

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

4.30pm 13 OCTOBER 2025

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Grimshaw (Chair), Asaduzzaman, Atkinson, Alexander, Allen, Bagaeen, Cattell, Daniel, Davis, Earthey, Evans, Fishleigh, Fowler, Goddard, Goldsmith, Guilmant, Helliwell, Hewitt, Hill, Hogan, Lademacher, Loughran, Lyons, Mackey, McGregor, McLeay, McNair, Meadows, Miller, Muten, Nann, Oliveira, O'Quinn, Parrott, Pickett, Robins, Robinson, Rowkins, Sankey, Shanks, Sheard, Sykes, Taylor, C Theobald, Thomson, Wilkinson, Winder and Williams

PART ONE

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The mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that she intended to invite the Green Group Leader to introduce the newly elected councillor for their Group, who would then come forward so that she could receive them and invite them to take their seat in the Council Chamber.

Councillor Davis introduced: Councillor Marina Lademacher Queens Park

The mayor welcomed the newly elected Member to the Council and wished them well in their terms of office.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

32.1 There were no declarations of interests in matters appearing on the agenda.

33 MINUTES

33.1 The minutes of the special meeting held on the 24 September 2025 were approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings.

34 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

34.1 The Mayor gave the following communications:

“Good afternoon, Councillors, Colleagues and Residents. It's a pleasure to be with you all here today.

Last month, I had the honour of attending the Southeast Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Association Awards Ceremony at the Flying Museum in Hampshire, alongside the Leader of the Council and our Chief Executive. It was a proud moment for Brighton & Hove City Council as we were formally presented with the Gold Award under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.

This prestigious recognition reflects three years of dedicated work to better support our reservists, veterans, and armed forces personnel employed by the council. It is a testament to our commitment to inclusion, respect, and meaningful action to those who have and are currently serving.

Over this period, we have introduced and strengthened policies that directly support our military community. We've hosted training courses led by external organisations to educate both members and officers on the Armed Forces Covenant. We've helped establish the Brighton & Hove Veterans Group and built strong relationships with all 12 cadet units across the city ensuring their participation in key civic events such as VE Day, Remembrance Sunday, and Armed Forces Day

One of the cornerstone achievements was the creation of the Reserve Forces and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers – Training and Mobilisation Policy, developed in close collaboration with Eric Page from our Equalities Team. This new policy provides clear guidance on additional paid leave for reservists and cadet force adult volunteers to attend annual training camps, a vital step forward from our previous Special and Carer's Leave Policy. It outlines the legal framework, training commitments, and mobilisation process, ensuring our staff are properly supported in their service. To reinforce this, we've updated our HR systems to record relevant data and leave taken for training.

I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to Eric Page and Wendy Jepson for their leadership and dedication in shaping these policies. Their unwavering commitment to ensuring our council is inclusive and supportive of our serving colleagues has been instrumental.

I also wish to thank our Outdoor Events Team, led by Ian Baird, for their continued support of civic events including Remembrance, VE Day, and Armed Forces Day.

Special thanks to our Remembrance Committee and key partners such as Michael Button from Take Shelter, whose work in organising Armed Forces Day has helped us engage meaningfully with our local cadet units, reservists, veterans, and personnel.

Brighton & Hove is home to a vibrant and dedicated armed forces community. Through these initiatives, we have not only strengthened our internal policies but also deepened our connection with those who serve bringing our city together in pride, respect, and gratitude.

Receiving the Gold Award was a moment of celebration, marked by a stirring performance from an army band and even a flypast a fitting tribute to the organisations, large and small, who have demonstrated their commitment to our armed forces personnel and veterans across the Southeast of England.

Brighton & Hove remains a city that honours service, supports its people, and leads with compassion.

Thank you.

Councillor Sankey presented the award to the mayor.

Before we move on to today's agenda, I would like to take a moment to reflect on some of the remarkable events and initiatives that have taken place across our city over the past couple of months.

August began with a vibrant celebration as I had the honour of launching the Rainbow Run, a 5km charity event around Hove Park marking the start of our city's Pride celebrations. Organised by the Rainbow Run charity, this year's event raised funds for Allsorts, one of my chosen Mayoral Charities. The park was filled with colour, laughter, and joy. Later that month, I welcomed Simon, Ian, and the Rainbow Run committee to the Mayor's Parlour, where they proudly presented a cheque for £6,000 to support Allsorts' vital work.

The following day, my Consort and I joined the Pride celebrations, where I had the privilege of starting the parade and travelling aboard the Pride Bus. It was a day of unity, celebration, and unforgettable moments.

I was deeply honoured to host a VJ Day Service at St Helen's Church in Hangleton, led by my Chaplain, Reverend David Hazell. Together with veterans, cadets, residents, and community leaders, we paid tribute to the courage of those who served, the strength of families who waited, and the resilience of communities who rebuilt. We were especially moved by the presence of Anne Bawden, a 96-year-old Hove resident who shared her powerful story of internment in Lunghwa Camp in Shanghai - a story immortalised in the book and film *Empire of the Sun*. Her words were a profound testament to patriotism, faith, and the enduring human spirit.

I had the pleasure of visiting Pelican Parcels' new offices and warehouse in Hove. This remarkable charity redistributes pre-loved and new items, from baby clothes and books to prams and play mats - to families facing financial hardship across Brighton & Hove. Their work, especially during the cost-of-living crisis, is a beacon of compassion and community care.

We also welcomed schoolchildren and municipal leaders from Ashikata in Japan, strengthening our bonds of international friendship and cultural exchange. I participated in the Festival of Chariots, helping clean the streets as the chariot was pulled along the seafront. I joined the Army Careers Team for a volunteer day cleaning Brighton beach and learning more about employment opportunities in the armed forces.

I had the pleasure of visiting Tower House, run by the St Vincent de Paul Society, where they hosted a joyful afternoon tea. The centre welcomes anyone over 50, regardless of faith, and offers a wide range of clubs, classes, and services aimed at reducing loneliness and improving wellbeing. It was a truly uplifting afternoon.

The Mayor's Charities have been active, hosting a Tea and Cake Fundraiser at the Royal Pavilion Café - a lovely opportunity for guests to connect and learn more about the charities making a difference in our city. I also met with the new General Manager at The Grand Brighton Hotel to discuss future partnerships and support.

This weekend, I'll be joining the Hove & Adur Sea Cadets for a sponsored 'Sleep Out' in Hove Park to raise funds for my Mayoral Charities. I've been gathering thermal sleeping bags and supplies, and the Civic Office has shared the sponsorship link. Every contribution goes directly to supporting my Mayoral Charities, and I'm deeply grateful for your generosity.

Looking ahead, in early November I will host the launch of the Brighton & Hove Buses Santa Bus Appeal at Brighton Town Hall. And in December, I'll be joining the Santa Bus itself with my charities spreading festive cheer and raising vital funds. Last week, we gathered once again at St Helen's Church for the Civic Harvest Festival Service. Joined by the Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex, dignitaries, community leaders, and our armed forces community, we gave thanks for the gifts of creation and the strength of community. Donations were made to Oasis Foodbank in Hangleton and Lunch Positive, a charity supporting residents living with HIV. We were also joined by Sophie and Jonathan from Mile Oak Farm who even brought their tractor to the church! A wonderful reminder that farming and stewardship of the land remain vibrant in our city.

Next month, I will have the great privilege in leading the city in honouring those who gave their lives in service, with 12 commemorative events taking place across the city from Rottingdean to Portslade. These services are proudly supported by Brighton & Hove City Council and our dedicated community partners, volunteers, faith leaders, and armed forces personnel. I warmly invite all members, colleagues and residents to join us in remembrance to pause, reflect, and pay tribute alongside communities across the nation. And a gentle reminder the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal launches on 23 October. Poppies will be available at the Town Halls and across our city. Your support helps honour the past and support those who serve today.

Finally, I would like to share a short BAFTA-awarded film titled *The Run*, which Councillor Sankey and I watched at the 'It Takes A Village' event hosted by Brighton & Hove Fostering Service last Thursday. The event focused on how to support Black and Global Majority children in the care system. The film gives voice to young people who have lived in care. Though actors tell the story, the experiences are real. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Fostering Services Team for the incredible work they do across our city and now, I will ask the AV Team to play the film. Thank you.

A LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

34a.1 The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holders' gave the following communications:

"We gather this afternoon in the shadow of tragedy. The recent terrorist attack at Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation Synagogue in Manchester on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, was a vile betrayal of everything we stand for. Days later, a violent hate filled attack on Peacehaven Mosque just across our boundary shook our community again. These acts of hate are not just attacks on places of worship, they are attacks on all of us, on our way of life, on our tolerant and diverse society. Let me be

clear. Hate has no place in Brighton & Hove, nor anywhere in Sussex. We must redouble our efforts to root it out.

This week is Hate Crime Awareness Week. I urge every resident and councillor, if you witness or experience hate, please report it. Stand together, stand firm. Everyone in Brighton & Hove has the right to feel safe.

October is also Black History Month. This year's theme, 'Standing Firm in Power and Pride', is a tribute to resilience and strength of the black community. Power is not about title, it's about collective courage and unity. As a proudly mixed heritage person, pride is the golden thread of black communities worldwide. I'm proud that there are so many events going on in the city to celebrate Black History Month. Please do get involved and ensure that black voices are heard, valued and celebrated in our city.

We are living through a time of change. Since our Special Full Council, we have submitted a forward-thinking proposal for local government reorganisation – a five unitary option shaped by local consultation and a vision for a stronger, more equal Sussex. The government's consultation could launch as early as next month, with decisions by March, legislation before summer, and new authorities live by April 2028. This is real public sector reform driven by local voices and we are bringing power home. Our devolution deal will deliver £1.4 billion of new investment into Sussex and Brighton over the next 30 years, £38 million a year guaranteed for a new strategic Mayoral Authority. And this is just the start. This is money we would not otherwise have money for jobs, homes and opportunity. I want to pay tribute to Councillor Hewitt for his outstanding work to deliver this, and I'm excited about the next step we hope to take tonight.

Last month our Labour government confirmed £20 million for Whitehawk over the next decade. Pride in Place funding with residents at the heart of decision making. No more projects imposed from above. This is a new era. Local people shaping their own future and I know that Councillors Williams and McGregor will ensure that our Whitehawk residents are empowered in their decision making over this.

Our regeneration has continued across the city with the opening of Temple on Kemptown seafront, as well as sand sports in Hove. It's good to see our inclusive growth agenda recognised as we move from 21st to 16th in the PricewaterhouseCoopers' Good Growth for Cities index.

Regeneration is not just a word, Madam Mayor, it's a promise. Led by Councillor Robins, and assisted by Councillor Robinson, our plans for King Alfred are bold and beautiful - developing civic infrastructure for generations to come. We want to hear from everyone, users, sports clubs, neighbours, future residents – the deadline to share your views on our designs is the 31st of this month.

And, Madam Mayor, we will get Britain and Brighton working. At our Special Council earlier this year, we discussed in this chamber the need for better government support for those facing barriers to employment, including people with disabilities and other complex barriers. Well, our Labour government is now delivering through a £15.6 million grant. We will deliver the Connect to Work programme together with West Sussex,

supporting disabled people, care leavers like we just saw in that video, homeless people, veterans, refugees and others into work.

Fourteen years of austerity and the pandemic have left scars on our society, but with a Labour government and a Labour-led council, and Councillor Daniels in the lead on this project, we will help people overcome barriers and gain the dignity of work.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of Brighton & Hove. Councillor Mohammed Asaduzzaman, our small business ambassador, will host his second surgery at Jubilee Library on the 16th of October. Our citywide economic plan is about skills, jobs and sustainable growth, and we will build on the creativity and independence that define our city, making Brighton & Hove fairer, more sustainable and more productive.

With the bold leadership of Councillors Taylor and Nann, we're tackling homelessness head on. We will directly purchase up to 200 temporary homes for homeless families, investing £10 million. Vulnerable families and crucially, children and young people, will be at the heart of our housing and homelessness strategy. Too many children are growing up in temporary accommodation in this city and that must stop. We will use council owned sites like Slipper Baths and South Downs Riding School for housing. No new eligibility criteria, just prioritising those most in need.

Our new food waste collection service is off to a flying start under the leadership of Councillor Rowkins. 11,000 properties are already receiving the service with all rounds completed on time. When issues arise, our crews are responding quickly.

We're building a cleaner, greener Brighton & Hove, and we've also announced a new neighborhood team to work with our council tenants on improving their places. And we are investing in our communities. £400,000 in grants from our Community Catalyst Fund will support local groups and voluntary organisations, improving well-being and tackling poverty.

Nominations for Freedom of the City are now open. Our city is full of remarkable people, so please consider nominating a worthy recipient.

And I'm delighted, as you've already mentioned, Madam Mayor, that we've been awarded the Gold Award for the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, a testament to the hard work of our staff and to you as our armed forces champion. So thank you for everything you've done to achieve this for our residents.

Madam Mayor, I was pleased to host the Secretary of State for Energy, Security and Climate Change last month to set out how we are leading a just transition here in Brighton & Hove. And of course, we are very pleased that our Labour government has now announced that Sussex train services will be taken back into public control from May next year. We are calling time on 30 years of failure, frustration and fragmentation, returning our railways to the service of passengers.

Madam Mayor, this is Labour in action, compassion, ambition and delivery. We are building a city that is fairer, safer and more inclusive. We are investing in people, in

places and in hope. Let us stand together against hate, for equality, for opportunity. Let us shape a future where every voice is heard, every community is valued and every resident can thrive.

I'd like to close by wishing a happy Diwali to all those celebrating in the coming weeks. Thank you, Madam Mayor."

35 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS

35.1 The mayor stated that he had been notified of four ordinary petitions to be presented today. She advised that petitioners had up to three minutes to outline the petition and to confirm the number of signatories and that the petition would then be responded to by the relevant Cabinet Member:

35.2 Andrew Ridgway-Brown, on behalf of Matthew Blaize-Smith, presented a petition titled 'Request to Implement Controlled Parking Zone: Elms Lea Avenue, Brighton, BN1 6UG'

35.3 Councillor Muten replied:

Thank you, Andrew, for bringing this petition to council today and thanks to the 24 residents who signed this petition calling for enforceable parking restrictions on Elms Lea Avenue.

I'm sorry to hear of the of the parking issues you describe and I'm keen to help. I agree it does make sense at this location to look at this. The Parking Scheme Priority Timetable was agreed earlier this year and part of this includes a review of zone K in the Preston Village area, which will include consultation on the wider area, including Elms Lea Avenue.

This year the focus has been on consultations within Hollingdean, with consultations now completed soon to be implemented, and the Nevill Road area of Hove, soon to be taken forward with ward councillors and residents, where there is significant high demand for parking causing issues for residents.

The timetable will be reviewed following these consultations to ensure your area and your street is prioritised in the near future. Prior to any consultations starting, officers will contact ward councillors to discuss the options available, including that presented by your petition. Thank you.

35.4 Joao Pagano presented a petition titled 'Support Brighton Buskers: Designated Spaces, Amplification and Shelter'

35.5 Councillor Miller replied:

Thank you for your petition and the support you're demonstrating for buskers in our city. As an administration, we agree with the sentiment that the council should support the cultural and social value of street performance. Street performance enriches public spaces by fostering inclusivity, accessibility and cultural vibrancy, offering a free and democratic platform for artists to develop their craft and audiences, and engage live art regardless of background or ability.

Supporting buskers in Brighton & Hove strengthens the city's cultural brand, encourages economic activity and builds a stronger emotional connection between people and place. However, our approach needs to balance with the need to monitor noise and amplification of noise. These considerations are assessed under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, as extended by the Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act of 1993.

Local businesses near the upside-down house have reported disruption due to prolonged and loud performances. Concerns include difficulty communicating with customers, reduced dwell time and negative impacts on the trading environment. While many traders support street performance in principle, they have requested clearer enforcement of existing rules to maintain a balance between cultural activity and commercial viability.

Brighton & Hove City Council operates a voluntary code of conduct for buskers. This includes no use of amplifiers or drums, one hour performance limits per location, avoiding obstruction of public highways and performing only between 10am and 10pm. Whilst not legally binding, performers are expected to follow this guidance to avoid causing disturbance.

The upside-down house area is acoustically sensitive and adjacent to both residential flats and commercial units. Signage prohibiting amplification and percussion was installed following repeated complaints and enforcement challenges. No license is required to busk, but buskers are expected to play at a reasonable volume and avoid using amplifiers unless specifically permitted.

While the Council supports the cultural and social value of street performance, we also need to consider this along with the interests of residents and businesses. The current voluntary code of conduct, supported by local bylaws and national legislation, remains the most appropriate framework for managing busking activity in Brighton & Hove. In response to this petition, I have asked the team to further review the situation and respond in more detail to the point.

35.6 Caroline Ellis presented a petition titled 'Petition Objecting to the Proposed Closure of Rottingdean Library'

35.7 Councillor Robins replied:

Thank you for bringing the petition. We understand the impact that losing a library can have on any community. Unfortunately, as a council we had to make some tough decisions last year when setting the budget. One of these was to reduce the library revenue budget. We have analysed the data on how libraries are used, the needs of the communities, and the geographic spread of libraries in each area. Taking a citywide approach, the proposal maintains a statutory library service, with access to books, spaces, wi-fi and computers still available in ten libraries across the city, supporting the most vulnerable members of the communities.

Three libraries were identified for potential closure, alongside a reduction in evening and weekend hours at Jubilee and Hove Library. We are aware that each library, including Rottingdean, are used by families and children and are valued as community hubs. A

12-week consultation closed on Friday, October 10th, last Friday, and the feedback gathered through the survey and the public meetings will now support the cabinet making the final decision to in regard to the library savings on Thursday the 12th of December. Your petition will be noted and added to this feedback. Thank you again.

35.8. Joe Gill and Tanuska Marah presented a petition titled 'Bring Southern Water into Public Ownership'

35.9 Councillor Rowkins replied:

Thank you for coming today to present your petition. I mean, I agree with a great deal of what you just said. Privatisation of the water industry by the Thatcher government has been a disaster and it was, in my view, a bad idea in principle and in practice has been even worse. Decades of underinvestment, vast amounts of money funnelled into private hands, scandalous dumping of sewage into our rivers and seas, and now bills rising for residents. It is my firm belief that, in principle, water does indeed belong in public hands.

However, the question of re nationalizing the water companies now in 2025, is sadly not so simple. DEFRA have estimated that the cost of acquiring the water companies is very high and I do accept that there's a range of views on what that cost might be and, of course, once you have it if you do acquire it, there is probably some substantial costs in terms of investing and addressing the historic underinvestment that's existed for so long.

Business as usual, though clearly is not an option and the government has taken a range of measures to crack down on the water companies. The Water Special Measures Bill introduced In July 2024, almost immediately after the election requires money to be ring fenced for infrastructure investments, which of course is much needed, as well as greater accountability to customers. More recently, the government announced that the regulator which you reference in your petition, Ofwat, which let's face it, has been part of the problem all along, will be abolished and replaced with a single more powerful entity that also takes in functions from the Environment Agency, Natural England, the Drinking Water Inspectorate and so on and it's been described as the biggest shake up of the water industry since privatisation and comes with a government commitment to cut pollution in half by 2030.

I personally and we collectively will continue to push for further reforms to the water industry so that it operates not in the interest of profit, but of the people and the planet and I hope that we one day indeed do see water back where it belongs: in public hands.

36 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

36.1 The mayor reported that 9 written questions had been received from members of the public and invited them to come forward and address the council.

1. Omaid Hiwaizi asked:

Please could Brighton Council endorse the Plant Based Treaty, following over 46 towns and cities worldwide? Since I last raised the Treaty in February 2024, when 24 towns had endorsed it, the number has grown to over 46, showing momentum. The Treaty calls for a global commitment, alongside the Paris Agreement, to reduce food system

emissions and encourage local action. After Edinburgh endorsed it in February 2023, they introduced carbon labelling in schools and universities, staff training, and public education. I ask that the Council show leadership by endorsing the Treaty and making plant-based food more accessible to residents.

Councillor Rowkins, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services, replied:

Thank you, Omaid, for the question and for coming to the chamber, albeit online. You're quite right - food production is of course a major contributor to global greenhouse emissions, somewhere approaching 30%, with meat production making up well over half of that. That's due not only to the very large emissions in relation to producing feed for the livestock over their lifetimes, not to mention water use and so on, but also the role of methane, which of course is a far more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. I think it's about 28 times more powerful in terms of its impact on global warming. Just as an aside, I do think that as a city we do have to really get to grips with the emissions associated with the goods and services that we consume. We spend so much time talking about energy and all of those things, which is quite right, but we have to start grappling with this wider issue.

I'm plant-based myself, I don't mind sharing, and enjoy living in a city that embraces that and offers so much choice. I'm aware of the Treaty and its signatories and I'm looking into what information is available in order to assess the outcomes from those cities in terms of tangible emissions reduction. If we're convinced that signing up to the Treaty would lead to emissions reductions here in Brighton & Hove, then we will certainly consider signing up.

In the meantime, I would certainly encourage everyone in this chamber, and indeed in the city, to eat less meat and dairy. Not just for environmental reasons, but of course in the interests of health as well. If you do eat meat and dairy, please consider buying some of the excellent local food produced here in Sussex.

Omaid Hiwaizi asked a supplementary question:

Is the council willing to meet with me and the Plant Based Treaty team to learn more about the initiative and see how we can work together?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

Very easy answer. Absolutely, yes. I think as I referenced in the initial response to the substantive question, what I'm really keen to do is to sort of get to grips a bit more with some of the tangible outputs of what's been achieved in those cities that have signed up in terms of, you know, tangible and measurable emissions reduction. So very very happy to learn more about it from you and I'll be in touch after the meeting to set that up.

2. Adrian Hill asked:

Residents have been told by the bus company and the council since 2018 that there is an Ultra Low Emission Zone on North Street and Western Road. The zone only applies

to buses, is non charging, doesn't exclude non compliant vehicles, didn't actually become live until 2024 and is voluntary. Vehicles including buses violating the zone are still being driven on these roads. Do you understand the link between air pollution and health and can you charge vehicles that don't meet the zone's requirements?

Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport and City Infrastructure, replied:

Thank you, Adrian, for your question. It was good to meet you recently, ride alongside you at last month's Kidical Mass family cycle ride and see you at last week's Sussex Air Quality Conference. In short, and more so following the excellent presentation at last week's conference, I'm very much aware of the compelling links between air quality and a range of health conditions.

Now, in terms of your question, running between North Street and Western Road are ultra-low emission zones or ULEZ along this route that have been in place for the past decade and have been a success in driving demonstrable improvements to the standard of buses passing through our city centre.

Earlier this year, Brighton & Hove buses, the majority of which pass through this route, confirmed that all of their fleet on this route are ULEZ compliant. That is they are Euro 5 or Euro 6 standard through upgrading and new buses with a funded commitment, in partnership with the council, to introduce fully EV zero emission buses on routes 7, 2, 6 and part of the 5 route next year. However, I recognize your concern and see from my recently strengthened and publicly accessible air quality monitoring data that air quality in North Street remains stubbornly poor. We have introduced an enforceable engine idling policy, and we will again ask that all vehicles waiting switch off their engines.

Following 12 weeks of public consultation on our City Transport Plan 2035, we recognise the need to do more to tackle vehicle emissions and improve city centre air quality. With moving traffic offensive powers as applied for earlier this year, and an accelerated commitment to public EV charging, we will work with traders, taxis, bus operators and residents. We intent to tackle vehicle related emissions and improve air quality.

Adrian Hill asked a supplementary question:

You said it was in place for a decade, one of your officers said it should be Euro 6 only and those are government clean air zone restrictions. So, if Euro 5 are running in the zone that's probably the reason why there's such high levels of pollution.

Again, can I ask, can we see the certificates or have the online checker updated because some of those even say Euro 3, some are Euro 4 as well and there's no way that we can find out otherwise if just somebody's told somebody in the council without actually showing certificates. There's been lots of lying and corruption in the industry as you're probably going to see in the news today with the lawsuit.

Councillor Muten replied:

I have specifically asked Brighton & Hove Buses, who are the majority operator along this route and they have given me reassurances that they have converted all of their

older buses to the ULEZ compliance standards, and also are in the process of purchasing new buses for this route which I highlighted in my earlier response.

I'm happy to take that question out of here and go back to the bus company and discuss with them how they certificate the upgrades that they've made and I'm more than happy to discuss that further with you after I've raised this question directly with Brighton & Hove buses and other operators. I chair the Enhanced Bus Partnership, so we look at all the operators across the city, particularly along our bus ULEZ.

3. David Wilson asked:

I walk my dogs in Saltdean's Oval Park every morning and see the debris that has been dumped overnight outside the recycling bins. As West Saltdean residents all have roadside recycling or communal bins for their flats, this communal facility is not necessary and is regularly used by residents of East Saltdean, Telscombe and Peacehaven where there are no communal recycling points. I know this because I look at the labels on the cardboard boxes and envelopes that blow around. Please would you remove this recycling point and turn the area into much needed disabled parking bays.

Councillor Rowkins, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services, replied:

Thank you for bringing that question. We certainly don't want to be clearing fly tipping coming from other local authorities, so thank you for bringing it. It's actually really useful intelligence - I'll make sure that that is fed back to the team. I can't promise that we will definitely remove them, but what we will certainly do is have a sort of reassessment of their use and the demand for them in that area. And as you say, it may well be that for the residents of West Saltdean, they're not required. So we'll certainly have a look at that. I'm happy to come back to you after this meeting once that's happened.

With regards to the need for more disabled bays, I've already fed that back and officers are now looking at the possibility of additional bays in the area. As an aside, and obviously if this recycling point ends up being taken out, then that will only help in that regard. So thank you very much.

David Wilson asked a supplementary question:

In that area we also have CCTV. We used to have it. It was a deterrent. For some reason it's been back about a month. There is no deterrent at all. We're not getting any feedback from the people who monitor this because it's quite clear that the fly tipping is getting worse and worse. So the cameras are not working and we would like to know why?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

The short answer is I don't know, but I can certainly have a have a look into that. Obviously CCTV, certainly if there's fly tipping offences going on, can be very useful in enforcing that, but also building up the bigger picture, which I think is necessary here in terms of assessing the use. I assume that is our CCTV, I don't know

for definite, but I'll certainly ask with the team and find out what's going on with that, whether it's working and if it is, what it's telling us. So thank you again.

4. Nigel Furness asked:

Would you kindly furnish us, Councillor Muten, with a full breakdown of the funding sources for the city's concessionary bus passes?

Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport and City Infrastructure 9 Brighton & Hove City Council, replied:

Statutory payments to reimburse bus operators for concessionary fares are funded from the council's parking surplus as outlined in the annual parking report. Thank you.

Nigel Furness asked a supplementary question:

As the funding for the bus passes comes totally out of motorists - we use four wheels, as do buses - I'm very disabled and I'm finding it almost impossible, like many other people, to use the buses anymore because of the shocking state of the major highways in this city. As it is the motorists who fund this, not the skateboarders, not the cyclists, could you commit to spending at least some of that income on preparing the roads properly so we can travel in a civilised manner?

Councillor Muten replied:

We have 42,000 pass holders in Brighton & Hove, 7,000 are issued for qualified disabled residents and we actually do more than the statutory minimum. So we do actually, for example, start at 9:00 in the morning rather than 9:30, some of those concessions go to 11 o'clock at night, we go to four in the morning for instance.

However, you highlighted a very important point about the highways maintenance. Under the previous government, nationally there was a decline in our highways because of lack of grant funding from central government to the point that the pothole became an emblem of that previous government. With Labour coming in, they brought in £500,000,000 extra across the nation to address the road maintenance and that means we've got more money coming into this city to restore our highways and address the backlog.

So I do accept some of our roads are not what they should be because they haven't had the proper maintenance because of lack of grant funding. But we are using our resource from grant funding and we're also working with the other sources of funds to enhance our roads and pathways because it is really important that our roads are maintained. We're trying to make sure our buses and our pavements are accessible for all. And yes, absolutely with more money we are doing more to address exactly the problem that you've raised.

5. Ian White asked:

On behalf of the 150 plus local children who use the outdated and worn out cricket nets on Nevill Sports Ground each week, please can you tell me when will the council

release the circa £80,000 CIL monies allocated to the Westdene and Hove Park ward to Brighton and Hove Cricket Club Net so we can begin our net renovation project in time for the 2026 cricket season?'

Councillor Robins, Cabinet member for Sports, Recreation and Libraries, replied:

All councillors will be providing their agreed list of projects to be funded through the neighbourhood CIL to the deputy leader for the for the cabinet for approval in spring 2026 pending the community consultation and engagement exercise. No neighbourhood CIL has been awarded for any projects in the city, including the cricket nets proposal. The cricket nets project has already been earmarked as one of the priority schemes funded from the final payment of S106 monies from the Moda Homes development in Sackville Road. This has been delayed until the summer of 2026 due to the occupancy levels of the new apartments taking longer than was originally advised by the developer.

Ian White asked a supplementary question:

We've got a lot of support from local councillors for this project. We've been advised that the CIL money is likely to be awarded before the S106 money in the ward and given the urgency, we need to get this done for the next cricket season. Are you able to tell me are other projects competing for the CIL money awarded to the Hove Park and Westdene Ward?

Councillor Robins replied:

I'm not able to tell you that because it says here that all councillors will provide their agreed list of products to be funded through the neighbourhood CIL to the deputy leader for approval in spring 2026 pending the community consultation and engagement exercise. So until we get that list, I can't provide you with a list, but it would be public knowledge at the time.

6. The mayor proceeded to the next question as the questioner was not in attendance.

7. Diane Montgomery asked:

Is Councillor Robins confident that this authority can continue to treat the King Alfred as two sites for proposed building?

Councillor Robins, Cabinet member for Sports, Recreation and Libraries, replied:

Yes, the council is confident in this approach of redeveloping the King Alfred Centre. The decision to construct the new centre as a separate project allows the existing centre to remain open for as long as possible during the build. This approach also ensures the project stays under the council's direct control, supporting its successful delivery.

Diane Montgomery asked a supplementary question:

Councillor Robins, are you aware that in 2023 Ashchurch Parish Council won in the Court of Appeal when Tewkesbury Borough Council tried to give planning permission to one part of a substantial development while ignoring the lawful fact that the planning consideration should be made with regard to a whole site rather than attempt what is known as 'salami-slicing'. This has become a resonant piece of case law.

Will you therefore have a single environmental impact assessment undertaken for the whole King Alfred site? And also, could you clarify when the King Alfred land is actually being sold, as the 2025 cabinet paper states that the land has been valued and will be put on sale this autumn, yet Mark Healey stated in Friday's Argus article that the land will be sold after the new leisure centre has been completed. Could you clarify on both those questions?

Councillor Robins replied:

Firstly, you're asking me do I know about Tewkesbury Council? No I don't. Secondly, it's my understanding that as soon as we get planning permission and work starts on the new King Alfred, then we will put the site up for sale. How long that will take, who knows, and who will buy it, who knows. But that's the position we're in and that's the position I think we've been consistent about and will remain consistent about.

8. Maxine Horn asked:

In December 2024 the council appointed a third-party company New Timber, to work with city parks 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. 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?

Councillor Miller, Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, replied:

For the 2025 season, the responsibility for reinstatement of grassed areas has been contracted out to New Timber Limited. This includes a photographic inspection both pre- and post- any event in any grassed area in the city. Reinstatement costs are costed against a pre-approved price list on a per square metre basis. This year there has been a delay in works being carried out, particularly in central areas due to the exceptionally dry summer which we have experienced.

Reinstatement works are now being started and will continue over the coming weeks. The level of reinstatement needed is advised by the contractor and agreed with City Parks operational teams ahead of the organiser being charged. Event organisers are billed directly by New Timber, who are also paid directly by the organisers. No monies for reinstatement are collected by the council, which means that no, there are neither over- nor underspends.

We are keen to continue to engage with communities and residents about our events in the city and there is ongoing information available through the engagement event meetings through our Your Voice forum on events accessible via the Council's website.

Maxine Horn asked a supplementary question:

If the arrangements are held between New Timber and the event organisers, but that work isn't undertaken so there has been no reinstatement of the damaged land, who's in control of enforcing it?

Councillor Miller replied:

As I explained before, there has been a delay this year because of the exceptional weather circumstances and the drought, and reinstatement is beginning, but it has not been possible to begin the reinstatement because it would actually not have been successful. We want the reinstatement to be durable rather than something which has to be redone in a few weeks.

9. David Plant asked:

Beacon Court residents and neighbours recently had to rush to unblock highways drains on Greenways (Ovingdean) when flash flood water reached up to their doorways. Beacon Court lies in a valley: the constant building of new homes nearby means that water run-off that would have been absorbed by farmland/green areas is now coming into a drainage system that cannot cope. Please would BHCC representatives meet us on site to inspect the drains and discuss what action BHCC can take to protect properties from inadequate highway drainage.

Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport and City Infrastructure 9 Brighton & Hove City Council, replied:

I'm sorry to hear that it was necessary and wish to thank residents for acting to alleviate the problems that you described.

The flood risk management team and highways maintenance team will be happy to meet with you and representatives from Beacon Court and discuss the possible causes and options for the area in question to alleviate this happening in the future.

David Plant asked a supplementary question:

As such, torrential rains are now becoming the norm and had it gone on for much longer, there was a real risk that properties in at least Beacon Court, Upper Greenways, and our farmers' fields with crops and livestock might have been flooded.

Considering the recent planning applications for Oxford International College and Ovingdean Farm, does the council agree that no further development should take place in this area until satisfied that highways drainage is adequate to prevent flooding in the local community?

Councillor Muten replied:

As part of our planning process, there is engagement with our highways, drainage and teams from the council as well as a discussion with Southern Water in terms of sewer capacity. So any planning application will be assessed in terms of existing capacity and what upgrades are needed to drainage capacity to ensure that any introduction of new buildings can be drained sufficiently with the infrastructure of our city. So thank you and with that certainly something which I know the planning process will deal with.

37 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

37.1 The mayor reported that four deputations had been received from members of the public and invited them in turn to come forward and address the council:

1. Dirk Mitchell presented a deputation concerning biodiversity vs microplastics pollution.

Councillor Rowkins, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services, replied:

Nice to see you in person, Dirk – I know we've exchanged a couple of emails on this subject over the last week or two. 3G pitches obviously play a very big role in enabling our residents to be physically active and can sustain, as you say, much greater usage than standard grass pitches, which of course can be taken out of action due to overuse or adverse weather conditions, the cancellation of matches and so on. I do take your point though about being able to make some of those traditional grass pitches potentially more durable through the use of biochar and other things, and I'm pleased to see you highlight the Level as being a success story in that regard.

Obviously, any artificial surface has an impact environmentally and microplastics, as you described so ably in your deputation, are a major global problem and something that I'm personally very, very concerned about. You mentioned microplastics have been found up and down the food chain and in various wildlife and invertebrates and so on. Also in clouds and at the top of the highest mountains and the bottoms of the deepest seas and everywhere. I mean it really is everywhere, including I think 80% of humans have it in their blood as well. It really is a crisis that we're facing in that regard.

There are potential alternatives to rubber crumbs, some of which you mentioned. Those include organic materials such as cork and wood chip, olive pits and walnut shells. You are probably aware, I guess, of the work being done in Sheffield, with close involvement of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, DEFRA and Sport England, where I think it's 6 pitches are being used as a test bed to evaluate a range of alternative materials and gather some performance data and some feedback from players as well in terms of how it feels to play on those surfaces. That work will help ascertain whether these materials can meet the standards required by organisations such as the FA, and we'll obviously be watching the output of that work very closely. I think it's due to, not necessarily report, but I think that testing finishes towards the end of the summer next year. So we haven't got too much longer to wait to get some decent data on that hopefully. Grass will of course always be the

preferred option environmentally. We'll certainly always consider that whether it's a viable option based on the use.

I just want to pick up on one of the points you're making which is biodiversity net gain usually only looks at the biodiversity loss on sites, and I think the broad point you're making there which I think is a really good one, is what about biodiversity loss that might happen further on down the line as a result of that microplastic pollution. I don't have an answer to that right now, but it's certainly something for us to consider. So thank you for bringing the deputation in so much detail, and I look forward to picking up the conversation with you in due course.

2. Susan Sheftz presented a deputation titled Will You Support Us?

Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Chair, replied:

Susan, Judith, Kim, Pieter, Sheila, Yoram and Joy, thank you for your deputation. As members of our local and treasured Jewish community, I say to you that Jewish residents in this city are seen, respected and deeply valued. Our administration and this council stands against the despicable rise in anti-Semitism here in the UK and I give you my word that we will redouble our efforts to root it out.

I am so proud to hail from a city with a deeply rooted and much cherished Jewish community. Brighton & Hove's story cannot be written without the contribution of Jews who have been here for so many generations and have contributed so much to the shaping, the building and the values of this city. It's why, following the revelation of a far-right plot to attack a synagogue here in Hove in '23, I met with Rabbis in the city and Jewish leaders to offer support, reassurance and to ask what more we could do. It's why, following the horrific attacks of the 7th of October 2023, the deadliest attack on Jews since the Holocaust, our Labour group gave an immediate statement of support acknowledging the right of Israel to defend herself. It's why, following the horrendous terror attack at Heaton Park synagogue last month, we in the Labour group attended every Shabbat service that Friday and Saturday. And it's why I attended the 7/10 memorial at BNJC last week. I am clear that an attack on Jews is an attack on all of us and our way of life.

To your asks, we hear what you say about ascribing genocidal intent to Israel. For this reason, we are proposing an amendment to the Green Notice of Motion this evening to make clear that it is the actions of the Israeli Government that we are critical of, not Israel. We also hear your concern that calls for divestment single out Israel. It is a matter of law and policy. Public bodies have a duty to ensure that they do not aid or abet this. This is why, following the UN Special Commission of Inquiry, finding that genocide has been occurring in Gaza, I wrote to East Sussex Pension Committee. But you are right that we must ensure that any investment that may abet human rights abuses anywhere in the world should be dealt with and we will take this point forward.

To your point about our Labour government's recognition of Palestine, this historic decision reflects our unwavering commitment to a two-state solution and our passionate belief in the inalienable right of Palestinian people to self-determination. It delivers on our long-standing Labour manifesto commitment. This is not an anti-Semitic act. In fact,

we firmly believe that a two-state solution is the only path to ensure a safe and secure Israel alongside a viable Palestinian state.

It is heartbreaking to me that you say social circles are closing and that you feel prejudice directed at you by public sector bodies and that Jews are considering emigrating. I know this only too well as my best Jewish friend from university already lives in America saying she feels unsafe in the UK. It is why I have now asked for anti-Semitism training to be rolled out to all council staff, why I welcome the measures that government has announced on tackling anti-Semitism, and why when I meet Jewish community leaders in the coming days, I will be asking again, what more can we do?

3. Harry Walsh presented a deputation concerning why devolution matters for skills and opportunities to the next generation.

Councillor Hewitt replied:

Thank you, Harry and Bill and your colleagues, for presenting your speech and the text you have submitted as part of your deputation. It's great to see the level of engagement and you've really captured the essence of what devolution can unlock and bring to our region. It is important that you have highlighted the impact of any decisions which are made, not least this one, will always have a significant impact on younger people and future generations.

A devolution bill will transfer adult educational functions from central government to the new authorities. This includes the ability to receive and manage the Adult Skills Fund, which is a non-repayable grant from the Department for Education. The Adult Skills Fund is there to fund skills training for adults aged 19 and over and is used to support with gaining skills for employment, entering apprenticeships and progressing to further learning. The funding is non-ringfenced so will give strategic authorities flexibilities to meet local needs and a broad discretion over how to use the funding. The funding can be tailored to meet local economic and skills needs, which really plays into your point about using this to support the industries and jobs in our region and having the strategic overview to join everything up.

Other areas in the country have set up youth guarantee trailblazers, which are there to specifically support 18- to 21-year-olds with access to work and education. So, this is an area which could also be unlocked.

On your point about ensuring that young people and other generations and demographics are more connected to politics, at the next general election 16- and 17-year-olds will be able to vote. Accepted voter identification card formats are being widened, and modernizing the electoral registration process will improve engagement and suffrage, that is thanks to a Labour Government.

Locally, the proposal we submitted last month to government for there to be five unitary authorities in Sussex representing between 300,000 and 400,000 people each will ensure residents are closer to their decision-making bodies and to their democracy, as well as having their communities represented well.

We've got a full item on devolution later this evening. You are more than welcome to stick around for the next three hours or so, however you may prefer to watch the recording on YouTube at your leisure.

4. Paul Roughsedge presented a deputation concerning green spaces.

Councillor Rowkins, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services, replied:

Thanks for bringing the deputation and actually, primarily, thank you to you and the residents for taking good care of that site in recent years. Obviously public access to green space is a priority for us and we know how important it is to our residents for all the reasons you've just described so eloquently, and we'll always seek to facilitate that where we can. I understand, as you suggest, that there's been some reluctance to invoke the covenant up to now due to the potential for liability of the maintenance of the site transferring to the council in the future.

I am keen to see if we can find a solution though and obviously, as you know, we're trying to come and meet with you and ward Councillors as well to have a look at the site, do exactly as you suggest, see what you've been doing there and kind of get a better feel for what that site means to residents and get a better understanding for what you're proposing really.

So, I don't have a long and detailed response for you today, but I'm looking forward to coming and seeing the site

So, I don't have a long and detailed response for you today, but I'm looking forward to coming and seeing the site, hearing more about it. I can promise that I'll take that forward with officers and colleagues and come back to you in due course. Thank you again for coming.

RESOLVED:

1) That the Deputation(s) be noted.

A PETITION FOR DEBATE - SAVE THE FLORAL CLOCK

37a.1 The mayor stated that the Council's Petition Scheme provide that where a petition secures 1,250 or more signatures it can be debated at a meeting of the Full Council. There were three petitions which had reached that threshold. The Mayor invited Greg Fittock to join the meeting and present the first petition.

37a.2 Laura King presented a petition for debate titled 'Save the Floral Clock' which had received 1969 signatures at the time the agenda was published.

37a.3 Councillor Robins replied:

Thank you for your petition, and for all the interest in this much-loved part of the city. I know that the floral clock has been a very important part of the green space, and indeed many people refer to the whole area as 'the floral clock'.

The council alone does not have the resources to install a new clock to replace the current clock which has not worked for many, many years. Also, the original design involved thousands of bedding plants being planted and then removed each year, which isn't in line with the more sustainable approach to our green spaces in place now.

We are taking forward a consultation and will consider everyone's views in deciding the options for the future, and we have set a working group to co-ordinate this open space that will be used for many years to come. The discussion and decisions will include what we do in relation to the clock area, and whether it is replaced or another option agreed. Whatever we do needs to be affordable, both to be installed and maintained. Thanks again for your interest and collaboration on this.

37a.4 Councillors Theobald and Fishleigh spoke on the matter.

37a.5 Councillor Miller responded:

I welcome your passion for Palmeira Square; it is one of my favourite bits of Hove too. But I have to say that I personally incline towards reinventing. This was a reinvention in 1953 and I'm sure there were objections at that point to changing a much-loved feature and the floral clock was put in.

In modern terms, there's a reason why so many councils are removing them. It's deeply environmentally unsustainable, growing thousands of plants. Because of the way they work, they need to be annual bedding plants which means thousands of plants are grown. It needs a high degree of weeding and, in fact, in 1973, 20 years after it was found, I've spoken with somebody who was in the gardening team then who said that actually Palmeira Square and the floral clock had its own team of five gardeners.

So that is a different time, a different way of gardening, high uses of pesticides in order to keep the area free of weeds, lots of hand weeding. It is not how we want to garden these days. We want to think about how we can preserve that square and make it better for the future and to create something new. And I agree that we do need to reference it and think about it, but I strongly would advocate that we have the courage to reinvent.

This is not an original feature. The original space was more lawned. It is a chance for us to reimagine the square and actually make it relevant to today, rather than trying to recreate something which is environmentally unsustainable, extremely expensive to maintain - if you think about the cost of five gardeners annually, that is a lot of money. We cannot afford it in any way, either environmentally or financially, and I think we can come up with a better and more exciting solution which is sustainable and we'll have just the same kind of passion and love in 70 years' time as this has had.

RESOLVED:

1) That the petition be noted.

38 CALL OVER FOR REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**(a) Call over**

The following items on the agenda were reserved for discussion:

Item 42 – Review of the Council’s Constitution

Item 43 – council Plan Refresh

Item 44 – Devolution for Sussex and Brighton

Item 45 – Partial Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

(b) Receipt and/or Approval of Reports

The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that Items 42, 43, 44 and 45 had been reserved for discussion; and

The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the following reports on the agenda with the recommendations therein had been approved and adopted:

Item 41 – Review of Political Balance

Item 46 – west Saltdean Neighbourhood Plan – Decision Statement

39 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 39.1 The mayor noted that written questions from Members and the replies from the appropriate Councillor were taken as read by reference to the list included in the addendum which had been circulated prior to the meeting as detailed below:

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 Miller, Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage and Tourism

In regard to the night shoot in July I’m sorry to hear it caused disruption, and I want to assure you that we take resident feedback seriously.

We have clear guidance for night filming to minimise impact, including:

No lighting into windows unless agreed in advance

Keeping noise to a minimum when not filming

Positioning equipment away from homes or securing agreement with residents

Ensuring respectful behaviour from all crew, including security and marshals

For more disruptive shoots—typically with over five crew or complex setups—production companies must consult residents in person, usually by door knocking and logging concerns. We stay in close contact with them to ensure issues are addressed. Multiple letter drops are also required to keep residents informed, even with shorter lead times.

Brighton & Hove is proud to be a film-friendly city, and we work hard to balance supporting creative industries with protecting residents' wellbeing. Filming brings economic and cultural benefits but must be done responsibly. Your feedback helps us hold production companies to account and improve how filming is managed in residential areas. Thank you again for raising your concerns

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

With the permission of the young people who have shared their experiences with you, please share their contact details so that officers can provide the necessary support and support providers of accommodation to make improvements.

Supporting young people experiencing homelessness is a priority for the council.

We commission a wide range of services specifically for young people, such as supported housing and emergency accommodation through Sussex Nightstop, and have dedicated pathways for those aged 16–17 and care leavers.

We recognise the rising demand for homelessness services, with young people aged 16–24 making up 18% of those assessed as homeless or at risk.

We are significantly expanding our supply of council-owned temporary accommodation—purchasing 60 new homes this year and committing to a further 200, backed by an initial £10 million investment. This will improve the quality and stability of temporary accommodation for all, including young people.

Our strong partnerships with local voluntary and community organisations, including the Clocktower Sanctuary, ensure that young people have access to vital support and advice.

Looking ahead, our draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy (2025–2030) continues to prioritise children and young people, ensuring that no young person is left without safe and suitable support in times of crisis.

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 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

The Council have thus far removed over 40 flags and continues to actively coordinate further removals. The Council firmly maintain that it is illegal to attach any items including flags to Highway Furniture such as street lamp columns and want to highlight the dangers of doing so.

Unfortunately, some further planned removals have been cancelled on-site due to threatening behaviour from members of the public. These incidents have been reported to the police. We are currently liaising with the police to determine the best approach to future removals, with the safety of our staff and contractors as a top priority.

Please report unauthorised flags to streetlighting@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

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

This is the second time the Green Party has suggested on record that we should not be recycling these plastics, and I'm beginning to suspect that the failure of the Green administration to expand the city's recycling provision was not actually a failure at all, but a conscious policy choice.

Clearly, getting away from using unnecessary packaging is the ultimate goal, and we are working to minimise waste in all forms. But with the amount of plastic packaging

constantly being circulated, I don't believe we should continue sending it to the Energy Recovery Facility, thereby creating yet more need for new packaging to be produced from virgin materials.

This view is supported by research, including a study by the European Commission that concluded "Recycling (mechanical, physical or chemical) is preferable to energy recovery in all pathways analysed... because the environmental savings from energy recovery are not sufficient to compensate for the environmental impacts from waste incineration and the related CO2 emissions."

The emissions gap between recycling and energy recovery of course continues to widen as the energy system decarbonises.

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 Miller, Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage and Tourism

For 2025 season the responsibility for reinstatement of grassed areas has been contracted out to New Timber Ltd. This includes a photographic inspection both pre And post any event in any grassed area in the city. Reinstatement costs are costed against a pre-approved price list on a per m2 basis. This year there has been delay in works being carried out, particularly in the central areas, due to the exceptionally dry summer we have experienced. Reinstatement works are now being started and will continue over the coming weeks.

The level of reinstatement needed is advised by the contractor and agreed with city parks operational teams ahead of the organiser being charged. There is no direct cost to BHCC for the works.

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

For 2025 season the responsibility for reinstatement of grassed areas has been contracted out to New Timber Ltd. This includes a photographic inspection

both pre And post any event in any grassed area in the city. Reinstatement costs are costed against a pre-approved price list on a per m2 basis. This year there has been delay in works being carried out, particularly in the central areas, due to the exceptionally dry summer we have experienced. Reinstatement works are now being started and will continue over the coming weeks.

The level of reinstatement needed is advised by the contractor and agreed with city parks operational teams ahead of the organiser being charged. There is no direct cost to BHCC for the works

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 Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Public Realm

Officers from City Parks and the Events team are working collaboratively to develop a city-wide Memorials Policy. Where the Policy ultimately sits will be decided in due course and on completion of the draft policy.

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 Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport and City Infrastructure

Thank you for your question, Cllr Sykes, highlighting the importance of the reinstatement by utility companies and their contractors working in our city. Utility companies have certain rights to access their services and work with the council in applying for streetworks notices and permits. There is a very large number of streetworks notices issues to utility companies and contractors. These range from the small-scale individual property service connections to much larger-scale access to mains services many located beneath our major roads. As an administration, we are keen that all such streetworks are completed well and reinstatement is of a standard expected by residents.

We seek to work collaboratively with the utility companies on work they complete across all our infrastructure, and where there are larger works we ensure that ward councillors and the local community are informed. It is a good idea for ward councillors to be involved in supporting our collective efforts to protect our nationally-important heritage streets and squares which are important to us as a city and that all have a responsibility to protect. I will ask officers in the transport team to make sure our processes for

involving ward councillors are robust. There may need to be further consideration as to how best communicate around the many thousands of smaller scale service connections, and I will discuss with officers as to how best to use digital tools to communicate this going forward. Please do contact the team about any specific concerns.

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

There is an existing discretionary rate relief scheme in Brighton & Hove which covers:

- Charitable rate relief for properties used wholly or mainly for charitable purposes, and occupied by a registered charity, or for registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs
- Community and voluntary sector rate relief for properties used by a club or organisation for the purposes of recreation, or otherwise occupied by an organisation for a non-profit making or charitable purpose, or for social welfare, education, science, literature or fine arts

If further rate relief schemes were to be proposed, the financial implications would also need to be considered. Details of the Leeds City Council scheme are here: [Relief from business rates | Leeds.gov.uk](#), which details the priorities and restrictions of the scheme. It was introduced in October 2022. The scheme has a capped budget of £1.75m per annum.

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

I have requested that data is gathered and analysed. This will include:

- Analysing the status of accounts for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure businesses e.g. how many are paid up to date, how many are “on hold”, how many are in a recovery stage (reminders, summonses, liability orders)
- Reviewing applications for hardship relief and how many were from Retail, Hospitality and Leisure businesses

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

As of June 2024, around 1 in 77 residents - 3,580 people - were experiencing homelessness in Brighton & Hove, with 3,528 in temporary accommodation. This reflects a national crisis, where demand for accommodation far exceeds supply.

Despite these challenges, we are committed to providing quality temporary homes. This year, we expect to purchase 60 additional council-owned homes and committed to acquiring a further 200, supported by an initial £10 million investment.

All landlords providing temporary accommodation on behalf of the council are required to meet strict standards for safety and quality. Any issues or concerns reported by residents regarding our contractors are taken very seriously. There are clear contractual obligations in place outlining the high standards we expect, and we will apply the necessary sanctions if contractors do not make the improvements required of them.

If these standards are not being met, we will act to address the situation promptly. Our priority is to ensure that everyone in temporary accommodation is safe and well supported, and we remain focused on improving both the quality and availability of housing for those experiencing homelessness.

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

Our policy of educate and inform is not limited to 1 year. Given the low starting point in terms of public awareness in relation to air pollution derived from solid fuels, it is still our intention to focus primarily on education. However, in cases where individuals are found to repeatedly be emitting smoke in a SCA, we may escalate and consider issuing fines.

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

A complaint, according to the Brighton & Hove City Council's corporate procedure and the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code, is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction - however it's made - about the standard of service, actions, or lack of action by the landlord or council, its staff, or anyone acting on its behalf, that affects a resident or group of residents.

Recently, all staff working for the council as a landlord have received clear guidance on how to recognise and respond to complaints, even if the word "complaint" isn't used. This applies to everyone, from operatives working in people's homes to estate staff in the community.

If a resident wants to make a complaint, they can contact the Customer Feedback team directly by webform, email, telephone, or post. Every complaint is logged, acknowledged, and passed to the relevant service for investigation. If a complaint is made to any other staff member, they have clear instructions on what information to gather and how to ensure it reaches the Customer Feedback team.

We also make sure that complaints raised through MPs or councillors are logged and addressed. Our aim is to ensure every expression of dissatisfaction is captured and acted upon, so we can continue to improve our services and meet our ambition of becoming a Great Landlord.

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

Yes, there is a clear and strong commitment to improving housing services for tenants. We want to be a Great Landlord for our tenants, and this informs everything that we do.

This is reflected in the 2025/26 HRA budget, which includes a £1.8 million revenue investment in tenancy services. This funding supports more vulnerable tenants, enables a more proactive tenancy management approach, and drives the changes needed to ensure our Housing Service is both compliant and accessible to all.

We've also recently expanded our service delivery through the introduction of Neighbourhood Officer teams across the city, with additional investment over the past year to strengthen local engagement and responsiveness.

Improving tenant satisfaction is a central priority and essential to our ambition of becoming a Great Landlord. While we do not have a single overarching target for tenant satisfaction, we do monitor and report on a range of performance indicators that reflect

customer experience. These are published quarterly in our Housing Performance Report for Area Panels and include satisfaction with repairs, complaints handling, and responsiveness to calls and emails. Targets are set for each indicator, and performance is tracked against them, including direction of travel and any corrective actions required.

For example, in Quarter 1 of 2025/26, tenant satisfaction with completed repairs was 98% for the standard of work and 99% for overall customer service - exceeding our target of 96% in both areas. These results are publicly available on our website and shared with Area Panels to ensure transparency and accountability.

In addition, our annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey (STAR) provides a broader view of tenant sentiment across services, repairs, maintenance, and customer service. This survey enables year-on-year comparisons and helps us identify areas for improvement.

As part of continued commitment to continuous improvement, I ask all councillors to encourage all tenants to take part in the next STAR survey which is scheduled for this autumn.

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

It is regrettable that our satisfaction rate has gone down and it is sadly reflective of the national picture given that our percentage is broadly in line with other landlords of a similar size. In sharing that context, we are not complacent. We are committed to improving our complaints handling across our housing services and recognise that behind every complaint is a resident who feels let down, and that we continue to learn from these experiences to improve our services.

Over the past year, we have taken several steps to address this. Targeted improvements to our Repairs Service have led to a 12% reduction in complaints related to repairs, maintenance, and property improvements. Our response times have also improved: in 2024/25, over 80% of Stage 1 complaints were answered within our 10-day target, and Stage 2 response times improved by 10% compared to the previous year.

We have worked closely with residents and staff through co-produced workshops focused on repairs, complaint handling, health and safety, and customer service. These sessions have shaped our "Creating Great Homes Together" improvement plan, which supports our ambition to become a Great Landlord. We know there is more to do, and we remain committed to further progress.

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

Thank you for your question, Cllr West. You raise a relevant matter, especially where abandoned bicycles are limiting cycle parking spaces.

In the context of pressures on council budget, i am sure you are aware that the Network Management service has limited budget and resources for abandoned bike enforcement. However, there is a Contract in place with Environmental Services (ES) for, removing and disposal of up to 30 bikes, the value of the contract is £350. This is a relatively small amount, however should there be a call to increase this, we would need to consider what services would need to be reduced to balance the budget. The Green Group may wish to propose this above other services at Budget Council in early 2026.

Additional to the removal and disposal of up to 30 bikes, the service do process reports of abandoned bikes, visit, tag, administrate and then collate reports and provide this to Environmental Services as part of the highway enforcement role. The funding available to remove these bikes is unfortunately not sufficient to tackle the number of bikes reported as abandoned. In 2023-2024 the Council received 778 reports of abandoned bikes and in 2024-2025 this increased to 838 reports.

Additional signage and street clutter is unlikely to deter these abandoned bikes as national research suggests abandon bikes are not a conscious decision but more often the result of irregular use then irreparable damage having been left in the open or due to people moving out of the area, particularly students. The costs of such signage are estimated to be in the region of £17,000 for 100 ridged street signs attached near cycle stands.

Officers will look to improve the information on the council webpages to ensure proactive promotion of reuse/ recycle bikes which could help to reduce the numbers of bikes left on the streets. We would encourage ward councillors and communities to assist with this communication and encourage owners of abandoned bikes where know to remove and dispose of their bikes responsibly.

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

Prior to the ban being put in place, any business selling vapes that the Trading Standards team visited were informed of the ban and advised to reduce as much of their stock as possible and not order more. Any stock held after the ban by businesses was advised to send back to their supplier. If a business cannot do this then we can offer the business to voluntarily surrender the goods to us which will then be recycled. However, we haven't had any businesses that have opted to do this.

We have been pro-active, visiting all new vape shops identified in the city providing them with advice on regulations surrounding the sale of vapes(attached). Any complaints we receive in relation to underage sales, illegal vapes, illicit tobacco or any complaints, where the business also sells vaping products, they have been visited and given advice.

Following the ban the Trading Standards team within the Council have already seized over 11,000 disposable vapes from 9 businesses. These have all been from shops that are already under investigation for other offences such as illicit tobacco or other non-compliant vapes. Businesses have been provided with advice as part of specific vape, tobacco and age restricted sales inspections as well as Food Standards inspections.

Most retailers are now fully aware of their legal obligations due to the advice received from the Council as well as their own suppliers and trade associations such as the Association of Convenience Stores.

If disposable vapes are found, the initial advice was to return to the supplier for disposal, however, businesses are now advised to dispose of and recycle. All shops of a certain size selling electricals are required to have a takeback scheme for small electricals. This is enforced by the Office of Product Safety and Standards, so if we identify a business not complying then a referral will be made. If there are deliberate attempts to conceal or circumvent the ban these are seized, and we recycle them once any enforcement activity is concluded. Any vapes that we seize are sent to a recycling centre. The lithium batteries are stored in safe fire tubs and covered with fine sand and vermiculite, until they are transported in bulk to a specialist salvage company where they are crushed into fine powders.

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 Allen, Cabinet member for Customer Services and Public Realm

The standing legal advice is that councillors should not wear clothing or display other material which could be perceived as offensive or politically controversial, as this risks bringing the Council into disrepute and disrupting proceedings. This is not a new position and aligns with the approach that has always been adopted at Brighton & Hove City Council, including in Guidance agreed by Group Leaders in 2021. The Council's Constitution already provides clarity regarding the powers of the Mayor in relation to those obstructing the business of the Council (CPR 16). Therefore, no constitutional reforms are required on this matter.

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 Allen, Cabinet member for Customer Services and Public Realm

CityParks officers have a landscape design for the roundabout for which we now have approval from National Highways. Officers continue to liaise with the landscaper and have a proposed contract with them to carry out the landscaping and maintenance on the roundabout for free, in return for sponsorship boards.

This requires a planning application and legal sign-offs for the contracts with the landscaper and National Highways. There is progress on these items but there is key issue to resolve as financing enabling works (salt margin and access hardstanding) and the cost of traffic management have not yet been secured.

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

Thank you for your question, Cllr Theobald. I am sorry to hear of your injury. May I trust you are recovering.

Your incident and others highlights the importance of highways maintenance including pavements. For far too many years, central government has granted inadequate funds to keep abreast of the maintenance required for our city. Under the previous government, this shortfall in highways maintenance budgets granted to highways authorities across England has led to potholes, trip hazards and road and pavement assets neglected and in decline. A quite unacceptable position. This is why we very much welcomed the substantive uplift the new government has committed to this year with an additional half a billion pounds more this financial year compared with last nationally for highways maintenance; with some £1.6 million more coming to Brighton & Hove this year compared with last.

With more money, we can get on and do more. This is why we updated our highways maintenance policy earlier this year that deals with inspection frequency, risk assessments and response times. Accepted there is substantial backlog after well over a decade of underinvestment under the previous government, we are taking action and getting on repairing our roads and pavements and fixing the potholes.

You may have seen we have taken action on Norton Road, with much of the pavements resurfaced over the summer.

In terms of this incident, an enquiry relating to this was logged on the Council system on 8th August.

In response, a highway inspection was carried out within 10 days on 19th August. During this inspection, a 7-day ticket was raised and the repair was completed on 26th August.

A further inspection was carried out on 29th September. During this inspection another safety defect was identified that met the investigation criteria and a 28-day ticket was raised for repair. This site is just south of the cycle stands adjacent to the taxi rank. This means that a repair will be completed within 28-days of the inspection. I can report that this repair was completed by the Council on 10th October, less than a fortnight after the inspection and 28-day ticket raised.

The next routine inspection is due to take place by 31st October. If any further safety defects have developed by this time then these will be actioned accordingly.

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

Thank you for your question, Cllr Theobald. The damage to pavements by vehicles parking on them can be substantial. The frequency of movement and the weight of vehicles are an important factor as well as the type of surface. Damage can be pronounced when vehicles park on paving slabs, more so where heavy vehicles or more frequent pavement parking and movement occurs.

Developers and building contractors should take all reasonable steps to protect the public highway including pavements during their planned works. A responsible contractor will have to provide a method statement to the client. We expect measures to be in place to protect the pavement set out within their method statement and site supervisors to ensure that such measures and mitigations are adhered to. Such procedures will need to be considered by the Planning Committee. However, from a Transport and City Infrastructure perspective, I recommend that planning decisions to include reference to good practice and protect our public highways including pavements.

I will write to the Chair of the Planning Committee to confirm this is taking place and being adhered to.

Officers are actively seeking to recover costs for damages to the public highway (including pavements). Highway inspectors assess the condition of the highway including pavements and can report to the council and the developer / contractor damages caused during a construction phase.

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

The site at Greenfield Crescent triangle was added to the Wilder Verges project as it already had an alternative mowing programme and was considered suitable to support wildlife. This is the same approach to many of the island sites in Hollingbury, Patcham and Westdene. Incorporating these sites into the Wilder Verges scheme will lead to better and more focused maintenance and oversight, as well as greater uplift in terms of biodiversity.

Public consultation was not undertaken at the time as the site was already outside the more vigorous mowing schedule.

The Greenfield Crescent triangle will have its next cut in October/November. The team is meeting next week to look at mowing regimes and any equipment requirements such as cut and collect machinery, to ensure that sites are managed appropriately and that further information can be provided to ensure residents are aware of cutting regimes.

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 Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation and Libraries

The work to cut the grass at the cemetery at All Saints church, Patcham, will start on 10th October. The team always seek to stick to timescales that have been communicated, but sometimes operational and resource issues mean work is delayed. Thank you for raising this, and we will take on board feedback to continue to improve the service provided, within the constraints we are working to after many years of continued reduction in resources.

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

Thank you for your question, Cllr McNair, regarding the drains on Carden Hill.

All gullies across the city are cleaned on a regular schedule at a risk-based frequency. This can be every 6 months, 1 year, 2 years, or 4 years, which is determined based on historical cleansing data, a risk score and delivered within the limited funding available to ensure public funds are used both responsibly and effectively.

The last inspection in Carden Hill was carried out in January 2025; however, as this road has been part of our surface extension treatment programme, we will be undertaking a visual survey of all the drains and any that are blocked form part of our contractual defect process associated with these works. If there is any damage to the drains this will be picked up and rectified by the contractor. Additionally, we do carry out an ad-hoc cleansing; however, these interventions are limited to situations where there is an immediate risk to public safety or where water is entering a home or building.

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

Given how much we have done in the last 2 years to expand our recycling provision, it is absurd to suggest that we have “little desire” in this area.

I do share the sentiment that we should have been further ahead on things like food waste in recent years, but the lack of progress on that is a question for previous administrations, not this one.

Since May 2023, we have:

- Deployed 23 bins for Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and 54 cartons bins at our recycling points
- Expanded our kerbside and communal recycling collections to include plastic pots, tubs and trays

- Introduced food waste

Lewes District Council has had food waste collections for some time, but apart from Lewes, we are the first council in Sussex to introduce this service.

We don't currently accept batteries in our kerbside collections, in part because there are so many other options for recycling them, including at the major supermarkets.

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

In the July Cabinet report about delivery against our Housing Strategy, we reported that in April there were 145 empty homes where we worked with owners to bring them back into use. We will continue to report back on our progress in bringing empty homes back into use through the Housing Strategy monitoring report which is considered at Cabinet annually.

I can report that figures from the 1 September 2025 indicate that 968 homes in Brighton & Hove have been vacant for longer than 12 months and classified as long-term empty. This does not include second homes or those going through the probate process. Of these 32 are council owned properties and we are taking steps to bring these homes back into use.

There can be complex and personal reasons why people leave a property empty, and the council's Empty Properties Team works with private owners to offer advice and support to help them bring their properties back into use. Increased council tax premiums on empty properties are also helping to discourage homes being left unoccupied.

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

Nevill Park is predominantly a sports/recreation ground and hosts many sports events all year round, with local football teams, cricket teams and other sports groups benefiting from the large area dedicated to sports and recreation. Nearby Hove park has a new 300k play area and other facilities and feasibility for new gym equipment is being

looked into. As this area of Hove develops, we will continue to review the provision and the mix of facilities needed.

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

Thank you for your question, Cllr Lyons, calling for additional parking restrictions in Woodland Drive to be brought in as a priority.

The Parking Scheme Priority timetable was agreed earlier this year and part of this includes a new parking consultation in the Goldstone Valley area. Officers in the Council's Parking Design and Implementation team are working on the detail of the consultation, and we will be contacting Ward Councillors shortly to arrange a meeting to discuss the boundary of this scheme and the inclusion of Woodland Drive to respond positively to this request.

Provided the respective residents have given consent to do so, please do share these comments with myself and senior officers in the Transport team. I look forward to discussing this further with you and the other ward councillors shortly.

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 Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Public Realm

There are restrictions for attachments to street lamps to ensure safety to pedestrians and prevent lasting damage to the units. I would appreciate being forwarded the correspondence referred to so that I can investigate this matter.

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

Thank you for your question, Cllr Earthey, and for drawing the connection to the former Brighton Metro concept. The success of the new Express bus services does indeed reflect a long-standing demand for faster, limited-stop connections across the city and region.

In partnership with Brighton & Hove City Council, Brighton & Hove Buses are actively developing a more consistent and easy-to-understand network. The colour-coding of the new Express routes has been particularly well received and is a direct response to the desire for clearer, more legible service branding. In collaboration with Brighton & Hove Buses, the Council are actively exploring how this approach can be expanded and refined.

As part of the Enhanced [Bus] Partnership which, as Cabinet member for Transport and City Infrastructure, I chair and part of our BSIP delivery, Brighton & Hove Buses have expressed a clear ambition to move toward a more “Metro-style” network, and the development of the Express routes represents an important step in that direction, offering faster, more direct journeys with a clearer identity and purpose. The opportunity to explore and develop this concept and place into a strategic citywide transport context has been taken forward as we have consulted on the Our City Transport Plan 2035. Opportunities to connect with neighbouring authorities to enable and enhance such a network into a wider regional context are expected once the Strategic Mayoral Authority for Brighton & Hove and Sussex is set up from next year. An affordable and sustainable integrated public transport plan to include rail, bus, taxi and bikeshare is needed and changes in regional governance may and should enable a stronger network for all.

While a “Brighton Crossrail” concept is ambitious, we remain open to innovative ideas that improve connectivity, legibility, and journey times. The Express bus programme is a strong foundation, and we are committed to building on its success.

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

I am cautiously optimistic of the emerging peace negotiations in respect of the war in Gaza and that this will lead to and end to the suffering of the people of Gaza as well as the return of hostages to their families. I have asked the East Sussex Pension Fund to update on their exposure to companies on the OHCHR list, and this is a matter we take extremely seriously as an administration. It is for other organisations to decide how they wish to respond on this matter.

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 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

Officers in the legal and planning teams are currently reviewing the appeal decision and costs decision on the gas works application and will be preparing reflections on this with a session for Planning Committee members to be arranged.

40 ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 40.1 The mayor noted that oral questions had been submitted and that 30 minutes was set aside for the duration of the item. He asked that both the questioner and responder endeavour to keep their questions and answers brief, to enable the questions listed to be taken:

1. Councillor Davis asked:

A few months ago councillors received comms regarding larger parking spaces in Norton Road car park. It was suggested that, and I want to quote, 'to better accommodate larger vehicles', but I've found I've been given an FOI and that's clearly not what the FOI said. So my question to the cabinet member is, does he have any safety concerns whatsoever regarding the concrete central beam in Norton Road car park?

Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure, replied:

Our engineer's report assessed the capacity and load bearing capacity of the current state of that car park, and we adjusted the number of vehicles that it could hold to make it entirely safe to continue as a car park at this point in time.

Councillor Davis asked a supplementary question:

Given that you've chosen the option to decommission the site within two years, could you outline what plans you have for the site, please?

Councillor Muten replied:

At this point in time we would not have any specific plans for that. We do need car parking capacity in our city, particularly this part of Hove, and we linked this to our parking review. We're doing a holistic strategy because there was not a good understanding of car parking in our city, I believe not for 20 years, particularly under the previous administration. So we fitted this in. So when we review the future of Norton Road car park, we will be reviewing it in the context of our wider car parking needs for this part of Hove and the city as a whole to make car parking work for residents, for business and for the environment. We want to really address it in a holistic way and so the future of Norton Road will fit within the future of our parking strategy.

2. Councillor McNair asked:

Why haven't the plans for housing next to the new King Alfred been included when the financial viability of the project depends on it?

Councillor Robins, Cabinet member for Sports, Recreation and Libraries, replied:

Well, for the simple reason we haven't sold the land and we don't have any plans for building. What we're building is a leisure centre. The development will come later once the land is sold and whoever buys it will put forward the plans that they have, which would then need to go through planning and be approved in the normal way.

Councillor McNair asked a supplementary question:

How likely is it that the number of flats will need to increase to meet the rising costs of the project?

Councillor Robins replied:

Well, I think you forget that the number of flats to be built there was actually decided in 2016, somewhere around the region of 400 would be put in there. That's always been the case for the last 10 years. We're not starting anything new. As I say, it will be up to whoever buys the land to put in their planning application to develop the land however they see fit. If there's too many flats going in for the site, then presumably planning will turn it down.

3. Councillor Fishleigh asked:

Please would you tell us more about the £142,000 compensation for loss of office payment that was made to a council officer earlier this year

Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Chair, replied:

I think you know that this is a forum for asking policy questions of the council, nothing to do with HR or operational matters.

4. Councillor Robinson asked:

Councillor Robins, I'm very excited with the plans for the new King Alfred Leisure Centre. As one of the ward councillors, I've been following and answering comments from residents on social media. Lots in support, of course, and the usual few just making mischief. For the record, could you please provide us with a list of all the things this centre will deliver more of than the current operational site.

Councillor Robins, Cabinet member for Sports, Recreation and Libraries, replied:

Thank you Councillor Robinson, and a special thank you for all the help and support you've given me. In fact a big thank you for all the help and support I've received from all the Labour group on bringing this project forward.

It's very difficult to list all the new improvements that have been made and what more there will be in the new one than the old. So I've started just by saying in terms of the pools, we've got three new pools. I'm very aware of the time Madame Mayor. I could stand here for three quarters of an hour and tell you. But I'll do in terms of the pool. We have three new pools going in. The new pools will feature an eight-lane competition pool, a teaching pool with a moveable bottom, and a leisure pool area. All three pools have their own heating and filtration systems. At the moment, all three pools share the same water and filtration system. Leisure water should be a higher temperature than the main pool. With the current design, this is not possible. A refurbishment could not address this.

The fixed step for the current teaching pool does not allow different uses and activities. The open layout of the current pools allow a limited opportunity for groups who would like a more private environment to swim. This is all addressed in the new layout.

I realise there's not much time so I'll just list a few things. The six-court modern sports hall with room for spectators, multi-use studios, large full equipment gym, 140-150 stations, family play area, [unclear], informal amphitheatre and seating, and I haven't even touched on how much more sustainable and environmentally friendly the whole building will be.

But there will be some things in the new building that will lack from what the old building has – plenty of leaky roofs, rusty steels and mouldy walls, just to name a few.

5. Councillor Lademacher asked:

Can the council commit to upholding standards in temporary accommodation and will it explain the approach to ensuring that contractors provide safe and dignified conditions for residents in temporary accommodation?

Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing, replied:

Yes, conditions in some areas or some types of accommodation across our city have long been an issue for a very long time, and this is why this administration has implemented a raft of provisions to tackle just that and thank you for raising it. So, we've had quite a few different interventions, such as implementing and overseeing of the management of some of the providers because some of them didn't come up to our standards and we're still looking at some of these. We've also put in place, and this is really important if anybody hears of anymore please tell us, a direct reporting system for any resident in accommodations by our providers. So rather than go to the provider who may or may not listen to their concerns, they should come direct to us. We can then approach the provider and we can then oversee what repairs and remedial actions that would be taken.

We also now have the power to inspect repairs and remedial actions to ensure that they have been implemented. A very recent example is we now have a programme of works that have been agreed and are being actioned right now as we speak, I'm proud to say. And not only that, as we mentioned earlier on, and I'm going to keep mentioning this because I'm very proud of what we're doing, we are now planning a very bold and very compassionate intervention to directly purchase hundreds of temporary homes across the city for our homeless families, because I believe our homeless families should have dignity and they should have security and they should have good conditions. And by us buying direct and overseeing them and owning them, we can guarantee those conditions. So thank you very much for your question.

Councillor Lademacher asked a supplementary question:

The recent policy to buy 200 houses for temporary accommodation is a really positive step. I welcome it and it clearly recognises the council's commitment to supporting people. However, it doesn't go nearly far enough. Can the council confirm what plans are in place to build upon this?

Councillor Williams replied:

Apart from guaranteeing the buying of at least 200 homes for temporary accommodation in a very short period of time, that is guaranteed and I want to thank Jacob Taylor for squaring that financially. We are building hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of new council homes as well, because temporary accommodation isn't where we want people to be, but it's something that the process has to be. We want permanent, good quality social housing in our city.

We also recently met with officers of other housing associations to really foster some better working relationships with the other providers in our city and to ensure that we can provide in the future as many possible social homes as we possibly can.

6. Councillor Meadows asked:

Why did the chair of housing go against the advice of planning officers on the gasworks development?

Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration, replied:

The chair of housing did not vote either way on that application. That was an application that went to Planning Committee and the ten members of Planning Committee voted on the application and the way they voted is subject to the public record.

Councillor Meadows asked a supplementary question:

Councillor Williams made a political play at a three-hour special meeting, thumping the table and really giving it her all, knowing this will cost the council dearly. So what is the real total cost to the council on top of the £160,000 we know about, including all officers' time and Kings' Counsel charges for playing party politics and how many libraries and toilets will that keep open?

Councillor Taylor replied:

It's an interesting and unfortunate attempt to politicise a planning decision. I would gently note that first of all, planning is not political and is not whipped. But my understanding is that the only Conservative member on that committee voted against the planning application. So it's a bit silly for Councillor Meadows to try and pretend it's a party-political issue. To answer a question directly, we don't know the final cost settlement that is to be determined in negotiation with the developer.

7. Councillor Earthy asked a question:

There are many instances in Brighton of pelican crossing lights located within 15 yards of bus stops. Red lights can force buses to halt abruptly less than 15 yards from their stop before resuming their journey. This 15-yard stop-start wastes emissions. What progress has been made to fit buses with transponders to override pedestrian lights and to reduce emissions?

Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure, replied:

Councillor Earthy, we are improving smart traffic signal coordination through the Bus Service Improvement Plan via a project to give more traffic signal priority to buses. This is expected to lead to improvements to bus punctuality and reliability, which will improve the appeal of these sustainable transport modes and reduce emissions.

After successful integration of the data feeds into Brighton & Hove City Council's urban traffic control system, two trial sites are now operational along the Eastern Road corridor. Initial testing shows the system is working as anticipated. Work will now continue to roll out the system to the next several junctions on the Eastern Road trial corridor to build a greater understanding of system capabilities, system validation and refinement.

Councillor Earthey asked a supplementary question:

My question really alludes to the superiority of the design of puffin over pelican crossings, which the former, as I'm sure this chamber knows, uses sensors to detect pedestrians and adapt signal timing while pelican crossings rely on fixed timers. So really puffin crossings are the way of the future, but it sounds like you're already doing tests and trials and things on that. I say in my regular bus travels around the city it's extremely frustrating when you're on a bus, it's just coming to its stop, and then the driver has to slam the anchors on because the light goes red in front of it. All the passengers fall over because they're within two seconds of the stop and the light goes green it starts up again with the acceleration. What are the plans to replace and upgrade pelican crossings with puffin crossings?

Councillor Muten replied:

In some ways I have answered that in a previous point but pelican crossings, or pedestrian light controlled, uses lights to control traffic. Pedestrians press the button and wait for the lights to change traffic to stop, etcetera. Puffin crossings, or pedestrian user friendly intelligent crossings, use intelligent sensors to adjust the crossing for pedestrians and can link with approaching buses, for instance, to aid bus timing.

The technology is now available and advancing to connect pedestrian crossings and bus times. And as I mentioned at the Eastern Road corridor, we're trying out six sites, six junctions. Let's see how we get on. If it's successful, we're very keen to see that rolled out so we get smoother journeys. Yes, it's very important to reduce the number of bus passenger incidents on buses and that's one of the reasons why we've introduced red routes as well.

8. Councillor De Oliveira asked:

Warm bunks, free Wi-Fi, educational support, story time, bed story time, brush your teeth story time. A safe place to sit, a space at the heart of communities. If libraries are crucial, and I believe they are, Labour's plan of making them harder to access is shameful. You don't call something essential, then lock the door on the people who need it the most, or do you? If you call libraries essential, why are you closing them?

Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries, replied:

At the moment we've only just finished the consultation. What was put in the budget last year was that library services were given a saving to make of £210,000, which they've come back after doing the needs and usage analyzation to tell us where they think those savings can be made.

We've now gone out to consultation. We're looking at different ways of running libraries. We're looking at how we can save and keep the libraries open. That consultation finished on Friday last week. So we now need to look at the data we've received back. We've received an awful lot of data back and then we will be making the decision at the cabinet meeting on the 12th of December.

Councillor De Oliveira asked a supplementary question:

If the government solution to fix the economy is imposed austerity in closing down libraries in the city here, what's your council going to do about it?

Councillor Robins:

Well, until we analyse the consultation that we've held, we don't know what we're going to do about it. That's the point of holding the consultation and that's the point of analyzing the consultation that you've got. If I stand here now and tell you what I intend to do about it, then what was the point of consulting anybody? That's the very point of the consultation and that's what we've done – a consultation. We'll now go away and the data will be analysed. And as I say, the report will come to the cabinet on the 12th December when we will make a decision about what we're doing.

9. Councillor Cattell asked:

I was very pleased and excited to read about the air source heat pump that we're fitting at Peter Gladwin School, making it the first city in the school to have its gas boilers fully decommissioned.

Together with the programme of installing solar PVs on many of our own buildings, this marks a hugely significant step on this administration's journey towards net zero. With that in mind, can you tell us, Councillor Rowkins, what other carbon neutral projects you've got up your sleeve?

Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero & Environmental Services, replied:

It is a very exciting project, I fully agree with you. I went to visit Peter Gladwin School two or three weeks ago and it's very exciting. Not only because it's the first school to have its gas boilers fully decommissioned, but because it's a really good example of a whole system approach. So it's out with the gas boilers, heat pumps going in, energy efficiency improvements to the building, rooftop solar operated on behalf of the council by one of the energy co-ops, in this case BHESCo, and all the work done by local contractors. So I think it's a very good example of how we want to see net zero projects, indeed decarbonisation projects, done throughout the city.

Crucially with this school, it's essentially a test bed, it's providing really good learning for us because this is a start of a programme to decarbonise more and more schools. We've currently got three further schools undergoing feasibility studies in order to identify cost and everything and the learning from this project is going to be really crucial.

In terms of other projects, I mean it's a long list. I'm not going to speak for a long time, but we're about to replace about 2000 light fittings to reduce demand in some of our care homes, family hubs and other council buildings. People will have seen that we've been doing a lot on rooftop solar. Since the start of this particular bit of the rooftop solar programme on our council housing, we've installed more than 730 panels since the programme started in 2024 and the plan is to do somewhere

between six and eight new installations every week over the next year. So really keeping the pace up.

We've started a retrofit programme for 100 of our least energy efficient council homes, which will obviously not just drive down emissions, but bills for residents and those surveys are already underway.

We've got solar farm feasibility going; we're exploring the technical feasibility of a city centre heat network; we're working on a net zero investment and delivery mechanism to bring in private investment on the scale needed; and we're already miles ahead on EV charging, but obviously Councillor Muten still isn't happy with that and insists on several thousand more. So the main problem that I have is that there just aren't enough hours in the day.

Councillor Cattell asked a supplementary question:

To ask Councillor Rowkins when he gets the time to sleep?

Councillor Rowkins replied:

I take micro-naps.

10. Councillor Sykes asked:

This is to the background of our TBM 5 position and financial constraints and it should be easy as we've already had the debate in full council about local government reorganisation. So if Councillor Taylor had 8 to 9 million to spend as he wished on council services, what would he spend it on?

Councillor Taylor, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration, replied:

It's a good question because it's almost the exact amount that we've just permissioned – £10 million to purchase temporary accommodation and try and transform the lives of our homeless families. £8 to £9 million, there's all sorts of things that we are already spending it on, including refurbishing our city, building new leisure facilities, restoring Madeira Terraces, resurfacing our roads and, as I say, investing in purchasing accommodation in the open market to try and change the nature of our housing market in the city and get people into more settled temporary accommodation and out of the very expensive private sector. So that's just one example.

Councillor Sykes asked a supplementary question:

If I counted properly I'd say, so that £8 to £9 million - your priority for local government reorganisation because that's the cost of that - is about 9th or 10th on your list of priorities. So that's interesting. But my supplementary is: when considering the financial upside of local government reorganisation, there's a line in there entitled disaggregation disbenefits with a few million in financial **risk**, so I wondered if you could remind what these are and how they might affect **Brighton City Council**.

Councillor Taylor replied:

In terms of the first comment, I mean Councillor Sykes is right, we have a very long list of priorities because we're a very ambitious administration. I think one of the differences that residents have really noticed, and indeed we'll see it later today this evening on the Tory Notice of Motion, is that we don't take the view that we can only do one thing at once, we've got to concentrate on that and not take any more ambitious decisions to do other things. So yes, we've got a very long list of priorities that we're trying to achieve in the city and that's what residents want to see, despite a difficult backdrop that we acknowledge in terms of the financial picture, we're still trying to be ambitious.

In terms of risk, I think the papers that were published were reasonably clear and transparent that there is both a potential one-off transitional cost for the whole set of unitary arrangements across the county. We don't know what those are going to be. We've made our submission, other people in the county have made other submissions. Those costs exist and indeed there are risks within that. But we tried to transparently set out what we've sent to and submitted to government, clearly the government will now need to decide, weigh up those risks, weigh up the costs and benefits and they will decide what they want to propose which will then go to formal consultation. We haven't made a final decision, we've simply submitted one idea which the government will now look at, amongst others, and then end up going to consultation.

Councillor Theobald asked a question:

I'd like to know would you consider an electric run floral clock in Palmeira Square? Because this is what other cities have done now, they've gone on to electric and that would be a lot cheaper. So perhaps you can give me an answer?

Councillor Robins, Cabinet Member for Sports, Recreation & Libraries, replied:

Well, my understanding is it is an electric clock. It's electric magnetic. It's certainly not a mechanical clock.

I was interested earlier on when Councillor Theobald mentioned the Smiths of Derbyshire who'd done the original clock, because they're the people we met down there a few weeks ago who came to tell us that the current clock couldn't actually be restored – that what was left underground isn't workable – but they could give us a price for fitting a new clock, which is what they've gone away now to do, to give us a price to fit a new clock. So we've got a proposition that they're going to price up a new clock. There's another proposition that we might have some sort of sculpture there or perhaps a sundial or something. There's another proposition that they might fit one of these mini tower clocks; and there's a proposition that we might put back just the hands and the face as it was, although that would need to go onto a solid dial rather than the carpet planting which we won't be involved with.

But to the best of my knowledge, Councillor Theobald, the clock was always electric. I don't think it was ever that anybody wound it up and set the pendulum spinning. It was always electric, that's why there's an electric box there to supply it with electricity.

Councillor Theobald asked a supplementary question:

That's a shame because I think the floral flowers look lovely around the clock. I just wondered - if you get your estimate, could this not be paid by CIL or sponsorship or fundraising, or something like that? Or grant? There are ways to get the money for something like this because the residents so much want to have it there.

Councillor Robins replied:

Well of course there's ways of getting the money to do it, and we could look at ways of getting the money to do it. The only thing I'd say is that it's not just a case of installing a new clock, it's a case of maintaining a new clock year upon year upon year. And it's the same with what you describe as lovely flowers. I personally think to see nature that flipped and stunted in its growth isn't a wonderful thing. But there we are, that's up to you. That's where we are. And just as an aside, the clock hasn't run for about 21 years.

41 REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE OCTOBER 2025**41.1 RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the Council appoints/re-appoints its committees with the sizes and allocation of seats between political groups as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

42 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

- 42.1 Councillor O'Quinn introduced and formally moved the report.
- 42.2 Councillor Shanks moved the amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Davis.
- 42.3 Councillor Meadows and Earthey spoke on the matter.
- 42.4 The mayor put the amendment to the vote and confirmed that it had been lost.
- 42.5 The mayor put the recommendations as detailed in the report to the vote which was carried.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Council formally approved the changes to the Constitution relating to increased task & finish groups and time for public questions for Overview & Scrutiny as set out in the report and in Appendix 1, with immediate effect.
- 2) That Council formally approved changes to the Council Procedure Rules relating to Extraordinary Council meetings and the notice period for member written questions as set out in the report and Appendix 2, with immediate effect.
- 3) That Council authorised the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary or incidental to the implementation of the above changes, and

that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend such parts of the Council's constitutional documents as they consider necessary or incidental to incorporate the changes, and to republish the Constitution.

43 COUNCIL PLAN REFRESH

- 43.1 Councillor Alexander introduced and formally moved the report.
- 43.2 Councillor Sykes, McNair, Fishleigh, Cattell, McLeay, Nann, Hill, Sheard and Davis spoke on the matter.
- 43.3 Councillor Alexander responded to the debate.
- 43.4 The mayor put the recommendations as detailed in the report to the vote which was carried.

RESOLVED:

- 1) Council received the report from the Cabinet meeting held on 17 July 2025 and the recommendations for approval:
- 2) Council approved the Council Plan refresh at Appendix 1.
- 3) Council noted the achievements made since the Council Plan was adopted in July 2023 as set out in Appendix 2.
- 4) Council noted the progress made in relation to delivering the Council Plan in 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 3.
- 5) Council noted the recommendations in the Corporate Peer Challenge at Appendix 4 and the response to these in the Council Plan Refresh.

44 DEVOLUTION FOR SUSSEX & BRIGHTON

- 44.1 Councillor Hewitt introduced and formally moved the report.
- 44.2 Councillor Sykes, De Oliveira, Hogan, Hill, Daniel and Pickett spoke on the matter.
- 44.3 Councillor Hewitt responded to the debate.
- 44.4 Councillors called for a recorded vote on the recommendations which was put to the vote and carried.
- 44.5 The mayor put the recommendations as detailed in the report to the vote:

		For	Against	Abstain			For	Against	Abstain
1	Alexander	x			28	Lyons			x
2	Allen	x			29	Mackey	x		
3	Asaduzzaman	x			30	McGregor	x		

4	Atkinson	Not Present			31	McLeay		x	
5	Bagaeen	Not Present			32	McNair			x
6	Baghoth	Not Present			33	Meadows			x
7	Cattell	x			34	Miller	Not Present		
8	Czolak	Not Present			35	Muten	x		
9	Daniel	x			36	Nann	x		
10	Davis		x		37	O'Quinn	X		
11	De Oliveira		x		38	Parrott	x		
12	Earthey	x			39	Pickett		x	
13	Evans	X			40	Robins	x		
14	Fishleigh	x			41	Robinson	x		
15	Fowler	x			42	Rowkins	x		
16	Galvin	Not Present			43	Sankey	x		
17	Gauge	Not Present			44	Shanks		x	
18	Goddard	Not Present			45	Sheard	x		
19	Goldsmith		x		46	Simon	Not Present		
20	Grimshaw	x			47	Sykes		x	
21	Guilmant	x			48	Taylor	x		
22	Helliwell	x			49	Theobald			x
23	Hewitt	x			50	Thomson	x		
24	Hill		x		51	West	Not Present		
25	Hogan			x	52	Wilkinson	x		
26	Lademacher		x		53	Williams	x		
27	Loughran	x			54	Winder	x		
						Total	30	9	5

44.6 The mayor confirmed that the recommendations had been carried by a vote of 30 in favour, 9 against, with 5 abstentions

RESOLVED:

- 1) That Council endorsed the recommendations set out in the Cabinet report attached.

45 PARTIAL REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACES 2025

45.1 Councillor Allen introduced and formally moved the report.

45.2 Councillor Shanks spoke on the matter.

45.3 Councillor Allen responded to the debate.

45.4 The mayor put the recommendations as detailed in the report to the vote which was carried.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Council agrees the revised polling district and polling place schemes outlined in Appendix 3
- 2) That the Council delegates authority to the Director Governance and Law to take all measures as are necessary or incidental, as required by law, to implement the changes indicated in paragraph 2.1.
- 3) That the Council delegates authority to the Returning Officer to designate alternative polling places, in the event of any polling place being unavailable, at any poll taking place prior to the next review of polling places, subject to consultation with Group Leaders and respective ward Councillors.

46 WEST SALTDEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – DECISION STATEMENT**46.1 RESOLVED:**

- 1) That Council agreed to:
 - 1.1 Determine that the West Saltdean Neighbourhood Plan be modified according to the recommendations in the independent examiner's report and as set out in the attached Decision Statement (Appendix 1) and that the Decision Statement be published.
 - 1.2 To approve the examiner's recommendation that the Neighbourhood Plan now proceed to a local referendum. The referendum area is the West Saltdean Neighbourhood Area.
 - 1.3 In the event that more than 50% of residents vote to support the Neighbourhood Plan in the local referendum, that the Council formally 'makes' the West Saltdean Neighbourhood Plan.

A PROTECT INDEPENDENT SCRUTINY, SAVE HEALTHWATCH ENGLAND

- 46a.1 The joint Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Hill on behalf of the Green Group and Brighton and Hove Independents Group and formally seconded by Councillor Earthey.
- 46a.2 Councillor Wilkinson moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Alexander.
- 46a.3 Councillors Shanks, Hogan, De Oliveira and Earthey spoke on the matter
- 46a.4 Councillor Hill responded to the debate and did not accept the amendment by the Labour Group.
- 46a.5 The mayor put the amendment to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

46a.6 The mayor put the motion as amended to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

RESOLVED:

This council notes:

- 1) The Health Secretary's proposal to abolish the independent local health and social care champion Healthwatch and to give health scrutiny powers over to Integrated Care Boards (ICBs). This will mean that the new Sussex and Surrey Heartlands ICB would take on Brighton & Hove Healthwatch's function locally next April. Social Care scrutiny powers would move to Councils.
- 2) That 35,000 residents have been supported by Healthwatch Brighton & Hove since 2013.
- 3) Concerns raised by Brighton & Hove Older People's Council about the perceived impact the government's proposal will have on elderly people.
- 4) The letter by Gary Wilkinson, Chair of Brighton & Hove's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee raising the committee's concerns about the work Healthwatch does in ensuring people have up to date information, sharing people's experiences with commissioners and supporting individuals to navigate a complex healthcare landscape.
- 5) The campaign led by local Healthwatch teams to oppose this proposal and to ask the Health Secretary to undertake a consultation with the public to codesign the future of scrutiny services.

This council resolves to:

- 1) Requests the leader of the council to ensure stronger democratic accountability and improved senior representation of elected members within strategic decision-making bodies following the formation of the new Sussex and Surrey ICB.
- 2) Requests the leader of the council to work with existing upper tier authorities, new Mayor and unitary authorities under LGR to develop a common approach to capture the voice and viewpoints of users of the local health system and where possible to maintain local oversight.

B GAZA AND COUNCIL FINANCIAL EXPOSURE

46b.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Sykes on behalf of the Green Group and formally seconded by Councillor Goldsmith.

46b.2 Councillor Taylor moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor McGregor.

46b.3 Councillors Lyons, Meadows and Goldsmith spoke on the matter

46b.4 Councillor Sykes responded to the debate and accepted the amendment by the Labour Group.

46b.5 Councillors called for a recorded vote on the motion which was put to the vote and carried.

46b.6 The mayor put the motion as amended to the vote.

		For	Against	Abstain			For	Against	Abstain
1	Alexander	x			28	Lyons		x	
2	Allen	x			29	Mackey	x		
3	Asaduzzaman	x			30	McGregor	x		
4	Atkinson	Not Present			31	McLeay	x		
5	Bagaeen	Not Present			32	McNair		x	
6	Baghoth	Not Present			33	Meadows		X	
7	Cattell	x			34	Miller	Not Present		
8	Czolak	Not Present			35	Muten	x		
9	Daniel	Not Present			36	Nann	x		
10	Davis	x			37	O'Quinn	Not Present		
11	De Oliveira	x			38	Parrott	x		
12	Earthey	x			39	Pickett	x		
13	Evans	X			40	Robins	x		
14	Fishleigh	x			41	Robinson	x		
15	Fowler	x			42	Rowkins	x		
16	Galvin	Not Present			43	Sankey	x		
17	Gauge	Not Present			44	Shanks	x		
18	Goddard	Not Present			45	Sheard	x		
19	Goldsmith	x			46	Simon	Not Present		
20	Grimshaw	x			47	Sykes	x		
21	Guilmant	x			48	Taylor	x		
22	Helliwell	x			49	Theobald		x	
23	Hewitt	x			50	Thomson	Not Present		
24	Hill	x			51	West	Not Present		
25	Hogan		x		52	Wilkinson	x		
26	Lademacher	x			53	Williams	x		
27	Loughran	x			54	Winder	x		
						Total	36	5	0

46b.7 The Mayor confirmed that the motion as amended had been carried by a vote of 36 in favour, 5 against, with no abstentions

RESOLVED:

This Council noted:

- 1) The welcome news that a peace plan has been agreed in the Middle East ensuring the release of all remaining hostages and for life-saving aid to reach Gaza.
- 2) The widespread view, including of the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS)¹ on 31/08/25 and a UN Independent Commission² on 16/09/25, that the Israeli Government has been committing genocide in Gaza;
- 3) That recent legal analysis has raised concerns that third-party states, including the UK, must ensure their activities do not contribute to violations of international law;
- 4) That this analysis has further suggested these responsibilities apply to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and other local government activities under domestic law;³
- 5) The recent letter from our Council Leader to the Chair of the ESCC Pension Committee requesting an update further to report A/HRC/37/39 of the UN Human Rights Council and East Sussex Pension Fund (ESPF) exposure;

This council therefore resolved to:

- 1) Request officers to bring a report to Cabinet detailing any exposure of ESPF, of our treasury management and of our freehold landholdings to 'involved companies'³;
- 2) Notify other local authorities who may have exposure via the East Sussex Pension Fund of the letter from the Leader of the Council and request that they seek the same information

C ENFORCING COVENANT ON LAND IN WEST SALTDEAN

46c.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Fishleigh on behalf of the Brighton and Hove Independents Group and formally seconded by Councillor Earthey.

46c.2 The mayor noted that the Labour Group amendment had been withdrawn.

46c.3 Councillors Pickett and Rowkins spoke on the matter

46c.4 The mayor put the motion to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

RESOLVED:

This council notes:

- 1) The 1938 agreement between Saltdean Estate Company Ltd, the Borough of Brighton and The Mayor Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Brighton which details various conditions attached to three separate plots of land known as The Mount Estate in West Saltdean – and described as open spaces in the Covenant.
- 2) That Clause 4 of 1938 agreement gives BHCC the powers to formally designate the land as public open space.

- 3) That the three plots of land are designated as Local Green Spaces in the West Saltdean Neighbourhood Plan which gives them the same protection as land in the green belt.
- 4) That locked gates have been installed meaning the land cannot be enjoyed as the open space the covenant intended.

This council resolves to:

- 1) Request that officers prepare a report to be presented to Cabinet about the processes, timescale and costs of invoking Clause 4 of the Covenant for plots 2 and 3 of The Mount Estate.

D INEQUALITY AND LIFE OUTCOMES IN BRIGHTON & HOVE

46d.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Taylor on behalf of the Labour Group and formally seconded by Councillor Guilmant.

46d.2 Councillor McLeay moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Davis.

46d.3 Councillors Meadows and De Oliveira spoke on the matter

46d.4 Councillor Taylor responded to the debate and did not accept the amendment by the Green Group.

46d.5 The mayor put the amendment to the vote and confirmed that it had been lost.

46d.6 The mayor put the motion to the vote and confirmed that it had been carried.

RESOLVED:

This council notes:

- 1) That the UK remains one of the most unequal countries in the developed world, with child poverty rising sharply under the previous government.¹
- 2) That inequality is particularly stark in Brighton & Hove, with a recent Sutton Trust report highlighting that parts of our city have some of the lowest social mobility in the country.²
- 3) The steps already taken locally to tackle inequality; creating a fairness fund to directly support residents; priority school admissions for those on Free School Meals; new school bus routes and free bus passes for Whitehawk families; free school meals for those educated at home.

- 4) Government's steps to alleviate child poverty including expanding eligibility for Free School Meals and signals that the former Coalition Government's two child benefit cap will be scrapped.
- 5) The welcome news from government of £20m for Whitehawk through the Pride in Place programme, with local residents directly shaping how funding will be invested.

This council resolves to:

- 1) Request the relevant Cabinet Member to consider a formal review of inequality in the city, and the impact it has on life chances; drawing on lived-experience, and welcoming input from residents and experts in a 'call for evidence'

E KING ALFRED LEISURE CENTRE

46e.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor McNair on behalf of the Conservative Group and formally seconded by Councillor Meadows.

46e.2 Councillors Sykes, Robins, Asaduzzaman, Shanks and Meadows spoke on the matter

46e.3 Councillor McNair responded to the debate.

46e.5 The mayor put the to the vote and confirmed that it had been lost.

RESOLVED:

- 1) The motion was lost.

47 CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting concluded at 11.34pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2025

