



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL HELD
ON TUESDAY, 1 NOVEMBER 2022 AT 1400 HOURS IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT:- Lord Mayor (Councillor Maureen Cornish) in the Chair.

Councillors

Akhlaq Ahmed	Colin Green	Lee Marsham
Saima Ahmed	Fred Grindrod	Karen McCarthy
Alex Aitken	Roger Harmer	Gareth Moore
Deirdre Alden	Deborah Harries	Simon Morrall
Robert Alden	Kath Hartley	Yvonne Mosquito
Raqeeb Aziz	Adam Higgs	Richard Parkin
Shabina Bano	Des Hughes	Rick Payne
David Barker	Jon Hunt	David Pears
David Barrie	Mumtaz Hussain	Miranda Perks
Baber Baz	Mahmood Hussain	Rob Pocock
Jilly	Shabrana Hussain	Julien Pritchard
Bermingham	Timothy Huxtable	Hendrina Quinnen
Marcus	Mohammed Idrees	Lauren Rainbow
Bemasconi	Zafar Iqbal	Darius Sandhu
Bushra Bi	Katherine Iroh	Rinkal Shergill
Sir Albert	Ziaul Islam	Sybil Spence
Bore	Morriam Jan	Ron Storer
Nicky	Kerry Jenkins	Saima Suleman
Brennan	Meirion Jenkins	Jamie Tennant
Kerry Brewer	Brigid Jones	Sharon Thompson
Marje Bridle	Jane Jones	Paul Tilsley
Martin Brooks	Ayoub Khan	Penny Wagg
Zaker Choudhry	Mariam Khan	Ian Ward
Debbie Clancy	Saqib Khan	Ken Wood
Liz Clements	Izzy Knowles	Alex Yip
John Cotton	Narinder Kaur	Waseem Zaffar
Phil Davis	Kooner	
Jack Deakin	Kirsten Kurt -Elli	
Adrian Delaney	Chaman Lal	
Diane Donaldson	Bruce Lines	
Barbara Dring	Mary Locke	
Jayne Francis	Ewan Mackey	
Sam Forsyth	Basharat	
Rob Grant	Mahmood	
	Majid Mahmood	

NOTICE OF RECORDING

- 44 The Lord Mayor advised that the meeting would be webcast for live and subsequent broadcasting via the Council's internet site and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.
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DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

- 45 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.

Council noted that the Monitoring Officer had granted a dispensation to all Members to enable a full and frank debate on Motion 12a only.

Councillor Robert Alden declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 10. Councillor Alden was a member of the West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Delivery Committee.

Councillor Nicky Brennan declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 11. Councillor Brennan was the Victims' Commissioner for the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

Councillor Chaman Lal declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 10. Councillor Lal was a member of the West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Delivery Sub-Committee.

MINUTES

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and –

- 46 **RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the extraordinary City Council meeting held on 30 September 2022 be taken as read and confirmed and signed.

Council noted that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 October (page 12) recorded that:

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

The minutes should read:

“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”.

Subject to the above amendment being made, Council agreed that the Minutes of the City Council meeting held on 11 October 2022 be taken as read and confirmed and signed.

LORD MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1 Death of Honorary Alderman Hugh McCallion

The Lord Mayor indicated her first announcement related to Honorary Alderman Hugh McCallion who had passed away on 11 September 2022 after a short illness.

Hugh had served as a Councillor for Billesley Ward from 1972 to 1973; and Kingstanding Ward from 1973 to 1990 and 2000 to 2006. During this time, he served on around 50 Committees and Sub-Committees - several as Chair - as well as numerous outside bodies.

He was Deputy Leader of the Labour Group from 2004 to 2005 and became an Honorary Alderman on 15 May 1990.

Hugh leaves behind his wife Peggy, and their children and grandchildren.

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and:-

47

RESOLVED:-

That the Council placed on record its sorrow at the death of Honorary Alderman Hugh McCallion and its appreciation of his devoted service to the residents of Birmingham. The Council extended its deepest sympathy to members of Hugh's family in their sad bereavement.

Members and officers stood for a minute's silence, following which a number of tributes were made by Members.

2 Death of former Councillor David Bennett

The Lord Mayor indicated her second announcement related to former Councillor David Bennett who had passed away on 2 October 2022 after a short illness.

David served as a Councillor for Rotton Park Ward from 1980 to 1982, during which time he served on a number of Committees.

David leaves behind family members including his brother and sister.

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and:-

48

RESOLVED:-

That the Council placed on record its sorrow at the death of former Councillor David Bennett and its appreciation of his devoted service to the residents of Birmingham. The Council extended its deepest sympathy to members of David's family in their sad bereavement.

Members and officers stood for a minute's silence, following which a number of tributes were made by Members.

3 Perry Barr Residential Scheme

The Lord Mayor indicated her third announcement related to the Perry Barr Residential Scheme.

The Scheme had been named RICS Residential Project of the year for 2022.

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and:-

49

RESOLVED:-

That this Council placed on record its congratulations to all of those involved in this achievement.

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:-

50

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

51

RESOLVED:-

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

QUESTION TIME

52

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

Councillor Des Hughes addressed the Council and it was-

53

RESOLVED:-

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

Licensing Sub-Committee C

Councillor Zafar Iqbal (Labour) to replace Councillor Narinder Kooner (Labour) on Licensing Sub-Committee C.

West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

Councillor Ray Goodwin (Labour) to replace Councillor Akhlaq Ahmed (Labour) as the substitute Member for the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel.

ELECTION OF COUNCILLOR

A report from the Returning Officer was submitted:-

(See document No. 3, agenda item 8)

Councillor Ian Ward, Leader of the Council moved the recommendation which was seconded from the floor.

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

It was therefore-

54

RESOLVED:-

1.) City Council noted the election of Councillor Saima Ahmed to the Sparkbrook and Balsall Heath East Ward on 6 October 2022.

EXECUTIVE BUSINESS REPORT

A report from Cabinet was submitted:-

(See document No. 4, agenda item 9)

Councillor Sharon Thompson moved the Motion which was seconded by Councillor Mariam Khan.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Ken Wood, Roger Harmer, Julien Pritchard, Mohammed Idrees, Rob Pocock and Ziaul Islam spoke during the debate.

It was-

55

RESOLVED:-

1.) That City Council noted the report.

ADJOURNMENT

56

It was moved by the Lord Mayor, seconded and-

RESOLVED:-

That the Council be adjourned until 1700 hours on this day.

The Council then adjourned at 1630 hours.

At 1700 hours the Council resumed at the point where the meeting had been adjourned.

Lord Mayor in the Chair.

**LEAD MEMBER REPORT: WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY
TRANSPORT DELIVERY COMMITTEE**

A report from Councillor Mary Locke, Lead Member: West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Delivery Committee was submitted:-

(See document No. 5, agenda item 10)

Councillor Mary Locke moved the recommendation which was

seconded from the floor.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Ewan Mackey, Jon Hunt, Narinder Kooner and Timothy Huxtable spoke during the debate.

It was-

57

RESOLVED:-

- 1.) That City Council noted the report.
-

LEAD MEMBER REPORT: WEST MIDLANDS POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

A report from Councillor Alex Aitken, Lead Member: West Midlands Police and Crime Panel was submitted:-

(See document No. 6, agenda item 11)

Councillor Alex Aitken moved the recommendation which was seconded from the floor.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Gareth Moore, Izzy Knowles and Majid Mahmood spoke during the debate.

It was-

58

RESOLVED:-

- 1.) That 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).

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

(See document No. 7, agenda item 12)

Councillor Sharon Thompson moved the Motion which was seconded by Councillor Raqeeb Aziz.

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

(See document No. 8, 'Amendments – City Council')

Councillor Roger Harmer moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Morriam Jan.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillors Robert Alden and Ken Wood gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

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

Councillor Robert Alden moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Ken Wood.

A debate ensued.

Councillors Baber Baz, Gareth Moore, Julien Pritchard and Jane Jones spoke during the debate

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor Sharon Thompson to sum up.

The amendment to the Motion in the names of Councillors Roger Harmer and Morriam Jan 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 Robert Alden and Ken Wood 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:-

"This Council notes that:

- Some landlords and registered providers are taking advantage of loopholes in planning law to run poor quality Supported Exempt Accommodation, profiting from housing benefit payments, failing vulnerable tenants and blighting our communities.
- Work is continuing across the city to improve the standard of exempt accommodation thanks to the continuing pilot scheme, our Charter of Rights, Quality Standards Framework and by following the recommendations outlined in O&S Exempt Accommodation Inquiry Report.

- Council notes it's disappointment that despite being agreed unanimously in Full Council Motions in December 2021, and being raised at other points, including at Cabinet, action has still not been implemented to control the growth of Exempt Accommodation in Birmingham by placing and enforcing existing covenants on housing sold or owned by the council.
- Council further notes it's disappointment and concern that council owned accommodation is being used as Exempt Accommodation and that, according to press reports the council has failed to act against antisocial behaviour in at least one of its properties. Council agrees with the statement of Shabana Mahmood MP that it should be expected the Council "as the landlord of the property to have dealt with the matter much more swiftly than they actually have done".
- Council also notes its concern that some elected members appear to believe that the commercial interests of individual councillors is a legitimate reason to withhold information on exempt accommodation ownership, contrary to the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and as set out in the government guidance "Openness and transparency on personal interests: A guide for councillors.

This Council resolves to:

- Support the campaign led by the homelessness charity Crisis to 'Regulate the Rogues', which calls on the Government to urgently introduce new laws in England to strengthen the regulation of Supported Exempt Accommodation.
- Welcome the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Select Committee report into Exempt Accommodation, call on Government to implement its' recommendations and place on record the Council's thanks to all those locally who contributed to the Select Committee's work.
- Continue to lobby the Government for greater powers to control provision and growth based on the city's needs assessment.
- Launch an independent public inquiry into the growth of Exempt Accommodation in the city, helping to strengthen the case for nationwide legislative reform. This inquiry should be independent not only of the council but also anyone involved in any way in the exempt accommodation market, including housing providers in Birmingham and elsewhere.

In addition, the Council calls on the Standards Committee to update the Council Code of Conduct so that:

- Any elected member, or their spouse or partner, save for their primary

residence, shall declare the use of all other properties they own and/or have an interest in. If the usage has potential safeguarding implications, the details shall be provided to the Monitoring Officer and held on a confidential basis as part of the Register of Interest.

- Call on all Members, in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer, to ensure that existing legal requirements, as set out in the Localism Act 2011 and associated guidance, are understood and enforced so that every elected member declares all disclosable interests. This includes all land and property interests within Birmingham held by either themselves or their spouse or partner. Details of these should only be withheld where the member and the monitoring officer, who is responsible for the register of members' interests, consider that disclosure of its details could lead to the member, or a person connected to the member, being subject to violence or intimidation or potential safeguarding implications.

Council notes that commercial interests are not a legitimate reason to withhold information from the public register of members' interests.

This Council also notes that a key cause of the growth of Supported Exempt Accommodation is the chronic shortage of socially rented homes in Birmingham and across the UK.

Many of those in Supported Exempt Accommodation have needs that would be better met in their own homes, rented from a social provider. This shortage is also causing a growth of other problems such as overcrowding and the use of temporary accommodation.

Council therefore also resolves to lobby the Government to invest more in socially rented housing and reform the way 'Right to Buy' operates to reduce the loss of existing stock.

Council calls on the Executive to:

- Bring a report forward before the end of the calendar year setting out a policy for the use and enforcement of covenants on properties sold and owned by the council to prevent the conversion of family homes into HMOs or Exempt Accommodation.
- Carry out and publish an urgent review into all council owned property currently being used as exempt accommodation, converting all former family homes back into their original use and assessing the impact on other accommodation on the local area to ensure it is appropriately sited, well managed, and used to prioritise demand placed on the city council and not that of other local authorities."

B. Councillors Simon Morrall and Debbie Clancy had given notice of the following Notice of Motion:-

(See document No. 10, agenda item 12)

Councillor Simon Morrall moved the Motion which was seconded by Councillor Debbie Clancy.

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

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

Councillor Jon Hunt moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor Paul Tilsley.

In accordance with Council Rules of Procedure, Councillor Karen McCarthy and John Cotton gave notice of the following amendment to the Motion:-

(See document No. 12, 'Amendments – City Council')

Councillor Karen McCarthy moved the amendment which was seconded by Councillor John Cotton.

The Lord Mayor invited Councillor Simon Morrall to sum up.

The amendment to the Motion in the names of Councillors Jon Hunt 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 Karen McCarthy and John Cotton 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:-

“This Council believes that every child, regardless of race or background, should be given the opportunity and encouragement to thrive in educational attainment.

Council notes that the executive was given a mandate in May 2022 to deliver on Labour’s manifesto commitment to: ‘Further improve school attainment and achievement, targeting the worst performing schools in the city, improving the educational attainment of poor performing cohorts, particularly disadvantaged working class white and black Caribbean boys who are the two lowest performing groups by ethnicity in the city.

Council further notes that unprecedented and brutal Government cuts to

education spending through a decade of austerity have disproportionately impacted on disadvantaged pupils, with the Institute for Fiscal Studies finding that the most disadvantaged fifth of secondary schools faced the biggest cuts, with a 14 per cent real-terms drop in spending per pupil between 2009 and 2019 compared with nine per cent for the least deprived schools.

Austerity has exacerbated attainment gaps for a number of disadvantaged cohorts, an example of which was highlighted in the cross-party Education Select Committee report in November 2021 “The Forgotten: how White working class pupils have been let down, and how to change it” which found that White Working Class pupils, eligible for free school meals, in particular working class boys, persistently underperform compared with peers in other ethnic groups in the UK.

In Birmingham, Gypsy/Roma pupils have the lowest attainment, while the attainment gap for free school meals eligible White British and Black Caribbean pupils is also significant when compared to the overall LA average.

Council believes that the educational attainment gap for these groups remains too large and that national and local strategies should focus on understanding and acting against the barriers to attainment for all groups, ensuring that no-one is forgotten or ignored.

Council acknowledges the Government’s response to the Select Committee report and calls for adequately funded action to address the attainment gap for all under-performing groups:

1. Funding needs to be tailor-made at a local level to level up opportunity.
2. Support engagement with parents, children and young people to tackle multi-generational disadvantage.
3. Ensure the value of vocational training, apprenticeships and entrepreneurship options while boosting access to higher education.
4. Attract good teachers to challenging and disadvantaged areas, while also supporting the professional development of teachers already committed to working in those areas.
5. Build on the work that has taken place across Birmingham in recent years - in particular the race equality for schools work with BRAP and the Unicef Rights Respecting School Award - to address racial disparities.

Council believes that local action is imperative, regardless of any national changes and that the findings of the select committee report should be factored into work already happening in Birmingham to address issues with educational attainment.

Council therefore resolves to call on the Government to:

- Deliver on its pledge to restore education spending, in real terms. to 2010 levels.
- End tax exemptions for independent schools, using the £1.7 billion raised to fund state school efforts to bridge the attainment gap.

Council further resolves to:

1. Ensure that 'Change For Children and Young People', Birmingham Children's Partnership (BCP) Board's emerging Children and Young People's Plan 2023-2027, identifies and addresses gaps in attainment.
2. Call on the Government to adopt the solutions proposed by the cross-party Education Select Committee report and continue to review its findings.
3. Call on the City Council Executive to ensure that the report's findings and solutions where appropriate to Birmingham, are factored into existing and developing strategies including 'Everyone's Battle, Everyone's Business' and its emerging Inclusion Strategy.
4. Call on Overview and Scrutiny to incorporate these Birmingham-specific strategies into their work programmes to track outcomes and monitor actions taken to address issues, ensuring they receive full analysis of achievement by socio-economic and ethnic background
5. Work with employers to ensure opportunity is spread equally, by creating career pathways for the most disadvantaged and deprived areas of the city.
6. Build on the findings of the Breaking Down Barriers report to develop communication and social media strategies to target the many young and disenfranchised pupils, in particular NEETS, who do not normally engage with standard and legacy forms of Council communication.
7. Promote vocational training, apprenticeships and entrepreneurship in schools.
8. Ensure that solutions are fully inclusive to ensure the city's most disadvantaged young people, including those in the care system, have access to a full range of opportunities through a school system empowered to work collectively for the benefit of all students.

Continue to highlight the risks to students of failure to maintain school budgets and, in particular, levels of pupil premium."

The meeting ended at 1915 hours.

APPENDIX

Questions and replies in accordance with Council Rules of Procedure B4.4 F
of the Constitution

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022



CITY COUNCIL 1 NOVEMBER 2022 WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIR

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“Street Traders Generators”

Question:

What licence requirements are there on the use of generators (i.e. fuel type, emission standards, running hours etc.) by street traders operating in Birmingham?

Answer:

There is no specific licence to control the use of generators.

Generators are indirectly controlled by regulations that govern their construction and safe use. Very large generators (greater than 1MegaWatt) have emission limits, but these are normally standby generators for buildings when there is a power cut, and they need continuous supply. More information at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/specified-generator-comply-with-permit-conditions>.

With regard to the street trading licence there is no specific requirement, however the Licensing Policy for Key considerations when assessing an application for street trading consent, states in section 8 of the document:

Power

- City centre units will be powered by electricity through a plug and use process that will be chargeable.
- Diesel generators will be permissible outside the city centre only when no other power source is available. They shall be positioned so as to reduce the length of cabling required to an absolute minimum and to minimise disturbance to local residents or businesses from noise or fumes. Where required, silenced generators or acoustically insulated generators shall be sourced.

Not all city centre locations currently include the provision of an electrical hook-up and therefore silenced generators have been allowed in these instances.

The Environmental Health team have certain powers for controlling noise that is determined to be a statutory nuisance arising in the street.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“Labour Party report on Cllr Jack Deakin”

Question:

Given the clear public interest the case has generated online and in the press, and given the reliance on the internal labour party report as a defence that both the Leader and Cllr Deakin have placed upon it, will the Leader publish the report into the actions of Cllr Deakin’s theft from a city centre bar?

Answer:

Following the incident in question, Councillor Deakin referred himself to the Labour Party Compliance Unit. The Labour Party had an Independent Panel look at this matter and have passed a sanction on Councillor Deakin.

Councillor Deakin has apologised to the manager of the bar, who I understand now considers the matter closed. The outcome of the Independent Panel, and any report, is not mine to publish.

I can confirm that the Monitoring Officer did not receive a formal Code of Conduct complaint which the Standards Committee could consider. Therefore, there is no report to publish.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE CITY COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR ADAM HIGGS**

“Small Heath Swimming Baths”

Question:

When the Small Heath leisure centre was ‘temporarily’ closed in 2016, what at that time was the projected cost of repairs needed and what is the projected cost to enable the baths to reopen now?

Answer: Following structural surveys, the cost of bringing the pool back into operation and undertaking associated work such as asbestos management was initially estimated at circa £1m. Since then further work has been identified, such as meeting current design standards for people with disabilities, and the cost has risen accordingly. The final cost of the project is not known at this stage and is dependent on a number of variables and a working group has been set up to address options and costs.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE CITY COUNCIL FROM
COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY HUXTABLE**

“Small Heath Swimming Baths-2”

Question:

What plans are there to reopen the swimming baths in Small Heath and what is the timescale for this ?

Answer:

The Council understands the importance of enabling residents to access the physical, mental and social benefits of swimming and is currently exploring the options to provide water space in this area of the city. At this stage we do not have a preferred option or a definite timetable.

However, a working group has been set up in order to address these matters.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

‘Christmas Lights’

Question:

With the festive season approaching could the Leader give reassurance that Christmas lights previously installed in some city locations will be connected and would the Council be willing to help fund a proportion of their running cost?

Answer:

The annual Festivals and Christmas Lighting Programme commenced back in May of this year and the Council is fully committed to delivering this programme across 25+ local centres.

The Council upgraded its stock of decorations last year by procuring 200 lighting features through the European Regional Development Fund. These features were installed across 11 local centres, and they are available for use again this year and over the coming years.

The increase in charges this year are actual costs that the Council will incur, mainly electricity and contractor installation, specifically the increase in fuel costs. The programme delivery team have made every effort to keep these increases to a minimum.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

'Meetings'

Question:

Following the report at cabinet on the business plan for the Alexander Stadium and Perry Park, could the leader set out what meetings have been held or invitations issued, since the Commonwealth Games, to brief any of the following groups on developing proposals for the park and stadium: ward councillors, Friends of Perry Park, Walsall Road Allotments, 3Bs Neighbourhood Planning Forum?

Answer:

All proposals raised within the Stadium Legacy report followed extensive consultation and engagement during both the stadium redevelopment and Perry Barr 2040 masterplan process.

As explained at Cabinet, the current approvals now allow the procurement of Project Management, cost management and design services which will then allow further engagement with all key stakeholders, including those named in the question, to firm up designs for the stadium and Perry Park and therefore meeting needs and aspirations.

This process is now underway and will gather momentum in the next few months with a view to go to planning in the first quarter of next year.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DEBOARH HARRIES

‘Planning Enforcement’

Question:

Does the Leader consider that the on line form to report Planning Enforcement, which seems to tackle all enquiries, is appropriate either for Councillors or lay members of the public?

Answer:

The Planning Enforcement form is intended to ensure that we have the necessary information to thoroughly investigate complaints and also identify those that are not planning matters at an early stage so that the Enforcement Team can be used more effectively, providing officers with far greater information at the outset and enabling them to obtain further information where needed to assist in the investigation and better direct resources.

Once a complaint has been received and registered, the complainant or Councillor can contact the investigating officer as they do now; they will receive an acknowledgement letter which contains the officer’s contact details as it does now. There will be no need for anyone to complete the form more than once.

The form is not intended to exclude anyone from submitting a complaint and does not discriminate against the elderly or less technically savvy. Should any of your constituents who do not have access or who are unable to use the internet wish to make a complaint, they can do this by either contacting us via members, or the call centre where the online form can be completed on their behalf, or they can write in to the Council and the case will be registered. If members wish to discuss the concerns with an officer in the first instance before making the submission planning enforcement officers will be more than happy to assist. Officers are still available to engage with anyone regarding their concerns before, during or after raising a complaint with the team.

I strongly believe the process allows us to better understand the nature of the enquiry from the outset, filter out non planning related complaints in a more timely fashion and allow the service to focus resources on more serious breaches of planning control; enabling the enforcement team to respond more efficiently to complaints and provide local residents with a more effective service.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR
JULIEN PRITCHARD**

‘Investment Zones’

Question:

What benefits does the expect to gain from the new Investment Zones? And what risks has it identified from its expression of interest? Has it done any risk-benefit analysis?

Answer:

The Investment Zone initiative was announced by Government in September 2022 as an opportunity for the Mayoral Combined Authority to create areas to accelerate housing and infrastructure to drive economic growth. Benefits announced by Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities and HM Treasury include speeding up planned development, time limited tax incentives, infrastructure and development.

I wrote to the Mayor supporting the initiative and the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) by the WMCA. Full details of the scheme are not available to officers however high-level modelling has commenced and will be further developed. I was clear to set out in my letter that the introduction of Investment Zone/s must be without detriment to the financial resources that would have otherwise been available to Birmingham City Council, with the implementation of these Zones being subject to further work with respect to due diligence, assessments of financial risk and approval through the appropriate Governance structures.

I have also made it clear that we would need to understand the consequences of any changes to the planning regime or environmental protections before we could agree to any Investment Zones.

I understand that the Secretary of State, Michael Gove, has announced a review of Investment Zones.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR DEBOARH HARRIES

'City Council Feed'

Question:

As of today (25 October 2022) the feed from City Council on 11 October has still not been uploaded to the Council's You Tube site – could the Deputy Leader explain why the delay?

Answer:

The recording of the October City Council meeting was uploaded to the Council's YouTube channel on 25th October. It is now available to view via the 'Birmingham City Council – Committee Meetings' channel on YouTube.

Unfortunately, on this occasion there was a short delay in receiving the recording from our livestream provider, TPG. This in turn delayed the upload of the recording. However, the vimeo link, which is used by TPG to stream the meeting live, remained available for members of the public to view upon request.

We apologise for the delay in uploading the recording on this occasion. The current webcasting arrangements represent a temporary solution while Scrutiny and Committee Services work with IT&D colleagues on the Council House Webcasting Project, which will see the delivery and implementation of a much improved solution once new equipment is installed in early 2023.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR JULIEN PRITCHARD

“Housing Repairs - Calls”

Question:

How many calls to the housing repairs number have taken more than 5 minutes to be answered per month for each month during 2021-2022 and for the part of 2022-2023 where there is data? and what were the length of those calls?

Answer:

We are unable to provide this data in the given timeframe, as more time would be required to pull the data from the system and perform an analysis.

However, the total calls, average wait times and talk times for Housing Repairs for each month in 2021/22 are as follows. This data will give you a guide to the performance of call handling since April 2021 for Housing Repairs.

Month-Year 2021	Answered	Average Time to Answer (Mins)	Average Talk Time (mins)
Apr-21	31,202	2.43	6.33
May-21	28,176	3.32	5.15
Jun-21	27,365	5.47	5.62
Jul-21	25,455	4.73	6.97
Aug-21	22,084	8.13	7.23
Sep-21	26,486	5.17	7.77

Oct-21	27,277	6.53	7.85
Nov-21	34,074	4.02	7.15
Dec-21	26,936	8.75	7.43
Jan-22	33,606	5.18	7.20
Feb-22	30,729	1.54	7.60
Mar-22	33,161	0.68	7.13
Year	346,551	2.29	6.95

Month-Year 2022	Answered	Average Time to Answer (Mins)	Average Talk Time (mins)
Apr-22	26,787	2.15	7.58
May-22	26,330	0.85	6.88
Jun-22	24,838	1.58	6.72
Jul-22	20,633	5.07	6.52
Aug-22	22,810	5.37	6.55
Sep-22	26,266	4.97	6.68
YTD	147,664	3.23	6.84

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR BRUCE LINES

“Gender identity training in schools”

Question:

How many, and which, local authority schools and colleges have bought in teacher training, student workshops etc. on gender identity. Please provide a breakdown of the supplier and costs by school.

Answer:

Schools and colleges have their own arrangements in place and records of any training commissioned would be held by individual schools and colleges.
The council does not hold this information.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR RON STORER

“SENDIASS”

Question:

On Wednesday 19th October at the Overview & Scrutiny Meeting, the SEND Commissioner, John Coughlan, confirmed, in relation to a discussion in respect of SENDIASS, that any changes to the service were a matter for Council through its own policies and procedures. John Coughlan further said that his preference is for services to remain ‘in house’. This was reinforced by the Chair of the Committee, who said that the Labour Group Manifesto commitment is for services to remain in house. Please can you therefore confirm that you will not be outsourcing SENDIASS?

Answer:

A working party has been set up to ensure that SENDIASS meets its statutory requirements, as per the National Minimum Standards.

There has been no decision made regarding the future operating model for SENDIASS.

The DfE appointed SEND Commissioner has asked me to advise that he believes this question significantly simplifies and therefore misrepresents what he actually said to scrutiny, which is on the public record. He would be happy to further discuss these matters as required.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD PARKIN

“SENDIASS OUTSOURCING”

Question:

Please provide details of all discussions that have taken place since September 2022 in respect of outsourcing SENDIASS, including details of Market Testing discussions and names of officers who have approved this.

Answer:

A working party has been set up to ensure that SENDIASS meets its statutory requirements, as per the National Minimum Standards.

There has been no decision made regarding the future operating model for SENDIASS and no formal market testing has been undertaken.

As part of the improvement process we need to look at how good SENDIASS services are delivered elsewhere.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR RICK PAYNE

“Tribunal ‘bias’ ”

Question:

On Wednesday 19th October at the Overview & Scrutiny Meeting, in response to a question raised as to why the council opposed so many SENDIST appeals that are ultimately successful, or concedes them just before the hearing date, the SEND Commissioner, John Coughlan, said that Tribunals are biased in favour of parents. Does the Cabinet Member agree with the SEND Commissioner?

Answer:

The DfE appointed SEND Commissioner’s reply to a question regarding tribunals at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 19th October was referring to the high appeal upheld rate nationally at SENDIST.

John Coughlan said “once you’re there [at tribunal] you’re likely for the tribunal to find in favour of the parents”, thus there was no mention of bias.

The last national statistics are from September 2020-August 2021 show that 97% of appeals were recorded as being concluded in favour of the appellant following a decision at tribunal. In Birmingham in the last academic year, 70% of appeals were recorded as being concluded in favour of the appellant following a decision at tribunal.

The commissioner has asked me to advise how disappointed he is that his position should be inaccurately quoted in such an important context.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“SENAR”

Question:

Please provide a breakdown of the budgeted and current YTD actual cost of SENAR, also breaking down and specifying the source of SENAR funding - DSG/HNB/Council revenue Budget/Other

Answer:

The current temporary budget for SENAR in 2022/23 is £8.1m, with a Year-to-Date (YTD) budget at period 6 of £4.05m and a YTD Actual at period 6 of £5.56m.

The funding for SENAR in 2022/23 is provided 100% from general fund, with no contribution from DSG.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR KERRY BREWER

“SENAR STRUCTURE”

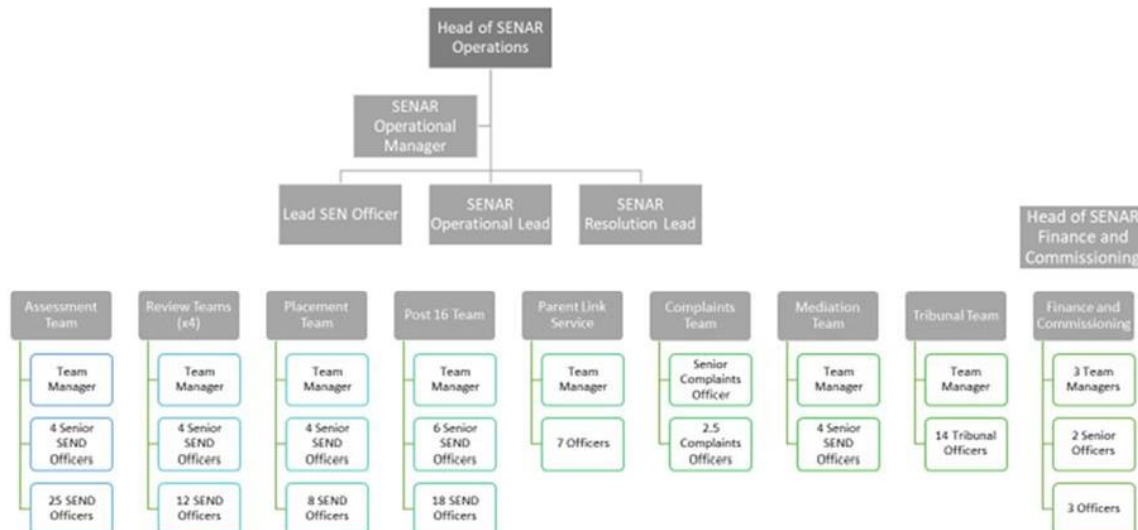
Question:

Please provide a structure chart for SENAR with the Grades of the Officers or pay scale day rate where interims are currently in post

Answer:

The table below shows the current staffing levels in SENAR. Staff pay ranges from GR4 to GR7 (or associated cost if agency), according to responsibility of the role.

The service currently operates with over 90% agency staff, due to the lack of substantive funding for the service. The appropriate substantive funding forms part of the Council’s MTFP process. This will enable the Council to recruit permanently to the structure.



CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR GARETH MOORE

“SENDIST Tribunal Learning”

Question:

In order to improve a service it is essential to understand how and why things have gone wrong by looking in detail at complaints and legal challenges.

Please provide us with the detail of any attempt that has been made to analyse the causes and outcomes of SENDIST tribunal cases and of complaints and LGO reports involving SEND services in Birmingham, including any discussions with SENDIST, IPSEA, the LGO, SENDIASS and any other organisations that support families with SEND issues.

Answer:

The Children and Families directorate has established lessons learned processes to ensure that there is oversight of the themes arising from complaints, including those relating to SEND issues. This includes regular consideration by the directorate’s senior leadership team and the wider leadership forum at their meetings. This information is also shared with the Cabinet Member on a regular basis.

Complaints that relate to SEND are also monitored by the SEND Improvement Board (chaired by the DfE appointed SEND Commissioner) through a dashboard.

A representative of the Local Government Ombudsman attended a recent meeting of the SEND Improvement Board. The Director of Children’s Services works with the LGO, including regular meetings with their representatives.

In terms of legal challenges, these arise from threats of judicial review pursuant to the pre-action protocol and can often be resolved without the need for a claim to be issued. It would not be appropriate to raise these types of matter with external organisations but BCC’s legal services work closely with SENAR and contribute to any broader analysis of cause and outcomes in general terms.

D

**PLEASE NOTE: NO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE
CABINET MEMBER FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE, HERITAGE AND
TOURISM**

CITY COUNCIL – 1 November 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR DEBBIE CLANCY**

“Slabs in Cabs”

Question:

There have now been 3 iterations of in cab technology - or ‘slabs in cabs’ - for waste collection crews since the roll out of wheelie bins. Please provide a breakdown of the total costs of each of these, including projected final costs of the most recent roll out.

Answer:

The Slab in the Cab technology consists of the back office ICT system and in-cab hardware, which was originally implemented in 2017. It has not been possible to confirm the original implementation costs, as this was part of a wider project to implement a new back office platform. The original in-cab hardware is life expired and no longer supported, and at 4-5 years old this is normal for this type of hardware, so is now being refreshed and re-implemented. There have been no other implementations. The supply and install of new equipment with associated support and refresher training is in the region of £150k, with around £30k annual recurring costs for data/BCC ITD costs which largely replace the recurring costs of the original hardware. There are no further direct costs anticipated to complete this refresh.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR KERRY BREWER**

“Highfield Recreation Grounds Bollards”

Question:

**What was the total cost of the new bollards installed at Highfield Recreation
Ground to deter off road bikes?**

Answer:

The bollards were installed to prevent cars entering the site as reported by the local police earlier this year, not to prevent off road bikes. The supply and installation was £770.00 for metal bollards into a tarmac path.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID BARRIE

“Alleyway clear up”

Question:

Further to question F4 from October Council, please provide an up-to-date list, naming the alleyways cleared and still waiting clearance, and the ward each is in.

Answer:



Alley Way clear up

data.xlsx

REFERN



PART 3.pdf

WAYS

REDFERN



REDFERN



LIFFORD



ALLEYWAYS.pdf

Montague Street Depot – Nil return as all alleyways/pathways have been completed.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR ZAKER CHOUDHRY**

‘Mobile Household Recycling Centre’

Question:

Could the Cabinet Member provide daily details of tonnage collected from MHRC during September and October by depot, along with details of the wards visited each day?

Answer:

The attached gives the daily Ward breakdown per depot for September and October. Please note that the service did not operate on the 19th September due to the Queen’s funeral.

Daily tonnage recording is in a trial phase, so may include previous days’ visits and recycling material streams are not always split. Tonnages are collated after the close of each month, so October’s data is not yet available.



MHRC Sept Oct
2022.pdf

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR DEBORAH HARRIES**

‘CCTV for Fly Tipping’

Question:

For every deployment of a CCTV camera, could the Cabinet Member confirm how many prosecutions are brought?

Answer:

It is not currently possible to determine how many prosecutions are brought per deployment of CCTV. This is because some of the prosecutions are still waiting for the courts to hear the cases.

The majority of cameras are overt and therefore clearly identified. They are there as a deterrent and to capture incidents. We have had 170 incidents of fly tipping with the deployment of current cameras. All have been investigated by enforcement officers.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR IZZY KNOWLES**

‘Missed Collections’

Question:

To help reduce the amount of missed collections of waste or recycling for residents who have assisted collections would it be possible for the council to issue stickers for the bins similar to those for garden waste?

Answer:

On the face of it that is a good suggestion, and it is important to us to make sure that those on assisted collections are not disadvantaged further. The service did look into this a number of years ago and concluded that providing any type of sticker or different bin type would identify these residents as being potentially vulnerable and open to exploitation. It is imperative that we do not create these circumstances and therefore stickers/different bins won't be issued.

Residents don't always require an ongoing assisted collection and can request one for a shorter-term period such as 3 months (e.g. following surgery). We also carry out two-year reviews on ongoing assisted collection request. It would require a significant amount of resource to remove stickers when the assisted collection was no longer required at that property.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM
COUNCILLOR JULIEN PRITCHARD**

'Waste Contract'

Question:

At what stage is the new waste contract procurement, and what work has been done to do date on the City's waste system post 2034?

Answer:

The authority has gone through a Competitive Dialogue procurement process for the Transitional Contract (Package 1) which has enabled the Authority to dialogue with Bidder(s). The procurement process has gone through the Selection Questionnaire stage, Invitation to Submit a Detailed Solution stage and received bid(s) for the final stage of the process (Call for Final Tender). The bid is going through an evaluation process which will lead to moderation for award consideration.

Using an outside specialist organisation, we have started evaluating the disposal options and technologies for the post 2034 contract. However, our commitment has been to deliver the current procurement and work will increase on the post 2034 contract by the middle of 2023.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“BID Levy from Dedicated Schools Grant”

Question:

Since 2012 how much has been paid in total from the Dedicated Schools Grant to pay the BID Levy for schools that fall within business improvement districts?
Please provide a breakdown by individual school

Answer:

**BID Levy raised from Maintained School
(2012>)**

Figures as of September 2022

BID AREA

Harborne BID

	BID Member Period		Total Levied
St Mary'S R C Primary School, Vivian Road, Birmingham, B17 0DN	2017-2022	£	7,500
Harborne Primary School, Station Road, Birmingham, B17 9LU	2017-2022	£	6,100
Chad Vale J & I School, Nursery Road, Birmingham, B15 3JU	2017-2022	£	4,925
St Peters Primary School, Old Church Road, Birmingham, B17 0BE	2017-2022	£	3,300
St Peters Infant School, Old Church Road, Birmingham, B17 0BE	2017-2022	£	3,000
		£	24,825

BID AREA

Kings Heath

	BID Member Period		Total Levied
Bishop Challoner R C School, Institute Road, Birmingham, B14 7EG	2012-2022	£	36,194.50
Queensbridge Secondary School, Queensbridge Road, Birmingham, B13 8QB	2012-2022	£	13,469.11
Kings Heath J&I School, Poplar Road, Birmingham, B14 7AA	2018-2022	£	8,356.25
St. Dunstans Rc Junior & Infant School, Drayton Road, Birmingham, B14 7LP	2018-2022	£	5,778.48

£ 63,798.34

BID AREA

Soho Road

Handsworth Grammar School, Grove Lane,
Birmingham, B21 9HB

BID Member Period

2014-2017

£

Total Levied

15,450.00

Grove Lane Primary School, Grove Lane,
Birmingham, B21 9HB

2014-2022

£

8,646.60

£

24,096.60

TOTAL

£ 112,719.94

The figures provided show all BID levies raised for maintained schools since 2012.

We are unable to provide information on whether all/some/none of the levy came from the Dedicated Schools Grant. This element will be followed up with a written response.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“Payment of suppliers”

Question:

In each month since April 2021, what action has been taken against the council by suppliers for non-payment of invoices, broken down by

- a. Complaints
- b. Final reminders
- c. Court action
- d. Bailiff action

Answer:

a) Complaints

From April 2021 until September 2022 we have only logged 22 complaints within accounts payable.

b) Final Notices – Total 75

April 21	2	Jan 22	4
May 21	3	Feb 22	3
June 21	4	Mar 22	4
July 21	4	Apr 22	6
Aug 21	1	May 22	2
Sept 21	2	Jun 22	5
Oct 21	1	Jul 22	5
Nov 21	0	Aug 22	4
Dec 21	1	Sep 22	14
		Oct 22	10

c) Court Action – Total 15

April 21	0	Jan 22	0
May 21	0	Feb 22	0
June 21	0	Mar 22	0
July 21	0	Apr 22	0
Aug 21	0	May 22	1
Sept 21	0	Jun 22	4
Oct 21	0	Jul 22	0
Nov 21	0	Aug 22	3
Dec 21	0	Sep 22	3
		Oct 22	4

d) Bailiff Action – Total 11

April 21	0	Jan 22	1
May 21	0	Feb 22	0
June 21	0	Mar 22	1
July 21	0	Apr 22	0
Aug 21	0	May 22	1
Sept 21	1	Jun 22	1
Oct 21	0	Jul 22	0
Nov 21	2	Aug 22	1
Dec 21	2	Sep 22	0
		Oct 22	1

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES FROM COUNCILLOR MEIRION JENKINS

“Delayed Invoices”

Question:

Scrutiny have been informed that there is currently a backlog of 6607 unpaid invoices that are over 30 days old (the maximum time allowed for payment under public contract regulations) , totalling £16.637m due to issues with implementation of Oracle, please provide a breakdown of the age profile of these invoices including the average number of days since these invoices were issued and the longest overdue invoice?

Answer:

The backlog continues to reduce and as at 25th October 2022 and since Scrutiny:

1. Total number of invoices over 31 days awaiting authorisation and payment is 4,571 with a value of £25.7m. Please note that we monitor and pay invoices from the date of receipt of invoice and not by the date on the invoice.
2. The longest overdue invoice is for £20,749.51 and the receipt date was the 14th April 2022.

Summary of Ageing Invoices as at 25th October 2022

25/10/2022	No. of Invoices	£'m
Not due	4,779	48,974,259
31 - 60 days	962	13,698,627
61 - 90 days	680	3,289,731
Over 90 days	2,545	8,721,899
Data Incomplete	384	(665)
Total	9,350	74,683,851

Not Due – this is an invoice that is not due and is within the contractual payment terms between BCC and the supplier

Data Incomplete – there is not enough information on the invoice to pay the supplier, bank details, no payment terms etc

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“Delayed Invoices SMEs”

Question:

Scrutiny have been informed that there is currently a backlog of 6607 unpaid invoices that are over 30 days old (the maximum time allowed for payment under public contract regulations) , totalling £16.637m due to issues with implementation of Oracle,, please provide a breakdown of the proportion of these invoices (number and value) that are due to

- a. SMEs
- b. Birmingham based firms

Answer:

We do not hold invoice information within category of supplier that depicts whether companies are SMEs.

We do hold payment address information as provided on invoices. However, this will not recognise group companies or others that do have a Birmingham base but the payment address is outside of Birmingham.

We will need to export data from Oracle in order to filter information by address (specifically post code). We will follow up with a written response if we can readily undertake this activity.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL
CARE FROM COUNCILLOR MATT BENNETT**

“Invoices for care costs”

Question:

In each month since April 2022, how many service user who pay in part or in full for their care have not been invoiced on time by the council for these costs and what is the total and average amount owed from this backlog as of today?

Answer:

Finance officers advise that the figures require significant work to pull together and these cannot be produced in time for City Council but I will ensure they are provided to Cllr Bennett as soon as possible.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID PEARS

“Ombudsman Findings”

Question:

The Local Government Ombudsman has recently found against the Council in a case where a family were not offered a care home which did not require them to pay a top-up on care fees. This resulted in the Council having to refund the family the fees as well as make an additional time and trouble payment due to the difficulties they faced in complaining to the council about this to resolve the matter. What work has the council carried out to identify any other cases where families may have been incorrectly charged in this manner and how many such cases were found, at what cost?

Answer:

This case has its origins in 2007 and the legislation, processes and systems in relation to this area have changed significantly since then with the implementation of the Care Act.

The Adult Social Care services are often unable to identify cases where a family pays an additional amount over the contracted price, as often it is a private arrangement between the home and the family members.

There is an expectation that if family members have discussed finances and ‘top-ups’ with social workers it is recorded on the case file system and appropriate advice and support is provided. This will be monitored through the Adult Social Care monthly case file audits carried out by managers of social work teams. There will be a mandatory field within the system going forward to capture this information.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR DARIUS SANDHU

“Empty Council Homes”

Question:

How many Council Houses/flats etc. are currently empty and how many were empty on 1 April each year for the last 10 years?

Answer:

On 26th October 2022 there were 379 empty available Council dwellings. These are dwellings currently in the various stages of the Voids process e.g. just vacated, under repair, advertised etc.

The following table sets out the total number of available Council properties vacant on 1st April for the previous 10 years:

Year	Total
2021	416
2020	297
2019	537
2018	532
2017	408
2016	436
2015	631
2014	903
2013	532
2012	261

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR RICK PAYNE

“Empty In reach properties”

Question:

How many Inreach properties are currently empty and what has been the monthly vacancy rate for Inreach in each month since its launch?

Answer:

InReach currently has Embankment which is a 92 block apartment. As of

27th October 2022 there are no voids.

Below table shows from launch the number of void units per month per year.

Year	Month	Void units	Occupancy %	void %
2018	July	84	8.70%	91.30%
	August	65	29.35%	70.65%
	September	22	76.09%	23.91%
	October	5	94.57%	5.43%
	November	3	97.83%	3.26%
	December	5	94.57%	5.43%
2019	January	2	97.83%	2.17%
	February	4	95.65%	4.35%
	March	7	92.39%	7.61%
	April	10	89.13%	10.87%
	May	8	91.30%	8.70%
	June	9	90.22%	9.78%
	July	7	92.39%	7.61%
	August	4	95.65%	4.35%
	September	4	95.65%	4.35%
	October	6	93.48%	6.52%
	November	7	92.39%	7.61%
	December	10	89.13%	10.87%
2020	January	14	84.78%	15.22%
	February	14	84.78%	15.22%

	March	11	88.04%	11.96%
	April	17	81.52%	18.48%
	May	20	78.26%	21.74%
	June	17	81.52%	18.48%
	July	10	89.13%	10.87%
	August	6	93.48%	6.52%
	September	2	97.83%	2.17%
	October	3	96.74%	3.26%
	November	3	96.74%	3.26%
	December	4	95.65%	4.35%
2021	January	7	92.39%	7.61%
	February	7	92.39%	7.61%
	March	11	88.04%	11.96%
	April	6	93.48%	6.52%
	May	3	96.74%	3.26%
	June	4	95.65%	4.35%
	July	2	97.83%	2.17%
	August	1	98.91%	1.09%
	September	1	98.91%	1.09%
	October	0	100.00%	0.00%
	November	0	100.00%	0.00%
	December	0	100.00%	0.00%
2022	January	0	100.00%	0.00%
	February	0	100.00%	0.00%
	March	0	100.00%	0.00%
	April	0	100.00%	0.00%
	May	1	98.91%	1.09%
	June	1	98.91%	1.09%
	July	2	97.83%	2.17%
	August	2	97.83%	2.17%
	September	3	96.74%	3.26%

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND
HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR RON STORER**

“Athletes Village”

Question:

How many of the properties on the athletes village site are currently occupied, by tenure?

Answer:

Answer: None at present but the Perry Barr delivery Team is working closely with the Council's appointed Marketing Agent, Avison Young, have commenced early marketing of the First Homes Scheme with occupation of residents expected to begin by end of March 2023.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“Exempt accommodation providers”

Question:

How many properties does the council currently rent, either directly or via third parties, to exempt accommodation providers?

Answer:

The Council has five leased properties that are currently providing support to vulnerable adults in supported exempt accommodation. Four of these are non commissioned supported exempt accommodation and one is commissioned.

The Council are working towards ensuring that all new lease agreements will contain a clause which will expressly prohibit exempt accommodation use for any asset in the commercial portfolio.

Property Services are implementing a process with the Community Safety team aligned to the Supported Exempt Accommodation Partnership to share information between teams in relation to those properties currently known to be operating as exempt accommodation. A working group is being established which will meet on a monthly basis between Property Services and Community Safety to ensure this happens.

All lease agreements have been reviewed on all five properties and consideration is being given in respect of the terms of any lease renewals.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“Exempt accommodation properties”

Question:

How many properties have been sold by the council since 2012 that the council is aware are now being used as Exempt Accommodation?

Answer:

A total of 5205 right to buy house sales have been completed since 2012 (to 31 March 2022).

When properties are sold through the right to buy scheme, restrictions are applied which include when the property can initially be sold and living in the property as the buyer's principle home.

In view of the above, the council is not aware of any properties that have been sold being used as exempt accommodation.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS FROM COUNCILLOR IZZY KNOWLES

'Notice Boards'

Question:

What is the current policy regarding installation and use of noticeboards in the communal areas of council owned blocks of flats and / or sheltered / supported housing? Is it correct that notice boards are not allowed for health and safety reasons? If that is the case, please list the associated risk of having a noticeboard for use by council tenants.

Answer:

Notice boards are provided in the communal areas of our high-rise blocks and sheltered housing schemes. They contain important and useful information for residents including essential BCC services contact details, fire and other health and safety advice, seasonal and exceptional advice (e.g. Covid 19).

The boards are monitored and maintained by the local housing teams.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, COMMUNITY SAFETY, AND EQUALITIES FROM COUNCILLOR BRUCE LINES

“Gender identity training for council employees”

Question:

Please provide a breakdown of suppliers and costs for the delivery of any employee training on gender identify delivered in each of the last 5 years.

Answer:

Since 2019, the Council has commissioned a range of training opportunities focused upon equalities matters. The following have been identified as including content around gender identity:

2019/20

- Equality in the Workplace e learning supplied as part of the wider e learning catalogue from **Learning Pool**

Cost £0

2020/21

- Equality in the Workplace e learning supplied as part of the wider e learning catalogue from **Learning Pool**

Cost £0

- Unconscious Bias training for managers supplied by **Aspire Training**

Cost £6250

- LGBT+ e learning module created by **Dr Justin Varney**

Cost £0

Total annual cost **£6250**

2021/22

- Equality in the Workplace e learning supplied as part of the wider e learning catalogue from **Learning Pool**

Cost £0

- 6 x Unconscious Bias workshops for managers supplied by **Aspire Training**

Cost £6250

- 5 x Respect and Inclusion workshops for all employees supplied by **Steve Talbot Consultancy**

Cost £4000

- LGBT+ e learning module created by **Dr Justin Varney**

Cost £0

Total annual cost **£10,250**

2022/23

- Equality in the Workplace, Gender Identity, Harassment and Bullying, Anti Racism, Direct and Indirect Discrimination e learning supplied as part of an EDI e learning catalogue from **Learning Pool**

Cost £4200

- 6 x Unconscious Bias workshops for managers supplied by **Aspire Training**

Cost £6250

- 6 x Conscious Inclusion workshops for managers supplied by **Aspire Training**

Cost £6250

- 5 x Managing Conflict and Challenging Conversations workshops for all employees supplied by **Steve Talbot Consultancy**

Cost £4000

- LGBT+ e learning module created by **Dr Justin Varney**

Cost £0

Total annual cost **£20,700**

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“PwC Ukraine costs”

Question:

What is the total cost (including projected final costs) of engaging PwC for work on the Ukraine refugee schemes? Please included a breakdown of costs.

Answer:

The total cost to the Council of procuring PwC to finalise the development of a case management tool¹ was £330, 000. It was commissioned as a total fee and the work that PwC undertook built on substantial pro bono support they provided to help the council build a digital solution to capture, store and use data relating to Ukrainians guests and hosts, as well as support the Council’s compliance with Central Government requirements

The procured work included:

1. Finalising the development of a case management tool that is now used by the Council and its provider, Refugee Action, to track and manage work under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, which includes organising records for refugee guests and sponsors, case management and automating processes such as payments to sponsors.
2. Managing the transition of Council and Refugee Action users to the tool by conducting the relevant training and developing a suite of relevant training material to ensure that users can use the new tool.
3. Providing a level of ‘hyper care’ support after the tool went live which meant that they monitored, triaged and remedied issues and/or bugs that immediately arose.
4. Transferred knowledge and upskilled relevant areas of Council prior to their departure which has enabled the Council to continue to use, support and develop the tool.
5. Developed a final summary report that articulated key themes on the programme, an indicative implementation plan with a timeline and a subset of technology-enabled requirements.

PwC concluded their engagement towards the end of September 2022.

¹ [Homes for Ukraine: guidance for councils - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-guidance-for-councils)

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

‘City Burials’

Question:

Further to the Liberal Democrat Motion that was agreed in June, I welcome the changes that have been made to burials in the City which go some way to facilitating the needs of all faiths however I have to ask are further improvements planned and what are they?

Answer:

The important work to ensure that our Bereavement Services respond to the needs and wishes of Birmingham’s diverse communities and faith traditions has been underway for some time and in fact pre-dates the Council debate in June. Indeed, Councillor Baz may recall that resolution passed by Council specifically noted and welcomed the actions already taken by this administration.

We have continued to drive forward this programme of service improvement over the summer and autumn, delivering investment in our infrastructure and facilities, together with reforms to our customer service and support. Specific actions include:

- Opening a new Muslim Section in Quinton Cemetery. There has been indication that demand will be high to use this area, and burials in this section started from the day it opened on 26 September 2022.
- Evening Burials at Sutton New Hall: burials can take place until 6pm through the winter period at Sutton New Hall Cemetery, utilising additional lighting. This was previously only possible during the summer months where natural sunlight was available.
- Establishment of a Muslim Bereavement Steering Group. Chaired by myself, this meets monthly, bringing together representatives of the Muslim Burial Council and staff from Bereavement Services to ensure that we are addressing specific concerns raised by our Muslim communities.
- An Activities Manager has been commissioned to work closely with communities, volunteer groups, faith groups, friends’ groups and to assist with ongoing improvements and appropriate activities within our cemeteries. We have commissioned a single telephone number (0121 216 2000) and email address for all contacts. This has reduced missed contacts and complaints

against the service. We are also ensuring that the website is updated more frequently.

- Roadway repairs have already been undertaken in several of our cemeteries. Road repair works in other locations are on-going.
- Cremated remains sections have been extended in most cemeteries and there is a high demand for the use of these areas. Plans are in place for further extensions to ensure demand can be met.
- Shrouded burials are now accepted in concrete lined graves in Sutton New Hall Cemetery.

In addition, we are taking forward the following planned improvements:

- Extension of Kings Norton Cemetery to include burials of all faiths. Expected completion date September 2024. A pre-planning consultation day took place on site on Tuesday 27th September to consider views from community representatives and Funeral Directors prior to the development of the plan.
- An additional entrance to Sutton New Hall is being developed to prevent traffic congestion.
- Installation of drainage in undeveloped areas of Handsworth Cemetery to increase number of available graves.
- Rebuilding Yardley Crematorium, including installation of better gas emission technology and energy efficiency measures, together with refurbishment of the chapel.
- Capital Investment in Cemeteries: a report has been progressed to review the capital works in the cemeteries. Ongoing road and infrastructure maintenance programmes are being established.
- Friends of Handsworth Cemetery: a proposal to set up a Friends of Handsworth Cemetery is being organised by the Muslim Community Burial Council and progressed via our steering group.
- Communication: new webforms being created to make the service more efficient and streamlined. This supports the improvements of the new one number, one email centralised contact system.
- Burial Booking Service: we are working with the Registration Service to streamline the burial booking service. This is aimed at reducing the delay caused by the official processes.
- Recruitment: - a recruitment drive is underway. We have successfully recruited 3 staff and recruitment to a further 8 vacancies is in progress.
- An independent "discovery team" is working with Bereavement Services. The team is looking at the customer journey and establish where on-going improvements can be made to assist bereaved families.

We will continue to work in partnership with our diverse communities and faiths to ensure that our services are able to respond quickly, effectively and with sympathy and understanding to their needs, when they are dealing with the pain and grief of losing a loved one.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

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

“Street names policy”

Question:

Please provide a copy of the procedural guidance on identifying names deemed ‘unsuitable’ for use as street names referenced in Appendix C of the 11 October Cabinet report approving the new policy.

Answer:

The advice document is due to be published on BCC’s website on the Street Naming & Numbering web pages by 4 November 2022.

Councillor Morrall will be provided with a copy of the link as soon as it is live.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT FROM
COUNCILLOR COLIN GREEN**

‘School Streets’

Question:

What is the process for prioritising School Streets including the engagement with ward members?

Answer:

Schools in Birmingham wishing to become part of the School Streets programme are assessed and prioritised against criteria grouped under two elements: location, and commitment/engagement.

Consideration of whether the location is appropriate includes:

- Number of points of entry – this scheme is most suited to roads where there is little or no through road access, eg cul-de-sacs. Main arterial/distributor roads and roads used by bus services cannot be included.
- Extent to which surrounding streets can accommodate any displaced traffic/parking.
- Whether local infrastructure is in place to support alternative means of travel, eg walking & cycling routes, safe crossing points, cycle storage, etc.
- Availability of suitable ‘Park & Stride’ locations nearby.
- Any other traffic generators in the near vicinity which could impact on the scheme, eg shops, businesses, health centres, leisure facilities, etc.

Consideration of previous engagement and demonstration of commitment includes:

- Is the school signed up with and participating in Modeshift STARS?
- Have school travel surveys been completed recently?
- Previous activities or initiatives to encourage safer, greener, and healthier travel and to address problem parking at the school gate.
- Willingness of school to recruit volunteer marshals to staff road closures.
- Commitment from the school to promote and support the scheme.
- Support from school staff, parents, residents, and Ward Councillors.

Ward Councillors would be contacted by the team to seek their views on any new schools proposed to be added to the programme. Ward Councillors would also be contacted as part of the statutory consultation for any traffic orders being introduced in the delivery of School Streets.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT FROM
COUNCILLOR JON HUNT**

'Dropped Kerb'

Question:

Can I congratulate the cabinet member on the new style, permeable and green drop kerb I have just seen arrive in my ward. Will the cabinet member confirm whether these new green kerbs will be used when low-cost kerbs are offered to residents as part of road paving projects?

Answer:

The use of grass blocks (offering improved green space and sustainable drainage benefits) as part of dropped kerb works has been recently introduced following the development of a design and installation methodology by our Highways team.

Grass blocks will continue to be an option for surfaces on dropped kerbs where appropriate and there will be an ongoing review of the performance and maintenance implications of their use. However, I can confirm that, subject to any issues becoming evident as an outcome of that ongoing review, it is intended to extend the use of grass blocks on dropped kerbs when delivering the Council's programme of footway resurfacing works at locations where it is deemed appropriate.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT FROM
COUNCILLOR ZAKER CHOUDHRY**

'Blocked Drains'

Question:

Residents who report blocked drains are being told there are delays as long as 12 weeks. What steps are being taken to prioritise neighbourhoods with a high risk of flooding?

Answer:

The Council has a cleansing regime where all gullies are cleansed at least annually and they have information of known high risk areas which are susceptible to internal flooding.

Following any storm events and reported incidences, we proactively attend sites throughout the city to ensure that the affected gullies, and flooded areas, have been investigated and, if required, cleansed. The Council carries out around 114,500 gully cleansing operations each year to keep water flowing.

Any additional road sweeping or street cleansing following a storm event is managed and carried out by Street Scene. As there are already established flood action groups in high-risk areas, appropriate steps are taken by continued dialogue with the Flood Risk Management team and local flood wardens to escalate issues with other teams in the Council, Severn Trent Water and the Environment Agency.

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CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT FROM
COUNCILLOR IZZY KNOWLES**

'Leaf Clearance Programme'

Question:

When does the council begin its leaf clearance programme and how does it decide which roads to prioritise?'

Answer:

The leaf clearance work has already started. Additional dedicated crews have been deployed to clear the leaves from our streets. We work to a priority of tree lined roads where we know there are many broadleaf trees and historical flooding issues.

Our aim is to complete all the leaf clearance by mid-January 2023.

CITY COUNCIL – 1 NOVEMBER 2022

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT FROM
COUNCILLOR JULIEN PRITCHARD**

'Road Safety Schemes'

Question:

How many road locations in the city met the threshold for of 9 accidents per km in 3 years for road safety schemes in 2021-2022?

Answer:

The criteria for further investigation for potential inclusion in the road safety programme as set out in the Road Safety Strategy for Birmingham is as follows:

- 9 or more injury accidents in last 3 years or 3 accidents per 100m lengths; or
- 3 or more KSI accidents in last 3 years; or
- Greater than expected number of accidents involving vulnerable users; or
- Significant increase in accidents in last year.

It is not possible to provide an exact answer to the question because the 100m lengths are not pre-defined and sometimes apply to junctions including parts of numerous roads. Collision clusters can also overlap.

Once a “hot spot” has been identified, further work is required to determine whether there are any issues with the road layout or any patterns in terms of contributory factors that might be resolved by a road safety scheme. In many instances this is not the case. If a suitable scheme can be identified for delivery following assessment, a business case will be prepared and put forward for delivery as part of the rolling road safety programme.

There are currently 8 schemes in the 2021/22 road safety programme.

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF PLANNING COMMITTEE FROM
COUNCILLOR DEBORAH HARRIES**

‘Planning Permission – Standard Application Form’

Question:

Could the chair establish how many times the standard application form and the standard decision form for planning permissions has been redesigned in the last 12 months, setting out the dates when this has happened?

Answer:

The Planning Application form is a national standard form and hasn't been amended in the last 12 months. The standard decision notice is updated occasionally to reflect changes in legislation or guidance, but hasn't been redesigned in the last year.

