

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Cabinet

## Agenda Item 189(a)

**Subject: Member Questions**

**Date of meeting: 24 April 2025**

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

The following written questions have been received from Members:

**(1) Councillor Fishleigh- Local Transport Capital Programme 2025/26**

In the Indicative Capital Planned Maintenance Programme for 2025/6, it proposes a Surface Extension – Micro-asphalt of the A259 between Roedean Road and Rottingdean High Street. Rottingdean High Street itself is in a much worse state than this section of road. Please would you explain why this major through road from the A27 to the coast hasn't been included in the programme for this financial year?

**(2) Councillor Fishleigh – Local Transport Capital Programme 2025/26**

Please would you explain the £748k allocated to Valley Gardens 3 in the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 25/26, what is it match funding and is this money in addition to the £5m loan and £1.8m allocated by BHCC?

**(3) Councillor Fishleigh- Local Transport Capital Programme 2025/26**

Why hasn't any money been allocated to improving safety for walkers and people on wheels on the undercliff? In January I submitted a document prepared by local groups to Councillor Muten which suggests a number of measures that would improve the tense situation down there

**(4) Councillor Fishleigh- Local Transport Capital Programme 2025/26**

Why does BHCC need to spend any money on bike hire facilities? Isn't this the responsibility of Beryl Bikes?

**(5) Councillor Meadows- Capital Asset Strategy**

Why can't all councillors view part 2 papers? These involve commercially sensitive details but without sight of them, how can councillors represent their residents? Councillors used to be able access these papers. We may not be part of Cabinet but how can we be a part of decision making in this

council without access to part two papers. We are elected members too and some of these decisions may have to come to council for example.

**(6) Councillor McNair- Capital Asset Strategy**

Which urban fringe sites (para 3.6) are likely to be built on first?

**(7) Councillor Meadows- Capital Asset Strategy**

Are there any urban fringe sites not allocated in City Plan part 2 which the administration is interested in developing?

**(8) Councillor Meadows- Capital Asset Strategy**

Can the council reassure residents that no parks or school playing fields will be developed for housing?

**(9) Councillor McNair- Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 25/26**

As one of the major routes in Patcham & Hollingbury, and a bus route, Carden Hill is also one of the roads most in need of resurfacing in the city. Will Carden Hill be resurfaced completely in 2025/26?

**(10) Councillor McNair- Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 25/26**

Across Patcham & Hollingbury, dozens of properties flood many times per year, partly because of blocked drains but also through badly thought-through development such as Patcham Court Farm. Why is only £100,000 being spent on drainage when £150,000 is being spent on dropped kerbs?

**(11) Councillor McNair- Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 25/26**

Regarding heritage assets (para 3.6), the 400-year-old Patcham dovecote (grade II listed) and Patcham clocktower are both suffering serious decay. Are there any immediate plans to ensure these important and rare structures are safeguarded for future generations?

**(12) Councillor Meadows- Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 25/26**

We need to make Winfield Avenue speed hump into a school crossing so why can't we put white lines on the hump to indicate to drivers it is a crossing? Drivers do not see the tactile paving so do not slow down or stop.

**(13) Councillor Meadows- Transfer or Adult Social Care Learning Disability Services**

You are outsourcing four more Learning Disability group homes and transferring staff. How many more group homes for those with a learning disability are there left to outsource? And will the council monitor the situation as these are our most vulnerable residents and private providers may not have their best interest at heart?

**(14) Councillor Pickett- Capital Asset Strategy**

Your Capital Asset Strategy has been set up to identify assets that can be used or sold to shore up capital receipts for the council's innovation fund and capital investment fund. My particular concern at this point is the future of the Downland Estate, much of which is part of the National Park. I understand your consideration for rationalism, but would you not agree that land and in particular, land in the Southeast, is always going to be at a premium price financially. In light of the number of councils around the country falling bankrupt wouldn't it be prudent to secure these assets for future generations should the city once again find itself in this dire financial situation? Can you assure residents that it is not your intention to sell off our Downland Estate for short term and short-sighted gain?

**(15) Councillor Pickett- Transfer or Adult Social Care Learning Disability Services**

With regard to the procurement exercise to appoint new providers to take over the 3 residential care homes including Preston Drove, Leicester Villas and Windlesham Road, and the supported living service at Burwash Lodge, whilst I am sure the council will do its utmost to appoint providers to provide the best care such finances can buy, how can we be sure that this maximisation of efficiencies will really provide the residents with the same or better care than they already receive? I have a particular interest in Preston drove care home where I have had relatives contact me. They are very complimentary of the current in-house service and are worried that any change in provider will down-grade the service as they have experienced elsewhere. Can you please give these residents some assurance that this will not happen and if it does what will be the plan to rectify it?

**(16) Councillor West- Capital Asset Strategy**

3.8 of the report lists four properties identified for disposal. However, it is clear from the text that these are only some of the properties identified, with others hidden from public and opposition in part 2 under the guise that they are regarded commercially sensitive. In this now typically thin public report, no rationale is offered as to why the four properties listed have been identified. The suggestion being that this detailed information, along with all details of the other properties, is also being kept from us - why is that? How are the public and opposition councillors to know what publicly owned assets are to be disposed of, and why that might be regarded as a good idea?

**(17) Councillor West- Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 25/26**

It is welcome to see that two sections of Ditchling Road and Fiveways are listed in Appendix 1 for resurfacing, and it is appreciated that the cabinet member has listened to Green ward councillors concerns about the urgent need for this. While many residents will welcome inclusion of their streets, I cannot however understand the rationale whereby so many lightly used

roads, including short cul-de-sacs, are to be improved while busy bus routes, that are in no better condition than farm tracks, for example Carden Hill, remain overlooked. Given the scale of public funding being committed here, does the cabinet member agree that detail of the rationale behind each proposed improvement should have been included in appendix 1 so that the public would be able to see how the prioritisation choices have been arrived at?

**(18) Councillor West- Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 25/26**

3.12 notes that the council receives around 200 enquiries about pot holes every week - that is over 10,000 a year! Can the cabinet member say how many of these complaints are about the impact pot-holes are having upon road safety and damage to vehicles? Can we have a breakdown of this including insurance claims being made against the council for vehicle repairs, and injuries?

**(19) Councillor West- Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 25/26**

3.13 notes that the estimated backlog for maintenance of roads is £57m and £39m for footways, and further states that to prevent further decline of these assets alone requires an estimated budget of £8.45m. The sum committed by the Labour administration to highway maintenance given in table 1 is however just £5.283m, far less than what is needed just to stem the decline, let alone address the backlog. Does the cabinet member agree that the Government funding is woefully inadequate, and that if the Government is to be believed in its pledge to “fix the foundations”, then it needs to make a serious commitment to increase in funding so that all our roads and footways will be properly restored by the end of this parliament?

**(20) Councillor West- Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 25/26**

6.2 reminds us of the recently announced distrustful new terms Government has set out for councils to receive road maintenance funding, including the need to report details of pot-hole filling progress in order to access the final 25% of promised funds. Given the Government funding falls way short of what is required to properly fix our highways, does the cabinet member agree that the additional administrative burden of having to list the pot-holes that have been filled is an unwelcome and pointless expense that will merely detract from getting the job done. And, does the cabinet member also agree that instead of setting up more hoops for councils to jump through, the Government needs to instead increase the funding so we can get on with the task of ensuring roads are safe to use and more cost effective to maintain?

**(21) Councillor Hill- Transfer or Adult Social Care Learning Disability Services**

The document states that ‘Some families are keen to be involved in the evaluation and selection of the new provider/s and they have been asked to identify any particular requirements that they would expect of a potential

provider and a small number of family members will develop and evaluate a question for bidders.' If bids received do not meet the family's expectations in their evaluation, will you keep the care home provision in house? Do you believe that families feel sufficiently involved as desired in the selection process?

**(22) Councillor Hill- Transfer or Adult Social Care Learning Disability Services**

How do you intend to achieve the £400,000 saving?

