Brighton & Hove City Council

Council **Agenda Item 57**

Subject: **Written questions from members of the public**

Date of meeting: **26 November 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. Stewart Stone asked:

Residents were promised improvements to Dorset Gardens after funding was secured through a Section 106 agreement in 2019/20, yet seven years later the scheme remains stuck before procurement despite £237,000 being allocated. Given that the project includes long-awaited accessibility improvements, including an access ramp, why has progress been so slow, and when will residents finally see work begin on site?

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

2. Sarah Ratty asked:

Given confirmation that Council-commissioned reports by Smith of Derby and Cumbria Clock Company establish that restoring a working Floral Clock is technically achievable, yet restoration was excluded from the public consultation, and in light of the successful 2008 restoration, the clock's recognised heritage significance in the 2022 Brunswick Town Conservation Area Character Statement, 3,100+ petition signatures and Historic England's active listing assessment (Ref: 1498567). Will the Council, in accordance with the Gunning Principles, authorise a new, transparent consultation explicitly offering restoration and retention of the historic 1953 Coronation Floral Clock and withdraw the previous consultation?

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

3. Ian MacIntyre asked:

In February 2021, both of the largest parties voted to bring Seaside Homes in house. The benefits set out by officers included lowering the rent paid by up to 499 homeless households. This would help hugely in alleviating the cost of living. It also would recover a debt owing to the council and make efficiency savings by bringing the control and management of temporary homeless accommodation more under the council. At the time, officers estimated six months to implement the decision. It is now nearly four years later and nothing has changed despite promises from the Cabinet Housing Lead. If the decision had been implemented, what would have been the overall financial impact between April 2022 and April 2026, for both the rent payments that would have been saved for homeless households and for the money paid to Seaside Homes for core running and management costs under the lease agreement?

Response from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member - Housing

4. Sarah Gorton asked

The supply of Brighton and Hove's council council general needs homes fell by 64 in the year until April 2026 (had England followed Scotland and Wales and abolished the Right to Buy (RTB) 69 more council homes would still have been available and the supply would not have fallen!) Can you provide an update to these figures for the next 6 months by providing the number of occupied general needs council homes as of the 1.10.26 along with the number of council homes that were sold under the RTB between 1st of April and the 1st of October 2026?

Response from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member - Housing

5. Sheila Rimmer asked:

Given the devolution agenda of the new government and the associated faith being put in locally elected leaders to do whats best for their communities. Do you agree that Council's should be free again to determine rent increases without facing financial penalties as under the current system?

Response from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member - Housing

6. Lynora Knott asked:

The Prime Minister has committed to ending homelessness and expanding Housing First towards achieving this. This is welcome as he is funding councils to provide street homeless people with access to shelter in the winter. This offer fulfils the aspiration of providing "a right to shelter" (in clause 2 of the Homeless Bill of Rights adopted by the council in March 2021) at least for the winter. During Covid, under "Everyone In" and beyond, rough sleepers were offered shelter and Housing First was expanded, contributing to a fall of 54% in rough sleepers counted annually over

3 years. What year-round shelter offer and additional Housing First placements does the council plan to provide in the next financial year to help support people sleeping rough into permanent housing and towards ending homelessness?

Response from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member - Housing

7. Luqma Temitayo Onikosi asked:

Recently many residents wrote to you asking that you help safeguard the refugee women and families who were being moved out of the hotel by the Home Office and dispersed to unknown locations around the UK.

Some Labour councillors wrote back saying: "Our expectation is that moves from a hotel are carried out in a humane and trauma-informed manner, and that the residents are informed about their destinations as early as possible." And: "The council is working at every level to ensure that members of our community resident at the hotel are treated with dignity and respect".

But in the end, residents were given no information on destinations, and no respect for their dignity or experiences of trauma.

So I would like to ask: what concrete steps did the Council take on this? And why do you think these failed?

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

8. Caroline Ellis asked:

Will the Council explain why it awarded preferred-bidder status to the operator behind “Black Rock 1883” before completing the necessary financial, legal and governance due diligence, and while the outcome of the Black Rock 100-day planning application remains outstanding

Response from Councillor Taylor , Cabinet Member – Finance and City Regeneration

9. Ben Thomas asked:

Can the Council confirm how many households are currently placed by Brighton & Hove City Council in temporary accommodation outside the city and, where those placements include a disabled adult or child, that the required notification is given to the receiving local authority and what scrutiny is in place to ensure compliance with this requirement?

Response from Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member - Housing

10. Kelly Lewis asked:

Boundary House has been open to unauthorised entry since at least April. At considerable cost to the public purse, police and council officers have been dealing with it since then, and Sussex Police have recorded 48 emergency calls about the building this year. On 9 September the council told residents steel shutters would secure it by the end of the following week. The freeholder then carried out its own works, which the council says did not fully meet its notice, leaving ground-floor doors and windows accessible. The building was later occupied by squatters and children continued to enter. Residents understand the occupants left on 17 November after the freeholder's operatives asked them to go. By what date will the council secure the building, using its own default powers if the freeholder does not comply?

Response from Councillor Taylor , Cabinet Member – Finance and City Regeneration

11. Alessandro Capozzi asked:

Residents first reported children entering Boundary House in April, and have supplied photographs showing children, some as young as about 12, repeatedly going inside. In November the fire and rescue service has told residents its risk assessment found the building unsafe to enter, and that it would go in only if lives were at risk. In October an officer of Sussex Police has said they have been unable to find a safe route into the building to secure it. Yet the council's latest update says there is no evidence the interior is dangerous apart from two open first-floor window bays. What interim measures will the council now take, with its safeguarding partners, to stop children entering a building that the fire and rescue service has assessed as unsafe to enter?

Response from Councillor Taylor , Cabinet Member – Finance and City Regeneration

12. Louis Bird asked:

Can the Cabinet Member confirm the current position on the City Plan timetable and set out the implications of the Government's recent planning reforms, including the August 2026 National Planning Policy Framework and the 30-month plan-making system, for the content and designations of the Plan?

Response from Councillor Taylor , Cabinet Member – Finance and City Regeneration

13. Giampaolo Boldrini asked:

Back in 2015 Brighton and Hove Councillors voted in favour of Brighton and Hove to become a City of Sanctuary, taking pride in welcoming people seeking safety, especially refugees and asylum seekers. For a city to be a City of Sanctuary, it means that the support network in the city - community groups and charities - needs to come together and be coordinated to make the city the most welcoming city for

people seeking sanctuary. During the past few weeks a long standing charity, Sussex Interpreting Services (SIS), had to close down. The charity supported many people in the city when they needed an interpreter or a translation.

In Feruary next year, 2027, it seems that Brighton Housing Trust is closing its immigration support; a vital service for people claiming asylum. What impact will the closure of some of the most important services have on our City of Sanctuary?

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