

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 39

Subject: Written questions from Councillors

Date of meeting: 13 October 2025

Report of: Director of Governance & Law

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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 answers detailed in a further addendum:

1. Councillor Hill asked:

Residents in my ward on Springfield Road have complained about noise from filming in the early hours of the morning and removal of parking spaces. Added to this has been what they consider insufficient notice and a consultation with residents on this. Would the administration consider changing its policies around this and offer an apology to those affected on Springfield Road?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport and City Infrastructure

2. Councillor Hill asked:

The Clocktower Sanctuary told me Young homeless people in the city under 25 lack specific emergency accommodation. Young people at the sanctuary told me they have been endangered by this. While young people specific accommodation exists for temporary accommodation, would it be sensible to acquire something similar in the context of rising need in both emergency and temporary accommodation?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing

3. Councillor West asked:

The unpatriotic 'raising the colours' campaign is leading to an increasing number of unauthorised national flags being attached to street furniture in Brighton and Hove. Many people in the community recognise the nativist, racist, motivations behind this and feel intimidated and offended. I am pleased that the council recognised this and are making efforts to remove these offending articles. I understand that on occasions contractors attempting to

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remove flags have received abuse, also that in some cases the flags have been swiftly replaced by perpetrators. I am deeply concerned that the council does not allow the phenomenon to become established and normalised. What additional resources are the administration planning to allocate to swiftly clampdown on the appearance of unauthorised flags?

Reply from Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Public Realm

4. Councillor West asked:

In a recent media release Councillor Rowkins celebrates the introduction of plastic Pots, Tubs and Trays recycling by the administration. Looking at the list of plastic items collected for recycling, which includes prepared vegetable and fruit trays, soup and pasta sauce pots, ready meal bowls and pastry trays, I am mindful that all these items are either unnecessary packaging and or can be made of metal, glass or plant-based alternatives. The question then arises whether offering to recycle these single use plastic items is just aiding and abetting the perpetuation of their manufacture and use. Moreover, given the energy required to collect, separate, transport and re-process these low grade plastic materials, is it even sustainable to do so? Just because an item can be recycled doesn't necessarily make it a good idea. Will Rowkins shift focus to promoting waste reduction and the use of non-plastic packaging?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services

5. Councillor Shanks asked:

In December 2024 the council appointed a third party company New Timber, to work with city parks in order to undertake rapid reinstatement of damaged green spaces following use by outdoor events. Can the council therefore list the reinstatement fees and bonds each event has paid since the new policy was introduced in December 2024 and where those funds are being held?

Reply from Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries

6. Councillor Shanks asked:

Regarding Valley Gardens, can the council confirm when the reinstatement of the grassed areas will take place and give precise details of the nature of the work and a breakdown of the costs? Is the council liable for any shortfalls or will event organisers meet additional charges? Will any underspend be retained by city parks or returned to the event organisers?

Reply from Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries

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7. Councillor Sykes asked:

In previous responses about Palmeira Square, the administration have referred to the development of a memorial policy under the auspices of the forthcoming Events Strategy, whose draft earlier this year had no mention of a memorial policy in it. Would a public space memorial policy not sit better under our Parks and Open Spaces strategy, which is due for renewal by 2027? Please update on progress of the memorial policy.

Reply from Councillor Miller, Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage and Tourism

8. Councillor Sykes asked:

Will the administration work with ward councillors to seek better protection from utility company contractors, for curtilage infrastructure in our nationally-important heritage streets and squares?

Reply from Councillor Miller, Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage and Tourism

9. Councillor McLeay asked:

Leeds City Council offers up to 40% discretionary business rate relief—capped at £15,000 per business—for those delivering social or civic value, such as employing local people, paying the living wage, or supporting environmental goals. Could Brighton & Hove City Council consider introducing a similar scheme to support independent businesses, particularly those demonstrating social value and financial need?

Reply from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance and City Regeneration

10. Councillor McLeay asked:

The government intends to permanently lower rates for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) relief properties from 2026–27. Given this, is Brighton & Hove City Council currently collecting any data or evidence on the local impact of recent business rate changes? If not, could councillors request that such data be gathered to better understand how local traders are being affected and to inform future policy decisions?

Reply from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance and City Regeneration

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11. Councillor Lademacher asked:

Residents placed in temporary accommodation managed by Baron Homes have reported experiencing poor living conditions that may pose risks to health and safety. These concerns include issues such as mould, ceiling damage, rodent activity, leaks, structural defects, and potential fire safety breaches. There are also reports of delays in addressing urgent and emergency repairs. What immediate steps is the Council taking to investigate these concerns and ensure Baron Homes meets its responsibilities to provide safe and habitable accommodation?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing

12. Councillor Pickett asked:

Now that we are at the end of the 'educate and inform' year, whereby it was decided that fines for those ignoring the city's Smoke Control Areas would be commuted, will the administration move on from issuing warnings and restart fining those people, intent on burning solid fuels that poison the city's air?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services

13. Councillor Pickett asked:

How are housing complaints made by telephone, email or in person logged, and are they recorded as formal complaints and included in the totals reported to councillors? If a resident uses a route other than the webform, what is the standard process to ensure it is captured, acknowledged and progressed?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing

14. Councillor Goldsmith asked:

Is there a clear desire and commitment to improve housing services for tenants? If so, why aren't there any targets being set for tenant satisfaction measures and how can services demonstrably improve without defined targets to aim for and report against.

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing

15. Councillor Goldsmith asked:

In the council's 'Homing In' magazine Autumn 25, P8 states that 26.2% (down from 29.9% previously) of residents are satisfied with the council's approach to complaints handling. Whilst this is within the parameters nationally, these statistics are shockingly low. Do you think this is acceptable and what is the council doing to improve these statistics?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing

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16. Councillor West asked:

Abandoned bikes litter our streets, often left locked to cycle racks reducing available space and leaving many cyclists to resort to locking to street furniture which results in damage and maintenance cost to the council. There is an abandoned vehicle service responding to reports of abandoned bikes, removing them and getting them recycled all at considerable cost to the council. There is no signage on cycle parking stands communicating that abandoning bikes is a costly nuisance and signposting opportunities for reuse, recycling, or disposal. Surely, we wish to encourage and assist people to do the right thing. I have had a reply from Highways saying the cost of installing signage would be prohibitive, but I have seen no impact analysis of the cost-benefit that signage may have if it reduces abandonment. Can this proposal be properly considered, please.

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport and City Infrastructure

17. Councillor McLeay asked:

Given that the national ban on single-use vapes came into force on 1 June 2025, what specific actions are being taken by Brighton & Hove City Council and the Trading Standards team to enforce this ban locally? In addition, what support is being provided to businesses to help them responsibly dispose of or recycle any remaining stock of single-use vapes, and how are we ensuring they understand the distinction between banned disposable products and legal reusable alternatives?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services

18. Councillor Sykes asked:

Should all campaigning clothing and accessories be banned from the council chamber, how is this to be defined (for example concerning colours of flags) and do we need to change our council constitution?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council

19. Councillor Meadows asked:

Despite promises by this administration, and many before, to update and landscape Patcham roundabout, and even getting to the point with officers and sponsor of having a workable solution, no progress has been made. When will Patcham roundabout be landscaped?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet member for Transport and City Infrastructure

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20. Councillor Theobald asked:

Can you please tell me why the Council has not repaired the pavement outside Hove Town Hall where I tripped and fractured my arm on the 6th August?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet member for Transport and City Infrastructure

21. Councillor Theobald asked:

Please list the amount collected from owners/developers or contractors over the last three years for reinstating damaged footways/pavements caused by contractors' heavy lorries parking on the same during building works?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport and City Infrastructure

22. Councillor Meadows asked:

Many residents in Greenfield Crescent are unhappy with being included in the Wilder Verges project. Dog owners are unable to walk their dogs in their local green space, and the number of dogs being taken to the vets because of grass burrs buried in their skin has increased. Were residents included in a consultation process? Why weren't local councillors informed of this? Can the council ensure residents are included in future consultations? Why were dog owners' needs ignored?

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services

23. Councillor McNair asked:

When is the long grass at the cemetery at All Saints church Patcham going to be cut back? It was not cut on 30 September. This has not happened despite numerous emails and reassurances it would. Visitors cannot access the graves.

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services

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24. Councillor McNair asked:

Residents are concerned that drains down Carden Hill are blocked – indeed, may have been tarmacked over with the recent resurfacing – and that when it rains water pours down the hill causing flooding in Hollingbury and very probably Carden Avenue. When are the drains in Carden Hill due to be inspected and unblocked?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet member for Transport and City Infrastructure

25. Councillor Lyons asked:

Why does the Council have so little desire for recycling? One of the last councils in the country to recycle food wastage & has no plans to start collecting used batteries from households. About 25% of councils (roughly 100 out of 391) offer kerbside collections for batteries and small electricals, covering ~23% of households.

Reply from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet member for Net Zero and Environmental Services

26. Councillor Hogan asked:

We were given a snapshot of the number of empty homes with a briefing on 3 March 2025. However, when will the 2024 figure be issued?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet member for Housing

27. Councillor Lyons asked:

Please can you look into improving the facilities at Nevill Park in Hove? There is not a single seating bench which are needed. In addition, can there be a children's playground and other public facilities installed eg gym/climbing equipment etc? There is huge demand due to the number of people and schools here. There are various flats being built in this area so there is a strong case for sil money to be used. It is a forgotten part of Hove that deserves attention.

Reply from Councillor Robins, Cabinet member for Sports, Recreation and Libraries

28. Councillor Lyons asked:

Residents in Woodland Drive are requesting additional parking measures as cars are often parked for long periods in the road causing congestion. We will provide residents responses that we have received.

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet member for Transport and City Infrastructure

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29. Councillor Fishleigh asked:

The Saltdean charity wanted to put hanging baskets on lamp posts this summer using the same company that Rottingdean In Bloom uses. However, I was advised that this wasn't possible until BHCC has finalised a new policy WRT lamp posts. When will this be ready please?

Reply from Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries

30. Councillor Earthey asked:

The introduction of 'X buses' is clearly very successful, but those of us with long memories say that all you have done is rekindle the demand for limited-stop services identified 15 – 20 years ago under the 'Brighton Metro' debate. Given the major success of the X bus services, can you commit to expanding the X bus programme, and reopening the old bus-based 'Brighton Metro' project, even considering a type of 'Brighton Crossrail' X bus?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport and City Infrastructure

31. Councillor Bagaeen asked:

In September, the Leader of the Council urged pension fund bosses in East Sussex to say whether any of their investments are linked to "atrocities taking place in Palestine", specifically asking whether the pension fund currently has any exposure to any companies on the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR) list.

Divestment campaigns urge banks, alongside local government pension funds, and universities to withdraw investments from companies that help sustain what is a widely held view of Israel's genocide in the region.

Might the Leader of the Council be open to write to the Vice Chancellors of our Universities and banks operating in our city urging them to divest, and additionally launch a divestment campaign in Brighton and Hove as an effective way of showing solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for freedom?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council

32. Councillor Bagaeen asked:

Brighton & Hove City Council was ordered to pay the developer's full costs after a Planning Inspector ruled in favor of the Gasworks redevelopment scheme, finding the council's reasons for refusal unsubstantiated and that the development's "very substantial" benefits outweighed its "limited" harm to heritage and amenity. The council had refused permission for the mixed-use development due to concerns about overdevelopment, design, and lack of

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affordable homes, but the inspector and Secretary of State endorsed the scheme's benefits, including site remediation, housing delivery, and biodiversity gain.

In refusing planning permission, against officer recommendations, 7 out of 10 members of the planning committee voted for refusal.

What lessons has the council learnt from this hugely costly mistake in allowing elected members to override officer recommendations for planning?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council

