Whilst it was measured correctly, using the usual GPS tracking system, it was put out incorrectly on the day, a simple human error.

The organisers have been in touch with their peers in the major marathon group and are working on a system where a time will be calculated from this year's event to enable competitors to register with other marathons such as London, Liverpool, Manchester and even Chicago should they so wish. The absence of a licence does not affect this.

They have already applied for the licence for 2022.

There is a full operational debrief for Brighton Marathon 2021 on Tuesday 19th October where the issues of the course and the licence are on the agenda.



## (21) Councillor Allcock: Use and Cost of Agency Staff

What is the total additional cost to the Council of using agency staff for financial years?

- 2018 to 2019
- 2019 to 2020
- 2020 to 2021

What agencies were used during these financial years and where are their corporate offices located?

### Reply from Councillor Gibson / Druiitt, Joint Deputy Chair (Finance) of the Policy & Resources Committee

Agency Name	Head Office Address	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
3D Recruit Ltd	Regent House, Mitre Way, Battle, East Sussex, England, TN33 0BQ		Yes	
BetterHealth Care	11-15 St Mary at Hill, London EC3R 8EE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Blue Arrow	800 The Boulevard, Capability Green, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 3BA	Yes	Yes	Yes
BRS Jobs LTD	Unit 20a Tims Boatyard, Tims Way, Staines, England, TW18 3JY	Yes		Yes
Carbon60 Limited	800 The Boulevard, Capability Green, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 3BA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Caritas Recruitment	4 Coleman St, London EC2R 5AR	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carrington West Ltd	Building 1000, Lakeside North Harbour, Western Rd, Portsmouth PO6 3EN	Yes	Yes	Yes
Casgo Connections Ltd	60 Lansdowne Pl, Hove BN3 1FG	Yes	Yes	Yes
Direct QSW	800 The Boulevard, Capability Green, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 3BA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fircroft Engineering Services Limited	The Pinnacle, 170 Midsummer Boulevard, Milton Keynes MK9 1BP	Yes		Yes
FPR Group	22 Queens Rd, Brighton BN1 3XA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guidant Group Direct - CST	800 The Boulevard, Capability Green, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 3BA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hanover Care Limited	71 Church Rd, Hove BN3 2BB	Yes	Yes	Yes
Liquid Personnel LTD	Sevendale House, Dale Street, Manchester, M1 1JB	Yes	Yes	Yes
Logic Engagements Ltd	45/47 High Street, Cobham, Surrey, KT11 3DP	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lorien Resourcing	107 Leadenhall St, London EC3A 4AF	Yes	Yes	Yes
Macdonald and Company Freelance LTD	2 Harewood Place, Hanover Square, London W1S 1BX UK	Yes		Yes
Matchtech Group	1450 Parkway, Solent Business Park, Fareham, Hampshire, PO15 7AF	Yes	Yes	Yes
Morgan Hunt (SP)	9th Floor, 125 London Wall London, EC2Y 5AS	Yes		Yes
Morgan McKinley (SP)	1 Milkhouse Gate, Guildford GU1 3EZ	Yes		Yes
Networkers Recruitment Services Ltd	1450 Parkway, Solent Business Park, Fareham, Hampshire, PO15 7AF	Yes	Yes	Yes
Osborne Richardson	3rd Floor, 66-68 Margaret Street, London, Greater London, W1W 8SR	Yes		Yes
Permanent Futures Ltd	19 New Street, Leeds, LS18 4BH	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personnel Selection	3 High Street, Woking, Surrey, GU21 6BG	Yes	Yes	Yes

Associates Limited				
Premier Group Recruitment Limited (SP)	2nd Floor, Finsbury House, 23 Finsbury Circus, London, EC2M 7EA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Project Management On Demand	4 Hoewood Small Dole, Henfield, West Sussex, England, BN5 9YR	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sanctuary Social Care Ltd	15 Friars Street. Ipswich. IP1 1TD	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sellick Partnership LTD	Queens Court 24 Queen Street Manchester M2 5HX	Yes		Yes
Service Care Solutions LTD	Arthur House, 12-13 Starkie Street, Preston, PR1 3LU	Yes		Yes
Seven Social Care Ltd	2nd Floor, Oberon House (B67), Adastral Park, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP5 3RE	Yes		Yes
SOLOS Consultants Ltd	Main Rd, Watnall NG16 1LA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Staff Now Ltd	Hanover House, 118, Queens Rd, Brighton, BN1 3XG	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stride Recruitment	Quay Point, 1 Northarbour Rd, Cosham, Portsmouth PO6 3TD	Yes		Yes
Tate Herts Service Delivery	800 The Boulevard, Capability Green, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU1 3BA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tempest Resourcing LTD	2nd floor, 6 Gracechurch St, London EC3V 0AT	Yes		Yes
Tripod Partners	National House, Wardour Street, Soho, London, W1F 0TA		Yes	
Vector Recruitment Solutions Ltd	30 Holmethorpe Avenue, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 2NL		Yes	

## (22) Councillor Grimshaw: School Uniforms

Have our local LA schools have any feedback on numbers of parents asking for financial support to provide uniforms? If so how many and what was the response?

How many families have been supported with assistance to purchase uniforms for the Sept 2021 term?

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

We don't have specific numbers of parents who have asked for financial support to purchase uniform, either in the past or since September 2021. Most schools donate uniform directly to pupils or their families on an ad hoc basis, and this is not typically recorded. Where financial support is provided to buy uniform this would be recorded, but not outside of the school setting.

As has been previously [reported to Children, Young People and Skills Committee](#), the Local Authority has little power over the cost of school uniforms. This is down to individual schools.

## (23) Councillor O'Quinn: Recycling Rates

What were the recycling rates for the first 6 months of 2021 in Brighton and Hove?

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

Thank you for your question.

The recycling rate from January to June 2021 was 30.3%. However, caution should be taken with this figure.

A 12-month rolling total is a more accurate way of understanding the recycling rate as some recycling is seasonal e.g. garden waste, Christmas, the spring rush at Household Waste Recycling Sites and the leaf content in mechanical street sweepings.

The most up-to-date data submitted to DEFRA is a 29.7% recycling rate from July 2020 to June 2021.

**(24) Councillor Childs: Divestment**

In view of the recent acquisition of Newcastle Utd football club, by the Saudi Sovereign Wealth Fund, will the Council, in line with its commitment to women's, LGBT and human rights, write to the Chair of the Club, as well as BH Albion, to make clear that they are not welcome in our city until the Saudi Fund divests in full from the team?

**Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

The response could not be provided in time inclusion with the addendum and will be provided to the Councillor following the meeting and listed in the minutes.

**(25) Councillor Childs: Asbestos**

Given that there is no safe level of asbestos exposure and that children are uniquely vulnerable will the Council agree to commit to remove all blue and brown asbestos from area occupied by children in our school and nursery estate by 2030?

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

The HSE do not support wholesale removal of asbestos from school buildings. One of their basic principles is that asbestos should not be removed unnecessarily, and that removal can carry more risks than leaving it in place and managing it as set out in the Control Of Asbestos Regulation 2021 – HSE. This is the approach that the Council follows, and asbestos is robustly and actively managed in our school buildings.

The council manages asbestos through non-intrusive asbestos surveys of its Estate and school portfolio that identify elements that may/or may not contain asbestos. These surveys give an indication only and whenever we undertake

works to school buildings, we commission further intrusive asbestos Refurbishment and Demolition (R & D) surveys to enable us to know whether asbestos is present or not and what type of asbestos. Once known we can plan removal if required as part of the proposed works contract under controlled conditions that comply with the Asbestos Legislation.

It is impossible to quantify the scale and cost of removing all blue and brown asbestos from school buildings since the full extent of the asbestos content is unknown. This can only be found out through full intrusive surveys of the school Estate and is an approach that would carry great risks, the cost and disruption to schools would be enormous too and it is not recommended by the HSE.

The current risk assessed approach that the council adopts for managing asbestos in schools is recommended by the HSE, contains the risks of exposure and protects occupants of the schools.

It should also be noted that the Council sits on the DfE's Asbestos in Schools steering group and our approach to managing Asbestos in Schools is in line with their approach and the HSE's.

## **(26) Councillor Childs: Air Pollution**

When and how will the council take decisive action to address the issue of unacceptable air pollution in London Road and Rottingdean High Street and in what timescales will this occur?

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

I am pleased to be able to report that our monitoring in Rottingdean High Street has recently shown evidence of compliance with national air quality standards, but some further continued improvement is required before we can confirm that levels are below the threshold that does not require an Air Quality Management Area. I am sure that our partnership working at a local level with the parish and ward councillors and the community on traffic management measures has helped to achieve this.

Although monitoring on London Road (near Queen's Place & Oxford Place) continues to show Nitrogen Dioxide levels which are greater than national standards, there has been some long term improvement. This is positive news and in this busy area, the investment in, and introduction of, hybrid buses by the main bus company will help bring down emissions further. The continued programme of upgrading older buses with exhaust technology that we have successfully secured funding for from the government will also make a continued difference and help move towards compliance.

The preparation of a new Air Quality Action Plan, which will be available for consultation in the coming months, will set out comprehensive proposals and options to tackle sources and quantities of emissions that are harmful to public health, especially in the more confined spaces that you mentioned. The speed at which we can achieve the improvements needed in air quality will vary from

area to area because each one is different. What is important is that we continue to work together in partnership to address this issue and ensure that we have enough officer resource and funding to do so. Everybody has a part to play. Raising awareness of the effects of individuals' travel decisions on other people's health is really important and encouraging and enabling travel behaviour change is critical. Reducing the need to travel by car, shifting to sustainable transport options for some journeys and enabling greater use of cleaner, low or zero emission vehicles is the way forward and these themes are at the heart of the new emerging Local Transport Plan, which is out for consultation now.

**(27) Councillor Childs: Radon**

Several areas of our city fall into medium risk areas of radon exposure. What action will the Council take to ensure:

- a) All schools located in medium risk areas are tested for radon levels and subject to suitable abatement measures should levels exceed PHEs 'target level';
- b) New planning applications in medium radon risk areas ensure appropriate testing and mitigation.

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

The cost of a precautionary approach needs to be balanced with other priorities. The British Geological Survey categorizes radioactive risk level based on solid rock and drift geology maps that the Council has on GIS layer. Radon is unlikely to arise from Brighton & Hove's chalk. It is low risk, particularly compared to parts of Cornwall and Derbyshire and is unlikely to require mitigation other than ventilation.

Funds are available to schools in England to monitor CO2 and air quality and this can be secured by individual schools if they considered any risks need to be tested. There is also potential for Radon monitoring to be adopted into the city's wider air quality monitoring strategy where this achieves a good value price.

Public Health England is the UK's specialist on radon and radiation protection. They have produced a Radon Action Plan (2018) and database, including identifying radon 'Affected Areas' - where at least 1% of homes are expected to be above the radon Action Level (200Bq m-3). These areas are published online ([www.ukradon.org](http://www.ukradon.org)), and include parts of Brighton & Hove, on the outskirts of the built-up area. More generally, PHE runs programmes to encourage the remediation of affected homes in these areas where it is considered necessary, as set out in the Radon Action Plan.

In terms of new build, this is managed through Building Regulations. Where subsoil conditions indicate radon is an issue, buildings may be required to be

constructed with protective measures to prevent radon ingress. This is normally a gas-resistant barrier at ground level.

**(28) Councillor Childs: Lead**

Lead has long been known to be harmful to young children, yet a large number of Council schools contain large amounts of lead paint in poor condition. What action will the Council take to audit the risk of lead contamination in our city schools and what action will be taken to put in place appropriate abatement measures to protect children?

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

Advice from the HSE website on lead paint confirms that lead pigments were widely used in paints for homes, schools, offices etc. until the 1960s. It was not removed from all commonly used paint until the early 1980s therefore it could be found underneath existing paintwork in older buildings, but no modern specification would include applying lead paint. In terms of the council specifications for works to school buildings, we assess the risk on a case-by-case audit basis and make the worst scenario assumption that all painted surfaces could contain lead and must be prepared or removed before redecoration, using methods and correct PPE that does not create dust in accordance with HSE guidance/Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002 and sealed with a modern paint finish.

Please note we could in conjunction with H & S colleagues look to offer more guidance to schools regarding lead paint and how to manage and specify redecoration works. To undertake an audit of painted surfaces in all of our schools would potentially be a difficult process and expensive, as multiple paint samples would have to be taken and a risk assessment-based approach as described above is more manageable for all parties.

**(29) Councillor Childs: Changing Places**

Will the Council agree to provide a Changing Places toilet at Black Rock station as part of the regeneration project in this area?

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

The Black Rock project is a landscaping and civil engineering project. It has one small new build classroom, and the footprint allows for 4 public toilets at one end. These are urgently needed to serve the eastern seafront area. It is not possible to amend this as all the detailed design is now complete, and there is no space or funding to redesign it.

We will ensure the future development brief for Black rock includes provision for a changing places toilet.

Nearest changing places toilets are at the Colonnade.

**(30) Councillor Childs: Upper Rock Gardens**

Upper Rock Gardens, Kemp Town, has long been misused by street drinkers and those engaged in anti-social behaviour. Will the Council agree to have the area fenced off until a longer-term decision is made on the future of this area?

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

The response could not be provided in time inclusion with the addendum and will be provided to the Councillor following the meeting and listed in the minutes.

**(31) Councillor Childs: St James Street**

Despite platitudes over many years, anti-social behaviour, drug crime and aggressive begging continue to plague St James St area. Will the Council arrange to meet with local councillors and Sussex Police to call for a zero-tolerance policy in the area?

**Reply from Councillor Deane, Chair of the Licensing Committee**

The response could not be provided in time inclusion with the addendum and will be provided to the Councillor following the meeting and listed in the minutes.

**(32) Councillor Childs: Parking Meters**

Council parking meters frequently prevent residents paying for the actual time used and instead for blocks of one or two hours presumably in order to extract further money from hard pressed residents. This is not the case in adjoining areas. Will the Council agree to recalibrate all meters, as is entirely possible, to allow residents to pay for actual time used in units of 15 minutes or at least for each separate hour?

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

The tariffs available on the P&D machines and by PaybyPhone reflect the fees and charges agreed at ETS Committee and then ultimately at Budget Council. This is, therefore, a proposal for consideration as part of the fees and charges setting budget process where changes to the fee tariffs can be reviewed and evaluated.

**(33) Councillor Childs: Freshfield Road**

Please can an update on the development of the Freshfield Rd Industrial Estate be provided?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

The last contact we had was in relation to the redevelopment of the Gala Bingo Hall was in 2018 but this has gone no further.

There are no updates regarding this. There have been no pre-application enquiries, planning applications, or informal discussions for some years.

**(34) Councillor Childs: Queen's Park Fountain**

Will the Council provide funding to renovate the listed Queens Park public drinking fountain which has fallen into a parlous state of repair and appearance?

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

A bid has been made to fund maintenance costs of the Queens Park fountain from the Corporate Plan delivery risk provision which was set aside from the 2020/21 revenue underspend. The member Budget Review Group has asked for more information on this which is currently being collated and is expected to be considered by BRG in November.

If this bid is successful it will be used to survey the structure and see what refurbishment can be done within the funds made available.

**(35) Councillor Childs: Bonfire Events**

Will the Council make a public statement and write to neighbouring local authorities and Sussex Police condemning anti-Catholic sectarian statements and imagery that frequently appear at County-wide bonfire events and request that action be taken to prevent and/or deal with such bigotry occurring at otherwise enjoyable family events?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

The Council is pleased to confirm that we will be putting out a public statement encouraging residents to have a fun, safe and considerate Bonfire night. We respect and value the diverse backgrounds and experiences of all our residents and support everyone to feel safe and free from harm in their homes and neighbourhoods. Therefore, as well as urging people to refrain from burning effigies which can cause offence and harm to residents that have experienced



hate due to their identity, our inclusive statement will also reference consideration of our veterans and others that that have experienced the trauma of conflict and ask people to support locally organised events rather than setting off spontaneous and random fireworks close to homes.

We are happy to write to neighbouring local authorities to encourage considerate and inclusive bonfire events.

**(36) Councillor Childs: Pepperpot**

What plans does the Council have for the Pepperpot and will it engage with the Friends of the Pepperpot and other residents to secure a more meaningful future for this listed building?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

The Pepperpot is currently in poor repair with a temporary internal scaffold to enable safe access. This Listed Building requires significant investment to secure a sustainable future.

Previous options working in collaboration with Friends of the Pepperpot and residents have looked at marketing it for potential commercial uses such as a café seeking investment to refurbish the ground floor area and/or working with other organisations to seek grant funding (i.e. the Landmark Trust) for significant investment into the whole structure as a potential holiday lets. Unfortunately all these attempts were unsuccessful.

Future plans had therefore been put on hold and we will re-engage with the Friends of the Pepperpot to start the conversation on exploring possible options, uses and investment opportunities to secure a more meaningful future for the Listed Building.

**(37) Councillor Childs: Parking Permits**

When will the chaos in the parking permit system, that has caused stress and misery for residents across Queens Park Ward, end? And will residents be promised waivers for PCNs issued as a result of the Council's failure to operate a basic and functioning permit issuing system?

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

A detailed Member Briefing was circulated on 12th October by the Head of Parking which gives a clear picture of the problems, what caused them, what we're doing to resolve them, and how we might reduce the likelihood of them recurring in future. In terms of waivers when these circumstances arise, the PCN Appeals & Bailiff team cancel the PCN. However, the customer does

need to appeal the PCN for us to know there's an issue, and to be able to follow the legal rules around cancelling PCNs correctly.

**(38) Councillor Childs: Pedestrian Crossing**

Will the Council install a proper pedestrian crossings at the junction of St James St and Upper Rock Gardens?

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

Planned maintenance work to the traffic signals at the junction of St James St/Upper Rock Gardens/Lower Rock Gardens is set to replace the existing signal equipment. During the course of this work we will be taking the opportunity to improve the existing facilities including adding signalised pedestrian crossings to the remaining three arms of the junction. This works is being funded through a combination of the council's routine signal maintenance and LTP intelligent transport system budgets. Work is currently expected to start around the 15th November although this date may vary depending on other maintenance schemes currently in progress elsewhere in the city. We are conscious of the proximity of these works to the shopping area and church so up to Christmas we will only be carrying out tasks that can be covered up and removed from mid-December onwards and the existing signals will not be removed until after the Christmas period.

**(39) Councillor Wilkinson: Cycle Hangars**

In March of this year I asked if there were any plans to install cycle hangers across the city and if so, how many cycle hangars will be installed/are estimated to be installed across the city in 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24. I was informed that provision had been made for 100 cycle hangars. A Cycle Hangar survey is currently available to assess demand for secure on-street cycle parking that will be solely reserved for residents. Does the Chair of the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee believe that 100 cycle hangars is enough for our city and if the survey indicates a much greater demand, how will the council meet this need?

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

With many residents living in shared accommodation, flats or houses where storage space is at a premium, it can be difficult to find secure cycle storage. This can be a major barrier to those wishing to travel by bike. Storage can be especially challenging if you use an adapted cycle. People can also face difficulties manoeuvring their cycles from inside their home onto the street outside.

Currently Council Officers are in the process of tendering the fore mentioned 100 cycle hangars to be installed and once the survey asking for residents to express interest has concluded on the 14th November 2021 an assessment will be made of this demand.

Once the 100 hangars start to be installed it will be determined as to what further provisions can be provided should demand for more be seen. Of course 100 is not going to be enough, I would like to see at least 1 on every street across Brighton and Hove.

**(40) Councillor Wilkinson: Fly-tipping**

Can the Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee please inform me as to how many prosecutions have occurred across the city in the previous 12 months in relation to kerbside/street fly-tipping?

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

*Between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, 499 Fixed Penalty Notices were issues for fly-tipping. Of these:*

- 202 have been paid
- 92 are subject to payment plans
- 130 are awaiting prosecution
- 75 were rescinded. This could have been due to vulnerability or lack of evidence

*The Covid-19 pandemic has led to delays in cases going to court.*

*Since 1st April 2021, 257 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued for fly tipping. Of these:*

- 105 have been paid
- 37 are subject to payment plans
- 56 are awaiting prosecution
- 59 have been rescinded

**(41) Councillor Wilkinson: Graffiti Enforcement**

Graffiti across Brighton and Hove is becoming an increasing blight on our city. It is clearly a problem that is out of control. Can the Chair of the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee please inform me as to how many prosecutions have occurred across the city in the previous 12 months for this act of criminal damage and does the Chair agree with me that the council should now establish an Anti-graffiti Working Group to tackle this issue?

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

Thank you for your question.

In recognition of the graffiti problem across the city, Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee agreed the Graffiti Reduction Strategy in November 2019.

The strategy has four workstreams of prevention, removal, enforcement and monitoring/measuring. Unfortunately, work was paused due to the pandemic however has now restarted in earnest progressing the actions within the project plan in conjunction with the police, stakeholders, businesses and residents.

Recent activities with stakeholders across the city include attendance at the Joint Action Group. These meetings are co-chaired by the Chief Inspector of Sussex Police and the Safer Communities Manager from the council and is attended by many city stakeholders. The meeting allows for multi-agency round table discussion and collaborative problem solving for issues of anti-social behaviour, including graffiti. Through this joined up approach we are able to ensure that actions that are taken to address these issues are as robust and effective as possible.

Officers have already met with many local community and resident associations including the North Laine Community Association and The Roundhill Society, as well as individual residents, to understand the issues faced to ensure work being developed through the Graffiti Reduction Strategy is correctly aligned. Additionally, officers have also supported with lighting, signage and potential new planting to deter graffiti vandals in hotspot areas. Community clean ups have also been enabled in some parts of the city.

At Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee in September 2020, the Environmental Enforcement Team were given new powers to issue Community Protection Notices for graffiti which enforce property owners across the city to take greater responsibility to remove graffiti or face fines and legal action for not doing so. Procedures to manage these processes are currently being developed and once finalised, the new enforcement approach will be implemented. This new approach has been designed to encourage the timely removal of graffiti from private property across all areas of the city.

The Environmental Enforcement Team also use mobile CCTV units which are placed in graffiti hot spots to act as deterrents and to fine and prosecute those caught committing offenses.

As part of Cityclean's prevention work, a new mural has recently been completed at The Level. The artwork, painted by a local artist and designed by young people on the theme of Biodiversity, was commissioned by Octopus Energy and will be digitally displayed at the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in November.

The Environmental Enforcement Team continue to adapt their graffiti patrols based on intelligence on graffiti vandalism activities from the public and local action groups. New mobile CCTV units have been placed in graffiti hotspots to

support this process. Environmental Enforcement Officers also liaise closely with the dedicated graffiti officers within Sussex Police on a regular basis undertaking joint patrols and sharing intelligence to maximise our chances in catching those responsible. Additional funding was also put in the last budget to support graffiti removal work.

I do not believe it is necessary to establish an anti-graffiti working group given all the engagement work already in train.

**(42) Councillor Yates: Bin Strike**

Can the current Leader of the Council clarify what action he took when the last Green Administration faced a similar bin strike in the city, on behalf of his Administration?

**Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

In both the disputes of 2013 and 2021 I have been consistent in working to advance an end to the dispute, listen to the workforce and residents alike and champion a fairer city council. In 2019 during the last Labour administration, following a request I also attended a negotiation meeting between the GMB and Labour group during the dispute over Pride, when ACAS were called in.

**(43) Councillor Barnett: St Helens Green, Hangleton - Rewilding**

The Council has started leaving large patches of St Helens Green in Hangleton uncut.

This is unpopular with residents, who have reported that the uncut areas are being used as a toilet for pet dogs, detracting from the local amenity.

St Helens Green is a conservation area and residents were not informed about the Council's rewilding policy. The Green is faced onto by many residents' bungalows who want to see it well-kept as it used to be and visually appealing but now consider it to be an eyesore.

Can the Council:

- a. Arrange to have the grass cut and return St Helens Green to its previous state so that can be enjoyed by all.
- b. In future consult residents before introducing rewilding trials.

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

The only wilding project currently being undertaken by the council is at Waterhall Golf Course as agreed by the TEC Committee.

In line with the 2017 Open Spaces Strategy Cityparks are continuing to encourage habitats and opportunities for wildlife to thrive within all of our open

spaces including our parks and gardens. As part of the feedback to our public consultation for the Open Spaces Strategy 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that we should cut verges less often and I believe these respondents would also support longer grass in parks. I am aware that there are residents who want to see close mown grass there are also a lot of people who want us to increase the biodiversity of our parks and open spaces and support the move away from close mowing the majority of our grass.

**(44) Councillor Lewry: Local Infrastructure Improvements, Hangleton & Knoll**

Please can you provide a progress update, including expected completion dates, for the following local projects in my ward of Hangleton & Knoll:

- a. Greenleas Park - Installation of bigger capacity bins
- b. Knoll Park – Installation of bigger capacity bins
- c. Hangleton Park
  - i Resurfacing of multipurpose play area with new astro-turf
  - ii Replacement of damaged hoardings
  - iii Installation of new basketball nets
  - iv Installation of Zip wire

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

Through the delivery of the Bin Infrastructure Action Plan, Cityclean will be introducing on-the-go recycling bins within the city's Parks. The project is beginning with an initial group of pilot sites which includes Hove Park, Stanmer Park, Preston Park, Saltdean Oval, Valley Gardens, Wish Park, and St Ann's Well Gardens.

The introduction of on-the-go recycling bins will increase the capacity available for residents and visitors to dispose of litter. The implementation of these bins is not as simple as just placing the bins. Appropriate consideration and planning needs to go into assuring suitable and regular collections.

Consequently, the project is beginning by deploying new bins to a pilot site - Wish Park/Aldrington Rec. This will allow Cityclean to assess the effectiveness of the planned service delivery model and refine it, prior to rolling it to the other pilot sites.

Also as part of the Bin Infrastructure Strategy, Cityclean is reviewing the locations of dog waste bins and seeking to replace with normal litter bins, which can also be used for dog waste. Normal litter bins are larger than dog waste bins and so through this piece of work, there is likely to be an increase in capacity for Greenleas Park and Knoll Park.

At this stage we are not putting bigger bins in either Greenleas or Knoll Park. The existing bins are the maximum size that can be emptied by hand, larger

bins need to be mechanically emptied. Some of the bins are in poor condition these will be replaced in the next 6 months but with bins of a similar size. Going forward we will be looking at how we deal with parks litter with the aim of increasing recycling and at this stage we will also consider mechanised bin collection which would enable larger bins to be used.

Hangleton Park playground is scheduled to be replaced in April/May 2022 and this refurbishment will include the installation of a zip wire.

Cityparks has no budget or plans to refurbish the astro-turf pitch at Hangleton Park officers will continue to explore any additional funding that may become available to do this.

#### **(45) Councillor Mears: Disability Beach Access Ramp East of the City**

In the City Budget negotiations earlier in the year, the Conservative Group worked with the Administration to ensure a sum of £30,000 was included for a beach disability access ramp in the east of the city.

The ramp is needed to address an accessibility gap in Brighton and Hove, with all the existing ramps currently located in the west of the city.

A beach access ramp would help people with a disability in the east of the city enjoy access to the coastline.

Talking to residents in the east of the city, they are very keen to see such a ramp at Rottingdean Beach or Saltdean Beach to give disabled people in this vicinity access to the beach to be able to enjoy family outings.

I know that the Chair is strongly supportive of improved beach access for the disabled and shares the view of disability groups that there is inadequate provision in the east compared to the west and an accessibility gap.

Can the Chair of the Tourism, Equalities Communities and Culture committee:

- i. Provide an update on what the total beach access strategy looks like for the city's sea border so that access solutions are provided along the full stretch and all locations are equally provided for.
- ii. Confirm how many disability beach access ramps currently exist in Brighton and Hove and their locations.
- iii. Commit to progressing the £30,000 project over the winter months so that the new access ramp can be in place for people in the east of the city to enjoy by summer 2022; and
- iv. Ensure that local disability groups, including BADGE and the Brighton Beach Access Team, are fully consulted in choosing the location for this budgeted item.
- v. Advise whether a beach accessibility officer is currently employed by Brighton and Hove City Council.

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

Beach Access Team Brighton & Hove is a campaign group run by a small number of volunteers, all of whom have a disability or who provide care for somebody who does. The council has been actively working with the Beach Access Team for several years to bring about real and tangible access improvements on our beaches and seafront.

This year has seen a number of small interventions which have helped to improve access on the seafront, these include a trial of 2 seasonal pathways to the high-water mark, the opening of a new Changing Places facility at the Shelter Hall public toilets, new accessible seating and picnic tables, accessible beach platform by Brighton Seafront Office and the design of manufacture of a bespoke electric beach wheelchair which will be ready for next summer.

Alongside these improvements the team have been focusing on a site in Hove to develop an accessible beach deck to improve access onto the shingle. This was the site chosen by the public following a consultation event in August 2018 however, this project still requires funding. Now that funding is available for a ramp in the eastern seafront the council and Beach Access Team will investigate the options for a suitable design and location in Saltdean or Rottingdean.

In terms of the longer-term strategy, an accessible boardwalk from Black Rock to Banjo Groyne is in the process of being built and should be complete by the end of this year. The Sea Lanes development is also due to be completed next year and this will include a Changing Places facility and pathway across the shingle to facilitate easier access to the shoreline. Over the winter the council and Beach Access Team will be reviewing the feedback from this years' trial of the beach mat pathways to consider if temporary pathways are a viable option and whether these can be expanded to additional locations.

It is the aim of the council and the Beach Access Team to provide a variety of interventions across all areas of our seafront to offer solutions, wherever possible, to improve access for all. The needs, aspirations and abilities of our residents and visitors are wide ranging. Therefore, there is not a 'once size fits all' solution to the difficulties encountered when accessing our shingle beaches. Some disabled people have expressed a desire to be able to independently get down to the sea to swim, while others just want to be able to get onto the beach to spend time with friends and family.

The council acknowledges that we are still a long way off from a viable solution which enables disabled people to access all areas of our beaches or the sea independently. The main reason for this is due to the complexities created from our shingle beaches and particular seafront environment, However, we are committed to exploring new ideas and technology and working creatively to overcome these issues.

#### **(46) Councillor Bagaen: Health Services**

If local GPs continue to refuse to see people face-to-face, this will mean that local inequities in the city will be magnified again and again.



Will this Administration stand up for patients whose voices all too often are not heard in this city, and will the administration press its partner, the clinical commissioning group, and insist that GPs see all patients face to face without a triage screening first?

### **Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

You sit on the Health and Wellbeing Board and of course in such a position can ask the Clinical Commissioning Group CCG through those meetings.

Local GPs and their practice teams are working incredibly hard to provide care and support for their patients, provide appointments on a day-to-day basis that work best for the needs of the patient and keep everyone safe, address the ongoing health checks and reviews that are due as a result of the pandemic, and lead the roll out of the COVID-19 vaccination programme and the seasonal flu vaccinations.

It is important to be clear that GP practices are not refusing face to face care; every patient is assessed based on their need and anyone who needs to be seen face to face will be offered this type of consultation.

Demand for NHS services is high but in the latest data, in August alone, more than 717,725 appointments took place – 58.5% of which were face to face and that rate is increasing (57% in July). As well as face to face appointments, GP practices are also offering phone and video appointments – options to keep patients safe and provide more flexibility for those who don't need to be seen on site.

The Clinical Commissioning Group has been asked to provide some data: they work closely with GP practices in the city to make sure that they are providing the best possible care to their patients, and that the available consultations meet the needs of their patients. In September they agreed £3.6 million in resilience monies and a £16 million investment package for general practice to be spent in this financial year. Following the publication of the NHS England and Improvement guidance last week, there is currently focused work to understand what is working well, what is best practice and where improvements can be made for the benefit of the city's residents.

The Health Secretary, Sajid Javid promised GPs and their practices £26M yet only a few days ago made funding conditional on increasing the number of patients who get an in-person appointment. According to the BMA, of the 29 initiatives just seven may provide some limited or new support for general practice and these won't go far enough. The BMA described the move as a *"government completely out of touch with the scale of the crisis on the ground."* I support the BMA's #SupportYourSurgery campaign which seeks to end the scapegoating of GPs, stop abuse of the NHS workforce and for urgent investment in primary care. I would encourage all councillors to do so too.

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/covid-19/gp-practices/support-your-surgery>

**(47) Councillor Peltzer Dunn: Pavements**

Can the Chair of the Committee advise:

- a) What are the total lengths of pavement within the city under the responsibility of Brighton and Hove City Council?
- b) How many claims have been made to the Council in respect of injuries caused through pavement accidents in the following municipal years:
  - i 2018-19
  - ii 2019-20
  - iii 2020-21
  - iv 2021-2 (to date)
- c) How many such claims have been upheld in the last twelve months and how many are outstanding?
- d) How many operatives are clearing the pavements of weeds?
- e) What proportion of streets have had their weeds cleared?
- f) What plans have been made to address the outstanding problems this year
- g) What changes are planned for next year to avoid this year's problem?

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

- a) What are the total lengths of pavement within the city under the responsibility of Brighton and Hove City Council?

**There is 975.67km of footway in the city**

- b) How many claims have been made to the Council in respect of injuries caused through pavement accidents in the following municipal years:
  - i. 2018-19 **60 Claims**
  - ii. 2019-20 **55 Claims**
  - iii. 2020-21 **45 Claims**
  - iv. 2021-2 (to date) **31 Claims**
- c) How many such claims have been upheld in the last twelve months and how many are outstanding?

**0 Payments (upheld claims) to a claimant as a result of an injury caused through pavement accidents. There are currently 37 Claims open with outstanding reserves.**
- d) How many operatives are clearing the pavements of weeds?

**Weed spraying has been replaced with 6 additional seasonal staff. On top of this, we have 160 street staff who clean the streets including detritus, leaves and weeds. Contractors also support the process.**

- e) What proportion of streets have had their weeds cleared?

**20 to 30% of the city**

- f) What plans have been made to address the outstanding problems this year?

**Many different types of machinery were trialled including different processes for weed removal. Benchmarking with other local authorities to identify solutions, including new types of machinery. Engagement with councillors and community clean-up groups continues.**

- g) What changes are planned for next year to avoid this year's problem?

**A new mechanical weed ripper/sweeper is being ordered that will allow better removal from open spaces and wide footways such as Old Shoreham Road and New Church Road. In addition, there is a plan to replace the push weed ripper with trimmers which increase the effectiveness in terms of transport and manoeuvring.**

#### **(48) Councillor Theobald: Patcham Community Centre**

When will One Parking Solution be implemented at Patcham Community Centre? Patcham Community Centre and Patcham Councillors have been requesting One Parking Solution since before lockdown, because if it is not implemented this invaluable community resource will be in danger of closing down.

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

The response could not be provided in time inclusion with the addendum and will be provided to the Councillor following the meeting and listed in the minutes.

#### **(49) Councillor Nemeth: Active Travel Schemes**

How much expenditure has been incurred on the following active travel measures:

- a) Old Shoreham Road Temporary Cycle Lane:
- i Installation
  - ii Removal
- b) A259 Temporary Cycle Lane:
- i Installation
  - ii Removal

- c) Madeira Drive closure scheme:
  - i Installation
  - ii Maintenance (including staffing costs at entry points)
  - iii Removal
  - iv Repurposing to new configuration.

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

- a) Old Shoreham Road Temporary Cycle Lane:
  - i Installation - **(£53,070)**
  - ii Removal - **(£74,600)**
- b) A259 Temporary Cycle Lane:
  - i Installation - **(£181,491)**
  - ii Removal - **(£5,000) low cost is due to only painting over the markings, further work will be required**
- c) Madeira Drive closure scheme:
  - i Installation
  - ii Maintenance (including staffing costs at entry points)
  - iii Removal
  - iv Repurposing to new configuration - **£447,853.18 – Includes all phase scheme delivery costs**

**Installation and maintenance of the initial closure - the GL shows 20/21 NPCF287 Madeira Drive Emergency Closure costs £26,810.58 and 21/22 npcf Madeira Drive Emergency Closure costs £421,042.60**

**(50) Councillor Mears: Homeless Placements in the City**

It has been reported that while Brighton and Hove City Council is placing homeless people out of area, including into Newhaven and Eastbourne, that Adur District Council is placing homeless people into Brighton and Hove.

Can the Chair please confirm:

- a) How many homeless have been placed by Adur District Council into Brighton and Hove?
- b) How many other local authorities are also placing homeless into Brighton and Hove?
- c) Are homeless placed into the City by other local authorities able to access the services they need easily?

Additional information:

<https://www.brightonandhove.org/2021/10/05/while-brighton-and-hove-sends-homeless-elsewhere-adur-sends-them-to-brighton-to-hove/>

**Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Chair of the Housing Committee**

Thank you for your question.

We are currently making enquiries as to the number of councils in the pan Sussex area to confirm placements in the Brighton & Hove area. However there is no requirement for this data to be provided and of course it may vary day by day. Once we have more information officers can provide a fuller response..

We have no evidence to indicate that homeless households placed in Brighton & Hove by other housing authorities are facing difficulties in accessing services.

**(51) Councillor Simson: Population**

I refer to my previous written question from the last full council – Question 14, 15 July 2021.

This question was answered: Response to follow.

I have yet to receive a response. Please can this question be answered?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

The response could not be provided in time inclusion with the addendum and will be provided to the Councillor following the meeting and listed in the minutes.

**(52) Councillor Simson: Homemove System**

When the new Homemove System was brought in, it was promised that the regular feedback reports showing the details of allocations would be reinstated once the IT was sorted out.

This has never happened, so Councillors and residents are completely unaware which properties have been let to which Bands and criteria unless they request an excel spreadsheet.

Please can the Chair arrange for this to be restarted?

**Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Chair of the Housing Committee**

Thank you for your question.

Implementation of new system has been more problematic than anticipated but a recent system upgrade that we are currently testing will enable us to make regular feedback reports available to Members. We anticipate that this will be available within the next 8 weeks.

**(53) Councillor Simson: Safer Streets Round 1**

It has come to my attention that during the 2019/20 municipal year Brighton and Hove City Council was contacted by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and offered an opportunity to participate in a joint Sussex bid for Round 1 of the Government's Safer Streets Fund.

Brighton and Hove had been identified by the Office of the PCC as statistically the area most in need of crime prevention infrastructure.

Despite this ranking and offer, Brighton and Hove City Council did not choose to participate in the joint bid.

As a result our City missed out on funding, which went to Eastbourne and Hastings Councils which did progress applications and were awarded £893,366.

It is appreciated that this occurred under the previous Labour administration but can the Chair of the Committee please investigate what happened and answer the following questions:

- a) Does the Council have a skills or capacity gap in applying for funding opportunities from the Government?
- b) Was there a lack of oversight from the Chair of the TECC Committee on this matter which meant that the City missed out on funding?
- c) Can the Administration put in place a plan to fill any fundamental skill gaps or capacity issues so that the city does not miss out on vital funding in the future.

Further information: <https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/news/pcc-secures-nearly-900k-for-safer-streets-in-eastbourne-hastings/>

### **Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

Officers were approached by Sussex Police about safer streets round 1 funding which they were leading on with the Sussex police and crime commissioner. At the time there were capacity issues for staff to contribute fully to a bid, as officers were at that time working on the development of the Community safety strategy. Officers did submit a bid for safer streets round two funding but were unsuccessful. The City council in conjunction with colleagues from East and West Sussex and the OSPCC have recently successfully bid for safer streets round three funding which specifically looks to address violence against women and girls. Both a primary and secondary bid were submitted, and both were successful. Officers are currently waiting to hear whether a further bid for funding to address violence against women and girls in the night-time economy is successful. The Council regularly successfully bids for funding from a wide range of Government programmes.

### **(54) Councillor Simson: Congestion**

The Council's decision to reduce the capacity of Lewes Road has had a knock-on effect in Woodingdean, with traffic using Falmer Road as a bypass.

There are now fears that the Council's changes at Valley Gardens will cause further congestion in the inner city and displace more cars to Falmer Road and in Woodingdean and this is causing great concern in the community.

A local resident has previously suggested the idea of improving traffic flow on Lewes Road by making the bus lane flexible in a similar way to smart motorways, allowing the bus-lane to be re-repurposed for cars when demand for buses is lower, for example when the Universities are out.

Will the Council consider this as a plan to reduce congestion on Lewes Road?

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

The Lewes Road corridor is a heavily used multi model corridor that is used by residents and students to access the universities, which is why the bus lane was introduced to encourage both walking and cycling. While it is an interesting idea to change the use during the times when the universities are out there are a number of issues to consider. These are:-

- Changing the times of bus lane restrictions on road would be confusing when the times of the university change so often
- It would encourage people to abuse the lanes and likely lead to more cars being fined due to the confusion
- The road is also a major commuting route with large number of people using public transport and increasing capacity even for a short time will encourage them to swap back to the car
- Recent evidence of smart motorways being implemented also demonstrates some issues with the schemes, in particular raised by drivers (as can be partially understood through, for example, RAC surveys)

For all of these reasons I would not support any change to the Bus Lane restrictions.

**(55) Councillor Simson: Falmer Road Crossing**

Now that the work has been completed to widen Falmer Road walking and cycling path, will the Council prioritise the installation of the promised crossing across Falmer Road to link the Falmer Road Path and the Drove Road Path?

This simple addition of a crossing would in one stroke create a safe integrated active travel network in Woodingdean and for those enjoying the South Downs National Park.

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

A proposal for an informal crossing at this location was presented to stakeholders prior to the completion of the path upgrade with a view to implementing it at the end of the construction phase. Unfortunately, there are many physical challenges to installing a crossing at this location and it was the view of some of the stakeholders that the required design compromises would

have resulted in a crossing that did not meet the needs of the users of the path. As in interim measure, we are in the process of putting together a phase one of improvements which will seek to tackle the key concerns of visibility and vehicle speed. We are also gathering further data on speeds and use in order to inform any future considerations for this site. Details of the phase one scheme were sent to you via email on 3rd September. If you would like to discuss this further, then please speak to the relevant officer directly.

**(56) Councillor Simson: Bus Services**

Falmer has become an increasingly important hub in Brighton and Hove for all its residents, providing a major source of employment and major education, sport and recreation facilities.

Falmer is now set to also become a health hub for Brighton and Hove's resident following the announcement from the Government that it will be the site of one of 40 Community Diagnostic Centres to be set up across England to clear the NHS backlog caused by the pandemic.

The Amex Community Diagnostic Centre will provide a one-stop-shop for key testing to catch up and boost early diagnoses, speed up and increase referrals.

This will include a full range of scans and tests for patients to identify illnesses at the earliest signs and will achieve quicker diagnoses for patients through easier, faster, and more direct access to the full range of scans and tests needed to understand patients' symptoms – including breathlessness and cancer symptoms.

It is fantastic that Brighton and Hove is in a position to host one of these centres and great for local residents and it is now important that all parts of the city are fully connected to this facility.

There is currently no direct bus connection between Woodingdean and Falmer, something residents have been calling for, for many years.

Will the Council, which heavily subsidises Brighton and Hove busses, take this opportunity to request Brighton and Hove busses or other bus providers introduce a direct Woodingdean to Falmer bus route?

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

I am happy to instruct officers to put this suggestion to operators, but they are only likely to run this service if they deem it commercially viable. Should an operator decide to trial a service and it does not make a profit then the Council would have to step in to subsidise the service which would carry an unquantifiable financial risk. The draft BSIP approved at the September ETS contains the following commitment.

The council will work with operators and neighbouring authorities to explore how services to areas to the north of Brighton & Hove can be enhanced.

I have to challenge the assertion that the Council 'heavily' subsidises Brighton & Hove Buses, at least in normal, non-Covid times. The Council does indeed pay B&H buses to run supported services which would otherwise be commercially



unviable such as school services, Breeze up to the Downs and parts of the 21 route. It also pays bus operators generally for concessionary travel under the English National Concessionary fares scheme. It has been distributing additional DFT mandated payments under Covid Bus Services Support grant and Bus Recovery Grant to keep commercial services going when passenger revenue collapsed during the pandemic, but it is worth noting some of these grants are now being phased out as we transition out of Covid restrictions.

**(57) Councillor Simson: Homeless Placements in Woodingdean**

- a) How many from the homeless register have received assistance with privately renting in Woodingdean during the following municipal years?
  - i) 2019-20
  - ii) 2020-21
  - iii) 2021-2 (to date)
- b) How many of these had previously been rough sleeping and were sufficient support mechanisms put in place bearing in mind their isolated location?
- c) Are there proper support services in place for homeless people entering private accommodation?

**Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Chair of the Housing Committee**

Thank you for your question.

- i) 2019-20 – 4
- ii) 2020-21 – 4
- iii) 2021-2 (to date) – 7

Seven of the clients accommodated during this period have been referred through our street outreach service or were threatened with homelessness during the Covid-19 period. Southdown, a housing and support provider, has been specifically commissioned to provide support to single vulnerable clients, including those with a history of rough sleeping.

The Direct Lets Team currently supports people to whom we have accepted a statutory duty to accommodate under the Homelessness Reduction Act and helps to sustain those tenancies. Third sector providers work in partnership with the Direct Lets Team to support clients who were referred through the street outreach service. We have strong links to a network of public and third sector support agencies and provide a wraparound tenancy sustainment package for the clients we place.

**(58) Councillor Nemeth: Tree Garden Removal**

In the absence of Council action on the matter, hundreds of residents have started to maintain areas around tree bases outside their homes. In many cases, they have created beautiful tree gardens that bring joy to passers-by.

Sadly, the Council has destroyed several of these gardens when carrying out works on or around the trees without reference to gardeners or neighbours.

It is of course the case that the Council owns the land around the trees and may not have a legal duty to consult anybody. However, given that residents already feel so let down by the lack of maintenance, and that they have put so much help into proactively assisting the Council, it is quite simply wrong that their work is being destroyed in this manner.

What protocols can be put in place to avoid such a situation continuing?

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

Neither Cityparks or its contractors are aware of destroying any planting around tree bases. There should be no structures put around trees and if there are these will be removed however we welcome the effort residents put into improving their streets by planting herbaceous plants around tree bases. In most cases the council will not know who has been working on a particular tree base, it would not be practical for the council or its contractors to locate the person who has planted a tree base and consult them prior to working on a tree. The only time that planting will be destroyed is when stumps are removed however it is quite possible that some damage is done to it during routine pruning operations.

I will ask officers to offer to meet Cllr Nemeth to look at the tree bases in question to check that our staff and contractors are not causing unnecessary damage to residents planting schemes.

**(59) Councillor Pissaridou:**

Concerns have been raised to me by residents in my ward who are parents whose children, age 12-15, attend senior schools across the city and who are worried about the current spread of Covid-19 locally.

There are four schools in North Portslade including a Special school, with two of them teaching Years 7-11.

The latest figures from the ONS ( Office of National Statistics) show that the percentage of people testing positive for COVID-19 this week (October 8th) was highest in secondary school pupils Years 7-11 with the daily percentage trebling since the return to school in September after the summer break.

Can you tell me

How many children aged 12-15 locally have contracted COVID-19 since the return to school in September on a week-by-week basis and how many of those were in the clinically vulnerable category but now no longer shielding and had to return to school or are living with people who are still considered to be clinically vulnerable?

How many children are currently off school due to a positive COVID-19 test and given the figures vary week by week, is the trend similar to the national trend?

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

There are still high numbers of Covid cases in school and college aged children and young people in the city and I know we'd all agree that efforts must be maintained to control possible infection and reduce the rate of transmission. On our [public key stats page](#) we show the rate of new confirmed COVID-19 cases by broad age group, which shows the rates in the city remain highest in those aged 0-14 years.

The [government COVID-19 dashboard](#) breaks this down further, with the rate by 5 year age band.

Our public health team at the council receive further detailed data usually on a daily basis on the Covid cases in the city. This data is confidential and cannot be shared publicly as it is personal sensitive health data. It is however used proactively to monitor the situation, both generally across the city but also in particular areas, particular age groups and in particular settings including schools. In addition to this, our Education and Skills team ask the city's schools to update them when they have positive cases. The Education and Skills and the Public Health team are currently meeting daily, given the ongoing high Covid rates, to look at this data and to consider what support can be best given to schools.

