

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cabinet

Agenda Item 59(b)

Subject: Member Questions

Date of meeting: 26 September 2024

A maximum period of fifteen minutes in total shall be made available at each meeting of the Executive for questions from Members of the Council. The question will be answered either orally or at the discretion of the Chair by a written answer circulated after the meeting. Officers may assist the Leader or a Cabinet Member with technical answers to questions. No supplementary questions shall be permitted.

The following written questions have been received from Members:

(1) Councillor Shanks- Supported Accommodation for Young People Placements

How will the council ensure that all placements are within the area of Brighton and Hove?

(2) Councillor Davis- Parking Review Update

What was the cost of the external consultants?

(3) Councillor Davis- Parking Review Update

What are the procurement costs of bringing back pay and display machine?

(4) Councillor Meadows- General fund budget planning and resource update 2025-26

When can we expect an increase in our budget from central government? What level of uplift is expected?

(5) Councillor McNair- Parking Review Update

What do you mean by 'increase accessibility of 3rd party reporting for enforcement'? Appendix 3.

(6) Councillor McNair- Parking Review Update

Where are new red routes planned? (appendix 1)

(7) Councillor McNair- Parking Review Update

The council receives almost £46m from parking. How much income from motorists is the council aiming to achieve in the next 5 years?

(8) Councillor McNair- Parking Review Update

How much did the consultants Mott MacDonald cost the council for their parking review?

(9) Councillor McNair- Parking Review Update

If residents reject any plans in the consultation will residents' decision stand?

(10) Councillor Meadows- Supported accommodation for young people placements

What is the ethnic makeup as percentages of those seeking mental health support services?

(11) Councillor Meadows- Supported accommodation for young people placements

What percentage of young people in care/supported accommodation enter mental health support services?

(12) Councillor Meadows- Cleaning Services

Are there any cleaning services provided to private tenants and homeowners? Is this something that we could offer to create an income stream thereby supporting families who don't receive adult social care?

(13) Councillor Hill- Cleaning Services

10% of total quality score is given on grounds of sustainability and social value framework respectively. What is the remaining 80% of the total quality score?

(14) Councillor Hill- Cleaning Services

Will the procurement consider if the company itself is locally owned and run, as opposed to simply just that it employs local people which is implied in the papers in point 12.3?

(15) Councillor Hill- Mental Health Support Services for Adults

Point 6.1 states that 'if public health funding were to cease or reduce in the future within the duration of the contract, then the outstanding contractual obligations link to the programme could then fall on the BHCC general fund. This would result in an unplanned expenditure, which could affect the overall expenditure of BHCC'

The NHS is going to experience cuts as part of austerity measures implemented by the new Labour government as part of what Kier Starmer has stated is their 'reform or die' agenda for the NHS. How do we ensure that nationally imposed cuts to the NHS are not going to lead to additional

costs being put onto the Council to support vital mental health support services?

(16) Councillor Hill- Mental Health Support Services for Adults

'3.4.4 The annual budget for the new Brighton and Hove MHS service will be £1.837m which represents a reduction in funding of approximately 15%. Both the ICB and the council are reducing their contribution. The annual BHCC contribution will be £0.27m per annum funded from the Public Health ring fenced grant (see Table 1 below). This equates to a BHCC expenditure of £1.89m over the lifetime of the seven-year contract.'

Given the rise of mental health issues in our city, is it wise for the Council and ICB to be cutting back costs on mental health services?

(17) Councillor Goldsmith- Parking Review Update

I've had residents in parking zones with waitlists get in touch because they have missed their reminder email and re-applied slightly too late (sometimes by just a few days), only to find they have to go right to the back of the wait list, which can be a year plus. Will the administration consider a) sending out more reminders to people in these zones, and b) giving a longer grace period for people within these zones to re-apply for their parking permit without having to go right to the back of the waiting list?

(18) Councillor Sykes- General Fund Budget Planning and Resource Update

The GF budget planning timeline allows for consultation, and general detail of planned stakeholder engagement is set out in s12 of Item 64. However the promised Star Chamber process is not included in the outline budget timeline and it not clear when line-by-line draft budget proposals will be made available for public and member review. Can the Cabinet Member for Finance please indicate when we can expect Star Chamber meetings to occur and when initial draft budget proposals will be made public?

(19) Councillor Sykes- General Fund Budget Planning and Resource Update

Options to address budget shortfalls (s3.14) include reviewing the capital programme to reduce associated revenue commitments. Additional capital financing cost pressures in 2025/26 are already greater than £5m for 2025/6 (s5, table) and recent capital project financing decisions have added to the capital financing cost pressure. Would the Cabinet Member for Finance agree this deteriorating position chosen by the administration feels like somewhat of a gamble with perilous council finances?

(20) Councillor Sykes- General Fund Budget Planning and Resource Update

Please can the Cabinet Member for Finance provide the build-up for 'All other pressures across council services', £6.605m, in s5, Table?

(21) Councillor Sykes- General Fund Budget Planning and Resource Update

Please can the Cabinet Member for Finance inform us of the three key areas of advocacy he is pursuing with Treasury and MHCLG with respect to the financial pressures BHCC and other LAs are experiencing?

(22) Councillor McLeay- Housing Strategy

We have heard for a long time about the backlog of routine housing repairs. Is there a target date or timeframe for when this might be resolved?

(23) Councillor McLeay- Housing Strategy

Great to see in Appendix 2 that BHCC will explore the opportunity to bid for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund – making the most of external funding? Can you confirm if the housing team have started preparing their application for Wave 3? The guidance in May was to start preparing.

(24) Councillor McLeay- Housing Strategy

Has the refresh of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping partnership arrangements been done? The strategy suggests it would be by Sep 2024. Could we receive an update on this?

(25) Councillor McLeay- Housing Strategy

There are three examples I've come across in my ward since May 2023, where limited housing options have meant survivors are placed in unsuitable accommodation. How will this be addressed differently going forward, if lack of supply continues to be the key challenge?

(26) Councillor McLeay- Housing Strategy

It was a shame to hear about the closing of Leslie Best House in my ward. That low level supported accommodation was housing women who were survivors of domestic abuse. They were very happy there and felt safe and secure. How can BHCC make sure these women are placed in accommodation where they continue to feel secure? I am conscious that low support need can very quickly ramp up to medium or high if people suddenly lose the right level of support. Their low support need should not be taken for granted.

(27) Councillor McLeay- Housing Strategy

At a meeting last week it was suggested that how consultations are currently conducted excludes a lot of people whose perspective the service would really benefit from. They suggested a short form at food banks or sent to homes might be one way to make it more accessible. Is this something BHCC might consider for the next role of housing strategy consultation as well as other non-traditional engagement methods?

(28) Councillor McLeay- Housing Strategy

Improving engagement with residents - the response times from some parts of the housing department is currently not great. Will we increase staff for that department to achieve the ambitions to improve communication and engagement? Is more investment being given to this department to support this additional work?

(29) Councillor McLeay- Housing Strategy

HS28 - take a resident centered approach to developing future options for the regeneration of LPS blocks. Residents, particularly leaseholders, don't sound too happy about the approach so far. There is concern about how news on LPS blocks and possible demolition has impacted the value of their property. If BHCC are able to purchase these properties, will BHCC commit to paying what the value of the property was before the BBC reported news of demolition on July 25, 2024?

(30) Councillor McLeay- Improving Housing Services: Response to the Regulator of Social Housing Ruling

(3.8) Providing a clear timeline for completing lower-risk actions. Will these clear timelines be published or shared with residents – and how?

(31) Councillor McLeay- Improving Housing Services: Response to the Regulator of Social Housing Ruling

(3.14) Additional contractor capacity is being deployed to work alongside Council teams to undertake these remediation actions and the financial implications forecast an overspend. How much is that overspend and how do you plan to mitigate and bring the HRA back into balance?

(32) Councillor McLeay- Improving Housing Services: Response to the Regulator of Social Housing Ruling

Appendix B – the letter – there is only one method of contact given to raise safety concerns, a phone number. In the event that this phone number doesn't get through to an officer, could an email address not be provided also? The ways in which residents can reports needs to be clear and accessible

