

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cabinet

Agenda Item 6(a)

Subject: Member Questions

Date of meeting: 26 June 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 Hill- Drug and Alcohol Strategy

How do cuts to the Sussex ICB funding as well as our own public health affect the ability to carry out this strategy?

(2) Councillor Hill- Drug and Alcohol Strategy

Does the Cabinet consider the criminalisation of cannabis possession in particular to be of beneficial to the 'harm reduction' which the strategy alludes to? I feel this causes far more harm and the priority should be on tackling county lines and working with Sussex Police on that

(3) Councillor Hill- Drug and Alcohol Strategy

Earlier this year, Glasgow has opened a safer drug consumption facility which reduces HIV transmission and the likelihood for death by overdose. This has worked in places like Switzerland for many years. Would you agree that it is a shame that consideration was not given to this in the strategy?

(4) Councillor Meadows- Playing Pitch Strategy

It is disappointing to see Patcham Place cricket pavilion deteriorate to the point of closure due to vandalism. It is an important part of Brighton heritage. Only last year, the cricket season was almost cancelled because of the closure of the pavilion, possibly the first time in 70 years. Therefore, we are pleased to see the intention to invest in Horsdean, Braypool and especially Patcham Place recreation grounds and sports facilities. What is the predicted timescale for Patcham Place pavilion to be renovated?

(5) Councillor McNair- Targeted Budget Management

30/55 schools had deficits in 2024/25. How many schools are expected to be in deficit next year?

(6) Councillor McNair- Targeted Budget Management

Are all schools on track to complete their recovery plans? If not, why not?

(7) Councillor McNair- Targeted Budget Management

Is there an expectation that no schools should be in deficit? If so, when is this expected to be achieved?

(8) Councillor Meadows- Targeted Budget Management

As happened with West Hove Primary School, will Woodingdean Primary School be offered a support package to encourage it not to become an academy?

(9) Councillor Sykes- Targeted Budget Management

The 2023-24 TBM provisional outturn reported a £0.296m overspend under Cityclean due to 'increased vehicle costs within fleet due to purchased vehicle delays and recent sabotage'. This year the 2024-5 provisional outturn reports a £1.527m overspend under newly-named Environmental Services due to 'Overspend on Refuse /Recycling collection vehicle hire in addition to ongoing maintenance charges and other vehicle costs in keeping an ageing fleet operational.' This is a massive and increased overspend. Does the Finance Lead expect this item to be better controlled in the new financial year?

(10) Councillor Sykes- Targeted Budget Management

The provisional outturn for Temporary Accommodation this year (£9178k) compared with last year (£4281k) evidently shows a massive increase, well over a budget for these costs that was itself doubled. What modelling has the Finance Lead done to understand the impact of the housing crisis on council finances over the next years?

(11) Councillor McLeay- Response to the Short Term Lets Task & Finish Group Recommendations

For the recommendations that are not reliant on a change in legislation – how soon could these recommendations be implemented? What timeline are you working to?

(12) Councillor McLeay- Drug and Alcohol Strategy

How will this new strategy support front line workers leading recovery programmes? Where organisations like the YMCA and St Mungo's come under fire for their housing facilities attracting ASB in communities, how will this strategy factor in the challenges they and their residents face – especially when service budgets are under pressure?

(13) Councillor McLeay- Drug and Alcohol Strategy

Where police resource is already at a critically low point across the city, with less officers on duty on any given day/night compared to previous years, what scope is there to improve cross agency working? Especially where communities feel nothing happens despite consistent reporting.

(14) Councillor McLeay- Drug and Alcohol Strategy

The arguments for legalising and regulating drugs such as cannabis have been discussed for decades. The 'War on Drugs' approach has failed on all meaningful measures. This generational failure is driving a process of cannabis reform worldwide. What is the cabinet's stance on pushing for legalisation reform for drugs like cannabis?

(15) Councillor McLeay- Drug and Alcohol Strategy

Cities are on the frontline of both the failings of the war on drugs and the debate around alternatives. Would Brighton & Hove City Council be willing to work with cities like Amsterdam to support a new network of cities innovating drug policy?

