

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Council

## Agenda Item 36

**Subject:** Written questions from Councillors

**Date of meeting:** 24 October 2024

**Report of:** Corporate Director for Corporate Services

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**Ward(s) affected:** All

### For general release

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

#### 1. Councillor Fishleigh

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

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

Thank you for your question, Cllr Fishleigh, regarding the recent public consultation on the proposed new bus lane east of the aquarium junction. An update on the consultation will be published on the Your Voice platform. If the decision is made to progress with the scheme, it is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed to commence works in winter 2025.

You may be encouraged to know that the level of response from the public engagement was positive with 895 responses received and 533 didn't oppose. In response to specific comments made as part of the public consultation, you may also welcome that we have made amendments to the scheme including retaining a second pedestrian crossing island, as well as providing the new traffic light controlled crossing included on the proposals. Lane widths have been reviewed; and we are looking at options for road maintenance at the same time, using available funding for the bus lane.

This decision is delegated to the corporate director city services in consultation with the cabinet member.

#### 2. Councillor Fishleigh

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

# Brighton & Hove City Council

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

The area in question was an Elaeagnus hedge, which has gradually died out. The area is now between a cycle lane and the A259 road, and maintenance requires the closure of a lane on the A259, making it challenging and expensive.

I met with the General Manager following his appearance at Full Council and we talked about the options. One option would be to remove the hedge and tarmac over, but we agreed that that would be a shame, and I asked officers to explore further options. One solution we discussed was a continuation of the period iron railings that are in place further along the A259, although clearly that would be very challenging financially.

I have written to the hotel with an update, including the most viable options, and have asked for their view.

### **3. Councillor Fishleigh**

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Fishleigh, for your question regarding the proposed A259 Active Travel Scheme from Fourth Avenue to Wharf Road in Hove. This scheme is to be well designed to better consider the needs of pedestrians, accessibility including crossings, separate bi-directional cycle path and retaining two westbound traffic lanes for much of the route, unlike the previous design. To enable this scheme, the scheme relies on funding from central government.

Budget requirements for the scheme have been considered and set out in the Cabinet Report 27/06/24. This sets out how this capital scheme will be funded using both Active Travel Funding and Local Transport Plan Funding; and will apply across more than one financial year.

### **4. Councillor Fishleigh**

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Fishleigh, for your question raising concerns about anti-social behaviour in New Road. As you rightly indicate, this has been an ongoing concern for some time. We are therefore aware of the ongoing antisocial behaviour issues on New Road impacting local business,

# Brighton & Hove City Council

residents, and visitors to the city. Such anti-social behaviour is very difficult to attribute to the presence or absence of benches and it would be inappropriate to do so. Rather, it is important to evaluate and tackle the root cause of such behaviour.

Senior officers across highways, regeneration, community safety and culture have been working with the administration and external stakeholders, to consider plans for removal and replacement of the current benches. The benches will be removed in the coming months as they are at the end of their life. A proposal is currently being developed for this in line with discussions for greater enhancement of New Road, and the planned Royal Pavilion Garden redevelopment. These plans will also be discussed with Ward Cllrs imminently.

The planned enhancements to the public realm in and around Pavilion Gardens will improve the look and feel of this part of our city benefits nearby traders, businesses and residents.

## 5. Councillor Fishleigh

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

### **Reply from Cllr Muten, Cabinet Member – Transport, Parking and Public Realm / Rowkins**

Thank you, Cllr Fishleigh, for your question concerning the resurfacing of Rottingdean High Street and The Green in Rottingdean.

The Council prioritises capital maintenance spending following an asset management data-led approach. Based on the latest carriageway condition surveys and analysis, Rottingdean High Street is No. 105 on the capital carriageway priority list and The Green is No. 429.

We are in the process of finalising the programme for 2025/26 however, based on the latest analysis, other roads are a higher priority for carriageway treatment at this time and therefore these roads will not be treated in the immediate future.

The current capital budget for footways is circa £400k/year which is insufficient to carry out a city-wide footway renewal programme. For this reason, the budget is spent on a seek-and-fix programme which prioritises the worst sections of footway for treatment across the city. In anticipation of any future increase in funding, a full network footway condition survey has been completed and Rottingdean High Street is No. 2002 on the priority list. However, there is a S106 sum associated with the St Aubyns development site which has been identified for improvements within this area. Options for this scheme are still under development and will be shared with members once they are available.

## 6. Councillor Bagaen

# Brighton & Hove City Council

Interim roles in the Council's Housing Service

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

## **Reply from Cllr Sankey, Leader of the Council**

Delivery of affordable housing is a key priority for the council. We have a long history of successfully delivering council owned housing through our New Homes for Neighbourhoods and small sites programmes. In addition, Homes for Brighton and Hove, the council's partnership with Hyde Housing is committed to delivering 1,000 lower cost homes in the city with the first two schemes delivered and a further site identified.

The council will also review opportunities with private developers to see whether there are options for a viable affordable housing scheme. We actively look for a range of acquisition opportunities. We have the recent example of working with developers at the former St Aubyns School site in Rottingdean whereby the council is taking on the 21 affordable rented homes. The new interim Director of Housing Regeneration will look to build upon this work once in post.

## **7. Councillor Bagaen**

Devolution

Plans under consideration in Brighton and Hove as announced by the Leader of the Council could involve an elected mayor taking political charge of a bigger geographical area that includes our city and some neighbouring councils. I agree that devolved power to a real Greater Brighton rather than the illusion of what exists at the moment is an excellent step forward. I said as much in 2015

(<https://www.brightonchamber.co.uk/blog/%E2%80%98greater-brighton%E2%80%99-better-your-business>). How does this help rebuild democracy at the citizen level in our city with our citizens as key participants when their voices will be only a handful of many in a wider geographical footprint?

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

Devolution has the potential to unlock powers and funding that would drive economic growth and ensure that decisions are made closer to local people, communities and the businesses they affect. This potential for economic growth through locally devolved powers is the key to ensuring our citizens have a greater say and influence in driving the prosperity in our region. As we have set out in our Expression of Interest, we are keen that our approach to devolution will be resident-led and we will be engaging residents, businesses and local organisations, at the earliest opportunity, inviting them to inform and shape the process.

## **8. Councillor Bagaen**

Veolia Household Waste Recycling Site (HWRS) Hove

# Brighton & Hove City Council

Please detail all officer inspections of the Hove WRs Veolia facility since 1 January 2024

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

Members of the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Waste Team have visited Hove waste transfer station and household waste recycling site six times since 1 January 2024. All but one of these visits were unannounced inspections.

- 22/01/2024
- 16/02/2024
- 01/02/2024
- 14/03/2024
- 15/04/2024
- 14/08/2024

Most site visits are conducted by the ESCC Waste Team's Contract Monitoring Officer and the Contract Officer. These visits are typically unannounced and involve checking health and safety, site performance and compliance with site procedures, the environmental permit and the contract. ESCC officers also visit if asked, for example in response to a complaint from a member of the public.

Issues are always raised straightaway with Veolia management and progress with rectifying issues reviewed at the monthly contractor/client meeting. Veolia are proactive in reporting issues and provide a report for this meeting listing incidents recorded on their business management system. ESCC officers also meet periodically with the Environment Agency to discuss site compliance and the outcome of visits by their officers.

Performance is reported back to BHCC through regular reports to Waste Project Board, which consists of senior management from both local authorities. ESCC officers are also in regular contact with Cityclean management outside of board meetings to review operational matters.

### **9. Councillor Bagaen**

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

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

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

Since the approval of the Circular Economy Action Plan in 2020, several significant milestones have been achieved. The plan focuses on embedding circular principles across various sectors in the city. In the food and drink

## Brighton & Hove City Council

sector, the Brighton & Hove Food Strategy incorporates circular actions, promoting sustainability. In the built environment, all new housing builds and major projects now require a CE opportunities assessment and whole-life carbon assessment at the design stage, helping to reduce embodied carbon in council construction projects. Circular principles are also included in the Planning Sustainability Checklist, with ongoing efforts to review the City Plan to enhance CE outcomes through planning.

Business support has been strengthened through the Green Hub at the Business & Intellectual Property Centre offering carbon footprint reduction clinics, while the Shared Prosperity Fund supports the Net Zero 360 business training.

In terms of procurement, a new tool has been developed to strengthen environmental requirements in specifications and making this mandatory for certain procurements is being reviewed. Additionally, highways continue to trial preventative maintenance solutions, saving costs, carbon, and resources.

Furthermore, a second iteration of the Routemap and Action Plan is being developed, with a final draft expected by January 2025. This update will guide initiatives for the next five years.

### 10. Councillor Bagaeen

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

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

Thank you for your question, Cllr Bagaeen, regarding the Twitten connecting Woodland Drive to the north – south footpath that runs along the length of the Three-Cornered Copse.

I understand you are concerned about communication within the Council. The Twitten repair has highlighted several shortcomings concerning communication within the Council which as an administration, we are taking action to address - not least though new appointments, a major restructuring of the council in part to remove silo working, and our new governance model. The structural improvements within the council will see improvements in communication between teams. However, perhaps your question applies to how communication between elected members can be improved.

## Brighton & Hove City Council

I have recently undertaken a detailed review of all correspondence received by elected members regarding this matter. I wish to firstly thank you for being the first ward councillor or local resident to directly contact me, or any other elected member of the administration. specially to raise this matter when you did so with your written question to me at Full Council on 11th July 2024. Although there was previously a media request responded to with officers' assistance, the absence of any communication from ward councillors to elected members of the administration including myself regarding this closed twitten prior to July is noted.

Following your question in July, I took the opportunity to visit either end of the closed twitten and put some photos on social media. This helpfully generated some public response. I also discussed with Council officers and arranged a site meeting in Woodland Drive on the 28th August with a senior officer and the Leader of the Council Cllr Sankey. From this site visit we moved fast. I wrote to local residents on the 30th August 2024 asking for written confirmtion of continual use of this twitten by the public. Within one week, we had received some 80 responses confirming its long-term public as a well-loved twitten.

I then met with you and members of the Twitten Action Group on the 4th September in Woodland Drive. It became very clear that a local campaign had been set up and was active for many months, known to ward councillors but not directed to my attention. The engagement I have had with local residents has been very positive and helped facilitate rapid resolution of this matter. For this, I am very grateful to members of the Twitten Action Group, to the Friends of Three Cornered Copse and other local residents.

The Twitten Action Group kindly wrote to me to advise of a timeline of events that included all the engagement they have had with their local ward councillors and officers. On review of this timeline, the Council was forced to close the footpath in October 2023 because of a partially collapsed wall for public safety. The owner of the wall was unable to have it reinstated. Further legal issues were identified that needed resolution. It may be that ward councillors considered this a ward matter and dealt with officers accordingly. However, having taken such a time, it might be expedient for ward councillors to bring this matter to my attention sooner. With such strength of local opinion with the closure due to several issues as raised, including access rights; involving the elected members of the administration sooner would have helped drive the actions as taken over the past couple of months to reopen this twitten progressing sooner.

With the support of evidence provided to us by the local community, we made a legal order, confirming ths twitten as an official public footpath. By the 9th September, we established that this twitten, in demonstrable use by the public as a footpath since the 1930s, as now a formally designated Public Footpath. The first time in its history that this has been formally so. We know this new designation has been very welcomed by the local community.

During visits by council officers, it became clear other sections of a boundary wall were still at risk of collapse.

# Brighton & Hove City Council

So, following an inspection from an external structural engineer, we used powers under Section 78 of the Building Act to instruct contractors to undertake, clear the area and make it safe certain works. The Public Footpath was made safe and was opened on the 16th October 2024.

Having met with many residents, I particularly wish to thank the Twitten Action Group, Friends of Three Corner Copse and the many other local residents for their positive engagement as we have taken steps to reopen this popular and much loved twitten. Now with better interconnection within this community; might this also help bring better connections between elected members to resolve issues that most matter to residents sooner?

## 11. **Councillor McLeay**

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

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

Our information shows 13 properties registered for Council Tax in Zion Gardens.

Powers to gate or close a public highway due to anti-social behaviour are no longer sit under the Highway's Act, it now comes under the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) process. Further consultation with the police and community safety would therefore be necessary. However, Zion Gardens is not only a direct access route for properties but it has numerous fire exits on it and may be used to collect bins from the rear of properties on Queens Road.

## 12. **Councillor McLeay**

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

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

Because the Housing Strategy 2024-2029 is a wide ranging and high-level document, the consultation was intended to reach a broad cross section of residents and stakeholders. 85% of responses were from residents of the city - owner occupiers, private and social renters, and the homeless population. We also had responses from 53 local groups and organisations, many of them working with residents who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. We had detailed submissions from many individuals



# Brighton & Hove City Council

and organisations, drawing on personal experience or on that of their service users.

Going forward, we will create more opportunities for engagement with people who are homeless or who have experienced homelessness. We are about to begin work on the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. To do this we will work with a range of partners to review homelessness in the city, bringing in valuable expertise and experience of a wide a range of people. This will include people with lived experience of homelessness. As we bring forward proposals for new services or changes to service, we are also committed to consult and involve the people who use them.

## 13. **Councillor McLeay**

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

### **Reply from Cllr Robins, Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation**

We agreed to a request for filming in June 2024 and asked for a donation to the Resident's Association of £500, which was agreed. As the Residents Association did not have a bank account, the suggestion of the Communities Equalities team was that this money would be paid to the Council and held for them, until such time that they wanted to spend the funds.

## 14. **Councillor McLeay**

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

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

Yes [the letter could be subject to a freedom of information request]

## 15. **Councillor McLeay**

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

## Brighton & Hove City Council

worked towards – do you have a rough estimate of the financial cost for bringing this in-house?

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

As Cllr McLeay correctly states, paragraph 4.2 of the report, explains that the 'in-house' option was not recommended for the purposes of the pilot because of the lack of experience to provide this level of support at scale. The need to mobilise quickly and short-term nature of the pilot were also factors. However, it is reasonable to assume that an 'in-house' option would be likely to increase costs in the region of 20%-30%.

#### **16. Councillor McLeay**

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

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

In the report agreed at Cabinet on 27 June, paragraph 3.9 explains that the pilot will be evaluated across three parameters: (1) Cost; (2) Impact on payments to providers; (3) Quality of management & support.

The third of these will take into consideration satisfaction from residents. However, it should be born in mind that the success against this parameter would be determined by an improvement in resident satisfaction at the end of the pilot, in comparison with satisfaction levels prior to the pilot, and because this relates to temporary accommodation, many of those residents would have changed over the duration

#### **17. Councillor McLeay**

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

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

We will develop a satisfaction survey which we will make available to Emergency Accommodation residents both online and in paper form. We will survey those accommodated in the Emergency Accommodation pilot properties at 6 month intervals to track changes in satisfaction.

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## 18. Councillor Pickett

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

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

There are some locations where bins for Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) and glass have been replaced with the new bins for cartons and waste electricals. This has only happened in areas where those materials are collected at the kerbside. The focus has been on creating new opportunities to recycle items that cannot currently go into the kerbside collections.

The site near Withdean Stadium was frequently fly tipped which led to rubbish being spread across the area. This site receives regular cleaning from Street Cleansing 5 – 7 days per week but the service still received complaints regarding the cleanliness of the location. When a site visit was made, 2 out of 3 visitors used the site for textiles and electricals. To help reduce fly tip, the recycling bins for DMR and glass, which are already collected kerbside in the area, were removed. The site now has 1 cartons bin, 1 electronics bin and 2 clothes banks. Feedback from Street Cleansing is the site is better maintained and there is much less fly tip. However, the cartons bin needs more frequent emptying which Cityclean will discuss with the contractor who empties the bins.

We will continue to monitor these sites and make changes as necessary.

## 19. Councillor Pickett

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

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

At this point, we do not know what future funding may or may not be available from central government and how this may compare to previous allocations. However, I can say this council sees the ending of rough sleeping in the city as a priority and will continue to do so in future.

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## 20. Councillor Sykes

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Sykes, for your question regarding parking revenue figures for the 2023-24 financial year.

For the financial year ending 2023/24 Parking permit fees, both resident and visitor permits achieved a combined revenue of £10.7m. In the same period income from suspended bays achieved £1.3m, and net Penalty Charge Notice revenue from parking enforcement activities were £8.0m. Parking income for off-street parking achieved £8.9m and on-street parking achieved £12.3m.

## 21. Councillor Sykes

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Sykes, for your question regarding our plans to improve the crossing over Coldean Lane near the top of Ditchling Road.

The Council is liaising with the National Highways to bid for funding via the Access for All funding tranche which may include additional funding which could include funding for improvements to the existing pedestrian island at the top of Ditchling Road. These plans would improve accessibility and safety for all using this crossing.

## 22. Councillor Sykes

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Sykes, for your question on the Breeze up to the Downs.

Due to the very challenging financial circumstances handed to us when we took the administration last year, regrettably the 2024/25 budget had to commit to reducing the budget allocated to council-supported bus services.

# Brighton & Hove City Council

The Council identified its priorities for service support as education and disadvantaged communities.

Nonetheless, we recognised the value of the Breeze up to the Downs to our residents and actively pursued alternative funding that does not take from the Council's general fund and therefore does not diminish the important priorities in tackling inequalities in our city.

In Spring 2024, we moved promptly to establish £58,000 support for the 77, 78 and 79 "Breeze" services via BSIP funding with agreement from the Department of Transport (DfT). Whilst we presently understand the end of BSIP funding is 31st March 2025, we await further guidance from the DfT as to whether and how this might continue.

The Public Transport team have had extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders. This is to understand the full range of impacts of a loss of or reduction in these services, which we do not wish to see, and therefore are committed to secure longer term funding. We are exploring revising the Breeze up to the Downs Partnership – effectively disbanded in 2019/20 with no subsequent effort or priority by the previous administration to reestablish this valued partnership that enabled the success of the Breeze up the Downs bus services.

Furthermore, we are actively working with Brighton and Hove Buses and third-party funders to keep these Breeze Up the Downs services, carefully looking at their viability, sustainability and funding requirements to secure these services for the future. We understand that summer services for the 77 route is likely to be commercially viable and we are committed to actively find funding to support all these services to meet known demand. I have met with Brighton and Hove Buses to discuss options and officers are actively exploring viable options to secure funding to support less sustainable parts of this service. This will inform our next steps. I look forward to updating with positive news on the future of these services soon.

## **23. Councillor Sykes**

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

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

The Petition was debated by elected members in detail at Full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> March. The decision was taken to also refer the petition to the relevant Committee. Since that date the Council has moved to a Cabinet system and the Committee has been discontinued, and therefore that action has not been possible. The position in relation to the Council's approach was shared widely with residents shortly after the Full Council debate, including the briefing linked below.

[New approach for tackling weeds begins](#)

# Brighton & Hove City Council

Following committee approval, the first year of the glyphosate application will conclude in November and the outcome is being assessed.

Further updates can be found published in this addendum, in particular in relation to questions 25 and 30.

## 24. Councillor Sykes

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

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

Date from the annual permit performance report submitted to the Environment Agency indicate that the total use was:

- 2023: 373,403 litres
- 2022: 208,965 litres

Please note more fuel was consumed in 2023 because there was a major outage for planned maintenance that doesn't happen every year.

## 25. Councillor Sykes

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

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

When using glyphosate, the requirement to wear goggles and masks is only at the preparatory stage and not during application. The controlled droplet application used by the Council differs substantially from conventional methods. This application is applied in large, oil-based droplets released under gravity. It is not released under pressure and does not produce breathable droplets and therefore there is no requirement for Operatives to wear masks or goggles during application.

The contractor has significant experience in this field and has fully investigated any complaints relating to how the product is being applied. The communication between the Council and the Contractor has been excellent with daily updates between the Supervisors working on the ground and the Operations Managers within the Street Cleansing teams. Regular contract meetings have been held to discuss any issues and concerns. Therefore, I

# Brighton & Hove City Council

am assured the Contractor is applying the treatment within the manufacturers safety guidelines.

## 26. Councillor West

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

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

The council is exploring options for deployment of solar PV to accelerate progress towards net zero.

Any future solar farm development would not be *in place* of roof top deployment. Deploying solar at quickly and at scale will be crucial, not only so that our residents and businesses benefit from cleaner, cheaper electricity but also to help free up the grid capacity required as transport and heating become electrified in the coming years.

To date, Solar PV systems have been installed on approximately 760 council homes as well as 50 additional larger systems on communal housing blocks. There are current plans for an additional 400 PV systems to be installed on council homes (houses and bungalows) over the next two financial years with the generated electricity feeding directly to the residents supply, reducing their energy bills.

## 27. Councillor West

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

### **Reply from Cllr Robins, Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation**

# Brighton & Hove City Council

The mowing regime has not changed since we took over the administration. Where mowing has taken place outside of the planned timetable of cuts, it is due to errors by staff in the service.

The current mowing arrangements are part of a 3-year trial agreed by the former ETS Committee. This trial saw the number of cuts on grass verges each year reduced from 11 to 6. 2024 is the third and final year. As such, we will be reviewing to inform the approach for 2025.

The administration's intention is to balance the need to protect biodiversity with keeping the City tidy and to communicate to residents what they can expect with mowing regimes. Councillors have received a lot of feedback from residents about areas of long grass on our verges, much of it deemed to be negative. Councillors have requested a report for consideration at the December cabinet meeting, to include options on grass cutting going forward.

## **28. Councillor West**

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

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

It is a major milestone that the contractor has now been appointed for the first phase of the Terrace's restoration, with a start on site expected imminently. This project represents a serious financial commitment from the Council, supplemented by a substantial grant and donations from residents and businesses.

The first phase provides proof of concept and has attracted £750,000 of Historic England funding, which reflects their strong support for the project. This was mentioned in Parliament last week in the context of growing the UK's tourist economy through investment in our heritage. It is anticipated that a successful first phase will attract more funding for further phases from government funds, the Heritage Lottery Fund and others keen to invest in our city.

It is anticipated the project will have economic benefits to the city by enhancing the tourist offer, establishing a critical mass of attractions that will drive growth, especially in high value overnight stays. Management of the existing structure is dependent on the level of works deemed necessary to keep the structure safe - this cost varies from year to year. This is managed with existing capital budgets for maintenance of Council assets.



# Brighton & Hove City Council

## 29. Councillor West

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

### **Reply from Cllr Robins, Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation**

The specification for the replacement of the King Alfred Leisure Centre does not include facilities for diving. The facility-mix proposed for the new centre is derived from what is set out in the council's Sports Facilities Investment Plan (SFIP) 2021-31. This was informed by extensive public consultation, as well as working with specialist leisure consultants, Sport England and national governing bodies (including Swim England) to undertake modelling and analysis using a variety of supply and demand data and the spread of pool provision within a recommended drive time catchment area. There has also been frequent stakeholder engagement including the local swimming and aquatics clubs.

Throughout the process to develop the SFIP, and through more recent consultation relating to the King Alfred Development, demand for a diving facility (which has specific pool requirements) has not been strongly evidenced. The council's leisure operator Freedom Leisure and the local swimming clubs based in the city do offer an extensive programme of swimming and other aquatic disciplines, for example artistic swimming and water polo.

## 30. Councillor Hill

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

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

As this years' treatments come to an end, we are reviewing the approach taken, including how successful it has been. There has been lots of feedback that suggests that the situation is significantly improved, particularly in the wards from which most complaints originated in previous years. However, we are yet to review all of the information and so we will have a fuller picture soon. What is already clear though is that the wet weather we have had throughout the summer has both delayed progress of the treatment and exacerbated growth.

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## 31. Councillor Hill

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

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

The council provides over 720 units of supported accommodation for single people in Brighton & Hove. This will be a mixture of high-support, medium support and low-support. Typically, people will move from high to medium and then low, as part of a pathway towards living independently. However, people's journeys will vary, and the model we operate enables people to move into a higher type of support, if that's what best suits their circumstances.

## 32. Councillor Hill

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

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

The Expression of Interest we submitted at the end of September to government is in the public domain. These were published with the BHCC press release, both are available on our newsroom site here: [Expression of Interest in devolution submitted](#)

## 33. Councillor Hill

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

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

The implementation of a new city council governance framework gave the administration the opportunity to review all of its committee functions including overview and scrutiny committees and the Health and Wellbeing Board. Unlike the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the Health and Wellbeing Board is not a political committee as such but more of a Health and Care System leadership meeting, including significant delivery partners across the NHS and relevant key partners within the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector. Its governance relates to the Sussex Health and Care Assembly and includes responsibilities for oversight of the city's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and spend across the Better Care Fund. To further promote the board as a health and care system leadership forum and

## Brighton & Hove City Council

given that the HWB constitution does not require opposition membership, the decision was taken to remove opposition membership from the board and replace that with members from a broader spectrum of health and care representatives in the city. In acknowledgement of the importance of enabling cross-party discussions and scrutiny of significant health issues, the council has retained the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) alongside the People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

### 34. Councillor Hill

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Hill for your question concerning the success of the Lewes Road and London Road Red Routes introduced by this administration earlier this year.

The experimental traffic order red routes were funded by our Bus Service Improvement Plan (or BSIP). Therefore, the primary measure of success is the feedback from the bus company along with any eventual improvements to the bus journey times along these corridors. In addition, over the longer term we will also be monitoring air quality data, traffic flow data and road collision data to establish improvements in those areas also.

There is public consultation associated with each experimental traffic order red route. As a listening council, we will be reviewing feedback and comments from residents, business and visitors. This will include comments from different constituencies include local business owners and traders, community groups, residents, bus users, disability groups and representatives, cyclists and others.

### 35. Councillor Hill

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

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

East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS) were asked to submit projects for inclusion in the refreshed Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) in 2021. They identified a £50k need to upgrade/install “green wave” traffic signal technology at Hove, Preston Circus and Roeddean Fire stations. ESFRS will be invited to submit projects for inclusion in the next refresh of the IDP.

# Brighton & Hove City Council

When Cabinet considers the use of the circa £2.8 M citywide CIL pot in due course, this requirement will be considered as part of the £587 M of capital projects that were identified as needing investment across all public sector service provision across the city.

## 36. Councillor Hill

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

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

The organisation redesign consultation was launched on 23<sup>rd</sup> October. An equality impact assessment was published on the SharePoint site on 18<sup>th</sup> October. All those impacted and all council staff have access to this document, with a link available on the Wave. This is a live document and is helping inform how we are managing this significant organisational change. I am aware that our CEO, Jess Gibbons, who is leading this redesign of the council's paid service, has had lots of really useful feedback from staff and Trade Unions, that she will be considering in making the final decisions on the structure. This will include any feedback provided through the Equality Impact Assessment, as we strive to ensure that fairness and inclusivity are at the heart of all we do, including in how we manage change.

## 37. Councillor Hill

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

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

The council continues to assess the potential impact of VAT on private school fees both locally and regionally. To date the Council has not seen statistically significant levels of enquiries or applications due to this proposal however we will continue to monitor the situation and are aware that other areas have seen greater levels of enquiries than in Brighton and Hove. People will be aware that as a city we are having to address the impact of falling pupil numbers and have places available in the city's schools.

## 38. Councillor Shanks

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

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

# Brighton & Hove City Council

Following legal advice the approach and requirements for consultation were agreed, this was stated as a parent consultation at children, families and skills committee on 6<sup>th</sup> November. The approach to the consultation was discussed with Councillors and a parent consultation was held via a survey, e-mail inbox, parent meeting with officers and Councillors and the offer of individual meetings. Following the parent consultation changes to the proposed model were made.

## **39. Councillor Shanks**

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Shanks, for your question concerning Francis Street.

Having first visited Francis Street with you to better understand the traffic issues in September 2023 where we discussed much of the background and history, it soon became aware to me the persistent problem of traffic ignoring the signs on entering Francis Street that this is only for access and not a through road. Despite improvement measures to restore pavement access by prevent pavement parking, I understand from you, Cllr Shanks, that this problem of through traffic has persisted and not been resolved for over a decade. I have since met with officers to establish whether there are practical options to help resolve this.

The existing access restrictions, if adhered to, are in principle legally sufficient to resolve this. Because of the legal sufficiency of existing legal restrictions, there are no plans to change access in Francis Street. However, it is understood that the current Traffic Regulation Order and associated signage for this street is being ignored by some drivers. As Brighton and Hove City Council do not have moving traffic offences powers, the responsibility for enforcement against drivers breaking the law falls to Sussex Police.

Following my visits, I have discussed with officers other more innovative options such as ANPR number plate recognition. Presently, Brighton and Hove City Council do not have moving traffic offences enforcement powers.

Due to the access requirements of both residents and businesses, a lockable or access only barrier is not considered suitable and the road layouts of both Ditchling Road and London Road do not allow for further changes to the junctions to discourage drivers from using the road unless necessary.

The council does carry out enforcement of illegal parking and the area is visited regularly by our Civil enforcement officers. We have arranged for the area patrols to be increased; and will highlight this to Sussex Police to see

# Brighton & Hove City Council

what further can be done to prevent drivers illegally using Francis Street as a through route.

## 40. Councillor Shanks

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

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

The DfE estimates that there is currently sufficient early years provision in Brighton & Hove to meet parental demand for the newly expanded early years entitlements.

It also estimates that across Brighton & Hove an additional 92 places will be needed by September 2025 when the offer increases to 30 hours a week. This is a 3% increase in the estimated supply of childcare hours for two-year-olds and under.

To produce this data the DfE uses childcare supply data from Ofsted publications, both the bi-annual official statistics publication and the bi-annual management information releases. Since this data was produced four new nurseries have opened in the city (not including Bright Start Nursery at Turner Children's Centre which replaced provision at the Old Slipper Baths). These four new nurseries may provide the additional 92 places needed for September 2025. A number of nurseries are also planning to increase their baby places through our early years capital offer.

Childcare availability is also dependent on sufficient staffing as well as nursery space; the data above is a snapshot which will change over the coming months.

## 41. Councillor Shanks

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

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

The decision to relocate Brightstart Nursery to Turner Family Hub was taken at Children, Families & Schools Committee 6 November 2023.

The property has been identified as a possible development site as it is surplus to the council's operational requirements. Officers have begun discussions with a view to obtaining vacant possession of the property. There is not yet a certain timeframe as to when this might be achieved. Options for the development or disposal of the site have not yet been

## Brighton & Hove City Council

presented to Cabinet and therefore a decision as to its future use has not yet been made.

### 42. Councillor Shanks

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

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

The property has been identified as a possible development site as it is surplus to the council's operational requirements. Officers have begun discussions with a view to obtaining vacant possession of the property. There is not yet a certain timeframe as to when this might be achieved. Options for the development or disposal of the site have not yet been presented to Cabinet and therefore a decision as to its future use has not yet been made.

### 43. Councillor Goldsmith

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Goldsmith, for your question regarding cycle hangars. We successfully installed 150 cycle hangars across the City – committing all of the available budget for this scheme. These are being managed externally. Although there is no available budget or current plans to install any further cycle hangars at this time due to severe budgetary constraints, we are aware that there are parts of the city where demand for cycle hangars is high – outstripping the available supply. Therefore, we will keep this under review and look at options in the future when the budget provides more opportunity to do so.

### 44. Councillor Goldsmith

I'm pleased to see planning permission has been applied for, to reconstruct a further number of arches along the seafront. A number of current tenants are concerned that their businesses will not be able to return to their arches once the works have been completed. Can the administration provide any

## Brighton & Hove City Council

reassurance that current businesses – many of whom have been trading there for years – will be given a priority when it comes to leasing out the restored arches?

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

The majority of tenants who currently occupy the arches within Phase 4 and Phase 5 of the A259 strengthening works have been given an option to return to the new units. However, within Phase 5 there are a few exceptions to this where the current business occupies a small kiosk style unit. The new layout of the arches is a change to the existing and will provide improved indoor space which will comply with modern day Building Regulations. As a result, these kiosks will no longer exist so there will be no new premises for these tenants to return to.

#### **45. Councillor Goldsmith**

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

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

Thank you, Councillor Goldsmith, for your question regarding many companies choosing to use Brighton & Hove as a filming location. This demonstrates confidence in our city and helps celebrate the vibrancy of our communities. However, it is important that any permission to film considers carefully the impact on residents; which should be minimised and courteous to residents' needs.

This is why officers in our Parking Services work closely with production crews to mitigate impacts, this includes limiting the numbers of bays suspended, increased noticed periods and letter drops from companies. All crews are expected to provide alternative parking for residents impacted, which does involve car parks. All large-scale suspensions come to named officers who help manage the project with the crews in question.

However, following a busy year for filming in our City, we are mindful that we need to consider residents further in future planning. This is why our Council's Parking Services met with Events and Brighton Film Office last month. We are producing a filming charter which will outline what is expected of crews and what parking can offer. This will sit on our website and the 'Events App' when it comes into effect. This will further ensure that crews understand their obligations to residents and Brighton & Hove City



# Brighton & Hove City Council

Council when filming in Brighton and Hove and residents' interests are served well.

## 46. Councillor Goldsmith

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

### **Reply from Cllr Robins, Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation**

A register like this would be very useful and would be something the council and the Sussex Film Office would be happy to consider putting together.

## 47. Councillor Goldsmith

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

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

The EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) team conducted an options appraisal paper that explored ideas for LGBTQ+ venue protection, promotion, and support. The paper examined how other cities with significant LGBTQ+ populations have provided support to their respective sectors, and identified seven potential options for consideration.

The Lead Member for Equality has discussed these options and their implications with the Policy Chairs Board, and has provided guidance on the specific options that officers should pursue. It's important to note that the options that have been discussed and agreed upon as deliverable would require the identification of additional budget resources before they can be implemented.

Discussions are currently underway with service heads and relevant teams to explore and potentially adopt these options, where possible. This comprehensive approach aims to ensure that the identified support measures can be effectively implemented to benefit the local LGBTQ+ communities.

## 48. Councillor Goldsmith

Despite a 20mph speed limit being in place along Upper North Street, Montpelier Terrace, and Montpelier Place, people often speed along this stretch of road, making it more dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, and

## Brighton & Hove City Council

drivers entering the road from any of the adjoining streets. I've been informed that the police do not have the resources to fine drivers, so will the administration look into what can be done to ensure drivers on this stretch of road actually stick to the speed limit?

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

Thank you, Councillor Goldsmith, for your question concerning traffic speeds in Upper North Street, Montpelier Terrace, and Montpelier Place.

This area is listed on the Council's Safer, Better Streets programme which assesses requests and identifies priorities based on a series of agreed assessment criteria including speed and collisions. It is anticipated the priority list will be presented to Cabinet Members in December.

Furthermore, we have consulted residents on improvements to the Upper North Street / Dyke Road junction.

We continue to work with Sussex Police who, unlike the Council, have moving traffic offences powers, and will advise them of your question to determine what further action they plan to enforce existing 20 MPH speed limit in this area.

#### **49. Councillor Mc Nair**

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

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

Thank you, Councillor McNair, for your question concerning flood defences in Warmdene Road, Winfield Avenue, Dale Drive, Patcham Old Village and other places across the city.

The properties in Patcham Old Village (2016), Warmdene Road (2019) and Dale Drive (2019) were provided with property level protection measures. Since this intervention there have not been any reports of internal flooding to the properties. There is a known groundwater flooding risk in this part of Patcham when groundwater levels are very high (following the 2000 flood event; with elevated groundwater table levels triggering the response protocol in 2014. With the groundwater table trigger levels and our response plan in place, there are no additional measures or further flood defence works planned at this location.

Winfield Avenue will be included in the Citywide Surface Water management feasibility study which will begin in the week commencing 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024, following the tender process. This study will deliver an appropriate risk-based assessment of the areas around the city where flood prevention and

# Brighton & Hove City Council

drainage improvement works will be required determined using this risk-based approach. This study will enable the identification of what funding will be needed to improve the drainage of surface water. At this stage prior to this study commencing, I cannot provide an indication of when a solution will be found, but it is being treated as a priority. We are a data-led and listening council and will apply the findings from this assessment to protect communities.

## 50. Councillor McNair

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

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

I have requested that a team visits this location and have been assured that it will be done shortly. Please feel free to email me any time with specific requests and I will action them straight away.

## 51. Councillor McNair

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

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

Before the units are renovated, there will be a consultation with residents on their use. This is scheduled for early 2025.

## 52. Councillor Meadows

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

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

The camera at Birchgrove Crescent has been sent away for repair. We are working with contractors to get an installment date and let residents know once the date is confirmed.

## 53. Councillor McNair

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

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

## Brighton & Hove City Council

Orchid View is on the list to be looked at as a site for CCTV on the next move which should be December/January.

### 54. Councillor Meadows

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Meadows, for your question regarding the new crossing on Winfield Avenue.

The crossing on Winfield Avenue is part of the Safer, Better Streets programme of works and is being developed with support of Section 106 funding. We have procured the construction contractor who is planning construction to start in February 2025, subject to weather and permit applications etc. It am therefore pleased to report that crossing will be delivered early next year, providing a safer and better crossing on Winfield Avenue for the community.

### 55. Councillor Theobald

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Theobald, for your question regarding Carden Hill road surface.

Regrettably, after 14 years of Tory government underfunding under, public funds for road maintenance, pothole repairs and other services and stripped bare. However, despite this targeted underfunding of public services, as an administration, we are working hard to maintain and improve our roads, with a major programme of resurfacing, patching and pothole repairs being undertaken in 2024.

Carden Hill is No. 686 on the priority list for capital investment. The budget for 2024-25 has already been committed and we are in the process of finalising the programme for 2025-26 following an asset management data-led approach. Based on the analysis, there are other roads that are higher on the priority list and therefore in more urgent need of treatment and so Carden Hill will not be treated in the immediate future.

All roads in the City are inspected routinely to maintain safety. During an inspection, any investigation level safety defects (greater than a 40mm abrupt level difference) will be risk assessed and actioned for repair as appropriate. During an inspection, if a Highway Inspector identifies a road that is deteriorating faster than anticipated, they may also raise a condition

## Brighton & Hove City Council

report. Condition reports are considered as part of the prioritisation approach. We will continue to monitor the condition of this road via our routine safety inspection regime and our annual condition surveys and should the condition change then action will be considered as appropriate.

### 56. Councillor Theobald

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

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

The Council has historically depended on donations for most park benches. This service was put on hold because of the difference between donation fees agreed by committee, the actual cost of installing the benches and the difficulty in meeting the demand for particular sites where benches were needed. The Council is reviewing how we manage donations for parks going forward with the hope to be able to reintroduce this service. Benches in the Peace Garden would then depend on the willingness of the public to donate.

### 57. Councillor Hogan

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

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

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide data on the number of missed assisted collections due to limitations with the software. Whilst data relating to missed collections is recorded it does not detail if the householder has an assisted collection. Cityclean are in the process of introducing a new system which includes in-cab technology and once in place it will highlight an assisted collection to the Driver in real time and will provide data on any missed assisted collections.

In the meantime, when there are new assisted collections, a memo is prepared every week with the details of the location to remind crews of the new assisted collection. This stays in place for the first few weeks until crew are familiar with the collection. The contact centre team notify Operations daily of any Assisted Collections issues that have been raised through email or telephone. In addition, a new Assisted Collection 'Champion' has been appointed within the Contact Centre Team and any issues raised through the contact centre is followed up with the Operations Management team to ensure issues are addressed.

### 58. Councillor Meadows

The new Stanmer Heights playground near the Gathering Place is much smaller than the previous design and unlikely to attract teenagers. When

## Brighton & Hove City Council

will improvements be made to it to give children of all ages better equipment?

### **Reply from Cllr Robins, Cabinet Member – Sports & Recreation**

Stanmer Heights play area was transformed to an area for children to have quiet time and roleplay, following the extensive refurbishment of Brighton's largest play space at Carden Park, which is located immediately next to Stanmer Heights. Carden Park play area has an adventure playground, MUGA, Outdoor Gym and accessible play space for children of all ages and abilities.

### **59. Councillor Lyons**

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

### **Reply from Cllr Alexander, Cabinet Member – Culture, Heritage & Tourism**

The Tagging Reduction Action Plan is now in place which outlines an action plan including our steps to take forward street art to support the reduction in unauthorised graffiti/tagging. As part of this was an action to explore the options for identifying sites for street art and mechanisms to manage sites with a target date of January 2025. We are currently establishing a mural programme which would tackle problem areas in the city and have established a Street Art working group with councillors to take forward. This will follow the adopted Public Art strategy and engage local artists in creating new works in problem areas. Officers have been in conversations with other cities, such as Bristol and Glasgow, to build on experiences elsewhere around effective and sustainable street art programmes.

### **60. Councillor Lyons**

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

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

Thank you, Cllr Lyons, for your request for consultation with residents for parking restrictions in Hill Brow in Hove.

Hill Brow is currently within the existing Zone P residents' parking scheme. Permits are required Monday to Friday to park between the hours of 9 -10 am and 1 – 2 pm following the outcome from public consultation in 2018.

Should residents seek changes to existing parking restrictions, they can contact officers in the Parking Design & Implementation team outlining the change they would like to see and the reason for this.