

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cabinet

Agenda Item 128(b)

Subject: Public Questions

Date of meeting: 23 January 2025

A period of not more than thirty minutes shall be allowed at each ordinary meeting for questions submitted by a member of the public.

The following written questions have been received from members of the public:

(1) Preventing and tackling violence against women and girls, domestic abuse, and sexual violence – Brighton & Hove City Council’s strategy 2025-2028 – Clare B Dimyon

When "Violence Against Women and Girls" (female) is recognised by international treaties* (UN 1993, Council of Europe - Istanbul 2013 & Dublin 2022) to be a phenomenon of specifically male violence, as is reflected in UK and other government data globally, across two decades, and in the context of 97-98% opposite-sex [50] orientation (ONS Census 2021), upon what evidence does Brighton & Hove City Council (agents and officers), rely in terms of liability, for the hypothesis that the sexual offending of transgender & nonbinary males (transwomen), is, as low or lower than that of the female population (not excluding transmen).

(2) Preventing and tackling violence against women and girls, domestic abuse, and sexual violence – Brighton & Hove City Council’s strategy 2025-2028 – Allison Hooper

Over 500 women have so far signed an Open Letter on sexual violence support for women in B&H and surrounding areas. The letter raised serious concerns about the withdrawal or absence of female-only services for survivors of sexual violence and domestic abuse. Can the council confirm to me today that its VAWG Strategy will be amended to ensure female-only services are reinstated as soon as possible and made available to any female survivor who needs them?

(3) Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit Version 5– Adrian Hart

How will the Toolkit V5 prevent the classroom to clinic pipeline that has developed across the city (something highlighted in the recent High Court case launched by a Brighton parent against the NHS and which began with a child being socially transitioned in a local secondary school)? I’m sure Cabinet will want to reassure parents that the activist organisation Allsorts Youth Project will cease its activities inside schools in facilitating this pipeline.

(4) Preventing and tackling violence against women and girls, domestic abuse, and sexual violence – Brighton & Hove City Council’s strategy 2025-2028 – Naomi Bos

In 2021, Rise Up! submitted a petition with over 30,000 signatures to the Council, highlighting public distress at Brighton's home grown specialist domestic abuse charity being decommissioned and services handed over to national generic providers. Subsequently we worked with a cross-party working group to address these failures. However, our requests to be included in the 'lived-experience' board and the City's VAWG Forum have gone unanswered. We seek assurance that there will be a transparent process allowing stakeholder organisations to apply for membership of the new Oversight Board, rather than being privately selected. Will this Board have room for the input of engaged and established volunteer-run survivors' groups and the victim-survivors that they represent and will we be invited?

(5) Preventing and tackling violence against women and girls, domestic abuse, and sexual violence – Brighton & Hove City Council's strategy 2025-2028 – Gail Gray

The Pan Sussex Domestic Abuse accommodation and support strategy identified a shortfall of 14 Refuge spaces for women and children. How does the Council intend to fill this gap in provision?

(6) Park & Ride– James Taylor

One of the stated aims of the park and ride scheme is to reduce city centre congestion. Clearly this can only be achieved if drivers choose to use the park and ride scheme, instead of driving to the city centre car parks, but there is no mention of the trial park and ride spaces replacing existing city centre parking spaces. Combine this with the recent reduction in city centre parking charges and there is no incentive for drivers to choose the slightly less convenient park and ride option. If the trial scheme is unpopular for the reasons stated, how will this be considered when making a decision on a permanent scheme?