

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## Cabinet

## Agenda Item 80(a)

**Subject: Member Questions**

**Date of meeting: 11 December 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- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

We never received a breakdown of how BHCC came up with the figure of £25k to run Rottingdean library. Now that figure has increased to £40k. Please would you provide a breakdown of this.

**(2) Councillor Fishleigh- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

Several statements justify library closures as our city has more libraries per person population. This justification is inappropriate. UK Gov reports by The Centre for Cities shows our population has 56% high level qualification (NVQ4 or above). This puts our city 5th in the UK, just below Oxford, Edinburgh, Cambridge and London. Brighton and Hove is above 57 other UK cities/urban areas. Students require books and digital access to learning materials and spaces. The outcome of closures and restrictions on student access to learning materials is to reduce learning outcomes, employability opportunities, taxable earnings and public services relying on taxable incomes. Why is this demographic context omitted?

**(3) Councillor Fishleigh- Our City Transport Plan**

On page 426 of the cabinet report it gives £18.626m as the total funding allocation for transport 2026/7. Please would you tell me the breakdown between ring-fenced grants and BHCC funds?

**(4) Councillor Fishleigh- Our City Transport Plan**

Given the maintenance backlog of £57 million on our roads and £37.3 million on our footways, do you agree that all non-essential, nice to have schemes paid for from BHCC funds should be deprioritised in favour of mending existing pavements and roads?

**(5) Councillor Fishleigh- Our City Transport Plan**

The report states that Pavement parking is a major issue in the city and BHCC has campaigned central government for the power to be able to enforce pavement parking. Should we ask our three MPs to raise this again with the Government?

**(6) Councillor Fishleigh- Our City Transport Plan**

Figure 7 on page 426 of the cabinet report doesn't show that Rottingdean High Street has congestion and capacity issues. Previous studies have identified the High Street is a problem area so why is it being excluded in this report for measures to address the issues there?

**(7) Councillor Fishleigh- Our City Transport Plan**

Figure 7 also shows average delays on the A259 between Saltdean and Roedean of 30-50 seconds which is not people's lived experience. The plan is to create additional bus and cycle lanes but these will not help. Congestion of west-bound traffic is caused by the existing bus lane just east of the Rottingdean High Street/A259 junction and congestion of east-bound traffic is caused by issues in Telscombe and Peacehaven as well as bus stops. Will you commit to a more detailed analysis of the issues and working with ESCC to resolve them?

**(8) Councillor Meadows- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

When Hollingbury library was closed, residents were promised a new library, which was located in Old Boat Corner Community Centre. However, this library has over the last couple of years been reduced to only opening one day a week. There has been a lack of advertising on the part of the council. No wonder footfall is low. Has Hollingbury library been set up to fail? Is the use and needs analysis flawed because of this?

**(9) Councillor McNair- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

At budget council in February 2025, the Conservative Group proposed maintaining library funding and keeping all three libraries open by reducing the Advisor-Led Antiracism Strategy funding of £80,000. Does the Administration regret not using our suggestion to protect community assets?

**(10) Councillor McNair- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

Why did the Labour Administration propose closing Rottingdean library in their carefully planned budget in February only to reverse their decision and support Rottingdean library ten months later?

**(11) Councillor Meadows- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

With Rottingdean library being saved, what will be cut in its place?

**(12) Councillor Meadows- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

As only £35,000 is being saved by closing Westdene and Hollingbury libraries, surely money can be found to protect these community assets?

**(13) Councillor Meadows- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

The council has been working to propose means of maintaining some level of library service in Westdene and Hollingbury libraries for months. What concrete plans are there for these libraries to continue under different auspices?

**(14) Councillor Meadows- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

What further cuts to library services are coming?

**(15) Councillor Meadows- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

Why has there been a reduction in funding for homelessness?

**(16) Councillor Meadows- Royal Pavilion & Museums Trust Service Fee 2026-31**

The Royal Pavilion Trust has been able to secure £6m in funding from outside of the council. Despite this, why is the council still going to give the Trust £2.1m despite the it being unable to meet its £4m repayment plan agreed with the council?

**(17) Councillor Hill- General Fund Draft Budget & Resource Update - 2026-27 to 2029-30**

On page 232 there is a proposal that the £65,000 Cemeteries Maintenance Reserve is to be pooled with other risks under a general risk reserve. It would seem the future financial position of the council will lead to extreme pressures on the general reserves. What reassurances can the administration give that taking away a dedicated maintenance reserve for cemeteries will not harm cemetery maintenance?

**(18) Councillor Hill- General Fund Draft Budget & Resource Update - 2026-27 to 2029-30**

Page 131 regarding Registration Services says there will be a 'Comprehensive transformation of registration services by streamlining processes, optimising resources and embedding efficiency into service delivery risk and impact: Implications of managing change and challenging old ways of working – potential staffing challenges during the transition period'.

This is very opaque language that does not explain what the proposed changes to registration are, leaving me unsure how the 60k savings will be realised. Is this just a long way of saying the Administration is cutting jobs in the registration services team?

**(19) Councillor Shanks- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

Why has the Cabinet decided to ignore the recommendation from the People Scrutiny committee to shelve the library cuts, and the subsequent one which was to moth ball even if closed which was passed unanimously even to the extent of not mentioning them in the report?

**(20) Councillor Pickett- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

Residents are in agreement that this plan is too rushed and hasn't given interested residents, such as those in Westdene, the opportunity, and in the main, time, to fully engage to work out ways to keep a community library running, possibly by volunteers. Why can't this plan be mothballed, as suggested by the People Scrutiny and Overview Committee, so that residents have time to properly work out ways to make this can happen?

**(21) Councillor Pickett- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

As the library service is currently rewriting its current strategy regarding services, finances and forward plans, why can't the proposed closures wait until this strategy is complete so that we have a more thorough idea of how to move forward with possible closures and ways of making savings?

**(22) Councillor Pickett- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

Once the library at Westdene closes the children of Westdene Primary School will no longer have access to a school library. What provision will they have to access books, other than text books, in school?

**(23) Councillor Pickett- Sustainability plan for Libraries**

What will happen to the empty buildings once the libraries cease to function? I note that Westdene library is part of the school. How will this work?

**(24) Councillor Sykes- General Fund Draft Budget & Resource Update - 2026-27 to 2029-30**

To the background of the impact of the cost of temporary accommodation on council budgets, what actions are the administration pursuing to influence the cost of housing to residents and how is the effectiveness of these actions being monitored?

**(25) Councillor McLeay- Regulator of Social Housing - response to regulatory judgement including Procurement of Stock Conditions Contractor**

Are all FRA reports available for inspection by residents and if not, when can they be made available?

**(26) Councillor McLeay- Regulator of Social Housing - response to regulatory judgement including Procurement of Stock Conditions Contractor**

In a recent report, it stated that the fire safety actions remain high, although it has reduced from 6420 to 4855. Of the 4855 outstanding actions, how many of them are serious breaches, and if there are any serious breaches, how many of them have not been completed within the target remediation date mentioned on the FRA? We have been awaiting an update since Place Scrutiny.

