

Public Document Pack



COUNCIL – TUESDAY 23 JANUARY 2024

This document contains the following –

Agenda Item 9 – Report by the Leader of Council

Agenda Item 10 – Questions to the Leader and Portfolio holder – Questions together with respective Answers

9. REPORT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (Standing Order 11A) 1 - 2

A written report by the Leader of Council giving an update on key issues will be circulated before the start of the meeting. There shall be a period of up to 15 minutes during which any Member of Council may ask the Leader of the Council (or a Member of the Council nominated by the Leader) a question on any matter arising out of the written report.

10. MEMBER QUESTION TIME (Standing Order 12) 3 - 22

To deal with supplementary questions arising from the attached questions of which written notice has been given.

Notes:

- (i) *Answers to written questions shall be circulated at the commencement of the meeting.*
- (ii) *The Lord Mayor will have regard to the list of questions and the political composition of the Council in calling on Members to put their supplementary question to the Leader of Council and Portfolio Holders.*
- (iii) *A period of up to 30 minutes shall be available for supplementary questions to Members of the Executive.*

1. Councillor Alex Mitchell

Would the leader be surprised to learn that even Conservative MPs in leafy suburbs, like Danny Kruger, are admitting that the Tory Government is leaving the country in a worse state than they found it. Up and down the country it is ordinary people who continue to pay the price for ongoing austerity to local councils. Bradford Council has had to find £350m through cuts and savings in 14 years of austerity. Residents of Queensbury are rightly sick of the Tory cuts to their frontline services including the proposed closure of the tip at Ford Hill. Whilst the opposition locally are powerless to help and can only point the finger. What more can be done to compel this government to do the right thing, restore fair local funding to Bradford Council to protect vital services for the most vulnerable in society and keep open much loved local facilities in wards like Queensbury?

2. Councillor Mike Pollard

Can the Leader of Council explain why, as soon as it became patently clear, as long ago as July last year, that there was no plausible route to presenting a balanced Revenue Budget for 2024/25 (even including whatever positive adjustments to the Council's usable reserves position might at that time have been

thought feasible), was the sensible proactive decision to lodge a request with DLUHC for Exceptional Financial Support not taken at that time?

3. Councillor Caroline Whitaker

Can the portfolio holder please reassure residents in Steeton and Silsden that the long-awaited construction of the bridge over the A629 between Silsden and Steeton is still going ahead as planned?

4. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

As part of the plan to achieve financial sustainability there is a proposal to close and dispose of Ingleborough Hall Outdoor Centre and the transition of bookings to Buckden House and the enabling of Respite and Short Breaks to support cost avoidance of the growing financial pressure being experienced in the Children and Families Trust to provide Short Breaks and holiday respite provision. Notwithstanding the serious detriment to children in the district which the closure of Ingleborough Hall represents can the Portfolio Holder explain to Council what financial provision is being made to ensure that the facilities at Buckden are fully accessible to all?

5. Councillor Alex Mitchell

Will the portfolio holder for culture join me in congratulating the wonderful Black Dyke Band on their national trophy.

6. Councillor Ralph Berry

Can the Portfolio holder advise how many vulnerable people have been placed in Bradford rented accommodation by other local authorities, principally from the south, seeking to discharge their duties under the homeless persons legislation following in the last year and what impact this is having on Bradford's budget.

7. Councillor Ralph Berry

Can the Portfolio holder please advise how many Bradford families have required re housing as part of Child in Need assessments in the last 6 months and at what cost.

8. Councillor Liz Rowe

Is it true that our district's Tory MPs refused to lobby their Ministers to support the Bradford Children and Families Trust in getting the

funding it needs to provide children's social care services this year and next?

9. Councillor Andrew Loy

Would the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport please provide usage figures and running costs for individual Waste Recycling Centres across the district for the past five municipal years?

10. Councillor Ian Parsons

In the light of the recent legislation could it be confirmed that the Dog Warden service has enough resources to meet an expected rise in demand; also are plans in place to inform our constituents where they can flag up any concerns about the behaviour of dangerous dogs?

11. Councillor Ian Parsons

Eccleshill Library is a well-used and much loved resource for the people of Eccleshill. Given that the library is one of the most used libraries in the district, could it be confirmed that this will be considered in any review that is due to take place?

12. Councillor Martin Love

At the meeting of Full Council in October a motion was passed supporting an asset disposal plan to help towards alleviating our terrible financial situation. Can the Leader of Council tell us when elected members will have sight of the list of assets being considered for disposal in their respective wards?

13. Councillor Beverley Mullaney

Would the leader join me in thanking Christa Ackroyd, the City of Culture Trust and the volunteers for all their hard work to secure the Bronte Birthplace as an asset of historical interest for the benefit of our residents across the district and to promote the history and talent of the Bronte Sisters to visitors nationally and beyond.

14. Councillor Caroline Firth

Re-opening the Skipton-Colne train line would be a boost to the economy of Keighley and the whole Aire Valley. Can the Portfolio Holder provide an update on the campaign to get this vital stretch of rail infrastructure reopened?

15. Councillor Allison Coates

Further to the Mayor of London's December 2023 announcement of the councils in the running to host the London Borough of Culture

2025, which will be held across two separate London Boroughs, coupled with the launch on 13 January 2024 of “Our Year”, the Wakefield MDC led and WYCA supported, year-long celebration of the District’s “culture and creativity”, does the Leader of Bradford Council share my concerns that these events may somewhat undermine Bradford Council’s aspirations for Bradford’s year as the 2025 City of Culture to boost visitor numbers and create investment opportunities in the district?

16. Councillor Nazam Azam

With the positive news that the NEC is hoping to open Bradford Live this autumn, can the portfolio holder give any further updates at this stage?

17. Councillor Alun Griffiths

Proposals to reduce the access to Household Waste Sites will inevitably lead to an increase in fly-tipping. What consideration has been given to the impact of this on existing hot spots such as Ainsbury Avenue in Idle and Thackley? Do the financial assumptions include the additional costs of increased demand for removal of fly-tipping?

18. Councillor Aneela Ahmed

Can I have an update on when the works will be carried out to get the Interchange fixed and back to normal operations?

19. Councillor Tariq Hussain

Obviously we knew that a project of this scope and ambition would cause some disruption but we all eagerly look forward to more progress with the Transforming Cities works in the city centre, can the portfolio holder give a progress update including when disruption to road and bus routes will be reduced?

20. Councillor Aneela Ahmed

Research by the UCL Institute of Health Equity has found that a million people in England would have lived longer if they had experienced the same death rates as the wealthiest 10% of the country. In other words, poverty and inequality is literally shortening people’s lives in this country. Can the portfolio holder for healthy people and places outline the things we are investing in with partners to try and tackle or mitigate health inequalities in light of these shocking statistics?

21. Councillor Debbie Davies

Could the Leader of the Council confirm the amounts of unpaid Council Tax per ward, for each of the last 5 years?

22. Councillor Matt Edwards

Despite previous responses to our questions regarding HGV traffic on Mill Carr Hill Road in Oakenshaw, there is still a significant number of HGVs trying to access the road up to Bierley and getting stuck – resulting in considerable disruption to residents. Will the portfolio holder and Highways Department tell us what they can do to address this issue?

23. Councillor Mohammed Shafiq

It's a frightening prospect that the government won't renew the Household Support Fund, which will take away £11m of support for some of the district's most vulnerable families. Will the leader set out what support the council and our partners provide for families on the breadline?

24. Councillor Malcolm Slater

The application to re-open Horn Crag Quarry, which was rejected last year by Bradford Council, is now going to appeal. Can the Portfolio Holder outline the reasons planners rejected the application and provide more information on the appeal and any comment on the strength of our position?

25. Councillor Mohammed Shafiq

The Chief Medical Officer has issued guidelines saying that young people between the age of 5 and 18 should aim to do a least 60 minutes exercise a day. Can the Portfolio Holder advise what work is going on to make sure Bradford district children are able to meet this target?

26. Councillor Paul Godwin

Rivers campaigner Feargal Sharkey has warned residents in areas hit by flooding that in the UK "flood water is invariably massively contaminated with sewage", with sewage networks unable to cope with periods of heavy rainfall. Does the leader join me in calling on the flooding minister, Robbie Moore, to take action on this horrendous state of affairs that the people of Keighley face as a result of his department's policies.

27. Councillor Bob Felstead

In light of the Council's oft stated desire to improve the rail connectivity of the Bradford District, would the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport please clarify why the Council and / or the West Yorkshire Combined Authority have not chosen to exercise Compulsory Purchase powers to secure ownership of the Wortley Curve section of the former railway route that connected the Wakefield to Leeds line to the Bradford to Leeds line, in order protect the option to once again allow trains to travel

from Bradford to Wakefield and beyond without having to pass through Leeds Station?

28. Councillor Mohsin Hussain

Please can you tell me what support is available to start-up businesses in the Bradford district if people are thinking about going down this route?

29. Councillor Aneela Ahmed

What are we doing to reduce road traffic accidents in Bradford district?

30. Councillor Anna Watson

Shipley Station is one of the key gateways into the Bradford District. However, the land around it - owned by Network Rail - is strewn with litter. The underpass is often flooded and is dark and dingy. Will the Council leader let us know how the Council is working with Network Rail and Northern to clean up our railway estate so that our railway stations are welcoming and safe for local rail users and visitors to the District?

31. Councillor Brendan Stubbs

As part of the Budget proposals a substantial disposal of assets is outlined including a review of Leisure services. Can the leader explain in relation to Eccleshill Library and Eccleshill Pool, if the Labour Group are going to support the disposal, will they give active consideration and support to Community Asset Transfers, the creation of a Leisure Trust or alternative models that will preserve the service for local residents or is the plan simply to sell to the highest bidder?

32. Councillor Debbie Davies

Baildon's Ian Clough car park currently costs £2 to park in all day (Mon-Sat 8am-6pm) and yet the budget proposal is for this to increase to £1 per hour – you must realise that people working in the centre are not going to pay £50 per week to do so – has any assessment been made that this could actually lead to a loss of income to the Council and more issues with people parking on residential streets as well as hitting local businesses again as people with their own transport can drive and park for free at larger shopping centres and supermarkets?

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Leader's Report

January 2024

Bradford Bus Interchange

To be clear the closure of the Bus Interchange is hugely inconvenient for residents and bus operators at a time when the City of Bradford is in the middle of the biggest regeneration programme the city has seen in decades. I have asked WYCA for an update on the current situation so that I could report it to Full Council. All the information I have is derived from WYCA. If there are any questions which I don't have the response to I will of course take them back to WYCA and get them answered.

Additionally I have asked for a report to be prepared for the West Yorkshire Transport Committee to review next Monday. This is a cross party committee and they will all have the opportunity to get answers to any questions they may have.

WYCA advise me that on 22nd December a piece of concrete (20 cm x 50 cm) fell into the underground car park underneath the Bus Interchange. WYCA closed the car park for public safety and alternative parking arrangements were made for users. Further inspections took place as a result and in view of the heavy rainfall which could be putting a strain on the interchange internal drainage system, a decision was made on 4th January that as well as the closure of the car park the whole Bus Interchange should be closed as well.

Work has been ongoing on the bus facility since an £8.5m business case was approved by the Combined Authority in December 2021 to improve the resilience of the bus station and reduce the adverse impacts associated with the age of the asset, which has been in operation since 1974. That work at the interchange included the commissioning of survey work and the findings had informed the work undertaken at the Interchange. These works have now been halted. The bus station is an unusual structure, with buses operating across an elevated area, which is supported by a continuous concrete slab above a cavity, which has served as a basement car park for adjacent businesses.

The CA have been challenged in engaging the right level of surveyor expertise to carry out a full inspection because of the national RAAC issue. This means that every surveyor with expertise in concrete is already fully engaged in other work at this present time. I have asked whether the Bus Interchange has RAAC and have been advised that it does not. However with the passing years water could have got into the structure. Only a full surveyor report will be able to properly ascertain if this theory could be correct. To do this survey significant works will have to be undertaken to get into the core structure of the bus station, which may involve taking up surfacing for example.

Further public information was therefore issued on Friday 19 January to confirm that the bus station will remain closed for at least the next two months, so as to allow time for the structure as a whole to be examined and for a full remediation plan to be developed looking at all options.

Regarding passenger usage, an emergency plan was instigated overnight on 4th January, enabling WYCA to maintain bus operations by directing passengers to alternative stops principally along Hall Ings and Nelson Street. This plan has been improved since the first day of operation by establishing the Jacobs Well car park as a temporary bus layover area, installing portacabin rest areas for staff, further pedestrian signage, a temporary information and travelshop facility within the rail station and regular customer information updates.

WYCA and Bradford Council teams have liaised daily on performance and we have maintained a daily stand-up call with bus operators.

This group has worked on the longer closure period, so as to identify what further passenger and traffic management measures should be established to improve the performance of the temporary arrangements. The explicit aim in carrying out this work is to:

- Protect public safety in the area;
- Manage traffic in the Hall Ings/Nelson Street/Bridge Street/Market Street area, so as to safeguard the completion of the ongoing TCF works and removal of the former NCP car park;
- Support general congestion management in the city centre; and
- Establish a facility that can be managed in the interests of passengers, bus network performance and the city centre as a whole.

WYCA have apologised for the inconvenienced caused to the travelling public and given me their commitment that all senior staff are working to resolve this issue as soon as possible. I will provide more updates as and when I have them.

Budget Consultation launched

On 11th January the Council's budget consultation launched where £40 million of cuts were announced over three years. We have had a good response so far to the consultation and I would encourage everyone in the district to engage with the process. At the same time the Council is negotiating with DLUHC to apply for Exceptional Financial Support so that the Council and the Children's Trust remain financially viable. The Council will have to change how it operates to reduce its expenditure substantially to eliminate the £120 million structural gap that now exists because of the increase in social care costs. 87% of the council's projected spend this year against the budget we set in February 2023 will be spent on Children's and Adults Social Care. I have tasked the Chief Executive with developing a transformation plan to reduce the size and shape of the council over the next 4 to 5 years to fit the reduced funding we will have now.

There is a huge amount of lobbying being done cross party with Government to secure more investment in all councils, not just Bradford Council. Sigoma, the LGA, the Yorkshire Leaders' Board and this week the County Councils Network (predominantly a Conservative Council Leaders' organisation) have all written to Government asking for action in the face of rising costs. Decisions on our own council funding is subject to agreement with DLUHC and has to be taken in time for council budget setting.

New bus services in Bradford district due to the Mayor's Bus Service Improvement Plan

We were delighted that the West Yorkshire Mayor has invested in additional bus services as well as the £2 fare. This means that the district has benefitted from significant investment in superbus schemes. The Aireline number 60 service, which runs between Keighley and Leeds has been increased to every 20 minutes between Leeds and Shipley. The K7 route which runs between Keighley and Oakworth now has a service every 12 minutes and the K2/K3 route which runs between Keighley and Braithwaite now has a service every ten minutes.

As of December 2023, the improvements to these services have had a positive impact on local bus use, with passenger numbers on the 'Aireline' service up by 28 per cent, on the K7 route up by 23 per cent and an increase of 21 per cent on the K2/K3 route compared to Spring 2023. The other local Keighley services which had the £1 flat fare have also seen passenger numbers increase by 5 per cent.

COUNCIL

Tuesday 23 January 2024

MEMBER QUESTION TIME – PART 1

Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12

1. Councillor Alex Mitchell

Would the leader be surprised to learn that even Conservative MPs in leafy suburbs, like Danny Kruger, are admitting that the Tory Government is leaving the country in a worse state than they found it. Up and down the country it is ordinary people who continue to pay the price for ongoing austerity to local councils. Bradford Council has had to find £350m through cuts and savings in 14 years of austerity. Residents of Queensbury are rightly sick of the Tory cuts to their frontline services including the proposed closure of the tip at Ford Hill. Whilst the opposition locally are powerless to help and can only point the finger. What more can be done to compel this government to do the right thing, restore fair local funding to Bradford Council to protect vital services for the most vulnerable in society and keep open much loved local facilities in wards like Queensbury?

Response

No, I'm not surprised that even in the leafy glades they are complaining about the Government as their failures are being felt everywhere with councils of all types right across the country under huge financial pressure, including Tory run counties like Kent and Hampshire. The local government funding model is evidently broken. Before Tory austerity, the government used to fund two-thirds of Bradford Council's budget through the Revenue Support Grant but that position is now reversed with two-thirds having to come from council resources. Demand for our services is going up, inflation has been soaring and the number of people in the Bradford district is increasing while our resources are shrinking.

Successive years of government cuts, followed by the inflation and cost of living crisis and rapidly rising demands for social care services, has left structural funding gaps for councils across the country. The government's answer so far has been to tell councils to increase council tax and use reserves. However the income generated by increasing council tax comes nowhere near closing the gap that was created by the government cuts, hence councils everywhere are forced to close services as well as increase council tax. Council services have therefore been closed on a massive scale in the UK since 2010.

In Bradford we've already made cuts and savings totalling more than £350 million since 2010 while working hard to protect frontline services. But the need to meet rising demands for services with ever reducing resources inevitably gets more difficult year on year. Frankly none of us want to make these reductions to services but unfortunately we are left in an incredibly difficult position due to this systemic underfunding of councils. We will do everything we can to mitigate the

impact of the government cuts and we will continue to lobby government for a fairer funding deal for all our residents whilst we transform and further reduce the council to meet this challenge.

2. Councillor Mike Pollard

Can the Leader of Council explain why, as soon as it became patently clear, as long ago as July last year, that there was no plausible route to presenting a balanced Revenue Budget for 2024/25 (even including whatever positive adjustments to the Council's usable reserves position might at that time have been thought feasible), was the sensible proactive decision to lodge a request with DLUHC for Exceptional Financial Support not taken at that time?

Response

Senior officers have been in ongoing liaison with DLUHC about the Council's financial challenges over the last year, and DLUHC and the DfE have been aware of the Council's financial position.

The appropriate time to submit an exceptional financial support request was when the Council had identified the quantum of savings and asset disposals that it could deliver.

DLUHC's decision making for Bradford and other councils will only happen in February 2024 after the Final Local Government Settlement.

The EFS submission is in line with DLUHC's required timescales.

3. Councillor Caroline Whitaker

Can the portfolio holder please reassure residents in Steeton and Silsden that the long-awaited construction of the bridge over the A629 between Silsden and Steeton is still going ahead as planned?

Response

This project remains very much a priority for us. The Steeton and Silsden crossing project was granted a small amount of initial funding in 2017 to develop an Outline Business Case (OBC) and it was only last year when full funding was granted by the government as part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme which is administered by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and goes through the Combined Authority's Assurance Framework.

Work on developing the Outline Business Case (OBC) for this project now has to be revisited to align with the output requirements of the CRSTS funding and recent policies such as LTN 1/20. This means the scope has to be increased to consider active travel access to and from any crossing.

The project remains on track for completion within the CRSTS programme timescales of 2027.

4. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

As part of the plan to achieve financial sustainability there is a proposal to close and dispose of Ingleborough Hall Outdoor Centre and the transition of bookings to Buckden House and the enabling of Respite and Short Breaks to support cost avoidance of the growing financial pressure being experienced in the Children and Families Trust to provide Short Breaks and holiday respite provision. Notwithstanding the serious detriment to children in the district which the closure of Ingleborough Hall represents can the Portfolio Holder explain to Council what financial provision is being made to ensure that the facilities at Buckden are fully accessible to all?

Response

The Outdoor Education Centres (Ingleborough Hall and Buckden House) operate as traded services. Collectively they are operating at a deficit. The proposal to close Ingleborough and move all bookings to Buckden House, will ensure that the centre covers all its costs from trading, and does not rely on council funding for day-to-day operation. The Outdoor Education facilities have always been open to all, with schools and other groups bringing children to participate in an outdoor education experience. Operating a fully traded service from Buckden would ensure that children continue to benefit from this opportunity for years to come.

5. Councillor Alex Mitchell

Will the portfolio holder for culture join me in congratulating the wonderful Black Dyke Band on their national trophy.

Response

Black Dyke Band are not only a Bradford treasure but surely a national treasure, with wide international influence. Winning the prestigious National Brass Band Championships held at the iconic Royal Albert Hall in 2023 has truly affirmed this Bradford Brass Band firmly on the cultural map. We are immensely proud of what the band have achieved, they are an asset to Queensbury and an integral part of Bradford's cultural landscape. The Council's Small Arts, Culture & Heritage Grant scheme awarded the band £1,500 in February 2023 as a contribution towards their competition costs – a clear example of how the grants have enabled cultural brilliance within our communities and across the district.

Congratulations to all the members of Black Dyke Band.

6. Councillor Ralph Berry

Can the Portfolio holder advise how many vulnerable people have been placed in Bradford rented accommodation by other local authorities, principally from the south, seeking to discharge their duties under the homeless persons legislation following in the last year and what impact this is having on Bradford's budget.

Response

Bradford Council has received notifications from London councils regarding four out-of-borough housing placements in 2023. This marks a significant decrease in

recent years where, as an example, there were 78 in 2018 which was the highest number of notifications received by Bradford.

There must be clear reasons to move a vulnerable household out of area and Local Government Authority (LGA) guidance states that the placing authority must liaise with the host authority in advance of any placement being made, to ensure the suitability of the placement, appropriate sharing of information with key agencies, and the capacity and availability of necessary services.

In recent years Bradford Council has led on updating LGA guidance and liaised with London Authorities to ensure any boroughs placing people outside their area only do so as a last resort and follow the notification process.

It is important to note that while the financial impact on housing's budget was minimal other areas such as Education or Children's Services may have incurred costs which are not quantified.

7. Councillor Ralph Berry

Can the Portfolio holder please advise how many Bradford families have required re housing as part of Child in Need assessments in the last 6 months and at what cost.

Response

The need to safeguard and protect vulnerable children is our highest priority. Ensuring this, results in additional, significant and unavoidable financial cost. The council has a statutory duty under the Children Act to carry out an assessment of a child in need to determine what services are required to support the child. This includes in certain circumstances a statutory duty to provide accommodation. For privacy and data protection purposes, specific information is not collected in relation to children accommodated as a result of a Child in Need Assessment, so the specific cost is not gathered in the way the councillor has requested.

8. Councillor Liz Rowe

Is it true that our district's Tory MPs refused to lobby their Ministers to support the Bradford Children and Families Trust in getting the funding it needs to provide children's social care services this year and next?

Response

The Department for Education has provided special "safety valve" funding totalling around £1 billion to more than 30 councils who have needed to fill funding gaps in their SEND provision. The Bradford Children and Families Trust and the council has therefore asked for a similar principle to be applied by the DfE to children's social care services in our district. The Trust and council strongly believes this is necessary given the vital importance of the service for the most vulnerable children in the district and there is an imperative to secure the improvements made by the Trust at this crucial early time in its development.

I wrote to the district's MPs seeking their support for this request to government. The three Labour MPs for Bradford were supportive. Unfortunately it is the case that one of the district's Conservative MPs didn't reply and the other replied without committing to support the Trust by lobbying Ministers.

The Children and Families Trust is making strong early progress, they have a well respected team who are delivering the improvements we all need to see. They have robust challenge and support from the council and they are led by a government appointed board with a government appointed commissioner overseeing their improvement plan. They are experts who have told us and told government what funding they need to continue their vital work.

9. Councillor Andrew Loy

Would the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport please provide usage figures and running costs for individual Waste Recycling Centres across the district for the past five municipal years?

Response

This response is being provided by the Portfolio Holder for Healthy People & Places. The running costs for HWRCs are all coded to one budget and not individually. The annual total running costs for Bradford's eight HWRCs are:

- 2018/19 £1.62m
- 2019/20 £1.90m
- 2020/21 £2.14m
- 2021/22 £2.04m
- 2022/23 £2.35m

Note: All costs exclude waste disposal and material processing which is currently an additional £2.5m per year. The Council's financial accounting process allocates an average cost per site.

The costs include staffing, premises costs, supplies and services, income, transport and machinery.

Tonnes per site 2023/24	Tonnes per year	Tonnes per week (average)	Tonnes per day (average)
Midland Road	8,049	155	22
Bowling Back Lane	5,949	114	16
Dowley Gap	5,545	107	15
Royd Ings Keighley	4,890	94	13

Dealburn Road	4,271	82	12
Sugden End	3,456	66	9
Ford Hill	3,385	65	9
Golden Butts	2,984	57	8

10. Councillor Ian Parsons

In the light of the recent legislation could it be confirmed that the Dog Warden service has enough resources to meet an expected rise in demand; also are plans in place to inform our constituents where they can flag up any concerns about the behaviour of dangerous dogs?

Response

The change in the legislation is an amendment to the Dangerous Dogs Act and the first element of the change came into force on the 31 December, with further restrictions to be introduced from the 1 February. From that date it will be an offence to own an XL Bully dog unless the owner holds a certificate of exemption. As the first date approached the dog warden service saw a number of this type of breed being abandoned, so consequently had to deal with them as strays. This incurs a cost to the Council and this trend has continued as the 1 February date approaches. The numbers of such cases have been manageable to date, but the practicalities of handling the dogs can be considerable for both the wardens and our kennelling partners.

The ongoing impact of this demand is being monitored as there is anecdotal national evidence that there are large numbers of XL Bully's that have yet to be the subject of requests for exemption and may consequently be abandoned. From 1 February, our colleagues at West Yorkshire Police will take on the statutory responsibility for contraventions of the amended law, but any abandoned dogs will remain the responsibility of the Council to deal with.

There has been significant national and local press coverage of the changes in the law alongside numerous online articles. The Council complaints portal on our website and scripting for our contact centre teams will reflect the change in the law to guide and advise our customers.

11. Councillor Ian Parsons

Eccleshill Library is a well-used and much loved resource for the people of Eccleshill. Given that the library is one of the most used libraries in the district, could it be confirmed that this will be considered in any review that is due to take place?

Response

Yes, the review will include the performance and use of all libraries alongside community need and other factors.

12. Councillor Martin Love

At the meeting of Full Council in October a motion was passed supporting an asset disposal plan to help towards alleviating our terrible financial situation. Can the Leader of Council tell us when elected members will have sight of the list of assets being considered for disposal in their respective wards?

Response

The Property Asset Disposals Programme which will detail a list of assets being put forward for evaluation for disposal together with their locations will be considered by the Executive at an upcoming meeting, currently planned for March subject to the evaluation work being completed.

13. Councillor Beverley Mullaney

Would the leader join me in thanking Christa Ackroyd, the City of Culture Trust and the volunteers for all their hard work to secure the Bronte Birthplace as an asset of historical interest for the benefit of our residents across the district and to promote the history and talent of the Bronte Sisters to visitors nationally and beyond.

Response

I was very pleased to see that the Bronte Birthplace Ltd had been successful in its application for grant funding which together with other funding already raised by volunteers, will be sufficient to purchase the birthplace of the Bronte sisters. The building will now be preserved as a lasting tribute to the Brontes and I am delighted to congratulate Christa Ackroyd, colleagues working for the Bradford Culture Company and all of the volunteers who have worked so hard to secure the building for future generations.

14. Councillor Caroline Firth

Re-opening the Skipton-Colne train line would be a boost to the economy of Keighley and the whole Aire Valley. Can the Portfolio Holder provide an update on the campaign to get this vital stretch of rail infrastructure reopened?

Response

The Council is acutely aware that the re-opening of the Skipton-Colne railway line would bring considerable dividends for Keighley and the Aire Valley, as well as the District as a whole. I am also a strong proponent of this scheme. Last year, Cllr Hinchcliffe and Mayor Tracy Brabin wrote to the Rail Minister to advocate for the re-opening, but the response from the Minister did not indicate that his Department viewed the scheme positively, nor was he committed to further development of the project. The Council and WYCA continue to engage with SELRAP and Lancashire County Council on this matter, as we understand an initial feasibility study undertaken by the government shows a positive business case for the scheme. Despite this, the government are refusing to progress the project further and are also refusing to share the report with anyone. I attended a meeting recently on this topic and pushed for further advocacy. We will continue

with these efforts and to push government to share the feasibility study so we can understand the business case better.

15. Councillor Allison Coates

Further to the Mayor of London's December 2023 announcement of the councils in the running to host the London Borough of Culture 2025, which will be held across two separate London Boroughs, coupled with the launch on 13 January 2024 of "Our Year", the Wakefield MDC led and WYCA supported, year-long celebration of the District's "culture and creativity", does the Leader of Bradford Council share my concerns that these events may somewhat undermine Bradford Council's aspirations for Bradford's year as the 2025 City of Culture to boost visitor numbers and create investment opportunities in the district?

Response

West Yorkshire's application for a Local Visitor Enterprise Partnership (LVEP) and subsequent West Yorkshire Destination Management Plan (draft) recognises the uniqueness and distinctiveness of UK City of Culture 2025 designation and specifically states, "it is widely accepted that cultural activities are underway in the build up to Bradford UK City of Culture 2025. A series of events right across West Yorkshire in 2023 (Kirklees Year of Music and Leeds 2023) and 2024 (Calderdale Year of Culture and Our Year – Wakefield 2024) will showcase, West Yorkshire's exceptional cultural offer.

Celebrating culture and heritage is important in creating the conditions for economic growth and so it is understandable that councils wish to maximise the impact of culture to benefit their communities. However, Bradford district is in a uniquely strong position to generate investment and growth due to its designation as UK City of Culture 2025. The accolade is the only award that is designated every four years on a national basis by an esteemed judging panel. The award of UK City of Culture 2025 brings with it significant external funding, with an estimated £40million of additional resources being levered directly into the district's economy. No other award secures the same opportunities to showcase the district on national TV and media, nor attract the same level of additional visitors. During 2025 alone, an estimated 3.3m additional visitors will generate direct expenditure into the local economy of £140m and provide an extra 190,000 overnight stays. UK City of Culture designation during 2025 provides us with the opportunity to bring together our comprehensive cultural and regeneration programmes to maximise the opportunities for investment and growth and I am confident that it will prove highly successful in doing so.

16. Councillor Nazam Azam

With the positive news that the NEC is hoping to open Bradford Live this autumn, can the portfolio holder give any further updates at this stage?

Response

The various works to redevelop the venue are going well. The venue is scheduled to open in the autumn, although an exact date has yet to be confirmed.

The project celebrated a significant milestone last week as the first shows of the launch season were announced by the NEC Group and tickets went on sale. We understand that while these may be the first shows announced they are not the opening acts, and over the coming weeks and months many more events will be announced, including original artists and shows. This is an extremely exciting time for the district and like everyone else we're eagerly awaiting the next announcements.

17. Councillor Alun Griffiths

Proposals to reduce the access to Household Waste Sites will inevitably lead to an increase in fly-tipping. What consideration has been given to the impact of this on existing hot spots such as Ainsbury Avenue in Idle and Thackley? Do the financial assumptions include the additional costs of increased demand for removal of fly-tipping?

Response

There is no data to suggest that residents are or will fly-tip in lieu of using available HWRCs. Fly-tipping tends to be from commercial origin and the Council will continue to use enforcement and prosecution avenues, along with cost recovery from landowners where fly-tips are removed from private land. The 2024-25 budget also included proposals to increase the penalty charges applied to people caught fly-tipping and littering.

18. Councillor Aneela Ahmed

Can I have an update on when the works will be carried out to get the Interchange fixed and back to normal operations?

Response

The Combined Authority is the organisation responsible for the Bradford Interchange city centre bus station. Officers from the Combined Authority took the decision to close Bradford Interchange bus station after some damage was discovered.

Contractors began work onsite on 12th January to establish the extent of the damage and what remedial works are required before it can be safely reopened. It is anticipated that these surveys could take several weeks to complete and the bus station will remain closed throughout this period.

Officers at the Combined Authority have stood-up an emergency response team which interfaces daily with Council officers. They are now developing plans for a temporary bus station solution to limit disruption for passengers, operators and the city centre during this time. Bradford Council is providing comprehensive operational and strategic support to The Combined Authority who are prioritising

efforts to minimise disruption to the transformational city centre modernisation projects currently underway in the city centre.

19. Councillor Tariq Hussain

Obviously we knew that a project of this scope and ambition would cause some disruption but we all eagerly look forward to more progress with the Transforming Cities works in the city centre, can the portfolio holder give a progress update including when disruption to road and bus routes will be reduced?

Response

Progress on the first of the Transforming Cities Fund project (City Centre Cycling and Walking) is continuing to progress at pace and is moving towards its second stage of delivery. From 17 March the works will move to the pedestrianisation of the city centre core, with bus services and general traffic being relocated onto the surrounding highway network which is currently being modified. The work in the city centre area is expected to take the remainder of 2024 to complete.

Independent of this scheme, work on the Bradford Interchange station access project - which includes the demolition of the former NCP car park - is due to commence this month. However, the work programme for this project is currently being reviewed to take full consideration of the recent issues at Bradford Interchange.

Finally, the advance statutory undertakers' diversion works on Thornton Road are due to commence later this month and continue through to April 2024 when then main construction of the West Bradford Cycle Superhighway scheme commences. Again the first phase of this project is expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

In terms of general traffic disruption associated with the Transforming Cities Fund projects this is likely to persist through 2024 as different sections of the highway network are being worked upon. Officers are expending significant efforts to ensure that any disruption is kept to an absolute minimum. However, with the recent decamp of bus services from the Interchange forcing buses to use alternative on-street bus stops for layover, and driver rest periods, the network is experiencing increased disruption. As the Interchange is an evolving situation we are unable to provide a definitive indication as to when this additional general traffic disruption will ease.

20. Councillor Aneela Ahmed

Research by the UCL Institute of Health Equity has found that a million people in England would have lived longer if they had experienced the same death rates as the wealthiest 10% of the country. In other words, poverty and inequality is literally shortening people's lives in this country. Can the portfolio holder for healthy people and places outline the things we are investing in with partners to try and tackle or mitigate health inequalities in light of these shocking statistics?

Response

As a district we are committed to addressing the inequality in health in the district and it is the core theme embedded through our District Plan.

Not only are the most disadvantaged communities dying earlier but they also live a greater number of years in ill health before their death creating further financial and social disadvantage to them and their families.

These inequalities in life expectancy are borne out of a complex combination of social, environmental, educational and economic inequalities and subsequently lifestyle behaviours for example healthy eating, smoking and physical activity which compound across the life course to create difference in life expectancy. This inequality often transfers between generations within communities making it highly challenging to identify singular actions or specific and targeted investments which can be taken to address this complexity a whole. Nevertheless across the system we making a number of steps to prioritise consideration for reducing inequalities into all that we do. This work is being coordinated by the Reducing Inequalities Alliance and work under 4 key themes to enable all parts of the district to take action these include:

- 1) Embedding inequalities into the strategic direction of key plans and actions being taken for the district
- 2) Building skills and confidence to prioritise inequality into the district's workforce
- 3) Developing local data/ intelligence, evidence and tools and resources to support best practice
- 4) Creating opportunities and learning networks to share practice and facilitate partners exploring their opportunities to address inequality.

These four enabling functions of the alliance to embed and coordinate the work on inequalities within the district is complimented by investments in specific work programmes which work to address different areas of the combination and complexity of factors which create inequality these include by no means are limited to:

- The anti-poverty strategy: economic inequality
- Living Well: inequality in health behaviours
- Diversity Exchange: promoting equality, diversity and belonging for all based on trust and fairness
- Digital Strategy: reducing digital exclusion
- Air pollution: environmental inequality
- Tobacco Control Alliance and cessation services: inequality in health behaviours
- Reducing Inequalities in Communities: wide ranging projects address a range of causes of inequality

- Welfare advice: social and economic inequality
- Warm Homes Health People: environmental inequality
- Core20plus5- healthcare inequality
- Economic Strategy: economic inequality

Beyond these programmes we strive to offer all appropriate services on a basis on universal proportionalism whereby we provide enhanced support to people in greatest need.

21. Councillor Debbie Davies

Could the Leader of the Council confirm the amounts of unpaid Council Tax per ward, for each of the last 5 years?

Response

The current amount of unpaid Council Tax by ward for debt relating to the last five years as at 15 January 2024 is set out in the following table. The Council makes every effort to pursue uncollected Council Tax outstanding and this continues after the year in which it is due, hence why the amount owed drops so significantly over time. This includes on-going payment arrangements, securing the debt in the Magistrates Court, deductions from earnings and benefits as well as post Liability Order action such as bankruptcy, charging order and order for sale.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Total
BAILDON	£ 10,623.33	£ 20,408.60	£ 41,465.57	£ 71,395.33	£ 112,772.36	£ 256,665.19
BINGLEY	£ 17,126.01	£ 31,511.83	£ 46,043.87	£ 80,667.44	£ 140,960.53	£ 316,309.68
BINGLEY RURAL	£ 12,771.41	£ 32,718.83	£ 59,105.03	£ 92,231.95	£ 168,524.18	£ 365,351.40
BOLTON AND UNDERCLIFFE	£ 36,959.30	£ 67,971.70	£ 110,650.50	£ 185,974.53	£ 339,732.98	£ 741,289.01
BOWLING AND BARKEREND	£ 77,512.44	£ 143,509.98	£ 226,750.92	£ 377,919.99	£ 625,878.16	£ 1,451,571.49
BRADFORD MOOR	£ 48,638.53	£ 98,314.59	£ 146,613.81	£ 242,309.12	£ 368,181.64	£ 904,057.69
CITY	£ 116,932.50	£ 207,624.93	£ 384,468.57	£ 837,429.72	£ 1,131,790.70	£ 2,678,246.42
CLAYTON AND FAIRWEATHER GREEN	£ 24,368.99	£ 57,801.80	£ 98,970.86	£ 174,252.62	£ 291,710.03	£ 647,104.30
CRAVEN	£ 6,585.28	£ 12,099.54	£ 17,955.53	£ 23,474.95	£ 96,207.59	£ 156,322.89
ECCLESHILL	£ 44,376.14	£ 105,163.23	£ 150,389.63	£ 271,980.17	£ 451,536.66	£ 1,023,445.83
GREAT HORTON	£ 54,104.64	£ 74,275.78	£ 164,903.41	£ 296,454.22	£ 471,021.24	£ 1,060,759.29
HEATON	£ 34,907.84	£ 61,677.97	£ 113,135.61	£ 190,645.02	£ 378,799.40	£ 779,165.84
IDLE AND THACKLEY	£ 13,542.82	£ 32,587.93	£ 50,106.48	£ 90,238.83	£ 174,693.28	£ 361,169.34
ILKLEY	£ 7,657.57	£ 14,319.52	£ 24,403.12	£ 43,769.45	£ 69,764.51	£ 159,914.17
KEIGHLEY CENTRAL	£ 49,400.49	£ 99,336.60	£ 148,348.01	£ 275,273.70	£ 426,345.66	£ 998,704.46
KEIGHLEY EAST	£ 40,684.79	£ 77,663.99	£ 115,751.23	£ 186,709.88	£ 295,637.18	£ 716,447.07
KEIGHLEY WEST	£ 31,025.45	£ 60,179.54	£ 100,477.91	£ 181,830.34	£ 318,969.47	£ 692,482.71
LITTLE HORTON	£ 66,072.39	£ 108,284.23	£ 169,608.90	£ 292,256.23	£ 468,398.19	£ 1,104,619.94
MANNINGHAM	£ 64,134.38	£ 130,394.36	£ 183,536.08	£ 291,603.35	£ 425,651.08	£ 1,095,319.25
QUEENSBURY	£ 25,417.56	£ 39,445.30	£ 72,915.63	£ 133,429.72	£ 220,134.74	£ 491,342.95
ROYDS	£ 38,554.31	£ 74,072.49	£ 109,152.80	£ 196,941.69	£ 340,255.30	£ 758,976.59
SHIPLEY	£ 26,881.00	£ 52,944.52	£ 79,667.40	£ 131,178.28	£ 207,368.32	£ 498,039.52
THORNTON AND ALLERTON	-£ 24,092.97	£ 72,465.74	£ 123,250.13	£ 209,548.35	£ 331,266.01	£ 712,437.26
TOLLER	£ 52,597.98	£ 96,847.48	£ 140,856.46	£ 235,515.71	£ 342,616.41	£ 868,434.04
TONG	£ 58,510.92	£ 111,600.24	£ 177,774.62	£ 343,784.28	£ 584,722.40	£ 1,276,392.46
WHARFEDALE	£ 3,720.72	£ 5,006.64	£ 10,089.31	£ 19,048.87	£ 49,231.03	£ 87,096.57
WIBSEY	£ 44,890.33	£ 60,330.66	£ 98,450.16	£ 175,116.07	£ 300,586.21	£ 679,373.43
WINDHILL AND WROSE	£ 25,285.99	£ 44,006.12	£ 63,333.79	£ 118,514.27	£ 249,329.53	£ 500,469.70
WORTH VALLEY	£ 6,409.28	£ 17,440.21	£ 28,831.22	£ 68,165.71	£ 119,885.76	£ 240,732.18
WYKE	£ 22,514.24	£ 59,906.46	£ 82,833.22	£ 147,458.70	£ 245,546.13	£ 558,258.75

22. Councillor Matt Edwards

Despite previous responses to our questions regarding HGV traffic on Mill Carr Hill Road in Oakenshaw, there is still a significant number of HGVs trying to access the road up to Bierley and getting stuck – resulting in considerable disruption to residents. Will the portfolio holder and Highways Department tell us what they can do to address this issue?

Response

There is an existing 7.5 tonne weight limit on Mill Carr Hill Road which is enforceable by the police but as these types of restrictions are notoriously time consuming and difficult to enforce the situation continues to persist.

Highway officers will look to enhance the signs for this restriction, making them more noticeable for lorry drivers leaving the new industrial estate on Cliff Hollins Lane. Officers will also carry out a review to examine the need for a new direction sign at the junction of Mill Carr Hill Road and Cliffe Hollins Lane to point traffic left for Bradford Road where there are existing signs for the motorways and Bradford. Such a sign could include an advanced warning of the HGV ban which is to the right of this junction.

23. Councillor Mohammed Shafiq

It's a frightening prospect that the government won't renew the Household Support Fund, which will take away £11m of support for some of the district's most vulnerable families. Will the leader set out what support the council and our partners provide for families on the breadline?

Response

I share the Councillor's deep concern about the lack of an announcement on the Household Support Fund. Councils up and down the country are lobbying on this issue. The fund supported Foodbanks across the district for example and was a lifeline for people living in poverty.

The Council in its own right provides support to help residents struggling with the cost of living. This includes:

- Council Tax Reduction to support those households on the lowest incomes.
- Care Leavers Council Tax Discount from the age of 18-25.
- Administration for Free School Meals.
- The Holiday Activities and Food programme.
- Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Cost of Living Bradford Website and leaflets signposting the help and support available to residents.
- Funding commissioned VCS Welfare and Debt advice providers across the district.

- Signpost to national, free, regulated and impartial debt advice support through the money advisor network.

24. Councillor Malcolm Slater

The application to re-open Horn Crag Quarry, which was rejected last year by Bradford Council, is now going to appeal. Can the Portfolio Holder outline the reasons planners rejected the application and provide more information on the appeal and any comment on the strength of our position?

Response

23/00829/MCF 'Re-opening of Horn Crag Quarry for the purposes of releasing a proven locally distinctive building stone resource' at Horn Crag Quarry Off Fishbeck Lane Silsden Keighley West Yorkshire was refused under Delegated Powers on 24 May 2023, on the following grounds.

1. The proposal as submitted is unacceptable, as there are risks to groundwater and private water supplies (potable drinking water) from the development and there is inadequate information to demonstrate that the risks posed to the groundwater and private water supplies can be satisfactorily managed and/or mitigated.
2. The proposal as submitted is unacceptable, as it will not make a positive contribution towards the conservation, management and enhancement of the diversity of landscapes within the designated landscape character area of the Rombald's Ridge Landscape Character Area.
3. The proposal as submitted is unacceptable, as it will not contribute positively towards the overall enhancement of the District's biodiversity resource within an acceptable timeframe. The priority habitat on the proposal site, coupled with the restrictive site boundary compared to the extraction area means the approach is not effective at returning to an overall Net Gain for biodiversity until around Year 30.
4. The application as submitted provides insufficient information to enable its proper consideration by the Local Planning Authority. In particular, there is inadequate information with regards to potential adverse impacts on Protected Species and no indication of appropriate mitigation that would satisfy the requirements of a licence to disturb and be effective for the lifetime of the quarry.

The Officer Report and Decision Notice are available on Public Access:

<https://planning.bradford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RR742XDH0IL00>

During the course of the appeal, the Planning Inspectorate has accepted the submission of information which may overcome refusal reason 1, subject to condition. The remaining refusal reasons have not been overcome, and the Planning Department considers the refusal reasons within the Decision Notice

remain sound.

25. Councillor Mohammed Shafiq

The Chief Medical Officer has issued guidelines saying that young people between the age of 5 and 18 should aim to do a least 60 minutes exercise a day. Can the Portfolio Holder advise what work is going on to make sure Bradford district children are able to meet this target?

Response

From the most recent data in 2021/22 40.4% of our children and young people are classified as active (60minutes a day) which compares to 47.2% in England. Furthermore, local research undertaken has shown there is significant gender and ethnic inequality in the physical activity levels of CYP in the district- only 32% of girls aged 7-11 years old meet physical activity guidelines compared to 55% of boys. 34% of Pakistani heritage children compared to 54% of White British children, and 48% of children from other ethnic groups meet guidelines. As such we embarked on a system wide partnership effort to tackle physical inactivity and create a new strategy to make Bradford the active district called "Every Move Counts". <https://www.activebradford.com/our-strategy>.

The new co-produced strategy, which was adopted and approved by the Wellbeing board in June 2023 has 9 core priorities, of which one of them is children and young people. The action plan that sits within the strategy is being formally launched at a stakeholder engagement event on January 16th. This work will build on the many actions that have been underway over the last five years, through both the Living Well initiative to address levels of obesity as well as the JU:MP programme (Join Us: Move Play) which is the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot in North Bradford and has bought (£13million of funding for physical activity in CYP into the district). These efforts include:

- Roll out of the "Creating Active Schools" framework in 57 primary schools to systematically tackle inactivity through a whole school approach, which has been a partnership funded project through Bradford Council, the NHS and JU:MP with 30 of these primary schools receiving facilitated support to embed the framework through Living Well Schools NHS RIC funded programme.
- JU:MP teenager app called "Best Life" which launched in autumn 2023 and hopes to 'gamify' physical activity.
- Bradford Council and JU:MP investment in parks to encourage active play, greater use by young females and more active use of green space through the funding of developments and improvements to places such as Kashmir Park, Ravenscliffe Woods, Eccleshill Playground and Peel Park Nature Play Area and Cycle Hub.
- Mobile Adventure Play programme delivered by Play Bradford and funded by JU:MP employs Adventure Play workers who have engaged large numbers of

children and families to get outdoors and play independently in local parks aiming to reduce antisocial behaviour and create a culture of playing out for children

- Living Well #20MinuteMovement campaign in which the most recent run included a specific campaign for children, where primary schools signed up to receive resources and materials to help embed physical activity and also to take part in the walk to school week. This campaign led to a range of positive outcomes including; a school starting a scooter club, installation of new bike racks, the start of the morning mile and new school walking routes. The campaign also engaged 650 children in a weekend of activities to launch the campaign.
- Beat the Street trial which gamified walking to school included 3000 children from South Bradford area, of whom 25% were inactive.
- Living Well Madrassas funded by Bradford Council, JU:MP and national partners have sought to add physical activity to the curriculum of Madrassas and Islamic Religious Settings in Bradford where 91% of South Asian children attend for religious learning. Faith in Communities have now engaged over 30 settings and distributed of £40,000 of sports equipment with hundreds of children benefitting from the increased physical activity opportunities now on offer.
- Development of a new interactive physical activity finder to help make it easier to find local ways to be active. This is embedded on the Living Well website, Council website and Active Bradford website.
- The Adventure Development Unit provision - climbing, cycling, Paddlesports, sailing, walking and related outdoor and adventurous activities - are delivered through primary, secondary schools (including pupil referral units), youth and community organisations and holiday and leisure courses for the districts residents. Provision is targeted and universal depending on the programme. Whilst we do not collect specific data on gender or ethnicity around 15,000 children accessed provision in 2023 with approximately equal numbers of boys and girls from all areas of the district. Children are typically active for between 1 and 4 hours per session depending on the programme
- HAF Play in Parks programme achieved 4,505 attendances across 30 venues in 30 wards in 2023.

Whilst significant efforts continue to be made and we continue to work with partners across JUMP, Yorkshire Sport and Sport England to seek additional funding, future key actions from the strategy action plan for children and young people include; the roll out of 'Living Well schools' (Our whole school approach to wellbeing) across the district from September 24, creation of children's role models and champions, embedding physical activity into children's social care pathways, and future work targeting early years settings.

26. Councillor Paul Godwin

Rivers campaigner Feargal Sharkey has warned residents in areas hit by flooding that in the UK "flood water is invariably massively contaminated with sewage",

with sewage networks unable to cope with periods of heavy rainfall. Does the leader join me in calling on the flooding minister, Robbie Moore, to take action on this horrendous state of affairs that the people of Keighley face as a result of his department's policies.

Response

Officers are aware of Feargal Sharkey's campaign and are working with the Environment Agency, as the lead organisation on flooding to address these concerns. As flooding Minister and the local MP we hope Robbie Moore will take action in support of his constituency to tackle this issue.

In regard to water pollution and water quality, sewage discharges only form part of the picture. The main reasons for poor water quality are:

- excessive use of fertiliser and pesticides in agriculture – identified as being responsible for 40% of water pollution in England
- untreated sewage released by water companies – responsible for 35%
- "run-off" from roads and towns which contains pollutants such as oil – responsible for 18%

Emerging pollutants include pharmaceuticals and microplastics and there is not enough knowledge at this point to indicate how big a problem they are going to be in the future.

Because water pollution originates from a number of sources and cannot be attributed solely to CSO discharges, work to improve water quality requires a river catchment level approach. The Council works on a multi agency approach and will continue to do so to address this serious problem.

27. Councillor Bob Felstead

In light of the Council's oft stated desire to improve the rail connectivity of the Bradford District, would the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport please clarify why the Council and / or the West Yorkshire Combined Authority have not chosen to exercise Compulsory Purchase powers to secure ownership of the Wortley Curve section of the former railway route that connected the Wakefield to Leeds line to the Bradford to Leeds line, in order protect the option to once again allow trains to travel from Bradford to Wakefield and beyond without having to pass through Leeds Station?

Response

The importance of the Wortley Curve is recognised by the Council and the opportunity it may present if the land could be brought back into use for rail, as it would represent the most direct route by rail between Bradford and Wakefield. The Council have raised the matter with WYCA, who – as the Transport Authority – are the responsible body for rail, and who are also in discussions with Network Rail to explore the opportunity. The land is currently going to auction and the lead bodies are in discussions with the current land owner (RPL) to explore this. For

several reasons, among which that the Council is not at present promoting a project to restore the Curve, it would be inappropriate to use Compulsory Purchase powers.

28. Councillor Mohsin Hussain

Please can you tell me what support is available to start-up businesses in the Bradford district if people are thinking about going down this route?

Response

The Council's Invest in Bradford Team has experienced business advisors to support any business looking to start-up, relocate or expand in the District.

The team includes a dedicated Start-Up Manager funded through the "Start-Up West Yorkshire programme", which is part of the Mayor of West Yorkshire's region-wide Enterprise West Yorkshire programme to encourage entrepreneurship and help people get the support that they need to build successful businesses.

Bradford Council also currently has a scheme which provides assistance for individuals considering self-employment in the District. This support is offered through the Build Your Business Programme, which offers dedicated coaching support delivered in community settings.

This free service to help business ideas become sustainable businesses providing personalised advice and specialised support to entrepreneurs considering launching their own businesses or becoming self-employed.

Experienced enterprise coaches provide one-to-one support at times to suit individuals to get their businesses off the ground.

The service is being delivered by Impact Hub Bradford, Bradford Trident and Inspired Neighbourhoods who are targeting support in the areas of Bowling & Barkerend, Bradford Moor, City ward, Great Horton, Little Horton, Manningham, Toller, Holme Wood and Tong, Shipley and Bingley.

The University of Bradford offer a two year Graduate Entrepreneur Programme for home or international applicants to live in Bradford and establish or further develop a successful start-up business. The programme provides comprehensive support, including a registered address, use of space and meeting rooms in the entrepreneurship centre, training and mentoring, networking events and access to fundraising opportunities.

Shipley College are currently offering a fully funded start-up course, "Creating a Business Start-up Level 2 Certificate". This course is free to anyone in receipt of benefits and actively seeking employment or in work.

Further information -

Start Up West Yorkshire - Start-Up West Yorkshire - West Yorkshire Business and Skills Support (wybusiness-skills.com)

Build Your Business - <https://www.investinbradford.com/business-support/buildyourbusiness/>

For general business enquiries - www.investinbradford.com/support,
email - info@investinbradford.com or call 01274 437727

University of Bradford Graduate Programme -
<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/careers/bradford-entrepreneur/bradford-entrepreneur-graduate/>

Shipley College course - <https://www.shipley.ac.uk/courses/creating-a-business-start-up-level-2>

29. Councillor Aneela Ahmed

What are we doing to reduce road traffic accidents in Bradford district?

Response

The council and its partners look at all facets of injury accidents on the district's road network. We use a wide range of sources to reduce road traffic accidents and improve road safety, from traditional Highways funding and road safety engagement (for instance, with schools across the district) to the Planning system. Using the principles of Vision Zero, it is recognised that people make mistakes but no one should be killed or seriously injured as a result of that mistake. The council's strategy is to look further than the collision locations and determine what the principal factors are that lead to the collisions in the first place. As this issue can include all manner of factors that have not necessarily been examined previously, it is important to recognise that many other agencies both inside and outside of the council will be involved in the solutions. Education, training, publicity, enforcement and engineering will continue to play a strong role, however the difference going forward will be the sharing of data between agencies so we will arrive at multi-faceted solution that is designed to address the route of the problem. Eventually, the council's aim is to develop programmes that looks at preventative solutions before collisions occur. The council is in the process of developing a Vision Zero Strategy. A recent report on the subject was presented to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee which can be found on this link:

<https://bradfordintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g8092/Public%20reports%200pack%2009th-Nov-2023%2017.00%20Corporate%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

30. Councillor Anna Watson

Shipley Station is one of the key gateways into the Bradford District. However, the land around it - owned by Network Rail - is strewn with litter. The underpass is often flooded and is dark and dingy. Will the Council leader let us know how the Council is working with Network Rail and Northern to clean up our railway

estate so that our railway stations are welcoming and safe for local rail users and visitors to the District?

Response

As part of the preparation for City of Culture status 2025, work has been progressing to ensure that key gateways into and within the District provide a positive impression. The council has established a 'District Readiness Board', chaired by the council's Programme Director for City of Culture, to engage with partner organisations in order to ensure such important gateways are cleaned and maintained regularly to an appropriate standard acknowledging the positive reputational impact that this can have, including on new visitors to the District. Regular liaison takes place with both Network Rail and Northern. This specific issue has been raised with both organisations to facilitate cleansing in the short term and to find a longer term permanent solution. The situation will be monitored to ensure that the response by the organisations is effective and appropriate.

31. Councillor Brendan Stubbs

As part of the Budget proposals a substantial disposal of assets is outlined including a review of Leisure services. Can the leader explain in relation to Eccleshill Library and Eccleshill Pool, if the Labour Group are going to support the disposal, will they give active consideration and support to Community Asset Transfers, the creation of a Leisure Trust or alternative models that will preserve the service for local residents or is the plan simply to sell to the highest bidder?

Response

The Service Reviews in Libraries and Sports Facilities in general terms will include consideration for alternative delivery models.

32. Councillor Debbie Davies

Baildon's Ian Clough car park currently costs £2 to park in all day (Mon-Sat 8am-6pm) and yet the budget proposal is for this to increase to £1 per hour – you must realise that people working in the centre are not going to pay £50 per week to do so – has any assessment been made that this could actually lead to a loss of income to the Council and more issues with people parking on residential streets as well as hitting local businesses again as people with their own transport can drive and park for free at larger shopping centres and supermarkets?

Response

The proposal is to standardise charges across the district for all towns and villages to same price point. The tariff to be adopted would be £1 per hour but £4 for all day parking so the cost would be £20 per week. We also offer parking permits at this location for £295 per year which works out cheaper than the current weekly charges. There is also some limited wait parking on street if people need to pop in and out quickly of the local shops.