

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

**4.30pm 15 JULY 2021**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors , Mears (Deputy Chair), Allcock, Appich, Clare, Ebel, Evans, Fishleigh, Knight, Lloyd, Mac Cafferty, Nemeth, Shanks, Simson and Yates

**PART ONE**

**15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 15.1 Councillors Allcock declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in Item 35 as is partner had an allotment and confirmed that he had been given dispensation to speak and vote on the matter.
- 15.2 Councillor Nemeth declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in Item 35 as is partner had an allotment and confirmed that he had been given dispensation to speak and vote on the matter.
- 15.3 Councillor Shanks declared a personal and not prejudicial interest in Item 35 as she owned an allotment and confirmed that she had been given dispensation to speak and vote on the matter.
- 15.4 Councillor Lloyd declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in Item 35 as his daughter was on a waiting list for an allotment and confirmed that he had been given dispensation to speak and vote on the matter.
- 15.5 No other declarations of interests in matters appearing on the agenda were made.

**16 MINUTES**

- 16.1 The minutes of the Budget Council meeting held on the 25 February 2021 together with the last ordinary meeting held on the 25 March 2021 and the Annual Council meeting on the 20 May 2021 were approved and signed by the Deputy Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings.

**17 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS.**

- 17.1 The Deputy Mayor gave the following communications:

- 17.2 Before I start the Mayor's communications, can I make it clear that I wish to be addressed as Madam Deputy Mayor and should Members not respect my wish they will not be called to speak. The Mayor's Charities' Boundary Walk takes place on Saturday 17 July setting off from Saltdean across the Downs and finishing at Stanmer Park for a cup of tea. It's not too late to sign up.
- 17.3 I understand that engagements are increasing, and we are nearly back to pre-Covid times, with very few cancellations over the last month.
- 17.4 Plans for the Civic Service of Compassion on the 17 October are progressing lead by the Interfaith Contact Group and accommodated by the Dome. All Councillors will be invited. It would be good if as many as possible can attend.
- 17.5 An inspection of our youth offending service (YOS) has been rated 'Outstanding' by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. The Inspection looked at 12 aspects of the YOS's work and awarded 'Outstanding' in every category. This is a rare achievement and a huge credit to the Youth Offending Team. Their work with young people and their families to reduce and prevent crime is an incredibly important service for our city and for the outcomes of young people who need robust support when things go wrong. We're hugely proud and thankful to all the staff who work day-to-day in this service. This accolade is testament to their commitment to make a positive difference and is thoroughly well-deserved.
- 17.6 We have some excellent news to report in relation to our Legal Services Team. The Service is accredited by the Law Society with the Lexcel legal practice quality mark for client care, compliance and practice management. Last month they achieved their re-accreditation with an outstanding audit which identified over 50 areas of good practice. In addition, the Service has been nominated and shortlisted for two awards. Their two shortlisted nominations are for Project Innovation of the Year and Inspirational Leader in Law, which is for Elizabeth Culbert, Head of Legal Services.

The awards are taking place tonight and we wish the Team and Liz the best of luck. Whatever the outcome, the nominations and shortlisting as finalists demonstrate the strength of the Service and its staff and their continued incredibly hard work over the last year.

- 17.7 Finally, I will be taking regular short breaks during the meeting in order to give everyone in the chamber an opportunity to get some fresh air and remove their masks.

## **18 TO RECEIVE PETITIONS AND E-PETITIONS.**

- 18.1 The Deputy Mayor stated that she had been notified of 6 petitions to be presented and invited the submission of petitions from councillors and members of the public. She reminded the Council that petitions would be referred to the appropriate decision-making body without debate and the person presenting the petition would be invited to attend the meeting to which the petition was referred.
- 18.2 Ms Mack presented a petition signed by residents concerning a request for speed bumps to be installed in Whitehawk.

- 18.3 Mr Hawtree presented a petition signed by over 800 residents concerning the need for a crossing at Portland Road.
- 18.4 Councillor Nemeth presented a petition signed by 687 residents calling for a 20mph speed limit along Portland Road.
- 18.5 Ms Goldsmith presented a petition signed by over 900 residents concerning the need for free school travel for children in Whitehawk.
- 18.6 Councillor Simson presented a petition on behalf of Councillor Barnett signed by 660 residents requesting that the proposed closure of Stapley Road was not implemented.
- 18.7 Mr Wright presented a petition signed by 340 residents calling for a safe access to the Bexhill Road play area.
- 18.8 The Deputy Mayor noted thanked the petitioners for presenting their petitions and confirmed that would be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration.

## **19 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

- 19.1 The Deputy Mayor reported that two written questions had been received from members of the public and invited Mr Wright to put his question to the meeting.
- 19.2 Mr Wright asked the following question; Will the council consider steam cleaning the 32 columns and 8 pillars of the Colonnade on Madeira Drive ready for when Soho house opens later this year just next door? I have a quote of £6,000 from the company that cleaned the Aquarium Terrace and balustrades for Soho House using the Doff cleaning method, which is designed to remove paint, biological matter and general dirt and grime without causing harm or shock to the substrate and also kills off any spores. With some imagination The Colonnade could easily become Brighton's version of Convent Garden Market.
- 19.3 Councillor Lloyd replied; thank you for your question and also for all the work you do around the city. We are very pleased that the whole of the eastern sea front is now seeing investment that it needs and the focus that we are giving to the restoration of Madeira Terraces. I know you know about that project as you are closely involved as a member of the Advisory Group. We have the Sea Lanes Development going on and also the Black Rock Development, showing that progress is happening. We are also progressing the Master Plan in the area as part of a comprehensive approach to improving this vital part of the seafront and the wonderful cycle lane has really improved the buzz and the atmosphere and I am pleased to see the improvements happening every day. I take the improvements and the tidiness of the appearance of the area very appearance very seriously and, once the Soho House development is completed, we will consider whether there is funding available to appoint external contractors to clean the columns, I think it is a great idea. What I would really like to do is approach Soho House to see whether they might want to contribute to this and perhaps we could do that together.
- 19.4 Mr Wright asked the following supplementary question; will the council also look at cleaning the balustrades on the Max Miller Walkway, putting flags in the flag poles,

repair the flagpole bases so that they are safe to sit on, asking highways to repair the uneven broken paving behind the columns, ask street lighting to mend the heritage ward lamps and lastly, repair the Chain Pier plaque

- 19.5 Councillor Lloyd replied; that was more than a question, but of course we sympathise with all of those things. I would like to see us working on all of those and I will ask officers whether we can find funds in the budget to do those works.
- 19.6 The Deputy Mayor thanked Mr Wright for his questions and invited Ms Andrews to address the council.
- 19.7 Ms Andrews asked the following question, Firstly, I have to mention that in the last TECC Committee in June we asked the council for valid objections to the King Alfred temporary ice rink project. The objection given was that the Sport & Leisure team disagreed with us, using the term 'unused area' on the west side of the King Alfred, and they insisted that it was called the 'roof of a vacant aging building'. On that basis, the east side of the King Alfred site is the children's play and amusement area, which has been earning the council income for decades. It is also situated on the 'roof of a vacant aging building', both sides are exactly the same build, built at exactly the same time using exactly the same methods. So, if one side is in critical condition, as is claimed, they both are so, the objection given at the TECC committee was not a valid one.

It is not rocket science that no major development at the King Alfred will start for probably the next 3 years probably 5. It has always been argued by the Sports & Leisure team that the site is not suitable for an ice rink, we dispute this and our 2011 pre-application for building advice and our 2012 structural survey disputes this too. Extracts from our 2011 pre-app - Principle of development of the erection of a temporary Ice Rink on the King Alfred site would essentially be an additional leisure facility on the main sport and leisure site in Hove. The ice rink would fall within the D2 class, which is consistent with other uses on the site, the objectives outlined in the planning brief are that mixed use development need to come forward for the site. It is clear from your submission that a temporary ice rink is proposed, it is therefore considered that providing any works remain temporary there is no demonstrable conflict for this planning brief. Extract from our 2012 survey report – It is generally adequate for the ice-skating venue we are proposing, so the structural survey undertaken in 2012 indicated that there were possibilities in relation to using the land adjacent to the King Alfred on the West side (former bowling alley) as an ice rink.

Will the Council agree to permit a further independent structural survey of this land to be undertaken by Hemsley Orel Partnership on the basis that the one undertaken in 2012 is now in need of updating?

- 19.8 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied, I have spoken to senior officers about your request and general proposals, and they are more than happy to will arrange to meet you to discuss the Sports Investment Plan and the future development of the King Alfred site with you and I have asked officers to contact you after this meeting to arrange a time.
- 19.9 Ms Andrews asked the following supplementary question, Where is the report regarding an ice rink in the city from the new City Sports Facility Strategy. Ice skating,

point 1, Ice rinks require more than 30% of the population to be under the age of 24 years. 2. Whilst the current population of the City of Brighton & Hove is marginally above this figure they will make up a smaller proportion of the population in future years. What this says, is that whilst we currently meet above the minimum demographic criteria of 30% of under 24-year-olds at 32% it is prophesied that at some point in the distant future the figure will be under 30%. We have to point out that we cannot be certain that the 31k student population has even been included in these statistics, but nevertheless in Plymouth with the under 24-year-olds percentage being slightly lower than ours at 31.6 they have just built the new Mayfair ice arena. The report goes on to say – point 3. Ice rinks have high operational costs and the energy foot print they generate through operations may be at odds with the city's priorities around its climate agenda, which is inaccurate when we consider the new eco-friendly ice rink technologies now available, which we can demonstrate to the council and which actually falls in line with the climate agenda. Point 4, the overall risks associated with provision is considered too high to outweigh any benefit, meaning that the council believes that an ice rink is of high risk and of no benefit to the community and wider area, unlike the i360, however all this report does is to provide a valid argument that a private social enterprise is the perfect venture.

- 19.10 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied, I would like to take the question and thank you Ms Andrews for your additional points and I am among many of your supporters of ice skating along with other activities as of course we are in the middle of a public health pandemic, anything that enhances our health at the moment is of course going to be welcome. We do have a very successful temporary ice rink in normal times at the Royal Pavilion Garden and we look forward to more normal times when that can return to the city in the winter. Permanent ice rinks have been bedevilled by viability in the city, we have not found a way of making them work up for the long time all the way back to the last serious study that was conducted in 2016. There were only three parties interested then and all three were contacted, only one actually accepted the council's invitation to meet and after initial discussions there was not a basis on which to proceed.

Basically, I am saying to you that it will be very hard to find a viability that works with ice skating. It was in 2016, I remember that it was pre-Brexit and pre pandemic so goodness knows what the viability of finding an ice rink that will work today is. But as I have said before we are more than happy for you to meet with officers and discuss further.

- 19.11 The Deputy Mayor thanked Ms Andrews for her questions and noted that this concluded the item.

## **20 DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

### **DEPUTATION CONCERNING INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEMS: WHAT WE CAN DISCERN SO FAR**

- 20.1 The Deputy Mayor reported that one deputation had been received from a member of the public and that she would invite the spokesperson to introduce their deputation and for the relevant Chair to respond. She noted that 15 minutes were set aside for the consideration of deputations.

- 20.2 The Deputy Mayor invited Mr Ken Kirk as the spokesperson for the deputation to come forward and address the council. The deputation related to the proposed integration of care systems.
- 20.3 Mrs Kirk spoke on the deputation relating to the issue of the integration of care systems in Brighton and Hove.
- 20.4 Councillor Shanks thanked Mr Kirk for his deputation and stated that the council does support the sentiments in the deputation and noted that he had undertaken a lot of research on the Bill. However, with 5 million people in the country waiting for treatment and a workforce crisis it is not time to have a new NHS Bill. It will not ensure the end of privatisation and she would prefer fully funded adult social care within the NHS service. There should be a proper long-term strategy and the Bill should be opposed in the proper way and the matter will be considered at the next Health & Wellbeing Board on the 27<sup>th</sup> July. The important consideration had to be what the impact will be for Brighton and Hove locally and the deputation would be taken into account during the discussion at the meeting next week.
- 20.5 The Deputy Mayor thanked Mr Kirk for attending the meeting and speaking on behalf of the deputation. She explained that the points had been noted and the deputation would be referred to the Health & Wellbeing Board for consideration. The persons forming the deputation would be invited to attend the meeting and would be informed subsequently of any action to be taken or proposed in relation to the matter set out in the deputation.
- 20.6 **RESOLVED:** That the deputation be noted and referred to the Health & Wellbeing Board.

## 21 CALL OVER FOR REPORTS OF COMMITTEES.

### (a) Callover

- 21.1 The following items on the agenda were reserved for discussion:

- Item 24 - IRP Report on Members Allowances
- Item 25 - Review of the Council's Constitution
- Item 26 - Review of the Code of Conduct for Members
- Item 27 - Council and Committee Meetings from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021
- Item 28 - Local Government Boundary Review
- Item 29 - The National Bus Strategy
- Item 30 - Targeted Budget Management (TBM) Provisional Outturn 2020/21

### (b) Receipt and/or Approval of Reports

- 21.2 The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that all of the Items listed on the agenda had been reserved for discussion.

### (c) Oral Questions from Members

21.3 The Deputy Mayor noted that there were no oral questions.

## **22 WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS.**

22.1 The Deputy 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 Yates:**

22.2 Can the lead member please provide a breakdown of the 198 EV charging points installed over recent years by ward please? Along with ward car ownership numbers in real terms for comparison.

### **Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

Only areas of the city with no off-street parking are eligible for central government funding of public charge points. By the end of July 235 lamp post, fast and rapid public chargers will have been installed. Residents with off street parking can apply for government grants towards home charging devices. The average parking zone has 8 chargers capable of charging 100 vehicles per week and 1,350 permit holders. A list of charge points by parking zone and ward together with car ownership will be sent to Cllr Yates.

### **(2) Councillor Allcock:**

22.3 At budget Council in February, it was agreed to allocate £60,000 to establish a post-Covid Family Coaches project within the city Children's Centres. This is intended to improve provide early intervention with families with babies and young children recovering from the impacts of Covid and other forms of disadvantage, to support their development and improve their future educational attainment. Can you please inform me how this this project in progressing including how many Family Coaches have been recruited and when they were appointed, and a brief update on their achievements to date?

### **Reply from Councillor Clare, Chair of the Children, Young Persons & Skills Committee**

22.4 Two early year family coaches (equivalent to 1.6 full time equivalent) have been recruited and are due to start in late July and early August. The early years family coaches are managed as part of the Integrated Team for Families together with other family coaches and are co-located in children's centres.

The early years family coaches will work with families with children under five who are facing multiple disadvantage, to enable them to achieve positive outcomes including: education and learning, living standards, safe relationships, health and wellbeing, educational attainment and employment and safer communities. Families are identified by other professionals including health visitors who refer the family to the Front Door for Families. The FDF then consider which families will most benefit from

an early years family coach. Family coaches offer a whole family assessment and plan together with interventions and regular review of the whole family plan to look at distanced travelled.

**(3) Councillor Allcock**

- 22.5 At budget Council in February, it was agreed to allocate £168,000 to establish a Community Drug Impact Co-ordinator role for 3 years to address the impact of illegal drug sales, drug use and cuckooing on our communities. Can you please inform me how this work is progressing including when the coordinator will be appointed?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

- 22.6 The drug impact co-ordinator job description has been written and evaluated. It is currently out to advert. Officers are expecting to interview on 5<sup>th</sup> August. If an appointment is made a start date is likely to be dependent on the successful candidate's notice period.

**(4) Councillor Childs:**

- 22.7 Will the Council provide an assurance that St Luke's Swimming Pool will not be closed and that it will be allocated appropriate funding and investment as part of the proposed City Leisure Plans?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

- 22.8 Not only do we have a shortage of pools in the city, but we know St Luke's is a widely used and much valued facility. There are no plans to close it, and it's wrong for others to suggest this.

The regular maintenance programme for all our sports facilities is already happening, in order to keep our sites in good condition.

Consultants looking at the future of sports and leisure opportunities for our city have suggested an investment plan, to meet our aims of creating more enhanced sports provision. This is based on a 'hub and spoke' model, of expanded and enhanced facilities, supported by a network of locally accessible community leisure centres, to meet the needs of residents.

Several of our sports facilities would benefit from investment. Although the consultant's report mentions that "no new investment is identified" for St Luke's, this refers to the proposals coming forward from the investment plan. St Luke's is also in reasonably good condition at this time.

What's more, any proposals for sports investment will first be explored by a cross party members working group, with the key decisions then being made by Policy and Resources committee. It may be that as the plan progresses, it is decided by that



group that additional investment will go into St Luke's, and indeed to other facilities, and this is for councillors to discuss in due course.

### **(5) Councillor Childs**

22.9 What percentage of Local Authority Schools contain blue and brown asbestos?

#### **Reply from Councillor Clare, Chair of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee**

22.10 There are currently 66 maintained schools in Brighton & Hove, 52 primary schools, 10 secondary schools, 3 special schools and 1 pupil referral unit. The council is responsible for the maintenance of 45 of these schools, 35 primary schools, 6 secondary schools, 3 special schools and 1 pupil referral unit. The remainder of the schools are either voluntary aided church schools (16No.) or free schools and academies (5 No.).

The council holds information on the asbestos known or suspected to be in place in community schools within the city but not for academies or free schools. It is considered good practice to assume that any building constructed before the year 2000 can be expected to contain asbestos and only buildings constructed since 2000 do not contain asbestos and this is the approach that the council takes in respect of its buildings.

Consequently, owing to the age of our school estate it is deemed that all the schools for which the council is responsible contain asbestos (white, blue and / or brown) with the exception of the five schools in the city that have been constructed since 2000 which are deemed not to contain asbestos. Three of these schools are academies (BACA, Kings School and the Bilingual Primary School) and are not consequently the responsibility of the council. The fourth is a voluntary aided church school (St Andrew's CE Primary School) and the fifth school constructed since 2000 is a community school (West Blatchington Primary and Nursery School) which is the responsibility of the council.

The number of schools with blue and / or brown asbestos is 47 out of a total of 61 community schools in the city, or 77%. This is broken down into 36 primary schools (36/50 = 72%), all 7 community secondary schools (100%), all special schools (100%) and the Pupil Referral Unit (100%).

It is important to note that the council does not undertake an intrusive survey of each school site to determine the presence of asbestos, unless work is planned in that area of the school. Rather its existence is deduced based on an asbestos management survey which is a visual inspection of the buildings and consideration of the records held. The reason for this is that the disturbance of asbestos should be avoided wherever possible. If managed actively and safely, the presence of asbestos should not pose a risk to occupants. Undamaged, sealed materials will not release fibres.

The asbestos register is updated as and when asbestos is removed or if further asbestos is identified as a result of undertaking a refurbishment and demolition survey in areas where work is undertaken. This is a more intrusive type of survey which

involves destructive inspection by a trained specialist to identify all asbestos materials. We undertake refurbishment and demolition surveys on all projects where we are likely to be disturbing the fabric of the building to ensure that we have a complete picture of the building materials we will encounter. These surveys are undertaken in controlled conditions as required by legislation. As a consequence of this there could be, as yet, undiscovered asbestos in the buildings

It is accepted good practice that where asbestos is in good condition it is not required to be removed but rather it will be labelled then left or possibly encapsulated. The HSE provides the following as basic principles to consider when managing asbestos:

- asbestos is only dangerous when disturbed. If it is safely managed and contained, it doesn't present a health hazard
- don't remove asbestos unnecessarily - removing it can be more dangerous than leaving it in place and managing it
- not all asbestos materials present the same risk. The measures that need to be taken for controlling the risks from materials such as pipe insulation are different from those needed in relation to asbestos cement
- if you are unsure about whether certain materials contain asbestos, you should presume they do and treat them as such
- the duty to manage is all about putting in place the practical steps necessary to protect maintenance workers and others from the risk of exposure to asbestos fibres - it is **not** about removing all asbestos

We follow these principles to ensure safe and proper management of asbestos in our school buildings.

#### **(6) Councillor Childs**

- 22.11 Will the administration commit to installing an adult disabled changing place as part of the Black Rock regeneration project?

#### **Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

- 22.12 If the councillor is referring to the meanwhile uses and site remediation as part of **the first phase** of the Black Rock project, the works to the Black Rock area include one small classroom building of which one full elevation has been used to create 4 fully accessible WC's available for public use. A changing Places toilet here at this late stage in the project could be included if the existing WC's were replaced. However, this would result in a net loss of other WC's in the area at a time when the Council is being asked to create more capacity for public toilets along the eastern seafront.

It may be of interest to note that there is a changing places toilet with RADAR key located at Brighton Marina and also at the Colonnade (west end of Madeira Terrace). We can supply these details on request and we believe the Marina details are available on their website.

**(7) Councillor Childs**

- 22.13 Given that the revenue generated from library reservation and inter library loan charges is less than £1000 a year, will the Council agree to cease the practice of charging children to access books?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

- 22.14 Charging children and young people a small amount for reservations and interlibrary loans is not intended to raise revenue and the services are run at a very considerable loss to the council. The purpose of charging a small amount is to stop large numbers of spurious reservations which are never collected. When the council used to have free reservations for children and only a very low charge for adults, the library service had to deal with 98,000 reservations a year of which only 33,000 were collected. The costs to the council of the staff time, transport of books between libraries and sending out notices to customers for the 65,000 uncollected reservations was very high and, in addition, each spurious reservation meant that the book involved was unavailable to other customers for approximately two weeks. Hence a small charge for children and young people was introduced. However, there are measures in place to ensure that no child is excluded because of this. Children with special needs are given a membership card which exempts them from having to pay and, in addition, library staff have discretion to reduce/waive charges in cases of hardship.

**(8) Councillor O'Quinn**

- 22.15 There have been a large number of anti-social incidents in local parks in Brighton and Hove in the last few weeks. What preventative actions, alongside the police, are the council implementing to deal with this very concerning issue?

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

- 22.16 The public space protection orders relating to alcohol and associated ASB have been agreed to be continued by TECC committee. Officers have been working with police and legal services to develop a process for enforcement. This will go live across the City on 19<sup>th</sup> July.

Home Office funding for the B&H Violence reduction partnership has allowed detached youth workers to be deployed in areas where we become aware of gatherings of young people who may be at risk of committing ASB.

Any noticeable areas of concern can also be discussed at the multi-agency partnership tactical tasking and co-ordination group, however without reports being made it is difficult to allocate resources to areas of concern. Environmental Enforcement Officers have recently been deployed across our parks and open spaces not only as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour but to also engage with users about their responsibilities in regard to waste. We have seen an increasing amount of litter being left behind within our parks and open spaces. We will continue to patrol the areas where possible and will liaise with our colleagues in Parks should we need to

recommend the installation of CCTV to identify the those responsible. We will however when advised by the police to look at design changes and generally implement these this is typically simple opening up areas so that people can see into them, which can be carried out within budget. Officers are also trialling the use of police mobile CCTV in one park in the city and evaluating new technology with them to see whether there are longer term benefits for further deployment if budgets allow.

**(9) Councillor Janio**

- 22.17 Can the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board confirm what active measures the council, including the Planning Department, are taking to support the provision of a Health Hub in H&K?

**Reply from Councillor Shanks, Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board**

- 22.18 I am aware that discussions are ongoing between the interested parties with respect to both site selection and the critical mass of any selected development. Working within local plan policy our Planning Department is actively discussing the options but with meetings continuing to try to find a constructive way forward I am unable at the present time to provide any additional update.

**(10) Councillor Janio**

- 22.19 Can the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board confirm if the council supports the provision of a Health Hub in Benfield Valley?

**Reply from Councillor Shanks, Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board**

- 22.20 Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning group is responsible for determining primary care demand and as such, acknowledging wider considerations will also need to be taken into account, the CCG does support the need for additional primary care provision in this area. As Chair of the HWB I recognise the case for additional primary care though I am aware of planning related issues in relation to outline proposals and constraints on the development site initially identified. I support the Council working with all stakeholders to see if we can work toward a project that can be supported by all parties.

**(11) Councillor Janio**

- 22.21 Can the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board would confirm if the CCG supports the provision of a Health Hub in Benfield Valley?

**Reply from Councillor Shanks, Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board**

- 22.22 Yes, the CCG would support this idea whilst recognising that there will be wider considerations to such a development though.

**(12) Councillor Janio**

- 22.23 Private households and organisations have formed over the last few years that seek to reverse the decline in 'the nations favourite 'non-captive' animal' - the Hedgehog. Indeed, the Janio family has 5 regular visitors who welcome the food provided for them by Mrs J. This helps, in a very small way, but there are dangers to the Hedgehog in our modern urban environment. In suburban Brighton and Hove many gaps between the pavement/road/soakaway have widened over the years and are now large enough for Hedgehogs to fall into – if they do, they then become trapped and suffer a horrible lonely miserable death.

Can the Chair of the ETS Committee list any ways in which the council could identify these enlarged spaces and any measures they think might be taken to avoid unnecessary deaths and suffering of hedgehogs across Brighton and Hove?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 22.24 The council under its move to a risk-based approach in managing its Highway Assets will be further developing its detailed knowledge of these assets including gully's and soakaways. This will aid understanding of their impact on the environment, including gaps between adjacent assets that might adversely affect wildlife. This will aid future decision making to ensure the natural world is considered in design and maintenance.

**(13) Councillor Janio**

- 22.25 Will the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board state if they believe there are good bus routes across Benfield Valley?

If they do, would they confirm that this would be very useful for patients attending a Health Hub in the area?

**Reply from Councillor Shanks, Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board**

- 22.26 There are a couple of options for patients needing to cross the Benfield Valley for medical appointments.

Monday to Friday there is an early morning commercial no. 55 Mile Oak -Hangleton City Centre - Hollingbury. This runs every fifteen minutes with the last bus leaving Fox way/Warrior close at 08:29.

Monday to Saturdays there is the Council supported no. 16/66 running hourly Portslade - Knoll estate - Hangleton until an 18:06 last departure from Portslade Health Centre.

Whilst this link would require some planning by clients to get to their appointments, there is a public transport option available to them. The Council will be reviewing bus services across the city as part of post - Covid bus network planning, but any improvements to services are subject to evidence of demand and/or a commitment to continued financial support by the Council.

**(14) Councillor Simson – Population:**

- 22.27 Please can you provide the following information relating to my ward of Woodingdean.
- a) Number and percentage of families with young children - pre-school or primary
  - b) Number and percentage of the population claiming unemployment benefits
  - c) Number and percentage of the population claiming health-related benefits

**Reply from Councillor Osborne, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

- 22.28 The information required could not be produced in time for the addendum papers and would be sent separately to Councillors.

**(15) Councillor Simson – CCTV in the City**

- 22.29 Can the Chair of the TECC Committee advise?
- a) The total number of Council-operated CCTV cameras deployed in the City, including:
    - a. Fixed CCTV cameras
    - b. Mobile CCTV cameras
  - b) The location where these cameras are monitored.
  - c) How many council staff members are employed to monitor output of these cameras?
  - d) The number of offences successfully identified and prosecuted as a result of CCTV evidence during the past municipal year.

**Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee**

- 22.30 The total number of Council-operated CCTV cameras deployed in the City, including:
- a) a. 38 Automatic Number plate recognition cameras and 95 public space CCTV cameras  
b. 0
  - b) Hove Town Hall, within The Brighton Centre
  - c) 12 however they also carry out other duties
  - d) 62,815 Penalty Charge Notices Issued

**(16) Councillor Mears - Housing repairs and maintenance service insourcing policy (Industrial action)**

- 22.31 The policy decision made by the Labour/Green Coalition on Housing to insource the City's Housing Repairs service on 1 April 2020 has resulted in a long industrial dispute with GMB Union.

This dispute has included:

- Weeklong strike action in the week commencing 7 September 2020.
- A threat of all-out strike action from GMB Union then followed

In the minutes from the meeting on 17 March 2021, The Co-Chair of the Housing Committee advised that the dispute had been settled.

However, no public statement has been issued by the council as to what the terms and the cost of resolving this industrial dispute has been, and furthermore who is bearing this cost.

Despite a number of questions from myself at the Housing Committee, no information as to the nature of any settlement has been provided.

This is a prime example of the lack of accountability and transparency at Brighton & Hove City Council generated by the Coalition arrangement between Labour and Green Parties on housing.

Can you please advise:

- a) What is the current backlog for Housing Repairs in the City?
- b) What concessions were made by the Council to resolve the industrial dispute with GMB Union over its housing repairs insourcing policy?
- c) What is the cost to the taxpayer of this settlement, including:
  - Cost to tenants through funds paid out of the Housing Revenue Account
  - Other administrative costs including legal fees incurred by the council during this year long industrial dispute

Will the Council put out a press statement to advise tenants and Councillors of the above information (a-c)?

### **Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

22.32 The current backlog for Housing Repairs in the City (as at 14th July) is 6,047 outstanding jobs, of these 4,835 are overdue. The service continues to clear the jobs by priority of the repair. A RAG (red-amber-green) analysis of all live jobs has been adopted to identify the order in which the jobs are attended to. The backlog has arisen because of service implications of pandemic restrictions and is kept under regular review so we can resource and progress as many jobs as possible in the most efficient way in the context of the overall service pressure. To clear the backlog the service is directly engaging additional contractors in key areas and regularly review staffing levels. The service has increased management capacity, retained additional agency staff and is about to commence recruitment to a significant number of permanent roles following completion of the harmonisation process for those staff who transferred into the council from Mears.

- (b) Dispute resolution was subject to a Part 2, confidential discussion at P&R Urgency Sub-Committee 12th March 2021. Staff working in the service were given the option to join council terms and conditions or remain on existing terms and conditions.
- c) The Housing Revenue Account (HRA), a separate ring-fenced account which includes all landlord costs relating to the provision of Council Housing and is funded primarily by tenants' rents, and service charges. Council tenants along with

private and housing association tenants receive welfare support towards rent payments if their income is low enough to qualify. Council tenants along with other residents pay council tax and other taxes. Increased costs can be funded either from annual rent increases (except when frozen), which are constrained by government regulation, or otherwise must be funded from savings and efficiencies from elsewhere within the service. In this context, the additional cost to the Housing Revenue Account for settlement of the harmonisation of terms and conditions for 2020/21 is estimated as £0.600m. For 2021/22 the forecast costs of harmonisation are estimated as £0.760m (allowing for current vacancies to be filled during the latter half of the financial year). The full year impact (from 2022/23) is estimated to be £0.890m. There is no cost to the tax payer for this cost element. These amounts will be funded from existing rents and these costs need to be assessed alongside consideration of the benefits provided to the workforce and the potential service benefits in greater motivation achieved from workers who are better cared for by their employers. Current resource projections indicate that rent income under the govt formula is sufficient to cover these costs

Most administrative costs incurred by the council during this industrial dispute have been met from current resources. However, it is estimated that extra Human Resources time was required at an estimated one-off cost of £0.032m and specialised legal advice was commissioned from outside the council at a cost of £0.005m. It is not anticipated that these relatively small amounts (which equate to less than 1 p a week) necessitate any change in council tax.

- d) The dispute was resolved on 26 January 2021 and this was communicated via a joint press release from BHCC and the GMB union. Housing Repairs & Maintenance dispute update ([brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://brighton-hove.gov.uk)).

The terms of this settlement were subject to agreement at P&R urgency sub-committee which took place on 12th March 2021. The agreement reached saw staff working in the service being given the option to join council terms and conditions or remain on existing terms and conditions.

This response to Council questions is also in the public domain.

### **(17) Councillor Mears - Green Wall**

- 22.33 The removal of a segment of Brighton & Hove's Green Wall has caused great upset among Brighton and Hove's residents and environmental groups such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Building Green.

The living wall along Madeira Drive was planted by the Victorians in the 1870s and is also a wildlife reserve listed in council planning documents. It has grown and survived intact in this city for a century and a half until April when it was severed.

The damage, relayed in shocking pictures published in The Argus, includes about eight Japanese spindle plants, planted in 1872 and a large fig tree which were cut down by the council.

It is noted that Brighton & Hove City Council has been reported to the police for a wildlife crime.



To date, there have been a number of conflicting explanations from the Green Administration as to why a section of this Green Wall was removed.

These have been published in the Argus Newspaper (Brighton Council apologises for cutting down Green Wall, The Argus 23/04/21):

*On Monday, residents were told the work was conducted during planning for a "possible" cycle lane on Dukes Mound.*

*On Wednesday, the council then said it took place for a cycle lane and a pedestrian crossing.*

*Now it claims it had "nothing to do with the cycle lane in particular".*

The Chair of the Black Rock Task and Finish Group has subsequently provided a new explanation as to why the Green Wall was cut down.

In an email to members of this Task and Finish Group, the Chair stated:

*I thought it was established that the reason the green wall was cut back was because of a traffic safety survey that recommended cutting back to enable pedestrians to see traffic coming up the hill so they can safely cross the road.*

When I asked the Chair of the Task and Finish Group if this was correct, Cllr Druitt said that he stood by what said in this email.

Can you please advise what the reason was for Brighton and Hove City Council cutting down the Green Wall?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 22.34 As the council have previously explained in a press release issued directly after the incident and subsequently to councillors, a full review of this situation is being undertaken and a full report of the circumstances surrounding this incident will be available once the council's internal audit service are able to conclude their review. As Councillors will be aware, the council has previously worked very closely with Building Green both in relation to the whole of the Green Wall which sits behind Madeira Terrace and constitutes over 90% of the wall, and also the higher sections of Green Wall along Dukes Mound which have been cut back and are now re-growing. What we want to establish is how it came to pass that this specific small section of wall came to be treated outside of these two areas. Auditors are separate to the officers involved in the incident and they will report when they have concluded their investigation. It is anticipated that the audit investigation will be concluded by mid-August of this year.

**(18) Councillor Mears – Protests in the City**

- 22.35 There have been many recent protests in the City involving large numbers of people. These large gatherings have been a threat to public health during the pandemic.

The Communications Department at the Council has not been providing public information to help residents avoid areas with protest activity on the regular protest days.

Will the Council instruct its communications department to warn the public when such protest activity occurred?

**Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council.**

22.36 Keeping people safe during the pandemic has been my number one priority. Making sure the city is following Covid rules and guidelines has been a core aim of the work the council's Communications Team for the last 18 months.

Wherever the city council has known or been told about large demonstrations in the city, we have issued public health advice to people taking part in the demonstrations to help reduce the risk of spreading Covid. This has included the publication of Covid-19 safety advice for residents and people participating in protests for e.g.

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2020/covid-19-safety-advice-people-participating-protests>

There is no public health information and there are no reliable statistics to suggest that socially distanced marches were in any way the cause of a rise in Covid cases throughout the last 18 months.

When known, the city council has also supported and amplified Sussex Police's information and messaging on the routes' demonstrators will be taking to help make people aware of potential travel disruption.

This information is also shared by the Police with B&H buses so any changes to bus routes due to any anticipated disruption can also be communicated the bus company. This again is supported by the council via our communications platforms.

Information on disruption or re-routing is also displayed on e-road signs which are along most main roads in the city.

Sussex Police share all details of all known demonstrations. Where information is limited, or it is felt that by promoting details this might heighten community tensions it is not always possible to share this. Wherever possible we will make residents and visitors aware of any potential travel disruption and remind them of the current good public health practices

Further to the announcements earlier in the week, central government is now proposing to remove all legal Covid guidelines. This has been condemned by over 120 senior scientists, while the move has been described by Dr Mike Ryan, from the World Health Organisation as "*moral emptiness and epidemiological stupidity.*" Alongside the significant spike in cases in the city since the end of lockdown, this will put public health in far greater danger than any protest has.

**(19) Councillor Barnett - CCTV and Cuckooing**

22.37 Action is required from the Council to get on top of this issue of cuckooing occurring on council-run property. There are many over-50s housing blocks up by the hospital and on the Ditchling Road that have been targeted for cuckooing and we need to protect

our elderly residents there. These council-run over 50s blocks have some vulnerable residents in their 80s.

We are aware of cases where council flats have been targeted for cuckooing three or four times but nothing has been done. It is deeply troubling that drug dealers consider the council's over 50's housing blocks as a safe haven for their activities and to target the elderly and the council needs to get on top of this which is happening in its own back yard.

The over 50s blocks need CCTV cameras in the entrance to see who's going in and out because there have been cases of cuckooing in those blocks with the very elderly.

I understand that the Council has been talking about the issue of cuckooing for a while and is now saying it is thinking of holding a drug summit to talk about it more - but our tenants need action now.

Until the Council gets on top of this drug dealing and cuckooing going on at Council-owned property we're not going to get anywhere with tackling drugs in the city.

I understand that the Council has the facilities for monitoring CCTV including a Council CCTV control room which should be being utilised better.

Will the Chair of the Housing Committee commit to installing CCTV cameras at the council-run over-50's blocks to protect our vulnerable residents from cuckooing?

**Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

22.38 The majority of Seniors Housing blocks have CCTV, and there is a planned programme of work, which will start shortly with an upgrade and increase the numbers. We have experienced some delay in the project due to Covid 19. Following on from completion at the Seniors Schemes, we will begin the upgrade within other council housing blocks. There are currently 300 CCTV cameras in more than 50 council blocks across the city.

In recent months we have seen an increase in the number of enquires for CCTV systems from either housing managers, residents' associations and/or councillors. As a result, we have increased our CCTV coverage in a further 14 locations. All applications have been supported by the Police and each site has been identified as urgent due to one of many factors such as drug dealing, ASB and criminal activity such as arson attacks.

Over the past 6 months, around 70 cases have been discussed at the Partnership Operation Cuckoo meeting, one of these cases was within a Seniors Housing block. Not all these cases end up being investigated under the multi-agency Cuckooing response, but they are all investigated and a proportionate response is provided.

Those properties that are discovered to be cuckooed are often resolved swiftly by people being removed from the property, all suspected cuckooed properties are then monitored through regular police welfare visits in partnership with relevant agencies

such as housing officers, social workers or substance misuse workers. These properties are also regularly reviewed by a police sergeant or inspector. Properties where the associated anti-social behaviour continues despite visits and monitoring, will be referred for a multi-agency meeting to agree the best way of resolving the situation, possibly by use of a closure order.

Whilst cuckooing' continues to be a problem in Brighton and Hove, putting vulnerable people at risk of harm, the partnership Operation Cuckoo procedures that we have implemented are very successful, and partner feedback positive.

If you would like further detail in relation to the CCTV upgrade, have an enquiry about CCTV at a particular block or would like to know more about the council's response to cuckooing this can be provided.

### **(20) Councillor Barnett - Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs)**

22.39 Brighton and Hove City Council previously had PSPOs in place to deal with antisocial behaviour in parks and green spaces. Certain parks that were trouble spots were named and had these PSPOs attached to them. They were described as 'having a positive deterrent effect on antisocial behaviour' by Council Officers. They were initially brought in to help tackle unauthorised encampments in City Parks.

Inexplicably, in December 2019, the then Labour Council allowed these Antisocial behaviour Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) for our parks to expire.

Despite calls from our Conservative Councillors to reinstate the Public Space Protection Orders, Labour and the Greens have never brought forward a measure to do so.

In its opposition to PSPOs the Labour/Green Council has put our City out of step with neighbouring authorities, such as Conservative Worthing which has PSPOs dealing with begging and overnight camping.

Given the recent spate of antisocial behaviour in the City, including unauthorised encampments of travellers (such as those that set up in the middle of Portslade Cricket Club) and the ongoing problem of begging throughout the pandemic, will the Green Administration reconsider its opposition PSPOs?

Will the Green Administration reintroduce PSPOs for parks and begging to bring us back into line with our neighbouring authority Worthing?

### **Reply from Councillor Gibson / Hugh-Jones, Joint Chair of the Housing Committee**

22.40 PSPOs are intended to be used to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in an area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life by imposing conditions on the use of that area that apply to everyone. They are designed to ensure people can use and enjoy public spaces safe from anti-social behaviour (ASB).

In December 2017 the Home Office issued revised guidance to accompany the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 and it included the following.

‘Public Spaces Protection Orders should not be used to target people based solely on the fact that someone is homeless or rough sleeping, as this in itself is unlikely to mean that such behaviour is having an unreasonably detrimental effect on the community’s quality of life which justifies the restrictions imposed. Councils may wish to consider whether the use of a Public Spaces Protection Order is the appropriate response. These orders should be used only to address any specific behaviour that is causing a detrimental effect on the community’s quality of life which is beyond the control of the person concerned.

Councils should therefore consider carefully the nature of any potential Public Spaces Protection Order that may impact on homeless people and rough sleepers.

### **(21) Councillor Theobald – Patcham Roundabout Precinct**

- 22.41 I would like to draw your attention to several council issues that are providing a poor first impression to visitors arriving to the city via the Patcham Roundabout precinct.
- a) The ‘London Road’ road sign at the top of London Road, next to the roundabout, is in a state of damage.
  - b) The area behind the ‘London Road’ sign, including the stunning brick wall, is overrun with weeds. This is an area that should be planted and maintained during the summer.
  - c) The Cricket Pavilion at Patcham Place Recreation Ground is covered in graffiti on 3 sides. This was reported by myself to the Council on 16 April but has not been actioned yet.
  - d) Patcham Roundabout remains unplanted and in a terrible state. In response to my question to Cllr Heley on 17 December 2020 I was told that: ‘Negotiations and due diligence are progressing and we hope this will be finalised shortly so that works can start in the New Year’. It is now July and works have still not started.
  - e) There is a recurrent problem with unlawful encampments of travellers on Patcham Place due to insufficient boundaries to prevent vehicles entering the park.

Please can you advise what work will be undertaken to resolve the above issues (a-e)?

It is noted that in this year’s City Budget (25 February 2021), the Conservative Group secured funding for a gateway entry signage for the Patcham Roundabout precinct as follows:

£0.005m revenue to fund:

- a. £0.050m borrowing from £0.004m revenue, to support capital investment into a gateway welcome to Brighton and Hove on and adjacent to Patcham A27/A23 Roundabout to include a piece of iconic public artwork.
- b. £0.001m revenue to maintain this gateway welcome

Please can you advise the progress and timeframe for the implementation of this initiative?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

22.42 (a) A new street name plate will be installed for “London Road”

This will be done within 14 days.

- b) The borders along the A23 have been left to naturalise for decades I will arrange for officers to meet ward members and decide the best approach to them, but they will not be returned to the high maintenance borders they once were as there are no longer the resources to look after them as they once were. Meeting date to be offered to ward members within 1 month.
- c) This will be cleaned within the next month.
- d) The Council continues to chase Highways England for an agreement to proceed with the outline planting design. Last year we had been led to believe we could progress with our proposal but this ambition was stopped at the last moment by Highways England. This is not within the councils’ control so no date can be given.
- e) Unauthorised encampments occur across the city, some parks have barriers, and some have none for example Hove Park or Preston Park have none. Patcham Place has wooden bollards which are not difficult to breach. It would cost around £20k to replace these with a sub soil bund [assuming that the material was being excavated in the City and therefore supplied at no cost]. Building such a bund would make access harder. Bunds are dug through and gates are cut but it could be sufficient deterrent to move the unauthorised encampment elsewhere in the City. For a number of years now the council has not installed new barriers to prevent unauthorised encampments as it has not proved to be a successful approach and if we were to start doing this we would need to look at all parks and open spaces not just Patcham Place. There are no plans currently to put new barriers on this site or any other park site.

A series of permanent art commissions as Welcome signage will be positioned at key entry points to the city during 2022. This will include the area adjacent to Patcham Roundabout. These commissions will play a part in welcoming tourists to Brighton and Hove, as well as residents, reflecting the diverse and eclectic reputation of the city. The public art commissions, which will enhance the city’s welcome at key entry points (road and rail) are a portfolio of projects that be developed over the course of the next ten years as part of the aspirations laid out in the council’s public art strategy. The signage plans and the public art strategy are subject to approval at the TECC Committee in September 2021 after which a timeline can be put in place to ensure delivery takes place during 2022.

## **(22) Councillor Theobald – City in Bloom**

22.43 Brighton and Hove City in Bloom folded on 24 February 2020 after running competitions in the City for many years.

When the committee decided to cease operation, the final Facebook post noted the challenges of having to leap the hurdles of council directions. They had to exclude less

sustainable categories and embrace more ecologically sound practices for the competition.

Their post said: “As volunteers, we have found the running of City in Bloom to be complex and unsustainable.

“While we are saddened that we can’t continue, we are very pleased with our achievements over the seven years that we have been running as a voluntary organisation.

“Our sponsors have supported us and allowed us to award many community groups for their outstanding work and achievements.

“It was the decision of the committee (five members in total) to cease operation due to the extreme amount of time and energy that was needed and, having worked to update the process in which the competitions were run to exclude less sustainable categories and embrace more ecologically sound practices, the operation was deemed to have become unsustainable for the volunteers involved.”

This was noted in the Special General Meeting of Dissolution Minutes of Monday 24 February 2020.

The council’s lack of support is a key factor. While sustainability is important, a more proactive council would have worked with City in Bloom to find a way to bring in sustainable displays alongside traditional colourful flowers for a time in the summer.

The annual competition did much instil civic pride and showcase the city.

This is so important to Brighton & Hove which is a tourist town that relies on visitors and the contrast with other tourist towns in our county right is striking – a look at the presentation of Eastbourne and Worthing right now puts Brighton and Hove to shame.

Many of the City’s flowerbeds are in a poor state, overgrown with weeds and some filled with rubbish. Examples include Viaduct Road and even outside Hove Town Hall.

What efforts will be taken to improve the current state of Communal flowerbeds and tubs, such as those on Viaduct Road and outside Hove Town Hall?

Will the Administration commission a report on the merits of bringing back City-wide City in Bloom Competition for 2022?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

The emerging planting plan for the city’s parks and open spaces including flower beds, recognises the limited resources Cityparks currently has to maintain all of its areas to a good standard. In response to this, an option is being developed by the department to select ‘high horticulture’ areas in each park and to reduce the remaining beds, and borders. to limited maintenance only. This will enable us to improve the best bits and

whilst minimising time maintaining the remaining areas. This change of focus is still being rolled out by the department.

Tubs have not been maintained by Cityparks for a long time and any tubs around the city are normally maintained by volunteers and occasionally by other council departments. The principle reason for this is watering as with the exception of a particularly hardy plant called Phormium the plants in them do not thrive without regular watering. Tub and basket watering rounds stopped in 2012 when 'In Bloom' was originally cut. Work is underway to tidy up shrub beds such as those at Hove Town Hall however there are no plans to reintroduce Cityparks maintained tubs. With the exception of tubs being used for traffic calming tubs on council land that are no longer cared for by volunteers are usually moved to another area where volunteers have requested them.

We do appreciate that there are tubs and planters in the city which are not being looked after by anyone and are scruffy. Without resources available for planting and watering the best option is to remove them. One of the projects that city parks will be taking forward is an audit of all of the planters in the city and to identify who looks after them, if they are not looked after whether a volunteer group or individual would like to do so and if not to remove them or in the case of traffic planting container cover them over so that they are tidy and cannot be used for rubbish bins. This is on our list of projects and we aim to progress this as soon as capacity allows.

The In Bloom competition was originally run by a council officer with volunteer support and a budget to cover events and additional floral displays. This was prior to the budget being taken to deliver budget savings. If members feel that it is not realistic to expect volunteers to run such a competition this would mean reintroducing a budget to do it, detailed workings have not been done on this but it is likely to require in the region of 100k.

The volunteering pattern in the city has changed with very significant and volunteers are having a greater impact on our parks and open spaces than they ever have had. It is important to remember that it is not only this administration that is keen on sustainable horticulture, South East in Bloom changed the judging criteria in the 'IN Bloom' competition to encourage more sustainable displays.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the In Bloom Committee for what they have done and all of the other volunteers who do so much to improve our parks and open spaces.

Officers can prepare a more accurate costings with a break-down should members wish to consider proposing this at budget council.

### **(23) Councillor Theobald - Contractors**

- 22.44 Residents on Stoneleigh Court Patcham have reported their street being left in poor condition following recent contractual work by a telecommunications provider.

Residents have found it difficult to have the work remediated.



Does the Council have a system in place for monitoring the standard of work undertaken by contractors on City streets and responding to residents when it falls short of expectations?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 22.45 The council receives many requests for access to the Highway under the councils permit scheme, looking at recent Stoneleigh Close Open reach works the original reinstatements were defected and remedial have been carried out by the utility. Inspectors will following up to check the site shortly to ensure it has indeed been finished properly.

**(24) Councillor Theobald – Cycling on the Promenade**

- 22.46 Cycling on the promenade continues despite the display of notices indicating that cycling is not allowed. The continued cycling creates a danger for pedestrians.

Council employees make no attempt to impose the rules.

I have seen several letters on this subject in the Argus.

What efforts will be taken to enforce these bylaws in future?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 22.47 Since the start of Covid-19 lockdown, Seafront Officers have been undertaking daily quad bike patrols along the Brighton & Hove promenades. While the team are out they engage with the public with regards to safety messaging, and also enforce the byelaws with regard to dogs on leads and no cycling on the prom. During this time Seafront Officers have engaged with hundreds cyclists and instructed them either to dismount or divert onto the cycle lane.

The Seafront Team operates an engage and educate policy rather than fines or notices. Seafront Officers are unable to issue a fine for a breach of the byelaw unless the Police are present to take the name and address of the perpetrator. The Seafront Officers undertake joint patrols with the Police wherever possible. However, the priority for the Police during the pandemic has been to engage with the public regarding Covid restrictions and respond to incidents of crime and disorder. The Police do not regard cycling byelaw offences as a priority at this time.

It is also important to consider the fact that many people cycle on pavements and the promenade because the roads are not safe enough, which emphasises the desperate need for safe infrastructure for cycling on our roads.

**(25) Councillor Brown – King George VI Avenue (River of Tulips)**

- 22.48 In April the Council accidentally cut down a display of tulips along King George VI Avenue, upsetting many residents.

This river of tulips was planted at public expense. One resident has said that although not native wildflowers, residents were assured at the time of planting by David Larkin that they would provide a corridor of habitat up the road as well.

Can you reassure the public that the administration supports the residents' river of tulips along King George VI Avenue?

What efforts will be made to make sure this mistake is not made again next year?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 22.49 As the spend on conventional flower beds decreased Cityparks carried out extensive bulb planting in verges and similar areas across the City to provide spring colour. To vary the displays from the daffodils and crocuses usually used species tulips were planted on King George VI Avenue these have not done as well as other bulbs and the display has deteriorated year on year. This spring this resulted in a mower operator not realising it was a bulb display and mowing over it which will have further damaged the struggling tulips. It is rare that bulb areas are unintentionally cut but unfortunately with staff turnover staff are not always aware of where bulbs were planted. The team leader for the area has been asked to make sure that staff are briefed not to cut the area next spring. Even if the tulip are dying out bulb areas are also useful for spring flowering wildflowers and the insects that depend on them so we will be leaving the grass to grow long in this area in the spring.

**(26) Councillor McNair – Birch Grove Crescent (Poorly designed bins)**

- 22.50 The Council's General Waste Bins on Birch Grove Crescent leak litter due to a design flaw.

The cages inside the bins are too small for the shell. As a result, much rubbish slips down the space between the cage and the shell and returns to the street, creating a health hazard for local residents.

I have reported this issue to the Council and asked for the design problem to be fixed.

Can the Council advise the progress in rectifying this issue?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 22.51 Housing are working closely with City Environment colleagues to resolve issues arising for residents with the bins at Birch Grove Crescent. This has been due to the number of bins and the design of the bin store, which had a lift up lid. This meant some of the rubbish was missing the bins when it was put in. In response we have removed the bin store and reverted to on street bins at this time.

We are reviewing design and funding options to resolve this issue and will engage with ward councillors and residents to agree a longer term more satisfactory solution.

**(27) Councillor McNair – 5G Mast Camouflaging**

- 22.52 Extra funding for camouflaging 5G masts was achieved at budget council by the Conservative Group.

It is good news that the new 5G mast in London Road by the Brangwyn estate will be camouflaged by trees. However, when will this take place, and what will it look like?

Can we have a guarantee that other 5G masts not requiring planning approval that may be erected in Patcham & Hollingbury in future will also be camouflaged?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 22.53 The planting to camouflage the mast will take place this winter, it will consist of low growing woodland edge species such as hazel and field maple set back from the mast so that the control cabinets can still be accessed. We cannot say that future masts will be camouflaged as often there will not be suitable ground to plant on. We are keen to increase the tree cover in the city and where there is a suitable space to allow screening planting, we will prioritise this. As landowner, the Council has little control over masts erected on highway land but ward members will always be involved in any decisions on new masts on other council land such as parks.

In terms of Planning rules, all new masts and equipment over a certain size normally needs prior approval which means they don't need planning permission. This limits officer considerations to siting and appearance and camouflage can help address this issue.

**(28) Councillor McNair – Peace Gardens**

- 22.54 The work in the Peace Gardens to replace two benches and repair the paving has been going on for many months, and residents are frustrated with the progress.

When is it going to be completed?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

- 22.55 Two benches will be installed on existing bench bases which will be repaired by the end of August.

**(29) Councillor Peltzer Dunn**

- 22.56 I would like to draw your attention to the following Platinum Jubilee event that would be ideally suited to Brighton & Hove City Council:

**Civic Honours competition** - Local authorities have the chance to showcase their civic pride, interesting heritage and record of innovation - putting their hometowns on the map and bringing greater prosperity and opportunity.

This would be an ideal opportunity for our City of Brighton & Hove, which embodies all these attributes.

Rare awards will grant winning towns and cities with 'city status' and 'Lord Mayor or Provost status' for the first time in 10 years.

Further information on how to participate can be found here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prestigious-civic-honours-to-be-awarded-by-her-majesty-the-queen-for-first-time-in-10-years?fbclid=IwAR3cs6vEN-WZGjyje\\_zNdaprH3S70zLHGmGUqiFzl-uvardrJURgCrPLY-8](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prestigious-civic-honours-to-be-awarded-by-her-majesty-the-queen-for-first-time-in-10-years?fbclid=IwAR3cs6vEN-WZGjyje_zNdaprH3S70zLHGmGUqiFzl-uvardrJURgCrPLY-8)

Please can you advise:

1. Whether Brighton and Hove City Council will participate in the Civic Honours competition for Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee?

If yes, when will planning commence for our participation in this Civic Honours competition?

### **Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council**

- 22.57 Further to a letter I received from Lord True on 8<sup>th</sup> June, I have asked officers to consider the guidance that has been published about the Civic Honours competition. There are three areas we can apply for: investment, the granting of existing cities such as Brighton & Hove with Lord Mayoralty and Tree Planting initiatives. Planning is in any case already underway to commemorate key events in the coming year including the other initiatives that mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. Further to your query, this will include whether the city should make an application for Lord Mayor, which should be submitted before the 8<sup>th</sup> December.

### **(30) Councillor Wilkinson**

- 22.58 Labour was pleased to work cross party with the Green Party in January 2021 in successfully asking for update our city's road safety strategy to include road danger reduction measures such as:

- creating an environment that supports the use of active travel methods, as they pose a lower level of threat to other road users.
- expanding interventions designed to cut drivers' speed.
- working on ways to encourage a reduction in journeys by motorised vehicles.
- measuring danger on our roads through metrics other than a reduction in casualty numbers.

Safe mobility around our city is central to the quality of life of all who live and work in Brighton and Hove. An updated road safety strategy will set out our vision for road safety and inform policies to achieve that goal. The citizens of Brighton and Hove should be able to go about their daily lives without being placed under undue risk of injury from traffic. Our city should be a place where it is safe for every child to walk independently to school.

Can you please provide details on the progress of this strategy?

Low traffic neighbourhoods are being successfully introduced both across the UK and abroad as a means of tackling traffic issues in communities.

As you know I have long supported my residents in championing the feasibility of creating a low traffic neighbourhood in my Central Hove Ward, something you said you support.

Labour also gained committee approval in March 2021 for officers to explore options for other Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes and suitable complimentary measures across the city and begin work with member oversight on a wider Low Traffic Neighbourhood delivery strategy for the city.

Can I further ask that you provide details on the progress of this strategy?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

22.59 Officers have begun work on the initial research phase of developing the new strategy which will also involve engaging with stakeholders such as Sussex Police over the coming months with the aim of publishing the new Road Safety strategy in the new year.

The development of a citywide Low Traffic Neighbourhood Strategy (and Policy) Framework will be informed by other work undertaken internationally and, in the UK,, as well as the work being taken forward now on the options for the Hanover & Turner area pilot project. It will enable us to assess requests from local communities against consistent criteria for a local area based on available demographic and transport data and evidence. This will enable the initial prioritisation of locations to ensure that we can maximise the potential benefits and outcomes, before embarking on a more detailed assessment of prioritised areas. Local community support and engagement will be a key part of this.

We have procured and will be appointing a consultant to assist with this significant work programme work very soon and officers will report on the draft strategy framework to ETS Committee later this year.

**(31) Councillor Barnett - Weeds on the pavement in Hangleton & Knoll**

22.60 The state of the pavements in Hangleton & Knoll has deteriorated and many are now overgrown with weeds.

Some weeds have become so large that they are growing into people's front gardens.

Something must be done before someone slips and falls and hurts themselves.

Can the Council confirm:

1. Is it the responsibility of Brighton & Hove City Council to ensure the pavements are free of weeds?

2. What is the council's current policy on removing weeds from the pavement?
3. Will the council arrange for weeds to be removed from all pavements in Hangleton & Knoll ward before Autumn?

**Reply from Councillor Heley, Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee**

22.61 A report went to ETS committee in 26 November 2019. The decision was made to end the use of glyphosate by the council for weed removal and that manual labour would be used to remove weeds as an alternative. It was made clear at committee that this would mean that there would be more weeds on hard surfaces but that this would be a benefit in terms of increasing biodiversity and habitats for insects. The budget for weed removal was increased by £33k and this enabled Cityclean to employ 6 additional temporary staff during the growing season to assist with weed removal. This approach was endorsed and confirmed again when the approach to weed removal was reviewed at ETSC in March 2021.

However, since the new approach our ability to operate the service has been impeded by a difficult in recruiting and additional service pressures as a result of the pandemic and Brexit. There is a national labour shortage for manual labour roles. We are therefore behind in our programme of weed removal and we are having to prioritise weed removal where there are trip hazards, potential restrictions to mobility or risk of damage. Weed removal in Hangleton is on our list and the crews are about to start in this area very shortly.

Many residents are doing a fantastic job of removing weeds on public roads outside of their homes and in the roads and other places and we are grateful to those residents who have done this.

It should also be noted that we have many people contacting us who are delighted about the weeds and seeing the habitats increasing for insects and wildflowers growing in unexpected places. In fact, we also receive complaints when we remove weeds.

**23 ORAL QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

- 23.1 The Deputy Mayor noted that 16 oral questions had been submitted and that 30 minutes was set aside for the duration of the item. She noted that due to the restriction on the numbers of councillors able to be present for the meeting, some questions would be asked and responded to by Members on behalf of their colleagues.
- 23.2 The Deputy Mayor also reminded Members of the need to keep questions and responses to the point and invited Councillor Allcock to put his question to Councillor Clare.

**(1) Councillor Allcock**

Subject matter: **Reinstatement of Parking Charges for NHS staff**

- 23.3 Councillor Allcock asked, For the benefit of elected members and the wider public can you please explain why free parking subsidies in the City's car parks and off-road

parking in the City's hospital sites have been removed for NHS staff and what the council is doing to liaise with both the NHS Trust and the Government to ensure they are reinstated at this very difficult time?

- 23.4 Councillor Clare replied on behalf of the Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee, Councillor Heley, The parking passes were introduced by central government as an emergency temporary measure, and they ended these on 21<sup>st</sup> June. As the passes are being phased out, officers work with Royal Sussex to provide additional parking spaces. The Royal Sussex County Hospital has secured 750 parking spaces for NHS staff.

These spaces are at various locations in the city, including Brighton Racecourse, and will free up parking spaces around the hospital site for residents, businesses and for those visiting patients.

Brighton & Hove City Council will continue to offer other types of permits for healthcare workers, such as Professional Carer Badges. Details of how to apply and the criteria are on the council website.

- 23.5 The Deputy Mayor noted there was no supplementary question and called on Councillor Nemeth to put a question on behalf of Councillor Bell to Mac Cafferty.

**(2) Councillor Nemeth, on behalf of Councillor Bell**

Subject matter: **Democracy in Brighton & Hove**

- 23.6 Councillor Nemeth asked, Will the Leader of the Council confirm if the coalition agreement between the Green and Labour Groups, the 'so called' Memorandum of Understanding is still in place following recent differences in policy positions on matters relating to climate change?

- 23.7 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied, If this question were submitted by a member of the public it would now be ruled out because it is the same topic from the same person.

What we have here again is a misrepresentation of what is going on, there is no coalition between the Labour and Green parties, there is a Memorandum of Understanding which recognises that a majority of people at the 2019 elections and with any luck at all it will see the end of the Conservative party altogether in 2023. When people voted at the last election, they gave a clear mandate to the Labour and Green parties to carry out their policy manifestos and on this occasion their manifestos aligned on a whole series of topics and that included the very good work of Cllr Gibson and Allcock on housing, for example and, I believe, that that relationship is still continuing and long may it last.

- 23.8 Councillor Nemeth asked a supplementary question, If, or when the coalition is dissolved will the Leader of the Council commit to making a public statement on the matter?

- 23.9 Councillor Mac Cafferty replied, There is no coalition so therefore there is no coalition agreement. What happens between political parties is a matter for the political parties as I am sure Cllr Nemeth would agree.

**(3) Councillor Appich**Subject matter: **EV Car Share Pilot**

- 23.10 Councillor Appich asked a question, At the recent Policy & Resources Committee, the Leader of the Council indicated that progress has been made to develop a pilot scheme for the co-operative owned electric vehicle car share scheme, ahead of the report back to the ETS Committee in September. Could you please set out what progress has been made and what barriers such as a pilot scheme to be made?
- 23.11 Councillor Lloyd replied, the report is being presented to the ETS Committee in September to outline the way forward. Things are progressing very well; I can't update you on any barriers because things are doing very well so I am looking forward to seeing that report and sharing it with you all then.
- 23.12 Councillor Appich asked a supplementary question, I wanted to know why we needed to wait until September to make some progress, for example on TROs which have been introduced without consultation or committee approval and as for other projects.
- 23.13 Councillor Lloyd replied, If you can email me the question and I will get you an answer.

**(4) Councillor Nemeth**Subject matter: **Ice Rinks**

- 23.14 Councillor Nemeth asked a question, the Council has recently released the Sports Facility Investment Plan which was pushed through committee without debate. It makes reference to the city currently having the necessary percentage of residents being below the age of 20 years old. Currently 32% to make an ice rink viable, and this was briefly broached upon a few minutes ago by a member of the public. It is unclear why the number of likely users is being expressed as a percentage rather than an absolute figure as clearly the requisite number of potential users would continually be met going forward as the population rises, even if the percentage of the overall number of residents were to drop.

Why is percentage rather than number of potential users being quoted by the council, given that numbers of potential likely users look set to rise?

- 23.15 Councillor Ebel replied on behalf of the Joint Chairs of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee, Councillors Osborne and Powell. In terms of numbers, we know that ice rinks are incredibly difficult financially to make them viable so there are only a few across the country and one for example in Newport is part of a big complex where lots of different types of sport attract lots of people. Wherever here as we said we were just above the 30% range of young people who would use it and if the number decreases further, we have even less viability. It is a big risk as a city, we are trying to keep our existing facilities open at the moment.
- 23.16 Councillor Nemeth asked a supplementary question, my question was over the wider percentage quoted because the absolute number of residents who are considered likely users is going to go up. The percentage will go down because the overall population is going up but the number of likely users will go up. Its not about



percentages, it is about overall numbers. In responding could you touch on that, Btu my actual supplementary is, I am delighted that the Leader of the Council has offered to meet with campaigners, that is welcome news. Would you consider doing this on a cross party basis because, if it is ever going to happen it will be an incredibly tricky project as both members of the Administration have pointed out, and it would only work on a cross party basis like the King Alfred.

- 23.17 Councillor Ebel replied, In terms of percentages, we have previous attempts of ice rinks in the city and I have 4 examples here in the last 120 years and it has been really difficult to make them financially viable. So, it may be 30% of young people but it has been looked at and recently in 2016 where the marketing exercise came back with not really any interested parties, we had three people interested and only one meeting was arranged in the end and that didn't go any further.

If there was a viable, financial demand private businesses would come forward. I realise as a city our existing sports facilities are a priority, we need to keep them open, we know how much people love their local swimming pools and if we start a new project where we don't know, but is most likely will not be viable we risk losing our swimming pools or other facilities and we need to avoid that because people need their existing facilities.

**(5) Councillor Knight**

Subject matter: **Seafront Lighting**

- 23.18 Councillor Knight asked a question, this is a question from a resident, who asked me to put this question on her behalf. Please can the Council say when the seafront lanterns will be fixed and be put back up, it has been quite some time since they were removed for safety reasons?

- 23.19 Councillor Lloyd replied, the seafront lighting on the seafront is an important historical asset that we are aware of and everyone loves them, but we you also are aware they have been exposed to a harsh marine environment and that has damaged them. The deterioration means that major repairs and replacement is required. Over the coming months the Council will be beginning a new project of restoration and replacement in partnership with key stakeholders such as English Heritage to ensure that these wonderful architectural features of the seafront are maintained.

The first phase of this project is underway, which involves planning, investigation and making existing columns safe. Further communications are planned with the public and people like English Heritage on the next phase of how to restore these lanterns and put them back.

- 23.20 Councillor Knight asked a supplementary question, could I have that in writing, and I will forward it to the resident. The resident's supplementary question is heritage related, please could the Marine Drive heritage benches be looked at for repair, many of them have missing planks, that doesn't seem to be a particularly onerous task.

- 23.21 Councillor Lloyd replied,

I think yes is the answer to that question, I didn't know about the Marine Drive benches, I will look into that and send you my answer.

**(6) Councillor Evans**

Subject matter: **Equalities & Disability Officer**

23.22 Councillor Evans asked a question, for some years now the council's Equalities Team has lacked the expertise of a disability officer, which has resulted in mistakes, and mis steps by council departments and inequity in the Council's approach to issues which affect the life of disabled residents. There was an acknowledgement of this lack of expertise at February's Budget Council meeting and it was agreed, and funding was allocated to enable the Equalities Team to recruit to this essential post. Five months on, in spite of numerous representations, the post remains vacant with no credible explanation. If the CET lacks capacity, then recruitment to the post would address that issue.

When will the recruitment process commence please?

23.23 Councillor Ebel replied, on behalf of the Joint Chairs of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee, Councillors Osborne and Powell. The appointment of the disability officer is a role that I believe is critically needed within the council. As you are aware at the February 2021 Budget meeting, an amendment to allocate £45k to the base budget fund for the creation of a disability officer to sit within the Equalities & Communities Team was agreed. I must note however, that since the budget in February two equality manager roles have become vacant in the last two months. It is therefore planned to take the opportunity to strengthen this area with a more senior manager leading a team of three equality officers. The structure will ensure that we will have specialist identified equalities officers to link up with equalities related work with one manager. This will mean that the disability work will be undertaken by one main equality officer. I have been informed that the restructure proposal is subject to staff consultation and implementation will not start until September 2021. Unfortunately, this will delay the appointment of a disability officer and, I for one, am very disappointed in this delay. However, it is important that we get this restructure right and have a stronger equalities team in place so we have the resources for this key area of work of the council. In the meantime, however, the progress of disability related work, I have been assured that an internal interim officer has been recruited to cover the remaining equality manager post. They are due to start on Monday 2 August. Again, I have been informed that discussions are underway with a local disability consultant to mobilise work on the Accessible City Strategy and to progress the stakeholder analysis engagement plan with some early stakeholder engagement. It is essential that the main Equality Manager is in place as part of this engagement.

23.24 Councillor Evans asked a supplementary question, it does seem like the post has not really been seen as a priority and I am wondering, there have been a number of incidents particularly during the time when we had the funding available when disabled people have been disproportionately disadvantaged and if the disability officer post had been filled sooner the council would have been able to mitigate that disadvantage. I feel mystified, I am pleased to hear that there is a restructure and that there is an interim person being put in place, it just seems that when funding has been identified

and agreed that the post doesn't seem to have been seen as a priority and I am wondering why?

- 23.25 Councillor Ebel replied, it is very important, but we did lose two equality managers recently and we do want to make sure that we have the right team in place. It might take a bit longer as we have to make sure that we have a brilliant team in place that tackles all the issues going forward.

**(7) Councillor McNair**

Subject matter: **Grass**

- 23.26 Councillor McNair asked a question, Cityparks has the unenviable and never-ending task of cutting grass across Brighton & Hove. In Patcham & Hollingbury and I suspect across the city grass cutting, including twittens, verges and grassy areas seems to be sporadic. It is also difficult for residents to know if their grassy area is counted as a wild meadow or isn't. Some residents want the grass kept long others hate it. Sometimes only the sight lines for cars are cut, other times the whole grassy area is cut back. The cut grass is also not collected leaving an unsightly mess, which no doubt blocks drains. What support is going to Cityparks to improve their ability to cut grass in a systematic way?

- 23.27 Councillor Lloyd replied, thank you for pointing out the reality that some people love long grass some people hate it. It is something we all experience as councillors. We have been experimenting with long grass in our ward in Withdean and we are getting some negative reaction as well as positive. The results are, for example we now have orchids growing in London Road, but I do understand that a lot of long grass can be a problem and you specifically asked how we are going to deal with that backlog, we have had real problems with growing conditions have been good this year we had a dry cool spring and a warm, wet summer and everything suddenly exploded into growth and we are experiencing that coupled with the lack of staff from Covid Cityparks are overblown with it. We are all experiencing it, especially in our suburban wards. I have been cutting back a lot of growth in my ward myself just to try and keep on top of it. We are engaging with agencies and contractors have been engaged to catch up with much better machinery more able to deal with the length of the grass we have.

I have had an update from Brighton Wildlife Forum who are saying that it is working very well and in our little patch in Withdean Woods we have Meadow Brown, Skippers, Cinnabar wasps, Burnet moths, Bush crickets and birds, frogs and slow worms that will eat them. That is just a small patch of meadow wood we are experimenting with. It does work and I think we need to communicate with the public these benefits as it is quite often hard to see them and it helps those local wildlife experts to tell us and help us inform the public.

- 23.28 Councillor McNair asked a supplementary question, is there a grass cutting plan outlining a schedule and type of grass cutting which councillors could view to advise residents of the likely timetable and type of cutting to expect and to dispute if necessary?

- 23.29 Councillor Lloyd replied, certainly what we would propose if you want to encourage meadows, if you have had a two winter cuts, one in early autumn and one around

Christmas, then you would let them grow for the rest of the year. I have been advised by experts that is not necessarily the opinion of the Council. Communicating that to the public is very important. I think we could use signage, certainly in my ward, a lot of canvassing was done by the stakeholder group that wanted it done and they literally knocked on all of the doors of the roads where they wanted the grass verges to be left, and that was very successful. In some sections there are patches of grass that have been cut in front of peoples' houses because they wanted it like that and in other sections, meadows grown.

We could put in place a plan I think we could make it very clear to the public how we do it and I look forward to working with all councillors in doing that as I think it something that we would all agree on.

**(8) Councillor Fishleigh**

Subject matter: **Hyde Group**

- 23.30 Councillor Fishleigh asked a question, I anyone is interested in this question, please visit the website of Trustpilot and type in the Hyde Group to read peoples stories of despair.

Given the appalling reviews of despair on Trustpilot, the company's cavalier and uncaring attitude to residents living next to its Saltdean development and the company's refusal to help those with shared ownership properties with their cladding nightmares. Will the Council review its relationship with this company?

- 23.31 Councillor Shanks replied on behalf of the Joint Chairs of the Housing Committee. I do have sympathy with your question as I have had a lot of issues about the cladding in my ward involving Hyde. This is a national issue, and I don't know if Hyde is worse than any other company, but it is a big problem in terms of people not being able to sell their properties or having to pay extra for waking watches etc.

In terms of partnership with the Council that is with Hyde Housing Association to delivery homes across the city which is overseen by a Board, it has cross party councillors and three Hyde representatives. This gives the council control over the direction of the joint venture including the specification, construction and management of the homes. For these first projects the rented homes will become council homes, let at low rents and managed directly by the council. The shared ownership homes will be managed by Hyde. They brought in a lot of additional funding, tens of millions of additional funding because of Hyde's direct investment and their Strategic Partnership with Homes England.

Officers do need to regularly meet with Hyde and pick up with individual concerns about management of their properties but obviously it is not properties that we manage ourselves as the Council.

- 23.32 The Mayor noted there was no supplementary question and called on Councillor Wilkinson to put his question to Councillor Lloyd.

**(9) Councillor Wilkinson**Subject matter: **Park & Ride**

- 23.33 Councillor Wilkinson asked, the issue of park and ride schemes has been discussed in our city for decades, successful park and ride schemes have been introduced across the South of England, Oxford, Guildford, Canterbury, Cambridge, Winchester, Portsmouth and Southampton to name a few. At a recent Policy & Resource Committee, Labour gained support for an amendment to recommendations for the targeted budget management provisional out turn. This is before Council today to ask for consideration of a park and ride feasibility study with enhancement of the budget to ensure that multiple locations can be explored with a view of linking this to planned transport hubs. Does Councillor Lloyd support park and ride schemes? Yes or No?
- 23.34 Councillor Lloyd replied, no. My party is against park and ride, we don't think building a 5000-place car park in the South Downs would be a particularly successful idea, and that is probably why it hasn't been done yet. I believe it has been in the Labour manifesto since 1995.

The very lack of park and ride in the City is proof of the fact that we have got the sea on one side and South Downs National Park on the other. Having said that, I do respect the fact that the Climate Assembly asked for it and we must respect the democratic desire of that assembly. For that reason, I have been looking at Park and Ride and I am interested in the concept of actually using our existing parking infrastructure to delivery some level of park and ride. For example, the Marina could work as a park and ride site as could Mill Road and the bus company has now come up with a plan of using more roads as an experimental park and ride and there will be an announcement on that at ETS committee next week.

In terms of the sum indicated in the budget I think it was £5K, the decision at the July P&R Committee was based on Labour amendment to consider using some of the saving from the Financial Smoothing sum to support further consideration of Park & Ride options we could also boost that potential to assist in enabling a greater level of work to be done. But I am excited about that bus company proposal and I look forward to seeing that.

- 23.35 Councillor Wilkinson asked a supplementary question, improving public transport in Brighton & Hove should be high in our agenda in order to achieve our aims of reducing congestion, improving local air quality and support in sustainable growth and I believe we must work hard to bus travel more efficient than ever before. I personally believe park and ride will play a vital role in this and there are strong calls across the city. As you have already indicated Brighton & Hove's first every Climate Assembly had in its top ten recommendations the introduction of park and ride to minimise car use in the city.

Will Councillor Lloyd believe, as does the Climate Assembly, that park and ride will aid realising carbon neutrality by 2030?

- 23.36 Councillor Lloyd replied, as I said, I do respect the Climate Assembly very much, which is why we are looking at this and why we are looking forward to the bus company's proposal at Mill Road and because to an extent that has already been done, because I

think it was used for park and ride for football matches. It is also in my ward and I have no objection to it, nor do other ward councillors.

Whether I think park and ride will reduce congestion? Personally, I don't think park and ride will reduce congestion unless we can remove the same amount of parking spaces from the city centre that will be dedicated to park and ride on the edge of the city. Otherwise, I think we will get people using park and ride and all of the parking spaces in the city and we will have exactly the same congestion with a brand new car park to add to it. I don't think it will contribute anything to our climate target, but I do believe we need to look at and encourage people to use it.

- 23.37 The Deputy Mayor noted that the 30 minutes had been reached but in view of the time and number of questions left to be asked, stated that she would continue with the questions until 6.20pm.

**(10) Barnett Councillor Simson asked on behalf of Councillor**  
**Subject matter: Dangerous Pavements**

- 23.38 Councillor Simson asked a question on behalf of Councillor Barnett, one of my constituents aged 77 had a very nasty accident in Greenleas last Friday. It happened just inside the gate of the unkempt and dangerous entrance to Greenleas Park. She tripped on the dangerously uneven pavement, an ambulance was called for her at the scene as she was bleeding profusely with broken, or badly bruised ribs. She sent me a photo of her injuries which was terrible and made me forward it to the Chief Executive.

Her injuries are no fault of her own, because the area is not maintained as it should be by the Council and she tripped on large stones jutting out. The park is popular and widely used and will all the rain fall the concrete has worn away over months and years the state of the pavement in Hangleton & Knoll has deteriorated to a state where they are dangerous in many places. The pavements on the north side are more hazardous and trees are overgrown in many places. Excuses are made about Covid but the work that needs doing is outdoors.

Her question is: Will the Council commit to fixing the dangerous pavement at the entrance to Greenleas Park as a priority to make it safer for my constituents and, given the wet weather over the summer will the Council also audit the safety of the pavements in Hangleton & Knoll?

- 23.39 Councillor Lloyd replied, I am very sorry to hear about that accident no one would wish that on anyone, it sounds appalling and wish the resident a speedy recovery.

We have recently adopted a risk-based approach that seeks to target funding at the areas of pavement where there is the greatest risk so I would like to ask officers to look at that particular section and I would appreciate it if Councillor Barnett could email me about that.

Footways are regularly inspected in line with the road category and these inspections pick up defects for repair. Reports of footway issues are also received from many sources mainly the public and these are inspected and repaired if the intervention criteria is met. I know that sounds like a bit of a formulaic answer to what is quite a

serious problem for the resident so I would appreciate it if I could be contacted personally so that we can go and look at that particular section.

- 23.40 Councillor Simson asked a supplementary question, my constituent looks after her husband, who has dementia, and when she tripped in Greenleas and required an ambulance she found the number on a card which had been issued by Cross Roads which is to be used when an emergency call is needed. The number is supposed to connect to the Council for emergency care of the person at home, but the number would not connect. My constituent has subsequently learnt that the number is defunct, the scheme was set up by Brighton & Hove City Council, in her time of need the Council did not answer. As a result, she was not able to attend the hospital by ambulance and had to be triaged and helped home so that she could resume care of her husband. My constituent wonders how many other carers carry the card with the same defunct number. Can the Council please investigate this?
- 23.41 Councillor Shanks, Chair of Health & Wellbeing Board replied, yes, we obviously need to look at that, can you send us the information.

**(11) Councillor Brennan**

Subject matter: **Psychologists in Brighton**

- 23.42 Councillor Brennan asked a question, before the pandemic the waiting list was 18 months, so 18 months to see a doctor that can help you. After the pandemic, although I haven't got the evidence, it will be longer. I see this as an inequality issue because there are so many private psychologists that people, if they need a diagnosis, can go to. However, if you don't have the money to wait 18 months is an awful long time. The reason you have to see a psychologist is they are the only ones who can diagnose you. If you need help with housing or adult social care or other issues, unless you have a diagnosis you can't get help. Doctors can't help with the medication, so people are left without medication and doctors are quite reluctant to refer, probably because of the waiting list. We keep hearing that money is being put in for mental health from the Government is this area going to be addressed and whether the Council can employ more psychologists. There are so many of them graduating every year there are plenty around, so are we not offering the right money. It is really important, it has to be looked at, people can't even get PIP and things like this and then their mental health will slowly deteriorate, and the psychologists are the ones with all the research and the scientific evidence to help with deep rooted mental health issues. Is there anything that we can do and can we look at this problem please?
- 23.43 Councillor Shanks replied, I can't give you a detailed plan I am afraid because I didn't know the actual context. You are right, there is a big waiting list, there is an underfunding and the Bill that we were talking about earlier isn't going to help that because we don't actually decide how many psychologists there should be. I think what we should, perhaps, do with your question is refer it to the Health & Wellbeing Board, I don't know if we can defer the question? We can certainly raise it at the H&WB which is in a couple of weeks. In the meantime, I will get a detailed reply for you from officers.

I was reading something recently about young people with ADHD and people just having to pay for private assessments because they can't get an appointment and

obviously that is a big inequality issue because we all know that the people who can afford to pay will be to do that. One of the new things in the Bill and certainly in our Health & Wellbeing Strategy is about inequalities and trying to address them.

- 23.44 Councillor Brennan asked a supplementary question, I think you have covered it because I was going to say that we also need to look into CAHMS, that has been an issue that has gone on, as far as I am aware of for over 12 years. We do need organic diagnosis for people to be able to learn how to deal with their behaviour and so that teachers can learn how to teach people who have these different learning difficulties.
- 23.45 Councillor Shanks replied, I agree, and we will work with organisations to address this.

**(12) Councillor Appich on behalf of Councillor Grimshaw**  
Subject matter: **Housing Transformation and Homelessness**

- 23.46 Councillor Appich asked a question on behalf of Councillor Grimshaw, we have seen, recently advertised, the post for Housing Transformation and Homeless Manager. We were wondering what the job role is and where it fits into the Council structure?
- 23.47 Councillor Clare replied on behalf of the Joint Chairs of the Housing Committee, Councillors Gibson and Hugh-Jones. The role is to lead our Homeless Transformation Programme it is an additional support resource to support the service to enable the review of how we improve the focus on a full client journey encompassing homelessness prevention through assessment, placement, temporary accommodation and finding permanent housing. This additional resource to the sub service is to give us capacity to transform the service working with our team address service delivery pressures including improving our customer service while also addressing the needs of clients with increasingly complex needs and wider demands and budget clashes exacerbated by the pandemic to provide a better and more cost-effective service. The program will look at how we improve our already positive work on homeless prevention and understand the client pathway to provide an open approach to our service, to manage client casework tracking that end-to-end customer journey through the service.

The most cost-effective use of our temporary accommodation resources and how we support clients into accommodation, particularly in the private rented sector. We will work with our teams on how we can improve our systems and processes around case management, assessments and pressure support risk assessment on customer contact.

- 23.48 Councillor Appich asked a supplementary question, I am impressed by the list of duties, but I am very concerned, this is a very highly paid post and it was advertised through an agency and not the normal process. Do you know why that is and is it going to be a Council employed member of staff or an agency member of staff?
- 23.49 Councillor Clare replied, Councillor Gibson tells me that it is not a temporary role it is providing specialist consultancy work that we don't have in the service currently. It is a program manager for a defined period because we don't have the requisite experience in the service currently.



**(13) Councillor Moonan**Subject matter: **ASC Commissioning**

- 23.50 Councillor Moonan asked a question, what arrangements are being put in place to ensure that an Adult Social Care Commissioning Strategy is being developed and implemented, that is pro-active needs space and is financially viable?
- 23.51 Councillor Shanks replied, we are waiting for the Strategy, as you know, as we were not entirely sure what you were going to ask about this, I will get you an answer but there is a Strategy that will be coming to the Adult Social Care Board. Obviously, it is very important that we look at all the commissions that are coming out and how we are going to deal with them.
- 23.52 Councillor Moonan asked a supplementary question, the Strategy has been coming for a while and I appreciate we have had a pandemic, and everyone has been extremely busy, but it is a vital piece of work because it is based on the adult social care need within the City and it needs to look at what funding we have, what services we have. It is commissioning big services, spending a lot of money for some very vulnerable people. The Strategy is coming but it would be good to have a firmer date around that please. But in the meantime, could you give me assurance that we have a robust commissioning process within the in-house directorate?
- 23.53 Councillor Shanks replied, I will go back to officers about the Strategy to see when it is coming. I think in terms of a process, at the moment, we are making sure that we get advance notice. I have a list of all the commissions that are coming up and we are regularly looking at those and when they are going to come and one of the things is I want to ensure how much we pay and what we ask providers to pay but I agree we need a much more joined up strategy for it. I will come back to you,

**(14) Councillor O'Quinn**Subject matter: **Women's Safety**

- 23.54 Councillor O'Quinn asked a question, it is the year 2021 and yet we still have major issues regarding the safety of women in the UK and in this city. What measures have your Administration taken in the last three months to address this issue in Brighton & Hove?
- 23.55 Councillor Ebel replied, the Administration and indeed all councillors recognise that women and girls do not feel safe in public areas and the tragic death of Sarah Everard is yet another sad reminder of the dangers that women and girls face every single day. Councillor Powell has requested a report comes to the TECC Committee setting out what work the Council and partners are doing to address the concerns. The report, I believe, should come to the September TECC.

Sussex Police continue to lead in response to starting a partnership with the Support Victim Advocacy Service and a newly designed curb-side program. It is designed to be delivered by trained professionals from Seek for Justice this provides 1-1 intensive therapy sessions focusing on compulsive and obsessive behaviour intervention. It is also recognised that many offenders against women and girls are linked to the night-time economy, as you probably know in your position in Licensing. Work with partners

to tackle some of these issues include promoting safe travel. In several licensed premises and providing a safe place in West Street on Friday and Saturday night and provision of the beach patrol. Training has also been undertaken with door staff so that they are able to support women at risk of violence. In Brighton & Hove, in response to the 'Everyone's Invited' Movement and the high-profile death of Sarah Everard some young people in the City have worked together when allegations have been raised to ensure investigations and intervention as appropriate are in play to ensure that support is in place when allegations are made.

On 24<sup>th</sup> March the Home Office launched its first trials of Safer Streets funding, so funding is available to local authorities and Police and Crime commissioners to undertake work to make defined geographical areas safer for women and girls and Brighton & Hove City Council officers worked with the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to submit a bid. The maximum amount that can be awarded is £550K and there was an expectation that they would use the biggest local data and evidence including anecdotal evidence. Bidders are required to consult with public organisations who support women and girls in the local area and with local or national violence against women and girls and stakeholders to ensure proposals reflect the local needs of women and girls. I am pleased to confirm that officers have, in conjunction with PCC office submitted a bid.

- 23.56 Councillor O'Quinn asked a supplementary question, during the recent campaign what efforts were made by the Administration to work with schools and other bodies to be involved.
- 23.57 Councillor Clare replied, information can be provided after the meeting and noted that schools were supportive and that attitudes needed to be challenged in order to make changes in the long-term.

### **(15) Councillor Childs**

Subject matter: **Asbestos in the Council's Estate**

- 23.58 Councillor Childs asked a question, evidence submitted to the Department of Education by the UK's most respected epidemiologist, Professor Julian Peto, estimated that up to 7000 pupils have died between 1980 and 2007 due to exposure to asbestos at school. Most of this asbestos is still in place and that the Government's committee on carcinogenicity concludes that there is no safe level of asbestos. Will the Administration commit to the removal of asbestos containing materials from our schools' estates by 2028?
- 23.59 Councillor Clare replied, I thought that the question was related to the housing estates and I have provided you with a written response to this meeting on our schools so I would refer you to that response which gives you all the detail you need on asbestos in our school estates.
- 23.60 Councillor Childs asked a supplementary question, it is considered best practice by the Joint Union Asbestos Committee and Norman Harry the leading asbestos hygienist in the country, that asbestos containing materials as well as being recorded on an asbestos register should also be labelled in situ to allow occupants of homes and schools and other buildings to know the presence of asbestos to raise awareness and

in particular to raise complaints should materials reach a dangerous state of repair. Will the Administration commit to a systematic labelling in situ of asbestos containing materials in the housing office and school estate?

23.61 Councillor Clare replied, in terms of the school estate I think there is a list in my written answer to you that gives you where asbestos is in our schools, so I would refer you to that. In terms of our council estates, we do undertake regular surveys and also record them in our operational IT systems and following the bringing in house of repairs and maintenance we have actually reviewed them and remapped our processes, so we do hold that information. I am happy to get you a written answer on whether it is possible to commit to the things you ask but I am not the Housing Chair I can't give you that commitment.

**(16) Councillor Yates**

Subject matter: **Housing Transfer Delays**

23.62 Councillor Yates asked a question, I am sure all Councillors are aware that housing transfers and mutual exchanges were paused due to Covid and the pandemic and have recently recommenced. What I would like to know is, what action is going to be taken to prioritise the long waiting list that developed rather than by dealing with people purely in date order telling people perhaps with urgent transfer needs to consider emergency accommodation or applying to other local authorities?

23.63 Councillor Clare replied on behalf of the Joint Chairs of the Housing Committee, Councillors Gibson and Hugh-Jones. My understanding is that we prioritise homeless households first and foremost and that we will continue to do that. I also understand that we are undertaking a range of measures to increase our capacity of homes so that we can reduce this backlog. Housing Committee have regular updates and I believe they are having a report in the Autumn.

23.64 Councillor Yates asked a supplementary question, that is of little use to people who are waiting for mutual exchanges or housing transfers who aren't in those positions or have the misfortune to apply late. I wonder what the Deputy Leader of the Council would like to say to my resident who is in fear of further domestic violence from her ex-partner who has been bailed to an address close to her residence and needs to move urgently or to another of my residents who is at risk of losing her children through the Court system because they are unable to provide evidence of having a safe family home to live in because their mutual exchange has been paused and then not being allowed to be considered or prioritised. It is no good just putting extra resources in, we have to treat individuals like humans not just numbers on a list.

23.65 Councillor Clare replied, I would advise you to raise those issues with Housing Officers and with the Chair of Housing Committee who I am sure can assist with expediting them if appropriate.

23.66 The Deputy Mayor noted that all the questions had been dealt with and called an adjournment for 30 minutes as a refreshment break at 6.23pm.

23.67 The Deputy Mayor reconvened the meeting at 6.55pm.

**24 IRP REPORT ON MEMBERS ALLOWANCES**

- 24.1 Councillor Mac Cafferty introduced the report concerning the recent review of the Members Allowances Scheme by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) and referred to the extract from the proceedings of the Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. He noted that the IRP and full Council had previously taken into consideration the recommendations of the Fawcett Society and that the majority of Chairs of Committees were currently women. The current proposed changes to the Scheme took into account the job-sharing of roles that were currently being undertaken and if approved would extend the equality principles encouraged by the Fawcett Society. He noted that there was no additional cost to the Scheme and that the IRP had recommended the changes. He also noted that it was proposed to recognise the contribution made by the Standing Invitees and co-optees to committees and hoped that the payment of an allowance would be agreed. However, in relation to the provision of car parking for Councillors he noted that there were three amendments to be considered and hoped that the Green amendment would be approved.
- 24.2 Councillor Allcock moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group, which was seconded by Councillor Appich. He believed it was a sensible compromise and wished to record his thanks to the IRP for their work during the review.
- 24.3 Councillor Clare moved an amendment on behalf of the Green Group which was seconded by Councillor Shanks.
- 24.4 Councillor Simson moved an amendment on behalf of the Conservative Group which was seconded by Councillor Nemeth. She welcomed the recommendations of the IRP and noted that for those Councillors living on the outskirts of the city, it was not easy to travel by public services and that there was a need to be able to drive and park in order to attend meetings and then return home safely.
- 24.5 Councillor Shanks stated that there was a climate emergency which needed to be recognised and that there were alternatives to the car such as buses and taxis. She believed that Councillors should set an example and could not support the retention of parking spaces.
- 24.6 The Mayor noted that there were 3 amendments which would be taken in reverse order and therefore put the Conservative amendment to the vote which was lost by 3 votes to 11.
- 24.7 The Mayor then put the Green amendment to the vote which was lost by 7 votes to 8.
- 24.8 The Mayor then put the Labour amendment to the vote which was carried by 8 votes to 3 with 3 abstentions.
- 24.9 The Mayor then put the recommendations as amended to the vote which were carried by 11 votes to 3 with 1 abstention.

**24.10 RESOLVED:**

- (1) That recommendation 3.1 as set out in the IRP report relating to job sharing roles be agreed;
- (2) That recommendation 3.3 as set out in the attached IRP report relating to an allowance for co-optees who attend committee in a personal capacity be agreed;
- (3) That the Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law be granted delegated authority to update Council Procedure Rules to reflect the agreement in relation to the job sharing of roles as referred to in paragraph 3.2 of this report and to publish the revised Members Allowances Scheme; and
- (4) That with regards to the provision of support for car parking for councillors, Council agrees to option 3 as outlined in paragraphs 5.10 and 5.11 in the Report by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Brighton & Hove City Council.

**25 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION**

25.1 Councillor Clare introduced the report which detailed proposed changes to the Constitution following a review by the Constitution Working Group and consideration by the Policy & Resources Committee on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. There were a number of changes to the council's procedural rules and the petition scheme which would require those on submitted on the council's website to have signatories to include their post code.

25.2 Councillor Nemeth queried whether the requirement for post codes could invalidate a petition if they were not supplied and asked how petitions on external sites would be treated.

25.3 The Monitoring Officer stated that each petition would need to be taken on its individual merits and if a significant proportion of signatories had not included their post code it may be ruled out of order. Those petitions that were placed on external sites could not be checked for post codes and again these would be looked at on an individual basis.

25.4 The Mayor then put the recommendations to the vote which were agreed.

**25.5 RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the proposal to make changes to the Council's Procedure Rules in Part 3.2 of the Council's Constitution indicated in paragraphs 4.1 - 4.7 inclusive and Appendix 1 be approved;
- (2) That the appointment of a co-optee to represent the perspective of disabled people to Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee and a representative from Parent Carers' Council (PaCC) to be co-opted onto the Children, Young People & Skills Committee, as outlined in paragraph 4.12 of the report be approved;

- (3) That the proposal to make changes to the rules on Petitions in Part 8.10 of the Council's Constitution as set out in paragraphs 4.16 to 4.18 inclusive and Appendix 5 of the report be approved;
- (4) That the proposed changes referred to in (1), (2) and (3) above and as set out in Appendices 1 and 5 to the report; be approved;
- (5) That the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer be authorised to take all steps necessary or incidental to the implementation of the changes agreed by the Policy & Resources Committee and by Full Council, and that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend all parts of the Council's constitutional documents necessary to incorporate the changes, and to republish the Constitution; and
- (6) That the proposed changes come into force immediately following their approval by Policy & Resources Committee or adoption by Full Council, as appropriate.

## 26 REVIEW OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

- 26.1 Councillor Yates introduced the report concerning proposed changes to the Code of Conduct for Members, which were recommended by the Audit & Standards Committee. There had been a thorough review by the committee and officers, and he wished to thank all involved for their work and recommended the adoption of the new Code.
- 26.2 The Mayor then put the recommendations to the vote which were agreed by 11 votes to 3.
- 26.3 **RESOLVED:** That the revised Code of Conduct for Members as outlined in paragraph 4.1 of the report and Appendix 1 be approved.

## 27 COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FROM 1ST AUGUST 2021

- 27.1 The report was introduced by Councillor Mac Cafferty and noted that the legislation which had enabled virtual committee meetings to be held expired on the 7<sup>th</sup> May. The Government had not found time to either extend this or to enable Authorities to hold decision-making meetings virtually and therefore a return to in-person meetings was necessary with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> August. However, was proposed to continue with the ability for members of the public and officers to attend virtually and to keep the arrangements under review and advice/guidance from Public Health in regard to the management of the meetings. He therefore recommended the report to the Council for approval.
- 27.2 Council Nemeth stated that the Conservative Group would support the proposals, but he was disappointed by the way in which the Special ET&S Committee on the 21<sup>st</sup> July had been managed. He noted that other Authorities had used alternative venues to accommodate meetings and hoped that consideration would be given to how meetings were held going forward.
- 27.3 Councillor Allcock stated that the Labour Group supported the comments of the Leader and noted that the democratic process had been maintained throughout the pandemic

and there had been greater public engagement. He also acknowledged the need to consider officers and those Councillors who had yet to be vaccinated.

27.4 Councillor Mac Cafferty noted the comments and stated that the previous arrangements for committee meetings would not have foreseen the need for the Special ET&S committee meeting. He also stated that there was a pandemic, and the Government should have legislated for the continued use of virtual meetings.

27.5 The Mayor then put the recommendations to the vote which were agreed.

27.6 **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the detailed arrangements outlined in the previous report to Policy & Resources Committee and its Appendices were put in place as a transitional measure only and will cease to have effect at the end of 31st July 2021 be noted;
- (2) That it be agreed to revert to attendance in person by Members, co-optees and standing invitees who are appointed to decision-making meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees from 1st August 2021 subject to the safeguards listed in paragraph 4.3 of the report;
- (3) That it be agreed to end the arrangements agreed on 13 May 2021 for use of enhanced delegations to officers; and
- (4) That the Chief Executive and the Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law be authorised to take such steps as are necessary or incidental to ensuring that the arrangements for meetings are safe, following consultation with the Director of Public Health and Group Leaders.

**28 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY REVIEW**

28.1 Councillor Shanks introduced the report which resulted from the Boundary Commission's review of the Council's wards and structure and an initial consultation on the number of Councillors. She noted that there was a Member Working Group looking at the various elements of the review and it had recommended an increase from 54 to 58 Councillors.

28.2 The Mayor then put the recommendations to the vote which carried by 10 votes to 4.

28.3 **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Information in the appendices, including the information checklist, the draft size submission and the survey response from Members be noted;
- (2) That it be agreed that the Council should submit to the Boundary Commission the information checklist with the attachments as set out in Appendix 1 and the result of the Member survey as set out in Appendix 3 to the report;
- (3) That the draft Submission document set out in Appendix 3 with a proposed number of 58 Councillors be agreed; and

- (4) That the Executive Lead Officer for Strategy, Governance & Law be authorised to submit the Council's proposals and take all other steps necessary or incidental to the process.

## **29 THE NATIONAL BUS STRATEGY**

- 29.1 Councillor Lloyd stated that the bus service played an important role in the city and officers had worked closely with Brighton Bus Company to review the provision and ensure it was able to meet demand. He noted that a feasibility study on franchising had been requested and a report would be brought to committee in due course.
- 29.2 Councillor Appich stated that franchising was a preferred option which required a change in legislation, and she looked forward to seeing proposals for a park & ride scheme. She also felt that there was a need for a community bus service to support all communities in the city.
- 29.3 The Deputy Mayor stated that the report had been referred for information and moved that it be noted.
- 29.4 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **30 TARGETED BUDGET MANAGEMENT (TBM) PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2020/21**

- 30.1 Councillor Appich stated that she had referred the report to full council as she wished to commend the officers for the financial management of the Council during the pandemic. She welcomed the additional funding that the government had provided and wanted to ensure all Members were aware of the allocation and impact of funds that had been made available to various organisations.
- 30.2 Councillors Clare and Nemeth spoke in support of the report and noted that options for the use of the underspend had been considered at the P&R Committee and that key corporate priorities would be supported going forward.
- 30.3 The Deputy Mayor stated that the report had been referred for information and moved that it be noted.
- 30.4 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **31 CITYWIDE ROLL-OUT OF REAL-TIME AIR QUALITY MONITORING**

- 31.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was moved by Councillor Fishleigh as an Independent Member, and formally seconded by Councillor Ebel.
- 31.2 Councillor Evans spoke in support of the motion.
- 31.3 The Deputy Mayor then put the following motion to the vote:

This Council notes that:



- The city needs publicly available real-time data about pan-city air pollution (NO<sub>2</sub> and PM) to enable:
  - Officers to assess how interventions, building configuration changes or traffic flow changes affect air quality
  - Residents and visitors vulnerable to air pollution to plan their days when pollution levels are high.

This Council also agrees to request that:

- The Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee explores investing in a city-wide real-time AQ monitoring system with information available in real-time via a website for residents, councillors and officers.
- The Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee considers amending planning policy to ensure that all residential and business developments that come to planning committee install and maintain an AQ monitor with data available to BHCC.

31.4 The Deputy Mayor confirmed that the motion had been **carried** unanimously.

## **32 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SCHOOLS PAY**

32.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Mac Cafferty and formally seconded by Councillor Shanks.

32.2 Councillor Allcock moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour Group which was formally seconded by Councillor Evans.

32.3 Councillor Clare stated that she could understand aspects of the amendment but could not accept the final bullet point and therefore could not support it.

32.4 The Deputy Mayor noted that the amendment had not accepted and put it to the vote which was carried by 5 votes to 1 with 6 abstentions.

32.5 The Deputy Mayor then put the following motion as amended to the vote:

This council notes

- Local government has endured central government funding cuts of more than 50% since 2010; meaning between 2010 and 2020, councils lost 60p out of every £1 receive from central government
- The efforts of public sector workers including council workers against the Covid-19 pandemic; and the additional expected costs and expenditure as councils aim to fully support their communities through the health crisis and beyond
- The efforts of local government workers to keep communities safe during the pandemic despite risk to themselves; e.g. in public health, in cleaning, waste and recycling; to ensure children are educated and to look after older and vulnerable people
- The contribution of school staff during the last year.

- That recent research shows that if the Government were to fully fund the unions' 2021 pay claim, around half of the money would be recouped thanks to increased tax revenue, reduced expenditure on benefits, and increased consumer spending in the local economy.
- Performance related pay progression in schools is not educationally sound and is usually discriminatory in outcome.

This council further:

- Agrees to support the campaign by Trade Unions for a proper, real-terms pay increase for local government; calling on government to fully fund this increase, without adding extra burden to local authority costs;
- Notes the importance of continued work to support our local staff, in line with work already underway such as the Fair and Inclusive Action Plan, People Promise and additional leave flexibility.
- Requests the Children, Young People & Skills Committee to revise the Council Schools Pay Policy to ensure that from 2021/22 onwards the policy progresses all teachers and school staff up the pay scale annually (and biennially for upper scale teachers) unless the staff member is subject to formal capability process.

33.6 The Deputy Mayor confirmed that the motion as amended had been **carried** by 10 votes to 3 with 1 abstention.

### **33 SUPPORTING UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING CHILDREN**

33.1 The Notice of Motion has listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Clare on behalf of the Green Group and formally seconded by Councillor Ebel.

33.2 Councillor Evans spoke in support of the motion.

33.3 The Deputy Mayor then put the following motion to the vote:

This council notes

- The recent announcement of Kent County Council that they are no longer able to support any more unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)
- Confirmation that Government will not be pursuing a mandatory rota for the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) but will offer a small funding uplift
- The Dublin III reunification programme has ended following Brexit
- The council's previous commitment to take at least 10 UASCs a year through the NTS

This council further:

- Notes that last year the council took more than its commitment through the NTS
- Notes that gaps in funding from Government to support UASCs means a cost to the general fund
- Gives thanks to the council's UASC social work pod, foster carers with placements of UASCs and all others who provide support to children and young people who arrive in the city

This council therefore requests:

- The chief executive write to the Home Secretary to express the council's:
  - dismay at the Government's refusal to introduce a mandatory rota for the NTS
  - concern that there is no replacement for Dublin III
  - disappointment that the Government funding uplift will not provide sufficient support to ensure that more councils take UASCs through the NTS;
  - concern that in the meantime, UASCs are waiting at the border for placements that councils aren't providing.

33.4 The deputy Mayor confirmed that the motion had been **carried** by 10 votes to 0 with 4 abstentions.

### **34 THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE**

34.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Nemeth on behalf of the Conservative Group and formally seconded by Councillor Simson.

34.2 Councillor Appich moved an amendment on behalf of the Labour group which was formally seconded by Councillor Evans.

34.3 Councillor Nemeth confirmed that he could not accept the amendment.

34.4 The Deputy Mayor then put the amendment to the vote which was carried by 10 votes to 3 with 1 abstention.

34.5 The Deputy Mayor then put the following motion as amended to the vote

This Council

1. Wholeheartedly backs calls to light the city's historic beacons and equivalent structures on 2nd June 2022 in celebration of Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee;
2. Expresses its wish that the new lighting is operational in advance of the Jubilee celebrations; and
3. Requests the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee to receive an officer report on 16th September to set out options for the above, to include investigating support for community street parties.

34.6 The Deputy Mayor confirmed that the motion had been **carried** unanimously.

### **35 URGENT REVIEW OF ALLOTMENTS**

35.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Nemeth on behalf of the Conservative Group and formally seconded by Councillor Simson.

35.2 Councillor Appich noted that a Councillor Briefing had been circulated and that a report was due to come to committee and therefore could not support the motion.

- 35.3 Councillor Lloyd noted that officers were working hard to resolve problems but stated that he was happy to support the motion.
- 35.4 Councillor welcomed Councillor Lloyd's support.
- 35.5 The Deputy Mayor then put the following motion to the vote

This Council resolves to:

1. Note concerns that have been raised by Site Representatives and Allotment Holders with regard to (i) the administration of the Council's Allotment Service and (ii) deviation away from the aims of the Brighton & Hove Allotment Strategy 2014-2024;
  2. Request the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee to call for an officer report on options for improvement which provides the following:
    - (i) Breakdown by site of the different sizes of plot (i.e. full/half/third);
    - (ii) Breakdown by site and plot type of rent that was paid during the last accounting period;
    - (iii) Breakdown by site and plot type of plots that are currently unlettable;
    - (iv) Breakdown by year of the number of people who have joined the allotment waiting list and paid the £17 charge, and how the funds have subsequently been spent;
    - (v) Breakdown of the resources that are allocated to the Allotment Service;
    - (vi) Breakdown of annual expenditure by site;
    - (vii) Description of the role of Allotments Officer;
    - (viii) Detail on which recommendations in the Allotment Strategy have been implemented and which remaining outstanding;
    - (ix) Estimate by site of annual cost of water leaks;
    - (x) Detail on when and why regular joint liaison meetings between Allotments Service staff, BHAF and other key stakeholders stopped; and
    - (xi) Total amount that has been raised by voluntary donations from plot holders.
- 35.6 The Deputy Mayor confirmed that the motion had been **carried** by 9 votes to 5.
- 35.7 The Deputy Mayor noted that the meeting had been session for over 4 hours, and she was therefore required to move a closure motion which she put to the vote.

- 35.8 The Deputy Mayor noted that the motion had been **lost** by 0 votes to 14.

## 36 CROSS CHANNEL LINK

- 36.1 The Notice of Motion as listed in the agenda was proposed by Councillor Evans on behalf of the Labour Group and formally seconded by Councillor Allcock.
- 36.2 Councillors Simson and Lloyd spoke on the motion and expressed reservations about whether a ferry service from the Marina would be viable.

36.3 Councillor Allcock spoke in favour of the motion having reserved his right to speak and argued that technological advances had been made and he hoped these would enable a ferry service to be developed.

36.4 Councillor Evans noted the comments and stated that she believed a foot passenger service was something that could be explored and hoped the motion would be supported.

36.5 The Deputy Mayor then put the following motion to the vote

This Council:

1. Notes that at various times there has been a cross channel ferry service to France from the City, most recently in 1992 from the Marina;
2. That such a service based not on car use, but bike and foot/wheelchair passengers have the potential to increase tourism, create employment and be very popular with residents;

Council therefore requests the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee to call for an officer report to explore options for the re-establishment of a cross channel passenger service from the Marina including:

- a. Whether such a service could be publicly run and operated or run as a cooperative or joint venture
- b. Revenue raising potential of such a service
- c. Transport links to the railway station(s) and bus routes.

36.6 The Deputy Mayor confirmed that the motion had been **lost** by 4 votes to 6 with 4 abstentions.

### **37 CLOSE OF MEETING**

37.1 The Deputy Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 9.17pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2021