

Birmingham City Council

City Council

6 February 2024



Subject: Motions for Debate from Individual Members
Report of: Marie Rosenthal, Interim Monitoring Officer and City Solicitor
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Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential: N/A

1 Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 To consider the following Motions of which notice has been given in accordance with Council Procedure Rules (section B4.4 G of the Constitution).

2 Notices of Motion

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

“This Council notes that –

It is one year to the day that a briefing was held, to which the current Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources along with the former Leader were invited, where it was shared that the council faced an equal pay liability of up to £820m as a result of alleged job enrichment through the 2017 bin dispute settlement and alleged introduction of task and finish practices in waste collection and street cleaning services from 2020.

- The Cabinet knew from 2017, and agreed with Unions in 2018, that a new job evaluation scheme and pay and grading structure was needed to address the structural inequalities in the pay scheme brought about by the 2017 strike settlement.

- The Cabinet was told by Auditors in 2019 that they had to urgently develop a contingency plan to address equal pay risks but have not been able to produce that plan when asked.
- A video was sent to the council in April 2022 claiming to show bin crews finishing early. Whilst the council at the time denied this was evidence of task and finish, at a scrutiny committee meeting in September 2023 the former head of HR told committee members that “In January, we discovered that task and finish was happening on a huge scale across waste, but not only waste but also in parks and gardens and potentially street scene as well.” There has since still been no public confirmation that task and finish practices were not happening across the directorate.
- As of questioning on 9 January 2024, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment were still unable to publicly confirm that task and finish practices had ceased within the waste service.
- In July, the Council Leader said “We will be open and transparent throughout this process and the independent reviews and judge-led inquiry will ensure that there is proper accountability for these failings”.
- The promised inquiry into what has led to the financial crisis in Birmingham has not yet been given a start date.

This Council believes that –

- The council and its residents cannot afford any more delays or indecision from the Executive.
- Residents deserve answers on what brought about a situation that will see their council tax bills rocket and their services be decimated.
- Learning what happened, and why, is an essential part of ensuring the council has a sustainable future.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Write to the Government by the end of February 2024, asking that the local inquiry commences no later than September 2024, and is concluded and publishes its report no later than December 2025.”

B. Councillors Ayoub Khan and Zaker Choudhry have given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

“This Council Notes:

There are 6395 private hire and 981 Hackney Carriage vehicles licensed by Birmingham City Council.

At present, only Hackney Carriages are allowed to use Bus Lanes.

Allowing private hire vehicles to also use Bus Lanes would reduce congestion especially at peak times but would also have many other benefits including: -

1. Faster journey times for passengers and as a result, cheaper fares per journey and
2. Reduced congestion and as a result, fewer emissions caused from sitting in traffic.
3. Fewer parking spaces needed in the city centre.

This Council resolves to call on the Executive to develop policies that would, like Wolverhampton, allow Private Hire Vehicles to use bus lanes whilst on duty.”