

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 17

Subject: Written questions from members of the public

Date of meeting: 23 July 2026

A period of not more than thirty minutes shall be allowed for questions submitted by a member of the public who either lives or works in the area of the authority at each ordinary meeting of the Council.

Every question shall be put and answered without discussion, but the person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer. The person who asked the question may ask one relevant supplementary question, which shall be put and answered without discussion.

The following written questions have been received from members of the public.

1. Mark Cull asked:

The Government says it exists to make the country fairer, reduce poverty and help improve lives, and that it is committed to cutting the cost of living to people and families. We all know that sport promotes positive mental and physical health, reduces isolation and improves social health. Brighton & Hove City Council has contracted Game4Padel to operate padel in our city. Game4Padel is a private company with many wealthy shareholders, who, by the way, do not reside in our city. To play padel at Hove Park a court can cost up to £32, and at Withdean, up to £48. Compare this to hiring a tennis court for £9. These prices are unaffordable for a great many people in our city, so how does this contract align to the Administrations commitments to making the country fairer, improving lives and reducing the cost of living?

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

2. Mike Sexton asked:

The grit bin is near the bottom of the Bazehill. This is not ideal as the main hazard is 100m further up the hill where the road bends. This area always get slippery when icy, vehicles brake and pedestrians cross here. The department responsible states "current location offers the most balanced distribution of properties along BazeHill," which is untrue as if the bin was sited at the bend there would be approx 25 household level and above the bin and 18 below it. Please move the bin near the bend so we do not have to carry the grit uphill.

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

3. John Parsons asked:

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I live in Ovingdean next to a plot of BHCC-owned land which has recently been identified for disposal. The boundary between this plot and my property is the wall of our home. We need maintenance access here for roof and double height windows requiring scaffolding. Current drawings indicate a planned child play area looking into our bedrooms! I am generally pro-development but these plans will surely create problems for everybody. Would BHCC consider an offer to buy approximately 270 sqm prior to the entire plot going on the open market? I can offer £38,000.

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

4. Daniel Rue asked:

This council set out its Accessible city strategy back in 2023. A specific focus of the strategy was to work closely with the disabled community in Brighton, specifically through the Disability Panel. Does the council believe the current approach is living up to standards and commitments set out in the original strategy and does it believe all relevant voices in the city are being heard as we enter the final few years of the plan?

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

5. Laura King asked:

Under BHCC Interim Chief Financial Officer, John Hooton, the cost for the King Alfred redevelopment project rose sharply from £47m to £65m in September 2025.

Now a new permanent CFO 151 Officer - Elizabeth Griffiths - has been appointed, is Ms Griffiths instigating an urgent and independent review of budget and costs for this project?

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

6. Chris Davis asked:

The Council recently published its Circular Economy Action Plan for 2026-2035. This Plan lists 'Brighton AI', a network encouraging the adoption of AI technologies across the City, as a 'delivery partner' within the Plan.

Given what is widely known about the range of environmental impacts from the development and use of AI - including with regards to energy and water demands, and reliance on extractive industries throughout supply chains - this proposed partnership would severely compromise the credibility of the Council's circular economy ambitions, and broader Net Zero strategy.

Can the council please explain the decision to include Brighton AI within this Plan - including supplying any evidence as to how Brighton AI will 'advance circular economy practices' - and clarify whether any consideration was given to environmental impacts when including the group within the Plan.

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

7. Tony Greenstein asked:

Parent carers are unanimously opposed to closing Wellington House. However it is spun there is a lack of evidence for safe alternatives and a failure to model future demand. It is also abundantly clear that the alternatives on offer do not have the capacity to admit more clients.'

This proposal is driven by financial considerations.

The Council's alternative providers are more of a hope and a prayer. Voluntary/private sector organisations are notorious for folding. It is essential that the Council has at least one drop-in-centre.

When the Belgrave Centre was closed a decade ago we were promised that Wellington House would be a permanent alternative. That promise is in danger of being broken.

In the event of a failure of the alternative providers the Council will be left with no fall-back position.

Will the Cabinet agree to abide by the views of parent carers in the consultation?

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

8. Kate Sawyer asked:

The Council's Local SEND Reform Plan places strong emphasis on earlier identification, expert support and improving outcomes for children with SEND. Given the widely recognised lessons arising from the failures of the Tavistock Gender Identity Development Service, particularly regarding the vulnerability of autistic children experiencing gender-related distress, can the Council explain how those lessons have informed the development of its SEND Reform Plan, including workforce training and the 'Experts at Hand' model?

Response from Councillor Daniel, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Youth Services.

9. Sarah Fitzgerald asked:

Hollingdean currently has a single bus route, the number 20 which recently replaced the 50, a decision many residents were not happy about. Comparable areas nearby, such as Preston Park and Hollingbury, have multiple routes serving them, giving residents a fallback when a service is disrupted. This is not true in Hollingdean, an area which includes

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neighbourhoods with some of the highest levels of deprivation in the city, where residents are less likely to own a car. The council's own data shows Hollingdean and Fiveways has one of the highest concentrations of young children in the city, and many families rely heavily on public transport to get around. When the council next reviews its Bus Service Improvement Plan, will it commit to reassessing the needs of single bus service communities like Hollingdean to ensure that no community in Brighton and Hove is disadvantaged by a lack of suitable public transport?

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

10. Robert Pickup asked:

On behalf of Hanover Action, Brighton & Hove has declared a climate and biodiversity emergency, and the Government's January 2026 national security assessment concludes that nature loss is now a systemic threat to the UK's food, water, health and economic security. The council's own Climate and Nature Action Plan does not yet reflect this urgency and lacks the measurable biodiversity targets and performance indicators such a threat demands. Given the council's duty to protect residents, will the administration commit to supporting and promoting viewings of the People's Emergency Briefing film across Brighton & Hove, especially for council officers and in Brighton & Hove schools, so that those helping deliver the plan and the generation who will be most affected by it, fully understand the risks it is meant to address?

Response from Councillor Rowkins, Cabinet Member for Net Zero and Environment Services.1

11. Mariangela Vitolo asked:

The new 3X service is a welcome addition to Brighton & Hove's public transport network, improving connectivity and encouraging more people to travel by bus.

However, residents have raised concerns about routing the service through Trafalgar Street, given its importance within the North Laine Conservation Area and the constraints of this historic street. The recent collision involving a bus and a shopfront has heightened concerns about pedestrian safety, businesses and property.

How will the Council work with residents, Brighton & Hove Buses, heritage organisations and other stakeholders to monitor the route, address any safety concerns and protect the character of this important area, while ensuring the continued success of this valuable new service?

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

12. Lambros Fatsis asked:

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What will the Council do to honour its Council of Sanctuary status by placing restrictions of banning the march of anti-immigration groups through the city?

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

