

Brighton & Hove City Council

Cabinet

Agenda Item 141(a)

Subject: Member Questions

Date of meeting: 19 March 2026

A maximum period of fifteen minutes in total shall be made available at each meeting of the Executive for questions from Members of the Council.

The questions included on the list of questions referred to above shall be taken as read at the Cabinet meeting. The question will be answered either orally or at the discretion of the Chair by a written answer circulated after the meeting. Officers may assist the Leader or a Cabinet Member with technical answers to questions. No supplementary questions shall be permitted.

The following written questions have been received from Members:

1. Councillor Meadows - Modernising our recycling centre.

While we're happy the aim is to increase Brighton & Hove's woeful recycling rates, we are concerned about borrowing costs. How close is the council to a borrowing ceiling given that we are borrowing for the King Alfred Centre, Withdean swimming pool and are paying off the loan for i360? How resilient are we to future shocks?

2. Councillor Meadows - Environmental Enforcement Centre

There was a budget on 26th February, only two weeks ago. Is the overspend outlined in 6.1 additional overspend from what was outlined in the budget? What is meant by 'structural pressure' (paragraph 6.1)? Did officers not know this extra expenditure was required last month before budget council?

3. Councillor McNair - A Cleaner City Centre

Has the establishment of a new overnight cleansing team (paragraph 3.3) reduced cover from other parts of Brighton & Hove? Will this level of service be rolled out to the rest of the city, including other central areas such as London Road and George Street?
How will the overnight cleansing team handle rough sleepers who might be sleeping in central areas targeted, for example, for graffiti removal?

4. Councillor McNair - Local Authority Bus Grant Delivery Plan 2026-27

Has the council been given any reason as to why funding is being cut by 5% as outlined in paragraph 6.1?

5. Councillor Meadows - Planned Maintenance Budget

What is the purpose of the property condition survey for Old Boat Corner Community Centre at a cost of £4,700? Are there any particular concerns about the building?

6. Councillor Meadows - Pride in Place

Whitehawk and Moulsecoomb were part of the new deal for communities fund of £50mn delivered over 10 years in the 1990s. Whitehawk was given the bulk of that funding which produced little result. What lessons have been learnt from past failures that can be carried forward to this programme?

7. Councillor McNair - Affordable Housing Planning Advice Note

According to paragraph 3.1, 'City Plan Policy CP20 sets a requirement for 40% affordable housing to be provided by developers in schemes of 15 or more homes and requires smaller percentages of affordable housing on site or an in lieu financial contribution in schemes down to 5 homes.' Will reducing the number of houses that are liable to pay a financial contribution from 9 to 5 put an onerous burden on house builders? The development of three houses in Rotherfiled Crescent is one example of the challenges faced with small infill sites. Is this financial contribution in schemes of 5 homes another reason why infill is becoming unaffordable for developers?

8. Councillor Meadows – Annual Procurement forward plan

How are we paying for a £14m expansion of the city's bike scheme? How will this allow other authorities in the southeast to establish their own scheme? Are Brighton & Hove residents subsidising the scheme in other councils?

9. Councillor McNair - Large Panel Systems Building and Estates Renewal

Why are secure tenants of the 8 blocks due to be demolished being helped to buy property (paragraph 3.14), possibly in the private sector? How many tenants do they envisage the £0.4m helping?

10. Councillor Raphael Hill - Modernising our recycling centre

The Hollingdean Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) has a significant visual impact on the Round Hill Conservation Area. A proposal for a green roof and green walls proposed for the MRF were part of the original design intentions but were not formalized as enforceable planning conditions in the approved application BH2006/00900 in June 2006. These features were ultimately not implemented. While I appreciate this report is largely about new machinery, could investment in the MRF also consider ways to include improvements that were part of the original design?

11. Councillor Ollie Sykes - Modernising our recycling centre

Concerning the loan for the capital works, a likely PWLB rate of 4.5% is indicated, giving a financing cost of £0.130m annually over 25 years. The

current PWLB fixed rate is about 6% for infrastructure investment, so where does 4.5% come from and how would a 6% rate affect the business case?

12. Councillor Ollie Sykes - Cleaner City Centre

A roving Field Officer role was piloted a few years ago with elements of similar remit to the City Centre Manager role. What lessons have been drawn from the Field Officer pilot, which was not continued?

13. Councillor Ollie Sykes - LA Bus Grant Delivery Plan

Will there be any consideration of corridor strengthening of the Western Road /Church Road bus corridor which is seeing damage and degradation from heavy vehicles including buses?

14. Councillor Pete West - Modernising our recycling centre

Yet again, another thin cabinet report that proposes significant investment over a long time period yet fails to present a full case; leaving obvious and major questions unaddressed. The financial implications give some indication of the loan and staff cost modelling, but don't consider the income/cost of marketing additionally separated materials. It is only when we read the Risk Implications do we see mention that the investment may offer opportunities for additional income. There are, of course, no figures offered for what that income might be, whether it will be able to help address the further 'pressure funding', or whether it may potentially end up with further cost for reprocessing, storage or disposal of poor value materials. I don't wish to seem cynical, but this report tells us too little to be confident the decision is being based on sound thinking. What are the full costings, please?

15. Councillor Shanks - Community Safety and Crime Reduction Strategy 2026 – 2029

Why was the opposition given no chance to scrutinise this important document, why do we have only administration councillors on this important partnership body. Will you consider giving other voices a seat.

16. Councillor McLeay - Middle Street- Statutory Notices

The proposed closure of Middle Street School is devastating for many families—those currently at the school, those whose children thrived there, and those who were educated there themselves. It has long been a much loved, once oversubscribed school. There is a strong feeling across the community that this closure could have been avoided had the right support been in place. Will Cabinet commit to a comprehensive external and independent investigation, so that any failings can be understood and prevented elsewhere in the city's school system?

17. Councillor McLeay - Large Panel Systems Building and Estates Renewal

What is the current annual availability of 3 and 4 bed council properties, and how does this compare with the projected need arising from decanting the LPS blocks?

18. Councillor McLeay - Large Panel Systems Building and Estates Renewal

The financial implications highlight £0.4m for the Home Ownership Pact pilot, a £7.489m capital allocation for LPS-related work, and an anticipated loss of £2.9m in annual rental income across the eight LPS blocks. Given these pressures, can Cabinet explain how the HRA will absorb these costs while ensuring the programme remains financially sustainable?