

**MEETING OF BIRMINGHAM
CITY COUNCIL,
TUESDAY, 11 JULY 2023**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL HELD
ON TUESDAY, 11 JULY 2023 AT 1400 HOURS IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT:- Lord Mayor (Councillor Chaman Lal) in the Chair.

Councillors

Saima Ahmed	Adrian Delaney	Ewan Mackey
Alex Aitken	Diane Donaldson	Basharat Mahmood
Deirdre Alden	Barbara Dring	Majid Mahmood
Robert Alden	Jayne Francis	Lee Marsham
Gurdial Singh	Sam Forsyth	Karen McCarthy
Atwal	Ray Goodwin	Saddak Miah
Raqeeb Aziz	Rob Grant	Gareth Moore
Shabina Bano	Colin Green	Yvonne Mosquito
David Barker	Fred Grindrod	Richard Parkin
David Barrie	Roger Harmer	Rick Payne
Baber Baz	Deborah Harries	David Pears
Matt Bennett	Kath Hartley	Miranda Perks
Jilly	Adam Higgs	Rob Pocock
Birmingham	Des Hughes	Julien Pritchard
Marcus	Jon Hunt	Hendrina Quinnen
Bernasconi	Mumtaz Hussain	Lauren Rainbow
Bushra Bi	Mahmood Hussain	Darius Sandhu
Sir Albert	Shabrana Hussain	Kath Scott
Bore	Timothy Huxtable	Rinkal Shergill
Nicky	Mohammed Idrees	Ron Storer
Brennan	Zafar Iqbal	Saima Suleman
Kerry Brewer	Katherine Iroh	Jamie Tennant
Marje Bridle	Ziaul Islam	Sharon Thompson
Martin Brooks	Morriam Jan	Paul Tilsley
Mick Brown	Kerry Jenkins	Lisa Trickett
Zaker	Meirion Jenkins	Penny Wagg
Choudhry	Brigid Jones	Ian Ward
Debbie	Jane Jones	Ken Wood
Clancy	Amar Khan	Alex Yip
Liz Clements	Ayoub Khan	Waseem Zaffar
Maureen	Mariam Khan	
Cornish	Izzy Knowles	
John Cotton	Bruce Lines	
Jack Deakin	Mary Locke	

NOTICE OF RECORDING

154 The Lord Mayor advised that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcasting via the Council’s Public-I website and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

155 The Lord Mayor reminded Members that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests relating to any items of business to be discussed at the meeting.

Councillor Waseem Zaffar declared a pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 8, Srebrenica Memorial Day, where a previous trip taken by Councillor Zaffar to Bosnia in 2016 (in his capacity as a Councillor) had been paid for by an external organisation.

Councillor Ray Goodwin declared a pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 11, Motions for Debate from Individual Members, Motion A (specifically related to Warm Spaces). Councillor Goodwin would leave the Chamber for this item.

Councillor Kerry Jenkins declared a pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 11, Motions for Debate from Individual Members, Motion B as she was an employee of Unite the Union. Councillor Jenkins would leave the Chamber for this item.

Councillor Matt Bennett declared a pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 11, Motions for Debate from Individual Members, Motion B which had been shared with the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting. Councillor Bennett would leave the Chamber for this item.

Councillor Sam Forsyth declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 11, Motions for Debate from Individual Members, Motion B as her birth mother was one of the claimants in relation to the equal pay claim. Councillor Forsyth would leave the Chamber for this item.

Councillor Mahmood Hussain declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 11, Motions for Debate from Individual Members, Motion B as he was a Member of Unite the Union. Councillor Hussain would leave the

Chamber for this item.

Councillor Ziaul Islam declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 11, Motions for Debate from Individual Members, Motion B as he was a Member of Unite the Union. Councillor Islam would leave the Chamber for this item.

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Chaman Lal, declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 11, Motions for Debate from Individual Members, Motion B as he was a Member of Unite the Union. The Lord Mayor had been granted a dispensation by the Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Gurdial Singh Atwal declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 11, Motions for Debate from Individual Members, Motion B as he was a Member of Unite the Union. Councillor Singh Atwal would leave the Chamber for this item.

MINUTES

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and –

156

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the City Council meeting held on 13 June 2023 be taken as read and confirmed and signed.

LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1 King's New Year's Honours

The Lord Mayor indicated his first announcement related to those mentioned in The King's Birthday Honours list, for services to Birmingham or who lived in Birmingham.

Awarded a CBE:

Ann Bentley

Awarded an OBE:

Professor Aravinthan Coomarasamy
Stephen Glyn Hughes; and
Reverend Dr Richard John Sudworth

Awarded an MBE:

Darnish Amraz
Dr Desmond Jaddoo; and
Aftabur Rahman

Awarded the British Empire Medal:

Zoe Bennett
Rekesh Chauhan
Geoffrey Cole
John Desmond Smith; and
Erma Lewis

157

RESOLVED:-

That the Council joined the Lord Mayor in congratulating all of the above individuals on their marvelous achievements.

PETITIONS

Petitions Relating to City Council Functions Presented at the Meeting

The following petitions were presented:-

(See document No. 1, 'Additional Meeting Documents')

In accordance with the proposals by the Members presenting the petitions, it was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and:-

158

RESOLVED:-

That the petitions were received and referred to the relevant Chief Officer(s).

Petitions Update

A Petitions Update had been made available electronically:-

(See document No. 2, 'Additional Meeting Documents')

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and

159

RESOLVED:-

That the Petitions Update be noted and those petitions for which a satisfactory response has been received, be discharged.

QUESTION TIME

160 The Council proceeded to consider Oral Questions in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 F of the Constitution).

Details of the questions asked are available for public inspection via the webcast.

APPOINTMENTS BY THE COUNCIL

Councillors Des Hughes addressed the Council and it was-

161 **RESOLVED:-**

That the appointments be made to serve on the Committees and other bodies set out below:-

Cllr Kath Scott off the Police and Crime Panel and to be replaced by Cllr Shabina Bano.

Cllr Raqeeb Aziz will be the substitute for Cllr Bano and Cllr Ray Goodwin will be substitute for Cllr Forsyth.

Cllr Jilly Bermingham off the Trusts & Charities Committee and onto the Licensing & Public Protection Committee

Cllr Zafar Iqbal off the Licensing & Public Protection Committee and onto the Trusts & Charities Committee.

Cllr Des Hughes to be replaced as Chair of the Housing Consultative committee by Cllr Sam Forsyth.

Councillor Baber Baz addressed the Council and it was-

162 **RESOLVED:-**

That the appointments be made to serve on the Committees and other bodies set out below:-

Councillor Morriam Jan replaced Councillor Deborah Harries on the Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

SREBRENICA MEMORIAL DAY

A report of the Council Business Management Committee was submitted:-

(See document No. 3, agenda item 8)

The Lord Mayor proposed that Standing Orders were suspended for this item.

This was seconded and agreed.

Councillor Martin Brooks moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillors Alex Yip, Izzy Knowles and Julien Pritchard.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Waseem Zaffar, Paul Tilsley and Majid Mahmood spoke during the debate where a period of one minutes' silence was held to remember the victims of Srebrenica.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor Martin Brooks to sum up.

It was therefore-

163

RESOLVED:-

1.) That City Council agreed to support the bullet points as outlined in the Motion included in the report.

DECISIONS NOT ON THE FORWARD PLAN AND THOSE AUTHORISED FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION

A report from the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer was submitted:-

(See document No. 4, agenda item 9)

Councillor John Cotton moved the recommendation which was seconded from the floor.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor John Cotton to sum up.

It was therefore-

164

RESOLVED:-

1.) That City Council noted the report.

ADJOURNMENT

165

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and-

RESOLVED:-

That the Council be adjourned until 1655 hours on this day.

The Council then adjourned at 1625 hours.

At 1655 hours the Council resumed at the point where the meeting had been adjourned.

SCRUTINY BUSINESS REPORT

A report from the Chair of the Co-Ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Sir Albert Bore was submitted:-

(See document No. 5, agenda item 10)

Councillor Sir Albert Bore moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Kerry Jenkins.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Jon Hunt, Marje Bridle, Alex Yip, Julien Pritchard, Lee Marsham, Ewan Mackey, Jack Deakin and Robert Alden spoke during the debate.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor Sir Albert Bore to sum up.

It was therefore-

166

RESOLVED:-

1.) That City Council noted the report.

MOTIONS FOR DEBATE FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

The Council proceeded to consider the Motions of which notice had been given in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure (B4.4 G of the Constitution).

Councillor Ray Goodwin left the Chamber for Motion A.

A. Councillors Sharon Thompson and Jamie Tennant had given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

(See document No. 6, agenda item 11)

Councillor Sharon Thompson moved the Motion which was seconded by Councillor Jamie Tennant.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Deirdre Alden and Alex Yip gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 7, 'Amendments – City Council')

Councillor Deirdre Alden moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Alex Yip.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Morriam Jan, Julien Pritchard, Lisa Trickett, Matt Bennett, Lee Marsham, Gareth Moore and Liz Clements spoke during the debate. During the debate, Councillor Gareth Moore declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was a trustee of Birmingham LGBT centre which was a Warm Space.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor Sharon Thompson to sum up.

The amendment to the Motion in the names of Councillors Deirdre Alden and Alex Yip having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be lost.

The Motion having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:-

“This Council notes that:

In the face of the Tory cost of living crisis, Birmingham City Council responded quickly by working with faith and community groups to set up over 200 Warm Welcome Spaces across the city. The Council also supported foodbanks to ensure that there was a sufficient supply of food.

The actions of hundreds of volunteers in running the warm welcome spaces across the city shows the true spirit of Birmingham and this Council extends its thanks and gratitude to every one of them.

The Council resolves that:

1. The Leader will write to every registered Warm Welcome Space and foodbank in Birmingham to express the gratitude of the Council.

2. The Council will continue to support this programme for as long as this Tory created crisis continues.

3. The Council will write to the government to demand action to address this Tory cost of living crisis.”

Councillors Kerry Jenkins, Matt Bennett, Sam Forsyth, Mahmood Hussain, Ziaul Islam, Chaman Lal and Gurdial Singh Atwal left the Chamber for Motion B.

B. Councillors Robert Alden and Ewan Mackey had given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

(See document No. 8, agenda item 11)

Councillor Robert Alden moved the Motion which was seconded by Councillor Ewan Mackey.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Roger Harmer and Paul Tilsley gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 9, ‘Amendments – City Council’)

Councillor Roger Harmer moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Paul Tilsley.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors John Cotton and Sharon Thompson gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 10, ‘Amendments – City Council’)

Councillor John Cotton moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Sharon Thompson.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Julien Pritchard and Rob Grant gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 11, ‘Amendments – City Council’)

Councillor Julien Pritchard moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Rob Grant.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor Robert Alden to sum up.

The amendment to the Motion in the names of Councillors Roger Harmer and Paul Tilsley having been moved and

seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

The amendment to the Motion in the names of Councillors John Cotton and Sharon Thompson having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

The amendment to the Motion in the names of Councillors Julien Pritchard and Rob Grant having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

The Motion as amended having been moved and seconded was put to the vote and by a show of hands was declared to be carried.

It was therefore-

RESOLVED:-

“Given the seriousness of the current situation brought about by the Council’s reported equal pay liability, this Council is taking a range of urgent actions to address the unsustainable growth in Equal Pay liability, improve governance and strengthen organisation capacity, including:

- Appointing three Strategic Expert Advisers to support the Council’s Directors and Cabinet
- Formally commissioning an independent Governance Review in collaboration with the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities
- Commissioning an independently chaired, internal management review to ascertain the root causes of the failure to effectively implement Oracle
- Setting out plans to instigate a judge-led inquiry to determine the causes of the equal pay liability growth since 2012, to begin following the outcome of the Governance Review
- Implementing mandatory spending restrictions

To oversee this work, a new Strategic Delivery Board will be created to develop and deliver plans for improvement. To ensure openness and transparency, the Strategic External Advisers will produce an independent report on a quarterly basis with an update on progress and an analysis on whether there is adequate grip and pace in relation to the delivery of the change that is required.

This Council commits to bringing these reports to Full Council each quarter to update members and allow a debate of not less than one hour on progress against actions to address the crisis. This should continue until such a time as the situation is fully resolved as agreed by a future resolution of Council.

Council Business Management Committee is asked to consider revisions to the Council's Constitution to accommodate this.

Further, this Council resolves that any amendment to the 2023/24 Council Budget, made in response to the Equal Pay Crisis, should come to Full Council for debate and approval.

In addition the Council resolves to ask the Executive to ensure that all political groups are fully briefed on any developments between Council meetings.

The Council also believes that ordinary residents, particularly those most in need and those most left behind, should not have to pay for the Council's financial crisis.

Further, there are ongoing existing challenges, particularly in the Council's housing service, that urgently need to be addressed.

The cost-of-living crisis is still massively affecting our residents and one of the best ways of tackling high energy bills are measures that also address the climate crisis, such as energy efficiency measures.

This Council therefore resolves, and asks the Executive, that future debates and decisions, including around the values framework:

- Prioritise improving the City Council's appalling housing conditions
- Protect services for those residents who need them most, particularly social care
- Protect our vital youth and library services
- Protect investment in our most left behind communities
- Prioritise action to tackle the cost-of-living crisis
- Ensure the Council lives up to its climate commitments".

The meeting ended at 1855 hours.

CITY COUNCIL

11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN
QUESTIONS TO
CABINET MEMBERS
AND CHAIRS OF
COMMITTEES/WARD
FORUMS**

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR RON STORER

“Authority to negotiate direct award”

Question:

At Cabinet on 27 June a report was agreed to issue a direct reward to Hays Recruitment for the supply of temporary and agency workers, with an annual spend of £82m, this is despite the previous cabinet report decision being for a full procurement. Under the authority was the direct reward negotiated with Hays given the previous cabinet decision was for full procurement?

Answer:

The previous Cabinet report (April 2021) sought approval to delegate approval of the procurement strategy for a series of lots (by worker type) to chief officers on the basis that no existing framework was capable of meeting the diverse contingent worker requirements of the Council.

Since approval of that report a detailed options appraisal was undertaken for the re-procurement exercise which considered compliant routes to market.

During this process, it was identified that the YPO (Yorkshire Procurement Organisation) Framework Agreement Managing Temporary and Permanent Recruitment was capable of meeting the Council's requirements.

The YPO framework is compliant route to market and with its existence brings together the likely limited cohort of suppliers who would be able to meet the scope and scale of the Council's needs but in a manner that reduced the administrative process of the Council running its own full procurement. Limited value would likely have been achieved from the Council running its own procurement process and indeed potentially would have increased timescales and risks from doing so.

The framework further allows for the requirements to be placed to a supplier via a permissible direct award. As part of this consideration around direct award value for money, tests around the HAYS offer was carried out. Key benefits from appointing HAYS includes but not limited to:

- Single source supplier to manage a significant contingent workforce
- Managed service delivery that supports getting the right candidates in a timely manner

- Reliable management information to help inform and manage the contingent work force
- Regulatory compliance e.g. IR35 and DBS checks
- The opportunity to address and consolidate non contracted spend.
- Retention of current pricing
- Key contributions to delivering social value

It is also important to note that whilst the estimated contract spend of £82 million accounts for total spend, typically 90-95% of this value is relates to the salaries and statutory costs for workers.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID BARRIE

“Accountability”

Question:

At Cabinet on 27 June, you stated that you had strengthened accountability around Oracle and that you were taking responsibility. To be clear, does this mean you will take personal responsibility as Leader if Oracle is not sorted, or if it costs even more than the £100m currently estimated?

Answer:

I have already taken responsibility, ensuring that governance has been significantly strengthened with the Chief Executive chairing a weekly dedicated ‘Gold’ task force setting the strategy for the Oracle Programme. In addition, there are weekly Silver Boards, chaired by Graeme Betts (SRO) which manages the overall programme and executes the strategy set by Gold, overseeing the risks, issues and mitigations whilst monitoring progress. Weekly Bronze meetings chaired by the Oracle Programme Director, Craig Buckley, oversees short term priorities and manages risks, issues, and progress.

Progress is overseen directly by myself, as Leader of the Council and other senior elected members by two Member Oversight Boards – one focusing on financial governance and council finances, and the other on the Oracle Programme as a whole. Two independent experts support these Boards – Ian O’Donnell for Finance and Jonathan House for technical aspects.

A Design Authority has also been established, chaired by Richard Brooks with the Chief Information Officer (CIO) as Deputy Chair. The core purpose of the Design Authority is to provide assurance on the design and specification of the Oracle solution, in line with overall strategy. This Authority makes recommendations to Gold based on expert technical advice. There are two key workstreams at present:

1. Review work underway to achieve ‘safe and compliant’ state, to ensure it is necessary and in line with sound criteria
2. Establish the approach to future design of the system in a way that supports successful implementation and benefits realisation.

There has also been a change in leadership in key areas of responsibility. Rebecca Hellard has resigned from her role as Strategic Director of Council Management, which included responsibility for Finance, HR, and IT. Fiona Greenway has been appointed as interim Director of Finance and will be supported by local government finance expert, Ian O’Donnell. Professor Graeme Betts is now the Senior Responsible Officer for the Oracle programme.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR RICK PAYNE**

“Equal Pay meetings”

Question:

Which officers and elected members were involved in the decision to cancel the last 3 Equal Pay meetings on 17 March 2023, 29 March 2023, and 28 June 2023?

Answer:

The Monitoring Officer made the decision to cancel the last 3 Equal Pay Meetings.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN**

“Value statement”

Question:

Please provide a copy of the Values statement you submitted to council officers for the purposes of developing the budget proposals to respond to equal pay and oracle challenges?

Answer:

I am currently working with Cabinet Members to finalise the statement and a copy will be provided shortly.

Nevertheless, the steer I have given officers is we must remain focused on social justice, frontline services and the needs of residents and communities of the city.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR EWAN MACKEY**

“DBS Checks”

Question:

Please provide a breakdown of the number of overdue DBS checks by service area that have accrued through failures in Oracle implementation

Answer:

There are no employees in posts that currently require a DBS Check who do not have a check in place. These checks do not expire. Birmingham City Council’s own policy is that the check must be updated annually. From April 2022, this update must be via the DBS Update Service.

The transition to Oracle has revealed that our Update records are incomplete. According to centrally held records, a total of 2849 employees have either not registered with the update service or have not re-subscribed as required after 12 months. Those cases are being actively pursued. Service area figures are as follows:

Adult Social Care	1164
Children and Families	753
City Operations	218
City Housing	185
Council Management	527
Place, Prosperity and Sustainability	2
Strategy, Equalities and Partnerships	0

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR RICHARD PARKIN**

“DBS Checks 2”

Question:

Of the backlog of approximately 3000 overdue DBS checks quoted at Audit Committee, how many when working through this backlog, have been found to have flagged up a issue that has required referral to the review panel, and how many of these have resulted in a finding of inability to work for the council?

Answer:

There are no employees in posts that currently require a DBS Check who do not have a check in place and these checks do not expire. Birmingham City Council’s own policy is that the check must be updated annually. From April 2022, this update must be via the DBS Update Service.

Of the 2849 centrally held records where gaps in data are being pursued, none so far have revealed an issue that required referral to the review panel and therefore none have been found ineligible to continue to work for the City Council.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR MATT BENNETT**

“Right to Work checks”

Question:

How many right-to-work checks were not carried out due to the failure of implementation of the oracle system, and of these how many have subsequently been found to not have lawful right-to-work due to immigration status?

Answer:

No employees who have started work since April 2022 (the implementation of Oracle) with a right to work limited by their visa status have been found to be working other than in accordance with their visas.

For UK and Irish nationals, right to work checks have been recorded for all employees who have started work since April 2022.

We are about to conduct an audit of all records relating to UK and Irish nationals to ensure checks have been conducted, and data has been recorded, correctly.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR GARETH MOORE**

“Cabinet papers”

Question:

Given the public statements now made by the council and unions on Equal Pay, will you now publish the private cabinet reports on the waste dispute settlement, including those relating to the settlement with Unite and the subsequent settlement with GMB?

Answer:

These confidential reports remain private due to ongoing litigation.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR BRUCE LINES**

“Equal Pay liability and cabinet decisions”

Question:

Were you aware of the £650m-£760m equal pay liability at the time of taking decisions with financial implications at Cabinet on 27 June 2023?

Answer:

Yes, and I had asked the Section 151 officer and Chief Executive to bring forward spending controls to address these matters, as per the announcement on 28th June 2023.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD**

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m

Answer:

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources was first notified of a potential liability on Thursday 8th June and requested officers undertake further work to clarify and confirm the position.

The Deputy Leader and I were first briefed, following this on Monday 15th June 2023.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No

A12

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR
JON HUNT

“Alexander stadium advisory committees”

Question:

“As ward councillors we continue to have to deal with resident complaints or problems linked to events at the Alexander Stadium, frequently with no prior notice of events taking place or what arrangements are in place. Typical issues are raised by noise or parking arrangements. We note that the football clubs have standing safety advisory groups with councillor membership and that major events are usually supported by a safety advisory committee. We must all expect the new stadium to be increasingly busy.

Could the leader establish how the stadium manages this – with a standing group or adhoc groups, advising what is the membership of these groups and what role there will be for input from local councillors as the stadium gets busier?”

Answer:

Sports Ground SAGs are chaired and facilitated by Michael Enderby (Head of Resilience) and their primary role is to consider safety plans. The SAG does also look at disruption and engagement, to encourage event organisers to have appropriate plans in place, even where not a safety matter. This process has been followed with regard to recent events at the Stadium.

Those present at the SAG are generally professional partners to review safety plans and include WM Police, WM Fire, WM Ambulance, Sports Ground Safety Authority, BCC Licensing, BCC Parks, BCC Highways and any relevant team associated with the delivery of the event.

As use of the Stadium increases it may be that a regular pattern of SAGs is put in place but at present each event is considered as it arises.

As the use gets busier the Stadium Manager will brief the ward members on future events scheduled and event organisers will be asked to discuss event plans so that any comments can be incorporated into the planning process.

A13

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR
BABER BAZ

“Treatment of councillors”

Question:

“Following the leaking of a confidential report that the Small Heath Councillor Shabina Bano submitted against the shameful treatment she received from her fellow Labour Councillors and activists, has any action been taken against those named in the report?”

Answer:

This issue is being considered by the standards committee.

A14

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR IZZY KNOWLES

“Queensbridge depot”

Question:

“The Queensbridge Depot on Queensbridge Road, Moseley has been derelict and unused for a long time. It is a site of significant local importance as part of the Cadbury family history and several community groups have shown an interest in restoring and converting it for community use.

What are the council doing to ensure the site is preserved and what are the long-term plans for its use?”

Answer:

The site had been considered by the Children & Families Directorate to contribute to the education offer in the city. This exercise has just been concluded and officers from that directorate confirm they will not be proceeding. As a result officers in Place Prosperity & Sustainability Directorate will review options for the site, which is declared surplus to the City Council's requirements.

A15

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MUMTAZ HUSSAIN

“Derelict building in Aston”

Question:

“There is an old and historic building in Aston known as the Broadway school Aston campus which has been derelict for many years but could be used for good in the local area.

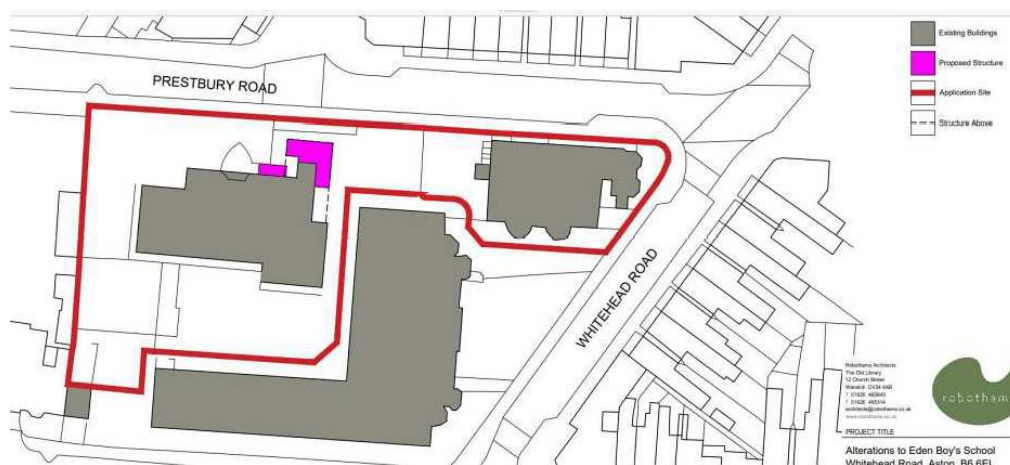
What are the council doing to ensure the site is preserved and what are the long-term plans for its use?”

Answer:

Officers assume the building being referred to is the former Broadway Annex on Whitehead/Ettington Road.

This building is on a 125 year lease to the Department for Education and has been used to house a studio school and as a decant facility for a couple of Free Schools.

Currently part of the building is being used for Titan AP Free School and officers are not aware of any plans around the block that is not currently occupied.



Officers are aware that extensive refurbishments were carried out to accommodate Titan and the unoccupied block (outside of the redline in the above plan) has been secured by the DfE but are unsure of the long-term plans for the unoccupied block.

Any interested parties will need to contact the Regional School Director's office directly via rg.wm@education.gov.uk

A16

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR
ROGER HARMER

“Planning”

Question:

“If a planning application is withdrawn or amended, councillors are currently not advised.

Can members be emailed when changes are made to planning applications within their ward?”

Answer:

The Local Planning Authority deals with approximately 9000 applications a year and they are managed through our back-office systems (NEC M3 and IDOX). It is common to receive numerous amendments and additional pieces of information on schemes. Unfortunately, there is no way of automatically triggering a notification that something has changed or added to the file. Given the scale of the schemes we are dealing with it would be prohibitive for officers to manually update all members each time a new document was added to a file.

We are however in the process of reviewing our back-office systems to make them far more engaging for citizens and members. As part of that work, we will look to how we can get automatic notifications embedded.

In relation to withdrawn applications, we do notify anyone who has commented on a scheme if that scheme is subsequently withdrawn by the applicants. Again, we don't have the ability to automatically generate notifications for this, but if members are interested in a particular scheme, they can lodge a comment on it to receive those notifications.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

15 June 2023.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR
ROBERT ALDEN**

“Equal Pay support”

Question:

On 22 April 2022 you tweeted that you were ‘proud to be a member of @GMBWestmidlands and support the equal pay fight in Birmingham. BCC should be leading the way.’ Given your support for the Unions claim and public admittance that you believed women in Birmingham were not being paid equally, what specific actions did you take and on what dates to push the council to implement and implement an equitable pay structure?

Answer:

I have and will always support the right for equal pay for women and the trade unions’ right to campaign for equal pay and against pay discrimination – in this case GMB.

Alongside cabinet colleagues work to resolve this issue has been ongoing, and since becoming Deputy Leader alongside the Leader and the Cabinet we have taken advice and decisive action with an aim to resolve this issue once and for all.

B4

PLEASE NOTE WRITTEN QUESTION B4 HAS BEEN REDIRECTED TO
QUESTION A16

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR ALEX YIP

“Children removed from school roll”

Question:

How many children aged 4-15 have been removed from school rolls in each of the last 4 years, broken down by age?

Answer:

Annex A of [the Department for Education’s statutory guidance for local authorities, Children Missing Education \(September 2016\)](#), lists 15 grounds for deleting a pupil from a school’s admission register.

The majority of cases of children being removed from a school’s roll are because the pupil has been admitted to another school, either as part of the in-year admissions process or at a normal transition point such as moving from primary to secondary school at the end of Year 6, moving from infant to junior school and moving into a 14-19 provision. We would therefore expect to see larger numbers of pupils being deleted from schools’ registers at ages 10 and 11 when pupils finish primary school and to a lesser extent at ages 7 and 15.

Other grounds for deleting a pupil from a school roll that are set out in the DfE guidance include:

- pupils who have been permanently excluded;
- pupils who have ceased to attend and are no longer living within a reasonable distance of the school;
- pupils sentenced to custody for a period of four months or more who are not expected to return to the school;
- where the parent has provided written confirmation that a child is receiving education otherwise than at school ¹.

The information provided in the table below is taken from the figures reported to the DfE as part of the School Census.

¹ Elective Home Education is defined as education otherwise than at school.

	Academic Year when child removed from school register, as reported through School Census			
Age of child	2019-20 (School Census did not take place in May 2020 due to COVID restrictions)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (based on available Census data undertaken in January 2023)
4	634	590	664	443
5	1,106	1,365	1,334	592
6	1,175	1,426	1,351	594
7	2,599	2,806	2,652	651
8	994	1,399	1,200	563
9	941	1,298	1,125	570
10	1,715	2,095	2,007	396
11	14,465	14,778	15,719	404
12	639	773	860	405
13	782	900	1,139	435
14	800	925	1,184	484
15	1,940	2156	2,446	304
Total	27,790	30,511	31,681	5,841

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY

“Home to School Transport Safety Checks”

Question:

Since April 2023, how many individuals have worked for any length of time within the Home to School Transport service without a cleared DBS check?

Answer:

No BCC Passenger Assistant or Transport provider Driver/Passenger Assistant employees are allowed on route without a cleared DBS check.

All office staff have a cleared BCC DBS check before starting, with the exception of one temporary employee who was able to start their role whilst awaiting the return. The employee had a clear DBS from their previous Local Authority and whilst awaiting the BCC DBS the Officer was restricted to desk duties only, with no site visits.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

19 June 2023

C4

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No

C5

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES COUNCILLOR DEBORAH HARRIS

“Care leavers”

Question:

“According to the performance and delivery monitoring report presented to cabinet last week, on page 24 it is advised that the council is meeting a target of 62% of care leavers who are in Education, Employment and Training. Birmingham is achieving 61% currently.

What is the target for the rest of the population aged 18-25 and if it is different from the measure for care leavers, what is the rationale for that?”

Answer:

There is no target for the rest of the population of 18-25 year olds in Education, Employment and Training (EET) either locally or nationally. As of 2017 -18 the Department for Education (DfE) removed the statutory requirement to report beyond year 13s. As a result there is no comparative data available other than for children on Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

C6

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES COUNCILLOR MORRIAM JAN

“Care leavers 2”

Question:

“According to the performance and delivery monitoring report presented to cabinet last week, on page 24 it is advised that the council is meeting a target of 62% of care leavers who are in Education, Employment and Training. Birmingham is achieving 61% currently.

What factors are taken into consideration when setting this target and is the council pleased with this result?”

Answer:

Birmingham City Council and Birmingham Children’s Trust agree this target annually, taking into account not only previous performance but also that of statistical, regional and national comparators.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE,
HERITAGE AND TOURISM FROM COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY**

“Northfield Library heating bill”

Question:

What was the heating bill for Northfield Library in each month between January and June 2023 and the same period in 2022?

Answer:

Northfield Library was not heated between January and June 2022 as the boiler had broken down in October 2021.

The heating costs for January 2023 to May 2023 are below. The figure for June 2023 is not yet available.

MONTH	GAS COST
January 2023	£3,160.96
February 2023	£2,479.38
March 2023	£2,517.58
April 2023	£2,409.86
May 2023	£1,001.09

D2

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE,
HERITAGE AND TOURISM FROM COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD**

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

19 June 2023

D3

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE,
HERITAGE AND TOURISM FROM COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL**

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No

D4

PLEASE NOTE WRITTEN QUESTION D4 HAS BEEN REDIRECTED TO
QUESTION A14

D5

PLEASE NOTE WRITTEN QUESTION D5 HAS BEEN REDIRECTED TO
QUESTION A15

E1

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

21 June 2023.

E2

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL**

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN**

“Equal Pay support”

Question:

On 21 April 2022 you tweeted that you support GMB union’s fight for #Birminghampayjustice. Given you were on Cabinet both before and after the May 2022 elections what specific action beyond tweeting did you take, and on what dates to support this?

Answer:

I support women’s right to equal pay and their unions’ right to campaign for equal pay and against pay discrimination - in this case GMB. I rejoined Cabinet in May 2022; I was not a Cabinet member in April 2022.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR PENNY WAGG**

“No Mow May”

Question:

“Following “No mow May” the grass was cut but no collected, and this has resulted in many of the road gullies being blocked with mown grass as the grass was particularly long after NMM.

What will be done to ensure they are cleared and that the risk of surface water flooding is prevented if the exercise is repeated?”

Answer:

No Mow May was piloted in four wards across the city this year. The aim was to review all of the implications and refine the initiative in future years.

Catching up with grass cutting and dealing with the arisings is part of the review because it has caused extra pressure on other services such as street cleansing.

Officers are currently evaluating this year’s pilot and will prepare some options for next year.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR ROGER HARMER**

“Wilcotts Grove”

Question:

“Wilcotts Grove has had many missed collections this year and seems to be a hot spot for this. It was missed again on Thursday 29 June, and the crew came back to clear some and not others.

Sometimes recycling is collected but not residual waste.

Can the cabinet member explain why this is happening, and can he ensure that this is resolved?”

Answer:

Over the last few weeks, we have been reviewing all the regular missed collections and have identified there was an issue between the recycling and residual maps not being reconciled, including the area around Wilcote (not Wilcotts) Grove. This has now been resolved.

In addition, the crews are being engaged regarding any issues they may be experiencing and to agree a resolution to ensure the collections are made in accordance with the schedule, with the reconciled maps implemented going forward. An Assistant Service Manager will be instructed to monitor and ensure compliance from the crew.

E6

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR MORRIAM JAN

“Overgrown grass verges”

Question:

“Around the new Perry Barr estate, by One Stop, there are problems with overgrown grass verges. Can the shrubs and grass be cut, and can maintenance be made regular?”

Answer:

The area in question was part of the regeneration works and is currently not on any maintenance programme, but we are expecting to move it on to the regular programme this month. This will mean grass cutting will now be undertaken at the same time as the surrounding roads and the shrubs will be pruned this winter.

E7

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR COLIN GREEN

“Recycling performance”

Question:

“In 2022, BCC won the “Local Authority Success” award at the National Recycling Awards, whilst also placing as 330th out of 333 councils for recycling performance.

Can the award submission data be shared?”

Answer:

The award submission is attached here as requested. It should be noted that the award was specifically with regard to the Mobile Household Recycling Centre initiative, as opposed to your question which has a statistical focus on our kerbside domestic recycling performance.



National_Recycling_A
wards_2022_Nomina

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR DEIRDRE ALDEN

“Oracle engagement”

Question:

What engagement took place - and on what dates - ahead of the rollout of Oracle with schools on the solution design for managing school transactions?

Answer:

The Schools Comms and Engagement Working Group was formed consisting of 3 schools and 9 academies and were engaged over a number of ‘voice of the customer’ workshops May-July 2020. BCC Schools Working Group (Schools HR, Payroll, Finance & Schools Finance) made a decision not to continue this engagement in either Autumn 2020 or Spring 2021 because Design had not concluded.

The Schools Comms and Engagement Working Group was re-instated in late April 2021 to enquire on progress and to agree engagement activity.

The Schools Comms and Engagement Working Group met on the below dates:

2021

11 January

18 January

26 October

9 November

23 November

2022

01 February

15 February

22 February

01 March

15 March

22 March

29 March

19 April

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR KERRY BREWER

“Bookkeeping systems”

Question:

As of 1 July 2023, how many different accounting\bookkeeping systems is the council running (please list)?

Answer:

There are 2. Oracle since April 2022 and SAP (archive only) from 2021/22 backwards. The data retention period is seven years.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS

“Extra staff for closing accounts”

Question:

What is the additional cost of extra staff (including backfilling of current staff) brought in to meet the statutory timetable for publishing accounts?

Answer:

Across all of Finance, Corporate, Business Partnering and Transactional Services, we're currently forecasting £1.276m for 38 fixed term employees.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN

“Debt and interest rates”

Question:

How much of the Council’s debt (split between general fund and HRA) is on variable interest rates?

Answer:

The Council does not currently borrow at variable rates, which means that all borrowings have a fixed rate for the duration of that borrowing.

The only exception is Lender Option Borrower Options (LOBOs) where at a fixed point in time the lender can change the rate, but at the same time the council has the option to repay the loan.

As part of the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy, for internal management purposes, borrowings less than 12 months duration are treated as ‘variable’ because if that borrowing was required to be refinanced it could be at a different rate to the current borrowing. However any such borrowing would normally be at a contractually fixed rate.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND
RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR DARIUS SANDHU**

“Oracle Cloud compatibility”

Question:

At any point before signing contracts did the Council receive any advice that Oracle Cloud would not work to meet the council’s needs?

Answer:

Oracle Cloud is a highly renowned software platform that has been successfully implemented across a large number of sectors and many local authorities. It was made clear from the start that the Council would need to adopt the processes the software is designed for.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY

“Oracle Staff Training”

Question:

In each month since training began up until June 2023, how many staff had been trained on the use of oracle?

Answer:

Prior to the rollout of Oracle in April 2022, all staff were offered training opportunities in the form of:

1. Oracle Guided Learning: a tool in Oracle Cloud
2. 1B Roadshows
3. Short 2-minute video tutorials
4. e Learning available on Learning Pool
5. Virtual instructor led training
6. Oracle Fusion Hub

Within Oracle there is also built in guidance to walk through some of the required activities and support staff to self-learning.

Post April 2023 localised training is taking place for People Services on recruitment and a wide and robust programme for Finance in the use of Oracle functionality.

There is no central register tracking how many staff have accessed one of the range of Oracle training opportunities provided.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID BARRIE

“User Acceptance Testing”

Question:

As well as the 'adopt not adapt' approach that should have been followed for Oracle implementation, the business case you signed off also contained clear learning about the importance of User Acceptance Testing prior to implementation. As the Cabinet Member responsible for this business case, what assurances did you seek that user acceptance testing had taken place prior to launch?

Answer:

A full programme of User Acceptance Testing took place prior to launch of the Oracle system. This included over 3,427 separate tests across areas including Finance, Procurement, HR and Payroll. Tests in all areas were reported as 'meeting exit criteria' i.e., meeting the standard required to proceed.

A further tranche of tests were completed during the first quarter of 2022, which again met exit criteria set out at the time.

A full review of the implementation of Oracle, including how the system was tested with users, will be addressed in the upcoming independent Management Review.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID PEARS

“User Acceptance Testing 2”

Question:

What User Acceptance Testing took place prior to the 'go live' of Oracle? Please provide this broken down by each Oracle user area?

Answer:

Two separate tranches of User Acceptance Tests took place prior to Oracle Go-Live. The second tranche of User Acceptance Tests completed during the first Quarter of 2022.

User Acceptance Testing exercised End-to-End processes for each Oracle Area.

Testing covered HR, Procurement, Finance, Payroll, Interfaces, and Reporting.

Area	UAT1	UAT2	Exit criteria achieved
Finance (AC, AR, CM, EXP, GL, IC, IB, Projects, PBCS)	830 Tests	77 Tests	Yes
Procurement (AP, CM, Grants, Purchasing, Requisitioning, Sourcing, SQM, Suppliers, CM, CIS)	701 Tests	73 Tests	Yes
HR (Helpdesk, ICP, Leavers, Movers, Absences, Recruitment, Time & Labour, Starters, Talent, Work Patterns, Security)	871 Tests	708 Tests	Yes
Payroll (BCC, BCT, Court Orders, Elections, External Processing, General, Members, Pensions, Adoption, Maternity, Paternity, Sickness)	782 Tests	53 Tests	Yes
Interfaces (GL, Projects, AR, P2P) Inbound & Outbound	73 Tests	17 Tests	Yes
Reporting	N/A	98 Tests	Yes
Data Migration	170 Tests	N/A	Yes
Browser Compatibility and Accessibility Tests	Standard	Standard	Yes

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR ADRIAN DELANEY

“GreenSquareAccord”

Question:

Broken down by year, including year to date, how much money has been paid by the council to GreenSquareAccord since April 2018?

Answer:

Period	Spend
Apr 18 - Mar 19	£6,621,982
Apr 19 - Mar 20	£5,731,039
Apr 20 - Mar 21	£5,249,547
Apr 21 - Mar 22	£4,586,647
Apr 22 - Mar 23	£8,571
April 23 - Jun 23	£2,161

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND
RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD**

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

I was first notified of a potential liability on Thursday 8th June and requested officers undertake further work to clarify and confirm the position.

The Leader and Deputy Leader were briefed, following this, on Thursday 15th June.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND
RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL**

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No.

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CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR EWAN MACKEY

“Version 1”

Question:

In answer to question F6 to June Council you helpfully pointed to the September 2021 planned procurement activities report and the 10 May 2022 Contracts awards report for where we could find the contract Provision of an Oracle Fusion Managed Service Provider (MSP) (contract ID 7012 on the register.) However, spend under this contract is now reported as double what was listed on these reports. Under what authority was the original contract value exceeded, given the thresholds for variance under procurement and contract rules?

Answer:

A PPAR was submitted in Sept 21 for a projected £1.5 million (and permissible variance of 20% to £1.8m+/-). The core provision was for Service & Maintenance of Oracle Cloud Fusion, post go-live and for a significant period of hyper-care to include amongst other fixed transition costs. The core commercial model was volume based and transactional i.e. a charge per service request (tiered accordingly) for low, medium and high transactional volume(s).

The subsequent, authorised Award Report (and contract value of £2.3m) reflected, and made provision for high/maximum transactional volume(s) only. Cabinet was not made aware that the final contract value exceeded the £1.5 million projected spend. This will be addressed in the upcoming independent management review.

F13

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND
RESOURCES COUNCILLOR PAUL TILSLEY

“Council tax increases”

Question:

“Last week, the section 151 officer announced that council tax would not be increased in the budget review.

If the council were to wish to increase council tax, would they need to undertake a referendum on the basis that council tax has already been increased by 4.9% in this financial year?”

Answer:

Yes.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND
RESOURCES COUNCILLOR ZAKER CHOUDHRY**

“Equal pay”

Question:

“Last week, the equal pay liability was announced. How long has the council known that this is still an ongoing issue, and why weren't members advised earlier?”

Answer:

Over the last decade, the Council has already paid out a total of £1.1bn in relation to the settlement of equal pay claims. The Council has proactively worked to mitigate the issue and minimise the Council's liability.

Up until May 2022, the Council was still addressing previous claims which had been issued.

In May 2022, new equal pay claims were issued against the Council. The Cabinet Advisory Group on Equal Pay was advised of the potential that claims might be issued against the Council by a Trade Union in January 2022. The receipt of these claims was shared with the Cabinet Advisory Group in June 2022. Further new claims were issued in April 2023.

The announcement on 28th June 2023 provided an updated estimate of the Council's current equal pay liability, following a refreshed analysis carried out by officers.

At all stages, the Council has sought to be transparent with Members and share information where possible, while not jeopardising ongoing litigation. The extent of equal pay liability has been discussed on an ongoing basis for a number of years with both external auditors and the Council's Audit Committee, which is a cross-Party Committee.

F15

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND
RESOURCES COUNCILLOR MUMTAZ HUSSAIN**

“Oracle”

Question:

“What’s the current level of delay to financial reporting in schools as a result of the ongoing issues with Oracle?”

Answer:

Normally we would close all schools in May/June with confirmation of outturn to each school and presentation of outturn to Schools Forum in June before the school holidays. This year we expect to close cheque book schools by the end of the summer term, and to close non cheque book and EPA schools during September/October, with confirmation of outturn to each school and presentation of outturn to Schools Forum in October.

Formal communications to schools of a revised timetable will be sent out as soon as possible.

F16

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR RON STORER

“Public Works Loans Board”

Question:

Is the Council still able to access PWLB loans at the same rates as other councils, or have new rates been set based on recent announcements by the council regarding its financial position? If new rates have been set, please specify what these are and how they differ from average rates other council's are charged.

Answer:

Yes the Council is able to access PWLB at the same rates as before the recent announcements

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE FROM COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

19th June 2023.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE FROM COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR ADRIAN DELANEY

“Tenant Hotline”

Question:

By week, since it was established, how many calls were made to the tenant hotline setup to deal with concerns in the wake of the RSH report?

Answer:

41 calls in total have been made to the dedicated tenant hotline since the Regulatory Notice was published. 32 of these were made in the first week whilst the following 9 calls came through on the second week. None of these queries escalated to the complaints stage.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

26 June 2023

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS

“Compliance Action Plan”

Question:

Please provide an updated copy of the latest compliance action plan that is shared with the Compliance Board responsible for tracking progress against actions to address the RSH findings.

Answer:

Following a meeting with the Regulator of Social Housing on the 3 July 2023, amendments are required to the overarching action plan. Once amendments have been made, this will be shared with the Regulator for sign off at our first monitoring meeting which is scheduled for early September 2023. We will then be able to share the finalised action plan more publicly.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY

“Dynamic Purchasing System for Private Sector Leased Properties”

Question:

Please list all providers who have been added to the Council’s dynamic purchasing system for private sector leased properties used within the temporary accommodation portfolio.

Answer:

Supplier
Ace Lettings Uk Ltd
Expectations UK Ltd
KPJ Property Services
Kwik Let properties
PDS Property Management Limited
Peartree Housing Ltd
Secured Housing Ltd
Weir Housing Ltd
Ezzi Letting Solutions Ltd
Select Care Solutions ltd
Claremont Living
Umbrella Housing Ltd
Finefair Ltd

H6

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR AYOUB KHAN

“Unfit properties”

Question:

“There was a briefing a while back where members were advised that in excess of 20,000 properties were unfit for habitation.

What is the timing to bring them back to a fit state of habitation and when will these details be published?”

Answer:

It's important to clarify whether a home is fit for habitation or whether it meets the Decent Homes Standard. There are two ways to establish this through either stock condition surveys or reports of hazards from residents. Hazards are categorised by the Housing Health and Safety (England) Regulations 2005.

There are a number of reasons why a home may be unfit and these are dealt with through the repairs service or when we do a stock condition survey. Hazards are identified and resolved within a month in most cases. However, this can vary depending on the extent of the work required. In more complex cases, lawyers may commence legal proceedings, creating a disrepair case. These can take longer to resolve due to the legal process.

We currently have around 1,800 disrepair cases being managed which will take up to 6 months to resolve. We have seen significant increases in disrepair cases over the last two years as some solicitors have targeted our estates following national reports by the Housing Ombudsman and the Secretary of State.

To accurately assess meeting the current Decent Homes Standard then extensive stock data is required.

We have low levels of stock data which is outdated. We're now accelerating stock condition surveys and cleansing our data. This will take 5 years to provide an accurate position as we intend to survey 20% of our homes each year. We are using Ark consultancy to collate data from different sources to establish the level of decency we currently report and to support our teams to deliver this year's capital investment programme.

Our current level of decency is reported at 61% and this reflects the lack of investment in homes historically. Future investment requirements are being prepared for approval in the new HRA business plan. This will be considered by cabinet in October 2023. Subject to approval and further data cleansing, then the earliest opportunity to meet decency standards will be 2029/2030.

This may change and take longer depending on when the new decency standard is implemented by the government.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE,
COMMUNITY SAFETY, AND EQUALITIES FROM COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD**

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

19 June 2023

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE,
COMMUNITY SAFETY, AND EQUALITIES FROM COUNCILLOR SIMON
MORRALL**

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT FROM
COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD**

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

21 June 2023

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT FROM
COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL**

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT FROM
COUNCILLOR ROBERT ALDEN**

“Equal Pay support”

Question:

On 19 April 2022 you tweeted that you ‘support @GMBBirmPubServ’s campaign for pay justice for BCC’s women,’ and that if re-elected you would ‘push for full and fair settlement of equal pay claims, implementation of consistent job evaluation & levelling up pay for women workers who faced pay discrimination.’ Given you were on Cabinet both before and after the May 2022 elections what specific action did you take, and on what dates to take these actions?

Answer:

I support women’s right to equal pay and their unions’ right to campaign for equal pay and against pay discrimination - in this case GMB. I joined Cabinet in May 2022; I was not a Cabinet member in April 2022.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT FROM
COUNCILLOR MORRIAM JAN

“TFWM update”

Question:

“Can you provide us with an update on how TFWM are supporting Goodfillas Café on Walsall Road, Perry Barr, and when will a meeting be arranged with TFWM and the owner of Goodfillas who have suffered due to TFWM?”

Answer:

Petition 2621 covering this matter was submitted to full council on 18 April 2023 by Councillor Jon Hunt to the Cabinet Member for Transport. A response has been agreed with TfWM as scheme promoter and approved for formal issue, attached here for reference.



Final Response Letter
to Councillor Jon Hun

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE FROM
COUNCILLOR MATT BENNETT**

“Build to Rent”

Question:

How many build-to-rent planning approvals have been granted in each year for the last 10 years?

Answer:

The Planning Department have advised that there have been numerous applications for build to rent properties across the city in recent years. However, owing to the fact that these are classified, in planning terms, with the C3 (Dwellinghouse) use class category they do not monitor these separately to standard dwellings.

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF SHARD END WARD FORUM FROM
COUNCILLOR KEN WOOD**

“Equal Pay liability”

Question:

On what date and time were you first told that the equal pay liability was potentially £760m?

Answer:

As the Leader of the Council I was regularly updated on equal pay issues and our potential liability. Alongside the members of the Labour Group, I was informed by the Leader that that the revised equal pay liability potential estimate was £650 million to £760 million on Wednesday 28 June.

K3

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF SHARD END WARD FORUM FROM
COUNCILLOR SIMON MORRALL

“Equal Pay liability 2”

Question:

Did you at any point instruct, advise, suggest or ask officers not to tell members of the opposition the scale of the equal pay liability before 28 June 2023 or were you aware of any cabinet colleagues doing so?

Answer:

No

K3^{K4}

CITY COUNCIL – 11 JULY 2023

**PLEASE NOTE WRITTEN QUESTION K4 HAS BEEN REDIRECTED TO
QUESTION J4**