

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 21

Subject: Written questions from Councillors

Date of meeting: 23 July 2026

Report of: Director of Governance & Law

Contact Officer: Name: Anthony Soyinka
Tel: 01273 291006
Email: anthony.soyinka@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answer detailed below:

1. Councillor Earthey:

In the context of BHCC's Decarbonisation strategy and its response to changes in central government energy policy, please provide an update on BHCC local policy on :

- a) Installation of onshore wind capacity within the City's boundaries, and reaching agreement with the SDNP for suitable sites;
- b) Installation of battery storage capacity on BHCC-owned brownfield sites;
- c) Finding alternative sources of grant funding for domestic insulation, given that the Warmer Homes funding scheme has already reached capacity, risking a huge backlog in applications;
- d) Enforcing BHCC freeholder rights over leaseholders of BHCC properties who refuse to engage with BHCC and the local community for the installation of solar PV arrays on the council buildings they lease.

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

2. Councillor Earthey:

Please provide an update on the City's Glyphosate Weed Control Programme – has it achieved its publicly-stated objectives to date, and what is BHCC's future weed control strategy?

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

3. Councillor Barton Ahmad:

Brighton & Hove City Council

With regard to Goldsmid ward and the recent new developments within the ward, what is the council doing to monitor occupancy and ensure that these developments do not remain unoccupied?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing.

4. Councillor Pickett:

In light of the recent hot weather, and in anticipation of the deluge that will follow, what is the council doing to pre-empt the anticipated flooding that will probably be worse than ever before and in the knowledge that calls within certain areas to clear blocked drains are being ignored eg bottom of Preston Drove?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

5. Councillor Pickett:

It is well documented that older people and children are most at risk of suffering health issues when it comes to pollution. Does the council have any plans to consolidate transport, environment and public health policy, joining up the statistics that prove that a reduction in traffic, woodburning, etc, correlates with improved health outcomes?

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

6. Councillor Hill:

Can papers for the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority meetings be available on the Brighton & Hove City Council website? Currently I have to use the East Sussex County Council site to get information.

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council.

7. Councillor Hill:

By April 2027, the East Sussex Fire Authority Board will be dissolved and the Sussex & Brighton Strategic Authority will take over their powers as well as for West Sussex. I do not agree with these proposals as I believe there will be weaker democratic oversight for Fire & Rescue without a bespoke authority dedicated to Fire & Rescue matters. There is a high level of risk involved to ensure day 1 readiness when the transfer completes. As Chair of the Strategic Authority, Cllr Bella Sankey will have some responsibility towards this. How will Cllr Sankey use her new role to ensure this transition is managed as smoothly as possible?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council.

Brighton & Hove City Council

8. Councillor Hill:

Has Cllr Sankey met with Mark Matthews, Chief Fire Officer for the East Sussex Fire & Rescue service to discuss changes to governance arrangements that affect the East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service since her election as Chair of the Strategic Authority?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council.

9. Councillor Hill:

Park Crescent remains at risk of pluvial flooding, especially this autumn. Has the Council been able to determine if a bump in the road between Park Crescent and Lewes Road would be helpful to push the water towards The Level rather than into Park Crescent? This is different to the previous barrier which was in the middle of Lewes Road.

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

10. Councillor Hill:

The East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service has no statutory responsibility to respond to flooding incidents and therefore is not funded to help with these incidents even though they do. Other strategic authorities provide funding to their Fire & Rescue Services to help fund this although it really should be a government funded responsibility. Can Cllrs on the Strategic Authority consider this in future when they have the relevant powers in future to affect this change?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council.

11. Councillor Shanks:

When will the CIL allocations be decided. Residents have been waiting?

Reply from Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Public Realm & Local Government Reorganisation.

12. Councillor Shanks:

Why are scrutiny call ins not given full financial information on which to base their decision?

Reply from Councillor Sankey, Leader of the Council.

13. Councillor Lademacher:

Brighton & Hove City Council

How are improvements to the public realm prioritised fairly across all wards, particularly in the ones that have historically received fewer resources and/or have high levels of socio-economic inequality (like Queen's Park)?

Reply from Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Public Realm & Local Government Reorganisation.

14. Councillor Lademacher:

Given new enforcement powers introduced under the Renters' Rights Act, which allow local authorities in England to issue civil penalties of up to £7,000 where serious Category 1 hazards are found in privately rented homes, how does the Council intend to enforce these new powers?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing.

15. Councillor McLeay:

Residents of Theobald House were told in 2023 that a children's play area could not be provided because major works were imminent, yet those works may now not begin until 2028. At the same time, families with children, including those with additional needs, continue to live in unsuitable conditions (on the 11th floor), alongside ongoing safety and ASB concerns. What is the council doing to improve the safety and wellbeing of children living in tower blocks such as Theobald House?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing.

16. Councillor McLeay:

Theobald House has been wrapped in scaffolding for around five years because concrete was falling from the building. Residents are now being told that repairs may still be years away, with a possible start date of 2028. How can the council justify a delay of more than seven years to resolve what is fundamentally a building safety issue, and what assurances can be given to residents that this timetable will be improved?

Reply from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Housing.

17. Councillor McLeay:

Parks for London recommends protecting public access to parks, limiting the impact of large-scale events, and being transparent about how event income is spent. Following two summers of intensive event use at The Level and Valley Gardens, residents have seen significant deterioration of grassed areas, yet the Cabinet Lead confirmed last year there were "no current plans for sprinkler systems or turf replacement, with reinstatement considered only on a case-by-case basis". What is the council's long-term plan to protect these green spaces, how much has been collected in reinstatement fees over

Brighton & Hove City Council

the last two years, and how much of that money has been spent restoring The Level and Valley Gardens?

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

18. Councillor Sykes:

Please provide a figure for total spend to end June on the King Alfred Leisure Centre project and the projected updated programme to completion as it stood at end June.

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

19. Councillor Sykes:

Please provide a log of the number of refuse and recycling trucks of all types that were out of action in the month of June, by date and issue.

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

20. Councillor Sykes:

The BHCC Perkbox offers savings for council employees. However, all the offers are with multinational companies. What happened to supporting the local economy?

Reply from Councillor McGregor, Cabinet Member for Economy, Culture, Heritage & Tourism.

21. Councillor Sykes:

Road drains are blocked all over the city and this increases risk of surface water flooding. Please state the in-house and bought-in resource (FTE or cash) planned for drain clearance in 2026-27 and indicate how many road drains are no longer planned for clearance due to resource shortage.

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

22. Councillor West:

The Government has recognised the mistake of halting councillors pensions and members are now permitted to join their local LGPS scheme. Why has the administration not yet set this up, the delay is unacceptable. Contributions should be back dated. Will they be?

Brighton & Hove City Council

Reply from Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Finance & City Regeneration.

23. Councillor De Oliveira:

What speed measure are taken to regulate smart paddle bikes and scooters as some can reach up to 40 miles per hour endangering vulnerable residents?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

24. Councillor McNair:

The way residents report missed bin collections has changed. Instead of being able to report a missed collection, residents are now told that the council knows that their bin hasn't been collected, in effect stopping residents from reporting it. After a few days, the default seems to be no collection and no way to report it. Residents are also often told their bin was not out when it was. Or that it was collected when it wasn't. The IT system rarely seems to be accurate. Why has the reporting system changed and when can we expect it to work accurately?

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

25. Councillor McNair:

Why is it proving impossible to have yellow lines provided to prevent dangerous parking in Patcham & Hollingbury? We have requested lines where there is risk to pedestrians and motorists due to badly parked cars, e.g. on the corners of roads in Rotherfield Crescent, but we are always told there is a lack of money. This is a typical quote:

"We have advised them that due to limited resources, our current focus is on maintaining existing parking restrictions. Regrettably we are unable to consider any changes to the public highway outside of controlled parking zones, except for disabled bay requests or busy junctions on or near the main road network where safety to all road users is of concern."

However, there is money for red routes in the centre of town. Why is the safety of residents in Patcham & Hollingbury of less concern?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

26. Councillor Meadows:

Fly tipping in Orchid View is extremely frequent. Can we have CCTV fitted, as it is in Bramble Way and Birch Grove Crescent, to deter fly tipping and, ultimately raise money for a cash-strapped council?

Brighton & Hove City Council

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

27. Councillor Meadows:

There were abandoned bike frames left chained to a bike rack in Patcham Old Village for months. They were retagged on 14th May for removal 14 days later – so 28th May – because the original tag for removal had no date. But, they still have not been removed on 2nd July. If notices are not followed through a) offenders will be encouraged to abandon bikes and vehicles with impunity b) it looks to residents that the council does not care about such 'trivial' matters. Why were the bikes not removed at the expiry date on the notice?

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

28. Councillor Theobald:

Rubbish, recycling and garden waste collections have been very inconsistent over the past few weeks. In particular, garden waste collections have been frequently missed despite residents paying extra for the service. Residents are also frequently told they had not left their garden waste out for collection when they have. Why is Garden Waste not being collected regularly and will residents receive extensions to their subscriptions?

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

29. Councillor Theobald:

At a previous Council Meeting I spoke in favour of the retention of Wellington House. On 23 June, Cllr Alexander circulated an email in which she stated that "there are 6 other providers of day opportunities for adults with learning difficulties in the city." Would Cllr Alexander please confirm where each of these centres are located, who operates them and whether all 21 current users of Wellington House would be able to be placed in one of them should the Administration decide to close Wellington House. I am advised that there are no Day Centres in Brighton and Hove to which all the current users can be transferred hence I strongly believe that Wellington House should not be closed.

Reply from Councillor Alexander, Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities, Public Health & Adult Social Care.

30. Councillor Lyons:

A number of residents in Woodlands have contacted me, requesting an additional lampstand (at least one) at the end of the close, as it is very dark at nighttime. The response that they and I have received to their requests is that

Brighton & Hove City Council

'The Street Lighting Team are not funded for the installation of additional lighting requests across the city & are only funded for the maintenance of the existing stock. Funds would need to be found to finance the new installation then the team would be able to adopt the new lighting assets and add them to the inventory and maintenance regime.' Can I ask that the close is added for consideration for additional street lighting at next year's budget?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

31. Councillor Lyons:

21 households in Artists Corner have contacted me, requesting a review of the parking situation in their streets. The preferred solution is to reduce the 4-hour parking paid bays to 2 hours, which may deter residents in other roads taking up spaces from 16:00 or alternatively, extending the paid bay service to beyond 20:00. Can this be investigated further?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

32. Councillor Hogan:

A typical working day ends between 4 and 5pm so why are the council phonelines only open between 9 and 1.30pm?

Reply from Councillor Allen, Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Public Realm & Local Government Reorganisation.

33. Councillor Hogan:

Could any damage to grass verges (mainly caused by workmen digging them up) be repaired by the council. Some of the damage is very unsightly and potentially dangerous as can be a trip hazard?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

34. Councillor Fishleigh:

Title: Protecting trees

In December 2022 Full Council agreed a Notice of Motion about protecting trees in the city. It was agreed that "This Council therefore resolves to request: A report to TECC Committee which outlines a. Details on the council's and national planning policy in relation to trees with TPOs that are removed without BHCC's permission and lawful conditions the council can make on applications regarding trees; b. A draft communications plan for residents and developers to support the Council's enforcement approach."

Please would you tell me if these actions took place as I can't find any details. Thank you.

Brighton & Hove City Council

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

35. Councillor Fishleigh:

Title: Better Brighton & Hove Fund

Will BHCC honour the costings given in the first consultation which were £10,000 for a bus shelter and, I think, £1,0000 for a bench?

Reply from Councillor Muten, Cabinet Member for Transport & City Infrastructure.

