

**COUNCIL –**

**Tuesday 11 July 2023**

**ITEM 10 - MEMBER QUESTION TIME – PART 1**

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

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**1. Councillor Simon Cunningham**

Will the Leader join me in congratulating the staff and children at Poplars Farm Primary School for being shortlisted for Primary School of the Year in the national Tes Schools Awards?

**Response**

I am glad to do so. Poplars Farm Primary School was one of only eight primary schools nationally shortlisted for Primary School of the Year in the TES awards. This prestigious award recognises the excellent achievements of the school in provision, partnership with parents and curriculum in nurturing all its pupils to give of their best. Although Poplars Farm did not win on 23rd June, their school has gained this national recognition. Our congratulations have been sent to the school.

**2. Debbie Davies**

Could the Leader of the Council confirm how much funding the Council contributes to Bradford Literature Festival?

**Response**

The Council through its Cultural Policy and Events Team contributes a grant of £30,000 per year as part of its competitive regularly funded organisations grants which is set up on a 3-year agreement and was part of an open call in 2022/23 and runs till 2024/25, therefore the funding is in its second year of a three-year agreement.

In addition to direct funding the Council's cultural facilities are used to support the delivery of the festival and some are used free or on a reduced cost basis from time to time, which supports the Bradford Literature Festival e.g. City Park, theatres, libraries, etc.

**3. Councillor Matt Edwards**

Given the serious issues of street racing taking place on Euroways Industrial Estate, can the portfolio holder advise how many Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued under the PSPO following the installation of the camera last year?

**Response**

We have issued nine tickets in total in this area out of which three were issued as a result of the cameras being installed.

The Bradford South Neighbourhood Policing Team along with BMDC Safer Communities have been working in partnership to tackle dangerous and disruptive car cruising events on the Euroway Trading Estate. A number of operations have been carried out and police staff are ring fenced to this area. The operation has resulted in seizure of vehicles, penalty points and fines given including breach of PSPO.

The police and Bradford Council are working in partnership to eradicate this problem from the area and with the operation and police staff patrolling the area, there has been a significant deterrent effect.

#### **4. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland**

On the 14th March 2023 the Council resolved to treat care experience as if it were a Protected Characteristic. Can the Leader of Council and each of the Portfolio Holders please list the changes made to policies, processes and procedures to put this resolution into practice.

#### **Response**

Nationally care experience is not treated as a protected characteristic however Bradford has recently made a commitment to add care leavers as a local protected characteristic.

Guidance is being developed for all departments to set out care leavers as a protected group and ask them to include this in departmental planning.

This is being applied across processes, policies and procedures. For example the Council employment/HR policies are being updated to include care experienced as a protected characteristic. In practice this includes sharing Apprenticeship opportunities with all care leavers with a guaranteed interview for those meeting the essential requirements; We deliver an apprenticeship preparation programme called "Leaving Care Employment Programme". This is run jointly with the Bradford Council Skills service. This prepares care leavers for apprenticeships within the council. Changes are also being made to recruitment to provide greater opportunity and pathways into Council employment.

It's an opportunity for departments to think in a more focussed way in their approach to care leavers and as a result, a number of initiatives are in the pipeline. These will be developed and be announced in due course.

#### **5. Councillor Talat Sajawal**

Given the latest reports nationally on Policing standards. Can the Portfolio holder please let me know what steps he has taken to ensure that West Yorkshire Police have correctly vetted officers when recruiting? As well as reassure the Public, that proper and in-depth investigations have been carried out, against officers that have faced complaints and disciplinary action.

#### **Response**

The Council does not regulate the Police. However the Portfolio Holder has asked them for their assurance on this subject. Here is their reply:

All officers and staff in West Yorkshire Police are vetted to national standards. A recent His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report into vetting, misconduct and misogyny showed that West Yorkshire Police has made significant progress in implementing the Inspectorate's recommendations in this area. West Yorkshire was one force which was selected as part of a rapid review by the HMICFRS and feedback was positive in respect of the cases reviewed.

West Yorkshire Police understands the importance of ensuring that the right people work for the force and that vetting needs to be a continuous process throughout a person's employment with regular integrity checks to ensure that any changes in a person's personal circumstances are understood and assessed. West Yorkshire Police welcomes the increased national guidance around vetting practices and misconduct investigations.

All complaints are investigated by dedicated police officers and staff who work within the Professional Standards Directorate. The complaints are investigated in accordance with the IOPC statutory guidance and where relevant police regulations legislation.

The majority of complaints received are resolved through either individual or organisational learning, an explanation of actions or an apology. Where there has been an indication of a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour then a misconduct investigation will take place. For those complaints which are identified as recordable conduct then a mandatory referral is also made to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). Where an investigation identifies gross misconduct by a police officer or special constable, a misconduct hearing will be held in public to ensure transparency and accountability.

## **6. Councillor Nazam Azam**

With One City Park quickly taking shape can the portfolio holder give an update on interest from prospective tenants and what are the timescales for opening?

### **Response**

Practical Completion of the OCP construction works is due by the end of August/early September, when hand-over to the Council will take place and the building will be effectively operational. Joint commercial property agents acting for the Council and Muse Developments are actively marketing the property and to date have had encouraging interest from prospective occupiers of the space provided.

Heads of terms have been agreed with one company interested in taking a lease on two of the four floors of the building, with other firm interest in the remainder of the building. Tenant fit-out works will be required before occupancy of any space

can take place but it is anticipated that should one or more of the current interests result in completion of appropriate leases actual use of the building could take place early in the New Year.

## **7. Councillor Aneela Ahmed**

I understand that the escalators (provided by a Keighley based manufacturer) have now been installed at Darley Street Market. Will the portfolio holder give a progress update on construction of the market?

### **Response**

The construction works are progressing well with Kier Construction on target to complete their work by mid-November when the market building will be handed over to the council to commence the internal fitting out of the stalls and other works such as the installation of a large outdoor screen on the new market square.

And it's great to see local firms from all over the district benefitting from these significant regeneration projects. As Councillor Ahmed rightly says the escalators have been provided by Kone lifts in Keighley. And of course R.N Wooler, also from Keighley, are our construction partner for the Bradford Live project.

The striking market roof is nearly complete along with the installation of 200 solar panels. The external glazing is continuing to be installed on the three elevations and the boundary walls to the new market square have been created. The basement servicing area underneath the market square is being waterproofed and the mechanical and electrical works have started to each of the three trading floors.

Discussions are ongoing with each selected trader regarding their fitting out plans to ensure the efficient use of the floor area in each stall.

## **8. Councillor Hassan Khan**

Works are now getting underway on the Transforming Cities scheme to improve the city centre and a project of this size will undoubtedly have an impact on traffic flow while the works are being done. For the benefit of residents will the portfolio holder remind us what these works are, and what can bus users and car drivers expect in the coming weeks and months?

### **Response**

The Transforming Cities Fund programme is an £80m investment in sustainable and active travel measures in the district which will see transformational, or once in a generation, change in our district. Bradford's TCF programme comprises four independent schemes which are at different stages of delivery, but will broadly be delivered in the following sequence:

- City Centre Cycling and Walking Improvements;
- Bradford Interchange Station Access improvements;
- West Bradford Cycle Superhighway;

- South Bradford Targeted Bus Improvements and Active Travel Measures.

The first of these schemes, the city centre cycling and walking improvements, started on site on the 10 July.

This scheme will remove through traffic from the civic heart of the city to create a safer pedestrian area which has measures to support and encourage greater active travel (walking and cycling) participation in the city's heart. The project will create a green, breathable, space in the city centre which will provide opportunities for increasing dwell time of pedestrians and enabling more businesses to have outdoor seating, supported by flexible animation spaces. As part of these improvements bus stops in the city core will be relocated to new locations, closer to existing and new attractions in the city centre including the Broadway, Bradford Live and Darley Street Market, whilst bus layover stops will be rationalised into the Interchange removing idling buses from outside many residential apartments.

The works to the city centre will take 18 months to complete and will be carried out in two distinct phases.

The first phase will consist of enabling works to a number of junctions around the city core to enable buses to be diverted onto new routes including the reopening of Well Street, infilling of Jacobs Well roundabout, Croft Street gyratory improvements to name but a few. The enabling phase will also provide the basis to allow the redirection of traffic around the city centre core to happen once works move to the second phase. The enabling works are programmed to finish around Christmas this year and until they are completed bus services will continue to operate as they have always done from existing stops. Some disruption to traffic will occur as works are carried out at key city centre junctions but advance warning of these will be signposted and localised traffic management arrangements will be designed to minimise disruption.

After Christmas works will move to the second phase, the transformation of the city core. A precursor to this transition will be buses being diverted onto their new routes and beginning to operate from new bus stops. There will be an intensive campaign of advance notification about these changes on the run up to the post-Christmas period by both WYCA and the Transforming Cities Fund team to ensure that passengers are fully aware of the proposed changes.

The second phase will see new public realm improvements introduced on Market Street, Bridge Street and Hall Ings at the same time as access arrangements change for City Hall, the Magistrates' Court and the National Media Museum. These works are planned to continue through to the end of 2024 with some landscaping works being completed in early 2025.

## **9. Councillor Peter Clarke**

Does the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport, support Sir Keir Starmer's recent announcement that if Labour win the next general election, a Labour Government would relax planning restrictions to allow more homes to

be built on the green belt and how does the proposal fit with the Council's Local Plan for future development across the district?

### **Response**

I support the government's policy to build 300,000 homes a year, even if most of the government doesn't. There's a desperate need for affordable housing in this country and no politician should just close their ears to that need.

As it stands, over the last ten years we have seen over 70% of housing developed in the district delivered on brownfield sites and the Local Plan maintains a 50% target, which we expect to be higher in our urban areas and lower in our rural areas. We have also secured public funding to help deliver housing in key urban brownfield sites like High Point and Conditioning House in the city centre, alongside our partnership with the English Cities Fund to look at the development of the 'City Village' area in the Top of Town, which will deliver a further 1,000 homes on brownfield land.

Nonetheless, to quote Keir Starmer himself, "We would make those tough choices and say to local areas, notwithstanding that it's greenbelt, if it's a car park or similar land which doesn't affect the beauty of our countryside... then we'll change the planning rules, we'll give you the powers to do that."

I would be surprised if the Conservative Group did not agree with this sentiment. As it stands, there are sites in the green belt that have been previously developed and remain blighted because their status makes redevelopment much more difficult. If a Labour government made their redevelopment more viable to provide much-needed homes without the need for green fields to be developed, I would expect that to have cross-party support in this chamber.

With regards the Local Plan, we have to base that on the rules and guidance that apply when the plan is in development. In 2017 we adopted a Core Strategy that followed the guidance of the government and agreed a need for 42,000 homes to be built across the district by 2030. We are now working on a Local Plan using another methodology stipulated by the same government (albeit four Prime Ministers later) that states a need for 32,000 homes over the next 15 years.

Finally, Members will note that all parties will have emerging proposals relating to the planning system and possible reforms to policy and practice, indeed the government itself consulted earlier this year on changes to national Planning Policy, which sought to clarify the approach to meeting housing needs in local plans while retaining the ability under exceptional circumstances to release green belt for housing. On this issue we also support the government.

### **10. Councillor Aneela Ahmed**

It's very welcome to see the much improved public spaces and greenery up at North Parade now that our works there have been completed. Does the portfolio holder join me in welcoming this and can he tell me what other plans we have around the top of town to make it a good destination for residents and businesses.

## Response

Completion of the North Parade highway improvement and public realm works is very welcome and will be of significant benefit to the businesses, residents and visitors in that area. The 'Top of Town' falls within the proposed City Village Regeneration Area and it is intended that similar highway improvement, traffic calming, street landscaping and new public realm works will form part of the future plans to create a safe and healthy neighbourhood that will make the 'City Village' a place in which people will choose to live, work and thrive and where businesses will want to invest, trade and grow.

- The public realm scheme was design to allow road closure so is the perfect space for street events. Businesses can apply for events licence. I'm sure as part of city of culture the area will be activated with events.
- The pavements have been extended and the businesses are encouraged through proper licencing to have tables and chairs outside. Townscape Heritage Grants are still available for property owners to improve their buildings. Phase two of the improvements to the top of town on Darley Street are at design stage and should commence in the next 6 months.

English Cities Fund (ECF) is now engaged as part of Phase 1 of bringing forward City Village. ECF is made up of Morgan Sindall (though Muse Developments), Legal and General and Homes England. The first Phase is a pre-development services agreement, which will undertake the detailed master planning of City Village and take us through to the submission of planning permission. Improvements to open spaces and public realm will be a key consideration within the masterplans.

## 11. Councillor Mohsin Hussain

It's a great relief that the determination of this council alongside NHS partners to deliver a top class new health centre in the heart of Keighley appears to be paying off with government finally approving this much needed facility for all our residents. Can the portfolio holder tell us what the next steps are to try and get it delivered as quickly as possible.

## Response

I share your relief and excitement that after this Government decision such a vital project for Keighley can now move forward. It will make great strides in reducing health inequalities in Keighley as well as providing a major boost for the economy of the town centre by consolidating 200 jobs, 50 of them new, into the heart of the town. Project timelines for the Keighley Health Facility are working to a Summer 2026 completion deadline to meet Towns Fund requirements enabling the drawdown of funding. This timescale had been needlessly put at risk by the dishonest campaigning of the local MP but we will support the NHS to meet this deadline and liaise with the government, who have now accepted the business case for the project.

The NHS Estates Lead is now mobilising supply chain partners to carry out the detailed design work and support the preparation of the Outline Business Case as part of NHS estates process. A specific steering group is meeting and a pre-application planning request will be submitted imminently as part of the overall planning application process to establish the key planning issues. An engagement strategy to ensure appropriate community involvement in the detailed design phase is being developed.

## **12. Councillor Simon Cunningham**

Can the Portfolio Holder give an update on the pilot of a new street sign design for Bradford, and confirm whether it can be rolled out in an effort to promote civic pride in Bradford and make our neighbourhoods look even smarter?

### **Response**

Over the last ten months we have been working on a new street name plate design incorporating the council crest and in March this year we piloted its use in a number of high footfall areas across the district, including Midland Road and North Parade, as well as locations in Saltaire, Keighley and Bingley. Signs within the city centre boundary include a 'City of Bradford' moniker, which signs elsewhere in the district will not have.

Feedback on these pilot signs proved extremely popular with positive comments being received. Having resolved the final minor production issues the Council are now in a position to start rolling out these new designs within existing budgets shortly.

Therefore, I can confirm that replacement street name plates will be amongst the first roads to receive a new style design, together with any new estate roads adopted by the Council as these are paid for by the developer.

## **13. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Would the Regeneration, Planning and Transport Portfolio Holder, clarify why the Council owned temporary Baildon Library on Northgate in the Conservation Area is permitted to have solid external shutters, when there have been numerous cases of businesses having to alter their shop fronts because external shutters they have installed to improve security have been deemed unsightly?

### **Response**

The metal shutters were already installed on this former retail unit and flat when the library was relocated into the property on a temporary basis last year. The planning officer's comments on the planning application (22/01377/FUL) included that the existing shutters were to be retained for the new use. The refurbishment did not make any change to the shutters and the development control requirements were therefore satisfied. Should there be any change to the shopfront, including shutters, in the future then this would need to comply with our existing Shopfront Design Guide SPD.

## **14. Councillor Kevin Warnes**



Will the Leader of Council please update us on when the review of the Active Travel Neighbourhood in Saltaire will take place, bearing in mind that this project has experienced repeated delays?

### **Response**

The Saltaire Active Travel Neighbourhood has been in place for a number of months now and the review is ongoing. We are in the process of analysing the traffic data and agreeing the next phase of public and stakeholder consultation to inform the final decision of what to do with the ATN. Taking into account resource constraints with our Communications Team and the start of delivery of our Transforming Cities programme, plus approaching summer holidays, we envisage the review phase of public consultation will take place at the end of summer, with the final decision on next steps to be taken in Autumn.

### **15. Councillor Alun Griffiths**

Can the portfolio holder confirm that the council has no “In house” capacity for road marking, and that all road makings are sent out to external contractors?

### **Response**

The Council currently does not have an in-house capability to lay road markings and relies on an externally contracted resource to provide this service.

The reasons for this are partly due to the specialised nature of the machines which are required for the application and removal of thermoplastic markings. When comparing the cost of purchasing this equipment, training operatives in its use and the running and maintenance costs involved versus the amount of work which is typically carried out each year it is not economically beneficial to provide the service in-house.

However, recent advances in cold-applied lining materials and techniques are making the use of smaller, cheaper application plant potentially viable. The Council is therefore looking at whether an approach of investing in such systems could be beneficial. Currently a trial of cold-applied lining is being organised in order that a comparison can be made with the traditional thermoplastic lining.

### **16. Councillor Julie Humphreys**

Does the Leader share my frustration that the government has rejected Labour's attempts to revive the animal welfare bill which the government quietly dropped in May? Among other things the bill would clamp down on dog thefts, which is a truly distressing crime that impacts on our residents, and it would ban the live export of farm animals - yet the government has gone ahead and scrapped it.

### **Response**

The Council is very committed to ensuring the highest standards of animal welfare within our district and there were provisions within the Kept Animals Bill that would have strengthened that position. There were a number of interesting proposals therein and some of those may have fallen to this Council to enforce

had the Bill become enacted. However, I can assure Members that officers in our Environmental Health Service support high standards of animal welfare. Existing legislation covers farm animal welfare, licensing for the keeping of defined wild animals and licensing of establishments that look after or sell pet animals. That work, coupled with the work of our Dog Warden service, will continue despite the Government decision not to proceed with the Bill in question.

#### **17. Councillor Arshad Hussain**

Whilst it was great news that the government finally accepted the inevitable and added Airedale General Hospital to the New Hospital Programme, I remain concerned that two other hospitals in our district, the BRI and Lynfield Mount mental health hospital, are in urgent need of investment due to the state of the buildings. Does the Leader have any information from government or health partners on when these hospitals that our residents depend on will get the investment they deserve?

#### **Response**

Whilst we are delighted that the NHS New Hospitals Programme has prioritised the rebuild of Airedale NHS Foundation Trust which was so desperately needed we are disappointed that two other expressions of interest were not supported - Lynfield Mount which is part of BDCT NHS Foundation Trust and a new Hospital in Bradford to replace BRI and St Luke's hospital. Investment in both of these hospitals is urgently needed and remains a priority for Bradford District and Craven Health and Care Partnership and West Yorkshire HCP.

Outside of the New Hospitals Programme, there is no major source of national NHS capital funding that would enable the required investment at Lynfield Mount or BRI. Discussions continue at a West Yorkshire level regarding the potential for different approaches to the use of the Integrated Care System's operational capital funding, but that envelope is limited. In the meantime, we continue to lobby central government around the quantum of capital funds available to the NHS and also the mechanisms in place for allocating it.

#### **18. Councillor Julie Lintern**

The Clean Air Zone has prompted a switch to many cleaner vehicles on our roads and it has also generated funds from non-compliant vehicles since it started. I realise that the health benefits of the scheme cannot be measured yet, but can the Portfolio holder please share further information in relation to the spending of the funds the CAZ has generated. I understand that part is given to the government and the remainder has to have environmental benefit to contribute to cleaner air quality such as through our Clean Air Schools programme. Can the portfolio holder clarify what will the CAZ funds be spent on to meet these aims in the district?

#### **Response**

While the assessment of health impacts of the CAZ by Born in Bradford are ongoing it is estimated by Bradford NHS that there is expected to be a reduction

in emergency admissions for heart disease, COPD, respiratory disease and asthma, with substantial cost savings for the NHS over time by having cleaner air.

The Council has received £6.58m in revenue since the launch of the CAZ, after £610,800 Government Charges have been taken off. Once resource costs are covered, any excess revenue will be reinvested in projects and programmes that align with the objectives of the CAZ and other legislative requirements.

CAZ revenue may be spent in very restricted ways as outlined in the Bradford Clean Air Zone Charging Scheme Order 2022 -

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/media/7229/bradfordcleanairzonechargingorder2022.pdf>

The Council has approved £1.1m of CAZ revenue to support the Clean Air Schools Programme, including the recruitment of five new School Wardens and a £500,000 fund for schools to implement projects to mitigate against the impact of traffic emissions around schools.

While further schemes are yet to be finalised, the Council is currently working with partners in developing a large hydrogen production and refuelling facility on Bowling Back Lane. The Council is interested in looking at how CAZ funding can be used in association with West Yorkshire CRSTS funding to accelerate the uptake of hydrogen buses, refuse collection vehicles and taxis.

The Council will shortly be launching the £4m Zero Emission Taxi Fund, providing the highest grant level in the UK to encourage 25% of our taxi fleet to move to zero emissions.

Since the development and implementation of the CAZ, the Council has seen multi million pounds of potential private sector investment interest in the district, covering EV infrastructure, solar power and production of renewable transport fuels and is looking at how opportunities of CAZ funding may be used to leverage the maximum amount of inward investment into the district.

## **19. Councillor Rebecca Poulsen**

Would the Leader join me in congratulating Robbie Moore MP for Keighley, other local MP's and the whole team at Airedale Hospital who have successfully been selected for a full hospital rebuild? Can the Leader ensure the Council fully supports this project and makes sure no delays are created by council departments?

### **Response**

To be honest it's high time that Airedale Hospital was given the go-ahead for a new building given that its current structure is literally crumbling. In the end because of the state of the building, the Government had no choice but to give the go ahead. The team at Airedale Hospital and the partners that have been involved over many years are naturally relieved. The Council Planning Department is actively engaged in pre-application discussions with the hospital's

agents and will be working with the hospital on various aspects of the refurbishment of the site. I can confirm that officer will proactively work to help them deliver their plans for a new hospital. It has to be noted though that the major delay on the project has not been by the Council, the delay has been before we start, because it's taken Government years to say yes.

## **20. Councillor Caroline Firth**

Does the Leader join me in welcoming the announcement that there will soon be new £1 flat fares and more frequent bus services for Keighley especially during this cost of living crisis. I know this council together with Labour Mayor Tracy Brabin at the Combined Authority and the bus operators have worked jointly to deliver this.

### **Response**

I welcome the announcement of the Enhanced Bus Services proposal for Keighley. Thanks to work by the Combined Authority, Mayor Tracy Brabin, the Keighley Bus Company and Bradford Council we have agreed an investment of £1.5m from the Bus Service Improvement Plan to improve Keighley's local bus services over five years, which will be met by investment from Transdev Blazefield, the owners of the Keighley Bus Company. Subject to the final proposals being agreed shortly, Keighley residents and visitors will soon benefit from more frequent services on three routes and a simple £1 flat fare for local journeys.

## **21. Councillor Tariq Hussain**

Will the portfolio holder give a summary of what the recent UKREEIF event was and how it links in with our regeneration ambitions for the Bradford District?

### **Response**

UK Real Estate, Infrastructure and Investment Forum UKREIIF 2023 was a major European regeneration conference held at the Royal Armouries and New Dock in May 2023. With over 7,000 delegates attending; from Government, public sector bodies, local government, consultancies and critically significant numbers of developers and investors.

It is a high profile annual event for the real estate and property industry – significantly held outside of London – that allowed for case-making and the promotion of the regeneration ambitions and opportunities that Bradford as a district has to offer in the short and long-term. It enabled direct contact with key investors to explore investment potential and plans.

There were three linked key announcements; on partnering with Homes England on supporting neighbourhood renewal across key parts of the district, on working with MusePlaces through the English Cities Fund on a preparing the case for securing City Village (with pre-development agreement launch event) and on collaboration with UK Infrastructure Bank on support to progressing Southern Gateway. These set the tone for Bradford's presence at UKREIIF as a serious

commercial location for place-making and regeneration; of national scale and significance.

Bradford Council - alongside many key partners, like MusePlaces, Incommunities, University of Bradford and more - was represented at the event through the Leader, Chief Executive and senior managers from the Department of Place; with panel involvement in many high profile sessions across the whole event to position Bradford District as a place to invest and partner. This included direct involvement in the West Yorkshire Pavilion organised through Mayor Brabin and West Yorkshire Combined Authority placing Bradford at the heart of West Yorkshire showcasing.

## **22. Councillor Mohammed Shafiq**

Given the serious impact of the pandemic on children's education, I was shocked to read reports that the Tory government has left hundreds of millions unspent of the funds that were earmarked for tutoring to help children catch up on lost learning. Does the portfolio holder share my frustration and do we know how much has been invested for the children of the Bradford District?

### **Response**

The initial allocation of School-Led Tutoring Grant monies to schools and academies in Bradford for the 2021/22 academic year was £4.41m. This allocation was based on a 75% subsidy of tutoring costs (meaning that existing school and academy budgets would meet 25% of the total cost). The £4.41m was reduced to £2.97m following the DfE's reconciliation and recovery of grant that had not been spent by schools and academies in Bradford. This means that a third of the initial grant was taken back by Government.

The District has received £4.91m of National Tutoring Programme (NTP) grant monies for the current 2022/23 academic year. This allocation is based on a 50% subsidy of tutoring costs. The £4.91m allocation is however prior to the DfE reconciliation and recovery of unspent grant, which will take place later in the year. This means that a substantial proportion of this grant may yet have to be sent back to Government.

The National Tutoring Programme Grant will continue (currently announced for a final year) in the 2023/24 academic year, with the allocations continuing to be based on a 50% subsidy. The DfE initially announced that the subsidy would reduce to 25%, but this has now been maintained at 50%.

## **23. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Would the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Transport accept responsibility for the Council throwing away the opportunity of £1.6m of external funding which had been awarded in 2021 (to re-naturalise Bradford Beck by opening up the historic waterway, creating paths, trees, meadows and a picnic area, encouraging wildlife and reducing the risk of flooding), but was forgone when the funding deadline for completion of the work (two years later in June

2023) was missed, despite elected members being told that work would be completed by last month?

### **Response**

The Naturalising Bradford Beck Scheme (NBBS) is an important part of the Bradford Shipley Route Improvement Scheme and continues to be so. The issue we had is that the tenders for the construction of the scheme came in significantly above budget, meaning it was unaffordable within the budget envelope. This has been incredibly frustrating for everyone involved including myself, local Councillors, the Friends of Bradford Beck who have been so supportive and especially our team of officers who have worked very hard to make this project so exciting for such a long time.

It is also another reminder that the nature of funding for Local Authorities under this government, where everything from toilets to train stations has to be bid for within tight timescales with tight deadlines for delivery, simply doesn't work, particularly when such significant external factors have to be dealt with. It would be far better if funding and associated powers was properly devolved to local and regional authorities.

Since the funding bid was submitted in February 2020 we have had the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the UK is now experiencing persistent inflation levels above the rest of Europe and the USA, which is causing similar issues for projects across the country.

The scheme itself requires significant engineering works including removal of a 90m long concrete culvert, earthworks to realign the beck and construction of a new channel. This introduces significant challenges including treating hazardous ground, flash flooding and ensuring the safety of the public and workforce.

These combined factors resulted in a significant change in the scope of the project.

The scheme and its original core objectives are still being pursued – to create a fantastic new amenity for the local community, to protect businesses and alleviate areas currently at risk of flooding, as well as biodiversity and habitat creation from improved landscapes, tree planting, increased fish passage and new wetland. I can confirm the NBBS will form part of the refined Outline Business case being produced for the Bradford Shipley Route Improvement Scheme.

Bradford Council are still committed to this project so are working to find alternative sources of funding particularly, as mentioned above, via the main Bradford Shipley Route Improvement Scheme.

### **24. Councillor Caroline Whitaker**

In response to a question to Full Council on 24th January 2023, I was told that the B6160 Bolton Road in Addingham, between Bark Lane and Main Street, was to be declassified and that this “will be moving forward before the end of the financial year”. However, the end of the financial year has come and gone and

despite numerous attempts to elicit a response from the relevant department, no more information has been forthcoming. Could I please have an update on the project, and can the portfolio holder ensure that the officer responsible understands the importance of communicating with Elected Members and within the timescales expected?

### **Response**

The issue of re-classifying Bolton Road has been delayed due to the need to review the associated Department for Transport mandated processes involved.

While the background administration of the order itself is uncomplicated, there is a need to undertake a full consultation process on the affected roads and a need to review signing in the area prior to any change being made. This will require a full area committee review/approval cycle and the allocation of associated funding and officer time to the project.

I also will remind officers of the importance of communicating with Elected Members and within reasonable timescales.

### **25. Councillor Brendon Stubbs**

It has been over a year now since children in Eccleshill were told that they could only access the swimming pool with an adult present. All open sessions were changed to family sessions. This change was put in place to protect staff and customers following several anti-social behaviour incidents. At the time, we were told that the measures were temporary while retraining and other measures were put in place.

Given we are weeks away from the summer holidays, and that the service has had over a year to retrain staff, invest in body cams or implement a permit scheme for children. Can the portfolio holder assure the overwhelming majority of well-behaved young people in Eccleshill that they will be able to access the pool in the same way children across the district can this summer?

### **Response**

We do not want the young people of Eccleshill to miss out on swimming for another summer because of the action of a few very unruly people.

We have invested in training for staff and we have introduced new measures to help keep staff safe.

We had planned to put a new membership in place to help manage bookings, however the IT system launch has been delayed due to technical issues.

Notwithstanding any difficulties with IT systems we plan to start new swim for all sessions every Tuesday evening based around a local membership scheme, and we will develop further sessions from there.

### **26. Councillor Marcus Dearden**

Having been given video evidence of not only an increase in traffic but the size and weight of some commercial vehicles using Ireland bridge in Bingley. Would the executive investigate the possibility of introducing weight restriction on the bridge. It is one of the oldest structures in the Bradford District and had structural work carried out over a decade ago. Coupled with the fact due to an increase in residential properties, pedestrian use across the bridge is proving to be treacherous.

### **Response**

Ireland bridge was built in 1685 and has been inspected regularly in terms of its structural integrity which to this day remains capable of taking HGV loads. It is the oldest listed (Grade II) structure in the Bradford District. The bridge forms part of a bus route and serves as the only vehicle river crossing in Bingley. In addition to vehicles and pedestrians the bridge also carries all major statutory undertaker services including high voltage electricity cables and fibre optic communication cables. There is a footpath on one side of the bridge but it is very narrow. The Council is unable to make any changes to the structure or appearance of the structure due to its Grade II Listing.

It is worth members noting that in the past, when it has been necessary to temporarily close the bridge for inspection and repair, the only viable vehicle diversion route avoiding the bridge is seven miles long and has itself caused major disruption to many local and distant businesses.

The Highways team will be happy to discuss with the Councillor what more can be done to alleviate his concerns.

### **27. Councillor Joe Wheatley**

Bradford District Credit Union was established 30 years ago this month. Will the Leader join me in celebrating and thanking the credit union for its truly brilliant contribution to our district which is more important than ever given the state of the nation's economy after 13 years of Tory rule.

### **Response**

In 1993, Bradford Council took the huge and forward thinking step to of setting up a Credit Union for their staff who were struggling to get loans from banks during the recession of the early 1990's. 30 Years later BDCU has grown to over 9,500 members leading on nationally recognised community development projects like FoodSavers and Uniforms avers in partnership with Bradford Council as well as providing staff with payroll savings and loans.

At its recent anniversary event, key note speeches including the Leader of the Council, the Lord Mayor and National Credit Union Association, celebrated with stakeholders, elected members and staff with stalls. BDCU is a celebrated hub bringing financial education and inclusion to the district, helping the economy grow and linking in the BD25 celebrations to promote the city.



As the cost of living crisis continues undiminished, there has never been more need for the Credit Union and all its activities. We should all support it.

## **28. Councillor Liz Rowe**

After putting in a bid for £11m of funding from Active Travel England it was really disappointing to see Bradford awarded just £1m. The money we bid for would have helped pay for our planned new Thornton cycle route and improvements to the canal towpath. Does the portfolio holder have more information on why Active Travel England did not provide the funding to match our ambitions and do we have more plans to secure future funding?

### **Response**

I share your disappointment at the Active Travel England (ATE) funding award and we have made our disappointment clear to them at the highest levels. We have good schemes, ready to go, and firmly believe they should have been approved by ATE and we have made this point to them. Given the time constraints they were operating under they did not have the capacity to provide detailed feedback on specific schemes or liaise with individual authorities to discuss any potential issues that could have been easily resolved. They have committed to improving their processes for any future rounds and working more closely with Combined and Local Authorities on their bids to ensure success is maximised. Active Travel England's senior management team recently visited Bradford district to discuss future active travel opportunities in Bradford and reassured Officers and Councillors that they are willing to work with us to help us secure future investment.

We remain ambitious for the district and we are definitely planning to secure funding to deliver on those ambitions. Possible options include Active Travel Fund 5 which is expected to be announced later this year and further funding through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement in due course. We continue to make the case to government that continuous rounds of funding bids at short notice take up a huge amount of time on already stretched council departments and true devolution would see proper devolution of budgets and the powers to use them with more autonomy. Nonetheless, the schemes submitted for Active Travel Fund 4 funding remain on our agenda and we will continue to seek any and all funding opportunities to enable us to deliver them.

## **29. Councillor Mike Pollard**

At the time that this question had to be submitted, no first quarter financial Monitoring information was of course, available in the public domain. Could the Portfolio Holder please indicate whether any information has been received from the Children's & Families Trust regarding success or otherwise in receiving additional contributions from the NHS in respect of Children in Care with complex needs. If additional contributions have been received, please indicate the scale thereof and whether the £6m target for the full financial year looks realistically attainable.

## **Response**

Bradford Council, Bradford Children and Families Trust and local Health Partners have undertaken a period of intensive work that has resulted in the formation of a new Complex Needs Panel with an agreed terms of reference. The Complex Needs Panel replaces the existing Joint Placement Panel that agreed joint finding between partners for children in care in residential placements. The Complex Needs Panel will have an extended scope and membership. The terms of reference were signed off by the Partnership Leadership Executive on the 23rd June 2023 and sets out the basis on which fair and proportionate funding will be agreed by partners and how disputes will be resolved. Based on this progress, we anticipate that the Trust and Council will have a consistent approach towards fair and equitable funding contributions for children with complex needs requiring individual and bespoke provision to be made.

### **30. Councillor Arshad Hussain**

Can you advise how the Squire Lane leisure centre project is progressing?

## **Response**

The Design Process is nearing the end of RIBA Stage 3 and the Council has started the process to appoint a contractor to input into the Design of the centre before they construct it. The Council is currently undertaking a review of the scheme and the revenue implications associated with the delivery to ensure that running costs are as low as they can be before moving on to the next stage.

### **31. Councillor Mohammed Shafiq**

The Government has now spent £1 billion in bailouts to 34 councils to plug their deficits on special educational needs and disabilities. Has the government explained to the Leader why Bradford does not get this huge additional funding for our SEND provision or indeed for children's services more generally given the unprecedented cost pressures that we and other councils are facing?

## **Response**

The Safety Valve is the name given to the DfE initiative to support Councils where there is a High Needs Block (HNB) deficit. The HNB is used to commission specialist services, such as specialist teachers and provide additional resources to schools for children with an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan. Bradford Council has not yet required DfE intervention through the Safety Valve as currently, due to careful and diligent planning and financial management, the HNB in Bradford is not in a deficit position. However, the high demand for EHC plans presents a significant challenge to the HNB in the future which we are monitoring closely and involved in regional and national discussions regarding adequate funding for children and young people with SEND.

There is also a national shortage of capital funding for the creation of additional specialist education places and we continue to lobby the DfE and Government on

this important and related issue. Government did of course reject our recent application for a new school.

### **32. Councillor Aneela Ahmed**

Like all major cities we face challenges of antisocial behaviour. I've discussed this issue with the portfolio holder given this is a top priority for us to support the police in tackling these issues. Will the portfolio holder set out some of the actions being taken to build a safer city centre for all.

#### **Response**

ASB in Bradford City centre has been much reduced over recent years – In 2017 it ran to 972 incidents per year and in 2022 this had reduced to 423. This is a huge reduction and runs contrary to some public perceptions of ASB in the city centre. Police are increasing the commitment to visible patrols in hotspot locations, working with a wide range of partners.

In partnership with West Yorkshire Police the Council set-up the 'Safer Bradford City Centre Partnership' in 2022. This multi-agency group tackles the day to day operational issues in the city centre that need a partnership rather than single agency focus. The group also has a strategic approach looking to improve safety in the long term as the city centre economy grows and evolves. The Partnership are developing a City Centre Safety Strategy and will be running a stakeholder event in September to inform this.

The Council has worked closely with Bradford BID who are equally committed to securing a safe and prosperous urban centre. In 2022/23 funding from the Government's Safer Streets fund was secured to improve safety in the night time economy – especially for women and girls.

Late Night Marshalls have been particularly successful, providing a strong visible uniformed presence, they have enhanced safety, focusing on de-escalation and early intervention to address issues before they develop, gathering intelligence and reducing demand on emergency services.

Bradford Council has supported the 'Ask for Angela' scheme where those who feel threatened in a premises registered with the scheme can seek help by asking a staff member for 'Angela'. The staff recognise this as a code for someone needing help and will discreetly provide support including assisting someone to get home if needed. By September we aim to have 100 premises registered on the scheme.

Bradford New Directions has supported providing a mobile 'Safe Space' using an outreach vehicle that is available in the evening and night times. Working on a Friday and Saturday night from 9pm-4am, the van has proved extremely useful dealing with a wide range of incidents including first aid incidents, vulnerable individuals unable to get home safely, and then a number of more serious assault incidents or overdoses.

'Bradford at Night' is a unique organisation set-up to support 'a vibrant, varied, and safe environment' in the city centre. They have recently enabled Bradford to become the world's first 'WalkSafe' city. This is done via a free phone app that gives users the power to pick safer routes home as well as share them with family and friends so they can monitor their safe arrival.

Bradford Council is spending £43.5 million of the Government's Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) to upgrade the look and feel of the city centre. The design plan includes a series of stunning public spaces, pedestrianisation, and greenery. There will be a focus on safety for pedestrians, reducing traffic and creating a calm, inviting environment for visitors. People can expect more places for events and meeting loved ones. We are working closely with TCF and other Regeneration partners to ensure that opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour are minimised as part of the works design programme.

### **33. Councillor Debbie Davies**

Given that around 95% of animals slaughtered in the UK for Halal are stunned first and this is considered a more humane method of killing, in the interests of animal welfare could the Leader of the Council confirm that all Halal meat used by the Council and in schools is pre-stunned?

#### **Response**

EU and UK legislation allows an exemption for animals slaughtered in accordance with religious rites which provides for non-stun slaughtered meat and poultry produce, for those who are consuming from the Muslim and Jewish faiths. To be clear all children have a choice of school meal and there is always a non halal option.

The longstanding agreement since 1983 between the Council and the Bradford Council for Mosques is for Halal meat and Halal poultry to be not pre-stunned following consultation with the Council for Mosques and Muslim scholars.

The Halal supply chain is monitored to ensure authenticity and compliance to religious requirements by the HMC (Halal Monitoring Committee). Many catering SLA/Contracts held with Academy Trusts specify HMC sourced Halal meat and poultry as a contractual requirement. The HMC require Halal meat and poultry to be not pre-stunned and regard any pre-stunning as Haram (not Halal).

### **34. Councillor Matt Edwards**

Can the leader of the Council please advise the waiting time for processing applications for residents to renew a Blue Badge?

#### **Response**

The Department for Transport on whose behalf the Council issues Blue Badges suggest that applicants should allow up to 12 weeks for an application to be processed. Currently the processing time for Bradford Council is around eight weeks. There has been an increase of 250 new applicants in the first quarter of this year but the team do prioritise claims where it is appropriate to do so, for

example if the claimant is terminally ill or if a referral is received from a support agency.