

## COUNCIL 16 JANUARY 2018

### MEMBER QUESTION TIME

Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12

---

**1. Councillor Wainwright**

Does the Leader wish to comment on the outrageous proposal by the Bradford Hospitals NHS Trust to set up a company to employ most of the staff at BRI? Bearing in mind Bradford Councillors at the last Full Council meeting voted to oppose the Airedale NHS Trust's similar proposals.

**Answer**

The Labour Group made its position very clear at the last meeting of this Full Council. We are opposed to any back-door privatisation of the NHS and we have already raised this with senior management at Bradford Hospitals Trust. We would welcome cross party support for this stance.

**2. Councillor Martin Smith**

Can the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport, advise who has been invited to respond to the Council's consultation on a methodology for determining green belt boundaries in Bradford and is it appropriate, that on a matter as significant as potential changes to the boundaries of Bradford's green belt, the consultation period is limited to just six weeks, two of which were over Christmas and New Year?

**Answer**

Now that the Core Strategy has been implemented following its release from being held by the Secretary of State, we are preparing our Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD), which will determine which sites are identified to meet the District's needs for homes and jobs.

The process for preparing the Plan is following the requirements and regulations of the Government and consultation principles set out in the Council's own Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The Green Belt Methodology consultation is a technical document and does not include any specific site proposals or areas of green belt.

There is no statutory requirement to consult on the methodology but in line with good practice I decided that the document should be published to allow interested parties to comment. Given the technical nature of the document and the fact that it was a single relatively short document compared to a full DPD, a targeted consultation with a period of four weeks was considered appropriate. However, given the Christmas holidays this was extended to six weeks.

The consultation commenced on Monday 18 December 2017 and will run until Monday 29 January. The document was published on the web site and made available at a number of deposit locations (town halls and main libraries) across the District. Email and letter notifications were sent to all statutory consultees, as well as over 3,000 others consultees on the consultation data base, which includes members of the public, community groups, agents, developers and all other interested parties who have requested to be notified of updates to the Local Plan. Email notifications were also sent to all members and MPs.

### **Supplementary Question**

As the 68 page document is fairly clearly professionally based could the public have a summary document so they can help them to offer their advice? Also could we have a time line or where the green belt methodology fits relative to the local plans, the brownfield sites and all the other documents so there is a clear line that we can all follow and understand when we are likely to get to a conclusion?

### **Councillor Ross-Shaw**

Yes we can certainly look at that. I do not think we have any feedback from members of the public about the sort of level of the contents. I suspect with consultations like this it tends to attract people who have that kind of level of interest to be fair but certainly in terms of a time line it is something we are looking at. I know people are keen to know when we are going to get there with the allocations process and what each significant milestone is so it is certainly something we are looking at.

### **3. Councillor Griffiths**

To the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety. On 22 December 2017 the Telegraph and Argus reported comments made by Members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee about community cohesion in the District. Can the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Neighbourhoods advise the Council what additional action is he taking in the light of these comments?

### **Answer**

I would like to thank Cllr Griffiths for raising this question, which I know is important to all 90 Members to consider in their capacity as community leaders. Whilst responsibility for this sits within my portfolio, we all have a role to play and we will not be successful if responsibility for building more integrated communities and community cohesion is just seen as something that is done by officers at the instigation of the Portfolio Holder.

Dame Louise Casey set out the challenge for government in her report, [The Casey Review: a review into opportunity and integration](#) in December 2016, which makes far reaching recommendations covering not only work on stronger communities, but also challenges for education policy, planning policy and for employers. The government is currently writing a response and we can expect to see a new integration strategy launched within a matter of weeks. Bradford has seconded a member of staff to work in London with the DCLG and we have been at the forefront of discussions with officers from government in contributing towards this vital area of work. We have hosted several meetings with the DCLG to help inform the strategy and to talk in detail about the challenges that we face locally in keeping with most large cities across the UK and Europe.

A great deal of cohesion work takes place across the district and the report to Scrutiny outlines some excellent examples of this, not only by the Council, but by the voluntary sector, businesses, public sector partners, faith groups and individuals, including councillors. The challenge from Scrutiny was whether this is doing enough and whether we are working with the right people to make effective change happen at Bradford. I have met with officers and we have also commissioned an independent piece of work, prior to the Scrutiny meeting to review the approach at Bradford. This report will be published within the next few months and together with the new government strategy, and feedback from Scrutiny it will form the basis of an action plan that will ensure that we spend the money that we have against the areas of greatest return and that we seek to influence others to do the same.

The DCLG will be visiting Bradford again at the end of January to discuss our work on cohesion and integration and I will be speaking with them about possible financial support that may help to scale up that which is working well and to try out new approaches that will engage those groups that need to play a greater role.

Cllr. Griffiths may be aware that the Council has also secured £1.4 million from the government's Controlling Migration Fund, which is the second largest award that has been made nationally, to work with established communities and those new to Bradford in support of their integration. This money is being used across the district by the Council, Health and the voluntary sector to try and address some of the root causes that can often lead to problems with people getting along well together.

There is no 'silver bullet' and our work will involve changing culture, behaviour and attitude. Some of this may come in the form of government policy, some will be delivered through projects and relationships and some will be about challenging what we know to be wrong. On occasion good work is 'undone' by national or international incident and our thoughts and attitudes are shaped by what we see and read about in the news as well as what we see and hear about in our towns and city.

Change will take time but we all have a responsibility and must recognise and appreciate that our actions and behaviours can and do make a difference to how people feel about their life in Bradford and their attitude towards their neighbour. If ever there was a subject that should unite us with common purpose, this would feel to be the one. I would encourage Councillors to work with me on building a stronger Bradford and I will happily meet with all Groups and individuals to listen to your thoughts.

### **Supplementary Question**

Thank you to the portfolio holder for a lengthy statement. It could be any statement of activity but I wonder if he would agree with me that very little if anything could come under the heading of additional as this is all historical activity and statements of what has already been done?

### **Councillor Jabar**

I would encourage Councillors to work on building a stronger Bradford and I will happily meet with groups/individuals to listen to your views and thoughts.

#### 4. **Councillor Love**

Can the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Culture tell us what impact on our waste service will be of the announcement by the Chinese government that China will severely restrict the amounts of waste plastic that it can import for recycling?

#### **Answer**

Following this announcement it is simply too early to say how recycling markets in the UK will react, and thus what if any will be the implications for Local Authority plastics recycling and associated income sales. When questioned by the Environmental Audit Committee, the Environment Secretary Michael Gove admitted that he has no knowledge of the effects that the Chinese situation will have on the UK recycling sector, and had “not given sufficient thought” to it.

In making this announcement, China has introduced a maximum contamination level of just 0.5%, a target viewed by the Recycling Association as very tough to meet. Clearly China is now only wanting high quality recycle materials. The challenge for the UK recycling sector is to improve quality as well as find new markets. This will take time, and will require new infrastructure to be developed nationally.

Our kerbside collected plastics are sorted via our Materials Recycling Facilities (MRF) to produce a clean contamination free product which is then baled prior to sending to recycling merchants. In this respect we believe we are in a good position to continue to successfully market our plastics, should the UK market become more sensitive to quality and contamination.

#### 5. **Councillor Hawkesworth**

Given that:-

1. The Leader and the Executive are pursuing a scheme to lend a sum of at least £12 million to a private sector company to develop the Odeon site as an events arena to accommodate approximately 4,000 people
2. The Council owns and operates two performance venues in central Bradford the Alhambra (at present fully operational) and St Georges Hall (which will be reopened after full refurbishment in 12 to 18 months time)
3. The operations of the Odeon when opened could well adversely affect the profitability and/or viability of the two Council owned venues
4. The Leader and the Executive have so surrounded the proposals in secrecy that most members of Council let alone members of the public have no meaningful financial information about the proposals
5. Members of Council will be required to vote on the Council's 2018/9 budget the papers for which will contain reference to the Odeon proposals

Will the Leader please state whether or not before proposals to provide financial assistance to the Odeon scheme were brought to the Executive a proper and objective assessment of the likely impact of the opening of the Odeon venue on the profitability and/or viability of the Alhambra and/or St Georges Hall was produced and considered by the Leader, the Executive and the Council's officers?

**Answer**

The confidential reports have been shared with opposition group leaders and all members of Corporate Scrutiny. The Executive has also referred the latest decision to Corporate Scrutiny and to Regeneration Scrutiny.

In their written submission to Bradford Live when applying to be the operator of the former Odeon building, the NEC provided assurances that their offer in the city centre would be complementary to the Alhambra and St George's Hall and that they would work with the Council and the Alhambra and St George's Hall in ensuring this is the case.

The opening of the venue will increase the total number of events on offer in the city centre. The Council's ambition, which is shared with Bradford Live and the NEC, is that the increase in supply will also stimulate a net growth in demand for entertainment and culture, with the consequent increase in demand for food, drink, travel, parking, accommodation and retail. This has been the experience in other cities with several venues and it is worth remembering that the former Odeon building is of a significantly different capacity and form than the existing offer. The Council recognises there could be a risk of some displacement of demand, and will be working with the venue operators to ensure programming is complementary rather than competitive. Our Theatre Service is confident that the venues can exist in a complementary, rather than competitive, fashion.

**Supplementary Question**

You have given an answer but I am not quite sure whether it is a complete answer because my question was, was a survey done before and presented to the Executive before they took the decision? In other words was an impact assessment done before it went to the Executive?

**Councillor Hinchcliffe**

So this has been long going honestly with the Odeon. We have all been every step of the way with this and obviously lots of reports have been done, lots done over the years and this question has been asked and answered time and again. Whilst we might not have got a consultant in to do that we have asked the question ourselves many time as has the Odeon group, as have Bradford Live, as have the NEC and we are confident that Bradford City Centre and Bradford District can support such a facility. I think we have to have a bit of confidence in ourselves. We are a city in a district of 530,000 people. Hopefully we will have even better connectivity in the future in terms of transport. We can sustain this level of leisure activity in the city centre. In fact we were made for it. There is a reason why it was built there in the first place to be something of a leisure facility and therefore we can do that still more in the future and accelerate that progress. I think we should be confident that yes of course we can sustain it and we are all working hard to try and achieve it.

**6. Councillor Dunbar**

Following our accreditation as a White Ribbon Authority can the portfolio holder list the actions that will take place over the next year with partners to successfully uphold this status?

## Answer

The Council became an accredited White Ribbon Local Authority on 6 December 2017. We received the White Ribbon status on the strength both of what it has done so far and what it has promised to do within a *two year Action Plan*. Work is already underway on the fulfilment of this action plan which is reviewed and updated annually. This work includes, but will not be limited to, the following:

- Continuing to raise awareness and encourage all male employees and councillors to make the pledge “never to commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women”. This will include stands at Margaret McMillan Tower and Keighley Town Hall, Bradnet articles, updates to the White Ribbon (CBMDC) Yammer Group, and periodic Workspace Desktop messages.
- Raising awareness with staff and managers about the existence of our new Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Policy – which supports employees and members of any gender who are experiencing domestic or sexual abuse, or are perpetrators wishing change their behaviour.
- Pilot “asking the question” training for managers who conduct Return to Work interviews so that those suffering abuse can be better supported in work.
- Developing a new *Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence* web presence – including a White Ribbon Page (which can become a hub for White Ribbon activity across the Bradford District)
- Organising a further Bradford City “White Ribbon” branded match – including players, social media, big screen, programme entries, radio commentary and volunteers handing out flyers to fans. Billy Bantam to wear White Ribbon t-shirt on the day also.
- Investigating the possibility of a *Bingley Music Live* White Ribbon Stage/Backstage Access & Free pitch for awareness raising stall.
- Liaising with *Transdev* around having a *White Ribbon Bus* that travels between Bradford and Keighley carrying White Ribbon messages, educating men, and encouraging their participation in changing behaviours and ‘calling out’ others who are abusive towards women or girls.
- Utilise all council information screens – sports centres, libraries etc. to display White Ribbon messages and calls to action.
- Encourage school participation in White Ribbon Day 2018 and the dissemination of White Ribbon messages through school email (secondary), school bags (primary) and Bradford Schools Online (all).
- Highlight the possibility of women’s involvement in the campaign by becoming “White Ribbon Champions”.
- Support growth of White Ribbon in the district through attendance at Bradford College White Ribbon Ambassador meetings, engaging with interested organisations (e.g. University of Bradford) and supporting individual ambassadors with events/awareness raising they are organising.
- Support and attend appropriate White Ribbon All Party Parliamentary Group meetings and National Conferences
- Engage with Licenced White Cabs in Bradford – to facilitate awareness raising for drivers and have White Ribbon messages displayed on or in all cabs. “White Cabs, White Ribbon”.
- Celebrate *International Women’s Day* by raising awareness with the public – The Broadway Bradford or Kirkgate Centre Bradford

- Exhibit “The Women’s Quilt” where each patch represents the life of one woman murdered during a specific time period.
- Support and work with the *Free Our Streets* campaign which seeks to reduce on street harassment around the university and college area of the city.
- Engage community and voluntary sector partners, and places of worship, in raising awareness themselves.
- Organise a ‘White Ribbon Ambassador’ training session for council employees and elected members who have taken up the role or are interested in doing so.

If any members would wish to make the pledge, become an ambassador, or raise awareness of male violence against women and White Ribbon UK in your ward please contact Barry Cusack in the Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence team on 01274 434229 or at [barry.cusack@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:barry.cusack@bradford.gov.uk)

## 7. Councillor Dunbar

2018 is the bi-centenary year of Emily Brontë’s birth. As one of Thornton’s famous daughters will the portfolio holder explain what plans there are across the District to celebrate this occasion?

### Answer

There are a range of activities taking place across the district to celebrate the Brontës bicentenaries which are being led in the main by the Brontë Society and partners.

#### Brontë Society – Haworth will lead on the significant activities celebrating Emily Brontë’s Bicentenary

The Brontë sisters are undoubtedly among Bradford’s most enduring and most influential innovators, and this year sees the bicentennial celebrations for Emily Brontë. The Brontë Society will hold a weekend of birthday celebrations from July 27 – 30, celebrating her creativity and talent as a writer, artist and musician by commissioning exciting new work from artists they hope will do her legacy justice.

Actress and social entrepreneur Lily Cole has been appointed as creative partner at the Brontë Parsonage Museum and will explore the connections between the origins of Emily’s anti-hero Heathcliff and the real foundlings of 1840s London in a new partnership with the Foundling Museum. She will also consider gender politics and women’s rights, in the year which marks 100 years since women got the vote.

Poet and performer Patience Agbabi, who regularly appears on TV and radio, will be the Museum’s Writer in Residence. During her time at the Brontë Parsonage Museum, Patience will create new work in response to Emily Brontë, and offer fresh literary perspectives on Emily’s life and work.

Land artist Kate Whiteford who will explore Emily’s connection to the Yorkshire landscape through her pet hawk Nero and award-winning band The Unthanks, who will compose and perform a song cycle based on Emily’s poems. Also working with the Brontë Parsonage Museum next year is teenage author and vlogger Lucy Powrie, who, in the new role of Brontë Society Young Ambassador, will present an online book club via her YouTube channel, *lucythereader*, during the year.

Visitors to the Brontë Parsonage Museum will also have the opportunity to see the iconic portrait of Emily with Charlotte and Anne, *The Brontë Sisters*, which was painted by her brother, Branwell Brontë. The painting will return to Haworth for a special three-month loan from the National Portrait Gallery, London from 1 June to 31 August.

A programme of family activities organised by the Brontë Society to support the bicentenary will take place across the summer.

#### The Bradford Literature Festival – 29 June to 8 July

The 2018 Festival will see the launch of the Brontë Stones; a legacy project, which will see four stones carved with literary responses to the Brontë sisters, and set into the Yorkshire landscape at locations key to the Brontë story, from the birthplace at Thornton to the Parsonage at Haworth.

The detailed events programme is still being finalised, but content celebrating a northern theme will include - Emily Brontë - a series of events celebrating the author's bicentenary

Stormy House by White Stone Arts:- November 2018 - a mixed reality performative installation based on the ghost scenes from *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë (1818-1848) and the *kaidan* (Japanese ghost tales) collected and translated by Greco-Irish writer, traveller and polymath Patrick Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904).

This will premiere at the Brontë Parsonage Museum in November 2018 as part of celebrations for the 200th anniversary of Emily Brontë's birth. It will then tour UK museum, gallery and studio spaces in 2019 and Japanese venues in 2020.

There will be further celebratory activities, workshops and events taking place in the district delivered by key cultural partners like South Square arts gallery, Bradford Libraries, Ilkley Literature Festival, First Stories and National Literacy Hub in particular aimed at Children & Young people.

#### **8. Councillor Whiteley**

Could the Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing confirm that the Council will examine the feasibility of mirroring the practice of some neighbouring councils, who provide Voluntary Sector providers of services to support people at home, in order to reduce hospital admissions and support independence, with ten year funding figures in order that they can better manage their capacity and in some cases even continue to provide the services?

#### **Answer**

It is welcome that a Conservative member of the opposition recognises the value of investing in prevention to reduce hospital admissions. I would encourage her to join with me in persuading her colleagues in central Government of this. We need national government to invest in social care and upfront prevention activities to take the strain off the NHS.

The Voluntary Sector has a place on the Health and Wellbeing Board and continues to be a vital and valued part of this agenda, as evidenced by the CCGs recently investing a substantial sum in growing its capacity.

Bradford is leading the way in developing new models of care in partnership with the voluntary sector. Our Integrated Carers Service and our Personal Care/Support Navigators programmes support people at home to manage their independence and reduce hospital admissions.

However it is unlikely that we will be in a position to provide them with 10-year funding figures in relation to Social Care because this council does not have a similar guarantee of funding from central government for the next 10 years.

### **Supplementary Question**

Thank you for your answer. I suppose Leeds who does provide funding for 10 years is in the same boat as Bradford. I would ask you would you not agree that the excellent plans that we do have for home care/social care in the community would be greatly strengthened if the voluntary sector knew that they had a long term plan and played a long term part in it and could plan accordingly?

### **Councillor Val Slater**

I think we would all greatly benefit in the avenue of social care if we knew we had confirmed funding for 10 years but as my answer outlines we as a Council and other Councils across this country and other organisations that deal with social care do not have that luxury. I only wish we did Jackie and if we did then quite happy to work with our valued partners in the voluntary sector to take things forward but at the moment nobody is in a position to know what is going to happen with social care funding and how we can sustain that tremendous growth in demand.

### **9. Councillor Hassan Khan**

Can the portfolio holder give an update on our campaign for a Bradford stop on Northern Powerhouse Rail?

### **Answer**

Transport for the North's draft Strategic Transport Plan was published this morning and proposes a Bradford stop for the NPR line, which is great news.

We will continue to make the case specifically for a city centre station stop in Bradford and I'd like to thank all our partners for supporting the case, particularly businesses across the district, other Local Authorities in West Yorkshire and our district's MPs from all parties.

As part of the Next Stop Bradford Campaign to bring Northern Powerhouse Rail to Bradford city centre, the Council has been working with the stakeholders across the District, City Region and the north of England with regard to securing a new transpennine rail link between Manchester and Leeds via Bradford. Bradford Council and our partners have made a strong economic and connectivity case for an intermediate stop in its advocacy prospectus. The case has been presented to John Cridland at Transport for the North (TfN) and other key and influential figures

including the Northern Powerhouse Minister. The case is fully understood and supported by the local business sector. The advocacy document informed work commissioned by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), and sought to establish a single message on the preferred intermediate stop for West Yorkshire and the Leeds City Region. The study came out with clear recommendations that a Bradford stop would deliver most benefits for the Leeds City Region in terms of regeneration, increased GVA, movement of labour and skills as well as the wider catchment of population that it would connect.

A Bradford stop has been fully supported by the West Yorkshire Leaders as the Combined Authority and Leeds City Region. Connection to a world class transport network and integrated Northern economy is essential if Bradford is to realise fully its potential, build a dynamic, resilient and inclusive local economy and maximise its contribution to national productivity and prosperity. There is a strong connectivity case for a high speed rail stop in Bradford. The Council is currently underway with a number of technical studies to support the strategic outline business case for a NPR station stop in Bradford city centre.

#### **10. Councillor Jamil**

With the concerning national increase in the number of people begging and sleeping rough, could the portfolio holder tell us what the Council is doing to support and assist homeless people in Bradford?

#### **Answer**

Bradford Council commissions and is involved in a number of services/initiatives to support people who sleep rough.

A primary point of call for rough sleepers is the Council's housing options service which will attempt to rehouse with support as appropriate. We also commission the No Second Night Out service, a hostel based emergency accommodation service run by Developing Initiatives Supporting Communities (DISC). The NSNO service carries out regular outreach sweeps particularly in the city centre liaising with rough sleepers and offering them hostel accommodation. Once in the hostel support officers work with rough sleepers to secure long term settled accommodation for them. DISC also lead on Cold Weather provision and works with partners to ensure no one has to sleep rough on cold nights (when temperatures fall below zero). Rough sleepers and those at risk of homelessness are also supported by the Council commissioned Day Shelter run by the Salvation Army on Leeds Road. The Salvation Army also carries out outreach work especially in the city centre. All of these services regularly offer support with housing, to engage with drug treatment when appropriate and sign posting to other services – Bevan Healthcare, benefits advice centres and feeding projects to help meet people's needs. The Council also has a set of commissioned housing related support services which are targeted at vulnerable people with complex need, offenders, young people etc.

Bradford Council is also the lead on the Bradford Cares Initiative which is a targeted partnership campaign to encourage people to give to homeless charities. There is currently a campaign of posters around the city to encourage this approach and organisations have dedicated time to run days of action to support the campaign.

The campaign uses a website [www.streetsupport.net/Bradford](http://www.streetsupport.net/Bradford) to find help and give help.

**11. Councillor Mike Pollard**

Given that Bradford reportedly has the third largest number of homes in the country (approximately 4414) that have been empty for more than 6 months, whilst appreciating that revision to the Regulations in 2012 extended the period of a property remaining empty before Orders could be sought, to 2 years, could the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport please advise me how many Empty Dwelling Management Orders have been issued in the current 2017/18 financial year and in light of the simpler rules for the Compulsory Purchase programme, can we have details of the Council's actions relating to repayable grants or purchases, to bring homes in Bradford back into use?

**Answer**

Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) were introduced in 2006 under the Housing Act 2004. EDMOs only provide a temporary solution to deal with long term empty properties as the properties remain in the ownership of the empty home owner, who can appeal the EDMO at any time, even after the Council has invested in bringing a property back into use, and in any case the maximum lifespan of an EDMO is seven years. Due to the limitations in their use as a permanent tool the Council's Executive in 2006 determined that the Council would not use EDMOs but would instead focus on more permanent solutions including voluntary acquisition, compulsory purchase, Empty Property Loans and Empty Property Assistance. This is reflected by the low take-up of usage from other Local Authorities, as only 19 across the country have utilised them. The table below provides details of the number of completed loans, grants and acquisitions (voluntary and through compulsory purchase) of long term empty homes:

Empty Homes Activity 2016-2018

Activity	2016/2017	2017/2018
Empty Property Assistance Completed	5	1
Empty Property Loans Completed	2	6
Purchase by Agreement Completed	4	1
Compulsory Purchase Orders Confirmed	2	2
Current Ongoing CPO Activity		21
Current Ongoing Purchase by Agreement Activity		4

**12. Councillor Dunbar**

Will the Leader provide an update on the full roll out of Universal Credit in Bradford and any issues she anticipates as a result?

**Answer**

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is introducing Universal Credit to replace a number of existing benefits: Job Seekers Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Income Support, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit and Housing Benefit.

Universal credit went live in the Bradford District in November 2015, but only for newly unemployed single people. There are currently around 4,000 people claiming universal credit in Bradford.

Because of the Autumn Budget announcements, this has been suspended and the go-live for new claims from families and couples has been delayed until June 2018 in Bradford.

After this date, any of our residents that are already claiming one of these so called legacy benefits, will move on to Universal Credit if their circumstances change.

This will leave a cohort of residents who remain on one of these benefits and the DWP have said these will move across between 2019 and 2022

Universal Credit represents a significant shift in the way claimants apply for, and maintain, their benefit payments, and in the way that those benefits are paid.

These will bring some significant challenges to some of our vulnerable residents and we must do all we can to support them.

I think the key challenges will be as follows:

- The government expect all claims for universal credit to be made and managed digitally.

Residents will require an e-mail address, a bank account and on-line access.

We are working with partners to put arrangements in place to support claimants and provide on-line access

- Our residents will be expected to manage their budget on a monthly basis, because universal credit will be paid directly into a bank account in a single monthly payment. This will include housing costs and this could see rent arrears grow and increase the risk of evictions.

It will mean one payment per household, which could bring difficulties in family dispute situations

The Government are able to make alternative payment arrangements so that rent can be paid to landlords or payments can be made other than monthly to the whole household.

We are working with housing providers and the DWP to support residents' financial capability and mitigate difficulties these arrangements may bring. We will also be keen to see the DWP using alternative payment arrangements where necessary

The issue of rent arrears is one the Government has now moved on slightly after much campaigning by advocacy groups.

Briefly, the Government has:

- Reduced the length of time before a first payment of universal credit is made;
- Increased the amount our residents can receive as an advance and increased the pay back period.
- Introduced a non-recoverable payment of two weeks rent for anyone transferring from housing benefits to universal credit and
- Said it will look more favourably on requests for direct payment of housing costs to private sector landlords

There remain however significant challenges which are likely to impact on Bradford residents.

The Council and its partners across the District are all working together to ensure any negative impacts for our residents are minimised as far as we can but there is a danger that a lot of people will really struggle with these changes.

### **Supplementary Question**

Thanks for the detailed answer Leader. One massive concern I have got about the roll out of Universal Credit is because it is assessed on a monthly basis. The impact it will have on self employed people because the Government are not coming forward with any real assurances to mitigate for the discretion for the peaks and troughs self employed people go through so we know if a self employed person takes a holiday they may not then fit the work requirements of Universal Credit which will result in them being sanctioned so I think we need to put a bit more pressure on the Government for their lack of action for self employed people on this.

### **Councillor Hinchcliffe**

You make a good point. I think a wholesale system change like this has wide ranging impacts that people in Government do not always see. I hear Minister after Minister say you know what it is far too complex is the welfare system, far too complex. Well there is a reason for the complexity because just as you raise there, there are always individual circumstances that mean each and every one of us is unique and different and therefore any welfare system has to by its nature be complex to make sure it serves the needs of those people it is designed to create and help. So absolutely I am happy to pursue that further with the team that we have in Bradford and make sure that we can do as much as we can to mitigate the circumstance which you raise there.

### **13. Councillor Fear**

To the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Culture. Given the recent announcement by the Chinese Government to restrict the importation of plastics can the Portfolio Holder advise the Council of any implications for the waste treatment and disposal contract due to commence in April 2018?

### **Answer**

It is simply too early to say how recycling markets in the UK will react, and thus what if any will be the implications for Local Authority plastics recycling and associated income sales. When questioned by the Environmental Audit Committee, the Environment Secretary Michael Gove admitted that he has no knowledge of the

effects that the Chinese situation will have on the UK recycling sector, and had “not given sufficient thought” to it.

In making this announcement, China has introduced a maximum contamination level of just 0.5%, a target viewed by the Recycling Association as very tough to meet. Clearly China is now only wanting high quality recyclate materials. The challenge for the UK recycling sector is to improve quality as well as find new markets. This will take time, and will require new infrastructure to be developed nationally. Our kerbside collected plastics are sorted via our MRF to produce a clean contamination free product which is then baled prior to sending to recycling merchants. In this respect we believe we are in a good position to continue to successfully market our plastics, should the UK market become more sensitive to quality and contamination.

In respect to our contract for residual waste treatment, this contract will begin in April this year. This contract has recycling targets to be achieved from the treatment of our residual waste based upon weight. This is an overall target, and does not specify individual recycling targets for specific products such as plastics, glass etc. These targets will remain in force, and are thus unaffected by the Chinese situation. It is the responsibility of the contractor to capture and market recyclates from our residual waste. Failure to meet targets will result in financial penalties against the contractor.

#### **Supplementary Question**

Thank you portfolio holder for the answer. Can you offer any guarantees that we will not see a reduction in the types of plastic that we are collecting kerbside?

#### **Councillor Ferriby**

Obviously we do not want to see a reduction in any kerbside recycling of plastics but obviously it is something that I cannot guarantee at this moment but officers will work hard to ensure that we maintain levels that we do wherever possible.

#### **14. Councillor Peart**

Will the portfolio holder give an update on the plans to improve the Interchange and Forster Square stations?

#### **Answer**

We know our two city centre stations are key in making a good impression to visitors to our city and that both need to reflect our city and district as dynamic and modern stations.

Both the Interchange and the Forster Square stations are part of the West Yorkshire+ Transport Fund programme overseen by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), with Forster Square and Phase One of the Interchange redevelopment both due for completion by 2021.

Phase One of the Interchange redevelopment will see significant improvements, including to the Bridge Street entrance and in the provision of arrangements for taxis.

Forster Square will see a new enclosed station built, with new lifts, toilets, heated

waiting area, pocket park and retail introduced. It will also bring the magnificent railway arches into use to really make a statement as people approach the city centre.

The current position is as follows:

#### Bradford Interchange

- Expression of interest documentation has been completed and presented to WYCA at the end of last year. These funding requests have progressed through the relevant approval boards and are expected to receive final approval at the WYCA Investment committee meeting taking place in Early Feb 18
- This will release £100k for the development of an outline business case to make quick win improvements to the existing arrangements including improvements for taxi access
- Also being released is £500k for feasibility works to investigate key future options for the interchange site. These are:
  - A - Major improvements to the existing interchange structure (Note this has already been developed in previous master planning works)
  - B - Removal of existing concrete structure and rebuilding a new bus station on the same footprint
  - C - Removal of existing structure and construction on an alternative location

All of these options require actions such as Structural surveys/ Condition surveys and temporary works assessments. These actions are all planned as they will be none abortive and take steps in the right direction whatever the final solution may prove to be. Briefs for the survey procurement are being prepared now.

It is to be noted that the final outcome will also depend on Northern Powerhouse rails decisions

#### Bradford Forster Square

- 12 and 13 December saw the completion of a Public Consultation exercise. This made a statement to the public that shows commitment to getting these works completed.
- Very positive response with over 300 questionnaires filled out
- Programme board meeting has been held where the procurement direction has been tabled. This has established that the project will be led by Bradford as opposed to being led by Network Rail. This has the backing of Network rail and puts the Council team in the driving seat to ensure that this project is delivered.
- Our brief has been prepared for the procurement of the design partner to work with us to take the scheme to the Full business case status. This is progressing through procurement team procedures and will look to use the WYCA framework.
- Details of the procurement have been tabled and discussed with the Environment and Waste Management scrutiny committee
- The team are also looking to recruit specific Network Rail expertise who will join the team and advise on the navigation of the Network rail procedures. The brief for this appointment is also with the procurement team

- Consultation has taken place with the Police who have advised on measures to keep the station safe in its future permanent operation

#### 15. **Councillor Davies**

In light of the fact that the recent consultation on restructuring the SEND Specialist Teaching Support Services, resulted in 79 responses, with 72 of these from employees and just 3 from schools and 2 from parents, does the Portfolio Holder for Education, Employment and Skills consider it to be time to revisit how consultations are carried out in order to increase engagement?

#### **Answer**

During the period of formal consultation between 26 June and 31 August 2017 a further 72 responses were received. Of these 68 were from staff, 2 from schools and 2 from parents. In addition to these responses we also received responses from the National Deaf Childrens' Society, the Royal National Institute for the Blind, Local MPs, Ophthalmology at Bradford NHS Trust and Snoop. All of the responses were responded to individually.

In July 2017 we also circulated a survey to schools to ask them how much they used and rated the teaching support services and if, under a 100% traded model, they would buy into the services on offer; to which 106 schools responded with helpful feedback.

As a result of the initial and formal periods of consultation we have listened and amended our plans to reflect the feedback we have received. The new model was presented to the Council Executive on 9 January and permission was granted for a further period to commence consultation on 17 January with the revised model.

Prior to presenting plans to the Executive we have discussed draft plans with representatives from parents support groups and shared plans with the SEND Strategic Partnership for feedback.

My colleague Councillor Val Slater led on a piece of work with the Local Government Association recently regarding consultation. They organised an event in City Hall for all councillors on this subject, however I accept this was poorly attended.

More recently a Bradford Consultation Toolkit has been developed to support Officers at different levels within the Council to better understand how to undertake engagement and / or consultation. The intention is that with this toolkit officers will be better able to:

- ensure that there is a clear understanding of, and commitment to, consultation and engagement by officers and elected members, and skills, tools and capacity to deliver among officers;
- ensure consultation and engagement is inclusive, well-coordinated, achieves value for money and meets high quality standard;.
- ensure the council's consultations comply with relevant statutory and legal requirements;

- achieve continuous improvement by learning from the evaluation of all significant consultation and engagement activity;
- ensure that the views of local people are used to help identify priorities, influence policy, service delivery and decision making;
- provide clear and timely feedback following all consultation;
- ensure information on consultations is easily accessible;

It is vital that services have active and on-going engagement with their current and potential service users, to ensure that those services continue to be effective and fit for purpose, and also to help support any changes that those services may have to make.

#### 16. **Councillor Dunbar**

Will the Leader join me in condemning the national shame that is period poverty and support the campaign calling for free menstrual products for children in receipt of free school meals?

#### **Answer**

Absolutely. The petition for free menstrual products for young women and girls receiving free school meals and promoted by Amika George, an 18-year-old student from London, and Freedom4Girls, a charity that provides sanitary wear to girls in developing countries, had received 138,414 signatures at 17.00 on Monday 8 January 2018. Once closed, this petition will be presented to the Education Secretary and Prime Minister. The campaign and petition is solely to lobby Government to develop policy in this area and is not concerned with funding sources to support its implementation.

This is the link to the campaign and petition site: <https://www.change.org/p/theresa-may-mp-free-menstrual-products-for-all-children-on-free-school-meals-freeperiods>

I actually think it is tragic that increasingly we are having to campaign for hand-outs to people who can afford nothing. Our country's economy should be working sufficiently well for all people to afford the essentials of life whether that is sanitary products or food.

#### 17. **Councillor Greenwood**

Can the portfolio holder for education, employment and skills tell us what the Opportunity Area scheme will mean for Bradford?

#### **Answer**

Bradford is one of the Education Secretary's 12 Opportunity Areas (OAs) each receiving a share of £72 million to improve opportunities for young people in our community. Bradford's share of the investment is £11.5m which includes £5.5m for the Essential Life Skills funding over two years to enable children and young people aged 5 -18 years old to participate in regular extra-curricular activities.

The Delivery Plan, due to be launched by the Education Secretary includes investing in literacy projects, careers education and advice and additional support for

vulnerable young people across the city, as well as boosting career development for school leaders and teachers in Bradford. The plan sets out four priorities for Bradford to improve social mobility which are:

1. Strengthening school leadership and the quality of teaching.
2. Improve literacy across all phases of education, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
3. Broaden aspirations and support young people in to rewarding careers.
4. Removing barriers to learning by developing evidence for what really works.

Bradford was active in asking DfE to be nominated as an Opportunity Area. Existing partnerships are very involved in both planning and delivery of the programme and the benefits which it will bring for young people in the district.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Anne-Marie Canning as the Chair of the Education Opportunity Area. I am confident that she will make a great contribution to improving education and social mobility in the Bradford District.

#### **18. Councillor Whiteley**

In light of the implications of the adoption of Bradford's Local Plan with applications which will attract a Community Infrastructure Levy, coming before the Regulatory and Appeals Committee, can the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport, please explain how the Council will ensure that the at least 75% of the levy which will be retained centrally, will be utilised for infrastructure projects for the areas that the levy relates to, as those areas will experience the greatest impact from any houses that are built and any amounts going to Parish Councils will not sufficiently mitigate the additional pressure on infrastructure that large developments will bring and some areas of the district have no parish councils or indeed a Neighbourhood plan?

#### **Answer**

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding collected from new developments across the District is split depending on whether there is a Town or Parish Council locally, and whether the Town/Parish Council have an adopted Neighbourhood Plan in place. If a plan is in place then 25% goes to the Town or Parish Council, if not then 15% goes to the Town or Parish Council. The rest, and any CIL money raised in an area without a Town or Parish Council, goes into a pooled strategic pot to be spent on infrastructure priorities across the district, informed by the CIL Regulation 123 List approved by the Executive and adopted by Full Council on 21 March 2017.

We know infrastructure is a huge issue across the district and there is a significant funding gap for us to be able to provide the infrastructure we need to realise our growth potential. There will also be pressures on the wider road network for example faced by areas that currently have a nil CIL value and those needs must also be taken into account. That is why we continue to make the case to central government for devolution and additional infrastructure spending to boost economic growth.

In the meantime we will continue to work in partnership with Town and Parish Councils, and local communities, to explore opportunities for maximising funding and available resources to meet local needs.

It is important to remember that CIL sits alongside the existing planning obligations system, where contributions may still be requested for any site specific infrastructure required to make a development acceptable in planning terms.

### **Supplementary Question**

Thank you for your answer. You did not tell me anything I did not already know. I was asking you really is do you not think it would be a good idea to form some form of fund that will be used in the areas where there will be substantial burden on infrastructure and particularly areas where there will be a large amount of CIL and that will be obviously in Wharfedale from Addingham through to Menston but also in Thornton and with the tiny little amounts of money to parish councils will not provide schools, any additional civil engineering works that might need to be done on roads or anything else that is substantial and I just wondered whether there might be some imaginative use of this CIL money?

### **Councillor Ross-Shaw**

Thank you Councillor Whiteley. The reason you are not being told anything you do not know is because you keep asking the same question so I can only ever give you the same answer really. These are the rules that are laid out. Parish Councils if they have got a neighbourhood planning place can get up to 25% but it is always worth bearing in mind that on any planning application it is determined on its needs and any works directly related to that will have to be funded through that application but the idea of a 75% is it goes to a central pot which we can then spend according to need across the district to the strategic priorities. That will include obviously Wharfedale and Thornton and wherever else there is significant housing growth because we need to unlock that. If we can unlock other areas as well then we can take some of the pressure off Wharfedale so I suppose if we spent a lot of money building a lot of infrastructure in Wharfedale then it would make it even more attractive to even more housing applications which I suspect is not actually what you want.

### **19. Councillor Hassan Khan**

With the good news that Bradford was named by Barclays Bank as the best place in the country to start a business, can the portfolio holder tell us what support the Council is offering to attract and encourage new business in the district?

### **Answer**

Direct business support is provided by the Economic Development Team, under the Council's Invest In Bradford brand, offering wrap around support to businesses seeking to invest or grow within the district.

The Economic Development Team works with partners and local businesses to identify gaps in provision and work collaboratively to address those gaps either through new programmes or informing existing provision. Examples include the City Centre Growth Zone and the development of the Business Improvement Districts in Keighley and Bradford.

The team account manages companies from enquiry to conversion of the investment project, diagnosing business growth needs and brokering in support from other public or private partners as required by the client. They publicise and signpost to external business support programmes, advising on property, assisting with grant applications and advising on doing business with the Council.

To help market properties to potential investors and business occupiers, a comprehensive database of vacant property/ accommodation is provided for businesses via the Invest in Bradford website ([www.investinbradford.com](http://www.investinbradford.com)). The database currently contains 406 properties including retail, office, leisure, industrial, enterprise centres and development sites.

The team also deliver inward investment work for the District, generating enquiries and promoting property development schemes available to business end users. The team work with a large number of existing larger businesses (both foreign and overseas owned) to facilitate significant investment in the district. Successful investment projects of all types handled by the team totalled over £41 million investment and created 455 jobs in the last 12 months. The team also work with the LEP to develop the joint Leeds City Region working on inward investment.

## **20. Councillor Thirkill**

Can the Leader tell us the council's position regarding the campaign to convert the disused Queensbury Tunnel into a cycle route?

### **Answer**

The Queensbury Tunnel is currently owned by and the responsibility of Highways England's Historical Railways Estate (HRE), which acts as custodian of the disused railway tunnel on behalf of the DfT who plan to spend approximately £3 million to close and make safe the tunnel by June 2018. There is local interest in re-opening the 1.4 mile long disused railway tunnel as a walking and cycling route, led by the Queensbury Tunnel Society campaign group.

A report produced by Jacobs in February 2016, as consultants to Highways England, estimates that refurbishing the tunnel for use as a walking and cycling link would cost in excess of £30 million. A separate report produced by the Queensbury Tunnel Society in January 2017 has estimated the cost of refurbishing the tunnel for use as a walking and cycling route as closer to £3 million. The very significant difference between these figures has made it difficult for Bradford Council to fairly assess the actual cost of its retention and in turn take a well-informed decision on whether to adopt the Queensbury Tunnel for walking and cycling provision.

Due to the discrepancy in figures (and the potential need for additional finance from Highways England) and to test its own efficacy for a potential walking and cycling tunnel project, Bradford Council commissioned Sustrans' Research and Monitoring Unit (RMU) to produce a technical report to appraise the benefits and value for money of a number of walking and cycling options, and generate benefit to cost ratios (BCRs). The Council has also commissioned a detailed structural survey of the tunnel (which potentially includes intrusive investigations) in order to better understand repairs and associated costs, enabling the Council to reach an agreed

corporate position on the future ownership and use of the tunnel. This survey work has been funded by HE. Ultimately, the decision on whether it is viable to convert Queensbury Tunnel will be based on the anticipated conversion cost, annual running costs and availability of sufficient commuted sum to cover all future maintenance liabilities.

In terms of the proposed deadline for arriving at this decision Bradford Council has previously asked HRE that any works and associated spend towards the sealing of the tunnel be suspended until these further investigations are completed and a position is reached.

**21. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland**

To the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport. Given the approximately 4000 empty homes in Bradford is greater than the approximately 3882 people on the open housing register who have been assessed as being in the greatest need what plans has the Portfolio Holder to introduce the use of Empty Dwelling Management Orders to take over residential properties that have been empty for longer than six months and so ease the burden on those in greatest need of a home?

**Answer**

Empty Dwelling Management Orders (EDMOs) were introduced in 2006 under the Housing Act 2004. Government guidance stresses that EDMOs are only to be used as one of a range of options, and only when other methods of bringing properties back into use are not appropriate or have failed. Significant limitations apply to the use of EDMOs. For example, they cannot be pursued where the owner is absent because they are receiving care or providing care; where the property is genuinely on the market for sale or letting or where the owner had died and it has been less than six months since probate was granted. They also only provide a temporary solution to deal with long term empty properties as the properties remain in the ownership of the empty home owner and the Council would need the owner's permission in order to rent their property out.

The Council also has a further limitation because it no longer has a housing management function that could manage, maintain and let such properties. Due to the limitations in their use the Council's Executive in 2006 determined that unless there were significant changes to the EDMO tool the Council would not use EDMOs but would instead focus on other solutions including voluntary acquisition, compulsory purchase, Empty Property Loans and Empty Property Assistance which provide a permanent way to bring long term empty properties back into use. This approach has seen the number of empty homes across the district fall by over a third in the last ten years. There have been no changes to EDMOs since their introduction and it is for this reason that only a very small number of authorities across the country (19) have actually used them.

**Supplementary Question**

Thank you to the portfolio holder for his answer. I am actually very disappointed in the response concerning the ability of anyone in Bradford to use this tool. We really need to take more speedy action to help the almost 4,000 people in greatest need

and there are several organisations in the district that could easily become involved in providing a housing management function and I do ask that you take some action to explore with them their ability because at least one organisation that I have knowledge of is now running 40 odd houses which were empty and deemed never to be recoverable and now home families.

**Councillor Ross-Shaw**

We are always happy to speak to any organisation you want to put us in touch with who is doing great work and it sounds like that organisation has done a great job. I think we just need to split out the sort of seriousness of empty properties and people in housing need and a use of EDMOs and how viable they are. I doubt that they were used obviously in the example you have cited because of the way they are structured and that is why it was a decision of the previous Executive not to use them and we have not changed that and only 19 Councils across the whole country have decided to use them because they are very difficult to use. They do not offer a permanent solution because they only last for seven years anyway so the Council has to invest the money in bringing a property back in which at any time the homeowner can then appeal against and after seven years it lapses. So we think there are better tools to tackle issues of homelessness and on empty properties and if you want to put us in touch with any organisations you think we can work with we are happy to meet them.

**22. Councillor Aneela Ahmed**

Does the Leader join with me in congratulating all the people in the District who have received an honour in the New Year's honours list this year?

**Answer**

I was absolutely delighted to see so many people from Bradford District receiving New Year's honours this year. It showed the breadth of talent we have across the district from community radio, medicine, youth work and beyond. We need to celebrate these local heroes and encourage others to get involved. I have of course written to all those honoured to congratulate them personally.

**23. Councillor Poulsen**

Can the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning & Transport, provide details about when and which pavements are gritted during snowy / icy weather, how locations are prioritised, how refills are scheduled and can be requested and whether any actions such as the provision of grit etc., are being taken to encourage the "People Can" and "People Will" initiatives which encourage community spirit and neighbourliness?

**Answer**

The recently approved Winter Service Plan 2018 provides information on the treatment and prioritisation strategy which has been implemented in the current winter season and is available on the Council's website.

Locations for precautionary treatment are determined based on the following factors:

PRIORITY 1 Footway gritting consists of seven dedicated routes covering the city centre in Bradford and town centres of Shipley, Baildon, Bingley, Keighley and Ilkley. The footways treated in these locations are pedestrian areas, busy urban shopping and business centres, transport interchanges, public buildings and outside St Luke's, Bradford Royal Infirmary and Airedale Hospitals.

PRIORITY 2 includes footways which have medium usage for accessing local shopping areas, post offices, medical centres and school routes in busy residential areas and villages. The PRIORITY 2 network will only be treated once the PRIORITY 1 routes have been attended to.

There are in excess of 500 grit bins on the network which are seen as essential to ensuring that those areas of the network which are not covered by the Priority Gritting routes have a facility for treatment by local residents/road users in winter periods. The Highways Service fills each grit bin which it has provided at the start of the winter season (October) as well as repairs/replaces any damaged bins which it finds. Generally, replenishment of council grit bins through the season (October to March) takes place as and when resources permit. Where grit bins have been provided by external bodies or parish/town councils the replenishment of grit stocks is charged for at £25/refill to cover material, plant and labour costs.

We also run a 'Snow Team' volunteer scheme where we assist groups of volunteers to grit their local footpaths and roads and provide free grit and snow shovels to assist with this. There are over 70 Snow Teams across the district. The scheme is co-ordinated through the Neighbourhood Service Area Co-ordinators' officers and details of how local residents and groups can apply to become Snow Teams are provided on the winter service pages of the Council's website: <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/emergencies/winter-and-gritting/snow-teams>.

### **Supplementary Question**

Just to clarify the winter service plan that is on the website is actually 2016/17 because I have just double checked because I thought I was going mad on that. Can you arrange for it to be updated? On your answer priority 1 and 2, thank you for clarifying that on the gritting of pavements. Obviously quite topical today. It would work if there was an equitable fall of snow across the district but as we know it can be very, very patchy having just driven through Thornton and Allerton with thick snow and nothing here. Can I ask that when we are looking at priority 1 and 2 on footpaths the actual falls of snow are looked at and the high levels, for instance before Christmas when we had a week of snow, driving into Keighley from my ward all the footpaths were gritted on the main road into Keighley where there was not a drop of snow to be seen yet as soon as you came up into the higher ground with thick snow and ice still for a week there was no gritting done at all. So it really needs to focus on where the problems are. So could I ask you to have a look at that for me?

### **Councillor Ross-Shaw**

Yes obviously in the Labour Party we believe in equality of coverage even if it is snow. We will certainly take a look at how it is done in the first place. It might obviously be in Keighley which sounds like it has got fantastic gritting coverage. I will just remind Keighley members of that. It might be that it is ice but it is helping to

stop as well. It certainly is a good point and we will look into it.

**24. Councillor Dodds**

Could the Leader advise what we are doing in the District this year to mark the end of the First World War?

**Answer**

Work has been taking place since 2014 to commemorate WW1. Activities have drawn on the important and fascinating collections and archives held by the Museums and Libraries Services. A significant part of the activities has involved working with volunteers, young people and community groups to interpret the many stories and local impact of the war.

For 2018, Bradford Theatres are bringing back the National Theatre's acclaimed play 'War Horse' from 14 February until 10 March 2018. Based on the beloved novel by Michael Morpurgo, this powerfully moving and imaginative drama, filled with stirring music and songs, is a show of phenomenal inventiveness. At its heart are the astonishing life-size horses by South Africa's Handspring Puppet Theatre Company, who bring breathing, galloping, charging horses to thrilling life on stage.

Bradford Museums service are working through their proposal for an exhibition at Cliffe Castle – WW1 'The People's War (working title), April – November 2018. The exhibition will focus on key figures from the Keighley area, their roles in the war and the outcomes of their experiences. The exhibition will put in place a schools and community engagement programme.

The Events team are working in partnership with Civic Affairs and are in discussion with the Yorkshire Regiment who will have a large presence at this year's Armed Forces Day on the 30 June 2018. Meetings have also taken place with Bradford Literature Festival to ensure a joined up approach to activities for WW1 during June.

Civic Affairs are leading on activities for Remembrance Day in November 2018.

Bradford City of Film is supporting a number of projects to inform material for inclusion for the various WW1 activities taking place throughout 2018. It is envisaged that the play created by Undercliffe Cemetery Charity commemorating the lives of some of the army personnel buried there, which was filmed, will be shown at key events on the Big Screen.

Discussions are underway with Bradford College who are planning a series of 'happenings' which includes an academic conference, an exhibition, music and performance arts, workshops for schools and community groups between 22 October and 23 November 2018. The underlying theme will be the impact of WW1, then and now on Bradford District and Yorkshire.

**25. Councillor Hassan Khan**

In view of the comments from Anne Longfield, Children's Commissioner for England

regarding children being “ill-equipped” to be able to cope with the sudden demands of social media, can the portfolio holder advise what we are doing in Bradford to educate young people about how to keep themselves safe online?

### **Answer**

The internet offers great opportunities for children and adults but also poses some real potential risks. These risks were highlighted in the recent “Jack” Serious Case Review. We want everybody to be able to access the benefits of the internet without harm and this means working together with a wide range of stakeholders to develop safer online communities and empowering citizens of all ages to manage risk and stay safe online.

The BSCB has co-ordinated and led on partnership work in this area; in June 2017 the BSCB hosted the Internet Safety Conference with 80 delegates attending who work within the safeguarding arena. Speakers included the Children’s Commissioner, Police, business links through KPMG and an expert in the field of Internet Safety with children. The conference heard directly from children, with a group of young people presenting and contributing to round table discussions. The BSCB, working with the Education Safeguarding Team, has undertaken a Section 175 Audit with all schools. This enables schools to undertake a thorough review of safeguarding procedures and will feed back to the BCSB. This does include awareness of internet safety.

The Curriculum Innovation Service also undertakes significant work around online safety. Sessions are planned with several secondary schools over the coming weeks to meet and discuss online behaviours and the impact social media has on children. Work is also being done around requirements in primary schools (Addressing Childhood Development Milestones in the Digital Environment - <http://5rightsframework.com/resources.html>).

Opportunities for further research with Dixons Research School are ongoing around the effects of technology and social media on young people. The team recently produced this short blog highlighting the Life in ‘Likes’ report and is available here: <http://theblog.is/lac/2018/01/08/life-in-likes/>

Social media is an element of the Online Safety curriculum that schools are expected to deliver in the Online Safety curriculum framework for primary schools: <http://www.ticbradford.com/downloads/esafeguarding/325-e-safeguarding-scheme-of-work-v8-3/file>. Schools are advised of the SWGfL scheme of work that extends into secondary schools available here: <https://digital-literacy.org.uk/>

A Police Cyber Team has been developed in Bradford to deliver free sessions to staff, parents and pupils at primary schools. Their work has been well received by schools accepting a narrow focus around Online Safety and CSEA.

As a partnership Bradford has also made use of positive online methods to work positively with children and young people. This includes work done by the Youth Service with the development of the information advice and guidance app and an online CSE campaign.

**26. Councillor Bacon**

There has been much in the press recently regarding pressures on the NHS during the winter months and we've all become more familiar with the measure of delayed transfers of care where the social care system is too slow at enabling someone in hospital to go back home. Can the Leader tell us how Bradford is doing on this measure?

**Answer**

Bradford is a high performer on this particular measure. For the Period July – September 2017 Bradford ranks 9th highest performing out of 151 Local Authority areas on the overall Delayed Transfer of Care metric (all delays in the system) and 36th highest out of 150 system Local Authority areas for the social care element (delays attributable solely to Social Care).

Each Local Authority has set targets which have been signed off by NHS England and the Local Government Association in relation to the number of days that people are in a hospital bed who are formally delayed due to a delayed transfer of care. During November there were 47 people delayed totalling 174 days against a target of 439 days. Of the 174 days, only 36 were delays attributable to social care. Performance during December dipped, but was still well below the NHS England Target. There were 70 people delayed totalling 253 days against a target of 462 days. There were no delays attributable to social care during December, but 4 days were joint delays.

Staff based at both Bradford hospitals have worked extremely hard to ensure that people are discharged from acute hospital beds quickly once they are medically fit and safe for discharge, ensuring that delays are minimised and people are cared for in the most appropriate setting.

**27. Councillor Mike Pollard**

In the light of the proposals for Council to undertake an increased level of property investment activity, could the Portfolio Holder please comment on whether or not a recent press report stating that; following the recent consultation, the DCLG is likely to introduce new limitations on such activities and that in any case, local government financial regulations prohibit Councils "borrowing solely to invest in yield bearing opportunity" being deemed "borrowing in advance of need," is correct?

**Answer**

It is important to note that our Investment Strategy is predicated on the need for Bradford Council to become more financially sustainable in light of government cuts and for us to invest strategically to generate revenue, which in turn can be used to support public services on which we all rely.

A report on Income Growth, which covers investment in assets to generate a return, was received by the Executive on 9 January. The report acknowledges the current changes that are being consulted on, both by the DCLG and CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy), and that the results of these consultations will be due in the coming months.

However, the 2011 Localism Act provides councils with a general power of competence, which gives local authorities the legal capacity to undertake creative and innovative proposals which meet local people's needs. This includes areas such as the promotion of economic wellbeing and job creation within its area. For example the investment in the NCP car park, which provides a net income to help fund other council services, falls under these legal powers. Such acquisitions are treated as capital expenditure, recorded on the Council's Balance Sheet as an asset and financed in several different manners, including potential borrowing. The Council is therefore borrowing to finance capital expenditure and not borrowing purely to invest. Historically Bradford Council has been much more cautious about this kind of investment than other local authorities.

Councils are legally required to have due regard for recommended practice, such as the Prudential borrowing regulations issued by CIPFA. These regulations allow Councils to borrow up to the level required to fund all capital expenditure. Bradford Council has used its own internal cash balances to part fund its capital expenditure to date, as this is cheaper than borrowing externally in the current interest rate environment. Therefore its external borrowing is currently significantly less than the capital expenditure it has incurred to date and a future borrowing requirement remains. Any new borrowing, rather than being in advance of need, would be for prior need, namely capital expenditure that occurred in previous years.

The prudential indicators which are set out in the Prudential Code and which are the test for new borrowing are fully met by Bradford Council.

The consultation document does not say that borrowing in advance of need is illegal. Rather it says: "Borrowing to invest rather than to deliver statutory services or strategic objectives has always been considered to be borrowing in advance of need. The Government believes that it is appropriate for the revised Guidance that recognises this and requires additional disclosure by local authorities who borrow solely to invest in revenue generating investments". Indeed by proposing new disclosures, the Government is assuming that borrowing in advance of need will happen.

**28. Councillor Mullaney**

Could the Leader let the Chamber know what events are taking place in Bradford this year 2018 to mark the centenary of women's suffrage?

**Answer**

2018 marks a series of important anniversaries that have helped to shape democracy in the UK. Bradford Council is keen to support community celebrations throughout the year, which was resolved at full council on the 18 July 2017. Bradford plans to celebrate the laws and events that ensured that everyone now has the right to vote on the same basis.

Key dates to note:

- 6 February 1918 - The Representation of the People Act is passed on 6 February giving women the vote provided they are aged over 30 and either they, or their husband, meet a property qualification
- 21 November 1918 - The Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act is passed on 21 November allowing women to stand for Parliament
- 14 December 1918 - Women vote in a general election for the first time on 14 December with 8.5 million women eligible

### Outline Programme for 2018

#### February 2018

Representation of Peoples Act event - 6 February 2018, To mark 100 years of "Representation of the People Act " Bradford Council is organising a launch event on 6 February 12pm – 4pm in the Banqueting Suite, City Hall. The event is being planned with VCS groups, cultural organisations and key officers who supports 'women and gender' development across the district to ensure that a vibrant year long programme is in place to mark the Suffrage Centenary.

#### March 2018

International Women's' Day fortnight 2018 - March 1 – 18 - Several activities, workshops, film screenings are being planned to take place across the district which will take place in arts & cultural spaces , community centres , libraries etc.

#### April 2018

Bradford Museums & Galleries April 2018 – September 2018 - Displays and events responding to suffragette centenary in Cartwright Hall, Cliff Castle and Bradford Industrial Museum.

#### May 2018

Shipley Glen Tramway Rally May 26 - Event with Shipley Feminist Zealots and partners recreating the Shipley Glen Women Rally in which took place in 1908. For 2018 the event will take the form of a mass picnic for families to enjoy and make the occasion.

#### June 2018

Bradford Literature Festival:- June 29 to July 8, Events and activities being programmed in response to suffragette centenary.

#### July 2018

- Bradford Festival 2018 – July 13 to 15 – A specific piece of work is being commissioned in response to Suffragettes centenary which will be displayed/performed as part of the Festival. Alongside this piece of work a dedicated space will be created which will include a series of workshops, talks, street acts etc.
- The Bradford Science Festival - July 16 to 22 There will be events and activities programmed with a focus on " Women & Science"
- Bronte Parsonage Museums Emily Brontë's Bicentenary July 27 – 30 - The Brontë Society will hold a weekend of birthday celebrations from July 27– 30, celebrating her creativity and talent as a writer, artist and musician by

commissioning exciting new work from artists who will do her legacy justice. The activities will consider gender politics and women's rights, in the year which marks 100 years since women got the vote.

#### August 2018 – December 2018

Activities are in development which includes a performance production "Radical Acts" developed by Common Wealth Theatre. Radical Acts will be a celebration of disobedient action that women have taken to make change throughout history and the present day. All movement in the play, every action, gesture is historical and all text spoken is contemporary, from personal experiences of the radical for women today. The acts together will make a collage of radical experience that reflects the everyday and the epic.

Throughout the year a number of our partners are delivering a range of projects which responds the Representation of the People's Act 2018.

#### **29. Councillor Farley**

Now we are in the third year of celebrating the birth of the Brontes, will the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport & Culture join with me in welcoming the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Emily Bronte's birth, congratulating the Bronte Society on the great work they are doing and providing support for their programme of work which helps further raise Haworth's profile as a major tourist destination?

#### **Answer**

I welcome the forthcoming celebrations to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Emily Bronte's birth and convey my congratulations to the Bronte Society for pulling together an exciting programme of work throughout 2018. I am particularly encouraged to see the new work commissioned by the Society which is being developed by White Stone Arts, to be launched in November 2018, which will then tour the UK museums, galleries and studio spaces in 2019 and Japanese venues in 2020. The Bronte Society continues to raise the profile of Haworth as a major tourist destination on a national and international platform.

#### **30. Councillor Stubbs**

To the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport & Culture. Given the recent announcement by the Chinese Government to restrict the importation of plastics can the Portfolio Holder advise the Council of any implications for the disposal of plastic waste from Bradford?

#### **Answer**

It is simply too early to say how recycling markets in the UK will react, and thus what if any will be the implications for Local Authority plastics recycling and associated income sales. When questioned by the Environmental Audit Committee, the Environment Secretary Michael Gove admitted that he has no knowledge of the effects that the Chinese situation will have on the UK recycling sector, and had "not given sufficient thought" to it.

In making this announcement, China has introduced a maximum contamination level of just 0.5%, a target viewed by the Recycling Association as very tough to meet.

Clearly China now only wants high quality recycle materials. The challenge for the UK recycling sector is to improve quality as well as find new markets. This will take time, and will require new infrastructure to be developed nationally.

Our kerbside collected plastics are sorted via our Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) to produce a clean contamination free product which is then baled prior to sending to recycling merchants. In this respect we believe we are in a good position to continue to successfully market our plastics, should the UK market become more sensitive to quality and contamination.

### **Supplementary Question**

Thank you for the answer. I wonder in light of the question from my colleague earlier as well whether or not we can consider looking again at the opportunity for recycling more of the plastic within the district so we are closing the loop on our waste? If countries around the world are rightly saying they do not want rubbish from countries like ours there must be more opportunities for us to do more with that waste locally and given that we have this machine that does such a wonderful job at separating out the best of the stuff that must mean that there are more commercially viable options for that plastic at least as well.

### **Councillor Ferriby**

Obviously we are doing a lot of work around recycling and we have already increased the items that we can recycle regarding plastics. That is something that we can explore further and in the amended motion that is going before Council to ask the Environment and Overview Scrutiny to look into that in more depth but certainly officers will do as well.

### **31. Councillor Farley**

Can the Portfolio Holder comment on the campaign to re-open the Skipton-Colne line, its potential impact on Keighley and the wider Bradford District, and whether Bradford Council supports the campaign?

### **Answer**

Bradford Council supports the campaign to open up the Skipton-Colne rail link and I commend the local MP John Grogan for his work in making the case to government.

The Council recognises the re-opened rail link will have potential benefits for Keighley and the Airedale towns and villages as well as the wider City Region and North of England, while playing an important role with regard to transpennine rail freight by providing a new link between Liverpool and Hull. Therefore the Council will continue to work with West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport for the North to assess the feasibility of the scheme as part of our wider strategy to dramatically improve our district's transport connectivity.

### **32. Councillor Hawkesworth**

Since publication of any such document could not conceivably have any adverse effect on negotiations with third parties regarding the Odeon site, will the Leader please confirm that any impact assessment the Council has produced or has had produced regarding any possible effects the opening of the Odeon venue might have

on the profitability and/or viability of the Alhambra and/or St Georges Hall will on demand by a Member be identified and a copy or copies provided to Members on demand?

**Answer**

We refer you to the answer to question 5 which also answers this question.

**Supplementary Question**

On the same point you say you recognise there could be a problem. Yes it does recognise the fact that customers could move backwards and forwards as we know. Will the programming actually be on a contractual basis? Will there be protection both into the contract as far as the programming of the theatres are concerned?

**Councillor Hinchcliffe**

I can't comment on detail on what is in that at least I am afraid. Although obviously in due course that will be known. I do not think I did say there could be a problem actually. I do not remember saying that. I am confident that there is room for all the venues to succeed and prosper in Bradford city centre. Alhambra does particularly well actually and Adam Renton who runs that is a very good business manager and I have every faith that he will continue to deliver that in that venue in the future.

**33. Councillor Cooke**

Could the Leader of the Council outline the methodology used to assess whether, and any evidence to indicate, that the Council's ban on new fast food businesses near schools, parks and other places used by young people, has reduced levels of childhood obesity?

**Answer**

Obviously no single action can solve childhood obesity in one go, as it's a complex issue with many influencing factors.

In September 2017 a UK based study including data from over 1,000 children, found direct evidence that children living closer to fast food outlets were more likely to gain a significant amount of weight between the first and last year of primary school.

Banning new fast food businesses near places used by young people is one piece of the jigsaw, and forms part of our long term vision to make Bradford a healthier place to live, most recently reinforced by the Healthy Bradford Plan. Deploying multiple actions simultaneously to tackle obesity has and continues to be our approach, for example the current Children's Healthy Weight Action Plan (2017-2020) includes actions related to pregnancy, breastfeeding, raising parental awareness of the issue, local delivery of the National Child Measurement Programme, healthy food and drink provision in early years and school settings, a comprehensive physical activity programme across the district which included sustainable travel, play and outdoor learning.

Giving our children the best start is important to us; this includes helping to ensure they have healthy food choices readily available to them wherever possible.

### **Supplementary Question**

Thank you for the answer. Just to clarify the Council actually has no idea at all whether or not if this particular planning policy is making any difference whatsoever to childhood obesity. You have no method or intention to try and find out whether this policy is doing that, you have no evidence of a support to cause in other words you cite a study which is not a study showing cause merely showing correlation between locations and those who know anything about basic science will know that we have to demonstrate that x is linked to y, saying x and y exist in the same place does not mean it is the case. So what we have here is a policy which is preventing people from setting up businesses so it is damaging the economy of the district and you have no idea at all whether it is making a single jot of difference to the thing that you say you have introduced it to do. Do you actually think this is good planning policy?

### **Councillor Hinchcliffe**

Yes. So the national evidence is absolutely clear on this subject. It is just common sense. Fast food is not good for your waist line Councillor Cooke and therefore I would advise you not to eat too much of it and this is one of many measures that we are putting in place to reduce obesity across the district. All of us agree that it is an issue we have to tackle. We cannot wait 20 years just to do a narrow test on one group of children and not give them anything else apart from no fast food to see if that makes a difference. We all know that actually health is a complex issue. How much you earn has an impact. Where you live has an impact. What exercise you do has an impact and yes what you ingest, what you eat also has an impact. So it is by putting all these things together that we are going to make a difference. I am sure Councillor Val Slater who is very keen to talk there but I sat her down has got a whole healthy weight plan and can go through that with you in detail and it includes many issues because we are determined to make progress on this issue.

### **34. Councillor Warburton**

Can the portfolio holder update members on progress with the new leisure and sports development at Sedbergh Fields?

#### **Answer**

Officers are currently in the process of finalising the appointment of a main contractor for this project, a press release will be issued in due course announcing the details of the contractor and a start on site date.

Building work is expected to take 72 weeks and the facility should be open by June 2019.

### **35. Councillor Davies**

Can the Portfolio Holder for Education, Employment & Skills confirm what is being done to improve the Education Psychologist Service, given that in 2012, 88% of children were seen by the requested date, compared to only 51% in 2016?

#### **Answer**

Since 2014, the number of requests for EP reports for Education Health and Care

assessments has more than doubled. At a time of national shortage of Educational Psychologists this has caused some significant problems for the EP team in terms of capacity. We have an ambitious team target of 90% of requests submitted on time and this is written into all EP's Performance Development Reviews.

This has been addressed in a number of key ways:

1. An increased proportion of EP time is now dedicated to statutory work (From approximately 35% - approximately 50%).
2. The system for providing statutory EP advice has been revised and the resulting Joint Assessment Meeting (JAM) system has almost doubled our capacity whilst at the same time been widely welcomed by parents and schools. It is also causing national interest and 30 LAs are due to attend a seminar on JAMs to learn from Bradford's innovative approach.
3. A 'green shoots' recruitment programme has been implemented to encourage local graduates into Educational Psychology and to persuade them to work for Bradford. This is now bearing fruit and we have secured 4 trainees who should then go on to take up existing vacancies.
4. Where necessary, Locum EPs are being used to address any backlog of assessments. As a result of this, all new referrals are now being offered a compliant assessment date and we are confident the previous issues will be resolved.

The service is trying to address the increase in requests through developing more robust pathways that engage school based accountability prior to requesting EHCA. In addition, we have been implementing our 'Green shoots' workforce development programme to encourage more EP's to want to work in Bradford. This is showing encouraging signs of progress.

### **Supplementary Question**

Thanks for the answer. Do you have a date in mind for when you might achieve the 90% target?

### **Councillor Imran Khan**

I will come back to you. It is obviously an ambitious target and it is something that is very important to us but I will get you some more details.

### **36. Councillor Ward**

Can the Portfolio Holder advise how many children in Bradford spent the festive period in temporary accommodation such as B and B's and hostels and hotels?

### **Answer**

No children in Bradford spent the festive period in B&Bs, hostels or hotels. There were 21 families (with 56 children) in temporary accommodation during the Christmas period. These homeless households with children were all accommodated in self-contained flats or houses, with support.

Local authorities have a duty to provide temporary accommodation to households who are in priority need (includes families with children) whilst their homeless

application is being assessed, or if their homeless application has been accepted until duty is discharged with an offer of long-term accommodation.

**Supplementary Question**

Thank you very much for the answer. Can I just ask bearing in mind that we are talking about households in priority need, could you tell us now or later whether the average length of time for households living in temporary accommodation is increasing or decreasing?

**Councillor Ross-Shaw**

Thank you Councillor Ward. I will get the official figures for you. I think it is probably the safest thing to do rather than try to speak about that. I think the numbers in temporary have been falling in B&Bs so I think we are making progress but I will get the official stats for you.

**37. Councillor Martin Smith**

Further to the great expense to local taxpayers, of the survey of June 2017, can the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport advise Members of when some options on the car parking issues in Ilkley will be proposed, so that we may have a meaningful consultation with the residents?

**Answer**

Working with ward councillors, Bradford Council commissioned a report on parking in Ilkley, the scale of any issues around parking and potential proposals for dealing with them, which was completed by July 2017. This report has been distributed to Ward Members, the MP and the Town Council. We have since been taking feedback on the proposals contained within the report and have attended meetings organised by the local MP, John Grogan and the Town Council.

The proposals contained within the report are being considered at present. Further survey work is being undertaken to understand the parking demand for residents, shoppers, shop owners/workers and commuters.

Once a clear set of proposals has been agreed we will consult on them with Ward Members and subsequently other stakeholders before a final decision is taken by the Executive in due course.

**Supplementary Question**

Can we again have some indication of a time line of when the options will be available for consultation and also relevant to question 2 can we Ward Councillors have sight of the responses before reporting?

**Councillor Ross-Shaw**

Yes in terms of time line what I have asked officers to do is to look at the proposals in the consultation report for Ilkley and work out how that will work in practice or any of it we think would not work and therefore cannot go forward. That is a relatively complex piece of work where obviously we visited Ilkley Parish Council last week and gave them a similar answer in so much as we want it to be as fast as possible, hopefully in the next few months, a couple of months even, but I do not want to really

set a date on that in case it just takes a bit longer. I know people have waited for the report and now are keen to see some action. What I will say is it is quite a comprehensive set of proposals in the first place. Obviously it is not going to be in terms of say TROs for residents parking, it will take some time to get that in so I do not want to rush this. We need to make sure we get it right for Ilkley. Actually if we do get it right I think the prize on offer would be quite a good investment in Ilkley and it would be quite good for the transport and support for the town centre of Ilkley. Hopefully will have something for ward members first, which I think we did do with the consultation report, in the next couple of months.

**38. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland**

Can the Leader comment on the recent criticism of spending by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority which included £750,000.00 on networking events (much of it in Cannes in the South of France), £40,000.00 on a 'Council of the North' Conference which has yet to materialise, £25,000.00 on an aborted rebranding exercise, £100,000.00 on Executive Coaching and more than £7000.00 on two Leeds City Region lunches in Mayfair

**Answer**

Attendance at the MIPIM events in Cannes and London are an essential part of the Leeds City Region's work to attract inward investment and jobs and is supported strongly by the private sector as evidenced by the increase in sponsors from six to 34 since 2015. The overwhelming majority of the costs associated with attendance are met through private sector sponsorship. WYCA only makes a contribution to the cost of the exhibition space and the stand. So all networking events beyond the cost of the stand, and promotion of the region at MIPIM is paid for by the private sector from our region. This is a contribution WYCA are grateful for and are working on expanding into the future. The efforts we are making in Bradford and at the Combined Authority level to attract FDI into the region, which includes MIPIM, has resulted in demonstrable benefits. The EY Attractiveness Survey (May 2017) recognised that FDI in Yorkshire & Humber increased by 18 per cent during 2016 while the region has received over 400 enquiries so far from taking part in MIPIM.

The rebranding exercise was not aborted. A modern brand used across the region is being implemented in a process that will generate considerable financial savings which are conservatively estimated at £20,000 annually and have a much greater impact to help us achieve our objectives as a region.

WYCA is investing in staff to ensure they have the skills required to secure the funding this region needs to fulfil its economic ambitions and to manage the complex projects for which the organisation is responsible.

The Council of the North event in partnership with ResPublica scheduled for March 2017 had to be postponed when the General Election was called last year. An event will take place later this year, we are discussing this with other Combined Authorities across the North.

**Supplementary Question**

Thank you Leader or whoever wrote the response. I asked you for a response about

the criticism really because in times of austerity folk have been quite rightly critical of what seems to be quite an excessive expenditure and as Leader of the Combined Authority I think it does fall to you to make sure that it is absolutely transparent and when we do spend what seems to be quite an excessive amount of money on what does seem to be not the most important thing to focus on Bradford that we are actually clear about why it has been spent because the criticism falls on all of us.

### **Councillor Hinchcliffe**

Thank you Councillor Sunderland. You would expect a Councillor from Bradford to watch the pennies and indeed I do and I will and therefore you can be assured that as a new Chair to Combined Authority I obviously will be making sure that we spend that money well. The answer makes clear that a lot of the money that is on your list there is actually private sector money so businesses have put money into the pot because they want to promote the region because they see it is absolutely good for their business and therefore by default it is also good for our region's economy. I said at the last full Council meeting we had a debate about growth I believe was we need to go for growth. We cannot cut our way at the situation the Government are leaving us with at the moment. We cannot do that growth just by sitting behind a desk and hoping people will come here. We have to go out, we have to sell ourselves, we have to talk to businesses, work with them to make sure we get the investment into the region. That is really important. Obviously we need to do that at as low a cost as we can but if we can get in private sector sponsorship to support us in these endeavours then let's take it and let's work with them to achieve what we all need.

### **39. Councillor Davies**

How many school governor vacancies are there across the District's schools and what is being done to encourage people to volunteer their time and skills in this way?

#### **Answer**

Vacancy figures are made up of 'Foundation' Governors to which the Dioceses appoint and other governors that the Local Authority can support recruitment to. For clarity the following information reflects this. There are (8 January 2018) 163 governor vacancies across maintained schools in the Bradford District. This figure includes vacancies the School Governor Service (SGS) can work to fill (Co-opted Governors, Local Authority Governors) and vacancies that are for governing boards to elect to (Parent, Staff Governors). The number and proportion of vacancies is reducing. The 2016-2017 baseline (the most recent we hold) shows overall governor vacancies at 17%. This year the vacancy rate is 12% of which the Local Authority (LA) is able to assist in making appointments to 9% of this figure. The position is therefore improving.

SGS has an active involvement in promoting the Education Covenant as a source of governor recruitment. SGS has participated in the Education Covenant from its inception and works closely with colleagues in the Education, Employment and Enterprise Team in identifying potential governors within the Council's workforce and key district employers. The Education Covenant has been included in Governor Forum meetings where presentations have been delivered by councillors including Cllr Hinchcliffe. A component of SGS strategy is aligning the Education Covenant

with a range of recruitment initiatives e.g. using 'Governor Champions' through the employers we work with who share their experience to support recruitment although this is at an early stage.

There are also (8 January 2018) 64 Foundation Governor vacancies across all Bradford district schools. The Foundation Governor vacancies are recruited to and appointed by the relevant Diocese (or non-religious foundations) who undertake work in their communities to recruit governors.

Governance information for every maintained and academy school has now to be reported by each school to the Department of Education through the Get Information About Schools ([GIAS](#)) website – there is no requirement for schools to report their governance information to the Local Authority.

SGS gathers information (mainly through delivering a clerking service to many of the maintained schools and academies), thus the information held on the governance arrangements in all school across Bradford is an indicative rather than accurate representation of the picture.

By law, employers must give employees who serve on maintained school boards 'reasonable time off' to carry out their duties (Employment Rights Act 1996, s 50). SGS is working with an increasing number of local employers to raise awareness of governance and facilitate their staff coming forward to offer their time and skills in this voluntary role. Lloyds Bank and the Yorkshire Building Society actively promote governance to their staff.

SGS is also working with other large employers but this activity is at an early stage and as such cannot yet be reported here. SGS also advertises governance volunteering through national organisations recruiting volunteers including [Do-it volunteering](#), Governors for Schools ([SGOSS](#)) and [Inspiring Governance](#).

SGS has a recruitment plan to use social media and local press in raising awareness of Governance volunteering opportunities; however as the Local Authority funding for the SGS reduces the longevity of this approach will be reviewed.

SGS has strong relationships with LA colleagues in recruiting to governor positions, notably the Education, Employment and Skills Team.

SGS also offers free information sessions - 'Interested in being a Governor?' providing an interactive opportunity to find out more about governance before applying. Application forms and further information are available on [Bradford School Online](#) School Governance and Workforce Development section.