

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

The following questions listed on pages 43 - 46 of the agenda have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answers listed below.

Note: The Mayor also agreed to the inclusion of an additional 3 written questions which had been sent but due to technical issues had not been received in time to be listed in the agenda papers.

**(1) Councillor C. Theobald**

"I have repeatedly drawn to the attention of the Administration the disgusting condition of the Princes Place toilets adjacent to the Royal Pavilion Gardens. I asked an oral question at the Council Meeting on July 20<sup>th</sup> asking when the toilets would be put in a clean and tidy condition fit for residents and visitors to use. Councillor Mitchell stated to Members that she had, that day, instructed the Assistant Director for City Clean to, "...pay particular attention to those Pavilion Garden toilets."

Councillor Mitchell claims she received assurances on this matter, and yet more than 4 months have now passed and they are still in a disgraceful condition. So I ask yet again, will Councillor Mitchell, as a matter of urgency, have these toilets put in a decent state so that the general public can safely use them?"

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

"The new winter operating was implemented from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017, and soon after, a number of complaints were received in respect of Royal Pavilion Gardens. On investigation it was discovered that cleaning was not being carried out to the prescribed frequency or as it should have been by the respective toilet attendants – In addition some vandalism had also taken place at this site.

The staffing issues have now been addressed by Healthmatic and officers have independently carried out site visits and monitoring. Officers and Healthmatic representative met with Ward Councillors (08/12/17) and to improve the standard of cleaning the introduction of additional visits at the site is now taking place.

There will now be a further 3 hours per day allocated to these toilets for cleaning purposes however financial resourcing does not allow for a full time attendant on site

It is noted that there are ongoing antisocial behaviour activities at this toilet although the attendants will make every effort to deal and intervene they cannot be expected to deal with any confrontational situations which may put them at risk."

**(2) Councillor Littman**

“Thank you for having answered my oral question regarding recycling at the last meeting of Full Council. I have a number of supplementary questions resulting from your response.

In your response; you said: “I am pretty proud to have raised our recycling levels to the highest rate ever from the 24% under your administration to the 29.1% now”

According to the publicly available figures for CityClean performance (<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/environment/recycling-rubbish-and-street-cleaning/cityclean-performance>); the rate under the Greens ranged between 25.2% to 28.8%. Could you please explain which year you were referring to?

Similarly, according to the same publicly available figures; the rate in 2008/9 was 29.5%. Can you please explain how 29.1% is ‘the highest ever’?

As I said in my question; ‘Recycling rates in the city have been below 30% every year for the last 11 years, a time period covered by administrations of all three colours.’ 29.1% is nothing to be proud of. Following the successful introduction of Green initiatives; including communal recycling, and green waste collection, can you outline your plans to raise recycling rates past those of 2008/9 and towards the 50%+ achieved by many other Local Authorities?

Finally, my supplementary question asked what work was on-going regarding collaboration with other Local Authorities, which recycle a greater range of plastics than we do. This element of the question was not answered. Given the clear support both from Councillors of all Parties, and the general public, for the safe removal of plastics from our environment; please can you tell me what you are doing about collecting plastics which we ourselves cannot recycle, for recycling by any of those Local Authorities which can?”

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

“The figure of 24% relates to Q4 for the year 2014/15 (actual rate 24.14%).

The 29.1% rate is the highest ever compared to those achieved by the previous two political administrations on leaving office and there are plans to increase this further.

The introduction of wheelie bins for recycling will assist in continuing to raise the recycling rate as shown in the last quarter performance results. Officers continue to work on a number of recycling initiatives including wheelie bin recycling, increased garden waste collections and our new WEEE recycling project funded by Defra Tech Takeback.

Officers are also working closely with other officers on Neighbourhood Action Plans which will help deliver education messages to the community and in addition are working jointly with BHEE to deliver recycling education into schools. Officers will continue to look at other opportunities and work with partner organisations to raise the recycling rate

Most UK councils now offer householders some form of plastics recycling as part of their waste collection systems and this is generating increasing annual tonnages. There are many benefits to be gained by the responsible recycling of plastics;

- Provides a sustainable source of raw materials to industry
- Greatly reduces the environmental impact of plastic-rich products
- Minimises the amount of plastic being sent to the UK's diminishing landfill sites
- Avoids the consumption of the Earth's oil stocks
- Consumes less energy than producing new, virgin polymers

However, even though nearly all types of plastics can be recycled, the extent to which they are recycled depends upon technical, economic and logistic factors.

At present Brighton and Hove City Council only recycle plastic bottles (soft drinks, water, milk and detergent bottles). which are made of a certain type of plastic;

- PET clear bottle
- PET coloured bottles
- HDPE clear bottles
- HDPE coloured bottles
- PVC clear bottles (symbol "3" on bottle, used in the home)
- PVC coloured bottles (symbol "3" on bottle, blue tint, used in the home)
- PP clear bottles
- PP coloured bottles

There is a market for this product which provides an income and it provides the optimum recovery route in that it can be turned into a product that can be recycled again and again.

Unfortunately at present the Hollingdean MRF is not designed to take plastic pots, tubs and trays as it lacks the equipment needed to detect and separate these types of plastics. BHCC & ESCC have asked Veolia to assess the feasibility of retrofitting the facility.

The main challenge from an operational perspective is the limited space inside the hall to accommodate the sorting equipment and storage space needed for an additional material stream. It is questionable whether the existing Hollingdean site is large enough to accommodate additional sorting of pots, tubs and trays.

The biggest barrier is the lack of a sustainable end market for the volume of material likely to be generated collection. Feedback from ESCC and our contractor indicates a lack of demand from manufacturing and industry for these materials. There is also fierce competition from virgin plastics due to the

low price of oil and recent developments in China to restrict the import of recycling are also impacting on the market

Although, Cityclean will actively continue to look at future solutions with ESCC and Veolia.”

**(3) Councillor Sykes**

“Please can Cllr Mitchell provide quarterly figures for B&H domestic waste (not recycling) arising (kg per household) over the past five years?”

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

See table below – Information obtained from Waste Data Flow

Year	Quarter	NI191 HH waste not sent for recycling, reuse or composting – numerator	NI191 denominator: Number of households	NI191 Residual Household Waste per Household (Kg)
2011/12	Q2	26,407.27	125,460	150.73
2011/12	Q3	24,327.28	125,460	141.92
2011/12	Q4	23,780.58	126,060	136.10
2012/13	Q1	26,285.51	126,060	149.91
2012/13	Q2	26,935.16	126,060	154.26
2012/13	Q3	25,083.78	126,060	147.79
2012/13	Q4	23,744.15	126,430	140.21
2013/14	Q1	24,954.82	126,430	146.23
2013/14	Q2	26,664.24	126,430	156.23
2013/14	Q3	25,138.87	126,430	148.41
2013/14	Q4	25,398.71	127,080	147.94
2014/15	Q1	19,845.67	127,080	156.17
2014/15	Q2	19,606.31	127,080	154.28
2014/15	Q3	19,918.88	127,080	156.74
2014/15	Q4	18,704.92	127,080	147.19
2015/16	Q1	20,189.98	127,850	157.92
2015/16	Q2	20,366.74	127,850	159.30
2015/16	Q3	19,642.53	127,850	153.64
2015/16	Q4	19,189.01	127,850	150.09
2016/17	Q1	20,110.99	128,540	156.46
2016/17	Q2	20,301.56	128,540	157.94
2016/17	Q3	18,531.90	128,540	144.17
2016/17	Q4	18,420.07	128,540	143.30
2017/18	Q1	19,511.84	128,540	151.80

**(4) Councillor Gibson**

“a) Hanover and Elm Grove CPZ

Please can you provide as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of December:

- 1) The total number of permits issued for zones V and zone S?
  - 2) The numbers of annual and of 3 month permits issued for each of zones V and S?
  - 3) The total permit income paid to the council from permit fees for zones V and S up until 1<sup>st</sup> of December?
  - 4) The total capital expenditure incurred on markings, signage and other works needed for implementation of the CPZ in zones V and S?
  - 5) The total capital expenditure from other budgets headings spent at the same time as the CPZ (ie cycle racks)
- b) If community groups and local residents are able to fundraise the money needed for a covered cycle storage facility (at no cost to the council) and have identified a suitable location, can you confirm that, in the interests of supporting cycling with all the associated health benefits, the council will give the necessary permission to enable the facility to be installed? (subject to any consultation + planning that may be needed).”

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

“The latest total number of resident permit figures as of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017 were the following;

Area V (Full scheme) – 2384 permits (2488 limit)

Area S (Light touch scheme) – 1791 permits issued (2288 limit)

The rest of the data requested is a significant piece of work and involves data being collected from a number of teams in the Transport Department in liaison with finance colleagues. Therefore, we will ensure you get a written response from the department by early in the New Year.”

**(5) Councillor Gibson**

“a) Payments for emergency and temporary accommodation

For 2016/17, please can you provide the total annual cost payable for emergency and temporary accommodation to:

- i) Helgor Trading
- ii) Baron Homes

Along with the number of households that were housed by each provider

b) Financial modelling of new council homes

Please can you provide the figures for the estimated surplus/deficit over the 60 year financial modelling period (currently used-indicating for each scheme

whether the most current assumptions have been made or those used previously) for:

- Aldwick Mews
- Brook Mead
- Darwell Court
- Flint Close
- Hobby Place
- Kite Place
- Pierre Close
- Preston Rd
- Robert Lodge (N)
- Robert Lodge (S)
- Lynchet Close
- Kensington St”

**Reply from Councillor Meadows, Chair of the Housing & New Homes Committee**

**(a)**

“We have a procurement framework under which contracts for emergency and temporary accommodation are awarded. The contracts awarded to the providers where information is requested took effect from April 2015. The total cost of housing homeless residents in a city with our shortage of housing is at the moment still very significant, and has been for many years.

Overall we are:

- Aiming through the Homelessness Trailblazer prevention project to reduce our use of temporary accommodation by April 2019
- Looking at all options we can to provide more affordable housing to residents, so also reducing the need for temporary and emergency accommodation
- Working with CVS on financial inclusion work and Credit Union support to help residents stay in their homes
- Bringing forward new options for providing emergency and temporary accommodation. We have recently agreed to convert Oxford Street housing office to temporary accommodation, and Stonehurst Court to temporary accommodation, and any other opportunities are also actively being explored.

In terms of what was paid to specific providers, the total annual gross cost payable for emergency and temporary accommodation for 2016/7 for Baron Homes was £3,189,085 and for Helgor Trading was £932,772. However, this is not the net cost to the council, as tenants are eligible for housing benefit, as they would be if their accommodation was provided in another way, meaning that the net cost to the council is considerably lower.

We are looking into the second part of this request taking into account legal and commercial considerations.

**(b)**

These schemes were all considered and approved by the Housing & New Homes Committee taking into account the long term implications for the ring-

fenced Housing Revenue Account including consideration of appropriate scheme costs and rent levels. A number of the schemes are now occupied by tenants with costs and rental streams being as anticipated.

Remodeling the financial impact of new build schemes over 60 years is a significant piece of work and officers will therefore provide a written response to this question as soon as practicably possible.”

**(6) Councillor Taylor**

“In my previous oral question I asked the Administration what it planned to do should we have a similar situation for 2018/19 admissions in the Dorothy Stringer Varndean catchment to which I did not receive a satisfactory response.

Since then the two schools concerned have written to the Council expressing an interest in expansion of their PAN on a temporary basis but last year were not asked by the Council to accommodate additional numbers.

Therefore can Councillor Chapman please indicate how many pupils are expected to not be offered one of their catchment schools and if this is the case can he confirm that the Administration will work with the two schools to limit the impact on local residents?”

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

“The Cross Party School Organisation Working Group will be meeting on 20 December to consider the recommendations to the Children Young People & Skills committee following the public consultation. Within the 907 responses received was a joint response from the governing bodies of Varndean and Dorothy Stringer schools and their suggestion will be considered alongside those of all other respondents. Officers have since met with the Chairs of Governors and Headteachers of both schools to discuss their response further and I wait to hear more about this at the meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> December. Having attended the majority of public meetings I am also aware of the concerns of residents about the impact any decisions taken will have on local residents regarding admissions in 2019.

The council determined its admission arrangements for 2018 in January 2017 and parents were advised in the information booklet that there is no guarantee of a place at a catchment area school. Every pupil who requires a place will be offered one within the city. The closing date for applications was 31 October and late applications, with good reason, will be accepted up until 22 January 2018. We will not hear from city schools who are their own admission authority about who will receive places until 20 December and from neighbouring authorities until late January 2018. Therefore it is not possible to indicate how many pupils are expected to not to be offered one of their catchment schools at this time and what actions would be appropriate as a result.”

**(7) Councillor Wares**

**No.56 Subsidised Bus Route**

“Councillor Mitchell advised at full Council on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November, that officers had had meetings with The Big Lemon bus company about 50% reduction in the No.56 bus route link around Patcham and Hollingbury and that officers would be in touch with us to reassure residents. Some six weeks later we have still not had any communication, the link remains reduced by 50% and the life line this service provides remains severed. Please could Councillor Mitchell advise what precisely has taken place, what the discussions have been, what is proposed and when the service will be reinstated to the levels it was before?”

**Reply from Councillor Mitchell, Chair of the Environment, transport & Sustainability Committee**

“Thank you for your question. An information document is being prepared. This will be circulated to all councillors and other stakeholders and gives details of changes to bus services from 14 January 2018. The changes to service 56 result from feedback received by the council and The Big Lemon bus company since the new bus service contracts started on 17 September. The information document will say the following:

Following requests from passengers, the service 56 timetable has been revised to improve the service to Patcham. Generally buses will run every 75 minutes. This will allow more time for buses to complete their journeys and provide a reliable service.

Buses will leave Knoll Estate for Patcham at 7.10am, 8.30am, 9.30am, 10.45am, 12.00, 1.15pm, 2.30pm, 3.45pm, 5pm and 6.15pm. The 6.15pm journey will terminate at Hollingbury ASDA (there is not currently a journey at this time).

Buses will leave Patcham at 8.02am, 9.35am, 10.45am, 12.00, 1.15pm, 2.30pm, 3.45pm, 5pm and 6.15pm. All journeys will leave from Old London Road Co-op, with the exception of the 8.02am, which will start from Ladies Mile Road Shops (as has always been the case with this journey). The 6.15pm journey terminates at Old Steine.

An additional, later journey will leave Hollingbury ASDA at 7.09pm, terminating at Old Steine.

The changes will also be publicised in new editions of individual route leaflets and in the new edition of ‘Bus Times’, which will be available early in January. All bus stop timetables will also be updated in advance of the 14 January service change.”

**(8) Councillor Wares**

**Street Tree Planting**

“Subsequent to the revelation at ETS Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> November that officers are implanting street tree planting in the East of the City and working West, we have subsequently learnt that Councillor Mitchell agreed it will be carried out in zones over a four-year period. It appears this was a unilateral decision by



Councillor Mitchell that had no consultation at Ward or Committee level, has no future funding plan and affects everybody in the City. Further, it appears that officers have been delegated authority to decide what the zones are and what will happen in them. Please could Councillor Mitchell advise how, when and why this key strategic decision was taken and in detail, precisely what the four year plan is?"

**Reply from Councillor Mitchell, Chair of the Environment, transport & Sustainability Committee**

"For budgetary and operational reasons the city has been divided into four zones for street tree planting in order to get maximum value from the considerably reduced budget available. There has been no additional maintenance budget for these additional trees, only a budget for planting. This will mean increased pressure on the maintenance budget as the trees mature.

Planting of new trees are high maintenance in the first year, have to be watered more frequently and monitored closely, therefore the zones make it more efficient and cost effective to give this more intensive maintenance to trees in fairly close proximity than if the trees were spread across the city.

Zone 1 encompasses Hove focussing on the streets off New Church Road/Portland Road and working West to East:

- There are 152 trees ordered
- 5 are replacement trees for Patcham Peace Garden (Watering by Volunteers/Park Staff)
- 14 are to go into parks (Watering by Park Staff)
- 115 are to be planted into streets (Watering by City Parks)
- 9 of which are Memorial Trees
- 17 are for Cemeteries (Watering by Cemetery Staff)."

**(9) Councillor Druitt  
Trees**

"In the council year 2016-17 how many trees were felled by the council and what species were they, how many were diseased, what reasons are given for any that were not diseased, and how many trees were planted a) from the council's own budgets, and b) from the Tree Fund? Can the council indicate how this compares with the previous year and can the council outline the role of trees and bushes in the council's air quality strategy."

**Reply from Councillor Mitchell, Chair of the Environment, transport & Sustainability Committee**

"With reference to the number of trees felled, what species they were and the reasons given, this information is not available currently but will be provided.

There were 19 trees planted via donations/memorial. To the best of our knowledge no trees were planted from the council's own budget 2016-17 because tree planting was cut from the budget. No trees were planted from the

Tree Fund. In the previous year 201 trees were planted in total, of which 35 were donation/memorial and 18 were from the Hove Civic Society.

With reference to the role of trees and bushes in the council's air quality strategy, this information is not available currently but will be provided in the forthcoming Air Quality Strategy report."

**(10) Councillor Druitt**

Homelessness

"Does the council still aim to eliminate the need for rough-sleeping in the city by 2020, how likely is it that this will be achieved and when can we expect to see the numbers of people forced to sleep on the streets start coming down?"

**Reply from Councillor Moonan, Lead Member for Rough Sleeping**

"Yes the Labour administration still aims to eliminate the needs for anyone to sleep rough by 2020. This was a manifesto pledge and we will do everything we can, at a local authority level, to ensure all rough sleepers are housed. BHCC continues to drive forward with its local Rough Sleeping Strategy and there are a range of services and projects supporting the delivery of this strategy. Recent achievements include the opening of a winter night shelter; the city's first women's only hostel service and strengthening of our procedures for working across all partner agencies. We are implementing the Trailblazer project which has prevented many people becoming homeless and we have an affordable house building programme through our New Homes and Joint Venture initiatives.

This target of course remains a challenge as a result of a number of factors. We have had to absorb very significant saving across the council. We have a national housing crisis and the impact of welfare reforms is increasing the risk of homelessness, meaning rough sleeping all over the country is at unprecedented levels."

**(11) Councillor Druitt**

Policy on feeding seagulls and pigeons

"Whilst I commend the motives behind people feeding seagulls and pigeons, in some areas of the city, especially in our green spaces, this is having a detrimental effect on other bird species. Can the lead member for Environment, Transport and Sustainability tell me if there are any plans for a council policy on the feeding of seagulls and pigeons and can the signage that is in place in Powis Sq be erected in other green spaces too?"

**Reply from Councillor Mitchell, Chair of the Environment, transport & Sustainability Committee**

"We are planning to undertake an educational approach by displaying signs in certain problematic areas such as Pelham, Old Steine Memorial and Montpelier Crescent requesting that feeding does not take place."