

# Public Document Pack



Agenda Item 10 – Part two questions to the Leader and Portfolio Holders together with respective answers.

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## COUNCIL

25 January 2022

### MEMBER QUESTION TIME – Part 2

#### Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12

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#### **39. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Could the Portfolio Holder for Healthy People and Places please provide an update on the Covid Hub team – how many people are there, where they are based, what they are doing and what are the future plans are?

#### **Response**

The Covid Hub is still operating from Margaret McMillan Tower and is due to close on 31 March 2022. Operating hours are 8am until 6pm Mon-Thurs, 8am-5.30pm Fri.

Staffing comprises a Covid Hub Manager, 4 Operations Managers, 3.5 Team Leaders and 30 FTE Covid Support Workers.

Duties include the Covid Task Force Team, supporting the vaccination centre at Broadway and at the various pop up locations as directed by NHS, and staff conducting welfare visits to homes.

Plans are in place for the transition of the current work into various parts of Bradford Council, Public Health and NHS. Thus the current Task Force work will fall under the remit of the new Task Force project.

Vaccination work will continue through the NHS and Rimmingtons Pharmacy.

#### **40. Councillor Geoff Winnard**

In light of the fact that difficulty accessing GP appointments continues to be a matter of real concern across the district, which risks the danger of serious undiagnosed health conditions, will the Portfolio Holder for Healthy People and Places make representations to the local CCG about the need to provide appropriate access to face to face GP appointments for those particularly older residents, who may be unable to use alternative methods of engagement?

#### **Response**

This was the subject of a detailed discussion at Health Scrutiny.

Data provided by the CCG who commission GP services shows that access to general practice is back to the way it was before the pandemic. In November 2021 appointments (approx. 400,000) were delivered at a higher volume than November 2019 (approx. 350,000) however GP Appointments Data shows approximately 42% of appointments were delivered remotely. NHS England has recommended a Total Triage model for General Practice which places some emphasis on remote

appointments, this has been established in the course of the pandemic. Practices are now challenged to establish an optimal blend of face-to-face appointments alongside remote appointments.

However, In December the Covid Vaccination Programme was prioritised. As such a significant proportion of capacity from GP services was released to support the Vaccination campaign. This will have had an impact on the volume of appointments for December and January and this will reinforce the view of the public that there are greater challenges accessing their General Practice. A large proportion of extended access evening and weekend provision was also re-purposed for the vaccination programme, which would have had a further impact on the number of out of core hours' provision.

The CCG recognise our concerns and can emphasise the need for practices to be vigilant in supporting access for older patients in our engagements with practices. They will continue to monitor Primary Care Access closely as we all progress through Covid recovery.

#### **41. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland**

Figures reported by the ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) show a “rapidly deteriorating situation in relation to social care for older and disabled people and for carers.” Their (ADASS) Rapid Survey shows that whilst Councils are delivering more care and support in people’s homes, people are waiting longer for assessments and reviews. In the light of this report can you inform members of Council either the Council’s response to both the Rapid Survey and the Spring Survey or confirm for our District a) How many people are currently awaiting social care assessments, care and support or reviews and if there has been an increase in the last three months compared to the figures for the last three years, b) How many people have been waiting for more than six months for each of the last three years c) How many people are waiting for a review of their existing care and support plans and how long have they been waiting and d)How many people have been offered care and support that they would not have chosen due to recruitment and retention issues?

#### **Response**

The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) conducted surveys across all councils in August and November this year gathering data on the care market and workforce. Bradford MDC responded to both surveys. Data submitted via the survey shows that:

- In November 2021 there were 4,324 people who were on a waiting list for assessment, with 2,133 people waiting over six months.
- In August 2021 there were 3,790 people waiting for an assessment, with 2,132 people waiting over six months.

(Please note that the data is inclusive of waiting lists of any kind and includes Deprivation Of Liberty Safeguarding Applications (DoLS) and Occupational Therapy.)

Our staff in hospitals are operating under the Discharge to Assess (DTA) Government guidance, which focuses on the “home first” and discharge to assess - enabling people to go home as soon as they do not need acute healthcare, assessing people out of the hospital and supporting them to recover and regain independence. As such, our teams are working in a collaborative way to ensure that people with support needs are being primarily discharged home with a support package wherever possible with BEST (In House Enablement Service) which is reviewed shortly after discharge and any ongoing support required is put into place and reviewed.

While people needing long term care follow a clear process for assessment and the establishment of an appropriate placement which is reviewed before transfer to await an annual care review. The survey gathered data on people in long-term support who had not had a review of their care plan in the previous 12 months. In November 2021 this figure stood at 2,507 compared to 2,132 in August 2021. There are currently 5,618 people receiving long-term adult social care support. The delay in annual care reviews is not unique to Bradford and is becoming a major challenge across the country - in general, this is the result of a combination of increasing demand, funding pressures, and increasing staffing vacancies.

Findings from the ADASS Winter Contingency Survey of all councils, published on 13 Jan 22, has shown that the great majority of councils are continuing to meet people’s core assessed needs but are asking people using services to accept that there may need to be flexibility in this, for example, changes in their usual staff, times of visits may differ, or visits may be shortened once core needs are met (82% of councils).

In Bradford, across the social work teams, we have 37 vacancies (20%). We are tackling this through use of agency staff and employing newly qualified social workers but these vacancies are putting additional demand and pressure on the remaining workforce. Team managers and duty teams across the department review waiting lists to prioritise cases on a daily basis with oversight from service managers.

At a local level, the department is taking a lead role in developing our response to these shortages:

- We have worked across the different teams to identify gaps and have developed a recruitment and retention strategy that includes a recruitment campaign, recruitment portal, and other activities that will help promote the wide range of roles required within the department – we are aiming to formally launch this strategy in shortly.
- Recruitment is currently ongoing to fill vacant posts via a rolling recruitment programme, with some short-term agency staff utilised until permanent posts can be filled.
- We are working closely with our independent care providers to understand their staffing gaps and pressure points and developing plans to support them to address the staffing shortfall issues. We are working with our regional NHS partners to channel further funding in to help boost wages and make the sector more competitive.

- We are also working with Skills for Care to implement a skills strategy for Bradford Care Services – this will help support the training and development needs of new recruits coming into the care sector while enhancing the skills sets of existing staff.

#### **42. Councillor Matt Edwards**

West Yorkshire Police have been dealing with multiple reports of anti-social vehicle use on the Euroway Industrial Estate – this is proving to be a significant burden on their resources in Bradford South. There is a small area of residential properties on Rockhill Lane where residents are having to suffer with significant late night disruption. Is the portfolio holder able to provide any additional council resources to tackle this issue?

#### **Response**

A problem-solving approach involving multi-agency input has been led by Neighbourhood Police Team with support from the Council's Community Safety and Neighbourhood Service. The Steerside Multi-Agency Partnership has also held a specific session in January to try to identify appropriate solutions for this site.

Initially, a site visit was conducted on 6th July 2021 at the request of Cllr Kausar Mukhtar, who had raised concerns about the issue previously, in which residents were invited with representatives from NPT, SET (both police), and Council - Ward Officer, Community Safety Partnership, Highways and Councillors for Tong Ward (all three).

Actions set at this point were:

1. Steerside to follow up on Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) work.
2. More signs to be erected for PSPO by Community Safety Partnership
3. No Access signs to be investigated by Highways.

The first two actions have been achieved and a second site visit was conducted on 7 September 2021. Those present were NPT, Ward officer, Highways, Community Safety Partnership and Cllr Edwards and Cllr Wainwright. It was reported that meets were getting smaller at this point. PSPO signs had been erected.

A further meeting has been arranged in early February with colleagues from Police, Council's Safer Communities, and CCTV to look at having CCTV installed in the area.

Highways officers are involved in ongoing discussions to look at the potential for funding traffic management measures at this location. A range of measures are being considered that could restrict access and ability to speed. Police colleagues are also liaising with partners in Leeds and Kirklees who have similar issues at sites in their district.

The following enforcement has taken place:

- 2 x drivers reported for Careless Driving and Racing on a public way. Both found guilty – adjournments for disqualifications.
- 1 x S59 Warning Issued. 1 x Reported for Failing to Furnish driver details. Awaiting court result.
- 1 x reported for Careless Driving and Racing on a public way. Adjourned for full court hearing.
- 1 x Reported for Failing to Furnish driver details. Adjourned for full hearing.
- 1 x Reported for Failing to Furnish driver details. Found guilty. Adjourned for disqualification hearing.
- 2 x Reported for Failing to Furnish driver details. Found guilty. 6 points + £228 fine / £660 fine.

In Addition to this, a small number of fines have been given out for breach of the Public Space Protection Order. The Council issues the fines and will continue to use the PSPO as a tactical option to help penalise anti-social use of vehicles at this site.

#### **43. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Can the Portfolio Holder provide an assurance that in 2022, the activity days held in parks for children will be better spread across the district as it was disappointing to see that none were held in Baildon ward from the 42 days on offer?

#### **Response**

The Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) will be holding park Fun Days in 2022. The intention is to hold one in each Ward across the Summer. As part of HAF planning Cllr Khan organised a meeting with all Councillors. The Officer Leading HAF and the Sports Lead was in attendance. This gave Councillors an opportunity to identify the best location in their Ward.

With regard to no events being held in Baildon ward to date, it should be noted that two events were held in Roberts Park which whilst just outside the Baildon Ward border is in very easy walking distance of the Coach Road area in Lower Baildon. The events aimed to prioritise areas with higher proportions of free school meals. Roberts Park is very accessible to many Baildon ward residents.

#### **44. Councillor Rebecca Poulsen**

Could the Portfolio Holder for Childrens' Services inform members of what incentives have been given consideration as part of a recruitment package to attract experienced Childrens' social workers to work for Bradford MDC?

#### **Response**

The Council has considered and progressed Job Evaluation, pay and grading for social workers, and continues to review remuneration levels for permanent staff and Agency workers. The total benefits package is conveyed as part of our attraction, recruitment and selection process. We have a comprehensive package of benefits

for our staff and this is included on the microsite and as part of our advertising campaigns. Payment of professional social work registration fees was agreed and payments were made in early January 2022 for the 30th November registration fees, and free car parking is in place as part of recruitment and retention offer. We are looking at further retention and attraction options as part of our workforce strategies and total rewards package.

A new 'Bring Heart' branding has been developed and in place since the end of November for our social work job adverts. This was done in consultation with the workforce. A new microsite Social Work isn't just a job - Bring Heart, Transform Lives ([bringheartbradford.co.uk](http://bringheartbradford.co.uk)) went live on 8 December 2021. The microsite contains videos and artwork from our staff and children from Laisterdyke, Star Academy, and information on our total reward and benefits package to provide those interested with a real feel of working in Bradford. A communications content plan is developed and has been signed off and is being implemented, making best use of banners, case studies, adverts, social media (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, twitter), and ambassadors programme launch with 12 week cycles, analysis and adjusted marketing. This includes a partnership with Community Care, BASW, and Jobs Go Public with online adverts, banners, jobs postings and magazine adverts to ensure a sustained presence and as part of the communications content plan will continue and expand upon this over coming weeks and months.

We have developed an ASYE Academy which has just launched. The academy will build upon our existing ASYE programme which has recently received positive feedback from the Skills for Care Quality Assurance visit. The Academy will offer newly qualified social workers a positive and strong induction into statutory children's social work, promoting the development of quality and consistency to ensure that children's outcomes are positive. The Social Work Academy is a way of ensuring that we are recruiting, retaining and developing outstanding social workers. It is proposed that intake takes place 3 times a year; the aspiration is to attract 50 NQSWs for each cohort which will enable effective individual and group learning. This will be supported by ongoing recruitment campaigns within the teaching partnership and beyond to maximise on interest and availability.

#### **45. Councillor Brendan Stubbs**

On the 21st December 2021, the Chancellor announced additional support for businesses impacted by the Omicron Wave. Below is quoted a part of that announcement.

"To support other businesses impacted by Omicron – such as those who supply the hospitality and leisure sectors – the government is also giving a more than £100 million boost to the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) fund for local authorities in England.

Local Authorities will have the discretion to allocate this funding to businesses most in need. The ARG top-up will be prioritised for those local authorities that have distributed most of their existing allocation. This is on top of the £250 million of previously allocated funding that remains with local authorities.



Can the portfolio holder provide details on how much of the previously allocated funds were still held by Bradford Council on December 21st 2021, The amount of additional funding from the £100 million was allocated to Bradford Council, how the combined funds have been used to support local businesses across the district and how much still remains unallocated in the Councils bank accounts?

## **Response**

As at 21 December the Council had agreed the allocation of the full £15,590,378 of Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding. This was committed to a range of grants and business support activity.

Expenditure on the scheme is currently £12,311,806.

Over 6,000 grant payments have been processed to date, supporting businesses of all sizes and across impacted sectors.

Grant schemes and business support activity delivered and currently underway utilising the ARG funding include –

- Grants to Business that were mandated to close during lockdown periods.
- Grants to suppliers to the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors impacted by restrictions.
- Grants to Taxi Drivers licenced in Bradford.
- Grants to Self-employed, Home based, mobile and freelance business in the impacted by restrictions.
- Grants to support hospitality businesses to trade outdoors during restrictions (Outdoor trading grant).
- Grant to support essential retailers impacted by significantly reduced footfall and community venues suffering from loss of rental income.
- Discretionary Restart grants to support business to reopen.
- VCS Support Grants to assist organisations to flex or expand their delivery to support local economic recovery.
- Discretionary Top-Up payments to supply chain businesses to support recovery.
- Business Support programmes – working with the three Business Improvement Districts.
- Business Support interventions for town centres and shopping areas.
- Carbon audits for VCS organisations providing specialist advice and support around carbon reduction initiatives.
- Subsidies for small businesses to join Membership organisations and access range of business support.

- Micro Business Support Scheme – supporting small high street businesses to pivot or improve their operations and deliver safely.

The additional Top-Up allocation provided by Government was £691,872, the actual money has only recently been received. This funding is to support those businesses impacted by the rise of the Omicron Variant. It will initially target those sectors included in the Government's Omicron Grant for hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses, providing grants to businesses without business rates accounts. Available funding will also enable support to be widened out to other impacted sectors, as detailed in the Government's ARG Guidance – Travel agents, tour operators, coach operators, gyms and sports businesses, personal care sector businesses.

A new application process opened w/c 7 February. Full detailed guidance and a link to the application form is provided on our grant webpage - <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/business/business-rates/covid-19-business-grants/>. Previous applicants to both the mandatory and discretionary grant schemes will not need to reapply and will be contacted directly by us if they are operating in the eligible sectors.

#### **46. Councillor Matt Edwards**

What is the status of plans for a truck rest stop in Bradford South and what action does the Council plan to take to assist residents – like those in Rook Lane in Dudley Hill - who are seeing their roads becoming “unofficial” rest stops and being subjected to round the clock disruption from HGVs parking for extended breaks outside their homes?

#### **Response**

A study into the need for, and feasibility of providing, a freight parking facility was carried out in 2017 by MDS Transmodel on behalf of the Council in response to the increase in the numbers of complaints from local residents who were affected by HGVs parking on streets overnight. The findings of this study were that facilities capable of accommodating 50-100 vehicles at any one time would be required to meet the existing needs of businesses in south Bradford and options for potential sites for such a facility were explored but not developed.

Multiple meetings with local ward members have taken place in this time, however we have not been able to secure funding to deliver this scheme.

In response to the concerns raised by residents and members an interim solution was considered involving the use of an experimental Traffic Regulation Order to introduce parking restrictions on affected streets. Ultimately it was not adopted due to member concerns about enforcement of the restrictions and the potential for the problem to relocate to other streets within south Bradford.

We continue to look at securing funding for a deliverable scheme and are working closely with WYCA to consider options.

#### **47. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm what Play in the Park events the climbing wall went to over the summer?

**Response**

All events were attended by the climbing tower except one at Hainworth Rec – which was not accessible. A further two events were cancelled on the morning of the event due to bad weather/safety concerns so no provision at all took place on these dates.

**48. Councillor Geoff Winnard**

Can the Portfolio Holder provide an update on the provision of Changing Places toilet facilities across the district - when will the Council be in a position to announce whether Bingley Town Council has been successful in its application for funding support towards the cost of building a new Changing Places Toilet?

**Response**

We have yet to receive information from Central Government as to whether the application for funding for Changing Places Toilets, of which Bingley Town Council was part, has been successful. The bid was submitted on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**49. Councillor Geoff Reid**

Is the provision of traffic signals at the junction of Moorside Road and Harrogate Road, Eccleshill, still on the agenda? If so, at which point in the construction of hundreds of houses on the Fagley Quarry site are they likely to appear?

**Response**

The signalisation of the junction of Harrogate Road and Moorside Road is a requirement of the signed S106 agreement for the development at Fagley Road and the scheme must be delivered before occupation of the 150th unit of Site 'A' (the Keepmoat/Moorside Road parcel of land).

**50. Councillor Sally Birch**

Could the Leader of the Council confirm whether a trans woman can be appointed to vacant council or council supported voluntary sector roles advertised as suitable for female only recruits and if not, how does this sit with the Council's preference for transgender people to be allowed to use single sex spaces?

**Response**

The Council does not have a specific policy on this, and encourages applicants from diverse backgrounds to all roles. We do include adverts on our website that are on behalf of other organisations, but we do not have any control over their employment policies and who they choose to appoint.

**51. Councillor Mike Pollard**

In 2015 the Council initiated a Non-Turf Pitches programme in partnership with the ECB, with the intention to provide recreational cricket opportunities for all. Apart from the site at Bradford Park Avenue, where responsibility for maintenance lies outside

the Council, the other 4 installed in the 2015 programme at Haworth Road, Hudson Avenue, Thornbury and Myra Shay, appear to be either unused, or by virtue of deterioration, unusable. What record of use does the Council have and what criterion has been satisfied to demonstrate any sensible value for money?

### **Response**

The facilities you mention are not unused or unusable. With the first set of ECB-funded 5 x NTPs installed at Myra Shay, Park Avenue Cricket Ground, Haworth Road Rec., Hudson Avenue and Woodhall Playing Fields, the latter two are being renovated this spring and all five will be fully operational moving forward. Naturally all sport and leisure facilities have periods where they need more or less maintenance and repairs and we want to maintain all facilities to a high standard.

Nine new sites have been identified with two Practice Net Facilities to be installed at Marley ACC in Keighley and Myra Shay Recreation Ground with seven NTPs to be installed at Highfield Recreation Ground Keighley, King George Vth Recreation Ground at Marley, Northcliffe Park, Peel Park, Wibsey Park, Avenue Road Recreation Ground and Horsfall Playing Fields.

They will provide the local communities, wider club and public recreational and informal cricketing opportunities in a non-traditional club environment. This will help to grow engagement and participation opportunities with groups currently underrepresented (e.g. women and girls and disability cricket).

### **52. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland**

Does the Portfolio Holder think that the current arrangements for scrutinising the work of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Mayor are sufficiently robust to give confidence to residents that the governments “levelling up” agenda will indeed work for Bradford?

### **Response**

At its meeting on Tuesday 16 February 2021, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered West Yorkshire Devolution and recommended that future updates be provided to the Committee. Officers from Bradford Council and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority were in attendance. Members of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee were also invited to that meeting.

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be inviting officers from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, along with the Mayor of West Yorkshire to attend a meeting of the Committee in the New Year, to scrutinise the work undertaken to date and the impact and outcomes that this has had for the residents of the Bradford District. As previously, members of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny will also be invited to this meeting.

In addition West Yorkshire Combined Authority have their own scrutiny arrangements across three new Scrutiny Committees and Bradford district elected members are widely represented on these committees.

### 53. Councillor Matt Edwards

In October, a survey by the insurer Admiral revealed Bradford was in the top 10 area in England with longer-term empty homes with more than 1,279 properties that have been empty for two or more years. Can the portfolio holder conform the breakdown of these properties by ward?

#### Response

The source of the figure quoted by Admiral is unknown and it does not correlate with any official figures that the council has provided as shown in the government's official records.

There is always more to do, but official figures demonstrate that we have made significant progress on long term empty homes (long term refers to properties empty for at least 6 months), which have been reduced by more than half. In October 2009 there were 7,302 long term empty properties, whereas in October 2021 there were 3,526 – a reduction of 3,776 (52%).

On an annual basis the Council provides a statistical return to the Government called the CTB1. This is produced in October. It contains multiple statistics relating to Council Tax, including figures relating to empty homes which are published and available publicly online.

Officers have therefore provided below a breakdown of longer term empty properties that have been empty for two years at ward level based on the most current information at the end of January 2022 from the Council's system relating to Council Tax and empty properties.

It should be noted that monthly figures for empty properties, including those for properties vacant for two years or more, do fluctuate due to the housing market, i.e. properties being returned to use and those reaching the two-year period.

Ward	Total
Baildon	10
Bingley	21
Bingley Rural	31
Bolton And Undercliffe	45
Bowling And Barkerend	61
Bradford Moor	74
City	206
Clayton And Fairweather Green	18
Craven	30
Eccleshill	17
Great Horton	60
Heaton	46
Idle And Thackley	22
Ilkley	28
Keighley Central	74

Keighley East	40
Keighley West	69
Little Horton	83
Manningham	97
Queensbury	27
Royds	32
Shipley	31
Thornton And Allerton	36
Toller	56
Tong	35
Wharfedale	10
Wibsey	31
Windhill And Wrose	20
Worth Valley	29
Wyke	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,361</b>

#### **54. Councillor David Heseltine**

Bingley Town Hall is looking very sorry for itself, external paint work is missing on many windows and the wood work is looking rotten or decayed, so can the Portfolio Holder confirm what work is planned to ensure the building's long term survival, before the damage is irreparable and we lose another of Bingley's iconic buildings?

#### **Response**

Bingley Town Hall has been utilised as offices for staff from Health & Wellbeing for some years, although the layout of the building doesn't readily lend itself to a modern office environment. At present the occupation is very limited with the majority of staff working from home. A relocation of those staff to Shipley is pending. In the meantime, we are reviewing the exterior condition of the property to ensure it is maintained to an appropriate standard. Members will be aware that Bingley is the focus for our Shipley constituency Levelling Up bid to Government when the criteria for this scheme are eventually announced by Government which could benefit the Town Hall. The property benefits from protection due to its Grade II listing status so will not be lost. Indeed, any future planned scheme will enhance and further protect this historic building.

#### **55. Councillor David Heseltine**

As The Prince of Wales Park Lodge is now vacant, can the Portfolio Holder provide assurance to Bingley residents that the building will be made secure and not left to fall into ruin and also confirm that when BMDC dispose of the building, a use sympathetic to the historic park is sought and that any funds from a sale are reinvested in the Park?

#### **Response**

I can assure the Residents of Bingley that the Prince of Wales Lodge will be made secure and that the building will be marketed and sold as soon as possible. It is the

intention that the proceeds of the sale will be reinvested into the Park for the benefit of the residents of Bingley and the wider community.

**56. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland**

Will the Leader join me in commending local people in Idle and Thackley ward and elsewhere who have fund-raised to enable the installation of defibrillators in public spaces. Will she then advise what plans does the Council have to help with the installation of defibrillators in community used buildings and spaces?

**Response**

Indeed we are grateful to communities who have stepped up to provide such valuable community facilities. So much so that we have been exploring supporting more communities to do likewise. The Council, through the Department of Place (Sport & Culture), has recently established a partnership with the Bradford Lions charity. The partnership will see the Council match-funding monies raised by the Lions to buy defibrillators. These will then be distributed by asking community based organisations to apply to host and maintain this equipment at sites that offer 24/7 access to the public. Yorkshire Ambulance Service will also provide free defibrillator training for host organisations.

**57. Councillor Matt Edwards**

In their response to the gov.uk petition "Limit the Sale and Use of Fireworks to Organisers of Licensed Displays Only" (<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/319891>), the government said it was going to engage with local councils to "understand the issues they face with regard to fireworks" – Did the government contact Bradford regarding this topic and if so what did Bradford Council submit as it's response?

**Response**

There has been no contact from Central Government concerning the petition or relating to the issues we face in the District with fireworks.

**58. Councillor Rebecca Poulsen**

Could the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport confirm what steps have been taken to reduce the environmental impact of long periods of temporary traffic lights on main roads such as Halifax Road, between Cross Roads and Ingrow, where wall works have taken years and traffic often sits idling at rush hour?

**Response**

Works are continually monitored when on site, and wherever possible traffic management is optimised to make sure delays are minimal.

Specifically, with regards to the named locations, these are structural walling schemes that require time for materials to cure and obtain required structural strengths. It is not possible – in the interests of safety and compliance with national

roadworks legislation – to employ other forms of traffic management than lane closures and employing traffic signals.

**59. Councillor Rebecca Poulsen**

Could the Leader of the Council confirm what input Elected Members have into the West Yorkshire Casualty Reduction Partnership and the work they do?

**Response**

All engagement between members and highways officers ultimately helps form the priorities and overall council work that feeds into the West Yorkshire Casualty Prevention Partnership. The West Yorkshire Casualty Prevention Partnership is a joint collaboration between the five West Yorkshire Districts and West Yorkshire Police. The group reports to the West Yorkshire Safer Roads Executive and above that is the Vision Zero Board (Chaired by the West Yorkshire Deputy Mayor and attended by Portfolio Holders from each of the 5 districts). If local Elected Members wish to discuss specific fixed and mobile camera issues (Either current installations or new proposed sites), they should contact Bradford's representative on the Partnership, Simon D'Vali (Principal Engineer for Highways North and District Road Safety lead).

**60. Councillor Riaz Ahmed**

Can the leader of council inform the chamber what role the council played in the restoration of electricity in the Bradford District after the power cuts caused by Storm Arwen.

**Response**

The Council's Emergency Management Team worked with Northern Powergrid and West Yorkshire Resilience Forum to clearly identify where the power outages were in the district and stayed in communication with Northern Powergrid to ensure that they prioritised restoration to elderly and vulnerable customers in the District. We have asked at a West Yorkshire level for a lessons learned exercise to improve the response Northern Powergrid make to any future large power outage, as the impact was across more than one district.

Several areas were affected including Denholme, Long Lee and Riddlesden. Cllr Caroline Firth was supported by the council's emergency management team to set up two food and rest shelters in local churches for residents in Keighley East who were without power for days. She also went door to door with council officers and volunteers offering support and hot water, with the most vulnerable delivered hot food. This work continued until Northern Powergrid was able to restore power. As a result Cllr Firth was also asked to take part in the lessons learned exercise.

**61. Councillor Kevin Warnes**

Will the Leader of Council please update us on actions being undertaken by the Council in response to the announcement in December of an additional £462.5 million for workforce retention and recruitment for the social care setting and,



specifically, update us on how the Council is acting to ensure that homecare staff in our district receive the higher pay that they need and deserve?

### **Response**

Bradford Council received £4,426,913 funding from the Workforce Recruitment and Retention Funds (WRRFs) launched by the Government in October 2021 and this funding has been 'passported' directly to our Care Home and CQC-registered Care Providers to be used for direct-to-staff incentives, to support staff and recognise the important work they do.

Workforce retention and recruitment of social care staff is our biggest challenge. Our home care workforce are valued and very important to enabling our health and care system strategy for keeping people 'happy, health and at home'. We welcome the government announcement of funding for adult social care recruitment and retention as part of the white paper 'People at the Heart of Care'. In Bradford the measures we are taking include:

- A commitment to uplift care fees to ensure that home care staff can be paid the national living wage. Last year we funded an above inflation uplift of 7.2% for home care. Proposals for 2022/23 would also give homecare agencies a greater inflationary increase to pass on to their staff. It remains our aim to pay at least the real living wage, which will be £9.90, rather than the National Living Wage of £9.50, from April 22. The Association of Adult Directors of Social Services are pushing government to support parity with NHS starting salaries for NHS Health Care Assistants which are around £11/hour. Only by having a proper realistic settlement for social care from Government can we pay people the wage they deserve and the wage they need to continue to support our health system.
- The West Yorkshire and Harrogate Integrated Care System (NHS) recognise the importance of home care workers and have provided funding to bring forward the NLW increase for social care staff in Bradford and across the WY area, from April 2022 to December 2021. That funding has been passported to providers to pay staff.
- We have a regular workforce meeting between the Bradford Care Association and Bradford Council, operational social care and commissioners, to work together collaboratively on measures to support recruitment and retention. This includes Skills House recruiting trainee workers, recruiting Kick Start candidates, offering placements for health and care students, and feeding into the Integrated One Workforce Board. This group is currently overseeing the development of a 3-5-year strategy, and action plan focussing on this issue, this work is being supported by Skills for Care, with whom we have strong links.

### **62. Councillor Kyle Green**

What plans did the council make to provide effective leaf clearance throughout the district and why have they been so slow to be implemented?

### **Response**

In terms of the sweeping schedules normal routes were suspended, as usual, from late October to January to concentrate on the leafy areas and hot spots. Each Area Constituency has two dedicated sweepers to do this work and an additional sweeper is normally hired to assist at the Bradford and Keighley depots. This year sweepers have not been available to hire due to the current national demand for vehicles and at Keighley this has been exacerbated with numerous breakdowns leaving machines off the road for intermittent periods and the Clean Teams having to clear by brush and shovel instead.

### **63. Councillor Kyle Green**

What is the process to change the name of a Ward, such as changing Ilkley ward to Ilkley and Ben Rhydding Ward, to better reflect the two fantastic towns that the ward covers?

#### **Response**

There is provision in law, outside of a formal review of electoral arrangements, to initiate a process proposing the change of a ward name. The local authority must take reasonable steps to conduct a consultation of appropriate persons on the proposed name and may, by resolution at a specially convened meeting, following consultation, change the ward name. The decision on the resolution must be decided by a majority of at least two thirds of the members voting on it.

A full review of the electoral arrangements for a number of local authorities, including the Bradford District area, will take place in the next few years, in accordance with legislation. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), an independent body responsible for determining the electoral arrangements of local authorities across England would usually recommend that the Council does not start the process for changing a ward name at this time, as it could be challenging and confusing if there is consultation taking place to change a specific ward name at around the same time, or shortly before, the start of the LGBCE consultation on all of the ward boundaries for the Bradford District area.

### **64. Councillor Kevin Warnes**

Will the Leader of Council agree to commit Bradford Council to setting up a district-wide domestic food waste collection scheme by April 2023, such as that already in operation in Calderdale, bearing in mind that food waste constitutes 20% of the contents of the average household bin?

#### **Response**

Waste Services are awaiting the announcement from DEFRA on “Consistent Collections” which will be introduced for 2023 onwards. We don’t currently know if it will be a fully segregated collection of food waste (most expensive option) or if it will be comingled with garden waste (least costly and preferred by processors). Trials will be planned once the announcement is made in order to minimise cost and impact to residents.

Once DEFRA make the announcement, a fully revised collection fleet, storage facility and in excess of 225,000 additional bins/caddies will be required for the district. This will involve huge costs and impacts to residents so we need to trial and plan this carefully.

**65. Councillor Kyle Green**

Could the Portfolio Holder confirm what plans the council has to introduce food waste collections in the district?

**Response**

Waste Services are awaiting the announcement from DEFRA on “Consistent Collections” which will be introduced for 2023 onwards. We don’t currently know if it will be a fully segregated collection of food waste (most expensive option) or if it will be comingled with garden waste (least costly and preferred by processors). Trials will be planned once the announcement is made in order to minimise cost and impact to residents.

Once DEFRA make the announcement, a fully revised collection fleet, storage facility and in excess of 225,000 additional bins/caddies will be required for the district. This will involve huge costs and impacts to residents so we need to trial and plan this carefully.

**66. Councillor Kyle Green**

Can the Leader of the Council advise on a ward by ward basis the amount of uncollected council tax that has been written off since 2015?

**Response**

The data below includes nearly 7 years’ worth of data.

It inevitably includes council tax outstanding for years previous to 2015. This means not all the monies below can be applied to the time period since 2015. Some of the council tax written off will have been raised in the years prior to 2015.

As a percentage of council tax collected this equates to 1.77%. In total Bradford Council collected £1.55 billion in council tax over this time period.

*Data As at 31st Dec 2021*

<b>BAILDON</b>	<b>£ 249,441</b>
<b>BINGLEY</b>	<b>£ 345,471</b>
<b>BINGLEY RURAL</b>	<b>£ 330,727</b>
<b>BOLTON AND UNDERCLIFFE</b>	<b>£ 804,166</b>
<b>BOWLING AND BARKEREND</b>	<b>£ 1,859,611</b>
<b>BRADFORD MOOR</b>	<b>£ 1,327,692</b>

<b>CITY</b>	<b>£ 4,088,838</b>
<b>CLAYTON AND FAIRWEATHER GREEN</b>	<b>£ 778,221</b>
<b>CRAVEN</b>	<b>£ 186,509</b>
<b>ECCLESHILL</b>	<b>£ 980,817</b>
<b>GREAT HORTON</b>	<b>£ 1,545,781</b>
<b>HEATON</b>	<b>£ 1,059,450</b>
<b>IDLE AND THACKLEY</b>	<b>£ 381,619</b>
<b>ILKLEY</b>	<b>£ 100,108</b>
<b>KEIGHLEY CENTRAL</b>	<b>£ 1,264,352</b>
<b>KEIGHLEY EAST</b>	<b>£ 602,302</b>
<b>KEIGHLEY WEST</b>	<b>£ 675,096</b>
<b>LITTLE HORTON</b>	<b>£ 1,734,085</b>
<b>MANNINGHAM</b>	<b>£ 1,666,343</b>
<b>QUEENSBURY</b>	<b>£ 471,884</b>
<b>ROYDS</b>	<b>£ 812,025</b>
<b>SHIPLEY</b>	<b>£ 469,836</b>
<b>THORNTON AND ALLERTON</b>	<b>£ 779,157</b>
<b>TOLLER</b>	<b>£ 1,267,469</b>
<b>TONG</b>	<b>£ 1,454,514</b>
<b>WHARFEDALE</b>	<b>£ 53,978</b>
<b>WIBSEY</b>	<b>£ 756,781</b>
<b>WINDHILL AND WROSE</b>	<b>£ 619,090</b>
<b>WORTH VALLEY</b>	<b>£ 156,483</b>
<b>WYKE</b>	<b>£ 614,777</b>

**67. Councillor Kevin Warnes**

Will the Leader of Council please instruct the Chief Executive to launch an immediate review of the Council's failure to properly tackle the endemic, mindless

graffiti that disfigures multiple pieces of street furniture and many civic spaces across the district?

### **Response**

On average across the year less than 1 graffiti case per day is reported from the public. Where the service is notified of graffiti the service will remove it within 24 hrs if offensive (sexist, racist or inflammatory) or 5 working days if not offensive. The Service Level Agreement is subject to land-ownership which means if it is private land there has to be permission from the land owner before we can carry out the work.

As well as handling public reports of graffiti, the team will also address reports coming from other internal services e.g. Parks and Warden staff though in these cases there may not be a formal record on the system as the team do not use electronic recording of all the work they undertake. However, in the near future we will be piloting the use of an app for the wardens in the Shipley Constituency to record instances of graffiti. It must be noted that graffiti team comprises of two people that also complete a number of other tasks such a jetting of war memorials, town or city centre locations and are involved in the process of removing abandoned vehicles.

### **68. Councillor Kyle Green**

Can the Portfolio Holder inform members why Lister Park playground is deserving of £650,000 pounds of funding investment while Ilkley Riverside Playground is due only £150,000 despite both being destination parks?

### **Response**

Ilkley is a beautiful part of our district, blessed with wonderful sites for outdoor leisure and child-friendly play, and we are pleased to be investing in the improvements to the Riverside Playground that we will all be delighted to see. It's my understanding that the project has been in development with extensive consultation for several years and includes the local community through the Friends of Riverside, which has included local ward members. A small focus group has been involved with the evaluation to ensure continuing local input. We are proud of our substantial investment in play areas across the district, especially in these times of national austerity, and we welcome the great work of the friends group.

Ilkley has also seen other significant investment from the council in the last two years on its leisure facilities which other areas have not seen. For example the council has invested £1.18m in Ilkley Lido.

The play area at Lister Park is the largest play facility in the district and the investment was made to replace the old play area that was built as part of the park's restoration more than two decades ago.

Unfortunately, we have to tailor the finite budget to maximise the impact over all the sites across the district. Where we have the possibility of joint funding, which

hopefully we will have at Riverside, it allows us to maximise the money allocated and bring additionality to what is available.

I'm sure you would agree it's especially important that we put our good intentions into action to tackle health inequalities, make this a child-friendly district and give all children the best start in life wherever they happen to live. This means ensuring that there are good facilities for all, including where there would otherwise be more limited opportunities for children to enjoy play and healthy outdoor lifestyles.

**69. Councillor Kyle Green**

Can the Leader of the Council confirm whether the council still intends to admit Adil Rashid and Jonny Bairstow to "The Roll of Honorary Freemen of Bradford"?

**Response**

An Extraordinary meeting of the Council took place on 14 Jan 2020 which resolved to admit Jonny Bairstow and Adil Rashid to the Roll of Honorary Freemen of the City. Plans to hold a ceremony and civic reception to honour the cricketers have been hampered initially by lockdown in 2020 and subsequent Covid restrictions on public gatherings. Now that Covid restrictions have been lifted plans can now be made in liaison with the players, YCCC and the ECB to admit the players to the Roll of Honorary Freemen of the City. This also has to fit around the players heavy sporting calendars which cannot be underestimated.

**70. Councillor Kevin Warnes**

Will the Leader of Council act to ensure that the Council's budget process includes some form of carbon budgeting from the 2022-2023 financial year onwards?

**Response**

The council has set an organisational carbon budget since 2009/10 with annual carbon emissions reporting published on our website and the pathway to 2038 locked into the CBMDC carbon emissions Key Performance Indicator. This KPI is aiming towards net zero and effectively halves our annual carbon emissions every five years.

**71. Councillor Debbie Davies**

All members of the Council recently received a circular letter with an attachment from a campaigning organisation, which they had brought into City Hall, presuming we would pick them up, or that they would be sent through internal post. However, they were posted out to Councillors' home addresses at a cost £270 in postage, so would the Leader of Council ask officers to find a more cost-effective way to distribute such mail to us?

**Response**

The reprographics unit based at Birksland includes pigeon holes for Councillors' post. They are used for sending out Council agendas and minutes and other key Council documents to Councillors. Correspondence to councillors is not generally

opened and therefore council officers don't filter or censor the content of what is being sent to councillors.

## **72. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Could the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport confirm when the cut down street lights will be replaced in areas not due to get the new LED lighting until 2023?

### **Response**

All emergency cut down street lights will be replaced with new columns and temporary luminaires. It is anticipated all outstanding cut down assets will be replaced by mid-summer.

The priority replacement batches are scheduled to be complete by the first week in March. Priority asset replacement was determined by the criteria of clustered adjacent lighting, lone lights and footpath lighting, regardless of ward area. Once all priority assets have been replaced, the contractor will progress to replacing all other cut downs. Due to the turbulent supply chains and Covid impacts we are working with short term programmes. The order by which the non-priority columns are to be replaced will be determined by the contractor on the basis of efficiency. The rolling short term programme of these works will be published on the council website (approximately two months in advance). Whilst it is important to replace cut down columns, it is vital the contractor is also continuing with the luminaire LED upgrades across the wards, to ensure the energy savings are met at key dates to enable the financial viability of the project.

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/highways/the-smart-street-lighting-project/>

## **73. Councillor Kevin Warnes**

Will the Leader of Council launch an immediate review of the Council's stated policy that 'residents are not permitted to access household waste recycling centres on foot for safety reasons', bearing in mind that some residents will wish to do so and that appropriate safety arrangements could – and should - be made to facilitate this?

### **Response**

We do now allow residents who live close to our HWRC sites to enter on foot or bike in limited and managed circumstances. Anyone, not local would be declined pedestrian access as this has usually been found to be because they have parked up and are walking in to avoid the queue.

The Council's Environmental Permit does not allow residents to park outside, unload their waste and walk in. This is also a Health and Safety risk and would cause parking issues for local residents were it allowed. Pedestrian access on the sites is also very limited as due to multiple vehicles movements, there is a high probability of an incident taking place without risk management.

#### **74. Councillor Debbie Davies**

How many Council vacancies are there currently available by department and is there any succession planning in place for “key officer” posts?

##### **Response**

An annual data cleanse exercise of vacancies is currently underway, and is not yet complete therefore, it is not possible to provide this data currently. Leavers accounted for 14% of the Council workforce in the 12 months to 1 February 2022, Starters accounted for 17% of the Council workforce in the same period.

Council Services are working with HR to identify those key roles within individual service areas where there are workforce recruitment, retention or succession concerns or vacancy rates remain high and identify bespoke strategies and work streams that can be implemented to fill these vacancies and ensure that appropriate succession planning is in place where potholders leave the organisation.

For certain roles we are part of wider workforce strategy steering groups, working with universities, and considering best use of Kickstart, apprenticeship and graduate placements, rolling recruitment and bespoke attraction and retention strategies. HR will continue to work with departments to ensure that senior managers are constantly reviewing and assessing their vacancies, have workforce attraction, retention and succession plans in place and ensure that specific tailored work is being conducted wherever possible.

#### **75. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Could the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport confirm how much gross and net income is generated by the NCP car park in the city centre?

##### **Response**

The NCP car park, Hall Ings, was acquired by the Council in March 2017, NCP held a lease with annual rent increases linked to the CPI, and as such were in line with original forecasts. The annual income figures for the NCP and the budgeted income figure to finance the Prudential Borrowing Costs are detailed below:

	Actual	Budget	Surplus
17/18	£301k	£236k	£65k
18/19	£324k	£238k	£86k
19/20	£333k	£242k	£91k
20/21	£345k	£244k	£101k

#### **76. Councillor Kevin Warnes**



What is the Leader of Council doing to address the crippling under-staffing currently being experienced by the Network Resilience team and the Warden Service, and which is severely undermining the quality of service that the Council is able to deliver to our communities?

### **Response**

It needs to be noted that there is a shortage of skills in our country at the moment to do all the jobs that we usually rely on. In addition to this you have ten years plus of austerity in local government and during that time there has been low or no pay awards to local government staff in contrast to other sectors. All of this means that local authorities are struggling to recruit across a range of posts. The Council's Network Resilience team perform many roles managing and coordinating the smooth operation of the highway network. This team have been extremely busy during the pandemic carrying out their day-to-day duties in addition to working to install measures to support social distancing in our town and village centres, co-ordinate a major increase in roadworks by statutory undertakers across the district as well as enforcing contraventions of highway law.

This continuing upturn in workload has meant that a restructure of this team - to increase staff resources - was an essential and necessary response by managers in the service to address resource pressures. I can confirm that a restructure has now been agreed in relation to key posts within the Network Resilience team and that the service is now in the process of recruiting staff to these new positions with a fully staff structure planned to be in place by the end of April 2022.

With regards to the Warden service, there are a fixed number of Neighbourhood Wardens deployed to each of the 5 area based teams the service has flexibility and as such Neighbourhood Wardens can be deployed to support other areas when the need arises. Examples of this include the Tour De France, demonstrations, Covid community response and days of action. In addition we have implemented the use of mobile technology that allows Wardens to deal with requests for service whilst on patrol, minimising the amount of time in the back office and ensuring Wardens remain visible and available in the community for longer periods of time.

Wardens patrol plans are regularly reviewed to ensure they are relevant and appropriate to the area. Ward officers also have an input into their Warden deployment plan to ensure the community engagement needs and any other emerging needs for each area are met.

We have recently refreshed and implemented a new training program for Neighbourhood Wardens to ensure they are up to date and equipped with the skills and knowledge required to undertake their role effectively.

The above measures ensure that the use of Neighbourhood Warden resources are used as effectively and efficiently as possible.

### **77. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Could the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport confirm whether the contractor appointed two years ago for the £17.3m improvement programme for

Forster Square station will still be working on this project given that there has been a two-year delay and what is the completion date for this project?

**Response**

Yes. As the scheme is further developed an agreed completion date will be published though we currently anticipate it will be completed 2024-25.

**78. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Now that the short-lived bus lane on Leeds Road, from the A650 to the City Centre has been quietly removed, could the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport confirm what traffic surveys and other feasibility measures were carried out before its introduction, as it seems obvious to anybody that it would lead to traffic hold ups and safety concerns on major routes?

**Response**

The decision to introduce bus lanes on Leeds Road between Bridge Street and the A650 was made following representations from bus operators who provided evidence of delays being experienced by their services on this route caused by general traffic around the vicinity of the Broadway shopping centre. Prior to its introduction the Council's traffic signals team reviewed the operation of the signals at both the Bridge Street and A650 junctions to see if it would be possible to alleviate this situation through adjusting the phasing and timing of signals – this was not found to be possible.

The temporary removal of both the inbound and outbound bus lanes in November was carried out in response to a significantly increased level of traffic using this route to access city centre car parks (NCP and Broadway) by visitors to Bradford city centre in the run up to the Christmas period, particularly around dates of civic events. The changes to the highway network under the Transforming Cities Fund programme will ultimately see this section of Leeds Road removed from the bus network as bus routes are reassigned to other roads in order to avoid the pedestrian areas which are to be created on Bridge Street and Hall Ings.

**79. Councillor Kevin Warnes**

Will the Leader of Council liaise with the Canal and River Trust (CRT) to ensure that the long-overdue upgrade of the Leeds-Liverpool canal between Shipley and Apperley Bridge starts as promised in February (next month), and that the CRT also carries out improvement works along the badly dilapidated and graffiti-strewn stretch of towpath running between Shipley and Saltaire?

**Response**

Only short sections of the towpath along the Leeds- Liverpool Canal between Shipley and Apperley Bridge are public rights of way, access along the majority of this section is by permission of the Canals and Rivers Trust (CRT) and the responsibility for repair and maintenance is theirs. The Council has limited influence over their work programmes, however officers from the Countryside and Rights of Way and Highways teams have been liaising with CRT on the proposed works for

some time and CRT announced recently that construction work started on 28<sup>th</sup> February and will be ongoing until August. Alternative routes are being put in place.

**80. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm why it was necessary for children to sign up to the Library's Reading Challenge over the summer in order to access free activities such as ZooLab?

**Response**

Sadly experience tells us that families sometimes book several events at several libraries and then don't always turn up. Events are expensive to provide and the Service is limited to the number they can provide. Therefore linking them to the summer reading challenge means that we can link them to the reading habit and not just another free session that they may or may not turn up to.

Not all our summer events require signing up to the Summer Reading Challenge. In-house events and drop-in events can be equally enjoyed by library card holders and non-library members. And bookings for larger events can be taken for children not doing the Challenge if space allows or they turn up on the day and there is space available.

**81. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Can the Portfolio Holder confirm the sum of the budget for the maintenance of benches, whether the budget differs if they are in a park setting or elsewhere and how is the budget split across the district?

**Response**

There are no funds allocated specifically for seating or bench maintenance. Any replacement benches or repairs to such have to be funded from respective 'constituency maintenance' revenue budgets (£25,000 for Highways and £25,000 for Parks). In addition, memorial benches in parks are maintained by the person who made the purchase.

**82. Councillor David Heseltine**

As there has demonstrably been a significant increase in the costs of key construction projects in the district, can the Leader of the Council provide a list of currently approved projects with the original and updated project costs.

**Response**

The construction industry has seen substantial price increases globally over the past 18 months, caused by the Covid 19 pandemic, giving rise to material shortages, resulting in delays in delivery and increase in costs, please see attached table of current schemes under construction, or recently completed.

**83. Councillor David Heseltine**

What is the budget per annum allocated for inspection and maintenance / care of roadside trees and how many is the Council responsible for?

**Response**

The Trees & Woodland Service has an overall annual budget provision of £359,300 for managing its individual trees and woodland estate with an establishment of 10.5 FTE. Number of plotted trees in total is 32,327: 20,478 highway and 11,849 other Council trees. Actual tree work spend at the end of January 2022 was in the region of £240k but not all of it was for highways works. Allocated budget for Arboriculture is £83,800, £65k of which is for highway tree works. Government austerity has restricted any increase in this budget in recent years.

**84. Councillor David Heseltine**

As many café / bar businesses are still in recovery mode would the leader agree that extending the free pavement license would be a practical way of this Council supporting businesses in the district?

**Response**

The Council fully recognise the impact which is being felt by the hospitality trade within the district as they continue to suffer from the impact of Covid19. The impact of social distancing restrictions on cafes and bars is why the decision to delay implementation of the café licence charge agreed in the 2019 budget was postponed during the height of the pandemic. We will continue support this vital sector of our economy by confirming that the implementation of this policy will further be delayed until September 2022.

**85. Councillor David Heseltine**

Can the Leader of the Council provide a list of Council owned properties (including land) in Bingley Ward which have been sold over the last 15 years, the return realised by these and how it was reinvested in the Ward, along with an up to date list of the various types of properties which are owned by Bradford Council in Bingley Ward and their current use?

**Response**

Please see attached spreadsheet identifying all assets the Council holds in Bingley Ward, and also spreadsheet of all freehold disposals over the past 15 years. Capital receipts as a whole go towards funding the overall council wide capital programme rather than being ring fenced to particular projects, in line with accounting requirements etc, thereby reducing the council's requirement for prudential borrowing. This is standard practice across all authorities, as the member is well aware. The data shows that most of the capital receipts from properties in Bingley were realised under a Conservative administration and dealt with in the same way as they are now. However, please note that more recently, the sale of Priestthorpe Annexe was undertaken on behalf of Council acting as trustees and the proceeds from this sale were returned to the Trust.

**86. Councillor Rebecca Whittaker**

The A629 road between Shipley to Silsden is covered in rubbish and looks unsightly. How can Bradford Council be serious in pursuing the title 'City of Culture' when its main routes are so unkempt? What is being done by the Council to keep on top of the street cleaning and stop the littering in the first place?

### **Response**

Officers are aware of the litter problem on the A629. This is an extremely busy road with heavy traffic travelling at speed. Is it not possible to deal with individual issues as they arise without coning off areas and disrupting traffic flow.

The Council plans litter and detritus removal, grass cutting, gully cleaning and any highway repair and maintenance well in advance in order to provide a safe working environment. This includes relevant permissions to cone off lanes. There is an annual timetable to clean and maintain this stretch of highway 2 or 3 times a year depending on which part of the carriageway. This also takes a large number of staff from the Keighley and Shipley cleansing teams away from their normal duties. The service is reviewing the current frequency to see if it can be increased within current budget levels. In terms of enforcement we are currently reviewing litter hotspots along the A629 and well as other major roads across the District to look for suitable locations to deploy litter enforcement cameras.

Due to new legislation introduced in 2019 the registered keeper of a vehicle can be held responsible for litter deposited from a vehicle. To date 150 fines have been issued under this legislation.

### **87. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Parkrun is a very successful movement encouraging and supporting people of all ages and abilities to participate for free in running and walking regularly in local parks across the country however its success in numbers (often several hundred people, some of whom travel from afar) means facilities such as toilets and refreshments are necessary – what support does the Council provide for such facilities?

### **Response**

Parkruns are a brilliant initiative and it's great to see lots of people in our district taking part. The Parks team are very happy to support Parkrun by providing a well-maintained park to run in, however there is unfortunately no budget for the provision of public toilets. We have had conversations with the Parkrun team in the past about this issue and we'd be happy to speak with them again if they would like to discuss it further. Café facilities for runners, where provided, are run by businesses independent of the Council.

### **88. Councillor Rebecca Poulsen**

Can the Leader of the Council confirm whether the authority missed out on any potential funds from any tranches of Additional Restrictions Grant Funding, due to failure to provide evidence that funds received in previous tranches had been provided to local businesses, or was allocated thereto and can she provide details of

how many applications remain outstanding and the average duration between application receipt and funds provision to applicants?

### **Response**

When the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding was announced in November 2020, it was with a spend deadline of 31 March 2022. Similar to many Local Authorities, Bradford's grants and business support schemes were developed in line with this timeframe. This approach has been supported by the FSB.

A further announcement of top-up allocations came in March 2021 and it was confirmed in April that the top-up would only be available to those Local Authorities that had fully defrayed their initial allocations by the end of June 2021 (later moved to July 2021). We estimate that if the government had decided to support Bradford businesses without the short notice criteria the additional allocation would have seen a further £2.8million in support.

Like others, the Council had been working on opportunities to maximise the impact of the funding and to lever in additional resources to support the district's recovery. Within certain criteria set by government, Local Authorities were provided with the discretion to determine the most effective use of this funding to support the district's businesses and local economy.

Commitments had been made to deliver activity in line with the original timeframe. In addition, the schedule for grant application processes plus the appraisal of an extremely high volume of applications could not be accelerated to achieve expenditure of 100% of the initial allocation by the newly imposed deadlines.

The ARG has been used to support as many impacted businesses as possible and with the district's large number of microbusinesses there have been extremely high volumes of applications received across multiple application rounds.

To date, in excess of 6,000 grant awards have been paid to businesses of all sizes across those sectors hardest hit by the pandemic.

This latest and final ARG application round is aimed at supporting business most impacted by the COVID-19 Omicron variant. This includes the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sector businesses (not included under the Omicron Hospitality and leisure Grant for rate payers) in addition to the hospitality supply chain, travel, and events and exhibitions sectors, gyms and personal care sector.

Business in the targeted sectors who have already received LRSG or ARG grants been contacted and advised of their potential eligibility and how to access the funding. Any business that has not previously applied for either the mandatory or discretionary Covid grant support can apply via an online application process. Full guidance and details of how to apply have been published on the Council's website. The window for applications closes 24 February 2022.

It is not possible to provide volumes of outstanding applications as this will depend on the responses received to the current processes. Unfortunately, it is not possible

to assess the average processing time for applications. The length of time taken to assess and award payments has been determined by a number of factors including -

- The volume of applications received. In excess of 8,500 applications have been triaged and directed to the correct funding scheme or rejected. All ARG applications have received detailed appraisals and have been put through the full Government required assurance checks. The majority of ARG applicants were not rate paying businesses and were unknown to the Council. Due diligence checks have been undertaken on all of these organisations to ensure eligibility and to remove the opportunity for fraudulent claims.
- A high number of applicants applied under schemes they were not eligible for. A large number of these applications were held “live” so that they could be considered under subsequent funding rounds. This meant that applicants did not need to reapply but it did mean there could be several months lag between applying and becoming eligible for assistance.
- Applicants not providing evidence as requested has been a major impact on processing time. Accessing documents required from business in order to determine eligibility has been challenging.

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