

COUNCIL, 30 MARCH 2023 : WRITTEN QUESTIONS

CHAIR OF THE MEETING OF CABINET (AS TRUSTEE OF MAINDY PARK TRUST) HELD ON 2 MARCH 2023 (COUNCILLOR DAN DE'ATH)

W1	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR ROBSON</u></p> <p>When will residents and Councillors be consulted on proposed improvements to Caedelyn Park as part of the Maindy Trust land swap?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>As you know, the Maindy Park Independent Advisory Committee recommended to Cabinet that a land swap with part of the land at Maindy Park with land at Caedelyn is in the best interests of the charity, subject to obtaining the necessary Charity Commission consent and a number of conditions being met.</p> <p>The Cabinet, sitting as trustee of the Maindy Park Trust, agreed with this recommendation and took an in-principle decision confirming this on 2nd March 2023. One of the conditions is that:</p> <p><i>“Improvement works are to be carried out at Cae Delyn (including improved drainage of the site, walkways, lighting and other reasonable and proportionate measures to reduce anti – social behaviour in the area) and the retained land at Maindy, in order to improve its amenity value for the purposes of meeting the Trust’s charitable objectives. The Advisory Committee is to hold another meeting (within 90 days from the date of its last meeting on 23rd January 2023) to agree the proposed recommended improvements, which may be subject to further public consultation.”</i></p> <p>The Independent Advisory Committee is due to meet on 20th April 2023 to consider whether the proposals meet their requirements. In relation to the retained trust/public access land at Maindy, they will consider options to enhance the public amenity using existing topography of the site, as well as providing fully accessible areas, improved footways and cycle paths linking routes through the wider community. For Caedelyn, they will consider details of drainage schemes to enhance the amenity. For both sites, security measures are being reviewed.</p>
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	<p>When the proposals are agreed in principle, and when Charity Commission consent has been obtained for the land swap, public consultation will be undertaken. However, another of the conditions was that the new velodrome be built and operational before the land swap takes place. This is not imminent and so there is plenty of time for any necessary public consultation to take place prior to the land swap taking place and any works then being undertaken.</p>
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CHAIR OF PLANNING COMMITTEE
(COUNCILLOR ED STUBBS)

W2	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR LITTLECHILD</u></p> <p>How many planning enforcement notices have been issued in Pontprennau and Old St Mellons in the last 3 years?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>There were 15 enforcement cases registered in the last 3 years in Pontprennau and Old St Mellons. No formal enforcement notices have been served.</p>
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CLIMATE CHANGE
(COUNCILLOR CARO WILD)

W2	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVIES</u></p> <p>What progress has been made in tailoring the new recycling regime to those who live in HMOs, apartment blocks, and properties converted into flats?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>One size will not fit all when it comes to flats and HMOs. Research is underway to better understand the housing stock and what recycling facilities would be best suited to each type of flat.</p>
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The segregation of glass recycling has already been trialled successfully across a number and range of flats and, therefore, we intend to introduce this at the same time as we expand the segregation scheme to households. Segregated aperture bins are also being trialled in blocks of flats and the findings will be made available once sufficient data has been gathered. In addition, officers are working with WRAP Cymru to undertake a survey of all flats owned by the Council's Housing Service. Following on from this survey, the team will have a better understanding of which flats can accommodate bins and which flats will need to consider alternative methods of segregation.

The segregation of fibres and containers will need to take place in 2024/25 once the research currently taking place has been completed.

W3

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR ROBSON

Since the start of 2023, what change have wards seen in the amount of waste recycled? Please also indicate which wards are running the pilot scheme.

Reply

Currently, the segregated recycling scheme is only in operation in parts of wards, rather than whole wards, as we have been reviewing the changes on various household types. The pilot areas include parts of Radyr, Llandaff, Grangetown, Pentwyn, Trowbridge, Splott, Heath West and Rhiwbina.

It is not possible to provide recycling figures on a ward-by-ward basis. The Council collects recycling from several wards each day and the materials are taken to our Materials Recycling Facility for sorting and baling. What is clear from the trial scheme is that when we put material from the trial areas through the plant, contamination/reject levels drop significantly. Rather than rejecting around 30% of the materials collected, we are only rejecting around 6-8% of the materials collected from the trial areas. The outcome is improvements in the quality of the materials collected, thereby making it easier to recycle them.

	<p>Overall recycling figures for 2022/23 to date indicate an increase in performance on 2021/22. Last year, Cardiff reported a performance of 58.2%. The first three quarters of this year have each outperformed last year by over 5% in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2, and by 2% in Quarter 3. We are therefore anticipating the overall recycling performance for the year will be over 60% – by far the highest of any Core City in the UK.</p>
W4	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WOOD</u></p> <p>Can the council confirm that the garden waste collection service (green bins) will remain free to all households until the end of the current council term in 2027?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>As you will know, I am unable to give commitments for future budget decisions, especially given the financial pressures the Council faces and the ongoing impact of 12 years of austerity. Garden waste collection is a non-statutory service that is currently provided free of charge by the Council, although the service costs in terms of operations and disposal are over £2million. Budget strategies will be developed in coming months to review the delivery of both statutory and non-statutory services and the associated pressures to deliver these services over the coming years.</p>
W5	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WOOD</u></p> <p>Individuals on assisted lift collections are unlikely to be able to use HWRCs or move bulky items outside to take advantage of the collection service, will the council look at offering a service that can support these residents in disposing of bulky items?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>Where residents who are registered for the assisted lift collection service have requested a bulky collection, the collection location point is usually the same location as where they present their household waste.</p>

	<p>Waste collection staff do not enter residents' properties; however, where residents are unable to move the bulky item to an external location, the Waste Collections team works with colleagues in Housing and Estates Services to provide support, with either the Caretaking Team or the Local Action Team able to help residents to move the item from within their property. If the item(s) are suitable for reuse, we can also recommend local charities who can assess the item(s) and then collect from inside.</p> <p>For smaller household items, the service is expanding its community recycling zones in 2023/24.</p>
W6	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR LITTLECHILD</u></p> <p>In the last 2 years since general waste has been declined at recycling centres, has there been an increase in flytipping?</p> <p>If so, what were the rates prior to the change and in the subsequent years?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>General waste is not declined at recycling centres and, whilst there is a 'no black bag' policy in place at our Recycling Centres, skips at the Recycling Centres are available for residents to dispose of items that cannot be recycled.</p>
W7	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR LITTLECHILD</u></p> <p>How much has the Council made from EV charging since charging stations have been installed in the last year?</p> <p>What is the total usage rate of each charger?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The Council has Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers at 21 sites across the city, with charger capacities ranging from 7kw to 50kw. Most sites have two charge points. In 2022, these sites, combined, supplied in the region of half a million kilowatt hours of electricity to electric vehicles. A breakdown is provided below.</p>

kWh of usage at EVCP sites 2022	
Site	kWh
Bute Crescent	78,726.90
Howard Place	53,724.46
Windsor Place	66,216.57
Britannia Quay	52,731.60
Park Place	47,787.22
King Edward	52,800.48
Waterloo Road	25,458.09
Stallcourt Avenue	18,009.66
Penylan Library	15,602.01
Victoria Park Road	14,771.29
Pontcanna Street	10,728.15
Llandaff Car Park	9,503.48
Kyveilog Street	10,346.87
Maindy Road	9,335.20
Turning Head Car Park	5,386.46
Severn Road Car Park	7,740.18
Rennie Street	13,015.44
Anglesey Street	13,225.79
Butleigh Avenue	8,843.33
Mardy Street	7,019.60
Redlaver Street	2,567.13
Total	523,539.91

The Council received an income of £11,200 from these EV chargers over the course of 2022.

In addition to these sites, the Council has worked with Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) to bring forward an additional 10 sites in 2022/23. These are operated by CCR and there is no income to the Council from these. The Council has also put forward a further 6 EV charge point sites for inclusion in a CCR funding application to the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles for 2023/24. We do not have usage figures for these sites yet.

The Welsh Government's [Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Wales](#) estimates that some 30,000-50,000 chargers will be needed across Wales, with a high focus in urban areas such as Cardiff and Swansea. Therefore, the Council, CCR and private sector are all seeking to increase the charger provision to support the EV transition, particularly with new sales of petrol and diesel cars due to be phased out by 2030.

	<p>The EV market and charging facility requirements is a constantly changing area with rapid changes in technology, providers, usage and infrastructure requirements. New sales of battery electric or plug in hybrid vehicles has grown to around 20% of the market. We have set out in the new Corporate Plan 2023-26 that we wish to take stock of the current trends and future scenarios in the sector and bring forward an EV Charging Roadmap. This will consider how as a city we can continue to support the transition away from traditional combustion engines to electric vehicles in accordance with our One Planet Cardiff Strategy and the objectives set by national governments.</p>
W8	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR LITTLECHILD</u></p> <p>How many waste enforcement fines were issued last financial year and what was the income to the Council?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>In 2021/22, the total number of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) issued for all enforcement offences was 1,705, with a total potential income of £335,100. To date, 858 FPNs have been paid, with a total income of £131,592.</p>
W9	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR HOPKINS</u></p> <p>Missed waste collections are a continuing issue in Cyncoed and Lakeside with over 80 requests from myself alone to address missed collections over the last 18 months. In most cases, these are related to residents eligible for an assisted lift and, in many instances, these involve recurring problems at the same addresses. What can be done to avoid these repeated missed collections?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>A review of the data relating to reported missed collections (i.e. via the CardiffGov app, website or contact with C2C) in Cyncoed over the last 18 months has confirmed the following figures:</p>

- Individual missed collection reports = 789
- Individual missed collection reports related to assisted lift properties = 24

To put these figures in context, over 46,000 separate collections are undertaken each month in Cyncoed, equating to over 800,000 collections in the last 18 months. On this basis, over 99.9% of collections have been carried out as scheduled.

Several improvements have been made to our in-cab technology in relation to alerting drivers to assisted lift properties and we have seen this reduce the number of missed assisted lift collections being reported by residents. The service continues to look at ways to improve this further.

W10

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DRISCOLL

In your Stronger Greener Fairer Climate change document, you say: *“Invest in further local, sustainable drainage schemes to protect our communities from extreme weather events and flash flooding.”* In February 2020, ten homes in Radyr Court Road were flooded. What additional flood defences are being put in place that will make these residents in Radyr Court Road feel secure?

Reply

Officers from the Council’s Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) Team met with the residents of the flooded properties on Radyr Court Road in February 2020 whilst undertaking an inspection of the flood embankment between Radyr Court Road and the River Taff. The inspection determined that the flood embankment was no longer providing its designed level of protection to the properties on Radyr Court Road.

Discussions are currently taking place with Natural Resources Wales to determine the owner of the asset; however, this can often take a number of months. As a result, the FCRM Team has taken on the responsibility to investigate and undertake possible remedial works to the flood defences to ensure that it offers the appropriate level of protection.

	<p>An application for funding from the Welsh Government has been submitted to support the appointment of a consultant to develop a business justification case report and the associated detailed design of remedial works to the embankment. The FCRM Team is expecting to learn if the application has been successful or not in early May 2023 and, if successful, the duration of the detailed design work will be approximately 8 months. This design will then be submitted to the Welsh Government for approval and a further application for funding will be submitted for the construction of any remedial works.</p>
W11	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DRISCOLL</u></p> <p>The raised embankment on Radyr Court Road to protect property and roads from flooding was installed many years ago. Photographic and video evidence show that this flood defence measure is failing. Can the cabinet member explain why the River Taff embankment along Radyr Court Road is failing?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The flood defence scheme to eliminate repeated flooding of Radyr Court Road was built in 1992/93 by the former South Glamorgan County Council, with contributions from the Glamorgan Local Flood Defence Committee (GLFDC) and Cardiff City Council. The flood defences are comprised of a raised road and membrane-lined soil-covered gabions (i.e. wire mesh cages/baskets filled with stone). The Council's Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) Team believes that poor weather and high river levels in the last five years have contributed to the deterioration of the flood defence, with the aforementioned membrane and soil covering the gabions having been compromised.</p>
W12	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DRISCOLL</u></p> <p>Can the cabinet member confirm whether the flood defence embankment on Radyr Court Road would meet current <i>SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage)</i> or <i>SAB (Suds Approval Board)</i> standards and, if not, are we having discussions with the agency responsible for maintaining this defence?</p>

	<p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The embankment on Radyr Court Road is a flood defence asset and not a Sustainable Urban Drainage asset and, as such, the SAB standards would not be applicable. As I confirmed in reply to your previous question (W10), discussions are currently taking place with Natural Resources Wales to determine the owner of the asset; and, in the meantime, we have begun the process of appointing a consultant to develop a business justification case report and the associated detailed design of remedial works to the embankment.</p>
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CULTURE, PARKS & EVENTS
(COUNCILLOR JENNIFER BURKE)

W14	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVIES</u></p> <p>When will drainage works begin on Drover's Way Park and when will the works begin on refurbishing the park?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>As has been confirmed to you recently by officers, the drainage works commenced on 20th March 2023. It is anticipated that they will be completed by 7th July 2023 and will then be followed by the play area refurbishment works, subject to satisfactory tender returns. Officers will continue to keep you abreast of the timelines.</p>
W15	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVIES</u></p> <p>What action is the Council taking to assist Radyr Rangers in securing a lease for Mound Field and what timelines can it outline for completion?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>This matter has already been raised with me by Councillor Lloyd Jones. The Council is working with Transport for Wales, who are currently occupying part of the site, on plans to invest in new changing facilities, which will be constructed once the site is vacated.</p>

	<p>It is our intention to move to an asset transfer model for the management of the facilities with Radyr Rangers, which will also enhance opportunities for the club to attract external funding for improved clubhouse and community facilities.</p> <p>I understand that a meeting took place on 27th March 2023 with the Club, Transport for Wales and local ward members. Officers from the Council's Strategic Estates, Planning and Parks & Sport teams were also in attendance. I further understand that indicative timelines were discussed and officers explained that a detailed action plan is being developed.</p>
W16	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR REID-JONES</u></p> <p>Quite rightly Cardiff Council do not trim hedges, crown trees etc during our bird nesting season. However, I see conflicting dates of when the season starts and ends. Could the cabinet member confirm the nesting season dates the council will be working from for 2023?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The bird nesting season is defined as being between March and August, but this timeframe can vary depending upon specific species of birds and climatic changes. The Council recommends that vegetation management works should be completed outside of this period. As you may be aware, under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, it is an offence to disturb a bird's nest or to kill/injure any wild animal. Prior to the commencement of any works, a thorough inspection should be undertaken to check for any nests.</p>
W17	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR NAUGHTON</u></p> <p>With recent further delays to Pentwyn leisure centre with founding of development now not due to start till the 2024/2025 financial year, concerns have grown among some local residents in Pentwyn and Llanedeyrn that the much loved swimming pool will not be reopened as part of these plans. Can the council commit that the swimming pool will reopen when the redevelopment is completed?</p>

	<p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The Council is currently reviewing the proposal to ensure that the confirmed 'invest to save' capital commitment is able to be repaid. The scheme also still includes a pool currently; however, we need to be sure that the overall plan is fundable before commencing with the scheme. A report on this is expected to be considered by Cabinet in June 2023.</p>
W18	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DRISCOLL</u></p> <p>RADYR VALE PARK: In the past weeks, a large area of trees and scrubland was cleared to make way for the burying of National Grid overhead power lines. Do we know if the land will be reinstated, or if additional planting will take place to compensate this loss?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>As you are aware, the works are being undertaken by National Grid under an easement whereby statutory powers exist. Works that have been undertaken to date include re-coppicing and scrub clearance, which will result in regeneration over a relatively short period of time. The land in question will be reinstated and we anticipate tree losses being limited, with replacement planting being undertaken to compensate for any tree loss. Officers will keep you updated on these works.</p>

DEPUTY LEADER & EDUCATION
(COUNCILLOR SARAH MERRY)

W19	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR REID-JONES</u></p> <p>School meal prices have increased in Cardiff; however, I understand the council still subsidise their cost. Could the cabinet member please provide a breakdown of the costs and how much subsidy is paid?</p>
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Reply

The Council does not currently provide a direct subsidy to the provision of school meals in Cardiff. However, in the current 2022/23 financial year, the Council's school meal provision will result in a budget overspend position, which at the moment is projected to be circa £2million. This represents an overspend of 18.6% on the annual spend of £11.2million.

The main factors which have contributed to this overspend position have been:

- Significant increases in food and food supply prices;
- Increases in staff costs;
- Increases in staff agency costs used for absence and vacancy cover;
- A drop in paid meal take up; and
- Continued lower than expected take up of free school meals (both eligible and universal provision for Reception aged pupils).

The Council's public consultation on the 2023/24 budget proposals outlined the current financial position and suggested a range of price increases. Following the consideration of those responses, the agreed increase in school meal prices for the 2023/24 financial year will be an increase of circa 5% on current meal prices, which will mean the following prices will apply from April 2023:

- Primary = £2.70
- Secondary = £3.15
- Adult = £3.20

Based on current meal numbers and costs, it is projected that these increases will not bring in sufficient additional income to reduce the current budget deficit to a balanced position. As a result, a budget subsidy of £1million for school meal provision was included in the Council's budget for the 2023/24 financial year that was agreed by Council on 9th March 2023. Based on current expenditure levels, the £1million contribution represents an 8.93% subsidy.

FINANCE, MODERNISATION & PERFORMANCE
(COUNCILLOR CHRIS WEAVER)

W20	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS</u></p> <p>What discussions have taken place between the Council and Cardiff Bus in respects to Cardiff Bus needing further financial support from the Council and does the Council have confidence in the Company's financial health?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>There have been no discussions between the Shareholder representative and the Board of Cardiff Bus in relation to financial support.</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of a sustainable bus network provided by operators in the city and its role as the sole shareholder in Cardiff Bus. Like all commercial bus operators in the city, Wales and the UK, issues of reduced patronage, increasing fuel and employee costs continue to have an impact on the provision of bus services. Welsh Government financial support in the form of the Bus Emergency Support grant is available to all operators until end of June 2023.</p> <p>The Council is aware of the responsibilities of all operators to work on a commercial basis and the potential impact on services and residents as funding mechanisms change, and recognises that a joined-up approach will be required to ensure a sustainable bus network moving forward.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work with the company's Board to meet future challenges. We will also continue to seek opportunities for all bus operators to invest in sustainable modern fleet infrastructure to improve services and provide wider benefits for the city and bus users.</p>
W21	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS</u></p> <p>What are the present levels of borrowing at Cardiff Council and what is the forecasted total amount repayable by the Council on the amounts borrowed?</p>

Reply

I would refer you to the Budget Report that was considered by Council at its meeting on 9th March 2023. Annex 4 to the report is the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24, which sets out the actual level of external borrowing as at 31 December 2022, which was £851.8m. The level of borrowing is consistent with the alternative budget proposals tabled by the Conservative Group at the last Council meeting.

HOUSING & COMMUNITIES
(COUNCILLOR LYNDA THORNE)

W22

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WOOD

To help address the negative impact of Houses of Multiple Occupation, is the council willing to consider extending HMO licensing to new areas such as Gabalfa?

Reply

Mandatory licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) applies to all HMOs in Wales of three or more storeys having five or more occupiers. Where HMOs are being managed badly and their condition is affecting residents, the Council may declare an additional licensing scheme covering HMOs not captured by mandatory licensing.

The Council currently has additional licensing schemes in Cathays and Plasnewydd. The Cathays scheme has recently been re-declared with effect from 1 February 2023 for a 5-year period, and this means that a significant piece of work is now required to re-licence all the HMOs within the area.

In 2013, the Council engaged consultants to recommend which ward would follow the initial Cathays declaration in 2010 and Plasnewydd was chosen. The consultants recommended that Gabalfa on its own did not meet the criteria relating to poor HMO management, and that any challenge to the declaration of that area by landlords would likely be successful.

Within the constraints of current resources, it would not be possible to extend HMO licensing beyond the current two areas and, without further study, it is unclear which areas would qualify. Work is currently ongoing to map the growth of student housing to other districts, which may be helpful in informing future schemes.

The research and consultation required in order to declare an additional licensing scheme is significant and, in England, this has been met with legal challenge at judicial review if the case is not compelling.

INVESTMENT & DEVELOPMENT **(COUNCILLOR RUSSELL GOODWAY)**

W23

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR ROBSON

What action is the Council taking to protect the Coal Exchange from further deterioration?

Reply

Whilst ultimate responsibility for the upkeep of the Coal Exchange building rests with the owners, council officers have been engaged in discussions with a number of key stakeholders about the safety and condition of the building, including Coal Exchange Hotel LLP (as the leaseholder), Eden Grove Developments Limited (as the freeholder), Cadw, Mann Williams (Specialist Consulting Engineers, recommended by Cadw), Cardiff Demolition and Valco Scaffolding.

In early March, emergency measures were undertaken by the owners to carefully remove and store a limited area of dressed masonry from the north façade. The masonry had been displaced following a partial collapse of the roof. Part of this work also included the removal of that collapsed section of the roof. These works were undertaken by Cardiff Demolition and Valco Scaffolding following consultation with Cadw and Mann Williams. In addition, two remaining chimney stacks will require a structural brace to be fitted to prevent further deterioration, and this work is planned to be undertaken in the coming weeks.

	<p>From initial surveys of the building, it was evident that further work will be required to mitigate further deterioration of the north façade and Mann Williams will be appointed by the owners to undertake a detailed structural survey and provide a report with recommendations on further actions that are deemed necessary. The details of that report are awaited and the Council’s Building Control team continues to monitor the situation.</p> <p>Separately, the Council’s Economic Development team is considering offering a small emergency grant to Coal Exchange Hotel LLP to assist with mitigating further damage to the north façade of the building. Council officials have also briefed Welsh Government colleagues on the developing situation and the current challenges related to the Coal Exchange building.</p>
W24	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS</u></p> <p>What steps has Cardiff Council been taking to reduce the number of empty commercial units in the City Centre and throughout our high streets?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The Council’s City Recovery and Renewal Strategy and its associated City Centre Recovery Action Plan outlines our approach to supporting our city and district centres following the Coronavirus pandemic. Members will be aware that a lot of work has been undertaken to implement elements of the strategy and action plan. This includes investment in our City Centre Management team, bringing forward schemes such as the Canal Quarter, completing neighbourhood regeneration schemes and securing funding for major transport projects.</p> <p>Subsequently, we have seen Cardiff City Centre outperform its UK city comparators in terms of footfall according to data provided by retail analysts Springboard. This is also reflected in the availability of commercial premises within the city centre. While there are empty commercial units, property advisors EJ Hales suggest that vacancy rates are lower than other leading cities. Much of the vacancy relates to challenges that individual companies have experienced, and the timescales for bringing forward large development schemes such as Howells, Capitol Centre and Queens Arcade.</p>

Demand trends remain positive. Demand for office space in Cardiff bounced back in 2022 with take up above pre-COVID levels and the highest levels in five years. Demand for offices outside of the city centre also grew by 20%. This has enabled new occupiers to come to Cardiff, including BT and Go Compare, while Knight Frank property agents expect further growth in demand in 2023, which should see our remaining office availability fall further.

Footfall trends continue to be above average, giving confidence to investors to place new competitive hospitality projects into the city centre, such as Flight Club, which has occupied outdated retail space. This trend will continue whilst, at the same time, our traditional retail centres, such as St David's, recently reported that occupancy levels are now 90%.

The Council's Economic Development team is continuing to work to promote the city for investment alongside the Welsh Government and has recently visited MIPIM, the largest property event in Europe, to promote the city and our investment opportunities to international investors. We are also in the process of establishing a city centre business roadshow, similar to the successful one that was held recently at Ty Glas Business Park, which will bring together key Council departments and outside agencies to provide advice to city centre businesses and investors on a range of support measures.

The Council will also be bringing forward further support for businesses through the Shared Prosperity Fund, as well as an enhancement of our Neighbourhood Regeneration Schemes. We also continue to work with the Welsh Government to use the Town Centre Loans programme to support business expansion and growth, often in property that is currently under-utilised and/or vacant.

LEADER
(COUNCILLOR HUW THOMAS)

W25

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS

Does the Leader of the Council expect his Cabinet Members to work full time, given they receive enhanced remuneration and how does he measure the performance of his Cabinet Members?

Reply

I expect Cabinet Members to commit the time necessary to discharge their portfolio responsibilities, whilst also undertaking their role as an elected ward councillor. In terms of any performance assessment of Cabinet Members, I would refer you to the answer that I gave you back in July last year when you asked me a similar question at a meeting of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee.

TACKLING POVERTY, EQUALITY & PUBLIC HEALTH (JOB SHARE)
(COUNCILLORS JULIE SANGANI & PETER BRADBURY)

W26

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR

How will the council take forward the findings and recommendations of the Welsh Government's LGBTQ+ action plan?

Reply

The Council is committed to being an LGBTQ+ inclusive organisation and to leading the way on equality, diversity and inclusion as the capital city of Wales.

Members will have seen the excellent news last month that Cardiff Council was the highest ranked local authority in the UK in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, the 2nd highest government body and the 35th overall in the top 100 Employers. In doing so, we achieved the commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusivity set out in 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener' to become a Stonewall top 100 employer and to be the highest ranked local authority in Wales. It's great to see the Council leading the way amongst employers in Wales and the UK.

We are therefore supportive of the Welsh Government's ambition to make Wales the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe. The Action Plan is far-reaching, covering recommendations for all levels of government and all public services here in Wales. We are currently reviewing the actions identified that relate directly to local government and are committed to working alongside the Welsh Government and our LGBTQ+ communities to make sure that Cardiff is a capital city where LGBTQ+ people feel safe to live and love authentically, openly, and freely as themselves.

TRANSPORT & STRATEGIC PLANNING
(COUNCILLOR DAN DE'ATH)

W27	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVIES</u></p> <p>How will the Council assist Cardiff Bus in preserving routes and service frequency with the Welsh Government's Bus Emergency Scheme due to end in June 2023?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The Council is working with Cardiff Bus and other bus service providers in Cardiff to assess the effects of the possible ending of the Welsh Government's Bus Emergency Scheme funding at the end of June 2023. Once the Council has a clearer picture of both the extent of service withdrawals (including school bus services), frequency reductions etc. and the Welsh Government funding position, an assessment will be made as to where Council funded service support can best mitigate the impact on bus users in Cardiff. However, it must be recognised that the Council has insufficient funds available to support the continued operation of the current network in the event of the Bus Emergency Scheme funding coming to an end.</p>
W28	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DAVIES</u></p> <p>What assessment has the Council made of the contribution of cycle lanes to road congestion and what data has it collected on the use of cycle lanes over the last five years?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic recovery period and the switch to home working have made network conditions difficult to define of late; however, the Council has taken steps to ensure that statistics are obtained regularly. Transport surveys of key areas, such as the city centre and key routes, have been undertaken to update traffic models and inform future analysis. Many of the cycleways are either under construction or have only recently been completed; therefore, a completion and normalisation period will need to take place before their impact can be fully assessed. We expect to conduct further surveys in summer 2023 that will provide a more settled picture of usage.</p>

W29	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR ROBSON</u></p> <p>What additional signage and publicity can the Council undertake to promote Whitchurch Station (currently the least used station in Cardiff) and the other stations on the Coryton line?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The Council would need to work with the rail operator, Transport for Wales (TfW), to raise the issue in the first instance. A review of signage and promotion of the rail services would need to be a TfW-led campaign, but the Council would be happy to work with them to facilitate extra signage on the adopted highway (subject to review).</p> <p>One of the key issues with the Coryton Line is that it is only served by two trains per hour, which is why the Council is working with TfW at a strategic level to obtain funding to extend the Coryton Line to link to Radyr and increase the frequency of trains. This is in line with Commitment 2 in the South East Wales Metro section of the Council's Transport White Paper.</p>
W30	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WOOD</u></p> <p>Will the council look at prioritising pedestrian crossing times over other road traffic to encourage active travel?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>When implementing infrastructure schemes which involve changes to existing signalised junctions/crossings or the provision of new signalised crossing facilities, the Council takes the opportunity to improve conditions for pedestrians, in line with the sustainable transport hierarchy set out in the Welsh Government's Active Travel Design Guidance, whilst also taking account of wider network management considerations.</p>
W31	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WOOD</u></p> <p>Can the council prioritise undertaking a consultation on introducing double yellow lines on the Maelog Place access road?</p>

Reply

The installation of a double yellow lines on Maelog Place would be subject to a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). This would first of all require a formal request to be made to the TRO team and an assessment of the issue. The road safety database would also determine whether further investigation is required.

I would encourage you to put in a request and the team will then contact you directly. However, I should point out that the time for processing TROs is currently high due to demand and available resources, with only safety and operationally critical TROs currently being processed.

W32

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR HOPKINS

There are continuing concerns about road safety on Cyncoed Road, particularly at busy times of the day and when children have to cross the road to get to school. There are two traffic islands on the road in the vicinity of Celyn Avenue and Werngoch Road but these are ineffective in slowing the traffic down. Can the council consider replacing these with zebra crossings?

Reply

Improvements to walking and cycling are planned and prioritised through the Active Travel Network Map (ATNM), in line with the requirements of the Active Travel Act. Cardiff's approved ATNM sets out a map of existing routes, which already meet Welsh Government standards for an active travel route and proposed routes which will need improvements to bring them up to standard. The Cardiff ATNM can be viewed on the DataMapWales website at: <https://datamap.gov.wales/maps/active-travel-network-maps/view#/> The ATNM shows future walking and cycling routes – Routes NECATN-NS1A and CR-JM – along Cyncoed Road. The inclusion of zebra crossings will be investigated when this future route is developed. The programme of works to deliver proposed routes on the ATNM is still subject to prioritisation; therefore, I am unable to confirm a timescale for the delivery of crossing improvements on Cyncoed Road.

W33

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR

What discussions has the council had with Adventure Travel about the impact of withdrawing the C8 route?

Reply

Adventure Travel contacted officers in early February 2023 due to uncertainty surrounding the continuation of the Welsh Government's Bus Emergency Funding Scheme (BES) after 31st March 2023. The bus operator confirmed that the service was no longer commercially viable without continued BES funding due to low passenger numbers and wished to deregister the service.

Under the terms of the BES funding agreement, companies must seek agreement and support from the Council(s) within which the service operates and the South East Wales Bus Funding Group, before they can withdraw services. As the majority of the C8 route is already served by other bus services, Cardiff Council officers supported the withdrawal of the bus service, as the impact on passengers would be minimal and it would also help reduce the burden on the public purse.

As the service runs to Taffs Well, Rhondda Cynon Taf Council also needed to be consulted and agree to the withdrawal of the bus service; however, officers are not aware that this approval has been granted.

W34

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR

What assessment has been made of the benefit of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in Cardiff?

Reply

The Council is aware of the potentially positive benefits of 'filtering out' through-traffic from residential areas by addressing issues with rat-running and increasing movements by active modes of transport. We will consider opportunities to filter out through-movements where this will support the development of the active travel network and help reduce the impact of traffic on residents. There would, of course, be full public consultation before any intervention of this kind is progressed.

W35	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR</u></p> <p>Has the switch to digital parking permits been evaluated?</p> <p>If not, will the scheme be evaluated and how will the evaluation gather information from residents and parking officers?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The switch to digital parking permits has not yet been evaluated in Gabalfa as it was implemented as part of the Cycleway 1 scheme. Once the scheme has been completed and there has been a period of settling in, a full evaluation of the cycleway scheme and parking zone will be completed. This is currently scheduled for late 2023. The evaluation plan has not yet been drafted; however, it is likely to include information from residents via surveys and will consider related statistics – for example, if there has been a reduction in Penalty Charge Notices issued for expired permits.</p>
W36	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR TAYLOR</u></p> <p>What opportunities are there for rear lanes in the Gabalfa ward to become 'child friendly', encouraging safe outdoor play and active travel?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>'Play Lanes' are currently being piloted through the Grangetown Safe Play Lanes project, which is being delivered by the Council in partnership with Cardiff University and Grange Pavilion. Learning from this project will be reviewed and will be helpful in informing any decisions to roll-out this type of intervention in other wards in the city.</p>
W37	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR REID-JONES</u></p> <p>I recently learned from a planning application that the current modal split in Cardiff is 58% - please could you provide a detailed analysis of these figures split between the North and South of the city?</p>

	<p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The 58% refers to the current sustainable mode split for 2023. This figure is contained within the new Corporate Plan 2023-26 (page 51) that was approved by Council on 9th March 2023 and is based on the trajectory required to achieve the 76% sustainable mode split by 2030, as stated in the Cardiff Transport White Paper.</p> <p>The 6th Annual Monitoring Report for the Cardiff Local Development Plan reports the most recent results, with the proportion of people travelling sustainably for all journey purposes in 2021 estimated to be 53%. This period covered ongoing restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic and, therefore, may not reflect current conditions post-pandemic.</p> <p>Calculating the mode split for the North and South of the city can be considered later in 2023/24 after the Annual Transport Survey has been undertaken.</p>
W38	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR REID-JONES</u></p> <p>I want to thank Cardiff Council for carrying out much needed work on St Mellons Road potholes/HGV damage. Could the cabinet member please confirm when the rest of the winter damaged roads in Lisvane & Thornhill will be inspected and repaired?</p> <p><u>Reply</u></p> <p>The rest of the streets in Lisvane & Thornhill are due for their annual inspection in May 2023. Any actionable defects will be programmed for repair within appropriate timescales. Any possible areas of localised improvement will be added to our list for further assessment.</p>
W39	<p><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR REID-JONES</u></p> <p>The Welsh Government's emergency funding for bus services is only in place until September 2023. Our school bus service, together with buses servicing the outskirts of the City, benefit from this funding. What plans do the council have to ensure these vital services continue once the funding ends?</p>

Reply

The Council is working with Cardiff Bus and other bus service providers in Cardiff to assess the effects of the possible ending of the Welsh Government's Bus Emergency Scheme funding at the end of June 2023. Once the Council has a clearer picture of both the extent of service withdrawals (including school bus services), frequency reductions etc. and the Welsh Government funding position, an assessment will be made as to where Council funded service support can best mitigate the impact on bus users in Cardiff. However, it must be recognised that the Council has insufficient funds available to support the continued operation of the current network in the event of the Bus Emergency Scheme funding coming to an end.

W40

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DRISCOLL

In my communications with Go Safe Cymru, they advised that 30mph repeater signs could not be installed along Western Avenue. Would the proposed introduction of 20mph on a small section outside Cardiff Metropolitan University, then allow 30mph repeater signs to be installed along the rest of the A48 Western Avenue and, if this is the case, when could this take place?

Reply

I would advise that the advice from GoSafe is correct at the present time.

Repeaters are not permitted on a road that has a default speed limit in place and which has street lighting in place. At present, the default limit is 30mph; however, from 17th September this year, the new default speed limit in Wales will change from 30mph to 20mph. This means that 30mph repeater signs will legally have to be installed on any road that is to remain 30mph. This will include Western Avenue and a number of other roads in the city.

Once the new legislation is in force, any repeater signs showing 20mph will have to be removed from the network as the new default limit will be 20mph. On streets where there is no street lighting, 20mph repeaters will be installed as is currently the case for 30mph.

W41

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS

The introduction of some cycle lanes in the City has harmed the delivery and punctuality of bus services. What steps is the Council taking to ensure cycle lanes deemed surplus to requirements are removed to reduce congestion?

Reply

The primary cause of impact on the punctuality of bus services is traffic congestion in the city. The Council is developing cycleways as part of its wider strategy to affect a shift away from car use to tackle the climate emergency and air pollution. The provision of cycle lanes that are segregated from traffic is essential if we are going to achieve the targets for growth in cycling in Cardiff, as set out in our Transport White Paper. As a result, none of the cycle lanes that we have developed so far are redundant and we have no intention of removing them. Going forward, the design of cycle lanes and other active travel schemes will factor in the needs of bus services. The continued development of the cycle network and the growth in its usage will play a key part in reducing car journeys and tackling congestion on bus corridors, alongside our work to implement bus priority measures, such as putting in more bus lanes, to support increased bus usage and improved bus journey times.