

Brighton & Hove City Council

Council

Agenda Item 94

Subject: Written questions from councillors.

Date of meeting: 7 April 2022

Report of: Executive Director for Governance, People & Resources

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answer detailed below:

(1) Councillor Appich

At Policy and Resources committee on 10 February 2022 we discussed and agreed cross-party that vulnerable people in our council housing should get more support and that properties should be let at least in a liveable state, with particular reference to providing floor coverings.

What progress has been made with this - as charities are still getting applications for carpets from new tenants in our council housing?

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

The lettable standard review will start in June 2022 and will include a review of provision for help with floor coverings. Currently Housing has a prevention fund, which can be used for help with floor coverings. This is considered when looking at ways living conditions can be improved for the most vulnerable households or to de-escalate noise/neighbour disputes. The spend on floor coverings over the past 2 years has been:

2020-2021 - £12926.64

2021-2022 - £13128.67

(2) Councillor Grimshaw

Access Point

What is the response time for residents contacting Access Point by email as advised when calling by phone? Does Access Point have significant delays when responding to emails and how long in general is the wait for a referral?

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

The email response time is currently 10 days, so Access Point is responding to emails received from 24th March onwards. Referrals are also received by phone and online requests. Work is underway to improve the responsiveness of the service and we ensure urgent requests are always prioritised.

This delay is not acceptable and I am following up with officers and will monitor over the coming months to ensure we perform better.

Whilst stressing the other ways of communication and the prioritisation, 'the front door' has been a long-standing problem and is being redesigned to radically improve our performance. There have been staffing issues and the management has recently transferred to our General Manager, Access & Hospitals and the first stage of the change is currently going through a 30-day consultation. We are also piloting an Adult Safeguarding & Duty Services (ASDS) and the learning will be incorporated into our service redesign.

(3) Councillor Grimshaw

Dyslexia

Do Brighton & Hove City Council residents have access to a diagnostic service which assesses dyslexia? If so, what is the waiting time and how is this service accessible?

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

Brighton and Hove Inclusion Support Service (BHISS) is able to identify and diagnose SpLD/Dyslexia through its Educational Psychologists and specialist Literacy Team. BHISS embeds the Equality Act (2010) in its core work which recognises dyslexia as a disability and ensures statutory work is undertaken to enable access and prevent discrimination.

This approach is outlined in the Brighton & Hove SEND guide and Brighton & Hove Dyslexia Guidance. These illustrate a nationally accepted graduated approach to intervention and identification for children and young people from 0-25. However, our understanding is that there is no state funded (local or national) assessment for dyslexia for adults.

Once people have an identification, they can be entitled under the Equality Act (2010) to the next steps which are a needs assessment and the resulting reasonable adjustments. For students over 18, funding is available through Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). For adults an identification/diagnosis (from a psychologist or specialist teacher) would have to be funded by the employer or privately, followed by a Workplace Needs Assessment.

Regarding timelines - the pathway to an identification for dyslexia can be varied.

The City's Literacy Team follows the nationally accepted, graduated approach in schools, so the assess/plan/do/review process is followed. If appropriate, a specialist programme of work is actioned over a significant period of time. In 4

schools this is usually at least an academic year. Further assessment is then conducted to ascertain whether the pupil fits the profile of SpLD/Dyslexia.

However, if enough evidence is available, then an assessment and possible identification can be actioned immediately.

(4) Councillor Allcock

Transport Performance Measures

What are the range of performance measures regularly employed by the Council's Transport Team and how are they applied when initiating transport related projects?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Heley, Joint Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

Thank you for your question Councillor Allcock. The City Transport Division develops and delivers a wider range of projects to manage and improve accessibility, safety and sustainability. These vary from active travel and public transport schemes to traffic and parking management. The type of performance measures that may be developed for these projects will therefore depend upon the focus and scale of the project and the specific objectives that are set for each one. However, measures could generally include consideration of data associated with road safety collisions and casualties, traffic volumes and speeds, numbers of pedestrians and cyclists, levels of air quality and noise, and levels of public perception and satisfaction. These would be expected to be measured over various time periods, both before and after the project is completed, in order to secure robust and accurate data that can then be reported.

(5) Councillor Williams

Play Bus:

A number of years ago a Play Bus run by Brighton & Hove Council's Play Service operated to bring free open access play sessions into the heart of local communities.

The Play Bus visited locations across Brighton & Hove including Whitehawk and Hangleton and was extremely popular, providing essential opportunities for young children to play, interact and develop early learning skills.

Why was this vital and valued service stopped and can we bring it back?

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

The Play Service was launched in 2008 as a result of being awarded Big Lottery funding. The service included a play bus that travelled around the city offering a range of play opportunities. It stopped in 2016 after the labour council's budget proposed a saving due to 'ongoing reduction in central funding from central government'.

The Council are currently undertaking a review of Early Help Services and reviewing the Early Years Strategy where services for children and families will 5

be considered. The local community will be offered opportunities to engage in co-production sessions to share their view and discuss their needs.

(6) Councillor Moonan

CQC Inspection:

What preparation is HASC undertaking for the new CQC Inspection and how confident are they that we will achieve a 'good' rating?

Reply from Councillor Shanks, Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board The Care Quality Commission has announced that from April 2023 it will introduce a new regulatory inspection programme into adult social care. Whilst there has been consultation on this over recent months the methodology against which Councils will be inspected is still being prepared.

In Brighton and Hove we do not know when we are likely to be inspected but preparation is actively underway. We are working with two other Councils in the South East where we are preparing self-assessments against early draft guidance previously published and we are in the process here of establishing an Inspection Board within HASC which will work with colleagues, partners, service users, providers and other stakeholders.

The focus of the Executive Director in HASC and all colleagues in the directorate remains focused on maintaining and improving the service that we provide both through our Public Health team and our adult social care services. They are preparing comprehensively for the inspection, we will be assessed through the prism of how we work with our partners, the quality of services that we deliver for our service users and the effective use of our resources to meet challenges . These priorities are the daily focus of staff and is the reason they all come to work.

(7) Councillor Moonan

Craven Vale:

What steps are being taken to achieve maximum bed occupancy at Craven Vale and how are we going to recruit sufficient staff to run this service?

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

Recruitment during Covid has been a challenge across all provider services, including our in-house services, and during the last 2 years we have experienced a higher turnover of staff than previously. There has been the particular challenge due to Covid guidance of staff not being able to move between services, which means that each in-house service needs its own Care Crew (bank staff) cohort to cover staff absences.

At Craven Vale a number of staff left at the same time, causing some beds to not be offered for a period of time whilst recruitment was underway. There has been an ongoing recruitment drive for all vacancies, with rolling advertising for Care Crew staff. Craven Vale have 16 beds occupied at the moment, out of 24. We are committed to re-opening all the available beds at Craven Vale as soon as possible and Craven Vale continues to support

hospital discharge and carer respite. Recruitment is ongoing and we have new recruits starting and also awaiting employment checks so starting soon.

We have enabled some focused manager time for recruitment within in-house services to lead the recruitment process across all in-house services, which is an effective way to keep our ongoing recruitment campaigns going.

HASC has also invested in some additional HR support for a Social Care Recruitment Working Group which is working on how to attract people into adult social care careers and simplifying recruitment, so we don't lose people in the process of application.

(8) Councillor Moonan

Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

How has the pandemic affected the implementation of the Brighton & Hove Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2030, and are we still on track to achieve its targets?

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

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy has a stated ambition that by 2030:

- People will live more years in good health (reversing the current falling trend in healthy life expectancy) and
- The gap in healthy life expectancy between people living in the most and least disadvantaged areas of the city will be reduced

This ambition remains the same and the Covid -19 pandemic has not changed this. Obviously the past two years have had a significant impact upon our collective health and wellbeing and through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment we will be updating the overarching position, including the impact on health inequalities. This should strengthen our ambition to achieve these goals by 2030. Whilst the pandemic has undoubtedly had an adverse impact in certain areas of our health, for example mental health, equally we have forged new community relationships and a greater sense of community resilience than prior to the pandemic. The past two years have shone a light on the overarching importance of public health and preventative approaches to improve our health and wellbeing. We will make use of this learning and ensure it is embedded across the council, NHS and partner organisations which will benefit our delivery of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy in Brighton and Hove. We have set performance measurements and will be bringing reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

(9) Councillor Hamilton

Play Areas

The play areas in Portslade parks are being improved and residents welcome this. However, there are concerns that the needs of children with disabilities are not being met. I understand that this being discussed at a series of meetings. Please can you give me an update on what progress is being made in this matter?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Heley, Joint Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

At Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee in January 2021 it was agreed that the playground refurbishment programme be informed by consultation with disability groups in order to improve disability access to local playgrounds.

The industry standard for playgrounds typically seeks to create spaces for all ages and all abilities. However, City Parks were encouraged to work with SEND representatives to achieve more than this.

Following the committee approval, the first SEND meeting was held in March 2021. In attendance were representatives from inclusion groups including: Amaze Sussex, Extratime, PaCC Brighton and the Council's SEND Assistant Director.

Furthermore, representatives from the community with related SEND experiences were also present, alongside the council's Play Development Officer and the Head of the Parks Projects and Strategy Team.

Through discussion, the group identified the following opportunities to improve playgrounds for SEND children and their families:

- Design considerations that take into account older children/young adults.
- An increase in sensory play equipment.
- Swings for wheelchairs to be considered noting the cost and maintenance limitations that would apply.
- Surfaces providing a sensory experience.
- Climbing facilities for all abilities and ages.
- Changing places toilets to be considered.
- Accessible wheelchair ramps to access more play equipment.

The steer provided from this forum influenced all future briefs for the refurbishment programme. Consultants and contractors on the council's Play Framework (ESPO), were all made aware of the greater accessibility aspirations.

As a result, the following additional activities and outcomes have taken place:

- A more inclusive and accessible play site at Blakers Park, with the city's first wheelchair accessible jeep.
- A new wheelchair accessible large play unit at Blakers Park.
- The first wheelchair accessible seesaw in the UK at St Nicholas playground, which will be installed in March 2022.
- Universal design principles used in all new tenders.
- Inclusion and accessibility placed higher in the scores on all tenders.
- 'Making space for girls' included as a high score question on tenders.

In addition to the above information, all of the 24 playgrounds completed in the first phase of the refurbishment programme have had some level of accessibility provision for physical and or sensory needs. It is anticipated that 8

the future consultations planned with the wider community will continue to enhance this important area.

Furthermore, the following supporting activities also occurred:

- Directing feedback from the SEND group to play equipment suppliers and challenging them to create more inclusive apparatus.
- City Parks agreed to additional meetings on site to discuss concerns of any SEND forum members.
- City Parks accommodated additional SEND meetings as required.
- City Parks officers visited other sites and local authorities to widen their SEND knowledge, e.g. (Tower Hamlets – Weavers Field).

(10) Councillor Hamilton

Housing Site Delays

There are two potential housing sites in my ward, namely the Portslade Old People's Day Club and Portslade Village Centre. There appears to be no progress on these proposals. Please can you tell me what is causing the delay?

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

A budget for the Windlesham House (Old People's Day Club) project, to demolish the existing unused day centre and build 17 new council homes, was approved at Housing and P&R Committees in April 2021. The project undertook further pre-application planning advice and a DesignPLACE panel in September 2021. The pre-application planning advice recommended changes to the proposed designs before submitting a planning application.

Working with the current leaseholders of the Portslade Village Centre building, officers have developed an initial feasibility design which looks at the potential for demolishing the existing Portslade Village Centre and developing a new community centre and council homes.

The council has experienced a procurement issue in 2021 which significantly delayed both projects. This has now been resolved and officers are currently implementing the necessary changes to proceed.

Design development for both projects is due to recommence in April 2022 with design programmes yet to be updated. Designs for the Windlesham House project will be updated and another consultation with the local community will take place, before further pre-application planning advice is sought and a planning application is made. Following further feasibility design work on the Portslade Village Centre, community consultation will be carried out, pre-application planning advice will be sought, and then a report will be presented to Housing and P&R Committees.

(11) Councillor Evans

Housing Options Phone Lines: 9

What are the opening times for residents to get a response when calling Housing Options, as I have been made aware from a resident that when they called on two consecutive days in a row that by 2.30pm the answering message said the line was closed?

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

The Housing Advice lines are currently open from 9.30-13.30 - Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. After this time our customers are requested to leave a voicemail and will be called back by an adviser. In this way we can triage the most urgent cases, including those customers presenting as homeless on the day. We do check the voicemails on the phone throughout the day and clients are called back. We have recently recruited two new team members and we will soon be able to expand our phone lines to operate five mornings a week.

For Emergencies the Homelessness out of hours contact details are - 01273 294400

(12) Councillor Simson

Funding received for Community Safety

Please can you outline and provide a breakdown of the funding awarded to Brighton and Hove City Council for Community Safety from the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner for 2022-23.

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

The city council has recently been notified by the Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner of its finance award for 2022/23.

In total the city council will receive £264,558.98.

This is made up of £79,666.98 for the community safety partnership, £90,892 for youth offending services and £94,000 for drug interventions work.

(13) Councillor Mears

Funds received for Changing Places Toilets

On 24 March 2022 the Government announced that Brighton & Hove City Council has been awarded £330,000 from the Government's Changing Places Fund, to fund eight proposed changing places toilets.

Can the Chair provide details of the eight changing places facilities which will be set up with the funding received?

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

It is fantastic that we have secured £330,000 to increase the number of Changing Places facilities in the city. Sadly, this amount is less than half than the amount was requested so will not deliver the eight sites as set out in our expression of interest to government.

The money will be match funded with £94,500 from the council will provide four Changing Places facilities at:

- The One Garden in Stanmer Park
- The Ledward Centre in Jubilee Street
- Wish Park, and
- St Ann's Well Gardens

(14) Bell

Industrial Relations

Residents have continued to raise complaints about elements of City Clean's performance since the industrial dispute last year.

Can the Leader of the Council advise:

- a) What is cost to the taxpayer of the final settlement that was paid out to end the industrial dispute?
- b) What tangible benefits have been introduced to the service since the dispute was resolved?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Heley, Joint Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

(a)

The cost of the changes for staff pay changes at City Clean following the dispute is £859,000 per annum.

(b)

All driver posts have been recruited to. A redesign of the service has been completed, which includes drivers taking on a management role which includes being accountable for the effective and efficient day to day performance. This also includes working with colleagues to collect missed collections and develop solutions for collections by working as a team with other managers and crews.

There has been a reduction in Stage 1 complaints regarding missed collections. In August 2021- there were 47 Stage 1 complaints regarding missed collections; in September 2021- this number was reduced to 31 and in March that figure had further reduced to 16 complaints. The majority of rounds have been out on most days.

(15) Councillor Peltzer Dunn

Residents are deeply concerned that the Council has not adequately prepared to mark the historic Platinum Jubilee in Brighton and Hove and may have failed to

apply in time for several opportunities and funding streams available to mark the event.

It is important that we mark this historic occasion and make sure it is memorable for residents of the city, not only to boost civic pride but also to provide a boost for the economy as we come out of Covid. We are a city with a Royal history and a Royal Palace at Brighton Pavilion. The Queen has visited our city many times over the years – including to confer City status on Brighton and Hove - and deserves our great respect and admiration.

Time is now running short before the four-day Queen's Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend and the Council needs to provide more detail and more focus on what it has arranged and how we will be participating. 10

It is noted that other local authority areas are being much more proactive, for example, South Gloucestershire Council are making it easier for local residents wanting to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee by waiving fees for people wanting to arrange street parties or events in public open spaces.

It would be a huge shame if Brighton and Hove City Council has forgotten to apply to participate in the Civic Honours competition, which our city with its wonderful heritage and royal history would have been ideally suited towards participating in. There are also many funding streams available to local groups for the Platinum Jubilee to hold events but local groups report that these have not been properly promoted.

Can the Leader of the Council confirm:

Will he join other councils in waiving fees for Platinum Jubilee events?

a) Did the Council apply to participate in the Civic Honours competition? It was noted that in an answer to my previous written question of 15 July 2021 (Question 29, Civic Honours Competition), the Leader of the Council stated that he was considering whether the city would participate in the Platinum Jubilee Civic Honours Competition and that there were three areas of this programme that the city was eligible to apply for, including:

- i. Investment;
- ii. The granting of existing cities with Lord Mayoralty;
- iii. Tree Planting initiatives.

Can the Leader of the Council please provide an update on whether the Administration decided to proceed with participation in the above categories of the Civic honours competition as this has still not been answered?

b) Can he provide a programme of its official events for the Platinum Jubilee Year so that we can communicate this information with our constituents?

Can he confirm that the Council will use its communications channels to promote the Jubilee and the events the City will be holding, which is still not clear to residents and local community groups?

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

Thank you for your question, I believe much of this has been answered previously including through a report that went to TECC committee, 10.3.2022, that Conservative councillors supported- outlining plans to mark the Jubilee.

Brighton & Hove City Council are doing a number of things to mark the occasion of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. A Steering Group has been meeting monthly since January 2022 and will continue to do so up to the Jubilee weekend, to ensure that all events and activities are coordinated across the council.

We have a webpage dedicated to The Queen's Platinum Jubilee providing information about local events and how people can get involved.

The following outlines some of what the city council is doing to mark the occasion:

Street Parties & Road Closures

□ The application process for Platinum Jubilee street parties is detailed on the council's web site. This process allows the public to request road closures. A 11

team in City Transport assess the implications of a closure and ensure that the process has been followed. Each closure is considered in terms of congestion and transport implications alongside ensuring that necessary insurances etc. are in place. Charges for road closures are waived as this is not something BHCC charges for in any case.

□ The initial deadline for applications for road closures was 3rd April and there have been many requests received. Applications will continue to be accepted following this, allowing teams to ensure that multiple road closures are coordinated to minimise any disruption. These will be assessed and, if there are any requests for the same street, the organisers will be contacted to try and coordinate events.

□ Council tenants and leaseholders wishing to put on a street party or event where they live may be able to access funding through the Estate Development Budget (an ongoing programme for council tenants and leaseholders to use to fund projects and activities where they live). Residents' groups will be encouraged to apply for such activities through the Quick Bid element which provides awards of up to £1000 to residents' groups. Information on how to access this is included on the dedicated council webpage.

□ There have been many requests received. These will be assessed and, if there are any requests for the same street, the organisers will be contacted to try and coordinate events.

Beacon Lighting

□ Hove Beacon Lighting project will help to provide a welcoming atmosphere for evening strollers, improve views towards Hove from afar, and enhance the night-time image of Hove and the seafront.

□ Hove Beacon is on track for being alight in time for the Jubilee weekend. Discussions are taking place around a localised event marking the relighting of the Hove Beacon.

□ City Parks is working with the Beacon Hill Management Group and Rottingdean Parish Council to facilitate a beacon on Beacon Hill, following a request from the British Legion.

Events

□ The Library service will be receiving a grant of £1000 from Arts Council England to mark the occasion and will be using this grant in several ways. The library service would like to ensure that families who may be disadvantaged don't miss out on the Jubilee Celebrations, so they are planning to put on free events with food for disadvantaged families during the May half term holiday. They are working with a performing arts duo and partner organisations to put on two performances in Jubilee Library children's area for targeted groups. They will run bunting-making workshops to decorate the library and commission some of the adult participants to contribute to providing multicultural dishes for lunch for all participants.

□ The Mayor and Brighton Fringe are collaborating on a picnic with live music entertainment in the Royal Pavilions Gardens on 4th June.

The Queen's Green Canopy Initiative

□ Brighton and Hove City Parks team planned a Queen's Green Canopy planting event at The Bristol Estate on 24th February 2022, in conjunction 12

with Plant Your Postcode (CPRE Sussex) and Trees For Cities, our Urban Tree Challenge Fund partners. A lot of community engagement took place and BELTA have more information on their website.

□ As part of The Queen's Green Canopy initiative, the National Association of Civic Officers invited Civic Heads to plant a tree as a tribute to Her Majesty on 11th March. Stanmer Park was identified as a suitable venue for planting a Jubilee tree in honour of Her Majesty and this went ahead on 11th March, with the Mayor and Deputy Lord Lieutenant in attendance.

□ We have been engaging with the Lord Lieutenancy on tree planting.

Events Funding

□ A link to available funding has been added to our Platinum Jubilee web page.

□ In addition to the Estate Development Budget, £5,000 has been allocated to run a community grant programme to mark the occasion, offering funding for community events and activities. The fund will be available through the council's annual grant programme and will be opened soon.

□ There is a funding pot available through the Arts Council. The Arts Development Team have been in discussions with Brilliant Brighton and Videoclub, who are programming the Third Thursdays events as part of the ABCD Cultural Recovery Plan, to submit a bid to support a Jubilee Third Thursdays event in June as part of the celebrations.

Lord Mayor Title

We are aware of the facility for applying for the title of Lord Mayor. We already have the status of a City, which is much more important in terms of the status of

the City and its advantages in terms of attracting tourism and investment. As a City, the Council can apply for the title of Lord Mayor to be conferred on the holder of the Office of Mayor at any time. We are keeping it under review.

(16) Councillor McNair

Twittens Accessibility issues

The gates in the twitten from Barrhill Avenue to Vale Avenue park do not allow wheelchair access, making access to this park very difficult for disabled visitors.

a) Will these gates be improved?

b) How many gates across the city do not allow wheelchair users access?

Will they all be widened to allow wheelchair access?

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

Thank you for your question and I agree its extremely important that all our parks and local amenities are accessible by wheelchair. I will ask Officers to investigate this and respond to you directly on the matter.

(17) Councillor Brown

Hove Park shared path

The pathway cutting through the middle of Hove Park from the Droveaway is a shared path and needs to be signed as such. It is a cycle route but also an 13 important pathway in a busy park environment used by families, people jogging and walking dogs.

Recently there have been a number of collisions involving cyclists and members of the public and dogs with cyclists going too fast after descending down the very steep hill at the Droveaway.

The signage is virtually non-existent and needs to be improved. Residents would like to see it signed and made explicit that this is a shared space with cyclists encouraged to slow down.

Residents would like to see the Council put in place signage at the entrance points and on the surface of the pathway itself to indicate this is a shared space and to encourage caution for the safety of all park users.

Will the Chair commit to review the current system and install some more appropriate signage to make it clear to cyclists that they need to slow down and to all users that it is a shared path?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Heley, Joint Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

Part of the National Cycle Network NCN82 travels though Hove Park. The route is signed using wooden bollards which are more 'in keeping' with the local park environment than the standard blue backed public highway signs that are placed along the carriageway sections of the route.

Officers will investigate further to determine if any further additional signs are required.

(18) Councillor Bagaeen

Vandalised Defibrillator at Hove Park

The defibrillator at Hove Park has been vandalised twice in recent years and the box is currently sitting empty, filled up with bottles and rubbish.

It's a great shame for all residents and visitors to Hove Park that this piece of equipment has been vandalised twice and is now no longer available.

It's also a shame for the local Rotary Club who paid for the original and for the cafe which offered to host it.

With so many people using the park particularly during the last two years with the pandemic, and all the new tennis facilities, all weather football pitches and fitness centre, the park really needs to have a defibrillator. It is a really vital piece of equipment as it could save someone's life.

As it has been vandalised in that position twice, it needs to be in a more secure place that is also accessible and known to the public.

The Manager of the Hove Park Café, Carla Lampreda, believes that due to the recurrent anti-social behaviour at night by the Hove Park Café, a replacement defibrillator should be located elsewhere in a more secure location.

a) Will the Council commit to work on providing a replacement defibrillator for Hove Park as soon as possible at a new site within the park, in consultation with the Rotary Club?

b) Will the Council consider installing CCTV cameras at Hove Park to tackle persistent antisocial behaviour at night next to the Hove Park Café?

Reply from Councillor Osborne / Powell, Joint Chair of the Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee 14

I am saddened by the vandalism of the defibrillator at Hove Park, if there is one thing in a park that I would hope people would respect it would be this as it could mean life or death for someone.

The council is not in a financial position to supply defibrillators in the City's Parks and Green Spaces. To date when ever an organisation has donated defibrillators to parks the Council has employed contractors to install the equipment, this has been funded from the budget assigned to maintain parks buildings. I hope we can continue to find money to install these as and when they are donated. To work defibrillators have to be easily found, should a new one be provided we are happy to install elsewhere however we cannot provide a secure location and a well- used part of the park such as the café area would usually be considered more secure than the quieter parts and is also where I believe the defibrillator is most likely to be needed. I would welcome ward members views on where would be a more suitable site. To note, this would have to be near an electricity supply as we would not support or recommend running long electricity cables in Parks.

(19) Councillor Meadows

Litter on the A27

A wall of litter lining Brighton's arterial A27 road has left the road verge in its worst ever condition and the Council must do more to clean it up.

The litter, which has been building up for months if not years at many points, is made up of bottles, takeaway food; containers; and also plastics associated with construction materials.

There are concerns not only about the visual appearance of this arterial road which passes through the Brighton and Hove unitary authority area, but also of pollution and the impact on wildlife through this section of the South Downs.

It is the Council's responsibility to organise litter clean-ups along the A27 and to request permission to do this from National Highways for access etc. but this has not been done now for some time and the litter has built up to an unacceptable level.

We need to see the Council put in place an overarching plan to deal with this issue and ensure that the litter is regularly removed. This must include more regular clean-ups but also communication with the construction industry to encourage netting and signage as well.

Until the Council treats this as a priority, litter is going to continue to build up and we are concerned that it will put people off coming to Brighton.

Will the council commit to:

- a) Coordinating and organising more regular clean-ups so as not to allow rubbish to build up for years;
- b) Communicating with the construction industry to encourage netting of the back of trucks to stop plastics flying out;
- c) Installing CCTV cameras at hotspots as a deterrent and to issue penalty fines;
- d) Installing signage to discourage littering and show penalties, to give more of a sign that the City cares about littering and its impact.

Furthermore, can the Council: 15

e) Outline its schedule of works for clearing litter from the A27 during the following municipal years:

i. 2020-1

ii. 2021-2

f) Outline its proposed schedule of works for clearing litter from the A27 for the following future municipal years:

i 2022-3

Reply from Councillor Davis / Heley, Joint Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

I understand the frustration felt regarding the A27. The Council has been actively working with Highways England and a Traffic Management company to schedule lane closures to enable litter picking.

There have been challenges to overcome such as cleaning only being permitted at night, only 4km stretches can be closed at one time which must include a Safety Zone and Entry & Exit Points – this limits the cleaning space to roughly 3kms per closure. Also, Essential Emergency Works e.g. electrical or drainage issues take priority over any bookings which can lead to rescheduling.

During 2021 BHCC worked with other contractors who had closures in place. This limited the stretches and 5.5 miles and 4 laybys were litter picked resulting in 7.6 tonnes of rubbish collected. Due to the limitations with joining other contractors we employed a Traffic Management Company to apply for full road closures (sections of the A27 over 6 consecutive nights). This was submitted to Highways England in June 2021 and dates were approved for October 2021.

The Traffic Management company notified the Council that Highways England had postponed the closures and rescheduled to November 2021 due to emergency work taking priority. This was further postponed to December 2022.

The work emergency work has been completed early and plan are in place for road closures from 4th April for 4 nights to litter pick from Patcham to Hangleton – the verge and centre on each carriageway.

Following this the next upcoming closure is between Southwick tunnel to Portslade later in April 2022. We are arranging this with the contractor so that the Street Cleansing team can join them to litter pick whilst the whole tunnel is blocked off for maintenance works.

We will continue to work with Traffic Management to put in place plans to clean the A27 and identify single night slots throughout the year based around current contracted work bookings. It should be noted that whilst we plan for closures these can be cancelled by Highways England due to emergency works or by the contractor or the Council due to inclement weather impacting the safety of staff.

The outline schedule of works 2020 - 2022

2020 to 2021 16

Section between Patcham Slip Road to Hollingbury Slip Road both directions of the carriageway (3.3 tonnes collected). This was the only litterpick due to the impact of Covid where high percentage of staff were self-isolating in line with Government guidelines and the Council needed to deploy staff to cover essential street cleansing work such as clearing needles, body fluids, hazardous waste.

2021 to 2022

- Hangleton to Southwick Tunnel Westbound (3.8 tonnes collected)
- Devils Dyke Slip Roads Eastbound
- Patcham Slip Roads Eastbound (160 kg collected)
- A270 Off Slip Road bridge area (approx. 1 tonne collected)

- Hollingbury to Hove Westbound (1.2 tonnes collected)
- Southwick Tunnel Eastbound (1.1 tonnes collected)
- Slip Road from A27 to A23 and A23 Northbound (1 Mile)
- Applied for 2 week closure in October but this was cancelled by Highways England due to emergency work

2022 to 2023

- 4th April 2022 – Patcham to Hangleton – both sides of the carriageway including verges and central reservation
- April 2022 – Southwick Tunnel to Portslade

(20) Councillor Theobald

Patcham Roundabout project delays

I have been advised that the latest reason for the delay in the Patcham Roundabout landscaping project is that the Council was unable to submit a planning application as it was unable to find someone within the council to support providing scaled drawings, so this application was withdrawn.

Residents are now deeply frustrated with the Council and its ongoing delays in upgrading Patcham Roundabout. The funding has been there for many years but the Council seems unable to arrange these basic works.

Can the Chair:

- a) Outline the status of the works to landscape Patcham Roundabout.
- b) Advise whether the scaled drawings required to submit a planning application have now been undertaken.
- c) Assure local councillors that a new target date for this planning application to go in has been set and that the Council will expedite this as a priority and advise Councillors what this date is?

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

Patcham Roundabout is not owned by Brighton and Hove Council and we are not the planning authority for the site so moving forward on this scheme has proved complicated. The Council has no money to spend on the site we did however put forward a scheme where Brighton and Hove Council would get a sponsor to pay to landscape and maintain the roundabout. The latest in a long list of hurdles was the planning permission not something that is usually required for highway sponsored planting schemes. I can confirm that the council will provide funding to employ a consultant to produce the necessary paperwork for planning if the sponsor is still happy to go ahead with the scheme.

(21) Councillor Barnett

Knoll Park skate park proposal

Knoll Park, which includes the Knoll Recreation Ground, is the main green space for Knoll estate in Hove. It is well-used but is currently tired and in need of investment, with not enough facilities for young people.

Residents and community groups such as the Hangleton & Knoll Project would like to see the Council look providing new facilities for young people, such as a skate park.

At the moment, young people walk straight in and straight out of Knoll Park because there is little to do. Residents would like to see teenagers having something to do instead of hanging round in groups, strolling round the estate.

A skate park facility would give them an interest and somewhere positive to go – to take their skateboards, bikes and go to the park.

Such a facility would tie in with the Hangleton & Knoll Project which do some great local outreach work. The Hangleton & Knoll Project runs a café in Knoll Park, which they open up during the summer months, and a new skate park element would provide activities for young people could dovetail with their local work.

Will the Chair:

- a) Advise whether the Council has any current plans to upgrade Knoll Park and if so, outline these plans.
- b) Investigate and consider, in consultation with the Hangleton & Knoll project, a new skate park facility at Knoll Park to give younger people in the area a facility to use.

Reply from Councillor Davis / Heley, Joint Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

The Council currently has no plans to upgrade facilities at Knoll Recreation Ground at this time. In a few sites across the City we will be able to bring new facilities on the sites of long derelict sports areas using developers contributions but in general budgets are going on trying to maintain what we have.

However we are aware that as a result of this some parks are missed out from facilities upgrade. While at the moment we are focussing on delivering the funded programme of upgrading playgrounds and park facilities, as soon as resources and staff capacity allows we will undertake a gaps analysis for parks which have not attracted developer contributions and then seek funding opportunities to ensure that parks in all areas of the city have improved facilities

(22) Councillor Lewry

Safer Streets Fund Round 4 18

On 18 March 2022 the Government announced the fourth round of the Safer Streets Fund. Under the programme, Brighton & Hove City Council could benefit from a share of £150 million of new funding made available through the

Conservative Government's Safer Streets Fund. All local authorities are encouraged to apply.

This additional funding from the fourth round of the Safer Streets Fund will go towards measures proven to tackle neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls, and anti-social behaviour. This will help to prevent potential perpetrators committing crimes in the first place, improving the safety of our streets and helping our communities to flourish as we build back safer.

The Safer Streets Programme provides funding to areas most affected by crime and anti-social behaviour and will allow local authorities, civil society organisations and police and crime commissioners to bid for up to £500k per year for each project. The latest round of the fund targets neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls and – for the first time – anti-social behaviour.

All local authorities are encouraged to apply for the fourth round of funding that will have a transformative effect on the safety of people in their local communities.

Projects from previous rounds of funding have made a huge impact on local communities across the country. Funding has been used to improve the security for thousands of homes that were vulnerable to burglary with alleyway gates installed to prevent an easy escape for offenders. Other projects across the country have focused on setting up neighbourhood watch groups, increased CCTV and introducing wardens to undertake community engagement and train members of the public in crime prevention – demonstrating levelling up in action.

Under the last Labour administration, Brighton and Hove City Council declined an opportunity to apply for funds in Round 1 of the Safer Streets Fund. This oversight led to our funding being lost and allocated elsewhere.

The oversight occurred during the 2019/20 municipal year. Brighton and Hove City Council was contacted by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and offered an opportunity to participate in a joint Sussex bid for Round 1 of the Government's Safer Streets Fund. Brighton and Hove had been identified by the Office of the PCC as statistically the area most in need of crime prevention infrastructure. Despite this ranking and offer, Brighton and Hove City Council did not choose to participate in the joint bid.

As a result our City missed out on funding, which went to Eastbourne and Hastings Councils which did progress applications and were awarded £893,366.

The Council is getting a reputation in the public eye as being soft on crime and antisocial behaviour and not treating it as a priority. There is no doubt that residents want to see this Council focus much more on safety in the public domain in this city.

It is the responsibility of the Council to provide basic infrastructure such as street lighting and CCTV in Brighton & Hove to make the public domain as safe as possible, but the Council has fallen so far behind compared to other local councils.

Central Brighton recently ranked 8th highest for reported crime of 33,000 areas across the England and Wales according to a national analysis of crime reports, with Pavilion Gardens and surrounds recording seven incidents of rape in three

years. There have also been 100 incidents of drink spiking across the wider county over a 10-month period, many in Brighton and Hove.

Can the Chair:

- a) Provide an assurance that Brighton and Hove City Council will prioritise submitting a full application to Round 4 of the Safer Street Fund?
- b) Advise whether the Council currently has a standing list of priority areas which needs Safer Streets Funding which it can call upon when funding opportunities arise? If so, can the Chair provide a copy of this list?

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

There is no specific standing list of priority areas that is held by the council. Each tranche of safer streets funding has required different evidence to be provided in order to support the bid and different funding opportunities also require different criteria on which bids can be submitted. For safer Streets 4, projects can be put forward relating to violence against women and girls, anti social behaviour and acquisitive crime. Match funding will be required for this tranche of safer streets funding.

(23) Councillor Peltzer Dunn

A259 cycle lane decision

Now that the Administration has voted to reduce the westbound A259 down to a single lane road, will the Chair:

- a) Undertake to publish detailed air quality readings taken at least one point in the vicinity of The Hove Lagoon and the Wharf Road junction prior to the implementation of the scheme in order that readings taken subsequent to the completion of the scheme can provide a sound base for judging the environmental impact of the scheme?
- b) Advise the Council if any traffic levels have been taken in any of the roads running south to north from the A259 to New Church Road?
- c) If so will he publish the same and if not will he give the reasons for why no such information was deemed appropriate prior to the decision to proceed bearing in mind the potential environmental effect on residential areas within the area?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Heley, Joint Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

A) No air quality readings have been taken at Hove Lagoon as part of the monitoring for the A259 improvement scheme, as this is not a suitable spot to take readings due to it being open to the wind off the sea which sweeps any pollution quickly away. An Air Quality monitoring station is located by Victoria Terrace, which is more shelter from the sea wind and a better area to monitor Air quality. Information of data collected to date was published as part of the A259 scheme report at March ETS.

B) Not as part of this scheme.

C) Significant Traffic counts, parking audits, speed count, air quality monitoring and other assessments have and will continue to be conducted by officers as part of the pre and post monitoring of this scheme.

(24) Councillor Nemeth

Welcome Back Fund

Five streets in Brighton & Hove – Boundary Road, Portland Road, George Street, London Road and St James’s Street – were selected as recipients of approximately £300,000 funding through the Welcome Back Fund.

Please provide a breakdown of (i) expenditure to date and (ii) proposed expenditure for (a) Boundary Road, (b) Portland Road, (c) George Street, (d) London Road and (e) St James’s Street.

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

The Welcome Back Fund awarded BHCC £538,583.00 to help reduce the impact of Covid-19 around the city. A proposal was put together for how to use this money, which was approved by government, and also reported at P&R Recovery sub-committee. Whilst around £400,000 of this funding was spent on rejuvenating the city as a whole, the council ringfenced £100,000 to support local high streets in Brighton and Hove, to encourage members of the public to shop locally.

Officers engaged with community representatives as well as councillors from each location and from the feedback received created a list of projects that suited the needs of the community.

These were:

Marketing of Local High Streets – Headed up by Visit Brighton

Beautification such as planters, hanging baskets, floor vinyls Temporary Signage such as banners Deep Cleans of the high streets. Please find a breakdown of expenditure below

Road

Spend to date

Remaining anticipated spend

Total

Boundary Road

£13,698

£2,499

£16,197.00

Portland Road and Richardson

£15,999

£2,499

£18,498.00

George Street and Blatchington

£14,799.00

£2,499.00

£17,298.00

London Road and Trafalgar St

£20,257.00

£5,000

£25,257.00

21

St James's Street

£15,996.50

N/A

£15,996.50

Hove Station Approach

£3020.00

N/A

£3,020.00

(25) Councillor Mears

Unanswered Question

Please can I have an answer to my question asked at the Policy & Resources committee 2 December 2021 and followed up on 27 January 2022.

Reply from Councillor Mac Cafferty, Leader of the Council

The question asked at Policy & Resources Committee on 2 December 2021 concerned '*what the final costs have been*' to '*deliver an in house responsive repairs and empty property refurbishment service*' and '*set up and mobilisation costs*' compared to estimated costs outlined in the report presented to the Policy Resources and Growth Committee meeting on 11 October 2018.

Given the significant amount of information and careful analysis required in order to provide a full response, it is proposed the answer to this question is given full consideration in the form of a separate report to a future Housing committee when more meaningful comparative data will be available.

Comparisons of costs for 2018/19 (contract with Mears Ltd.) with costs of the in-house service during 2020/21 and 2021/22 are so difficult to make given activity

and staffing levels have been completely abnormal during the pandemic and the resultant changes to repairs and empty property refurbishment activity. Once we have a more 'standard' year of activity and staffing, we will be able to draw more meaningful comparisons.

(26) Councillor Childs

Free bus travel for young people

What would the cost to the council be to provide free bus travel to children and young people under 18 and in full time education who live in the city?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Heley, Joint Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

Thank you Cllr Childs for the question. Initial estimates are that the cost to the council of providing free travel to all children and young people would be in the region of £6m per year. This would be the extra cost of providing free travel over the discounts already offered by operators. This is based on calculations from Brighton & Hove Buses as the main operator but is subject to more work being done around this.

I would also like to add that lower fares for young people is something we would very much like to see. Indeed, our Bus Service Improvement Plan includes our aspiration for bus travel to be free. However, this would require substantial and ongoing funding. 22

We were delighted to receive news of the government's indicative funding allocation of nearly £28m for our Bus Service Improvement Plan this week. I hope that some of this can be used to provide lower fares for young people but there are a number of criteria we will need to meet. This includes around the long-term sustainability of any offers. We need to do further work and enter into a formal agreement with the Department for Transport and operators before funding is due to be confirmed in the summer. Officers will provide more detail on this as soon as they can.

(27) Councillor Childs

Ukrainian refugees

How many Ukrainian families will the Council agree to house and host, and will they commit to a minimum number?

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

Ukrainian refugees are arriving in the country through a variety of routes which is giving them varied immigration status, along with Ukrainians already in the country who wish to stay and are extending/changing their visa. We understand government intends to regularise the status for all Ukrainian refugees.

The refugees on the Homes for Ukrainians sponsorship scheme and those granted family visas have access to public services and therefore, should their housing circumstances change, will be able to access support.

Ukrainian refugees that arrive through other means may currently be deemed undocumented and therefore legally the council is constrained in the support it can provide. However, each case will be dealt with sensitively and all options of support explored.

The Council will support all Ukrainian households that we have a statutory duty to assist and meet the legal threshold for assistance.

Due to the acute shortage of social rented housing, we will be looking to support household to access the private housing sector where possible.

(28) Councillor Childs

Wheelie bins

Will the council commit to consult with residents in future before introducing wheelie bins or changing receptacle types?

Reply from Councillor Davis / Heley, Joint Chair of the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee

The council first rolled out refuse wheelie bins in 2002 and decided in 2016 to introduce recycling wheelie bins following a trial. In some areas, boxes continue to be used for recycling. As decisions to use these standard receptacles have been made by council committees, the council will not carry out consultations on the provision of wheelie bins to households.

Some households in the city continue to use metal, dustbin type receptacles to dispose of their waste. Cityclean is gradually replacing these metal bins with refuse wheelie bins. Consultation will not take place for these changes because wheelie bins are the agreed standard receptacle for collecting waste for these roads.

Consistency is required for several reasons:

- Cityclean trucks are specifically purchased to lift and empty wheelie bins; this is not possible when metal dustbins are used
- There is a health and safety issue for crews in lifting and emptying metal bins, particularly in relation to manual handling
- By providing uniform receptacles, the service can operate efficiently

The council does carry out consultations with residents before changing collection type, such as moving from a kerbside wheelie bin service to a communal bin service. The results of these consultations are presented to the Environment, Transport & Sustainability Committee to inform their decision making on how to proceed.

There are exceptions to this where:

- Health & Safety concerns are supported by a risk assessment which classified the risk as 'significant';
- Alternative options have been explored and are not viable;
- Data about injuries was included;

In circumstances where communal collections are the only option to mitigate health and safety risks, a consultation with residents will not take place.

**(29) Councillor Childs
Urban fringe**

Can the Council please summarise any legal reasons that would prevent or impede the transfer of council owned urban fringe land to charities or community interest companies for use and public accessible land?

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

It is difficult to generalise as each case depends on its facts. In many cases the land may be subject to a subsisting tenancy, restrictive covenant, easement or other legal restrictions that may limit the Council's ability to dispose of the land or the way it can be used..

The Council has, in the past transferred land to a non-for-profit organisation such as the Brighton & Hove Conservation Trust. But each case is unique and has to be considered on its facts. The Council does not have a policy automatically objecting or automatically committing to the transfer of urban fringe land to charities. We will be guided by what would work best.

(30) Councillor Childs Free swimming

The council provides free swimming to children and young people after school hours during the week, but pools are often closed to the public as a consequence of private swimming lessons. What measures will the council take to ensure that genuine access is provided for free swimming, and will they commit to ensure that private lessons do not prevent access to general swims after 3pm on weekdays?

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

Free swimming is available after school, at weekends and in school holidays whenever general swimming is available.

The pools operated on behalf of the council by Freedom Leisure try to provide a balanced programme between public swimming (lane and open swim), clubs, schools and publicly accessible Learn to Swim lessons. Freedom Leisure are meeting the demand at the lowest cost they can, to deliver valuable tuition for children that require the vital life skill of swimming and water safety in our city. Without being taught these essential life skills we will end up with a generation of non-swimmers or very poor swimmers - in a seaside city it is even more important that children have these skills.

At King Alfred the programme has recently been changed so the lagoon area is available after school three times a week to allow more public space and all of their lane swimming is now available for all ages - no longer restricted as an adult only activity. Freedom Leisure as the council's operator will continue to monitor usage

and make adjustments to the timetable where possible - to meet demand and take on board feedback from customers.

The recent cross party supported Sports Facilities Investment Plan highlighted that there is a shortage of water space in the city and moving forwards we are focusing our resources on improving the provision swimming pools in our city to meet the demand from all residents.

(31) Councillor Wilkinson

Disability Access: The recent news that a planned lift for people with disabilities has been delayed on a development in Hove and in violation of a planning condition has raised the issue of access for disabled people in our city. The Equality Act 2010 states that treating someone with a protected characteristic – in this instance disabled people who can't use stairs – less favourably than others, is direct discrimination. Can the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing board inform if the City Council has a Disability Access Officer and if not, does she agree that such a role would benefit the health and wellbeing of our disabled community and improve awareness of their needs when moving around the city?

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

The council has a Property Technical Access Manager whose role is dedicated to improvements and associated advice to remove, avoid or manage barriers within council owned buildings where the public access services.

We also work closely with our equalities team. I am happy to look at whether the planning team need such an officer but that is not in my remit as chair of Health and Wellbeing Board.

Planning matters such as this example in Hove are addressed through the Planning Service. In Planning and Building Control, accessibility is sought for new publicly accessible floorspace and uses and alterations to elevations and shopfronts. Accessibility advice is provided by the Building Control Service.

I have met with planning officers about the particular issue you raise and also with representatives of disability groups and will be monitoring the expected installation, planning officers will act if the agreement to install the lift is not honoured.