

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

4.30pm 11 JULY 2024

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Asaduzzaman (Chair), Grimshaw (Deputy Chair), O'Quinn, Atkinson, Alexander, Allen, Baghoth, Burden, Cattell, Czolak, Daniel, Davis, Evans, Galvin, Fishleigh, Fowler, Goddard, Goldsmith, Guilmant, Hewitt, Hill, Hogan, Loughran, Lyons, Mackey, McGregor, McLeay, McNair, Meadows, Muten, Nann, Oliveira, Pickett, Pumm, Robins, Robinson, Rowkins, Sankey, Shanks, Sheard, Simon, Taylor, C Theobald, Thomson, West, Wilkinson, Winder and Williams

PART ONE

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

16.1 No declarations of interests in matters appearing on the agenda were made.

17 MINUTES

17.1 The minutes of the last ordinary meeting held on the 16 May 2024 were approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings.

18 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.

18.1 The Mayor gave the following communications:

*"Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim
In the name of almighty, The most Merciful.*

Dear Councillors, colleagues and residents, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to you all.

Before we start proceedings, I would like to pay tribute to Roger Amerena who passed away last week. As the Founder and Chairman of the Brighton & Hove Heritage Commission, Roger was a pivotal figure in ensuring Brighton & Hove's rich architectural landmarks were preserved, and its famous residents recognised. Roger's tireless campaigning included projects like the Hannington's Lane, creation of a list of local heritage assets and the blue plaques that you see dotted around the city. Most recently he championed the campaign to recognise Mercedes Gleitze, the Brighton-born female English Channel swimmer and the subsequent film, Vindication Swim, about her life.

His legacy will continue to inspire and live on throughout the city.

I was fortunate to have seen him before becoming Mayor in May and would like to send sincere condolences to his family and friends.

I would also like to send my sincere condolences following the deaths of former Councillors Adrian Morris and also Councillor Juliette McCaffrey who was also a councillor for 16 years.

I ask that we all stand for a minute's silence to honour Roger Amerena and the other two Councillors.

On behalf of everyone at the Council, I send my best wishes for a speedy recovery to Councillor Miller following her illness and also to Councillor Earthey's wife who is also ill so we all wish her a speedy recovery as well.

As we have a big agenda to get through this evening, I will try to keep the Mayoral Communication brief.

I know that you will all join me to congratulate Peter Kyle on his re-election as Member of Parliament for Hove and Portslade, as well as his appointment as Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology. I would also like to welcome and congratulate our two new MPs to the city: Sian Berry for Brighton Pavilion and Chris Ward for Brighton Kemptown and Peacehaven. I wish you all the best in your new roles and I know that you have the very best interests of the residents of Brighton & Hove at heart.

I would also like to thank the Electoral Services Team and all the staff who worked so hard to deliver smooth and successful elections across the city last week. Their dedication and teamwork ensured the residents of Brighton & Hove were able to exercise their right to vote – something that we should never take for granted.

I am now 57 days into my Mayoral year, and a busy one at that.

I have undertaken over 40 events and met with a vast range of people from across the city and beyond.

Over the past month, I have attended various events linked to the Armed Forces – starting with the lighting of the Hove Beacon by the Cadets marking the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings; the Chattri Memorial Service up on the Downs; and Armed Forces Day at Downs Junior School. The Civic Office led the Boar's Head Commemoration Service at the Old Steine, marking the biggest loss of life from regiments in Sussex during World War One. The weekend culminated with a performance by the Burgess Hill Marching Youth Band on the Brighton Bandstand who led a fitting and fun tribute to our Armed Forces. I was also very impressed by one of the councillors who was the star of this event.

The Civic Office has hosted two visits from local primary schools to the Chamber and Mayor's Parlour – where they have been able to learn about democracy, how the Council works, the city's rich civic history and the role of the Mayor. It has been

wonderful to welcome children into the Town Hall and introduce them to civic life. I think they all enjoyed dressing up as the Mayor.

Last Monday, in Brighton Town Hall, on behalf of the Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex, I presented British Citizenships to over 60 people. I found this experience incredibly humbling as it took me back to when I received my British Citizenship in the same Council Chamber.

I recently attended a networking breakfast hosted by the Brighton Chamber of Business, which gave me the opportunity to meet with the start-ups, sole traders and large international businesses who work in the city to learn about the collaboration, innovation and challenges they face.

I have attended carnivals, school poetry recitals and a public speaking competition, concerts and a musical theatre performance. I have visited a care home, foodbanks, community events and exhibitions. I have opened a new sporting facility, presented awards at a Sussex Police ceremony – and even met Mr Motivator at an event tackling loneliness.

Over the past two months, I have been in awe of the work these charities, volunteers and community groups undertake throughout the city and I am very much looking forward to meeting new people and championing their extraordinary work, breaking down social barriers and collaborating in the months to come.

I know many of you will be taking a well-deserved break over the summer period and hope you enjoy the rest, hopefully in the sunshine, with your families and friends.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Brighton & Hove City Council's Legal Services Team for winning the Legal Team of the Year 2024 in the National Lawyers in Local Government Awards.

I welcome Iko, Beth, James and Sabina from the Legal Services Team to the chamber and ask them to come forward to receive your award."

19 LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

19.1 Leader of the Council, Councillor Bella Sankey, gave the following communication:

"Thank you Mr Mayor and good afternoon colleagues.

It may not surprise you to know that I have not actually stopped smiling since 10pm last Thursday and I am delighted to stand here today as a Labour Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council under a Labour Government. It's been a long time, too long in my view, since that alignment last occurred, and of course we had the added good news last night that England are through to the final of the Euros.

First, I want to put on record my condolences on the passing of two former Brighton & Hove City Council Councillors, Adrian Morris and Juliette McCaffrey, who we had a minute's silence for just now. Both of these former Councillors served this City with passion and distinction, we are grateful for their service and we mourn their passing.

I'd also like to acknowledge that Labour Councillor and Cabinet Member Birgit Miller has suffered a sudden serious illness last month, thankfully the prognosis is that she will make a full recovery, and I am pleased and grateful to Councillor Mitchie Alexander for stepping into her Cabinet role over the next few months. I know that everyone in this chamber joins me in sending our best wishes to Birgit for her full and speedy recovery.

Second, let me thank officers, in particular Michael Appleford and the electoral services team, but colleagues from right across the Council for the whole team effort that it was to run the General Election in Brighton & Hove on 4th July – the timing was unexpected – unless of course you were one of Sunak's aides having a flutter in the local Ladbrokes - and they, and by that I mean our Council officers, did a brilliant and professional job in seeing us through.

Third I'd like to put on record and welcome to Cllr Ollie Sykes the new Green Councillor for Brunswick and Adelaide and congratulate him on his win last Thursday. I'd also like to congratulate our new Labour Chair of the East Sussex Fire Authority, Councillor Amanda Evans and new Labour Chair of the Police & Crime Panel for Sussex, Councillor Andrei Czolak. It's fantastic to see our City take up these important roles and to drive accountability on behalf of millions of residents across our County.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations also to our Legal Services team who just arrived to receive their award for, among many other things, taking on the former Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, and winning a landmark High Court decision about the unlawfulness of that policy for unaccompanied asylum seeking children last July and I'm glad that they have the recognition that they so much deserve. My congratulations also to our Youth Employment Hub, our Parking Services team and City Clean's Rachel Chasseaud who've all received recognition recently for their fantastic work.

I also want to congratulate our newly elected three MPs for the city and I think it would be remiss not to note how much pride I know that so many in our city have at the recent appointment of Peter Kyle to The Prime Minister's Cabinet as Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology. Peter has overcome huge obstacles and personal loss and has achieved so much and I know he will achieve much more now for our country and city. Our city is a leader in all three of these things, Science, Innovation and Technology, but we have been held back by non-existent growth and no industrial strategy or plan. That can now all change and I know that as Councillor Ty Goddard brings forward our City's plan for growth later this month we can look forward to a new era of progress and prosperity.

Since we last met our Administration has been very active. At our first formal Cabinet meeting last month we agreed action on Violence Against Women and Girls, improved provision for children with social, emotional and mental health needs, as well as bold action on housing, including a new project for over 300 affordable and council homes on the Sackville Trading Estate and a pilot to bring the management of some of our emergency accommodation in house. Since then myself and our homelessness lead, Councillor Paul Nann, have met with the women's emergency accommodation group. We heard harrowing accounts of how women placed in our emergency accommodation feel unsafe and vulnerable and I'm pleased to announce that we will be pursuing

women-only emergency accommodation, following in the footsteps of Manchester, and officers are working already on a proposal to get that up and running as soon as possible.

I'm delighted that we, along with colleagues in Worthing, hosted the launch of the Sussex Bay initiative at our newly refurbished Corn Exchange last month to accelerate the recovery of our seascape. Our Greater Brighton Economic Board meeting that was due to take place last month had to be postponed because of the General Election, but it will be going ahead next week, where the Board will elect a new Chair. Excitingly, next week's Greater Brighton Economic Board meeting will be looking at how we achieve Net Zero across Sussex with a new initiative to work closely with our new Government and I'm really looking forward to taking that work forward. Our new Government has, of course, shown tremendous energy and speed when it comes to transitioning us to Net Zero. The nine- year ban on onshore wind has been overturned in days. Today our Energy Secretary, Ed Miliband, announced no new oil and gas licenses for the North Sea, we've started the work on GB Energy and set up a National Wealth Fund for major infrastructure projects that will – among other things - turbo charge public transport and connectivity, reduce carbon emissions and create thousands of jobs in the clean energy industries.

I'm also delighted to announce that I have been elected as the Deputy Leader of the Labour Group on the Local Government Association, alongside Bev Craig the Leader of Manchester and Peter Mason, Leader of Ealing. We have a vital role to play in connecting local government and our new national Government, repairing a broken relationship and resetting this most vital of partnerships for our city and our residents. I will be in London next week meeting with our new Deputy Prime Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner. I believe that as part of this reset of the relationship we must see more power devolved to local government – both as it exists and through the greater take up of devolution deals.

The South East currently lags far behind the North and the Nations in terms of devolution and that increasingly shows with poor connectivity, for example the East to West trainline in Sussex, high levels of deprivation and pressures on housing that are not matched by the powers that exist to deal with them – a point made in the Green NOM on short term lets and something that our Deputy Leader Councillor Williams has already written to Secretary of State Rayner about.

Together with colleagues from the Greater Brighton Economic Board we want to look again at the settlement of powers and responsibilities in Sussex. I was pleased to welcome the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, to Brighton last month and to hear from him how devolution has enabled his region to better tackle the housing and homelessness crises, improve bus services and usage of buses, and to drive greater economic investment. He also described our city as the second coolest city in the country. On this he is of course wrong, as we are the coolest city and best city in the world.

Working hand in hand with our new Government we will address this city's challenges. I am delighted that our new Health Secretary, Wes Streeting, has already begun constructive talks with the BMA and the dentistry sector. That our new Environment Secretary has already taken first steps to get the water industry around the table and to

tell them that price hikes are unacceptable and that profits must be immediately redirected back to people and the environment. That our new Home Secretary, Yvette Cooper has cancelled the toxic Rwanda plan and pledged to process the claims of over 100, 000 asylum seekers who have been trapped in limbo – including many in our city. And being the internationalist, human rights and peace-loving city that we are, I'm pleased that the Prime Minister Keir Starmer has begun a reset of our international relations, starting with a call to the Israeli Prime Minister and Palestinian Leader calling for an immediate ceasefire, the release of hostages and a two state solution – an outcome I know our city is desperate to see.

We have been doing our bit celebrating Windrush Day with an event at Hove Museum and several events to mark Refugee Week and affirm our aspiration to be a City of Sanctuary. Councillor Leslie Pumm has been working with colleagues at the University of Sussex on a needs assessment for asylum seekers and migrants in Brighton & Hove and this will be launched alongside a plan of action this autumn.

I'd like to pay tribute to Councillor Amanda Grimshaw, our Armed Forces champion, alongside officer Eric Page for their work to deliver an incredible armed forces weekend. From no events over the past few years to a weekend of successful and poignant commemorations. I'm really inspired by the work that is being done to begin better supporting our veterans in the city.

And finally, on behalf of residents I'd like to take this opportunity to send all of our very best wishes to the England men's version of the Lionesses ahead of the final on Sunday. Last Saturday's penalties were perfection, last night's game was a sheer joy to watch. May their record under a Labour Government remain unbroken, and may Godspeed be with them as they take on Spain on Sunday night."

20 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS.

- 20.1 The Mayor stated that he had been notified of three ordinary petitions to be presented today. the submission of petitions from councillors and members of the public. He reminded the Council that these are petitions with less than 1,250 signatures and they are presented and responded to without debate. The Mayor advised that petitions have up to three minutes to outline the petition and to confirm the number of signatories and that the petition would then be responded to by the relevant Cabinet Member.
- 20.2 Ed Sidgewick presented a petition titled 'Dyke Road Drive is an unsafe road' which had received 34 signatures at the time the Agenda was published.
- 20.3 The Mayor thanked the lead petitioner and invited Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport, Parking and Public Realm to respond.
- 20.4 Councillor Muten responded:

"Thank you Ed for presenting your petition. Really do appreciate that the time you've taken to do so and setting out residents' concerns about the safety of the road space and thoroughfare on Dyke Road Drive. It is helpful to hear directly from residents' perspectives and gain a sense of the local community's concerns.

It is the case that there's been road works on Dyke Road Drive earlier this year, notably in relation to Virgin Media and development in that area. This has led to some disruption for the local community and those driving along this road, including those on the school run. However, during this period it was accepted that there was slow traffic and a quieter street as some chose alternative routes for their journey. However, it's important we balance the needs of all residents and communities in relation to road safety. For instance, the recent road works did lead to greater traffic congestion on those other routes and increased journey times, neither of which were beneficial to localised air quality and their travel times. And that includes in their school run in particular. As a Council we must therefore always keep in review, the balance of needs.

Dyke Road Drive is a residential road with residential parking on both sides of the street, as you identify. It is popular with cyclists as a route across the city. I'm advised that the width of the road, in relation to parking on both sides, means the traffic generally moves a slower speed due to parking on both sides. And I do note your point about the retention that sometimes gives without passing spaces. A cycle lane could not be introduced without the removal of residential parking on one side of the street, which may also result in increased speeds of both traffic and cyclists. It is therefore not necessarily the case that such a proposal would make the streets safer and better and may produce greater hazards for residents and would certainly reduce residential parking capacity.

We have made some improvements to Dyke Road Drive, including following statutory consultation in May, June last year with feedback from residents and local businesses considered in revised plans. These improvements include changing placement of parking space on Dyke Road Drive to provide a clearer approach to the junction for cyclists near on the new A23 active travel routes now under construction. Conversion of a parking bay from regular pay and display to a disabled space to serve the community who use the specialist denture clinic on Dyke Road Drive. These improvements were approved by members of Transport Sustainability Committee in October 23. Moreso we're installing a dedicated cycle route on the A23 London Road to improve safety, especially for those choosing to active travel, provides an overall benefit for the wider community, including the junction with Dyke Road Drive. This all said, the issues you raise are important and we do wish to consider a holistic approach, not only for your road, but through wider community and all those that need to travel around that part of the city."

20.5 The Mayor thanked Councillor Muten for his response and moved that the petition be noted.

20.6 RESOLVED

Council agreed that the petition be noted.

20.7 George Yianjiu presented a petition titled 'Controlled Parking Zone' which had received 3 signatures at the time the Agenda was published.

20.8 The Mayor thanked the lead petitioner and invited Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport, Parking and Public Realm to respond.

20.9 Councillor Muten responded:

“Thank you George for your petition and presenting that. I note your call for measures to enable enforcement and very much welcome the call for a Controlled Parking Zone in this part of Hove. As you may be aware, this tallies with my clear statements on this matter at previous Full Council and Transport Sustainability Committee over the past many months and aligns well with our strategic approach to parking ,not undertaken previously.

I’m aware that there’s increased multiple pressures on parking in the Neville and Orchard area of Hove in part due to nearby residential development and overspill from other areas of the city, combined with some commuter parking and some use of these streets as a park and ride and in some cases people choosing to park there for some time, perhaps living in other parts of the city in that overspill context.

This is why I have met with a number of residents in Neville Road and Neville Avenue in recent months and welcome your petition today. I consider a co-design approach whereby residents help inform the design of a new controlled parking zone at its early stages so that the outcome reflects well the needs of the local community and the wider city pressures on parking in this area. I have asked officers to set up a meeting with residents’ representatives to progress this innovative co-design approach and am more than happy to invite you and include you in that discussion George and others who signed your petition.

This reflects this administration's commitment to making parking work better for the city, especially for communities, businesses, traders and visitors. Our parking review is making significant progress in setting out our strategy and has moved on to the modelling phase of development to ensure that we have the best outcome for all.

I am therefore pleased to inform you that the Neville and Orchard Court Farm area of Hove and its surrounding area is on our parking scheme priority timetable which is due to be agreed in the autumn. We are listening and taking action to respond to your concerns. And we wish to involve residents, community and ward councillors as best we can for that process. Thank you again for bringing your petition forward to this Council meeting. We very much heard your view.”

20.10 The Mayor thanked Councillor Muten for his response and moved that the petition be noted.

20.11 RESOLVED

Council agreed that the petition be noted.

20.12 Helena Joyce and Guy Longmore presented a petition titled ‘Residents’ Parking Consultation, Lovers Walk Brighton’ which had received 13 signatures at the time the Agenda was published.

20.13 The Mayor thanked the lead petitioner and invited Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport, Parking and Public Realm to respond.

20.14 Councillor Muten responded:

“Thank you Helena and Guy for coming here today, I really do value that, and for your petition that highlights the combination of factors making parking for residents such as yourselves in Lover’s Walk very difficult and reported worsening condition of the road surface which does need assessment.

I am advised by Council Officers that currently residents of Lover’s Walk are eligible for resident parking permits in the adjacent Zone Q. The road width is too narrow for parking bays to be installed, that’s my understanding. Double yellow lines could be set but that would limit parking for all which would not necessarily aid residents. Keeping the road accessible, notably for emergency vehicles, should be a priority. I would support working with residents to find a positive outcome to the concerns expressed in your petition.

Having heard the list of combined factors placing pressures on parking in your street, I will recommend an action plan approach is taken forward to resolve this. This action plan should include writing to Travelodge and Beaconsfield Medical Centre to establish what measures they could take to enable their residents and patients, respectfully, to park and, where practical, to encourage visitors to consider other means of transport to reduce some of that pressure.

There is a wider concern relating to new developments in this area. I have become increasingly aware that over recent years planning permission has been granted for car-free developments where new residents moving in are not expected to own a car. This has led to an insufficiency in parking capacity within the development itself and an increased pressure on nearby residential streets where such people choose to have a car, and it does create that additional pressure. I do acknowledge that point as well.

The disconnect with a wider strategic approach to parking over many years has placed increased parking pressure, especially in more densely populated parts of the city. Lover’s Walk appears to be a bit of an outlier by having no restrictions at all in the city centre and I do think that’s something that does need looking at. This is why we have commissioned a citywide strategic parking review. This is making good progress in establishing a fairer strategic, accessible and inclusive approach to parking to work well for communities, visitors and businesses. This review should include, well will include, a review of zonal capacity and its boundaries where there is known to be very high demand as well so perhaps that may also help in alleviating some of the pressures in zone Q. I will therefore recommend improvements to parking in Lover’s Walk to align with our new strategic approach to parking in our city as best we can. And just to add to that I’m more than happy to meet residents and come to your road to understand it better.”

20.15 The Mayor thanked Councillor Muten for his response and moved that the petition be noted.

20.16 RESOLVED

Council agreed that the petition be noted.

21 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

21.1 The Mayor reported that 5 written questions had been received from members of the public and invited Gary Valier to come forward and address the council.

21.2 Gary Valier asked:

“Does the council accept that Karon Monaghan KC is correct that the BHCC Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit is in breach of the Human Rights Act 1998, the European Convention on Human Rights, the Equality Act 2010, The Education Acts of 1996, 2002 and 2006, the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012, departmental statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education, EHRC Guidance (both Statutory and Technical) and multiple instances of binding case law in both the domestic and the supranational courts?”

21.3 Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and City Regeneration replied on behalf of Councillor Daniel, Cabinet Member for Children, Families, Youth Services and for Ending Violence Against Women and Girls:

“Thank you Gary for your question. Councillor Daniel would ordinarily answer but is unwell today, so I’m responding on her behalf. And thank you for the correspondence that we’ve had over some months on this important subject.

The first thing to say is the toolkit is not prescriptive and it encourages a case-by-case approach, which takes into account the needs of the student, their family and the school community. It does not and could not seek to override statutory guidance or binding statutes.

The second thing to say is that the Council is in the process of reviewing the toolkit and will be launching a public consultation on the revised version very soon. Potentially as early as next week. Thank you.”

21.4 Gary Valier asked the following supplementary question:

“When you say, Councillor Taylor, that the toolkit is not prescriptive, it does not prevent any school from taking decisions in the best interest pupils. This is a deliberate phraseology from the Council, I believe, to expose each school to legal risk should any parent or teacher undertake legal action. How on earth is this shifting of the blame without tackling the root cause of concern and the failures, in my opinion, of the toolkit protect and safeguard children in the city, or indeed protect the interests of schools and prevent taxpayer money being spent on legal fees and court action?”

21.5 Councillor Taylor replied:

“Thank you, Gary, for your follow up question. As I say, the document has always been clear from its inception, its introduction, that it is not prescriptive, it is guidance. I think the best thing to say is that, as I’ve said, we will very shortly be publishing a new

version of the toolkit and have a full public consultation. I fully understand you have strong views on this as to many others across the city. I think that consultation will be a really important chance for everyone to feed in their views and evidence to that process for the Council to consider.”

21.6 The Mayor thanked Gary Valier for their question and invited Penny Taites to come forward and address the council.

21.7 Penny Taites asked:

“Short term rentals have caused long term stress to neighbours due to noise disturbance and anti-social behaviour by the guests. This also has negative health effects on children such as prolonged sleep disturbance which results in tiredness, daytime sleepiness, difficulties in focusing attention, increased irritability, and lowered frustration tolerance. Short-term renters have no stake in the community, and therefore no reason to care how the neighbourhood around them suffers from their vacation activities. The levels of noise by these party goers (which is a statutory nuisance) and prolonged anti-social, disruptive behaviour is excessive, is at unreasonable times and in an unreasonable fashion, thereby substantially causing a significant interference with the enjoyment of homes in the neighbourhood and interferes with everyday life. What action will the Council take, in line with your enforcement policy to ban short term lets that are a statutory nuisance for a prolonged period of time?”

21.8 Councillor Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and New Homes replied:

“Thank you very much for your question and quite frankly, I couldn't agree more. I've been campaigning on this for a number of years and we're going to be talking a lot about it in this Council today, which I'm pleased about. We know that the rise in short term lets, and the number is staggering, absolutely staggering in our city, is causing a lot of negative impact on our local communities. And I'm speaking from experience having lived next door to one for a number of years. I know exactly how harrowing and unsettling and disturbing that can be. I completely sympathise with you.

So I can tell you that, as Cabinet Member for Housing and New Homes, I have already written to Angela Rayner, in her new role as Housing Secretary, recommending, and I would I dare say demanding, in a very polite way, swift devolved powers to enable Councils such as ours to regulate and control the numbers of short term lets. And when we get them, which I hope will be soon, we're going to use those powers to their full extent, I can assure you of that. Thank you so much for your question.”

21.9 The Mayor thanked Penny Taites for their question and invited Ben Carr to come forward and address the council.

21.10 Ben Carr asked:

“I'm a farmer in Ovingdean growing crops that people in our city eat. Last year I came to Full Council and asked BHCC to introduce a by-law so that overnight camping is banned on Greenways Road. I need this because people stay overnight, have picnics/campfires, empty their bowels/portaloos on my crops - and leave piles of

rubbish. Neither myself and Councillor Fishleigh have managed to make any progress with officers. Section 77 notices aren't enough. I need a solution so that vans that park overnight can be ticketed/moved on immediately. Can the Council please help save my crops and introduce a by-law?"

21.11 Councillor Pumm, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Human Rights replied:

"Hi Ben and thanks for your question. Firstly, I'm really really sorry to hear about your experience. I mean, I've just seen the photos you send round, that's really shocking. And I can tell you today our Community Safety Team is in the process of developing and implementing an integrated City Services Directorate response to van dwellers. By the way, this is a really complicated and convoluted way to say we are on it.

You mentioned already Section 77 notices and you are aware that we already have issued them and we hear you that this is not enough. That's why we are considering all legal options including the use of a newcomer injunction or other enforcement measures, including Public Space Protection Orders to repeat problem sites.

And we also have to think about what we do with vehicles. If we just remove from one site, you are probably aware that we are we are basically just passing on the problem to another area of the city. So that's why we're working on that integrated approach I've just mentioned.

So we're doing all we can to work with you and probably my message is today: sorry that it's taken so long and please keep working with us to resolve this problem as soon as possible. And lastly, thanks for your service to the city."

21.12 The Mayor thanked Ben Carr for their question and invited Barbara Odell to come forward and address the council.

21.13 Barbara Odell asked:

"What will it take for the Brighton and Hove Council, City Parks to respond to their Civic responsibilities to its residents of Goldstone, Shirley Drive and other local areas to cut/mow and re-instate their overgrown, hazardous, neglected and unsightly verges and is this a reflection of the sad decline of Civic Pride of our City?

N.B. The verges are now over knee-high and the breeding grounds for ticks, insect biting species incorporating dog faeces, rubbish, hidden uneven obstacles, heavy with grass seeds hazardous to dogs and cats, obstruction to visibility for vehicles, and also a potential fire hazard."

21.14 Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports and Recreation replied:

"Thank you, Barbara, if I may call you that, for bringing your question to us today. And I'd start by saying I agree with a great deal of what you say. This administration has not changed any policies on grass cuttings. We are coming to the end of a three-year trial agreed at ETS Committee under the previous administration. We will be looking, reviewing and resetting the policy on grass cutting on road verges in the coming months. The policy has been effective from a biodiversity point of view. With a small

amount of surveying that has been done in Brighton and Hove, reflecting the results seen nationally which show the contribution road verges can make in saving our biodiversity.

In our Council Plan 23-27, we undertook to protect and enhance the City's natural environment, conserve and manage spaces where plants and animals can thrive, and biodiversity is restored. However, due to a combination of service delivery failures, the Shirley Drive area only received one spring cut when it should have had two. And the recent good growing years for grass has meant that the grass is longer than we ever planned in the Shirley Drive area. We apologise for the missed cut and have taken immediate steps to put more resources into grass cutting.

We have closely monitored the debate on verge grass lengths, the problems raised by you, Barbara, are not all common citywide issues, but there are some that are common, such as the hidden obstacles and the litter in the longer grass. As we have reviewed the use of glyphosate, we will review grass cutting, but we are keen not to lose all the biodiversity gains that we have made, but a more measured approach is required.

So I think what we're saying there is that, quite what you say, the grass being long is appropriate in some areas but not appropriate in others and that's what we'll be reviewing and looking at in the coming months."

21.15 Barbara Odell asked the following supplementary question:

"I have been looking at the website and you have said that there was a three-year trial and you have listed a whole lot of the items here and I'd like to disagree with them actually. I wondered whether you're monitoring this plan, and if you're actually monitoring it now because you say there's an increase in flora and fauna, encouraging the growth of wildflowers, wildflowers can't grow unless you grow seeds for wildflowers. You have not planted any seeds for wildflowers, and there are very few wildflowers.

90% of the grasses in Shirley Drive, at least, 90% of the vegetation is grass, 10% is weeds. I've actually studied this myself. Increased some species of wildlife. I can't see any other wildlife apart from the odd flies, tics, ants and the odd bee. Improved flood alleviation for greater water [unclear] that's not applicable."

21.16 Councillor Robins replied:

"Thanks for coming back on that. And that is exactly what we're aiming to look at in the next few months. What, as we say, what is appropriate and what isn't appropriate. And I do take on board, I think we all take on board a lot of what you say and the need to rationalise how we mow and cut the grasses and how we look to the biodiversity that is in our city. So thanks very much for raising the question with me and you're more than welcome to e-mail me at any time you like and we can talk further on it. And again, thanks very much for coming along today."

21.17 The Mayor thanked Barbara Odell for their question and invited Nigel Smith to come forward and address the council.

21.18 Nigel Smith asked:

“BHCC’s transport officers say they expect that substantially reducing the width of the Marine Parade exit from the Aquarium Junction will have a negligible impact on bus and other eastbound traffic flows. This contradicts DfT guidance on how road widths affect traffic flows. It also ignores the widespread gridlock experienced in August 2020, when the width of the westbound exit was reduced for a COVID bike lane (which was rapidly removed).

Can you explain why B&HCC persists in believing its assumptions are better than the DfT’s professional road capacity guidelines that underpin UK Transport Assessments?”

21.19 Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport, Parking and Public Realm replied:

“Thank you, Nigel, for your question. May I firstly, and respectfully, press into the premise and express some concern you might have a somewhat subjective influence within your question. The extended merge eastbound between the A23 and Broad Street remains, with traffic then behaving as a single lane after that point, as it does now in the proposed design. It does narrow down at the new proposed signalised crossing where the existing pedestrian refuge is to facilitate a shorter, and therefore safer, more accessible crossing, with less delay to traffic flow as a result of the shorter width.

In practice, traffic is single file through this point with no change from the present arrangement in terms of road traffic capacity and a suitable road width for all vehicles, including HGV and buses. This is consistent with the Department of Transport’s road capacity guidance that underpins UK transport assessments and is the basis for DfT funding being awarded to our bus service improvement plan, improving bus services across the city. Of course, this is the case. This is an arterial route through our city centre. Respectfully Nigel, I believe you know this.

In this context, we will not be progressing proposals wherein a negative impact overall impacts on bus and traffic flow forecast. As there is no change in traffic lane capacity, our assessment shows that the Marine Parade proposal is not expected to significantly affect eastbound traffic flows and is broadly supported by Brighton and Hove buses who operate multiple services in this direction.

This I trust you welcome, although advocating for a wider crossing would introduce such traffic delay, which you appear to be opposed to. I believe, however, we can agree that the COVID bike lane were put in in a hurry and did result in notable delays and congestion at the time that did require costly post installation changes to the cycle lane to ensure traffic flow and no doubt contributed tensions between cyclists and drivers, which is deeply regrettable.

This is why, as an administration we are showing leadership through better design on active travel schemes. We have already stopped a proposed scheme put in similar wands in the road to take out a traffic lane between King Alfred and Hove Lagoon. At the June Cabinet meeting, I presented a more strategic, holistic and connected traffic management and active travel along the whole A259 seafront from the Marina to the city’s western boundary and its connection with the A23 North–South route. May I

thank you for highlighting the 2020 case. Absolutely, we will not return to such an approach. Design matters.”

21.20 Nigel Smith asked the following supplementary question:

“The A259 is designated major road network MRN, a consideration being but cannot be ignored at will. Improperly assessed good intentions led to gridlock in 2020 and to 16 years of hundreds of vehicles queuing near Rottingdean and its AQMA2. They also appear to prevent due diligence, including specifically Highway Code Rule 165 which determines the clearance required for motor vehicles, including E-Bikes to pass cyclists. Indeed, one may wonder why a transport intervention ranked 18th as value for money in the bus review, with a business case so bad that public funding would normally be refused, is being proposed.

A 30-times more effective improvement to A259 bus journey times for less than 10% of the cost was proposed several years ago, but has not been progressed, though it could easily be tested with a much smaller experimental traffic regulation order.

My question is to ask you to explain why this low-benefit high-cost option to improve bus services on the A259 MRN takes precedence over high-benefit low cost-option.”

21.21 Councillor Muten replied:

“Thank you, Nigel, for your supplementary question. I believe I've addressed that point about the 2020 case and you're absolutely right, it did cause traffic jams and there was retro-fitting of the cycle lane and they had to sort out some of the right turns, etcetera. And that was, I believe, not well designed. And I think those issues were addressed.

What we do have on the aquarium junction is presently around about, that's involved over a considerable period of time without really any traffic flow control over that. So at times when it's busy, you've got a roundabout with two or three arterial connections and a small minor route. So it's imbalance roundabout in that regard and with pedestrian traffic lights on each of those exits. So when that is busy, you can get queues in all sorts of directions, and sometimes considerable distances. This is why we're promoting a very robust and effective way to manage that traffic through that junction and this proposal for the bus lane 259 is very much, will go in as, a precursor to the plan to installation of the new design for Valley Gardens 3, particularly in relation to the aquarium junction.

So there is a particular reason why this is a priority, but also should be put in the context of the Bus Service Improvement Plan, in which we are setting up £28 million worth of commitment to this city, where we're looking at all sorts of places around the city where we want to improve the flow of traffic, particularly in relation to buses; improve the bus journey times, so they can align better to their timetable, and we're absolutely committed to that. So this should not be seen in isolation, be seen in the whole of all those different schemes. And I do acknowledge there are some challenges in Rottingdean A259 and I believe that needs for retention. Thank you.

21.22 The Mayor thanked Nigel Smith for their question.

22 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

- 22.1 The Mayor reported that two deputations had been received from members of the public and invited Edward Raynard as the spokesperson for the first deputation to come forward and address the council. The deputation related to parking, traffic management and safety on Eldred Avenue.
- 22.2 The Mayor invited Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport, Parking and Public Realm to reply.
- 22.3 Councillor Muten replied:

“Thank you Edward for coming here today. May I firstly thank you for your deputation and for your thoroughness and commitment in undertaking your survey. The results from the 18 households surveyed are clear. May I also commend your presentation of the data and use of an illustrative photograph in your summary. Perhaps you may be aware that I am passionate about applying a data-led approach to policy development. Even if you were unaware, I believe we should be able to engage well as a result of your informed approach. So, thank you.

To clarify one point made in your deputation, the parking charges were introduced by Freedom Leisure – the operators of Withdean Stadium – rather than Brighton and Hove City Council. The £3 charge introduced by Freedom Leisure earlier this year is only for vehicles staying longer than 3 hours. Visitors to Withdean Sports Complex and the Sportsman pub may extend their 3 hours stay free of charge by speaking with the sports centre and pub management staff if required.

As you may be aware, we have made significant progress with our citywide parking review, which we are setting out our strategic vision within a holistic, well-planned, fairer parking system that will work much better for residents, for businesses and traders and for communities such as yours. I hear that point, something has to be done. In light of your survey we would like to bring the information around what you’ve gathered there into our parking review and to respond positively in that context.

It is noted that residents in southern stretch of Eldred Avenue between Dene Vale and Tongdean Lane, situated on the borders of Westdene and Withdean, are calling for better planned parking that has enforcement designed to stop inconsiderate parking that has resulted in difficulty for some buses to park, and as you’ve described, damage to vehicles parked. This area is on the parking scheme priority timetable which is due to be agreed in the autumn. This area will be included as part of the review of Zone 12 (Withdean). So we are listening, thank you.”

- 22.4 The Mayor thanked Edward Raynard for their deputation and moved that the deputation be noted by Council.
- 22.5 **RESOLVED**

Council agreed to note the deputation.

22.6 The Mayor invited Catherine Eden as the spokesperson for the second deputation to come forward and address the council. The deputation related to recycling services on the Sylvan Hill estate.

22.7 The Mayor invited Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero and Environmental Services to reply:

22.8 Councillor Rowkins replied:

“Thank you Catherine and Jean for being here. I’m going to start with an apology, not just for the level of service you’ve received, but that you had to come here today and bring a deputation to get it resolved. Although I’m obviously pleased to see that there are some signs of improvement now happening.

I’ve been personally following this for the last week or two to try and get thing back on track. I’m sure that today’s collection has taken place, I don’t know if you can confirm that and we have been making a fair few changes to this particular round and to communal recycling rounds in order to deliver the service that you ought to be able to expect from us.

I understand that there have been some legitimate issues in terms of blocked access that you referred to in your remarks and contaminated recycling bins which I think we’ll come onto in a second. But obviously whilst there are some legitimate concerns, the service that you’ve had for too long has definitely fallen short of what you would expect.

Broadly, there is a modernisation plan currently being implemented, and I’m hoping that the improvements that you’re seeing are, you know, the fruits of that plan starting to ripen, I suppose we’ll say. One of the work streams that we’re doing relates to communal recycling in particular, and has included a recent change, which is moving all of the communal recycling service across the city from a five day week Monday to Friday service to a seven day a week collection. And as part of those changes, the flats, the communal rounds at flats, have been separated out from other collections into its own unique round, which will make it a little bit easier to manage.

Those changes have been made, you know, precisely because of some of the issues that you’ve just described and it is a major remodelling of services and there have been a few teething problems, but like I say, I’m glad to see that hopefully it’s starting to deliver some change. The key thing now is we need to make sure that that change sticks permanently so you can devote your valuable time to other things than berating us about poor service.

In response to the specific questions, in terms of records and so on, so the driver is now updating every single day on your round and others on that round precisely to make sure that these kinds of things are tracked. And you know, just to reiterate, you absolutely should not have to chase or turn up to Hove Town Hall to get the services that you deserve.

Your second question about record keeping, I mean the short answer is that our records and systems are very antiquated, but we are now modernising them, and

digitalising our systems and records using in-cab technology will better support communication between residents, back-office staff and drivers and crews. Currently drivers update managers verbally in terms of what's been missed and any issues along the rounds, and that can obviously lead to significant gaps in the information. The in-cab technology enables back-office staff to check the driver's route, you know, live as it happens, and to reallocate work when there are issues for drivers, to be able to report issues there and then and for that to then be distributed elsewhere in the service if needs be.

Modernising the sort of status quo in this way is obviously a major programme of work and it's progressing well and the technology has recently been introduced into our trade waste rounds, which is a kind of a beta test way to sort of test it out in the field, iron out any creases before we deploy it in the in the wider service.

Your third question about contamination, and you know, thank you for sending the photos. I think that really helps to illustrate the point. And you can certainly see within that that there is a very significant amount of contamination in those bins. Contamination of recycling is a huge problem for us across the city and it's something that we're working very hard to start to rectify. In terms of contamination at Sylvan Hall, it's very difficult to determine the level of that, because obviously the vehicle collects recycling from so many other locations. Until recently, the recycling was obviously also collected from on-street bins and the flats in the communal rounds, sort of all together. And therefore we don't have data currently available relating only to the flats, but now the flats on a separate round, we will be able to start gathering data on the levels of contamination. Not property by property, but within those rounds.

And like I say, contamination's a very big problem here. Our contamination rate is close to 15%, which is very high, and we're currently preparing a very large communications and messaging campaign aimed at improving it. And that will include some responsive messaging incidentally, so that so that when people do put the wrong things in their recycling, they will get something that tells them exactly what they've done wrong and hope to educate them sort of on the fly. With regards to the individual recycling bins that you mentioned, a review of the collections was carried out at Sylvan Hall and unfortunately is not suitable for collections to be made from all of the bin stores due to access issues including, steep multiple steps in steep banks. I'm quite keen to come and have a look for myself so that I can understand this better and I'm certainly happy to organise that along with yourselves and managers. The recent changes and improvements to the communal recycling service should help improve the collections and discussions will be held with colleagues in the housing department regarding any support that can be given to reduce contamination and to support our wider efforts on that issue.

Your 4th question was about rights to a good service. Of course, you absolutely have a right to a good service, and I'm now personally monitoring these new arrangements to make sure that you see the improvements that you deserve to see.

Finally on food waste it's currently being modelled across the city and there will be, the methods of collection will vary depending on the types of property and the density and all of those kinds of things. There are other local authorities that operate communal

food waste collections and we are having discussions with colleagues in other local authorities and also within housing to explore what those what those options are.

You mentioned vehicles. We have been looking very closely at the fleet in recent, well since the election last May really, and we've put in some new vehicles on the communal rounds which has really, really substantially improved the service there. This is communal refuse and but I think we have seen some issues on the recycling rounds in particular recently and it is very much under discussion whether or not we need to tweak our procurement programme or take some of the short term measures to improve that.

Finally, I just want to thank you again for being here and I want to assure you that I will be monitoring the situation and do please feel free to keep me in the loop. Personally, I think we've exchanged emails before and like I said, I'm very happy to come and visit and understand the issues a little bit more, but I very much hope that when I next see you, you'll have had several weeks of uninterrupted collections. But thanks again for being here."

22.9 The Mayor thanked Catherine Eden for their deputation and moved that the deputation be noted by Council.

22.10 RESOLVED

Council agreed to note the deputation.

23 PETITIONS FOR DEBATE - SAVE THE BABY ROOM AT BRIGHT START NURSERY

23.1 The Mayor stated that the Council's Petition Scheme provide that where a petition secures 1,250 or more signatures it can be debated at a meeting of the Full Council. There were three petitions which had reached that threshold. The Mayor invited Kiran Flynn to join the meeting and present the first petition.

23.2 Kiran Flynn presented the petition: 'Save the Baby Room at Bright Start Nursery'.

23.3 The Mayor invited Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and City Regeneration to reply.

23.4 Councillor Taylor replied:

"Thank you Kiran for bringing your petition on this. Councillor Daniel would normally respond in her new cabinet portfolio, but is unwell today, so responding on her behalf and congratulations to you on your forthcoming baby.

Obviously we've discussed this in a number of forms, both at Committee and Full Council, where I don't want to repeat things, but I'll try and briefly just recap the background for members of the public and Members of the Chamber.

We face two difficult things as a Council related to Bright Start. The building of the current location for Bright Start had many difficulties and indeed a number of administrations over the years had looked at what the solution to that might be. It

requires a significant amount of investment, both in the short and medium term. The second thing is to also acknowledge is that nurseries as a service run by local authorities and this local authority don't break even. So they are a service that we have to provide a net subsidy to through the budget. We then have to consider that in the budget setting process for this year, we were faced with the largest budget gap in the history of this local authority or indeed any predecessor local authority of £30 million and we ended up having to make £24 million of savings. And so it's within that context that, as you say Kiran, both Labour locally and Labour nationally believe very much in early years and that's why I'm so pleased that throughout that unbelievably difficult budget we maintain Council run nurseries in this city. That's quite rare if you look at local authorities across the southeast and across the country. In fact. Most no longer provide nurseries directly as Council provisions. So we're really proud that we have done that.

When we considered Bright Start, we didn't want to close it outright. And I'm not going to do any more political bashing. We didn't want to close it outright, we wanted to try and find a solution that maintained some provision in the city centre and to your point, maintained some of that expert staffing. And by the way there's also redeployment of staffing across the city and some of our other nurseries to retain that expertise. And so we chose the Turner Family Hub, not just because it was a very, very nearby building, but because it's a Family Hub and so therefore the policy aligns with other nurseries in the city. That Family Hub provides services to early years and to families and maternity services and so it's a good place to have a nursery. I think the colocation of services makes sense. I acknowledge that some have been upset that the removal of the baby room within that service. The things that we had to consider there really were both for sufficiency within the city, and whilst they totally acknowledge, equally as a parent of equally young children as yours, it's not always easy to find the right place with the right hours at the right cost. That is difficult. Although overall, what the Council does, as all Councils do, is they make an assessment of their overall sufficiency and our sufficiency assessments have shown for a number of years that we have a good level of sufficiency in the city, particularly compared to cities. For example, in the North East of England, where they have really, really poor sufficiency, some people refer to them as childcare deserts. So we had to consider that and the fact that there were 50 nurseries within 2 miles of Bright Start. And then we had to consider the space in the building that we proposed to move it to and so really, that's where we came to the decision.

To your point about the the New Labour government having a real focus on early years. Absolutely maintain what I said in January, that it'll be really interesting to see how the Labour government fleshes out that policy. They put a particular emphasis on putting nursery provision into schools. I think we'll be well placed as a city to potentially look at those options for a number of reasons. We already have a number of nurseries within schools. I think it's something like 20 settings, primary school settings, already have their either their own school-run nursery provision in the school or a private nursery uses one of the spare classroom and therefore generates a little bit of income for the school.

We've also got, unlike many councils, a really well staffed early years team in the Council because as I say, most councils don't run nurseries. So we've got a really, really good early years team in the Council. And so as the Labour government flesh out

that policy of how they want to expand nursery provision, this city and this Council, I believe, will be very well placed to take advantage of that.

Thank you again for your petition, I understand that some parents don't agree with the decision that we've made. I think it was a good decision. I think it was a good solution and I'm really proud that we have maintained Council-run nurseries in this city. Thank you."

23.5 Councillor Shanks moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Goldsmith.

23.6 Councillor Thomson spoke on the matter.

23.7 Councillor Taylor responded to the debate and did not accept the Green Group amendment.

23.8 The Mayor moved to put the amendment to the vote.

23.9 The Mayor confirmed that the amendment had been lost and put the recommendation to note the petition as listed in the original report to the vote.

23.10 RESOLVED

The Mayor confirmed that the recommendation that the petition is noted had been carried.

23.11 The Mayor thanked Kiran Flynn for presenting the petition and joining the Council meeting.

24 PETITION FOR DEBATE - SUPPORT PRIVATE RENT CONTROLS AND MORE SOCIAL HOUSING AT LIVING RENTS

24.1 The Mayor invited Sheile Rimmer to join the meeting and present the second petition.

24.2 Sheile Rimmer presented the petition: 'Support Private Rent Controls and More Social Housing at Living Rents'.

24.3 The Mayor invited Councillor Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and New Homes to reply.

24.4 Councillor Williams replied:

"Well, we know only too well that renting in Brighton and Hove is impossible for many because it's far too expensive. We already know that. We know only too well that many private renters suffer insecurity and poor standards and hardship. They deserve better. Let me assure you, we're taking action to improve renters' rights in our city. We have introduced Landlord Licencing. Very happy to announce that. We are also working with our community representatives to introduce zero-tolerance approach to rogue landlords, which is going to be led by Councillor Sheard, and I'm very proud to say we

have successfully led a prosecution of a rogue landlord in our city. The first I do believe by this Council.

We've been very busy and we're going to get even busier. And we very much welcome the Cowan report, commissioned by Labour's Lisa Nandy, which sets out recommendations to improve conditions and security for renters. And we welcome that report.

Now we do know that the previous government shamefully failed to regulate, leaving renters exposed to arbitrary eviction, poor quality homes and rip-off practises. So that's why we welcome the new Labour government's commitment and these include ending Section 21 immediately. Crack down on landlords who rip-off tenants for the extortionate rents and poor-quality living conditions. End bidding wars at the amount of rent requested upfront, forcing renters to try to find six months, 12 months rent in advance, completely impossible. We're going to end that. Most importantly, put the power back into tenants hands so that they can challenge unreasonable rent hikes.

So there's a lot to do with this new government and I'm looking forward to that being done. And on that note, as I said, I have already written to the new Secretary for Housing, this is a long letter with a lot of work, requesting urgent action to improve the rights of private renters, to review the right to buy, to give us more money for social housing. We've already done that. It's covered. We were there on day one. Thank you for your petition.

24.5 Councillor McLeay moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Shanks.

24.6 Councillors Meadows, Sheard and Theobald spoke on the matter.

24.7 Councillor Williams responded to the debate and did not accept the Green Group amendment.

24.8 The Mayor moved to put the amendment to the vote.

24.9 The Mayor confirmed that the amendment had been lost and put the recommendation to note the petition as listed in the original report to the vote.

24.10 RESOLVED

The Mayor confirmed that the recommendation that the petition is noted had been carried.

24.11 The Mayor thanked Sheile Rimmer for presenting the petition and joining the Council meeting.

25 PETITION FOR DEBATE - GOOD DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS: BUILDING HOMES WHICH MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITIES

25.1 The Mayor invited Nick Wells and Lysander Pierce to join the meeting and present the third and final petition for debate.

25.2 Nick Wells and Lysander Pierce presented the petition: 'Good Development Standards: building homes which meet the needs of our communities'.

25.3 The Mayor invited Councillor Loughran, Chair of the Planning Committee to reply:

25.4 Councillor Loughran replied:

"Thank you so much Lysander and [Nick] for coming on behalf of Citizens UK. That petition was written in April, and it was submitted prior to general election announcement. That timing brings a different context to the debate today. People voted with their feet on the 4th of July to bring in a Labour government, rejecting the dogma decision making misery of the Tories. The new government has been entrusted with putting things right that have gone badly wrong, not least the terrible harm has been done to our communities through changes to the planning system, which are a direct attack on citizen democracy. As a result of the manipulation of the planning system and the lack of investment, we now have a national under supply of housing, insufficient affordable housing, an increase in demand for temporary accommodation for the homeless, and a dysfunctional and overpriced housing market.

Funding to councils in Homes England has been starved and has no strategic oversight. The Tories have got muddled up. Did they think that net zero belong to housing policy and public provision rather than climate change? That's how it felt. Too many residents have been left empty handed when it comes to housing. The gaping holes for investments so needed by communities never came to fruition. Lack of levelling up and the housing shortfall now need urgent reform and I think this Chamber is all agreed on that. The failures from Tory ministers like Robert Jenrick included bashing Mayors and councils like ours with the imposition of high and unrealistic housing targets without regard to context. That combined with the proving controversial planning applications for housing where urban design and development standards can fall below the policy requirements of councils.

The Tories also extended permitted development rights, enabling landowners to turn offices into residential units for habitation without the need for the usual planning application and consultation or contribution to community infrastructure. Some of these developments are entirely unsuitable for housing. Landowners have got rewarded with a PD right to densify at a cost to occupants. And Gove continued with the pillage of right to buy by extending sales of affordable housing stock to housing associations and creating a meaningless definition of affordable housing that has led to an increase in rents through increased reliance on private rented sector stock. And that has made worse the broken nexus between incomes and house prices.

Gove steered through the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act, claiming this would help leaseholders with their rights, and the Renters Reform Bill. The reforms never came to fruition either. The commitment to abolish Section 21 evictions never happened.

So housing justice. Affected residents suffering from housing privation, feel the injustice of all these actions. We get why you want to bring this petition. Housing justice, to use your term, is a human right. This means housing security and healthy

homes across all tenures. We need housing development for all pockets and all sizes. We need place-making to embed help into lifestyles and neighbourhoods and improvements to the quality of the environment.

The Council is committed to taking a considered approach to engagement in consultation, recognising all this, and we wish to engage with as many diverse people as possible as in a variety of approaches.

We hope you will share the hard work we must do to deliver the change and we would urge Citizens UK to work in this participative way. We want to hear from those who come from across section of all genders, generations, class backgrounds, ethnically diverse groups and residents who may be disadvantaged in equality terms, as well as political and religious groups present in our communities.

The Council has recently refreshed the Community Engagement Framework, which provides a tool kit to support officers to deliver high quality consultation with the public. We have introduced a new digital engagement platform, Your Voice, which will help us take consistent approach to engaging with local people and get with the evidence that we need for in terms of gathering data.

We hope Citizens UK supporters with will engage with us on the exercise that is about to start in the autumn on the emerging City Plan Part One. This is the spatial strategy for the city, with a particular focus on site allocations for housing and employment land uses, the treatment of affordable housing and suggestions for transport and climate change measures on which we need your views. We will examine options for new policies to address the topic of design and development standards and the community infrastructure.

This Council will be working alongside the labour government to give effect to the vision of boosting housing supply. Our focus will be on affordable housing provision which we will enable by clear processes and practise. [Unclear] to developers at a very early stage of proposals. The City Plan Review will reflect the new national planning policy framework [unclear].

- 25.5 Councillor Hill moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Sykes.
- 25.6 The Mayor congratulated Councillor Sykes on his maiden speech.
- 25.7 Councillors Theobald and Williams spoke on the matter.
- 25.8 Councillor Loughran responded to the debate and did not accept the Green Group amendment.
- 25.9 The Mayor moved to put the amendment to the vote.
- 25.10 The Mayor confirmed that the amendment had been lost and put the recommendation to note the petition as listed in the original report to the vote.
- 25.11 RESOLVED

The Mayor confirmed that the recommendation that the petition is noted had been carried.

- 25.12 The Mayor thanked [Nick Wells] and Lysander Pierce for presenting the petition and joining the Council meeting.

26 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 26.1 The Mayor noted that written questions from Members and the responses by the appropriate Councillor were taken as read by reference to the list included in the addendum which had been circulated prior to the meeting as detailed below:

1. Councillor Hill

I welcome the introduction of a country wide mandatory food waste collection system by 31 March 2026, however implementing this properly within tight budget constraints will be a difficult challenge for our local authority. The previous government did not provide enough additional funds for the scheme so money will have to come from elsewhere to fund this. What is the administration doing to find ways to make up for this funding shortfall?

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

This administration is not waiting until the mandatory introduction of food waste and will be announcing the rollout soon. Capital has been allocated accordingly and the vehicles have now been procured. DEFRA has developed a funding formula to assist local authorities that do not have a food waste collection service, and some transitional funding was allocated accordingly. If a shortfall is identified, we will seek a change in that formula based on the evidence.

2. Councillor Hill

Food waste collections can lead to bits of food being left in the street. Even when the bins have a locking mechanism, it is likely that they will not always be used perfectly. If food waste is left in the street, it creates a contamination problem and allows seagulls and rats to get to the food. This is particularly problematic in high student density areas. Will the administration consider hiring additional street cleaners alongside the rollout of the food waste collection system up? What else is it looking at to avoid contamination issues relating to a food waste collection system.

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

As part of planning for the introduction of the service, research has taken place with other local authorities with a food waste service in place to understand best

practice and any issues experienced. This includes identifying options for suitable caddies, containers, on-street and communal containers.

In addition, we have identified food waste vehicles which are electric and have jet wash units installed, to enable efficient clean up if required, as well as to facilitate the on-going cleaning and maintenance programme of communal containers.

As part of the roll out and beyond, a communications campaign will be implemented, to include information for every household on what can and can't be recycled.

The collection service will be rolled out in phases so that lessons can be learned as we go. We will announce details later this year.

3. Councillor Hill

What progress has been made with Southern Water to get funding from them to pay for sustainable urban drainage systems and other improvements?

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

Thank you, Cllr Hill, for your question regarding Southern Water's obligations to our city. The council are engaged with Southern Water and are having early discussions on what could be done to improve the sustainable drainage in the city including what funding could be provided. The Council's leadership and senior Cabinet members and officers have met with Southern Water's senior leadership and have sought assurance that there is substantial funding for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems or SuDS within Brighton and Hove included in Southern Water's Asset Management Plan 8 (AMP8) presently being considered by the water regulator Ofwat at the Draft Determination Stage.

4. Councillor Hill

Regarding the Springfield Road memorial tree, are we any closer to getting the tree planted in a suitable place and with protections around it to stop it being knocked down by cars as happened before?

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

Thank you, Cllr Hill, for your question. Since I met with Springfield Road residents, Cllr Pickett and you in April to assess this tree pit and damage to the two former trees planted there by manoeuvring vehicles, I have pressed officers to come up with an effective solution that protects a newly planted tree. I am very pleased to report that we will be installing raised kerbs around the tree pit and a cage to protect the tree ready for next winters planting season. With these additional protective measures in place, akin with the two other recently planted and flu rushing trees further up the road, we are confident that the present location of the tree pit is suitable for the new tree to also flourish.

5. Councillor Pickett

Net Zero

The redesign of the Carbon Neutral Programme (CNP) initiated and set up in 2022 included a reduction in gas emissions, an enhancement of biodiversity and an adaptation to climate change. The current plan includes only a plan to reduce gas emissions to net zero. Can the administration please explain why they have abandoned any plan to enhance biodiversity or climate adaptation? Can they please explain what a net zero plan only looks like?

Reply from Cllr Rowkins Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Service

This administration is not abandoning plans to enhance biodiversity or our work to adapt to the changing climate. We are, however, placing a much greater focus on decarbonising the city as whole and are creating a new team to take that work forward as a matter of urgency.

6. Councillor Pickett

Clean air

In light of the recent BBC investigation that found that England's clean air zones (CAZs) have raised over £150m for local authorities by charging drivers a fee to enter certain areas in an effort to reduce pollution. The money raised is then reinvested into local transport plans, road repairs, and improvements including clean air school programmes and school streets pilot schemes. When will BHCC initiate its own scheme to improve the welfare and health of this city's residents and in particular, those of children who are particularly vulnerable, as well as pay for itself in the process?

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

Thank you, Cllr Pickett, for your question. One of the key aims in the Council Plan is to keep our city clean by improving air quality. By monitoring pollution levels, we can understand what is happening and where so we can take targeted action rather than adopt a 'one size fits all' approach. Our air quality monitoring is being significantly expanded so that we will have a greater amount of data on which to base future decisions. This will mean that we can plan and use the most effective means to improve air quality where it is most needed.

Opportunities to progress to widespread low emission zones, as done elsewhere over the course of the past decade, were not taken previously by BHCC. With substantial improvements in vehicle fleets bringing most cars and other vehicles to Euro5 and Euro6 emissions standards and many more registered electric vehicles in and visiting our city, it is now difficult to justify the substantive cost of installing such measures to reasonably address a dwindling proportion of older vehicles.

As Cabinet member for Transport, Parking & Public Realm, I work very closely with Council officers who are specialists in tackling air quality. The city already has a localised Ultra Low Emission Zone for buses in the city centre, which is working well through continued partnership working and investment in cleaner vehicles. Our successful bid to the Government's zero emission bus fund for electric buses, for example, together with many other targeted initiatives will further assist this.

Other measures we are working on to cut harmful emissions include building better and safer routes for active travel; significantly increasing the number public use on-street charge points for electric vehicles including for taxi drivers, as well as decarbonising the council's own fleet. Together these measures will create a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone and deliver one of our priorities for the city.

7. Councillor Shanks

Residents are concerned that money raised by events in parks and open spaces is not benefitting local communities. Has the administration plans to ensure some money from these can be used locally?

Reply from Cllr Robins Cabinet Member – Sports and Recreation

Income from Events is part of the Council's overall budget and investment in the city. On certain occasions donations (e.g. London marathon have made a donation of £250K towards local community table tennis) have been made to local charities, however, the income from these events are part of targets set for officers to ensure services can be run and maintained.

8. Councillor Shanks

Please identify which community groups have lost all or some of their funding from the communities' fund in the last budget

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

No groups have lost funding from the Communities Fund. As an annual grant programme, all wards are made on an annual basis with no guarantee of future funding should the applicant reapply and be successful in future rounds. While the Communities Fund has come to end we have redesigned the previous Third Sector Investment Programme to introduce a new two year grant opportunity for small and medium sized groups – the Community Catalyst Fund. This is in response to feedback from these groups that small sums of two year funding would allow them stability to make further applications to other funds without pushing them to become bigger organisations and take on more burdensome large grants.

9. Councillor Shanks

How many posts were removed in the council reorganisation and budget cuts?
Does the partial audit reassurance mean that we lack capacity in some areas?

Reply from Cllr Taylor Cabinet Member – Finance and City Regeneration

Approximately 186 posts were proposed to be deleted in the budget proposals for 24/25. These posts are from a range of grades and services, and approximately 110 of these posts were estimated to be vacancies. The Council has had significant financial pressures to address and this has resulted in reduced capacity in some areas which has impacted on some of our Audit outcomes. We are using our Audit process to focus activity on the areas where we need to improve our internal control and governance processes. In many areas this links to updating systems and digital processes as well as the level resources. We are also focusing on how we ensure robust governance and internal control as part of our organisation redesign.

10. Councillor Shanks

Please outline the councils strategy to plant more trees, how will you get City Parks and Highways depts to work together with community groups to plant trees in the North Laine and elsewhere?

Reply from Cllr Robins Cabinet Member – Sports and Recreation

The Council is prioritising tree planting and this year the administration has put £50k of additional funding in to planting. Working with funders and partners, we're looking to use our available funding as match funding so that the money goes further. We are also exploring sponsorship schemes.

Our Arbs team already do a vast amount of work on tree planting already working closely with local communities and regional/national agencies.

11. Councillor Shanks

When will the administrations plans for a federation of Schools be shared with opposition councillors?

Reply from Cllr Daniel Cabinet Member – Children, Families, Youth Services and for Ending Violence against Women and Girls

The Council has started a dialogue with Headteachers and Governing Boards about proposals for a city of federated schools as part of our overall school organisation work. We are holding a number of meetings with them to encourage engagement on this matter and develop the model. Some high-level information has been shared with these groups including a purely illustrative example of how federations based largely on geographical areas could be constructed, and we have provided contextual information to the characteristics of those federations. We are encouraging as much feedback from schools as possible on this. As with

any suggested change there is a mix of views across the schools about the approach. By the end of term we have asked Headteachers and Governing Boards to indicate if they are prepared to actively engage in further conversations around working towards a city of federated schools. No decisions have been made, nor has a formal consultation begun. At this early engagement stage we are welcoming alternative options to the way in which the city's schools tackles the challenges it faces, whilst maintaining high quality education, avoiding fragmentation and the risk of schools being left in isolation. The administration has recently shared information with opposition councillors on this subject.

12. Councillor McLeay

As the spraying of glyphosate takes place across the city, residents are finding they are not given warning of when this takes place, there is no signage to say the area has been sprayed and the only way they can tell spraying has taken place is by looking closely for an oily residue. This puts pets and children most at risk. Could there be more forewarning, or notice be given to streets when spraying might take place, and signage put in place to communicate when an area has been sprayed?

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

Given the number of variables that affect the progress of treatment, it is not possible to provide an accurate idea of when a given street will be treated. It is, however, possible to give an idea of when a broad area sits within the schedule, and that information is available on the relevant webpage. All of the agencies on which local authorities rely for health and safety guidance consider glyphosate safe to use in public areas, and of course the method chosen by BHCC is more targeted than that used by most other local authorities. As such, it is not considered necessary to place signage where treatment has taken place. The controlled droplet application method is an extremely responsible and safe means of treating amenity weeds.

13. Councillor McLeay

There are streets across the city who would like to manage their own weeds without any use of glyphosate. They applied for weeding kits and on the day it arrived, were met by sprayers on their street. How can residents politely request that they manage their own street, so it can remain glyphosate free? Who should they direct these requests to?

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

Residents can email communitycleanup@brighton-hove.gov.uk for support in clearing weeds in their area. Given the tight timeline as treatment started this year, it may be the case that some residents struggled to get this support in time, but now that everything is up and running this should no longer be a problem. All of the relevant information in relation to weed management is available [here](#).

There is not a formal opt-out scheme in place, but we are looking to introduce one in the future.

14. Councillor McNair

CCTV Orchid View –

There has recently been serious vandalism in Orchid View. When will CCTV be fitted in Orchid View in order for residents to feel safe? And what is the timeline?

Reply from Cllr Williams Cabinet Member – Housing and New Homes

Thank you for your question. I am sorry to hear of the issues your residents report at Orchid View. We would welcome residents reporting incidences of anti-social behaviour to the Housing Service through our Housing Customer Services Team. We are aware that there are some ongoing complaints about misuse of the laundry which are being looked into and will form part of the upcoming laundry review and consultation.

However, at this time we are not aware of incidences of behaviour that would meet our thresholds for consideration of installation of CCTV. We are happy to receive information on any further reports or complaints of anti-social behaviour/vandalism in Orchid View and will keep all options open to us under review.

15. Councillor Meadows

Patcham Place Pavilion –

Patcham Place pavilion has been repeatedly vandalised. Fortunately, cricket was able to continue at Patcham Place this season. What is the council doing to help ensure Patcham Place Pavilion is restored to a usable state and that cricket can continue at this venue long term?

Reply from Cllr Robins Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation

The repeated vandalism of Patcham Place Pavilion is sad to see and our attempts to secure the building have failed to keep the vandals out. We have inherited a big challenge with sports facilities across the City. It's generally not just an issue of vandalism as in this case, but the accumulation of years of underinvestment in buildings. We do have some capital funding available to get sports facilities back up and running but need to look at new operating models going forward, to ensure this capital investment is well used and to prevent a slide back into the current state of decay. The council, with clubs and sports governing bodies, brought thriving tennis back into our parks and made progress with other sports moving to facilities managed by the users and we hope to extend this further.

16. Councillor McNair

Garden waste collections –

Garden waste collections in Patcham & Hollingbury were severely affected in June. Why was this? When is the service expected to return to normal? As residents pay additionally for this service when can they expect to be compensated?

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

We apologise for the disruption to Garden Waste services during June which were due to exceptional levels of unexpected driver absence. This is beginning to settle back into a normal pattern now. Crews have been working hard to catch up any missed collections. However, if anyone has missed a fortnightly collection, we would be happy to extend their subscription.

17. Councillor Hogan

Recycling in Hove Park –

Recycling in Hove Park has not been collected. Why is this, and when will a consistent service be established?

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

I'm sorry that recycling collections in the Hove Park area have been affected due to an exceptionally high number of vehicles being off the road. The crew have been given additional staff to help catch up the work, and where there have been spare crews these have been deployed to support the collection of missed work. With regards to vehicles, we are still catching up with vehicle replacements after many years of under investment. This has been exacerbated by some difficulties recruiting HGV mechanics to maintain the fleet. However, 2 new starters are commencing work in the next 2 weeks and this will help improve the resilience of the Council's fleet. We are also looking at further investment to replace some of the less reliable vehicles.

18. Councillor Hogan

Road resurfacing –

Residents were told Woodland Drive would not be resurfaced, now it is. This is confusing for residents and has caused significant disruption. How will residents be notified of resurfacing?

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

Thank you, Cllr Hogan for your question. All residents in Woodland Drive were sent letters, all resurface work has been completed. Also, notices are placed on the road by our contractors in advance (5 days) of works taking place. We value the importance of road improvements including resurfacing and filling of potholes to make roads safer for cyclists, drivers and those crossing the roads and generally better for communities. Therefore, we have taken every opportunity to optimise our road resurfacing programme which has enabled the inclusion of this road – now complete, a benefit to the Woodland Drive community.

19. Councillor Lyons

Tongdean Lane parking consultation –

Residents in Tongdean Lane are keen for a parking consultation. Buses can't get through. Could this consultation be commenced in the near future?

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

Thank you, Cllr Lyons, for your question. We are making good progress with our parking review which provides as much needed planned strategic framework to make parking work better for communities through a planned and connected approach fairer, more equitable and accessible for residents, traders and businesses and visitors. It is noted that residents in Tongdean Lane are calling for better planned parking that has enforcement designed to stop inconsiderate parking that has resulted in some buses not being able to pass, as you report. The Tongdean Lane area is on the parking scheme priority timetable which is due to be agreed in the autumn. This area will be included as part of the review of Zone 12 (Withdean).

20. Councillor Lyons

Road Resurfacing –

We are grateful for the resurfacing of Hill Brow but why were worse roads in north Brighton ignored, such as Carden Hill?

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

Thank you, Cllr Lyons, for your question regarding our road maintenance programme. The Council, along with most other local authorities, follow a risk-based asset management approach to the delivery of planned maintenance in the City. Details of this approach are available in the Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy which was approved at committee in January 2023 and is the basis of allocation within this year's road maintenance programme within the notable constraints of the regressive reduced budget allocation assigned by the former Tory government. We take a data-led approach for our planned maintenance programmes. To reduce the cost of maintaining our roads, we focus on keeping our roads in good condition for as long as possible. This includes

conducting annual carriageway condition surveys and deterioration modelling which are used to allocate the budget across the road network and across different types of treatment to maximise the lifespan of each of our carriageway assets.

Our survey assessment showed that Hill Brow was starting to show the first signs of deterioration in the form of cracking. Cracking allows water into the structure which speeds up the rate of deterioration. By treating it with a microasphalt surface treatment we have sealed the surface and prevented water ingress which will slow the rate of deterioration. Carden Hill is not suitable for this type of treatment, it is high on our priority list for large scale repairs and then future resurfacing depending on budgets and priorities within the budget we have. We are working hard to increase budgets for road maintenance and pothole repairs, that unlike the former failed Tory central government, this Labour administration consider as a priority to this city.

21. Councillor Meadows

Enforcement officers –

Why did enforcement officers tell residents in Vale Avenue to take down their signs protesting the Royal Mail development? And, in the process, upset an elderly couple by telling them their sign was illegal when it wasn't? Who sent the enforcement officers to speak to the residents at this property? Can we be reassured that this will not occur again

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

Flyposting is an offence under section 43 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Fly posting is putting up posters or stickers on properties, lamp posts, telephone boxes or other structures on the street without consent from the owner.

The Environmental Enforcement Framework sets out the council's policy and approach to dealing with flyposting and other environmental crimes. There is nothing in this enquiry to suggest that the officers were not adhering to the policy and carrying out the role that they are tasked with. However I am sorry to hear that the residents were upset and if they have a complaint about how they were treated they can make a complaint through the council's complaints procedure when their specific circumstances can be considered by a manager.

22. Councillor Theobald

Patcham roundabout –

Please provide an update on the progress being made on ensuring Patcham roundabout is an attractive gateway to the city.

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

Thank you, Cllr Theobald, for your question which I do appreciate you have on several occasions sought progress on. I am now pleased to update you that there is now general agreement with National Highways on the council facilitating a maintenance agreement with the sponsor which I trust you can agree is good news and is progress. However, planning permission is still required and investment needs to be found to carry out enabling works (salt margin and access hard standing), and the cost of traffic management. These were planned for 2020 but were cancelled due to COVID. Now we have agreement with National Highways to proceed as set out above, we are currently getting them re-priced.

In the meantime, the sponsor who aims to take on the roundabout has upgraded the planting and is maintaining the display on the raised bed adjoining the roundabout. Hopefully you will have noticed the improvement.

We are also scoping more generally a programme of public artworks across the city to identify gateways and to identify sponsors for these. A positive addition to our public realm.

23. Councillor Lyons

Withdean Rd –

Part of Withdean road has a speed limit of 20mph, whilst the section between Withdean Stadium to the junction of Wayland Ave has a 30mph limit. Many households have contacted us requesting a uniform 20mph for the whole road. Could this be expedited as soon as possible? There have been a number of near accidents.

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

Thank you, Cllr Lyons for your question. During the consultation for 20mph limits in the city there was a generic reasonable expectation from transport operators and the Police that main routes into and out of the city would be kept at 30mph. This was to support the Police when it comes to enforcement. If a limit is imposed on a small section of a road, then that becomes almost impossible to enforce as a driver could state that they were confused about the speed limit due to the proliferation of different signs within the drivers view.

Changes to the speed limit would need to be considered as part of a future traffic management review. However, as you report residents are calling for a change and a proposed traffic management review supports this can be done safely, we may be minded to consult formally with local residents to progress such a speed limit change.

24. Councillor Lyons

The Martlet –

We have received requests for traffic calming within The Martlet. Traffic is heavy at school dropping off/collection times. Could consultation be commenced to decide the most appropriate traffic calming measure?

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

Thank you, Cllr Lyons, for your question regarding traffic calming measures within the Martlet. The council has introduced an assessment process called **Safer Better Streets**. This particular location has been looked at by officers who have recommended more enforcement at busier traffic periods at this location such as pick up and drop off times. Requests can be made via our Better Safer Streets programme for road safety assessments and requests.

25. Councillor McNair

Ukrainian refugee groups –

Is it true that Ukrainian refugee groups in the city are losing funding from the council? Will Ukrainian organisations and individuals be able to apply for funding from the Brighton & Hove Fairness Fund?

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

No funding has been withdrawn from Ukrainian groups in the city. If there is a specific example that the Councillor can share I will ask officers to look into the matter. Like other community groups in the city if the Ukrainian groups meet the eligibility criteria for the Brighton & Hove Fairness Fund they will be able to apply. The Trust for Developing Communities has been providing capacity building support to groups over the last few years.

26. Councillor McNair

Taxis –

Why are taxis from outside Brighton & Hove allowed to operate in the city with no checks and no adherence to this council's rules and regulations? Local taxi drivers are at a significant disadvantage and their business is suffering. What will the council do to support our local taxi drivers?

Reply from Cllr McGregor – Chair of Licensing Committee

Legislation allows for a licenced private hire vehicle (driver, vehicle & operator all licensed by the same authority) to operate legally anywhere in the country. Licensing checks are carried out by the relevant licensing authority. This has always been the case but the popularity of Apps based providers has made it

much easier for out-of-town private hire vehicles to work away from their licensing authority's area.

We do work closely with our neighbouring authorities and have joint enforcing procedures, carrying out regular joint enforcement work on both BHCC licensed vehicles and those "out of town" licensed vehicles.

We hold regular taxi forums with trade representatives to listen and address any concerns that are raised.

27. Councillor Fishleigh

Parking vouchers - digital discrimination continues in our city. When will printed parking vouchers be available in our City for visitors and residents to purchase?

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

Thank you, Cllr Fishleigh, for your question. Having made significant progress with evaluating the various options; an announcement is expected next month about providing our customers with a wider choice in the way they pay for their parking.

28. Councillor Fishleigh

Pavements - how much is in the budget for mending pavements and how will areas be prioritised for replacement of paving slabs damaged by weeds and re-laying of slabs that have lifted?

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

Thank you, Cllr Fishleigh, for your question. Regular Inspections are undertaken by the Council throughout the city to check the condition of pavements. Although budgets are limited, we do prioritise safety defectives as a priority above the current proactive planned intervention levels. Where safety defects are identified through routine inspections or residents, ward councillors and others making the council aware, they are treated as priority for treatment/repair.

29. Councillor Fishleigh

Trees - as there is no budget to remove tree stumps, will BHCC allow resident-funded projects to turn these into seats, flower pots and wood sculptures?

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

Thank you, Cllr Fishleigh, for your question regarding tree stumps. The Council is open to exploring options, however the stumps must not become a hazard. Although we do not have funding to deal with all of the stumps in the City as and

when we get funding we are replacing them, choice of site can often be influenced by any match funding we can access so stumps will still be being removed.

Any work carried out on the highway would need to be carried out in a safe manner so any plans would have to be discussed with officers.
If work can be carried out safely that enhances the street and it's done in the knowledge that it could be short lived yes. We are happy to get involved in discussing any schemes proposed.

30. Councillor Fishleigh

Unadopted pavement on Marine Drive, Rottingdean - will BHCC now agree that it has responsibility for this area to the east and south of the A259 and Rottingdean High Street junction and partly in front of shops that BHCC owns - and prioritise for resurfacing please?

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

The area referred to is not adopted highway and is part of the leased estate to the shops. BHCC Estates, are in contact with the Individual lease holders to resolve the maintenance needs to the pavements.

31. Councillor Earthey

What are the reasons for undertaking these improvements without consultation with the stakeholders of the Undercliff Safety Campaign (which include Rottingdean Parish Council, Ovingdean Residents and Preservation Society, Saltdean Residents Association, the Saltdean Community Association, the proprietors of the Ovingdean Café and Molly's Café, the two ward councillors, and the local MP)?

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

Thank you, Cllr Earthey, for your question. There is currently no formal plan for implementing changes to the Undercliff other than some recent refresh to signs to encourage all users to share the space. However, as you have raised this as a matter of some concern, I would be happy to meet with you and others there to discuss these concerns and potential solutions that work well for the range of stakeholders and constituencies that wish to use this shared space.

32. Councillor Earthey

What is BHCC's current plan for improving Undercliff safety (by type of improvement and date of implementation, e.g, rumble strips, signs, barriers, etc)?

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

Thank you, Cllr Earthey, for your further question regarding the Undercliff. There is currently no formal plan for implementing changes to the Undercliff other than some recent refresh to signs to encourage all users to share the space. However, as you have again raised this as a matter of some concern, as per my previous response, I would be happy to meet with you and others there to discuss these concerns and potential solutions that work well for the range of stakeholders and constituencies that wish to use this shared space.

33. Councillor Earthey

Please provide BHCC's budget and costings of their said plan, so it can be seen why there is no money for the Ovingdean – Saltdean stretch, and what the options are for raising finance from alternative sources.

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

Thank you, Cllr Earthey for once again asking a question regarding the Undercliff. As set out previously, there is currently no formal plan for implementing changes to the Undercliff other than some recent refresh to signs to encourage all users to share the space. However, as per my previous two responses, I would be happy to meet with you and others there to discuss these concerns and potential solutions that work well for the range of stakeholders and constituencies that wish to use this shared space.

34. Councillor Earthey

What is BHCC's plan to provide better engagement with the Campaign's stakeholders?

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

Thank you, Cllr Earthey, for your question. Please again be assured that officers and I, are more than happy to meet with any stakeholders including residents, business, walkers, cyclists, those with specific accessibility requirements and others at this location to progress resolution and mitigation to these matters raised.

35. Councillor Earthey

Please provide confirmation that the Stakeholders' views on Undercliff safety will be incorporated into the final plan.

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

Thank you Cllr Earthey for your question. Please again be assured that myself and officers are more than happy to meet with any stakeholders including

residents, business, walkers, cyclists, those with specific accessibility requirements and others at this location to progress resolution and mitigation to these matters raised.

36. Councillor Hill

Can Cllr Cllr Rowkins Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services clarify whether Hanover & Elm Grove ward is part of a pilot opt out scheme for glyphosate spraying? Different Labour Councillors have claimed it is either due to high footfall in the area or due to a pilot opt out scheme. Which reason is it? If the latter, is it fair that Cllr Cllr Rowkins Cabinet Member – Net Zero & Environmental Services's residents get to be part of a pilot whereas other wards have not been afforded the same right to opt out at this point in time?

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

There is no pilot opt-out scheme in place. Hanover & Elm Grove is part of the wider exclusion zone where glyphosate treatment is not applied.

37. Councillor Bagaen

Veolia Household Waste Recycling Site (HWRS) Hove

I have received consistent and persistent complaints from residents in the Westdene and Hove Park Ward, and additionally south of the railway, about a 'pungent', 'rancid', and 'not transient' smell from green waste vehicles entering and exiting the Waste Transfer Station.

Why is the council making this problem worse in allowing increasing amounts of green waste entering the site on council vehicles?

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

Increasing recycling is a priority for BHCC which includes garden waste. Currently there are approximately 11,500 residents requesting a collection of this waste for recycling. This is a very valued service for residents who cannot always use a composter or transport their green waste to the HWRS themselves.

Once collected from households with a garden waste subscription, it is taken to the Hove HWRS site, operated for the council under contract by Veolia. This provides our green waste transfer station and operates in line with environmental regulations and planning regulations. The site is routinely inspected and monitored as part of contract management and is also subject to inspection by the Environment Agency.

It should be noted that all green waste is removed from the site daily.

The site services over 91,000 residents. There were 263,000 visits in 2023/24 demonstrating that it is a critical element of waste infrastructure in the city.

A few residents who live adjacent to the site have complained about the smells and vehicle movements. However, to address the concerns a significant amount of money has been spent at Hove HWRS which has been over and above normal spend. This includes

- Noise survey completed by external consultant
- Remedial work to the waste transfer building
- Industrial deodorisers have been installed.
- Deep cleans and pest control preventative measures.
- Removal of "scrub" at the bottom of the site
- Paid for pest control visits for the complainant to address any pest concerns should they arise from the site.

38. Councillor Bagaeen

Public path between Woodland Drive and the Three Cornered Copse
In storms in early November 2023, a fence of a house on the passage blew down in the wind blocking the public path between The Three Cornered Copse and Woodland Drive. Soon after, council officers put up a 'Footpath Closed' sign and blocked access. This public path was very highly used.

How is it that the council has allowed this public path to remain closed since November 2023?

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

Thank you Cllr Bagaeen, for your question. There is a private wall that has partially collapsed causing a safety hazard to the public using this route. Highway Officers have been in communication with the owner for it to be removed fully or made safe. As is necessary Officers have been in regular communication with the owners. Actions are now being pursued through legal channels for the removal of the wall & to make safe the footpath. The footpath has been closed due to safety concerns and time to get the relevant legal consents. It is my understanding that ward councillors have been made aware of this and actions taken to resolve this and make it safe for pedestrians to use this path.

27 ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

27.1 The Mayor noted that 14 oral questions from Members had been submitted and that 30 minutes was set aside for the duration of the item. He asked that responses are kept brief to enable as many questions as possible to be heard.

27.2 Q1. Councillor Davis asked a question:

"I'd like to ask the Transport Member Lead: Did the Lead Member have discussions with Active Travel England before or after the Cabinet decision on the A259 was made, as it appears he has taken their approval for granted, contrary to the DfT's conditions for funding?"

Councillor Muten replied:

“Thank you, councillor Davis, for your question. In brief, the Officer, Senior Officers, in the Transport team, were in dialogue with Active Travel England ahead of the paper that went to Cabinet and the Active Travel England steer on this matter would be that we were needed, needed cabinet approval and decision as a Council ahead of them given granting expressing a clear view on that matter.”

Councillor Davis asked a supplementary question:

“Why does it appear that there were no detailed discussions with key stakeholders regarding the proposed Hove section held at any point?”

Councillor Muten replied:

“Thank you Councillor Davis. I struggle with that question on one level because in June, the end of June 2023, we presented very clear proposition to the Transport Sustainability Committee, which you were a member of for the rest of the year, where we set out very clearly that we wanted to revisit that design. We felt it was a poor design on many levels. It wasn't the best use of the space between Fourth Avenue and Wharf Road in that we're splitting the cycle lanes with a pavement inbetween, for instance, and part of it going round one side looking out and Morocco's and the other on the road. And throughout that year, from June all the way through to June. Yes, you knew we were criticised from a number of fronts by the Green Party for a) you didn't believe we were doing it or taking it forward and b) you scrapped the scheme, which was as you preferred. But we felt there was better use of the space, it was worth doing, we did engage and I have been on cycle rides with Bricycles, I've met Bricycles for instance several times during that period. It's been discussed in broad principle at the Transport Partnership and many other forums, and each probably, it's been several times at this Council meeting and at Transport Sustainability Committee meetings. There has been ample opportunity to discuss this proposal and we have been very clear of our intent around this. And there are other active travel groups and activity partners. They've also had the discussion around this fact. We've intended to move forward with this plan and to move away from a scheme which was broadly in line with more of a COVID rapid response type thing with wands in the road.”

27.3 Q2. Councillor McNair asked a question:

“Red routes in London Road and Lewes Road are causing financial difficulty for many small businesses. There is a consultation out about this, and the petition, buses may be quicker along this route. I use these buses every day and maybe a couple of minutes have been shaved off the journey. But wouldn't you agree that the Council should prioritise small businesses over a private bus company if it is serious about having a thriving economy?”

Councillor Muten replied:

“Thank you, Councillor McNair. On many levels, I might agree with you. We do want to get to prioritise bus service, but also we do prioritise the community and one of the things we had in particular along the London Road and Lewes Road is commonly

congested traffic causing air pollution and yes, delaying buses, but also other traffic through those main arterial routes of our city. And so yes, we do think they're adding incredible value to the community, but one thing I've also been committed during this period of consultation is going to talk to the residents and traders, for instance, in London Road.

So the 23rd of April, I went to the London Road Area Local Action Team, or LAT meeting. I heard the views of many of the traders that went to that meeting, and express their concerns. So on the 23rd of May I went along London Road and met traders, residents and others to understand better each of their concerns. By the 28th of May return back to London Road Area LAT. So within this consultation period, we've already made some improvements, to alleviate some of the pressures. We've put five new loading bays, we've put one four metre motorcycle parking bay and we've responded well to the traders.

So a number of traders have actually approached me to thank the ways we have responded and are listening. So we are making significant difference and we're committed to make them work. Let's find ways to mitigate these. And I met particularly three traders who I do believe have yet to fully resolve their concerns. And there's two of which, Smokemart and M&B Meats, have nearby loading bays, but I do appreciate they have been a little bit inconvenient by this by this and there's some work to do with them. The third one is Presuming Ed which is unable to park their [unclear] for unloading beers etc.

But I just want to emphasise throughout this Red Route, we've replaced the yellow double lines with red lines. It wasn't legal to park on any of these lines, which are now painted red that were previously yellow. So we've actually made more space for loading than there was previously in terms of the legal context to that. And I'm absolutely convinced that we can do this well, it does enhance and we've already seen some clear benefits and we've also done some air quality monitoring and that data has yet to come through. But you're right, we've had some very positive response from Brighton and Hove buses, Big Lemons, cyclists who've very much promoting the positive of this and drivers who come through there and traders and residents in the way we have responded. There is a consultation period open to the 30th of September and we are responding as we go through that consultation period to make it as best we possibly can."

Councillor McNair asked a supplementary question:

"Will the Council take red routes away if businesses struggle? Or even worse, fail?"

Councillor Muten replied:

"I think I've set out very clearly. I intend to try and make these work. I've I've gone to the London Road LAT meeting twice, I'm happy and I will plan to go later this month again.

We want to work with the community, and particularly with traders along that route to recognise the way we can make this work. It's not an all or nothing approach and that's what we're trying to do. We're not trying to say, you know, has it failed or has it worked,

we're trying to make it work as best we can because I believe it is making a big difference and air quality improvements, which I believe this does offer, are very important to this Council. Thank you."

27.4 Q3. Councillor Fishleigh asked a question:

"When the public consultation about the proposed new bus lane on the A259 east of the aquarium reveals that the majority of respondents are opposed to it, will the plans be abandoned?"

Councillor Muten replied:

"Thank you Councillor Fishleigh. Thank you for your question. It seems like a presumption within your question and somehow you kind of feel there might be a majority of people that are against it. Although the consultation is now closed, I have broadly, and we're still analysing as Council the information coming in from that consultation. It is wrong to suggest that the majority of people are against it. It's looking as if there's a number of groups have got involved and their campaigns and fair enough. Some groups have said not sure we like this, but others have actually shown some support. Some of those are bus passengers who've decided to make a positive response to this and others are cyclists, and another people who want to see more active travel in this area and see some positive aspects to this. And so the early indications is, well, it is looking like quite a mix of views. It isn't as clear cut as when you might infer with your question, and I would suggest we are looking at that, at all the responses coming through, and there are some people who are not so keen, but there's others who are keen that we move forward with this and make this a better route for buses, particularly prioritising buses, but also in forward-looking so we can get the aquarium junction much better in terms of traffic flow in the future."

Councillor Fishleigh asked a supplementary question:

"Air pollution in our city is not reducing in line with what would naturally occur with engine and fuel technology improvements. This is because over and over the Council introduces schemes that increase congestion, hence pollution. You heard earlier from Nigel Smith that this bus lane fails the value for money test. It's wrong to spend public money on schemes with little to no benefit, just because you've got a grant that needs to be spent.

Since this bus lane was proposed, I have got the bus from Saltdean to the city centre 38 times, including today, and I've been noting what happened. My journeys were on different days, different times, in rain and shine.

My supplementary how many times do you think the bus was delayed in the area of this proposed new bus lane on my journeys?"

Councillor Muten replied:

"Thank you, Councillor Fishleigh. You reference to your so-called expert that you put there, who had a particular view, and I challenge that view because I think its basis of its premise of its question was not robust. I've made it very clear that the eastbound

A259 proposal is within DfT guidance and the suggestion that we should keep a much wider crossing at the location so we can delay traffic eastbound is somewhat flawed in my view. And yes, you're right, it's interesting you took the bus at certain times. What we do know on the aquarium junction at this point in time, it's established, and I've said this before, it's a roundabout without any management control of it.

So you're right, you've chosen a bus. Well, no the bus journey you've taken towards that junction wasn't delayed, but there are times when there is a delay at that junction and so it is important that we enable this bus priority through that junction, particularly ahead of the planned works. And we do know at certain times we've got severe traffic delays at that junction and it cannot be managed by the configuration of a roundabout as it is at the moment and we are proposing a new scheme that allows for informed and intelligent traffic lights, as it were, that will enable the priorities on all traffic particularly, where there's buses or there's queue traffic, so we can manage that effectively. It cannot be done at this point in time, therefore the change is needed. This bus lane enables part of that change and it will help bus priorities during those peak times. Thank you."

27.5 Q4. Councillor Allen asked a question:

"Woodingdean Wanderers FC have over 400 players spanning 28 teams, including seven girls' teams. However, this success has meant they've outgrown their capacity at their current site at the Nuffield Hospital. We want to keep the club in the ward. So could councillor Robins describe how the administration is supporting [unclear] Woodingdean Wanderer's FC?"

Councillor Robins replied:

"Thank you Councillor Allen for your question and I thank both you and Councillor Hewitt for your interest and support for the local grassroots sport in our city. It's a little known fact that Sussex Sunday League, which is a League that I personally graced for many years as one of the best uncapped right [unclear] in the country, is the largest amateur Football League in the country, possibly Europe, maybe even the world. And it's fantastic to see, as you point out, the ever growing involvement for women and girls in grassroots football.

We have a good track record at working with sports clubs, and sports governing bodies, and improving sports facilities within our parks through our move to self-management. To date, the progress has largely been made on sites where there is a clear site based clubs that are principal users of the facility. I'm aware of at least two football organisations interested in developing football facilities at Happy Valley and the first challenge we face is a clear, fair and transparent way of working, which organisations we will work with. I'm aware that following a meeting with Woodingdean Wanderers' Sussex FA supplied some information on how another authority, decided which organisations to work with and I've asked officers to develop this and share it with myself and ward councillors so that we can prevent the hold-up of proposals of self-management of football sites across the city."

Councillor Allen asked a supplementary question:

“I thank Councillor Robins for that detailed reply. Please could Councillor Robins commit to meeting with me and other stakeholders as mentioned about how we can improve sports provision in the east of the city and in Woodingdean in particular, at sites like Happy Valley?”

Councillor Robins replied:

“I can think of nothing that will give me greater pleasure, Mr Mayor and if you could let me know at the time that suits you, Councillor Allen, then I'll be more than happy to meet you. Thank you again”

27.6 Q5. Councillor Shanks asked a question:

“We will soon have more empty school buildings in the city, St Barts, St Peters, Homewood College and the Bright Start Nursery and I want to ask really how are we going to ensure that those buildings are kept safe while they're being empty and what meanwhile use could we make of them?”

Councillor Taylor replied:

“Thank you, councillor Shanks for your question. Obviously we had a similar question that came to Cabinet two weeks ago and then we also covered some of that ground at Overview and Scrutiny Committee just this week. The first and primary consideration, as you say, a number of buildings are going to become available, subject to the stages of process that each of those three including Homewood where we've obviously just launched a consultation on on closure. The first and primary consideration is could those buildings be used for further education purposes, which is exactly what we'll be considering. If they end up not being used for education purposes there's a process to go through, particularly in the school building case, for potentially applying for a different use from the Secretary of State, which can take some time, which is obviously implicit in your question, Councillor Shanks, which is if there is a period of time where they're not occupied, how do we look after them? The Council has long experience of managing its significant property portfolio over many, many decades and ensuring that buildings don't fall into too far disrepair and then maintained to basic level. However, the meantime-use will be a consideration, and indeed I can confirm that some organisations have already made approaches about potential meantime-use. So we are considering that.

Councillor Shanks asked a supplementary question:

“Thank you. I think the one I did mention actually was Hertford Infants, which obviously was something that they've merged together so that building's empty and I think they are looking to have some meantime-use. So that'd be really, the community there.

The other bit, this question really is that Youth Services, which are included in this portfolio, are an educational service so I would like to be assured that if we're looking at a use for those buildings that Youth Service use could be a possibility as an educational use?”

Councillor Taylor replied:

“I assume yes, although I’d need to check whether within the legislation for education use that would be included. I would assume yes, and perhaps that would be suitable meantime-use and, obviously as Councillor Shanks knows, in the area of new services, we’re really excited about the rebuilding of Brighton Youth Centre in its new form, which I know she’s been very close to and that’s going to be a great facility. And I think we, Councillor Shanks and I, both share the view that Youth Services over the last decade and a bit have been degraded, and there aren’t enough Youth Services in our city and many other cities and we’d like to see that return and we’re very excited about that Brighton Youth Centre project.”

27.7 Q6. Councillor Lyons asked a question:

“In regard to the Kingsway, how many parking spaces will be permanently removed to accommodate the new cycle lane? And what would the associated loss of revenue be to the Council?”

Councillor Muten replied:

“Thank you Councillor Lyons. I want to say quite simply, and if you read the papers that went to Cabinet and supporting information, you will see that the actual sum reduction in parking is none. We’re not reducing parking due to the Active Travel proposed route that we have between Fourth Avenue and Wharf Road. So yeah, it’s not the case we’re taking away parking along that route and therefore the revenue is nominal. This isn’t a major part of the consideration. So no, we’re not dealing with that in that way.”

Councillor Lyons asked a supplementary question:

“Now I’m a cyclist and I cycle down on the Kingsway each week. I must admit, if I had 100 things I wanted the Council to do, the cycle lane would probably be all about number 91, I reckon. But why can’t the cycle lane be installed in the pavement, the promenade? And how will the closure of a road lane affect emergency vehicle access?”

Councillor Muten replied:

“Thank you Councillor Lyons for your question. I just want to clarify maybe a couple of points of within that. So we’re not taking it, the whole point of the scheme between Hove Street and Wharf Road. We’re not taking out a lane there. The reason we’re keen to, so let’s just clarify that point, that was the previous scheme and we stopped, a year ago we stopped a cycle lane install which was going to put the cycle lane on the road for that section of the road and was going to put the pavement between the right, the one direction and the other. So what we’re committed to is a bidirectional bicycle route all the way from Fourth Avenue to Wharf Road. It gives a nice safe defined space for cycling, and one thing we want to use that space in between Fourth Avenue and Hove Street very effectively because we’re going to widen the pavement as well and we can have very defined space. So we can actually create a bit more space for the pavement and the cafe culture along that section.

A nice, clearly defined cycle line, bidirectional, away from the road and so it’s safer.

And for much of that Victoria Terrace section, it is very common for vehicles to double park, particularly during the day when the road is busy and so that stretch of route is actually commonly single lane in effect during peak times.

It's very helpful to understand, you are a cyclist, I cycle as well. One thing that I was quite disturbed by during lockdown, particularly and as we came out of lockdown, is a negative polemic between cyclists and drivers, and I've reflected on that much and in some ways the COVID cycle lanes put in very quickly and hurriedly may have created some of that negativity between drivers and cyclists. Where drivers and cyclists were almost shouting at each other, at one another other and that's very negative and this shouldn't be and I believe that part of the problem with that, the route of that problem is actually design.

So if we give a good design to cycle routes, and start respecting each other on the roads and the space we do, I believe we can do this well. Because you go around much of Europe, this is done routinely. Nice, defined spaces for cycle routes, for pavements, for cars. It's a fairly straightforward thing. It shouldn't be that difficult in the city. It'd be great for us to work together and I'm very pleased to hear that you are a cyclist and I really value your support in making sure we do this well. Thank you."

27.8 Q8. Councillor Atkinson asked a question:

"I'll just give a brief bit of context. And my question relates to air quality problems caused by something called particulate pollution. It's often described as a deadliest form of pollution and is linked to higher death rates, respiratory problems and heart disease. The smallest of these particles is called pm 2.5. These particles are emitted from a variety of sources, including agriculture. But the one I'm asking the question on today is wood burning stoves. Although PM 2.5 pollution has decreased by 42% over the past 14 years, it has actually increased in some cities with Cardiff, Nottingham and Brighton having the highest levels. This is being put down to the increase in wood burning stoves, as pollution from all other sources has been decreasing. There are no safe levels of PM 2.5.

So my question is twofold. Are the Council aware of the problem with this type of air pollution, and in particular, are we conscious of how wood burning stoves, which residents may feel is a cleaner form of heating, are adding to the problem?

And also what can we do in practical terms to reduce or eliminate this problem and ensure residents are well informed on the issue?"

Councillor Rowkins replied:

Thank you Councillor Atkinson for the question. I can certainly assure you that this is very much on the radar and we're in the process of looking at the options we might have available to tackle the problem. My most recent meeting about this was only 10 days ago on July 1st and there's a further meeting coming shortly to evaluate the progress of the findings.

To answer your two specific points, we don't have a great deal of data, specifically relating to the contribution to PM 2.5 pollution from solid fuels here in Brighton and

Hove, but the defer figures state nationally that it's in the region of about 29%. Although I have to say there are there are lots of contrasting figures out there, so even getting a national average is quite difficult to pin down. But clearly, though, whatever that national average is, it's going to depend, it's going to vary significantly locally depending on a range of factors, and we're very keen to get a larger and more reliable data set to help us inform our actions here in Brighton and Hove. Part of the problem, of course, is identifying how much of the particulate matter comes from solid fuels versus vehicle emissions and other sources, and that's made more difficult by the fact that most air quality sensors here in Brighton and Hove are located at the roadside. In fact, currently there's only one air quality sensor that is located substantially far away from traffic. But we are significantly expanding our monitoring capabilities this year and by the end of the summer we'll have 45 monitors in place and several of those will be located away from roadsides and that should enable us to get a more nuanced and accurate picture of the makeup of our particular pollution, and particularly identifying the patterns of seasonality that you would expect to see in association with burning solid fuels in the winter.

We're currently looking at options in terms of practical steps to tackle the problem, including the role of our current smoke control areas, options for enforcement and of course communications and education, which I think is absolutely crucial. So I live in a in a very old house with an open fireplace, and since becoming more wise and more educated to the particulate pollution we have in the city, I've not burned a single thing in my house since then.

Last year, for the first time, our trading standards team did some focused work on checking that the fuels being sold in and around the city are compliant with both national regulations and those specifically relating to smoke control areas. And we'll be looking at how that can be expanded going forward. And I'm very happy to keep Members updated on this work as it progresses. Thanks for the question.

27.9 The Mayor stated that Council had reached the allocated time for oral questions and he would move on to the next item.

28 TACKLING SHORT TERM LETS

28.1 The Notice of Motion as listen in the agenda was proposed by Councillor McLeay on behalf of the Green group and formally seconded by Councillor Goldsmith.

28.2 The Mayor noted that there was one amendment from the Labour Group in relation to this motion as set out in the addendum papers.

28.3 Councillor Williams moved the amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Mackey.

28.4 The Mayor congratulated Councillor Mackey on her maiden speech.

28.5 Councillors Meadows and Goldsmith spoke on the matter

28.6 Councillor McLeay responded to the debate and accepted the amendment by the Labour Group

28.7 The Mayor put the motion as amended to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

28.8 RESOLVED

This council notes:

1. The high cost of rent and low availability of housing in the city, which reflects a market in which power is unfairly weighted towards landlords.
2. The negative impact which the high number of unregulated short-term let properties are having on housing availability for the local community.
3. The Cabinet Member for Housing and New Homes has written to the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP, requesting the Government:
 - a. Introduce a statutory licencing scheme for all STLs which requires safety standard compliance
 - b. Amend planning regulations to introduce a new class for STLs
 - c. Amend National planning policy to provide devolved powers to local authorities to control the number of permitted licences granted in areas of pressure

Therefore, Council resolves to:

1. Request a report report on the saturation of short-term lets within the city and prepare an options paper of policy recommendations for Cabinet which will mitigate their impact on our communities alongside outlining what the Council can do to prepare for planning powers so an Article 4 Direction (A4D) can be implemented. Suggested areas the report may cover include: Suggested areas the report may cover include:
 - a. identifying suitable area(s) within the city that the A4D should apply to;
 - b. beginning to collate the evidence needed to show why the A4D is necessary for these areas, including the required public consultation;
 - c. outlining how the Council can effectively enforce the A4D, should people not seek the proper permission for short-term lets.
 - d. outlining how the Council can work with the tourism industry to promote sustainable visitor accommodation provision, including via the Greater Brighton Economic Board.
 - e. exploring avenues that could support the adoption of a registration scheme for short-term rental provision, as is set out in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.

29 WEED REMOVAL

29.1 The Notice of Motion as listen in the agenda was proposed by Councillor McNair on behalf of the Conservative group and formally seconded by Councillor Lyons.

29.2 The Mayor noted that there was an amendment from the Labour Group and a joint amendment from the Brighton & Hove Independent Group and the Green Group in relation to this motion as set out in the addendum papers.

- 29.3 Councillor Rowkins moved the amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Winder.
- 29.4 Councillor Fishleigh moved the joint amendment on behalf of the Brighton & Hove Independent Group and Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Pickett.
- 29.5 Councillors Hill and Atkinson spoke on the matter.
- 29.6 Councillor McNair responded to the debate and did not accept the amendments.
- 28.7 The Mayor stated that the amendments had been moved and that he would put them to the vote in reverse order.
- 28.8 The Mayor put the joint amendment by the Brighton & Hove Independent Group and Green Group to the vote and confirmed that this had been lost
- 28.9 The Mayor put the amendment by the Labour Group to the vote and confirmed that this had been carried.
- 28.10 The Mayor put the motion as amended to the vote and confirmed that the motion had been carried.
- 28.11 RESOLVED

This Council:

- 1) Acknowledges the targeted and limited use of glyphosate that was agreed by Council in February 2024;
- 2) Notes the high volume of complaints Councillors in many parts of Brighton and Hove had previously received about lack of weed removal; the danger of not cutting verge sightlines; the hazard of broken pavements; the risk dogs are exposed to by seeds in long grass; reports from residents regarding the unsightly state of verges in the city; the need to strike a balance between supporting biodiversity and keeping our neighbourhoods maintained to the satisfaction of residents;
- 3) Notes that in March 2022, the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee agreed to begin a 3-year trial in which the previous 11 verge mows per year would be reduced to 6;
- 4) Notes that some mows scheduled for spring 2024 did not take place; that insufficient resources have been available in City Parks following substantial and successive budget cuts to local authorities; that conditions have been such that grass growth is around 20% increased compared to the same period in 2023;

This council therefore resolves to call for a report to Cabinet which considers options in relation to the following issues:

- 5) The grass-cutting regime, including sightlines and verges;

- 6) Clearer timelines for weed removal so residents know when their streets will be cleared;
- 7) Prioritising residential areas where elderly residents live who are may be at risk of tripping over weeds and broken paving slabs;

30 CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting concluded at 9:03pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2024