

COUNCIL, 30 NOVEMBER 2017 : WRITTEN QUESTIONS

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (COUNCILLOR GRAHAM HINCHEY)

W1

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR MOLIK

During the summer, we came across an article stating the concerning figures regarding missing children who are under local authority care – vulnerable children who could be at risk of paedophiles, drug gangs or otherwise. From my Freedom of Information request, I am informed that 35 children went missing from Cardiff Local Authority care between 01/09/2012 and 31/08/2017, whilst the majority were in teen-years, children as young as 3 years old have gone missing from our care. As stated by Mr Royston (from Children’s Society), children run away and it can be seen as a ‘call for help’.

What I would like to know is:

- How long do they go missing?
- How long before the council knows they’ve gone missing?
- Where do they go?
- Why do they go missing?
- What systems go wrong that results in them going missing?
- Do they go missing because they are placed with families who don’t have sufficient expertise or support?

Reply

Children and young people may go ‘missing’ for anything from 10 minutes to 10 days and sometimes longer, but that is rare.

All Looked After Children are living in regulated placements with foster carers or in a registered children’s home. The carers will usually know immediately if a child has left the premises and will take appropriate action, which will include looking for the child, reporting the matter to the Police, informing the child’s social worker and/or the Emergency Duty Team if out of hours. This will happen without delay.

Children and young people leave their placements for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, they run away ‘from’ the placement because they are unhappy and, sometimes, they ‘run to’ their family or friends or undesirable people because they are unhappy. Sometimes, teenagers push the boundaries and simply want to stay out late! Each child or young person is very different and will have different reasons for going missing. It is the role of the carers and social

workers to find out what those reasons are so they can be addressed.

It is rarely a case that systems 'go wrong'. It needs to be understood that the children and young people in our care have all experienced abuse, neglect, trauma and loss and will have complex needs. Sometimes, this manifests itself in behaviours that can be difficult to predict, understand or control and can sometimes include running away as a means of a 'cry for help' for bringing attention to their distress or a desire to exhibit a level of control where they feel they have lost it.

There is an All Wales Missing Person's Protocol, which Children's Services, along with other agencies, follow in order to safeguard the children in our care. Every child and young person has a risk assessment and we have very robust processes in place to ensure that we address any behaviours, which include running away. We work very closely with our partner providers and with the Police Missing Person's Team, to ensure high levels of communication and information sharing.

Any child going missing from placement will be seen by their social worker and/or an independent person to firstly ensure their safety and to try to ascertain the reasons for the child going missing. Follow up plans are then put in place to support that child or young person. We will also ensure that carers have as much support and guidance as possible in order to stabilise the placement and assist the child to settle.

In very extreme circumstances, and where risks are considered to be very high, we will look to legislation to assist and consider the Criteria of Section 25 of the Children Act (1989) and/or Section 119 of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (2014), which permits the Local Authority to make an application to the Court for a Secure Accommodation Order to place a child/young person in a Secure Unit.

W2

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR

What plans does the council have to increase the number of Welsh-medium Flying Start settings in the Authority?

Reply

There are currently no plans to increase the number of Welsh-medium Flying Start childcare settings across the Authority.

All families eligible for Flying Start are offered a free part-time childcare place as required by the Welsh Government grant. Families are asked for their language preference and, wherever possible, their wishes are met.

Currently, Flying Start offers Welsh-medium childcare places through a contractual arrangement with five providers. These are all locally based and are linked to the targeted Flying Start Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)/Primary School Catchments. Collectively, they provide 108 Welsh medium childcare places for 2-3 year olds.

The Welsh Government requires the Authority to regularly review the number of childcare places that it purchases to ensure that it closely matches demand.

Whilst sometimes the programme carries a waiting list, this is because families elect to take up a place with a particular provider and would rather wait for a place to become available rather than take up another available place elsewhere. Across the programme, there are sufficient Welsh-medium places to meet current demand.

In response to the lack of Welsh-medium pre-school childcare provision in the two Flying Start LSOAs serving Pentwyn, the Authority created 16 new Flying Start Welsh medium places in 2015. Since opening, the setting has regularly been under occupied, despite efforts to encourage more families to choose Welsh language childcare as an option for their children.

Should we identify any unmet demand in the future, we would review suitable registered Welsh-medium providers in those areas in conjunction with the Council's Procurement Team, with a view to discussing the potential to contract with them.

W3

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR

What plans does the council have to increase the number of Welsh-medium Flying Start places in the Authority?

Reply

There are currently no plans to increase the number of Welsh-medium Flying Start childcare places across the Authority for the reasons outlined in response to your previous question.

W4

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DE'ATH

Will Cardiff social workers be using the Child Case Context model developed from the nationwide 'Talking and Listening to Children' study funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and, if so, how will this fit in with them adopting 'Signs of Safety' working practices and methodologies?

Reply

The Child Case Context model is a research project that explores how social workers communicate with children in their everyday practice and how social workers and children involved in these encounters experience and understand them.

The Signs of Safety framework is a strengths based approach, which is predicated on effective communication and good relationships between social workers and the children and families they work with. I would therefore expect our approach to reflect and take into account the research findings and any best practice linked to the Child Case Context model.

W5

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DE'ATH

A recent employment tribunal has meant that official guidance has changed over whether sleep-in care workers should be entitled to the 'national living wage' for hours they are not awake, with employers warned they could face a substantial bill for back pay. Children's homes and similar provision have staff available to provide care throughout the night. Historically, workers often received an allowance or payment for this work that was not related to the 'waking' rate of pay. Now, 'sleeping in' is taken as 'worked time' and must be paid at or above national minimum wage levels. Could the Cabinet Member please make a statement on the potential impact, directly and indirectly, this will have on the local authority?

Reply

This decision is expected to have minimal impact on staff working at Crosslands, the only children's home operated by the Council. Staff pay grades currently range from Grade 5 upwards (minimum hourly rate of £10.44), which is above the current National Living Wage of £7.50 per hour.

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| | <p>A flat rate sleep-in allowance of £35.42 has previously been paid by the Council, with any time spent working during the sleep-in period being paid as overtime (either time and a half or time and a third if under 37 hours for part-time workers). Council staff would therefore have, in any event, been paid more than the National Minimum Wage.</p> |
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CLEAN STREETS, RECYCLING AND ENVIRONMENT
(COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MICHAEL)

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| <p>W6</p> | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BALE</u></p> <p>Has the City Council formally objected to proposals to dump contaminated waste related to the construction of the new Hinkley Point Power Station in the Severn Estuary?</p> <p>Will the Council supply copies of all representations to the UK & Welsh Governments, as well as any other bodies, to the Council's Environment Scrutiny Committee?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>I would refer you to the responses provided to previous questions on this matter that were asked at Council in September and October, in which it was made clear that this material is neither being dumped nor is it classified as contaminated waste. It is dredged mud or sediment from the Severn Estuary, which is being disposed of under a Marine Licence granted by Natural Resources Wales in July 2014, which expires in March 2019.</p> |
| <p>W7</p> | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOYLE</u></p> <p>On a ward-by-ward basis, how many Section 215 notices has the council issued in the past year for waste accumulating in private forecourts and what is the rate of compliance with those notices?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The Education and Enforcement Team engages with residents to encourage a clean and safe environment. Where education fails, there are two key processes which the team uses to tackle an accumulation of waste in frontages.</p> |

Firstly, section 215 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990, whereby a number of notices must be issued advising that, if the waste is not removed within 28 days, the Council will undertake the works in default – i.e. the Council will remove the waste and charge the landowner.

Secondly, where pests are present, officers can use section 4 of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, which is a slightly quicker process, but, again, this would result in the Council removing the waste and charging the landowner if they do not comply within the specified timescale.

The data set out in the table below provides a breakdown of the frontage actions undertaken on a ward-by-ward basis by the Education and Enforcement Team. In terms of compliance, we have conducted ‘works in default’ on just two occasions with legal proceedings.

| Ward | Front / Rear Garden Investigations | Street Letter (Frontage Advisory) | Prevention & damage by Pest Act 1949 – formal notice to remove (7 days) | Section 215 Notice – formal notice to remove (28 days) | Statutory Nuisance – Accumulations formal notice to remove (28 days) |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Adamsdown | 58 | 0 | 2 | | |
| Butetown | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Caerau | 15 | 0 | 0 | 2 | |
| Canton | 25 | 0 | 0 | 3 | |
| Cathays | 209 | 0 | 9 | 6 | 14 |
| Creigiau & St Fagans | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Cyncoed | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| Ely | 43 | 1 | 3 | 2 | |
| Fairwater | 17 | 0 | 3 | 1 | |
| Gabalfa | 9 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Grangetown | 45 | 0 | 5 | 4 | |
| Heath | 12 | 0 | 1 | | |
| Lisvane | 0 | 0 | 1 | | |
| Llandaff | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | |
| Llandaff North | 9 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Llanishen | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| Llanrumney | 6 | 0 | 1 | | |
| Pentwyn | 5 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| Pentyrch | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Penylan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | |
| Plasnewydd | 135 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 103 |
| Pontprennau & Old St Mellons | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| Radyr & Morganstown | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Rhiwbina | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| Riverside | 50 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| Rumney | 6 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 |
| Splott | 5 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Trowbridge | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |

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|--------------------------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Whitchurch & Tongwynlais | 4 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| TOTAL | 661 | 1 | 27 | 48 | 126 |

W8

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOYLE

On a street-by-street basis, where in Penylan have Section 215 notices been issued in the past year?

Reply

At present, it is not possible to provide the data on a street-by-street basis. Officers are in the process of reviewing the existing database with a view to enabling a wider range of reporting functions.

W9

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR SANDREY

What is the council doing to increase the take up of food waste collections services for businesses and offices in Cardiff?

I have had feedback from some who are based on St Mary Street who are unaware that these types of collections are available, and as a result are not separating out their food waste from the general waste. On streets like this in the city centre, this can contribute quite considerably to the area becoming messy due to pests ripping open refuse bags. Could the council remind businesses and offices in Cardiff of these services, particularly in high footfall areas?

Reply

The Council's Commercial Waste Services offer and promote a comprehensive food waste collection service that is suitable for any size of business. Officers proactively target businesses that generate food waste and offer competitive collection rates. This includes a mini-campaign which is undertaken every year in the city centre and shopping districts to target such businesses. The next campaign is due to take place in the New Year. They also price match and offer discounts for new customers and, as a result, a high number of businesses in the city centre have taken up the service. If you provide me with details of the businesses that you refer to in your question, our team will be happy to contact them.

CULTURE AND LEISURE
(COUNCILLOR PETER BRADBURY)

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| W10 | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BALE</u></p> <p>Cardiff Rivers Group do excellent work with volunteers to improve the cleanliness of our local rivers and waterways and recently secured funding from Viridor to acquire a boat to support their invaluable work. Would the Council, which also runs the Harbour Authority, please confirm what further support it could provide to assist the Rivers Group with operating this important new acquisition?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>I fully recognise and indeed value the work that the Cardiff Rivers Group undertakes on a city-wide basis. The group has strong and longstanding relationships and working arrangements with the Council and Cardiff Harbour Authority.</p> <p>I can confirm that the Harbour Authority has agreed to support the group by providing dry storage for the boat and slipway access.</p> |
| W11 | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR CARTER</u></p> <p>When did the council become aware of the plans by Better to close 4 leisure centre cafes?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>During the first six months of the arrangements, GLL committed to undertake a review of all aspects of the service, including the catering offer.</p> <p>As part of the business review that analysed service, operation, customer demand and financial performance, it emerged that the cafes were predicting unsustainable year-end losses. Continuation of the catering model would negatively affect the ability to achieve the challenging overarching partnership objective of reaching a zero subsidy by year 3 of the arrangements and the ability to sustain overall service provision.</p> <p>These decisions were confirmed by GLL at a Project Liaison Board meeting in September 2017.</p> |

W12

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR HOWELLS

How does Cardiff Council monitor the effectiveness of the systems which GLL have in place to ensure that the quality of the water within the swimming pools they manage on behalf of the council is to an acceptable standard?

Have there been any issues or complaints regarding water quality since the award of the contract to GLL and, if so, please quantify the number and nature of the complaints?

Reply

Service provision is managed through robust governance arrangements as set out in the service specification. This includes regular meetings, service updates and monitoring visits.

Health and safety is paramount and GLL have a range of stringent policies and procedures in place for all related matters. GLL implement a Water Management Plan at each facility that is available for inspection by the Council. With specific reference to swimming pools and water quality, GLL operate facilities in line with the recommendations included within the HSE publication 'Management of Health and Safety in Swimming Pools'. This is a requirement of the contract.

There have not been any reported issues or complaints regarding water quality since the commencement of the arrangements with GLL.

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS
(COUNCILLOR SARAH MERRY)

W13

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR CARTER

What would be the estimated additional cost be to change school transport rules to provide free transport to high school pupils further than 2.5 miles from their school?

Reply

Based on current pupil numbers, the estimated additional cost to the Council for providing free transport to all pupils living over 2.5 miles from their appropriate allocated secondary school would amount to £336,114 per annum.

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| W14 | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOYLE</u></p> <p>The council says the number of primary school children moving to high school in September 2019 will ‘exceed the numbers of places available across the city at entry to Year 7’. Band B money only becomes available in April 2019. What specific plans is the council putting in place to meet the excess demand anticipated for September 2019?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The Council has confirmed the feasibility of ensuring that every child requiring a Year 7 place in an English-medium or Welsh-medium community can be accommodated.</p> <p>Specific measures to provide additional places for this cohort will be agreed with schools in early 2018, in good time for secondary schools to plan for the September 2019 intake and for primary schools to make suitable transition arrangements. These measures will take into account the location and timing of any schemes proposed within the Council’s Band B programme.</p> |
| W15 | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR</u></p> <p>How does the Council meet the needs of pupils requiring Additional Learning Needs (ALN) support through the medium of Welsh?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The majority of ALN pupils, whether in English or Welsh medium schools, are supported by their schools, using delegated resources.</p> <p>Every school has an ALN Coordinator (ALNCO) who identifies pupils with additional learning needs and ensures support is in place for them.</p> <p>The Council provides a range of services to support schools, all of which include Welsh speaking staff, assigned to work with the Welsh medium schools. This includes Educational Psychology, ALN Casework Team and Partnership and Inclusion Officers. Specialist teaching services for sensory impairments, early years, healthcare and medical needs, learning, speech and language, autism and emotional health and wellbeing all have capacity to deliver support in the medium of Welsh.</p> |

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| | <p>There are also specialist resource bases at Ysgol Coed y Gof and Ysgol Glantaf, and a primary Wellbeing Class is currently located at Ysgol Pen y Groes. Last year, in partnership with the three secondary schools, the local authority undertook an audit of emotional health and wellbeing needs in secondary phase. As an outcome of this audit, it was agreed with the schools, that funding should be provided for a team of specialists working across the three secondary schools, in partnership with the ALNCOs, to provide specialist packages of support to pupils with the most complex needs.</p> <p>Specialist provision is kept under review, and needs are audited annually, to inform planning. As part of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), there are also plans to extend specialist places over the next three years.</p> <p>The Inclusion Service is engaged in a regional audit of ALN in Welsh medium education and will explore options for developing regional provision in partnership where appropriate.</p> |
| W16 | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR</u></p> <p>What plans does the council have to introduce a catchment area for Ysgol Hamadryad, and how soon will this be completed?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>Consideration of the revision of catchment areas and establishment of new catchment areas would be informed by any changes to the school admission policy, and by any changes to primary and/or secondary school provision brought forward through the 21st Century Schools Band B programme. It is therefore anticipated that consultation, in accordance with statutory timescales, on the establishment of a catchment area for Ysgol Hamadryad would be undertaken no sooner than 1 September 2018 and completed by 1 March 2019, for implementation in September 2020.</p> |
| W17 | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR</u></p> <p>What are the current numbers of Year 4 pupils in Welsh Medium Primary Schools, and what are the projected numbers of pupils entering Welsh Medium secondary education in 2019?</p> |

Reply

The September 2017 Number on Roll census confirms that there were 643 pupils enrolled in Welsh-medium primary schools or in Welsh-medium streams in dual stream schools.

All the evidence available suggests that there continues to be a reduction in the number of children that access their education through the medium of Welsh between Year 4 and entering secondary education.

The Council and its partners are seeking to understand the causes of this and are investigating measures to reduce this outflow. However, projections consistent with recent trends within the Welsh-medium sector indicate that 588 of the current Year 4 cohort would enter Welsh Medium secondary education in September 2020.

FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE
(COUNCILLOR CHRIS WEAVER)

W18

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR SANDREY

A survey by Axa revealed this week that Cardiff is the most 'stressed out' city in the UK. What is the council doing to address this?

Reply

The main reasons stated in the AXA survey for those suffering stress in Cardiff were: Personal Health (40%), Personal Finance (40%) and Work (37%).

In order to understand difference in well-being between communities in Cardiff, the 2017 Ask Cardiff survey asked respondents a series of questions about their mental health, satisfaction with life, levels of happiness and anxiety, and the extent to which they felt the things they did in their life are worthwhile.

The initial findings show that satisfaction across these dimensions of well-being was higher amongst the 55+ age group and those in the north of the city, but noticeably lower amongst under 35s, those from a minority ethnicity, people living in the most deprived areas of the city, particularly in Cardiff East, and respondents who identify as disabled.

The sense of well-being was lowest amongst respondents who identified as disabled (45.0%) and those living in the most deprived areas of the city (62.4%). Furthermore, almost half (46.7%) of those who identify as disabled and 30.1% of those living in the most deprived areas of the city reported their sense of well-being had declined over the last 12 months.

These more granular results suggest that the city's most deprived and vulnerable communities are, perhaps unsurprisingly, suffering greater levels of stress and lower levels of well-being. We know that poverty is damaging for our economy and our society. It also places major pressures on public services and casts a long shadow over too many lives. That's why, in Capital Ambition, the administration is committed to improving people's lives through, for example, a continued focus on education; targeted approaches to tackling poverty; supporting people into work; delivering affordable housing and being a Living Wage City.

In addition, as a major employer, the Council has implemented a number of measures to improve the health and well-being of its staff, in line with our Health and Wellbeing Strategy that was introduced in January 2016. This has included the formation of a Health and Wellbeing Group, whose objective is to change the culture and mindset of health and well-being within the organisation.

The Health and Wellbeing Group has worked closely with the Council's Occupational Health Unit to introduce a number of innovative health promotion initiatives, such as the increase in physiotherapy appointments and interactive self-help methodology to improve mental and physical health. Newly devised training and advice will help managers to be astute to the signs of ill health and the appropriate interventions.

The Health and Wellbeing Group has led the Council's efforts to gain the Corporate Health Standard, which is a national quality framework for employers who are committed to employee health and well-being. The Council successfully attained the Bronze Award in 2016 and is now actively working towards the Silver Award, with an assessment due to take place in the New Year.

The Council also signed an organisational pledge in May 2016 to support the Time to Change Wales campaign, which is a national campaign that aims to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination in the workplace. In addition to this, the Council has introduced a number of policies & guidance documents (e.g. Mental Health Policy; Menopause Guidance), which will inform and support employees.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES
(COUNCILLOR LYNDA THORNE)

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| W19 | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR CARTER</u></p> <p>What is the rationale for increasing police action against homeless people in the city centre?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The Police operation “Purple Ash”, to which I believe you refer, relates to proactive police enforcement action against those who are begging aggressively, street drinking and causing anti-social behaviour in the city centre.</p> <p>The activity being targeted by the Police is criminal behaviour which is causing distress to residents, visitors and businesses alike and it is important to be clear that such criminal behaviour will not be tolerated. However, it is also important that we are careful in our use of language so as not to label those individuals – who, for a wide range of reasons, may find themselves to be street homeless – as criminals.</p> <p>The Police work closely with Council and partner services, and support the excellent work done by our front-line teams to help those who are street homeless to successfully move off the streets and into accommodation with support. Since April 2017, we have assisted 119 people off the streets and our work in this regard continues.</p> |
| W20 | <p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DE’ATH</u></p> <p>South Wales Police are currently carrying out a series of interventions targeting begging, street drinking and anti-social behaviour in Cardiff city centre, dubbed Operation Purple Ash. As a result, a number of Section 35 notices have been served, arrests made and Dispersal Orders issued. Does the Council feel assured that only individuals engaged in anti-social activities have been targeted by Operation Purple Ash and that innocent, and possibly vulnerable homeless people, have not been?</p> <p>Is the Council aware as to whether, as a result of this operation, individuals who have been engaged in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) are being dispersed out of the city centre into peripheral areas like Canton, Plasnewydd and the outer parts of Cathays?</p> |

Reply

As part of Operation “Purple Ash”, the Police have undertaken proactive enforcement action against those who are begging aggressively, street drinking and causing anti-social behaviour in the city centre. The action is targeted at criminal behaviour and not at homeless people.

According to the latest Police figures released today, only 3 of the 19 people who have been arrested specifically for begging were actually homeless and they were signposted to alternative provision.

The Council is aware that this activity may have deflected some of those sleeping rough out of the city centre. Whilst we cannot state that it was as a direct consequence, the Council’s Outreach Team did note that 9 people changed their usual rough sleeping site to an area further out of the city centre. All of these individuals are known to be involved in differing levels of street begging activity. Additionally, 4 people were seen to have changed their begging location as a result of the operation and others were seen to be begging at a later time in the day.

The Council is currently working with South Wales Police to set up a task group to develop a more co-ordinated approach to the enforcement process, ensuring that there is a clear diversionary pathway in place.

In a clear sign that such a strategy can work, two service users took an immediate decision to switch from begging to signing up as vendors to sell the Big Issue and another individual began to explore accommodation options with outreach staff, having previously had had very limited engagement.

W21

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DE’ATH

A number of London Councils have been confiscating tents, bedding and similar possessions from homeless individuals in their boroughs using anti-social behaviour laws. These confiscations leave people even more vulnerable than they already are, exposing them to the elements and driving them away from visible, brightly-lit locations. A 2017 study by Crisis reveals a sharp increase in ‘informal’ harassment of UK rough sleepers – while only 10 percent have been hit with a formal sanction, 70 percent of rough sleepers report experiencing ‘informal’ enforcement measures in the past year. ‘Informal measures’ taken against rough sleepers include a practice

known as 'wetting down' – hosing down areas where people sleep rough with cold water, making them uninhabitable. What is Cardiff Council's position regarding tent and bedding confiscation, and also the practice of 'wetting down'?

Reply

As Members will be aware from previous answers on this question, Cardiff has a positive and proactive approach to assisting rough sleepers into accommodation. The Council's Outreach Team works with charities, such as the Wallich, Salvation Army and the Huggard, to bring people in from the streets and, where this is not possible, to help them to remain safe on the streets.

There is no policy in Cardiff of confiscating goods or deliberately wetting down areas; however, there does need to be a balance between the needs of those sleeping rough and of those who use the city centre to shop or do business.

With the increasing provision of new sleeping bags and bedding, we have also seen an increase in the number of people abandoning their bedding in the street and we do need to remove such material from shop doorways. There is also an increasing trend of defecating and leaving needles and other drug taking paraphernalia on the streets and this is clearly not acceptable and needs to be cleared and cleaned.

The tents, which have been given out by people with the best of intentions, are often used for illegal activities relating to prostitution or substance misuse. They make it harder to engage with the occupants and to bring them into accommodation services.

The Council is working with partners to achieve a balanced approach, which is sympathetic and supportive to those sleeping rough, while addressing any associated antisocial behaviour.

INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
(COUNCILLOR RUSSELL GOODWAY)

W22

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR HOWELLS

In relation to the decision to renew the existing sub lease of the Cardiff International Pool by the existing tenant, could you provide details of the 'improved operational arrangements' that are expected and how these will affect users of the pool and its facilities?

Reply

During discussions with the operator relating to the lease renewal, they indicated that they were minded to take advantage of the opportunity the lease renewal provided to improve their offer to local residents. I understand that they are minded to improve the gym facilities within the development and make them more attractive. The operator has indicated that they wish to undertake a public consultation exercise before finalising their proposals. I will make the Councillor aware of those proposals once they are available.

W23

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BERMAN

Given that the council is planning to draw up a business case for delivering a new County Hall, can you advise Members what you currently perceive as the benefits of such a proposal, what cost-benefit analysis you have undertaken to date to back this up, and what funding models you have so far considered to deliver such a scheme?

Reply

The County Councillor will be aware that discussions have been on-going for a period of years regarding the need to rationalise the council's office estate, an exercise which began during his term as Leader of the County Council. This was in response to the impact that cuts to the council's budgets have had on staff numbers and the effect new ways of working have had on the requirement for office space.

In addition, the council is conscious of the age and state of the current building which, along with the remainder of the estate, has a serious maintenance backlog and is fuelled by outdated and seriously inefficient energy systems. Taken together, I am persuaded that there is a prima facie case to undertake a more detailed business case to inform potential solutions. That business case could explore all eventualities and all possible funding mechanisms, and also take account of the opportunity cost of remaining on the present site.

I will report to Cabinet at an appropriate time.

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
(COUNCILLOR SUSAN ELSMORE)

W24

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR MOLIK

Given that Wales has the largest and fastest growing proportion of older people in UK, and Cardiff is housing a large share of that population, what are we doing:

- 1) to ensure prevention mechanisms are put in place to promote healthier lifestyle;
- 2) to intervene earlier to ensure senior citizens are supported in self managing their health and safety and in decision making;
- 3) to ensure care is provided in the community and at home rather than hospital; and
- 4) to ensure we are making best use of and supporting third sector service provision in supporting us on these agendas?

Reply

Working jointly with Cardiff & Vale University Health Board (UHB), together with third sector organisations, Cardiff Council works to provide community resources and activities to support and promote healthier lifestyles.

The UHB is the lead organisation in supporting individuals with lifestyle choices through primary care (i.e. GPs and community services). There are strategies in place to assist with, for example, exercise through a GP referral, or clinical support to give up smoking.

The Council's Hubs in different areas of the city provide a 'one stop shop' for all enquiries, but can also refer individuals to the Independent Living Service (ILS), which links in with First Point of Contact (FPOC) officers and co-located social workers. With an individual's consent, GP practices and UHB staff can also refer people to the ILS.

In accordance with the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, the Council's FPOC team and the ILS provide information, advice and assistance to keep people as independent as possible.

This approach is underpinned by the use of DEWIS (the system of third sector provider information). This enables individuals to receive information and advice tailored both to their locality and interests and needs.

A wide range of services are commissioned to enable people to remain at home for as long as possible, but, ultimately, any decision to admit a person to hospital, or to decide at what point they are fit to be discharged, is a clinical one made by health colleagues.

We work closely with a range of third sector partners in relation to older people, including Age Connects, Care & Repair and Cardiff Institute for the Blind. These organisations support older people to remain living safely in their own homes and, where possible, engaged within their own communities by addressing social isolation and loneliness. An organisation involving a volunteer runner base, GoodGym, is now operating in Cardiff with the benefit of financial support from the Integrated Care Fund.

W25

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DE'ATH

An employment appeal tribunal has decided that care workers required to sleep in at a service user's home are [entitled to be paid the 'national minimum wage'](#) for all hours worked, including the hours spent asleep. This decision will have significant consequences for adult social care. Wage costs may increase for many providers and there could be claims for back pay dating back up to six years. Failure to pay carries criminal penalties and fines, including the potential for doubling back pay arrears. Could the Cabinet Member please make a statement on the potential impact, directly and indirectly, this will have on the local authority?

Reply

There are a number of potential impacts for the Council and since learning of this ruling, officers have undertaken significant work to establish the impact this will have in Cardiff. However, during discussions with Care Providers, it has become apparent that it will not be possible to predict the exact impact, partly because of the complexity of this issue and the related legislation, guidance and requirements. In summary, we expect the impact for each part of the adult care sector in the city to be as follows:

Council-run Adult Residential Care Homes

This ruling has no impact on the Council. The Council has run its own homes for older people in the 6 years but staff would have been on a rota, which covered night duties. Sleep-in arrangements were used very rarely and where this did happen, it was in an emergency situation and staff would have been paid the above the minimum wage level.

Council-run Supported Living Service

Initial work to review the Council's Supported Living Service strongly indicates this ruling will have no impact, as Council staff are paid above the minimum wage level. However, further work is required and ongoing to confirm this.

Direct Payment Provision

There are a small number of people who in the last 6 years have managed their own care provision through the Direct Payment Scheme and have used sleep-in arrangements as part of this. It is assumed that these people funded this provision using the method that is no longer lawful. Whilst we expect the number of people that did this to be low, this is the area that gives the Council most cause for concern and we are currently looking through the cases to assess the specific impact on each individual. We are also looking into the question of who is liable for any enforcement action or payment of arrears.

Independent Sector Supported Living Providers

This is the sector most affected by this ruling. Many of these Providers are struggling to meet the combined demands of the National Minimum Wage, the National Living Wage and the additional payments for sleep-ins. Some of these providers have already approached the Council seeking additional funding to help them cover these costs. At this point in time, the exact impact is not clear and the Council has not set aside additional funds to meet these requests. Council officers are working with these Providers to understand the scale of the financial pressures they are facing and to help them overcome these challenges.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
(COUNCILLOR CARO WILD)

W26

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR SANDREY

I first submitted a petition regarding the dangerous parking around the Cardiff Met University Cyncoed Campus on Circle Way West back in July. After waiting months, I received a response in October which said the vicinity would be included in the Area Investigation Report for 2017, which will be made available in early 2018. This response is identical to ones received regarding other traffic related issues in Pentwyn. Given that 500 people signed this petition, which is based on an ongoing issue which has caused problems for residents for a long time, I and they expected a more specific response, particularly given the time it took to get back to us. I have asked for this to be looked at again, but would like to know how long should residents be expected to wait before they see some action?

And would the cabinet member consider attending a meeting in the community to address the issue with residents directly?

Residents are getting quite understandably impatient and are cynical about whether the council consider the dangerous parking to be a priority.

Reply

I understand that waiting until the Annual Area Investigation (AAI) has been carried out will seem like an unreasonable delay. However, even if a decision is made to implement parking restrictions, this year's budgets are already fully committed and over stretched. Therefore, we would not be able to start work until the new financial year at the earliest.

The advantage of the AAI approach is that we can take a more strategic and joined up approach to these issues, which we believe is a more effective and efficient way of allocating limited funding to this type of work.

Nevertheless, I do understand your concerns and, if you wish, I could arrange a meeting with officers who will be able to discuss your concerns and explain the AAI and other processes that they work to. I'm sure that they would be happy to consider any suggestions that you may have.

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR SANDREY

As part of the proposed partnership between Cardiff Council and HSBC, to improve cycling, would it be possible for money to be invested in cycling infrastructure at schools, such as bike stands/shelters?

Having somewhere safe to secure bikes during the school day would be a good way to encourage children to cycle to and from school.

Reply

The HSBC partnership project provides funding to support a range of initiatives that are designed to increase participation in cycling for daily travel, leisure and sport in Cardiff. The activities will include engagement with schools to provide basic cycle skills training, which will be integrated with the cycling and school travel-related activities currently delivered by the Council's Road Safety Team.

Whilst the HSBC funding cannot be used for physical infrastructure such as bike stands, the activities it will support will feed into the delivery of our Capital Ambition commitment to develop Active Travel Action Plans for all schools in Cardiff.

The Active Travel Action Plans will be developed through engagement with school pupils and staff and will identify measures required to give pupils the opportunity travel to school on foot or by bicycle. Such measures are likely to include the provision of secure and covered cycle parking located on the school premises, as well as physical measures to provide safer walking and routes within the immediate vicinity of the school site. They will also provide the basis for future bids to Welsh Government for grant funding to enable the physical improvements identified in the Active Travel Plan to be implemented.

The Council is due to embark on a major programme of investment in the city's schools through the 21st Century Schools Band B Programme. Through working closely with my Cabinet colleague, Councillor Merry, I intend to ensure that the new educational facilities developed as part of this programme will incorporate all the on-site and off-site infrastructure that is necessary to enable every pupil to enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of walking and cycling to school each day. This will be achieved through a co-ordinated, cross-departmental effort, bringing together the skills, expertise and resources of the Council's Schools Reorganisation, Planning and Transport teams.

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BERMAN

Following the email circulated to all councillors on 6 November regarding the London Borough of Hounslow scheme for installing charging points for electric vehicles by fitting them to existing street lights, will you look into the possibility of introducing a similar scheme here in Cardiff?

Reply

The Council has recently commissioned a feasibility study to look at options for a potential Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in the city. It is anticipated that this will provide a comprehensive resource on which we can base decisions on the way forward in providing EV charging facilities across the city.

The study will review the EV market and best practice from around the UK, including infrastructure technology, energy requirements and costs of various systems and funding options. The study will undertake an options appraisal and make recommendations on the best way forward for the city.

Officers are currently investigating options for a pilot of various types of charge points over the next months. It is anticipated that the technology type that was recently launched in Hounslow could be one of these, subject to technical feasibility, including access to appropriate power sources.

Members will be briefed in due course following the review of options and the outcomes of the feasibility study.