

COUNCIL

Tuesday 13 December 2022

MEMBER QUESTION TIME – Part 2

Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12

35. Councillor Debbie Davies

Would the Leader of Council please inform members how the 7 staff networks within the Council – Race Equality, LGBTQ+, Working Carers, Women’s Voice, Disability, Young People, BME Women – operate and how a voice is provided to employees who don’t fit into any of these categories?

Response

All 7 networks are -

- self-directed
- sponsored by a CMT member
- have individual Terms of Reference (TOR).

In terms of being self-directed, this means that the network is led by the network members. Networks meet with their CMT sponsor regularly, e.g. Kersten England is the sponsor for Race Equality Staff, where this is an opportunity for the network to feedback via the Sponsor to CMT.

Each network work towards their individual network goals/plans and they are all supported by various Officers in the Council, e.g. HR, CEX office. Networks meet in accordance with their TOR, e.g. Women’s Voice and LGBTQ+ meet once a month.

For employees who don’t fit into any of these categories, there is the option to partake in the RESPECT programme through allyship, the definition of which is ‘An ally is defined as "a person or group that provides assistance and support in an ongoing effort, activity or struggle - often now used specifically of a person who is not a member of a marginalized group but who expresses or gives support to that group"’

In addition, there is CMT accessibility/visibility, employee opinion survey and regular all staff briefings.

36. Councillor Alun Griffiths

Does the portfolio holder agree that the Bradford City runs were poorly promoted and publicised this year, and commit to earlier planning and better publicity in future?

Response

Thank you for raising this issue. As you will be aware the events calendar has been incrementally introduced since the pandemic and in addition this year has seen

some notable one-off events being organised for example, the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay, the four-day Queen's Jubilee celebration weekend and a royal visit to name but a few. The Bradford City Runs did not have the take up this year that we would have hoped for and we are looking at next year already. We are considering a new route, changing the time of year and increased marketing and publicity and how we might do this in partnership with Active Bradford who are currently in discussions with the Council officers. We will be making an announcement soon when we start the promotional campaign for the Bradford City Runs 2023 and look forward to increasing the number of runners taking an active part in the event.

37. Councillor Anna Watson

The clock on the Clock tower in Shipley has not been in working order for many months. Bradford Council is responsible for the upkeep of the mechanism under a long standing agreement but the structure is in private ownership. However, the engineers can no longer access the mechanism due to the poor state of the structure. What action is Bradford Council taking to ensure the private owner addresses this issue so that the mechanism can be fixed and we can have the clock back in working order?

Response

As the freehold owner we have written to the tenant requesting them to undertake the necessary repairs to the clock tower, and to date received no answer. We are currently taking legal advice to understand what recourse is available to the Council, which may include the Council undertaking the repairs direct and recharging the tenant.

38. Councillor Bob Felstead

Could the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport provide members with reassurance that condition 45 of the Sun Lane, Burley in Wharfedale planning permission, regarding the submission of a report setting out the timetable for all required actions and detailing and assigning individual responsibilities for the applicant/s and any other relevant party involved in the school delivery process is received and will be meticulously enforced?

Response

A document was submitted with the Reserved Matters application (21/05850/MAR) which was called the "Education Report". The intention of the report was to satisfy the requirements of condition 45 of the outline planning permission (16/07870/MAO) as well as ensuring the contents of the Section 106 Legal Agreement are adhered to. The Report identifies the relevant parties involved in the school delivery process (including David Wilson Homes, Bradford Council, Prospective Free School Sponsors, existing schools, Burley Parish Council, and Local Ward Members) together with their roles in that process. The Report also proposed a timescale for the delivery of the school with the process proposing up to 4 quarterly meetings each year up to the year 2032. The Report was considered to be acceptable in terms of

satisfying the requirements of the condition when determining the Reserved Matters application (21/05850/MAR). The timescale and delivery of the school are much dependent on the school place figures that are released annually which will determine local need. There will need to be some degree of flexibility with regards the enforcement of the condition as there may not be a need for the proposed four quarterly meetings each year whilst the development is in its early years of construction. However, it would still require the Developer to make contact with the Council at the relevant times to determine whether a meeting is required.

39. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

Following the failure of Bradford Council to make improvements to Hanson Academy, the intervention by the Regional Schools Commissioner and appointment of the Delta Academies Trust when can students, parents and staff expect to see improvements measured in terms of attainment, attendance and achievement and a reduction in exclusions?

Response

Hanson School became part of Delta Academies Trust from 1st July 2022. At this point, the school became a 'new' school. Government dictates that, as a sponsored academy it will not be inspected until the school's third year of opening i.e. 2025. Before that time all academic examinations, attendance data and exclusion data will be made publicly available annually. The first attainment data will be made available in the autumn of 2023 following the GCSE results release. The attendance and exclusions data will be made available at the end of the summer term 2023.

40. Councillor Kevin Warnes

Will the Leader of Council work with the Strategic Director of the Department of Place to ensure that our trees and highways officers coordinate closely when street trees are removed? Specifically, to ensure that (a) ward councillors and nearby residents are kept fully informed, especially in advance; (b) replacement trees are planted at the same location, whenever possible; and (c) pavement repairs are carried out within days rather than months or even years. At present, as many councillors will agree, this service failure across the district undermines our public realm and is a recurrent concern for local residents.

Response

The Council recognises the important contribution highway trees make to creating a sustainable district by supporting biodiversity, capturing carbon, improving air quality, moderating extreme temperatures and providing pleasure to the majority of people in the district. The Council is also aware that urban trees face an uncertain future as climate change and new diseases take effect: ash dieback is spreading through the district's ash trees including highways, whilst extreme summer temperatures and altered rainfall cause stress and loss. These factors are reflected in Council policy and practice which is to retain trees wherever possible whilst ensuring we meet our statutory obligation in respect of the highway and the highway user, that is, people should be able to pass unobstructed and in safety. The courts expect that when

hazardous trees are identified the owner acts in a timely way to either reduce or eliminate the hazard. It is for this reason that the decision to remove trees is effectively delegated by the Highways Service to the Tree and Woodland Unit, who implement Council policy through inspection, assessment and necessary action.

Highways and Tree/Woodland Officers maintain daily and weekly communications to ensure the Council is both efficient and effective in meeting its duty of care. In addition, officers from both services meet bi-annually as an officer group to review policy and operational issues.

In relation to the specific questions raised.

Firstly, advance notice to Councillors should be standard and we are working to ensure this always happens. Notice to residents is more difficult due to resource and time constraints, however we are looking at system and IT improvements to determine whether any element of advance notification is feasible. We will also liaise with the local Area Offices so local ward officers and wardens are aware as they, along with Councillors, can do valuable work with local engagement.

Secondly, Tree Officers as a matter of course assess whether it is feasible to replant in the same location following a tree removal. Unfortunately, highway tree planting is heavily constrained by a range of factors that are difficult and expensive to overcome, for example, the presence of above and below ground utility services, maintaining pavement widths and sightlines together with the impracticality and cost of complete stump removal or creation of a new planting location in the surfaced highway. However, over the last five years 242 trees have been planted in the adopted highway by Trees and Woodlands. Better Place Bradford has also planted additional highway trees and a number of road improvement schemes have ensured that trees are replanted, for example, North Street improvements in Keighley. The Council is also working closely with Trees for Streets, a government funded initiative, aimed at enabling citizens, civil councils and businesses etc. to sponsor tree planting.

Finally, the Council aims to reinstate the highway surface in a timely way where it is not feasible to replant trees. Unfortunately, staff turnover and COVID restrictions have disrupted the process of reinstatement over the last few years. Highway engineers are currently reviewing and checking a list of all trees felled over the past five years and a weekly list of completed removals is now also passed to highways. The officer group is also looking at the feasibility of integrating Highway contractor details into the Tree Management System to provide real time daily updates of reinstatement works.

41. Councillor Andrew Loy

Could the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport provide the latest figures for revenue from parking charges and fines in Ilkley, both for the car parks and on-street parking, and what are the estimated costs of the parking scheme in Ilkley for the same period?

Response

Revenue from P&D income from 2019-20 to date:

Year	On Street	Car Parks
2019-20	£223k	£450k
2020-21	£130k	£195k
2021-22	£197k	£501k
2022-23 (To end Nov '22)	£153k	£362k

Revenue from PCNs issued in Ilkley:

Year	PCN fines collected:
2019-20	£111k
2020-21	£49k
2021-22	£104k
2022-23 (To Dec '22)	£79k

Figures above are to CP9 (Nov/Dec) this financial year and include all fines collected for all PCNs issued across Ilkley for any contravention type both on-street and in car parks, including streets that don't have Pay & Display on-street parking.

Running costs for car parks during same time periods is £266k in total including the resurfacing of South Hawksworth Street car park, which included improved street lighting, tree planting and other site improvements and cost over £100k. Cost for the implementation was £303k. This includes Pay & Display works but also the review and implementation of the permit scheme. This figure does not include standard maintenance or repair cost to roads in the central Ilkley area during the same time periods.

42. Councillor Alun Griffiths

Can the portfolio holder give an update on the progress of the Smart Street Lighting project, including how many, if any, of the priority cut downs are still to be replaced, and how many installations were faulty and had to be returned to?

Response

The project team have investigated the progress regarding outstanding column replacements and requested the specific units outstanding to ensure that the data is picking up all outstanding work.

As at Friday 20/01/2022 there are 26 cut down columns that were not identified as a priority that require replacement.

In terms of those that were identified as a priority, there are 29 that have been issued to the contractor that are in the process of being replaced, these have been delayed due to site conditions such as restricted access, parked cars etc.

The project team request an update at the weekly progress meetings to ensure that we are aware of issues relating to the replacements and that we can monitor progress.

There were also 15 that were not deemed as a priority which are being picked up as the column replacement work progresses through the district.

In terms of general progress, as at the progress meeting of the 18/01/2023 the following have been completed against the total stock of around 60,000 units

Lantern changes to LED 20,318

Lantern change and new sheet steel bracket on concretes 475

Column Replacements 4,399

Total Lantern Replacements 25,192

There are milestones for the Lantern Replacements, the latest of which is 23,598

Therefore, the project is 1,594 Lantern Replacements ahead of schedule which will provide a slightly greater energy saving

As the inventory updates lag behind the replacements, the estimated savings based on the previous year's consumption in the period from April 2021 to Dec 2022 are:

- 13,120,182 kWh roughly equating to £749k (based on 24p/kWh) actual savings can only be confirmed once invoices and credit notes have been reconciled
- 1547 tonnes of CO²

43. Councillor Matt Edwards

Will Bradford Council be objecting to the planning application to build an Amazon distribution warehouse on the edge of Kirklees, given that in the Transport Assessment submitted by the applicants states they will be advising HGV drivers that arrive early to go to service stations within Bradford District - including a small petrol station on Tong Street?

Response

Having reviewed this document, the highway advice is, the document states that a vehicle would be allocated a specific time to arrive and depart. A grace period of sixty minutes, before and after the allotted time, has also been factored into the delivery operation. The proposed site layout has been designed such that vehicles arriving early, or late, can be accommodated within the site thereby reducing the risk of them being turned away. Vehicles could also be accommodated within the site for additional shorter periods should any issues arise within the site. Therefore, the likelihood of any significant number of vehicles being turned away and having to park on the highway is very small.

In the event of any vehicle being turned away the document identifies a number of possible sites where drivers could wait until they are allowed to enter the site of which three are located within the Bradford District. These are:

- Esso Rontec Westfield, Cleckheaton Road, Low Moor;
- Esso Rontec Denbrook, Tong Street, Tong;
- Shell Cross Lane Services, Westgate Hill Street, Tong.

It should be noted that all the above have been identified within the documents as having no HGV parking spaces and no toilet/shower facilities. Therefore, these would not prove to be attractive, or practical, destinations for drivers of HGVs to use as suitable places to park up and wait.

The only location identified as providing dedicated HGV parking, as well as other comfort break facilities, is the 'Welcome Break Hartshead Moor Services' on the M62. This lies within an easy eleven-minute drive from the development site and would be the most attractive place to drivers to park up and wait for their allotted times. For shorter waiting periods drivers may be tempted to park up closer to the site however this would take place in the Kirklees District and would be a matter for their own Highway's officers to address should this happen.

Therefore, BMDC Highways can raise no highway safety concerns to raise and any likely additional impact on Bradford Council's highway network resulting from parked HGVs would be negligible, if at all. However, we will liaise with Kirklees Planning and Highways Service to make clear to them that the three Bradford sites lack HGV facilities and should not be recommended as suitable HGV parking locations.

44. Councillor Mike Pollard

Could the Leader of the Council confirm how many hotel rooms in the District are currently occupied by migrants placed by implementation of Home Office procedures?

Response

The Council does not own data on how many hotel rooms are booked and used by the Home Office. This data is owned by the Home Office and they should be contacted for this information.

45. Councillor Susan Knox

Will the portfolio Holder join me in congratulating Blooming Buds based on Thorpe Edge in the Eccleshill Ward on their success in gaining 'Portfolio status'?

Response

Blooming Buds took over the Rockwell centre in May 2022 and have established themselves in the community very quickly, providing a plethora of activities for the local area such as pay as you feel markets, arts and craft sessions, young peoples' discos to name a few. Blooming Buds are a theatre company whose aim is to bring the arts to working class communities, they have recently been successful in a bid to the Arts Council which will enable them to continue allowing space for local people to access and participate in theatre productions and other artistic pursuits within the wider area. What they have achieved in eight short months is remarkable.

46. Councillor Kevin Warnes

According to the 'Climate and Environment Update' Report submitted by the Strategic Director, Place, to the Regeneration and Environment OSC on 15 November, "The West Yorkshire Mayor and Authorities are committed to achieving net zero by 2038 with...significant progress by 2030" (section 2.5, page 37 of the agenda). What does "significant progress" actually mean, in practice; and what specific target for reduced CO2e emissions are we aiming to achieve by 2030 across the West Yorkshire region?

Response

The West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan to 2024 sets a target of net zero by 2038 with significant progress by 2030. While 'significant progress' is yet to be fully defined on a regional and local basis, the Climate & Environment Plan includes decarbonisation pathways and a road map of activity to 2038 that progress will be assessed against.

47. Councillor Andrew Loy

Could the Portfolio Holder for Education, Employment & Skills confirm what plans are there for future investment in the district's libraries?

Response

Please note this is a question for the Portfolio Holder for Healthy People and Places.

The Council has made significant investment in libraries across the District in recent years. This has included £700k recurrent investment by Public Health in recognition of the important role that libraries play in supporting wellbeing, which is being developed further following the adoption of a new vision and model for the Service in March 2020. £200,000 capital was allocated to support the development of pilots to illustrate this model and this funding has been used alongside funding from Facilities Management as part of a complete refurbishment of Wibsey Library and adaptations to Keighley Library to make these libraries more modern and flexible. In addition, Holme Wood Library has been completely refurbished as part of the refurbishment of the TFD Centre there.

The Council currently has the following plans for further investment in Bradford District libraries:

- Re-provision of Baildon Library: In view of the requirement to move Baildon public library away from Ian Clough Hall, Bradford Council has acquired the former Baildon Club from the private sector and will, over the coming months, refurbish and convert this building into the new Baildon library. This intervention represents a £1.4million capital investment into the public library estate. Furthermore, to ensure continuity of this local provision, Baildon Library has been temporarily located in the centre of the town so that service disruption is minimised during that period
- Capital replacement of self-service kiosks across Bradford Council run libraries which is currently at the pre-procurement stage

- £200,000 grant funding from Arts Council England to make adaptations to 10 libraries across the District to enable more community and partner use of library spaces by April 2024, building on the work undertaken in the two pilots
- A total of £144,000 Community Infrastructure Levy funding has been allocated by the Executive to invest in new stock and other capital projects in response to additional demand from growth.

We will continue to review the needs of each library and prioritise investment as we roll out the new library model.

48. Councillor Brendan Stubbs

Can the Leader of the Council detail what are the current levels of occupancy in Council Offices and what steps are being taken to reduce the cost to the Council of the vacant workspaces and also what the council is doing to minimise the economic impact of having 1000's fewer staff working in our City and Town Centres?

Response

The Asset Management team gathers detailed occupancy data across the Council's main office buildings in Bradford City Centre. The data for November 2022 shows that the average occupancy of desks is around 29%. Occupancy rates vary from day to day and on the busiest day of this year 35% of the desks were occupied. Similar data taken from pre-Covid times shows that peak occupancy was around 80%.

Clearly, that is not sustainable in the long term and I have requested that officers come up with proposals for the future of our office estate. That work is complicated by matters such as the critical infrastructure contained within some of our buildings, the potential to better use office space in City Hall and the establishment of Bradford Children and Families Trust. In the meantime, we have temporarily closed Argus Chambers and significantly reduced our occupancy in Margaret McMillian Tower, both of which will enable us to achieve energy cost savings.

The data shows that we have moved to hybrid working patterns and the vast majority of office workers come into our offices at least once per week. Whilst this means that our offices are under occupied on a day to day basis, the economic impact is somewhat mitigated by the number of different people coming into the city centre each week and engaging in economic activity.

More broadly our regeneration programme continues to support the growth of our urban centres, such as One City Park in the city centre and the Health & Wellbeing Centre in Keighley, both of which will bring hundreds of quality jobs into those areas.

49. Councillor Anna Watson

Bradford Council is rightly proud to have led the way in insisting that electric vehicle charging points are incorporated into development proposals. When will we go further in terms of insisting that development proposals incorporate a fuller range of renewable energy technologies and follow the advice of the Committee on Climate Change that no new housing developments are connected to the gas network from 2025 onwards?

Response

Bradford led the way in insisting on developments incorporating electric vehicle charging points and led on the development of the West Yorkshire Low Emission Planning Guidance. This document primarily focuses on Air Quality emissions from developments. Planning guidance is currently being updated and will be incorporating the new Building Control Document S updates, with new homes in England now needing to produce around 30% less carbon emissions compared to the old regulations.

In terms of renewable energy, the government sets national standards for new housing and it is not possible for a Local Planning Authority to stipulate local standards that go beyond these. However, the draft Local Plan does have a Strategic Priority for delivering sustainable developments, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, which has a focus on minimising energy use of the building as a whole rather than just looking at renewable energy.

Our Homes & Neighbourhoods Design Guide also encourages developers to consider a wide range of sustainability measures as a core part of their planning considerations.

More generally, viability remains an issue for many developers across the district. Therefore, the more conditions attached to developments the more public subsidy can be required to deliver them.

50. Councillor Debbie Davies

As the answer to my question back in July confirmed that £190,000 had at that time been spent on making the former Richard Dunn sports centre “site and building secure from trespass, break-ins, theft and vandalism; and to stop illegal entry into the building with the potential risk to human life” and there have been at least two illegal traveller encampments there since, with the most recent one being in October, does the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport think that there is more that can be done and does the Council liaise with the police to pursue prosecutions of those responsible?

Response

Further to your question in July 2022, the Richard Dunn building is secured and was not broken into on the last two illegal occupations of the site by travellers. However, it has proved far more challenging to prevent trespassers gaining access to the site as ‘ad hoc’ use is required regularly by the Bradford Bulls and Stock Car Company to provide additional car parking when they hold matches/events at the Odsal stadium, Council officers are continually looking at what can be done to enhance the existing arrangements. Of course, where the Council has evidence, we have worked with the Police to successfully prosecute and charge an individual for illegal trespass, and will continue to do so.

51. Councillor Brendan Stubbs

Can the Portfolio holder please detail how many vacancies and staff on long term sick leave the Council currently, has broken down by department, and how many of these would be described as front line?

Response

There is no accepted definition for what constitutes “frontline” staff. The vacancies data reflects all vacant posts, but does not show those posts that are ‘true’ vacancies and (a) will be recruited to, or (b) are still needed in departments. Some roles are legacy roles from restructures and TUPE transfers so will reduce on review.

Dept	Unoccupied Posts FTE	Employees on Long Term Sickness
Chief Exec's Office	95	7
Children's Services	555	84
Corporate Resources	262	76
Health & Wellbeing	378	81
Place	344	59
Council	1,639	307

52. Councillor Matt Edwards

When will the Council deliver the 5 acre solar parc at Odsal Top, bearing in mind that this has been talked about on and off for the best part of a decade?

Response

This site now forms part of a larger regeneration project and was subject to the outcome of a Levelling Up Fund bid, which includes the Odsal stadium and former Richard Dunn site. Obviously we are disappointed that the Government did not award this scheme the investment it deserved. We had a plan to progress the project rapidly within 6 months however given the negative decision of Government, we will need to reassess the project to see where alternative funding might be sourced to progress our ambitions which remain undimmed.

53. Councillor Falak Ahmed

Further to the news that a 2-year-old in Rochdale passed away due to respiratory problems caused by mould in the home, could the Leader of the Council provide insight into the status of social housing in Bradford District- are we aware of any similar cases and what actions have we taken thus far to prevent what happened in Rochdale from repeating in the district?

Response

As a result of the incident in Rochdale, the Secretary of State for DLUHC has highlighted the urgent need to ensure a decent standard of properties for tenants in all sectors.

The SoS has written to all Local Housing Authorities reminding them of the duty that LAs have under the Housing Act 2004 to review housing conditions in their district and to identify where action is necessary. Social Housing Providers have also been reminded of the expectation that properties achieve the required standard and that providers address remedial action rapidly.

In addition, the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) has written to all social housing providers asking them to complete a survey / questionnaire by the 19th of December addressing a number of matters relating to the approach to damp and mould issues. Therefore the Council has already responded to this.

A report was prepared for CMT on the 30th November setting out the current position relating to the Council's activity and also measures that are in place to increase intervention and address the areas of concern for the SoS.

The Council is itself a stock holder of 406 homes, some of which are managed by Incommunities and some by Mears Plexus. The stock is less than 15 years old and the bulk have been designed and constructed to higher levels of energy efficiency, above the standard building regulations.

The Council has made contact with all social housing providers to request copies of the information that they will be providing to the RSH to improve our knowledge and information on the social landlords. Following receipt of this information the Council will be in a more informed position regarding the current status and condition of housing in the social sector.

In addition, the Housing Operations Service (Housing Standards Team) is responsible for the enforcement of housing standards in the district, not only in the private rented sector but also in the social housing sector. Action is taken by the Housing Standards Team to address hazards and this includes the hazard of damp and mould. The team is liaising with all social landlords to ensure that the correct and most up to date details are held for them so that action is directed correctly and dealt with swiftly.

The Council is not aware of any similar cases in the Bradford District.

54. Councillor Kevin Warnes

How much would it cost the Council to amend its TROs to incorporate pavement parking restrictions?

Response

Existing Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) can already be enforced to the full highway extent, including adjacent footways. Any streets or lengths of streets not yet covered by TRO's would have to be subject to new TRO's the cost of which would be governed by the extents covered.

The government has been looking at the issue of pavement parking and carried out a consultation with local authorities some time ago which we are still awaiting an announcement on. The outcome may have some impact on verge/footway parking in our district. This will be the subject of an Overview & Scrutiny report, when the findings are published. It would be prudent to wait for the national review to be finalised to avoid any abortive spend on interim TRO's.

In the meantime, local pavement parking issues can be flagged with wardens and the local Neighbourhood Police Team for consideration. While there are many instances of inconsiderate and even dangerous parking, there are also situations where the people doing the parking are local residents, with no easy resolution for where residents can park.

55. Councillor Geoff Winnard

Can the Leader of the Council please list all the charitable or trust funds that the Council manages setting out the aims of each one and the amount of funds remaining for each trust?

Response

The response is attached, as an excel document. Some of the criteria around these Trusts are very restrictive and therefore cannot be easily spent, ultimately it is not council money. Any changes to these Trusts have to be made through the Charities Commission which can come at a considerable expense. If there is any particular fund which Cllr Winnard is interested in then he can address queries to the Council's Finance Director.

56. Councillor Kevin Warnes

Will the Leader of Council please update us about measures being taken to ensure that the owners of the former garden centre site near Hirst Lock bring this site back into some form of use that is acceptable to the local community? This derelict site, in a Conservation Area and on the boundary of our World Heritage Site, has been a disgraceful eyesore for many years, a blight for the many people who access that stretch of canal every week and - frankly - a source of growing corporate embarrassment for Bradford Council.

Response

The Council served a Notice in 2021 under Section 215 requiring the land to be improved to remove the blight. While retaining some of the built structures the owner cleared the remaining parts of the land and removed rubbish and overgrown vegetation. Alongside the issuing of the Section 215 notice the Council has actively engaged with the owner to see how the site can be brought back in to use in an appropriate way which is sensitive to the conservation area and wider World heritage site setting. Subject to an appropriate scheme being developed by the owner would then be subject to a formal planning application which would be published and available in the normal way for the local community to comment.

If a scheme is not forthcoming the Council will consider what further action it can take within the powers available to it. However, the Council cannot force a landowner to develop a site and can only work to support them through the planning process with an appropriate scheme.

As has been explained previously, the site is in the green belt and a cleared green belt site is even harder to develop than a developed one. Therefore the optimum solution is for the site owner to submit a quality application bringing the site back into use, and that is what we are pushing for.

57. Councillor Geoff Winnard

Can the Leader of Council set out how many direct employees of the Council have been dismissed for reasons of conduct or capability for each of the last two calendar years and also the latest figures for 2022?

Response

Year	Headcount Dismissed
2020	38
2021	31
2022 to date	50
Grand Total	119

58. Councillor Kevin Warnes

Will the Leader of Council please reassure me that the Council will deal with the ongoing problems associated with an area of privately-owned derelict land by Alton Grove, where the owner has failed for years to maintain adequate perimeter fencing and allows fly-tipped rubbish to accumulate on this land in full public view; and where we have experienced ongoing issues including an abandoned bin and fly-tipped waste on Alton Grove?

Response

This matter has been referred to the Highway Enforcement Team to progress in terms of securing the fence at the perimeter of the site.

The issue of fly tipping on private land falls outside the remit of Highway Enforcement, but will be referred to the Environmental Enforcement Team for further action.

59. Councillor Peter Clarke

Could the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport please provide an update on the planned completion date of the building of the bridge over the A629 in the Craven Ward and the state of the funding for the project

Response

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

Work on developing the Outline Business Case (OBC) for this project now has to be revisited to align with the output requirements of the CRSTS funding and recent policies such as LTN 1/20.

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

As part of the CRSTS award a funding envelope of £10.3m was identified for this project made up from CRSTS (£9.5m) and other associated funding streams (£800,000).

60. Councillor Matt Edwards

Following the demolition of The Tempest pub in Holmewood in 2017, the land has remained an eyesore and it has taken a substantial amount of time by environmental enforcement officers to keep this site free of fly tipping - despite planning permission being granted on the site for housing. What actions can Bradford Council take to ensure this site is brought back into use and ensure good quality affordable homes are built here?

Response

Environmental Enforcement Officers have been liaising with the land owner including serving Enforcement Notices to ensure the land is cleared of any fly tipping. Currently the land is relatively clear of waste and the Enforcement Officer is continuing to liaise with the land owner to ensure regular inspections of the site are made and any waste present is removed. The Enforcement Team would only deal with the waste that is present on the site and do not have the remit to deal with the potential eyesore the site poses.

Planning enforcement/building control got the fire damaged building demolished as it was felt by the ward councillors at the time that it was an eyesore. Planning permission has been granted for a residential development of the site, however the Council has no powers to require the owner to implement it.

We all want to see such sites redeveloped to provide much-needed housing and we would urge the site owner to proceed with development or sale of the site before the planning approval lapses.

61. Councillor Peter Clarke

Can the Leader of the Council please confirm how many members of staff are allocated to answering calls from members of the public and what is being done to improve the poor quality of service received by customers?

Response

In the Corporate contact centre there are 67 advisors who answer calls from the public across a range of different services, they also deal with a significant number of email and social media contacts. The service has worked closely with IT in order to broaden options for members of the public to make contact with the council, this includes automating some services, the introduction of social media, the development of online forms, the app which issues reminders, investment in the Stay Connected newsletter and the recent introduction of a portal so that customers are able to report things 24/7 at their convenience. In developing these options, the service is freeing up advisors to deal with those customers who are calling in.

62. Councillor Anna Watson

The Environment Act 2021 brought in a requirement that food waste has to be collected separately on a weekly basis. What action has Bradford Council taken to start to roll this out across the District and when will all households receive this new service?

Response

The various changes within the act didn't take effect straight away, in part due to Covid and further investigation work. Some parts of the act were to be introduced in 2023 but this has been delayed and we are awaiting further instruction.

In particular, where a long-term residual waste to energy contract is in place, transition to a weekly, separate food waste collection service is proposed between 2024/25 and 2030/31 subject to further evidence on the associated costs and benefits. Our residual waste is contracted until 2030 so we would fall under this category.

Once the Consistent Collections scheme is announced (full kerbside segregation), we can then start actively planning food waste collections. We have commissioned an options appraisal, giving us a desktop outline of potential requirements that will aid with the transition. Significant budget of up to £10m is required for this, along with contractor capacity. We are procuring suitable contracts for processing of food waste in the coming months in order to start trials.