

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 39

Subject: Written questions from Councillors

Date of meeting: 24 October 2024

Report of: Corporate Director for Corporate Services

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

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

1. Councillor Fishleigh

When will the results of the consultation about the proposed new bus lane east of the aquarium roundabout be made public?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

2. Councillor Fishleigh

The General Manager of The Grand Hotel came to full council to ask for the unsightly growth in verges between the West Pier and West Street to be tidied up as they are an eyesore for visitors and residents. When will this happen?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

3. Councillor Fishleigh

Given the budget deficit, is the plan for new bike lanes between Hove and the Lagoon on hold given that BHCC must find another £2.8m for the scheme?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

4. Councillor Fishleigh

Given the ongoing and well-documented Anti Social Behaviour in New Road, will BHCC remove the benches on that road as requested by nearby traders whose businesses are suffering?

Brighton & Hove City Council

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

5. Councillor Fishleigh

How much is being set aside in the 2025/6 budget to resurface Rottingdean High Street and The Green in Rottingdean - and improve pavements on both sides?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm / Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

6. Councillor Bagaeen

Interim roles in the Council's Housing Service
With interim roles in the housing service not starting until November, how has the council been working with developers on joint working on redevelopment sites and the delivery of affordable housing?

Reply from Cllr Sankey, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Chair

7. Councillor Bagaeen

Devolution
Plans under consideration in Brighton and Hove as announced by the Leader of the Council could involve an elected mayor taking political charge of a bigger geographical area that includes our city and some neighbouring councils. I agree that devolved power to a real Greater Brighton rather than the illusion of what exists at the moment is an excellent step forward. I said as much in 2015
(<https://www.brightonchamber.co.uk/blog/%E2%80%98greater-brighton%E2%80%99-better-your-business>). How does this help rebuild democracy at the citizen level in our city with our citizens as key participants when their voices will be only a handful of many in a wider geographical footprint?

Reply from Cllr Sankey, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Chair

8. Councillor Bagaeen

Veolia Household Waste Recycling Site (HWRS) Hove
Please detail all officer inspections of the Hove WRs Veolia facility since 1 January 2024

Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

Brighton & Hove City Council

9. Councillor Bagaeen

Circular economy route map and action plan (2020-2035)

A circular economy route map and Action Plan were published by the Council with cross part support (<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/business-and-trade/brighton-hove-circular-economy-route-map-2020-2035>) The Action Plan and route map outlined a series of actions, targets and KPIs. Can you please offer an update on where we are with respect to these actions, targets and commitments?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

10. Councillor Bagaeen

Twitten between Woodland Drive and the Three Cornered Copse
Thank you for your efforts and unwavering support in opening the Twitten. You will remember from my question in July's Full Council that I noted how in storms of early November 2023, part of the wall of House 56 Woodland Drive fell into the Twitten. MY question then noted how soon after the collapse, council officers put up a 'Footpath Closed' sign and blocked access. Please detail all of the actions taken by officers relating to the twitten since that 'Footpath Closed' sign was put up until attempts to open it gathered pace this October.

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

11. Councillor McLeay

A key reason given against a gating scheme for Zion Gardens is in respect to the number of residents requiring access to the road. Could the council confirm how many registered addresses or registered council tax payers currently live on Zion Gardens?

Reply from Cllr Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Finance & City Regeneration

12. Councillor McLeay

Engagement with those who are homeless during the consultation for the Housing Strategy was alarmingly low. Just 0.082% of the homeless population were engaged with. Will there be further outreach done retrospectively to represent these voices and their lived experience? Could the strategy be adjusted to meet their needs?

Reply from Cllr Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Housing & New Homes

Brighton & Hove City Council

13. Councillor McLeay

It is my understanding that ITV recently got permission to film at Theobald House. How much would have been charged for a TV drama to film exterior and interior scenes at this high rise building? With major works on Theobald not commencing until April 2027, could those earnings be reinvested in the communal areas - such as their community room?

Reply from Cllr Robins, Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation

14. Councillor McLeay

Could the letter sent to Angela Rayner on short terms lets back in June/July be published?

Reply from Cllr Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Housing & New Homes

15. Councillor McLeay

The Emergency Accommodation Management Services Pilot - I agree the management of EA properties should be separated out from the provision of properties. That this would go some way to monitor the suitability and standards of housing for EA and TA. One of the benefits of this measure suggests an annual cost reductions on current management fees of between - £250,000 and £500,000. If the pilot is deemed unsuccessful, however, there is also the suggestion that the service might be brought in-house. I appreciate the report notes that The Housing, Care and Wellbeing directorate does not currently have the necessary resource, or experience of providing this service at scale – but if this was to be something BHCC worked towards – do you have a rough estimate of the financial cost for bringing this in-house?

Reply from Cllr Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Housing & New Homes

16. Councillor McLeay

The Emergency Accommodation Management Services Pilot - What does success look like for this pilot? How will the success or failure of the pilot be measured? Will it primarily be based on cost savings and efficiencies? What about resident satisfaction?

Reply from Cllr Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Housing & New Homes

Brighton & Hove City Council

17. Councillor McLeay

The Emergency Accommodation Management Services Pilot - It was noted in the June report that Residents of EA have not been directly consulted at this time but will be encouraged to compare any previous experience of EA with their experience of the pilot scheme once it is in place. Can you share how residents will be engaged with for this feedback? Will it be online forms? Face to face meetings? Paper-based feedback forms where digital exclusion might be a factor?

Reply from Cllr Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Housing & New Homes

18. Councillor Pickett

Earlier this year the council installed an additional 54 new carton recycling bins across the city as well as 21 new WEEE bins. Whilst this is great, it would seem that in various areas such as the area next to Withdean stadium, many of the regular recycling bins that took cardboard, bottles and tins, have been removed and only the newer bins remain. This process seems confusing and illogical. What now seems to be happening is that people are dumping where bins used to be creating a huge mess. Is this a new policy? Will the old bins or new versions be reinstalled? Will the residents be informed?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

19. Councillor Pickett

A recent report from charities stated that unless the Government addresses the £1bn drop in homelessness funding that this country will face "the most significant setback in progress towards ending homelessness and rough sleeping in recent history". What steps do we have in place in Brighton & Hove to mitigate this in light of the fact that we have higher than average numbers of homeless on our streets and that we will probably lose some of the funding that we already have set aside for this issue?

Reply from Cllr Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Housing & New Homes

20. Councillor Sykes

Parking income: can BHCC revenue figures be provided for the 2023-24 financial year with respect to (a) parking permit fees (resident and visitor) (b) suspended bay fees (c) Net Penalty Charge Notice revenue from parking infractions (d) off- street parking revenue (e) on- street parking revenue.

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

21. Councillor Sykes

Brighton & Hove City Council

Please provide an update on plans for an improved pedestrian and cycle crossing over Coldean Lane near the top of Ditchling Road. This was in discussion in 2022 following public pressure.

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

22. Councillor Sykes

Please provide an update on the future of the 77, 78 and 79 buses to Devil's Dyke, Stanmer, Ditchling Beacon.

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

23. Councillor Sykes

Glyphosate. A petition was presented to Council for debate on 28th March 2024. The agreed minutes to that item do not make sense and the follow action to that item (refer to the relevant decision making body) appears not to have happened. Please can the Cabinet Member explain.

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

24. Councillor Sykes

Newhaven incinerator heavy oil use. Cllr Rowkins was asked a question at Council of 19th Oct 2023 by Cllr Hill about the total annual volume of heavy oil /diesel use at the incinerator for the purposes of maintaining burn temperature. A response was provided in Feb 2024 but this did not answer the original question. Can the Cabinet Member for Net Zero and Environmental Services inform us how much heavy oil /diesel was used at the Newhaven incinerator in FY 2022/23 for the purposes of start-up, close down or maintenance of critical burn temperature at the incinerator?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

25. Councillor Sykes

Operatives applying glyphosate are supposed to wear PPE including gloves and goggles but this has often not been the case in the current BHCC trial. Does the council share our concern about contractors and also how they are applying the pesticide within agreed rules?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

26. Councillor West

Brighton & Hove City Council

While the role of solar PV is recognised for the contribution it can make to the city becoming carbon neutral by 2030, is developing a solar farm on open downland the right strategy. What consideration has been given to the need to develop local food security and the likelihood the SDNPA will reject an application for its visual impact on the protected landscape. Has the alternative of creating a solar farm distributed across the roofs of the city's housing stock been considered? Power generated like this would stand to directly benefit many lower-income households too through reduction of their electricity bills?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

27. Councillor West

The WWF reports wildlife populations have plummeted 73% over 50 years. For more than ten years the city has led the way with nature restoration initiatives spurred on by our UNESCO Biosphere designation. I am dismayed then to see a number of now familiar verge meadows have been put back on routine mowing, destroying the biodiversity gain and adding to the consumption of fossil fuels. One such area is the verge along the south side of Surrenden Road between Friar Road and Ditchling Road. Other examples include the sloping verges alongside Carden Avenue. I appreciate some residents have expressed concern about rye grass injuring their dogs and issues with highway visibility, but these verges do have roadside borders and paths mown through them on pedestrian desire lines. What is the administration's intention: is it to support our commitment to nature or suppress it in the quest for neat and tidy?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

28. Councillor West

After years of gathering funds, a start is being made on restoring only a small proportion of the Madiera Terraces. What is the time scale for funding to complete the entire restoration? Will we have to wait 10, 20, 30 years, maybe? And where is that funding likely to come from? What are the economic benefits to be gained from the restoration and when will they be realised? What is the long-term maintenance cost and how is that to be funded? And, what is the annual meanwhile cost of securing and supporting the existing structure pending restoration?

Reply from Cllr Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Finance & City Regeneration

Brighton & Hove City Council

29. Councillor West

It has been a delight to once again see British divers competing so well in the Olympic games. Board diving is a wonderful and exhilarating sport yet the city's pools haven't supported this for some years. Will the redeveloped King Alfred facilities include platform and springboard diving facilities so that we might look forward to seeing local young people participating in the sport and hopefully representing the city on a higher world stage?

Reply from Cllr Robins, Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation

30. Councillor Hill

The areas in my ward that have been sprayed by glyphosate have not seen any significant change to the street plants and so can still present trip hazards in some cases. Is the Council confident that it's 'controlled droplet' approach of spraying glyphosate is working at it's intended purpose of killing street plants/weeds? It seems like the current approach is falling into the worst of both worlds where we are spraying a probable carcinogen around the city with no less trip hazards on the street as a result.

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

31. Councillor Hill

Stanley Court provides low level supported accommodation in my ward and is being converted to medium level. This means that the current residents are going to be moved out. What is the Council doing to support people being moved out of Stanley Court and does it share my concerns that this contributes to a lack of low level supported accommodation in the city? We may end up only supporting people when they are in a much more vulnerable state when earlier intervention could have helped.

Reply from Cllr Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Housing & New Homes

32. Councillor Hill

Can the letter sent to Angela Rayner MP at the end of September indicating a high level interest in devolution for Brighton & Hove be published?

Reply from Cllr Sankey, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Chair

33. Councillor Hill

What was the reason for removing opposition groups from the Health and Wellbeing Board?

Reply from Cllr Sankey, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Chair

34. Councillor Hill

Brighton & Hove City Council

What criteria will the Council be looking at to assess the success of the Lewes and London Road Red Routes?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

35. Councillor Hill

Does the Council support the principle of considering bids from East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service for pots of money coming from Community Infrastructure Levy/CIL? In Seaford, CIL has been used to pay for improvements to the fire station but not all authorities make it easy for the Fire & Rescue Service to bid for CIL.

Reply from Cllr Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Finance & City Regeneration

36. Councillor Hill

When will an Equalities Impact Assessment for the Phase 2 Organisational Redesign be published?

Reply from Cllr Sankey, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Chair

37. Councillor Hill

Has the Council assessed the impact of the new VAT for private school fees on pupil numbers? It seems likely that this may lead to some more demand for local authority schools, has this been considered?

Reply from Cllr Daniels, Cabinet Member – Children, Families, Youth Services & for Ending Violence Against Women & Girls

38. Councillor Shanks

In an email dated, 9 November 2023, Deb Austin reported that Cllr Jacob Taylor 'wasn't fully sighted' on the fact that there would be no community consultation on the plans to move Bright Start to the Turner Family Hub before the November 6th Committee meeting. Do you think that Councillors should be 'fully sighted' on plans before recommending them?

Reply from Cllr Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Finance & City Regeneration

Brighton & Hove City Council

39. Councillor Shanks

Residents have complained for the last 10 years about the noise and nuisance of traffic using Francis Street as a cut through. Can we have an update on progress?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

40. Councillor Shanks

Will the council have enough free childcare places for all parents to take up this years entitlement of 15 hours from 9 months to three years and next years of 30 hours?

Reply from Cllr Daniels, Cabinet Member – Children, Families, Youth Services & for Ending Violence Against Women & Girls

41. Councillor Shanks

When the decision was made to close the Brightstart nursery building we were told that the building would be used for the new leisure hub. However, apparently now it is to be sold. Why was this change made and why can the site not be used for social housing?

Reply from Cllr Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Finance & City Regeneration

42. Councillor Shanks

Please explain the rationale for disposal of the Brightstart Nursery building. This building was identified as part of the development of the Sports Hub. Is this no longer part of the plan? Why is the site not being considered for local authority housing if the sports hub is no longer possible?

Reply from Cllr Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Finance & City Regeneration

Brighton & Hove City Council

43. Councillor Goldsmith

The cycle storage hangars across the city have been immensely popular, with nearly every single space in the current hangars having been taken up by residents. For those in flats especially, secure external storage can be a key factor in being able to make bike ownership a possibility. Sadly, the central Regency area - despite having a significant number of flats - has got a very low number of bike hangars and I have had multiple residents get in touch asking for hangars to be installed on their streets. Does the administration have plans for further bike hangars to be installed in the city and can we get at timeline on when we could expect them?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

44. Councillor Goldsmith

I'm pleased to see planning permission has been applied for, to reconstruct a further number of arches along the seafront. A number of current tenants are concerned that their businesses will not be able to return to their arches once the works have been completed. Can the administration provide any reassurance that current businesses – many of whom have been trading there for years – will be given a priority when it comes to leasing out the restored arches?

Reply from Cllr Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Finance & City Regeneration

45. Councillor Goldsmith

I think it's fantastic so many companies are wanting to use Brighton & Hove as a filming location, but more needs to be done to reduce the impact on residents. When a significant number of parking spaces in one area are going to be put out of action due to film crews, could it be made possible for residents to either park in another nearby zone or be given permission to use a council-operated car park for the duration of the suspension? With parking suspensions over a certain size/duration, could residents also be given more warning, ideally with notices put through their doors? (The onus could presumably be put on the production company to do this.)

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

Brighton & Hove City Council

46. Councillor Goldsmith

Many film production companies are willing to give donations to local community groups when they are filming in a nearby area, but there is currently no easy way for them to be linked up. Will the Council consider putting together a register of community groups who could benefit from these donations, and pass details on to film companies when they seek filming permission from the council?

Reply from Cllr Robins, Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation

47. Councillor Goldsmith

In their 2023 manifesto, B&H Labour promised they would look at how the special nature of LGBTQ+ businesses could be protected in our city. Since last June, at least three LGBTQ+ venues in the city have sadly closed. What progress has the administration made on looking into how the council can work to protect these spaces?

Reply from Cllr Pumm, Cabinet Member – Communities, Equalities & Human Rights

48. Councillor Goldsmith

Despite a 20mph speed limit being in place along Upper North Street, Montpelier Terrace, and Montpelier Place, people often speed along this stretch of road, making it more dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers entering the road from any of the adjoining streets. I've been informed that the police do not have the resources to fine drivers, so will the administration look into what can be done to ensure drivers on this stretch of road actually stick to the speed limit?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

49. Councillor Mc Nair

What progress is being made to find funding to improve flood defences in Warmdene Road, Winfield Avenue, Dale Drive, Patcham Old Village among many other places across the city? When are improvement works likely to start?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

Brighton & Hove City Council

50. Councillor McNair

Birch Grove Crescent is in serious need of dweeding, especially around block 60-72. Could this be done as soon as possible?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

51. Councillor McNair

Birch Grove Crescent storage units behind block 60 -72 are in a very poor state. When can we expect the units to be renovated to help residents use them fully?

Reply from Cllr Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Housing & New Homes

52. Councillor Meadows

CCTV has been removed from Birch Grove Crescent. When will it be reinstalled?

Reply from Cllr Pumm, Cabinet Member – Communities, Equalities & Human Rights

53. Councillor McNair

CCTV is required at the Gathering Place laundry as there is significant and frequent antisocial behaviour. When can this be installed?

Reply from Cllr Pumm, Cabinet Member – Communities, Equalities & Human Rights

54. Councillor Meadows

Is the new crossing on Winfield Avenue on track to be completed in February?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

55. Councillor Theobald

Carden Hill is a major bus route and suffers from many potholes. Do we know when it will be resurfaced?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm

Brighton & Hove City Council

56. Councillor Theobald

There are two concreted areas in the Peace Gardens that lack benches. Could benches be found so visitors to the park have more places to sit and relax?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

57. Councillor Hogan

Many assisted collections are still missed. How many assisted collections are missed across the city? What is being done to ensure these collections are always carried out on time?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins, Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services

58. Councillor Meadows

The new Stanmer Heights playground near the Gathering Place is much smaller than the previous design and unlikely to attract teenagers. When will improvements be made to it to give children of all ages better equipment?

Reply from Cllr Robins, Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation

59. Councillor Lyons

When will the report on our graffiti strategy for artwork in tunnels be available?

Reply from Cllr Miller/Cllr Alexander, Cabinet Member – Culture, Heritage & Tourism

60. Councillor Lyons

Could residents in Hill Brow have a consultation on parking restrictions?

Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm