

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

The following questions have been received from Councillor Bagaen and will be taken at Item 5:

**(1) Unauthorised Traveller Encampment During Covid 19**

Over the week there has been a small unauthorised encampment of travelling families on the Patcham Place that has raised some pertinent health and well-being issues.

To help travelling families during the pandemic to access health and hygiene requirements such as water, sanitation and waste disposal facilities, Government guidance suggests making alternative stopping place available such as transit sites, providing suitable local authority land or using holiday campsites which may have closed and have established facilities. Government as we know, has provided the council with funding to deal with Covid 19 issues.

However, contrary to Government advice the council has decided to close the multi-million transit site we have at Horsdean (other councils are opening transit sites such as Canterbury) and leave transit families in a popular park where somehow these essential health and hygiene requirements will be provided aside from the fact the council hasn't yet provided the scientific or medical advice to support closing the transit site. What plans have the council in place to support travelling families, what is happening at Patcham Place cannot be a sustainable and healthy solution across the whole city.

Surely, the plan isn't to leave families in the parks and open spaces they initially pitch up onto not knowing how long the pandemic arrangements will be in place. Please could the Chair advise what better strategy and protocol is being put into place to support travelling families and the affected than just leaving travelling families in the parks where they initially turn up.

**(2) Closure of Madeira Drive During Covid 19 Outbreak**

The council to a great fanfare, closed Madeira Drive to general traffic and encouraged the space to be used for cycling and walking. Above Madeira Drive as we know, is the wide boulevard of Marine Parade. However, it seems that the consequence of not thinking this through is that thousands of people encouraged to this area are having to squeeze by each other on the only two staircases that link these locations. Obviously, there is the ramp and the extreme ends of Madeira Drive for people to safely use. Regardless, people will try to find the shortest route between two points and the staircases could now become areas of close contact between individuals.

Please could the Chair advise what plans are being put into place to ensure that people can still use the staircases without the risk of spreading Covid 19. For example, could one stairway be up only and the other down only. It may require more physical marshalling but that would be better than the position that the stairs are ok to cross on.

**(3) Closure/Continuing Closure of City Schools – Covid 19**

On Friday 20 May 2020, the council advised schools in the city not to open. Could the Chair and the Board share what health advice has the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Director of Public Health given to schools on the issue of health and safety and risk of infection around opening schools at this point in the pandemic response.

**(4) Discussions with GMB – Covid 19**

On Friday 29 May 2020, Mark Turner of the GMB union, wrote to all Councillors saying that his and the GMB's information to date (29 May) is that the infection rate in Brighton and Hove is increasing not decreasing and the unions and Mr Turner had seen evidence indicating that the R value may be as high as 1.7.

Mr Turner advised all councillors that he and the GMB Members need to see scientific evidence locally to demonstrate to us that the R value is truly reducing.

Could the Char and the Board share what information was shared with Mr Turner and the GMB and why this information was not shared with the other members of the Board if the decision to support the council's position to advise schools to close was based on this information.