

CITY OF SHEFFIELD

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL – 9TH SEPTMBER, 2020

COPIES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THERETO

Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore)

Questions of Councillor Cllr Shaffaq Mohammed to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore)

Q.1 Are you happy with support Sheffield City Council has provided local businesses and organisations via the Government's Business Support Grants?

A.1 I am proud of the work the Council has carried out to administer the Government's Business Support Grants. From a standing start, with no notice, for a scheme that businesses were told would be simple and hassle free only for Government to then issue more and more technical restrictions and audit requirements to Local Authorities - we have provided over 8,000 grants totalling nearly £97m, whilst at the same time transitioning to staff working from home with all the challenges that presented in the early weeks of the pandemic. In addition to providing the grants, we have delivered over 3,000 one to one sessions with our Business Advisors and well over 50 on line workshops, to help businesses as they look the manage this unprecedented period. Like lots of others areas of the Council, staff in Business Rates and Business Sheffield have worked tirelessly, often across evenings and weekends and deserve our thanks for their hard work and dedication.

Q.2 Can you please provide information on the how much of the Government Business Support Grants did the council provide to local church halls?

A.2 Question to be answered by Councillor Iqbal.

Q.3 Can you tell me if you are aware of the Government Covid-19 support grants that Northumberland Council has provided to local church halls?

A.3 Question to be answered by Councillor Iqbal.

Q.4 Do you support the Active travel measures that were in operation over the summer period around the Shalesmoor area?

A.4 The Emergency Active Travel Fund, which introduced the cycle at Shalesmoor, was a direct response to Central Government's aspiration for Local Authorities to

provide active travel infrastructure throughout the covid-19 response. The Shalesmoor Cycle Route was always a temporary scheme and utilised the road capacity to provide a cycling route to promote sustainable and inclusive access to and from the City Centre. It ties into the Penistone Road Cycle route at one side, the recently completed Grey 2 Green project at the other, plugging a gap in the current network. The scheme was monitored throughout its implementation and an indication for its removal would be based on rising journey times for public transport and other road users. When this happened, the scheme was removed. The provision of active travel schemes is supported by national, regional and local policy objectives.

Q.5 Do you think that the Shalesmoor Active Travel Scheme was a success, if so does you Administration plan to roll out further Shalesmoor Style Schemes?

A.5 The Shalesmoor Cycle Lane was a temporary scheme and allowed the use of Central Government Funding (no Council funds have been used) to trial options.

Q.6 What consultation took place with all interested parties linked to the Shalesmoor Active Travel Scheme before it was introduced earlier this year?

A.6 Question to be answered by Councillor Johnson

Q.7 Can you please state how much money was spent on the Active Travel Scheme in Shalesmoor?

A.7 Question to be answered by Councillor Johnson

Q.8 What lessons has the leader of Council learnt from the Shalesmoor Active travel scheme?

A.8 To be clear, the cycle lane was put in under exceptional circumstances during the lockdown period of a global pandemic. In normal circumstances, a detailed business case would be produced, detailing the impacts of traffic flow, different options considered and outcomes from consultation. This process can take a very long time and could not be completed in the time needed to respond to Central Government. These tasks would always be undertaken when delivering any scheme of this nature under normal circumstances.

Q.9 How many decisions has the Council taken since March, 2020 using emergency powers? Please provide a list.

A.9 The Decision Making Scheme sets out how decisions are to be taken and all of those taken by IMG and myself or the Interim CEO are published or are in the process of being published.

Q.10 Do you think it is value for money to provide Sheffield City Trust £16m of extra funding whilst still keeping Ponds Forge closed?

A.10 The £16m of extra funding was to support Sheffield City Trust with an increase in grant up to £15m (exclusive of exceptional pension costs related to redundancy) in 2020/21 to cover the costs of lockdown and allow for a phased reopening of English Institute of Sport Sheffield (EISS) / iceSheffield /Hillsborough Leisure Centre / Concord Sports Centre / Springs Leisure Centre / Heeley Pool /Golf Courses (already re-opened). In addition, the council made a contract payment of up to £1.6m to Places Leisure (in 2020/21) to cover the costs of lockdown and allow for a phased re-opening of Graves Health and Leisure Centre / Thorncliffe Health and Leisure Centre and Wisewood Sports Centre. The alternative was to keep these facilities closed, at a cost to the council of approx. £12.6m in this financial year. This expenditure is as a direct result of loss of income and contractual costs incurred during the Coronavirus pandemic. Keeping facilities closed, denying Sheffield residents access to these vital health and wellbeing facilities, was not deemed a good use of council monies.

As you may have seen Cabinet have instructed officers to bring a report to September Cabinet with plans to re-open Ponds Forge.

Q.11 What impact do you think that the continued closure of Ponds Forge will have on local sports clubs, elite swimmers and divers?

A.11 See answer above.

Q.12 What work is this Council doing to ensure that Ponds Forge can be safely reopened as soon as possible?

A.12 Question to be answered by Councillor Lea

Questions of Councillor Mohammed Mahroof to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore)

The Black Lives Matter has become a major world issue. It is imperative that all organisations reflect the community they serve and that includes Sheffield City Council. Please provide the following information?

Q.1 What percentage of Sheffield's population is from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background?

A.1 Questions to be answered by Councillor Fox

Q.2 What percentage of Sheffield City Council staff is from a BAME background at the following levels:

- (a) Executive Management Team Level**
- (b) Senior Officer level - Salaries between £100k to £ £200k.**
- (c) Management Level. Salaries between £75k to £100k.**

A.2 Questions to be answered by Councillor Fox

Q.3 What percentage of Sheffield City Councils staff are women at the following levels:

- (a) Executive Management Team Level**
- (b) Senior Officer level - Salaries between £100k to £ £200k.**
- (c) Management Level. Salaries between £75k to £100k.**

A.3 Questions to be answered by Councillor Fox

Q.4 What percentage of Sheffield City Councils staff are people with registered disabilities at the following levels:

- (a) Executive Management Team Level**
- (b) Senior Officer level - Salaries between £100k to £ £200k.**
- (c) Management Level. Salaries between £75k to £100k.**

A.4 Questions to be answered by Councillor Fox

**Questions of Councillor Joe Otten to the Leader of the Council
(Councillor Julie Dore)**

Q.1 Regarding the PHE report "Understanding the impact of covid-19 on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities"

- (a) which of its recommendations do you consider applicable to the work of Sheffield City Council, and**
- (b) of these, what has been done to implement these recommendations?**

A.1 Question to be answered by Councillor Drayton

Question of Councillor Garry Weatherall to the Leader of the City Council (Councillor Julie Dore)

Q. Sheffield has responded brilliantly to the crisis and I want to thank all of those who have volunteered and all of those who work at Sheffield City Council for their work.

I understand that the Council Helpline has been a great aid to many of my constituents. Do we have the figures for the amount of calls made, and the number of food parcels or medicine delivered because of this?

A. To week ending 23.8.20:

Calls to Covid Community Helpline = 13,295

Shopping = 1,884

Meds delivery = 1,019

Safe and Well visits = 5,186

To 31.7.20

Emergency Food Parcels = 1,231

Questions of Councillor Ben Miskell to the Leader of the City Council (Councillor Julie Dore)

Q.1 Throughout this pandemic, the trade union movement has shown its huge worth to society, protecting frontline workers and working constructively with employers to make workplaces safe. Trade unions across both the public, private and voluntary sector have seen a sharp rise in membership, including 40,000 new members of the National Education Union (NEU), with which I am proud to be a member of.

Would the Leader join with me in encouraging Sheffielders to join a trade union to protect themselves, their colleagues and wider society?

Would she also consider joining the likes of Hackney Council, which was the first authority to join forces with the Trades Union Congress (TUC) in its “Stay Safe at Work – Join a Union” campaign, placing adverts on more than 500 noticeboards across Islington, in print and online.

A.1 Yes I would be more than happy to join your calls to encourage Sheffielders to join a trade union

I am not aware of the specific work in Hackney, I will ask the Deputy Leader to discuss this with CJC

Questions of Councillor Bryan Lodge to the Leader of the City Council (Councillor Julie Dore)

Q. As in all circumstances where there's a major incident, afterwards there's always time to reflect and review what happened, what worked well, what could have worked better and what can we learn from the incident for future behaviour. The Covid-19 pandemic presented challenges never faced by the City before so are there plans for a comprehensive review of how the Council responded to the situation?

A. Due to the scale and gravity of the pandemic it is likely that there will be some form of review on a national level which will be able to cover comprehensively all agencies across all parts of the country and provide a holistic review. When this happens we will fully participate in any review. When it is clearer what will happen

at this level will give us clarity about any necessary additional review by the council looking more specifically at our actions

As I am sure you will appreciate, currently it is important to continue to focus all resources on dealing with the ongoing situation as this is far from over.

Councillor George Lindars-Hammond (Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care)

Question of Councillor Steve Ayriss to Councillor George Lindars-Hammond (Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care)

Q. As we know, the Covid pandemic has directly, indirectly and discriminately affected both physical health and mental wellbeing within the Sheffield population. The Sheffield Joint Health & Wellbeing Board, which you chair, has commissioned Rapid Health Impact Assessments, I understand, on a broad range of specific themes, such as education, housing, employment, lifestyles, income and poverty, active travel, care and support, end of life, marginalisation. etc.

(a) What is the timetable for those findings to be presented to the Board and to elected Members?

(b) How will these assessments modify or alter other key citywide strategies and plans, such as the Local Plan, the Economic Strategy, etc., as envisaged by the Sheffield Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy?

A. These impact assessments are iterative. They have been developed over a period, and will continue to be developed as more evidence emerges.

A number of elected members and officers have been invited to discuss the findings and recommendations at a meeting next week where we will hear thoughts about how this work can enhance other citywide strategies and plans.

The finalised work will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board at the meeting on 24 September.

The assessments are broad and wide ranging, covering topics such as travel & transport (and impact on air quality), domestic abuse, education and skills, health behaviours, poverty and income, mental health, employment, homelessness, social contact and isolation, long term direct complications of COVID. It is likely many different stakeholders and groups will use the material in the individual impact assessments in a range of ways.

We would like to use this information along with the joint strategic needs assessment which is owned by the Health and Well Being Board and other Council and citywide plans to ensure that our response and recovery efforts are informed

by the best available intelligence.

Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Question of Councillor Mohammed Mahroof to Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Q. I have had concerned parents contacting me regarding Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Could you please confirm:

(a) How many requests we have for EHCPs?

A. In 2020 so far there have been 348 requests for EHC Plans. In 2019 there were 600 requests. See Appendix 1.

(b) How many EHCPs are pending?

A. The EHC Needs Assessment process is a 20 week process so there are always a number of assessments in process at any one time. Currently there are 185 cases in process.

(c) How many EHCPs have been completed?

A. Of the 348 requests made so far in 2020 123 new EHC Plans have been issued and 46 requests made have been closed following the decision either not to progress an assessment or not to issue a plan following the completion of the assessment.

Question of Councillor Paul Turpin to Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Q. Do you consider it safe for children to return to schools?"

A. All schools have been preparing and planning for the start of the new academic year and welcoming all pupils/students back. All early years, schools, FE colleges and University settings have been provided with support by the Sheffield City Council Public Health Team, the Director of Education, the Health & Safety Team and Learn Sheffield.

Schools are implementing a range of measures to minimise risk of virus transmission and are following DfE and PHE guidance. I am reassured that schools have been implementing robust and detailed risk assessments which have required that they carefully plan and consider how the school day will function and how specific measures will be implemented onsite. Schools are placing all the

guidance and safety measures in place that they can do in order to minimise risk and promote the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff. These measures include:

- All settings will continue with the social protective bubble model of cohorting pupils and year groups. This supports contact tracing.
- Schools will open with staggered start and finish times. PH have advised on school transport and minimising virus transmission via the introduction of a zoned travel approach on school buses where pupils sit in designated year group seating areas. There's also been a requirement placed on schools to obtain a list of pupils who will be frequent bus travellers over the autumn term.
- Schools will manage the learning environment through seating planning and social distancing where this can be in place.
- Following the announcement re face coverings guidance Sheffield has taken a precautionary position re advising face coverings from the start of the new academic year. Whilst Sheffield is not identified as an area of high virus transmission and is not identified as an area of Government intervention at this time the Sheffield Director of Public Health advises all pupils, students and staff in secondary schools, FE colleges and Universities that face coverings **should be worn** in communal areas and on corridors. In primary schools where social distancing is not possible (in areas outside of classrooms between members of staff or visitors, for example in staffrooms) wearing face coverings in these circumstances is advised. **It will not be necessary to wear face coverings in classrooms.**
- All settings have been advised to continue to reinforce key COVID-19 messages as sometimes when face coverings are worn other measures tend to reduce and people can feel a false sense of security, causing them to socially distance less and reduce the number of times they wash their hands. Therefore please continue to reinforce key messages of good infection prevention control and maintaining social distancing where possible.
- Schools are supporting vulnerable staff through undertaking individual risk assessments and making reasonable adjustments and modification to individual roles where necessary and where they can be.
- Schools are implementing frequent infection prevention control through regular hand washing and increased cleaning regimes in schools following key guidance.
- All settings have been supported with scenario testing planning (what action to take if settings have cases, clusters or outbreaks). This has included attendance at head teacher virtual meetings arranged via Learn Sheffield and individual meetings with Sheffield College, Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield.

Rates of virus transmission are significantly lower than at the peak of the pandemic. The Public Health team are carefully monitoring and mapping cases so have a clear insight into clusters or outbreaks across the city. This means that they are able to work closely with schools should there be an increase in cases in a particular geographical area.

All schools and settings also have a Standard Operating Procedure to follow if they

have confirmed cases of COVID-19 and they will be supported through any process by the LA Public Health team and PHE.

There has been regular communication with schools through the LA weekly bulletin which provides an update on national guidance. In addition to this the Public Health team provide a direct STORM phone line for schools to contact with any queries (available Monday-Friday 9 a.m. – 5p.m.) and an Email inbox which is monitored 7 days a week and responses are provided across 7 days. The Director of Public Health has also met with head teachers to provide information and support.

At a time when we have to start to live alongside COVID-19 it is important that children and young people return to school and we manage risk as much as possible to enable them to do this. The LA Public Health team will continue to support schools directly.

Questions of Councillor Alison Teal to Councillor Abtissam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Q.1 What steps are being taken to address the mental health of children by the Council or Learn Sheffield as a result of the upheaval of the pandemic?

A.1 See Appendix 2 attached.

Q.2 What support will schools be giving to help children manage the adjustment to the changes and possible emotional suffering they have experienced?

A.2 Substantial work has taken place to provide guidance to schools on how to address children returning following the pandemic including the co-production of resources between Sheffield Council and NHS which has been made available to schools on the LearnSheffield website with information being distributed for parents.

Services across Sheffield Council and NHS have offered support to schools throughout the pandemic to address concerns and will continue to offer support through the term, recognising that the best way to support individual children in managing the impact of the return to schools is to equip schools to directly support children who they are in a daily relationship with.

Services will continue to work to offer support where it is identified and needed over and above the resources within schools in regards to children's emotional health and well-being where it requires specific interventions. This will include from services such as MAST, Educational Psychology Service, Inclusion and Attendance and from our colleagues in health.

Question of Councillor Abdul Khayum to Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Q. Can the Cabinet lead, please give an update on the Race Equalities Commission and work on-going to support the Black Lives Matter movement?

A. The Leader made a statement in support of Black Lives Matter in June 2020 and in July 2020 announced the setting up of the independent Race Equality Commission as a response to the Public Health England Report into the impact of COVID 19 on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities as well as other reports on racial disparities and racism.

The Race Equality Commission has been established to make a non-partisan strategic assessment of the nature, extent, causes and impact of race inequality in the City and to make recommendations on what short and long term measures are required to disrupt systemic issues concerning race, racism and racialized inequalities.

Since the announcement by the Leader, there has been a significant amount of work undertaken to set up the Commission by a small Secretarial Team. Working alongside the Chair, the Secretarial Team has been developing and putting into place the range of procedures and processes required to effectively run the Commission. Progress to date includes the Commission's website being launched, a campaign page being designed, being live on Twitter, calls for evidence sent and recruitment of Commissioners.

I also spoke at the launch of The State of Sheffield about the Race Equality Commission. The Commission's Chair was interviewed by Calendar News.

We have received 36 applications expressing interest in becoming a Commissioner by the deadline date which shows a high level of interest in the Commission.

The next six months will see intense activity from the Commission as it holds the Inquiry sessions in each of the six areas that its Terms of Reference covers.

Question of Councillor Andy Bainbridge to Councillor to Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Q. Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the re-opening of schools – what work Sheffield City Council have been undertaking with schools to ensure that they are safe to open for children and staff? Also, following the re-opening what figures do you have for attendance?

A All schools were partially closed from 23 March 2020 except for vulnerable

children, children with EHCPs and children of key workers. From 15 June, Sheffield schools opened more widely offering provision to children in Foundation Stage 1 and 2, Year 1 and Year 6 as well as the original groups of children. Children and young people in Year 10 and Year 12 were also offered some face to face part time education.

The local authority has communicated regularly (often daily) with all schools and academies throughout the period of the pandemic.

Our planning and support for schools opening fully this week has, therefore, built on and developed the planning and support provided throughout the period of the pandemic so far.

Our support for schools is a whole-Council response. Here is summary of key plans and support from:

Public Health

School Transport

Health and Safety and Wellbeing

HR

Public Health

The PH team have supported early years, schools and University settings with planning ahead of the new academic year. This has included:

- Continuing to provide updated Public Health guidance and information to all settings, including supporting schools to interpret and implement national guidance.
- All settings will continue with the social protective bubble model of cohorting pupils and year groups. This supports contact tracing.
- Settings have been supported with scenario testing planning (what action to take if settings have cases, clusters or outbreaks). This has included attendance at head teacher virtual meetings arranged via Learn Sheffield and individual meetings with Sheffield College, Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield.
- Working with DST and the Comms Team a Getting Back to School Safely campaign was launched on Monday. This included social media advertising and a web page written by Public Health to advise and reassure parents/carers planning their child's return to school <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/BackToSchoolSafely>
- Each setting has a Standard Operating Procedure written jointly by PHE

and the LA Public Health Team. This provides a process and plan to follow to manage cases and outbreaks.

- PH guidance and advice has supported the development of a robust template risk assessment for schools to follow and the PH team has provided bespoke advice to individual settings based on their particular buildings, circumstances and logistics.
- Schools will open with staggered start and finish times. PH have advised on school transport and minimising virus transmission via the introduction of a zoned travel approach on school buses where pupils sit in designated year group seating areas. There's also been a requirement placed on schools to obtain a list of pupils who will be frequent bus travellers over the autumn term.
- Following the announcement re face coverings guidance and information has been distributed to all schools and information uploaded for parents/carers on the Getting Back to School Safely campaign.
- The LA PH team has a dedicated inbox for EYs, Schools and Universities. This is monitored 7 days a week and responses are provided across the 7 days. This inbox also is used to report positive confirmed COVID-19 cases.

A STORM phone line has now been set up and contact details will be shared with all settings. This will operate alongside the Inbox. Consideration is being given as to whether this should be available during Mon-Fri and also across the weekend. Discussions are ongoing about capacity to cover this alongside the 7 day rota that is currently in place.

SEN Transport

We have worked closely with Transport Services, Public Health, School Leaders and Directors/Managers across the council to ensure that all appropriate steps have been taken to enable children and young people using SEN Transport to return to school on a fulltime basis from the start of the new academic year. This follows government guidance, and has been approved by colleagues in Public Health as well as IMG.

This work has included the creation of 'transport bubbles', clear advice around sanitising of hands before and after travelling, seating plans to support contact tracing, staff use of PPE and robust cleaning arrangements, as well as clear plans to respond to symptomatic pupils or where a case is confirmed.

Communications for parents/carers have been developed with the Parent/Carer Forum and SENDIASS, and sent direct to all service-users, as well as asking

schools to distribute electronically to parents. In addition this has been published on the Local Offer and the PCF Facebook page, and sent to schools via the weekly email bulletin.

In addition, the bulletin has included information aimed at schools, which has also been via direct email to Special and IR Heads.

Mainstream School Buses

We have worked closely with the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE), Public Health, School Leaders and Directors/Managers across the council to ensure that the safety and capacity of school buses are maximised for the start of the new academic year. Again this follows government guidance, and has been approved by colleagues in Public Health as well as IMG .

This work has included gaining DfT approval to re-categorise school buses so they are no longer accessible to the general public and are instead classed as 'dedicated school transport', the provision of additional routes to ensure capacity and minimise the number of pupils using public transport where possible, and engaging with all schools (predominantly secondary) affected by transport to understand their local context and needs. Year group bubbles are supported by creating clearly identified zones for each cohort on buses, and schools are to keep a list of pupils who are likely to use each route during the autumn term – both measures support contact tracing. In addition, robust cleaning arrangements have been established, as well as clear plans to respond to symptomatic pupils or where a case is confirmed.

We have developed clear advice about the sanitising of hands before and after travelling, use of tissues and hand sanitiser, maintaining distancing (especially at pinch points such as bus stops), the use of face-coverings for ages 11+ (unless exempt), no food or drink to be consumed on transport, and no sharing of food or drink at any time.

Communications with parents/carers have been jointly developed with SYPTTE, and shared with all schools to distribute to parents via the weekly schools bulletin, as well as being published online by SYPTTE. In addition, the bulletin has included information aimed at schools, which has also been sent out via SchoolPoint. A 'child-friendly' version is being created and will be published shortly.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

We have produced the model risk assessment (Version 8) for Schools to adopt and amend to suit their individual setting. Once Schools have completed their risk assessment they have shared it with us for comment. We have been in regular contact with Headteachers throughout the pandemic providing support and helping them with any concerns they may have.

In addition to the model risk assessment we have produced:-

- A risk assessment for staff working from home
- An individual risk assessment for staff who are shielding / BAME / pregnant / extremely clinically vulnerable / clinically vulnerable
- A cleaning guidance for Schools
- A guidance for Administering first aid, administration of medicines and providing intimate care in Schools
- A risk assessment for support staff (based at Moorfoot) visiting Schools with SEN
- A risk assessment for support staff (based at Moorfoot) visiting SEN pupils in the Home

HR

HR advice has been incorporated within the regular bulletins to all educational settings and shared directly with external school HR providers as appropriate to ensure consistent messaging. This has generally included links to SCC (HR FAQs), DfE, LGA – highlighting key points for action / information and sharing attachments, where relevant for information and action. Schools are required to have statutory policies in place for managing staffing and this is delegated to the Headteacher who will be advised by their provider. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing team also sits within the HR service and have been directly involved with development of the risk assessments and providing feedback to LA maintained schools. The approach will continue as schools return to full reopening next week.

Position this week

All schools in Sheffield have opened successfully for all children. We have been in regular contact with schools and none have reported any issues with opening this week. We have been informed of a small number of parents who are refusing to return their children to school – some on medical grounds and some through not feeling that schools are safe. Attendance officers will contact any families in this position to explore concerns and to provide relevant advice and support.

Attendance figures are collected by the DfE and not the Council. The Council accesses the DfE portal in order to determine attendance and, so far, there is insufficient data currently. We anticipate fuller data being available from week beginning 7 September.

Furthermore, it is obviously a worrying time for parents and what work has the Council undertaken to provide reassurances to parents about schools re-

opening, and what work is being undertaken to support families who's children have not yet returned.

- A.
1. We have communicated to parents the need for children to be in school, alongside offering support should they wish to discuss their concerns with us.
 2. The attendance legal team time has been re-deployed to work with schools to support the re-entry of children into education.
 3. The attendance team will be working alongside the schools in contacting families whose children have not yet returned to school to understand their rationale and reasoning – offering reassurance and some challenge to any misconception.
 4. The Attendance and Inclusion Team are working across other areas – CAMHS, MAST, Social Care and other commissioned services offering consultations around attendance and how best to encourage engagement in education.
 5. A graduated approach to attendance is being embedded over this time to support as robustly as possible the re-engagement in education, but also looking to next year when attendance legal re-opens and how this can be managed – in the best interests of children.
 6. Weekly attendance sessions have been set up for professionals that will provide updates on how attendance is progressing and the opportunity to discuss (anonymously) the children who are struggling with re-engagement.
 7. A new supported process for Reduced Time Tables has been put in place to ensure we have children on RTTs for a short and supported time to reintegrate them back into education.
 8. Public Health guidance has been shared and parents know minimum numbers of professionals and adults will be in contact with their children, with only statutory interventions being safely carried out in the first instance.
 9. All support has continued to be offered to families virtually and via phone in the absence of a physical presence.
 10. The attendance team will be accessing schools to help with the identification and assessment of need for children in school alongside working to look for solutions and support which doesn't always mean allocation in services, but understanding and reassurance from school and LA combined.
 11. School networking sessions have been reinstated (virtually) to share practice across schools of what is working well.

12. Discussion is taking place as to how the School Inclusion Meetings take shape to accommodate the newly identified needs of a post-lockdown education – alongside sector leads.

Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Question of Councillor Penny Baker to Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q.1 Repairs to Council houses have been delayed by up to six months now, how long is the Council Housing Repairs Team going to take to get up to speed?

A.1 There were 11,000 jobs frozen pre COVID that are currently being worked through. It is expected that these 11,000 will have been closed through completion or unable to gain access by the end of November 2020.

It is estimated that the Repairs and Maintenance Service will see around 28,000 repairs logged on top of the normal run rate to accommodate for the all the non-urgent/emergency jobs that was never rang in through the pandemic. It is expected that this will take up to March 2021 to resume normal service delivery times and be on top of this. However, it is very unpredictable forecast the run rate of these coming in and where the service will get spikes in repairs being logged.

Questions of Councillor Angela Argenzio to Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q.1 Why has the report into the cladding of the Hanover Tower not been published yet?

A.1 The Council has apologised for the delay in finalising the Hanover report which we had hoped to finalise in March but unfortunately the lockdown has delayed issuing the final report.

This report was requested in 2017 by the then Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety. A considerable amount of work has taken place by officers to collate the required documentation, seek external technical expertise and legal advice to produce this report. I am now satisfied that the report is complete and we can discuss the findings with residents.

Q.2 When will it be published?

A.2 The report is now complete and is presently being translated into appropriate languages this week so that the report can be published, we are aiming to publish before the end of the week. We are speaking with the Hanover TARA to meet with

them prior to publication, since 2017 they have worked closely with officers and supported the Hanover community.

The final report and appropriate source documentation will be placed on the Council website when published.

Q.3 Why are local members being kept in the dark about progress despite the assertions that local community leaders would be kept informed of any developments?

A.3 I and officers have tried to keep local members engaged over the last 3 years and advised that we would let local councillors know when the report is to be published. I will be arranging to meet with local councillors when the report is published, as promised next week.

**Questions of Councillor Douglas Johnson to Councillor Paul Wood
(Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)**

Q.1 What is the current estimate of the impact of the pandemic on the level of rent arrears for Council tenants?

A.1 Rent arrears have and will continue to increase due to the impact of Covid-19. Many tenants have been affected financially by Covid. We have seen an increase in people losing their jobs, increase in demand for social housing, being furloughed, reduction in hours worked and, impact of caring for family and friends etc.

We expect the impact of COVID to be around £4m in increased rent arrears by the end of 20/21. This represents around 3% respectively of the total rent roll and is comparable with other LA's during this period.

Q.2 What differences in approach towards rent arrears recovery is the Council taking compared to the period before the lockdown?

A.2 The Council has adapted the approach to collecting both current and former tenant's arrears since lockdown started. This has included:

- Regular communications with tenant's, help and support has arrangements have been put in place, , collaborative officer working to support people in managing their finances during the COVID period. This has been via regular calls to re-assure tenants, written and media communications and information on the Council's website and, in exceptional situation through face to face contact keeping customers and officers safe.

Provided a single point of contact for tenants and to avoid multiple agencies contacting individuals about arrears (SCC sensitivity procedure)

- Our focus has been on making arrangements for tenants to pay whatever payments they can afford to pay without causing undue hardship and agreeing with

households appropriate payment plans to reschedule payments and, use of the Council's hardship fund to avoid debts reaching a level where their home could be at risk in future.

- Providing regular advice on benefits, financial advice and support, entitlement to benefits and helping households claim for any funds that could improve their financial situation and reduce mounting debts.
- We have seen an increase in Universal Credit Applications and targeted resources have been put in place and through working with DWP and CAB to manage and process payments quickly for households with no or limited income.
- Officers have also provided advice to new claimants (which we have seen an increase in) who are claiming benefits for the first time as a result of losing their regular income. This has included budgetary advice and support to access funds.

In line with Government guidance there has been no serving of Notices Seeking Possession (NSP's) or legal recovery action for rent arrears since lockdown. No evictions have taken place and, the extension of the 'eviction ban' has now been extended to 21st September at the earliest.

Once this suspension has been lifted then the Council aim to prioritise recovery based on those tenants who have not been financially affected by Covid and allowed their rent arrears to increase quickly or not engaged with the wealth of support that the Council has put in place to support struggling households.

Next Steps:

- The Council plan to re-commence the regular visiting of tenants at their home by the end of September prior to court and eviction proceedings being taken, to ensure important information and any assistance is made available.
- The Council provides a HRA Hardship Fund, and awards have been made to over 600 tenants (as at end of Aug 20). It is hoped that additional funding can be made available to increase the fund so we can provide ongoing support and until tenant's income position improves. Awards from this fund help avoid legal actions being taken, therefore helping to sustain tenancies.

Questions of Councillor Ben Miskell to Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q.1 The Community Response Teams have worked tirelessly across Sheffield to look after some of the most vulnerable residents in our city. Could the Cabinet Member join with me in thanking those involved in this effort?

Could the Cabinet Member also outline how many people have been supported in Park & Arbourthorne Ward since the start of the pandemic by the Community Response Teams, including the total number of food parcels that have been delivered.

A.1 Unfortunately we only have the data to Locality level:

East Locality:

Shopping = **381**

Meds delivery = **188**

Safe and well visits = **931**

Emergency Food Parcels = **195**

Q.2 We have experienced a series of gun related incidents across Park and Arbourthorne during the pandemic, which has been very disturbing for residents. It has been particularly difficult for those who have been self-isolating, many of which are already fearful of leaving their homes, now restrictions have been lifted.

Police officers have been busy dealing with these incidents and the community has come together, to unite and support each other, despite the difficult circumstances.

Will the Cabinet Member join with me in condemning this mindless criminality and explain what action Sheffield City Council is taking to both protect residents and work with partners?

A.2 Significant amounts of work was carried out SCC working with partners to protect residents following the gun related incidents.

This included:

- Target hardening to vulnerable properties and locations
- Rehoused a number of vulnerable residents
- Used legislation to serve Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO's) on family members of people thought to be linked t organised crime
- Provided intelligence and information to SYP so that they could carry out proactive, targeted visit.

In addition community meetings were held at the time of the incidents taking place and a community workshop is now being planned to develop a plan for the future including all elements that are a priority to the community not just Community Safety

Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children and Families)

Questions of Councillor Joe Otten to the Leader to be answered by Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children and Families)

Q.1 Regarding the PHE report "Understanding the impact of covid-19 on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities"

- (a) which of its recommendations do you consider applicable to the work of Sheffield City Council, and**
- (b) of these, what has been done to implement these recommendations?**

A.1 Both the Health and Well Being Board and the Accountable Care Partnership, of which SCC is a member of both, has considered in detail the recommendations of the PHE report. Both boards have committed to implementing the findings of the PHE report in full. Some may be easier and quicker than others to implement. Nonetheless they all remain important.

The ACP have supported the development of two workstreams focused on the impact of COVID on BAME communities from an NHS, Council and Social Care perspective. These cover the NHS and social care workforce and the broader community impact. The Community Strand aims to understand the local lived experience of BAME communities in Sheffield in relation to COVID and ensure they are integral in influencing how local recommendations are shaped and delivered. SCC and the VCF sector jointly lead the communities strand. There are detailed project plans for each detailing steps being taken to implement.

In addition the establishment of the Race Equality Commission will focus on wider structural inequalities. This will be a Commission independent of the council. <http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/race-equality-commission.html>

We as a Council we also sponsor the BAMER Hub which engages with a range of BAME community organisations, which is part of the wider Equality Hub Network.

Finally, none of the above takes anything away from the councils continued duty under equalities legislation to address race related inequalities

Question of Councillor Mike Levery to Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children and Families)

The additional spend on MAST for children's services will lead to a significant increase in resourcing and commencing the recruitment process at the earliest opportunity is fully understood. It is clear that as lockdown eases, and schools return to normal working, that there will be a peak of referrals which will require resourcing, and, in principle, support the early identification of resources to deal with the anticipated peak demand on children's social care services. However the anticipated demand whilst

predicted at this stage could well alter either way dependant on the long-term impact of COVID-19 on children and families, which is still unknown.

Q.1 Bearing in mind the recruitment plan for 22 additional staff is in both this and next financial year, will this plan be monitored and amended as knowledge develops, and will the £350k commitment in 2021/22 be subject to review before budget commitment?

A.1 The reason that this investment was split into two 6 month amounts was to allow a review towards the end of the 1st period where we will consider whether the demand has been sufficient to warrant the posts and also the impact that the investment has had in reducing demand into Children's Social Care.

Q.2 The staff turnover in MAST is intended to mitigate the financial impact in the long term. Does turnover refer to natural wastage or the pre-COVID staff turnover? Will the employment situation have a bearing on turnover?

A.2 This refers to usual staff turnover. It isn't anticipated the employment situation will have a bearing on turnover as the usual progression routes for these posts will still apply and are available. Some examples of the roles that Intervention Workers might go on to do are Step up to Social Work, Personal Advisors for Care Leavers, or Parenting Practitioners. Should there be a reduction in turnover then there are other same grade posts that we can move them into, in children's residential care for example.

Q.3 Has flexibility in employment contracts been considered to enable staff resourcing to be firmed up at a later date?

A.3 More flexible contracts were considered but it was thought that they would not attract the same calibre of applicant. As above it is felt that any risk will be mitigated through turnover.

Q.4 Will a report be prepared for the Childrens, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee on progress before commitment is made to the 2021/22 budget?

A.4 The annual update on the budget goes to scrutiny and this decision would form part of that report.

Councillor Terry Fox (Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)

Question of Councillor Martin Smith to Councillor Terry Fox (Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)

Q.1. An interim audit report of Sheffield City Trust (SCT) was reviewed by the

Economic and Environmental Scrutiny Committee in October last year. This report highlighted serious concerns about the financial management of SCT and the Committee requested the final report as a matter of urgency. Did the Council receive a copy of that document and, if so, when?

A.1 The interim report was not different to the final in any significant way. The SIV position is on the agenda for Scrutiny 8 September, allowing this previous and current issues to be debated in full.

**Question of Councillor Sue Auckland to Councillor Terry Fox
(Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)**

Q.1 In what circumstances, if any, are the Council employing Bailiffs for the collection of debt?

A.1 The Council is not currently using bailiffs as income recovery activity is currently on hold as a result of COVID-19. The Council is currently reviewing the practicalities and policy implications of resuming income recovery activity, in consultation with Cabinet. This will include considering whether some cases would be appropriate for bailiff enforcement action and, if so, what the timing of this would be.

**Question of Councillor Douglas Johnson to Councillor Terry Fox
(Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)**

Q.1 Has the council (or will it) apply to the government's income compensation scheme for lost sales, fees and charges?

A.1 Yes

Q.2 If so, what are the main areas of lost revenue to be claimed for?

A.2 Car parking
Home Care
Commercial property rent
Markets rent
Thornbridge Activity Centre

Q.3 Will the Council claim for the huge losses of income to SIV?

A.3 The Council is unable to claim for additional costs relating to Sheffield City Trust at this time. The Trust has taken advantage of the government's Job Retention Scheme and has applied for government funding that is intended to support the Arts and Culture.

Q.4 Will you provide a copy of the relevant claim form?

A.4 We will be happy to circulate the Council's application form relating to lost income once it has been completed and submitted.

Q.5 How will the £775,000 to provide emergency assistance grants be spent ?

A.5 The arrangements are not yet finalised, but we are intending to distribute this grant via the existing Local Assistance Scheme with some minor amendments to comply with the terms of the grant. The process will be finalised and published as soon as possible.

Q.6 How will residents apply for it?

A.6 Largely In line with the existing scheme. Our expectation at this stage is that people will be able to apply for vouchers or goods rather than cash payments.

Q.7 What will the criteria be?

A.7 Largely In line with the existing Local Assistance Scheme with any minor amendments required to comply with the terms of the grant.

Q.8 What conditions were applied to the £15 million emergency fund to SIV and other private leisure providers?

A.8 SCT are required to open the facilities set out in the decision and to operate them safely in line with government guidelines.

Q.9 What steps have been taken to strengthen the management of these leisure venues?

A.9 The management of SCT is a matter for the Trustees. However, Council Officers meet almost daily with SCT management to review both the day-to-day operation of the organisation and to progress the development of options for the longer term. The Council Leader, Deputy Leader and relevant Cabinet Member are briefed regularly and meet regularly with senior SCT Trustees.

Q.10 When can we expect to see the City Hall and Ponds Forge reopen?

A.10 We hope that the City Hall and Sheffield Arena can be re-opened as soon as Government guidelines make them viable to open. Our hope is that Ponds Forge will re-open as soon as a financially viable way of operating the facility can be found.

**Question of Councillor Angela Argenzio to Councillor Terry Fox
(Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)**

Q. Why are there so many issues with the Council website since bringing it in house? What measures were in place to ensure a smooth transition? And why have they not worked?

- A. During July the website was to be migrated from Capita, despite the best efforts of everyone involved and under difficult circumstances it resulted in some issues with performance over a 3 day period, so it was decided to put the website back with Capita to ensure that we maintained the performance levels residents expect. We are now looking to migrate the site in late September.

**Question of Councillor Martin Phipps to Councillor Terry Fox
(Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)**

- Q. Half of councils are reported to be planning to send bailiffs out once more. The use of bailiffs come with risk of coronavirus transmission and the danger of further compounding economic hardship due to Covid, as charities and organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau are highlighting. Is Sheffield Council planning on referring debts to bailiffs in light of this, and if so will they reconsider?
- A. The Council is not currently using bailiffs as income recovery activity is currently on hold as a result of COVID-19. The Council is currently reviewing the practicalities and policy implications of resuming income recovery activity, in consultation with Cabinet. This will include considering whether some cases would be appropriate for bailiff enforcement action and, if so, what the timing of this would be.

**Question of Councillor Ruth Mersereau to Councillor Terry Fox
(Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)**

- Q.1 Despite several emergency decisions being made to provide additional funds for the Council's IT system, which has not been sufficient to support staff working from home, these problems still seem to be occurring. What is being done to rectify this and when can we expect all Council staff to be working at full capacity?
- A.1 The Council has around 7500 staff excluding those who work in Schools. Through the work that has been done to focus on priorities, change working practices, redeploy staff where necessary and enable thousands more staff to work flexibly and remotely, there only remains on 200 staff who are not currently fully productive. We are working to bring these people back into work and that number is falling all the time. The restarting of, for example, school crossing patrols and the need for more home to school transport for vulnerable children will see this number fall further in the coming weeks.

The transition to home working has seen nearly 6,000 laptops setup and distributed to staff over the last 6 months. In common with many people in other organisations, Officers and Members have had to quickly adapt to new ways of working to ensure that vital services have continued to be delivered to the people of Sheffield. This adaptation has not been without its challenges and throughout there has been a difficult balance to maintain between vital service delivery and

the productivity and wellbeing of our staff. Staff should be commended for how they have embraced these changes and continued to 'go the extra mile' to ensure our residents received the vital services they need.

Q.2 There are also persistent problems with the Council's website, with links broken or taking you in circles. Members of the public are unable to report problems/engage with the Council. This poses very real problems for scrutiny, obtaining information and engagement. For example, the interactive map for reporting fly-tipping has been down for several weeks for "maintenance", so reporting now has to be done by phone - with the normal lengthy queue. This will no doubt put people off reporting, resulting in increased risk to public health at a time when health services are already under extra pressure. What is being done about getting this reporting website back up and running? What is being done to get the Council's entire website fit for purpose?

A.2 With regards to the comments on Highways reporting:

There were particular challenges with the Highways reporting part of the website caused by the attempted migration of our website from Capita, this is now available on the website.

**Question of Councillor Jayne Dunn to Councillor Terry Fox
(Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)**

Q. The link between Digital Exclusion and poverty are clear, if you are poor you have less chance of being online. The pandemic and the lockdown has only highlighted this. Far too many across our city have, and are having to choose between paying the Wi-fi or feeding their children and families.

With the children going back to school and the reliance on remote working if a class or school has to quarantine, this is going to be ongoing issue and could lead into a lost education for some of the most vulnerable in our city.

But, digital exclusion is not just about our children and young people, it can affect anyone at any age. Quite simply they could be left behind, not able to work, find work, do their banking or as in my ward a lady with dementia unable to join in with the zoom meetings at the memory café because she has no access to WiFi and her daughters data charges simply wouldn't stretch.

I would like to know what we are going to do to help bridge this inequality and bring the digital world to those who need it most?

A. You are right to say there are sections of Sheffield's communities that do not benefit from the internet or have the skills to do so and as such can be deemed as digitally excluded. Digital inclusion therefore includes both access to information technology (including the internet) and the ability to use it, and is experienced by different people in different ways. Digital inclusion remains a challenge for some

people in Sheffield and it can have detrimental impact on residents. The associated problems can be significant for citizens and families and may be symptomatic of wider social isolation, economic or health concerns for example. Therefore, becoming a more digitally inclusive city will contribute to reducing inequality and enabling all residents to thrive.

To achieve this we have set out a number of priorities in our Digital Inclusion Strategy that will help us work towards a more digitally inclusive city.

- Greater use of community facilities e.g. community centres and libraries to provide training opportunities and access to broadband
- Explore potential to provide a range of innovative approaches to overcome barriers to broadband access e.g. affordability
- Work with partners to develop a wider city region vision and strategy for Digital Inclusion focussing on the required skills for a prosperous city region
- Ensure new infrastructure developments (e.g. housing developments) include broadband provision where appropriate
- Develop a recognised Sheffield digital brand and associated campaigns including for example a „Big Switch“ style campaign to identify the most appropriate broadband packages
- Work with partners to make the best use of knowledge and resource to deliver the best outcomes for Sheffield with a particular focus on developing the digital skills of Sheffield residents and SCC employees, ensuring our support is targeted and recognises that different localities have different needs
- Identify and explore funding opportunities to drive forward Digital Inclusion work
- Establish a „Digital Community“ that will allow for the sharing of best practice and current activity

As you say the pandemic has highlighted these issues even more and as a result we will be considering any additional actions that are needed

**Question of Councillor Cate McDonald to Councillor Terry Fox
(Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)**

Q. Many Councils are struggling to meet the additional expenditure incurred as a result of supporting our communities to deal with Covid. It is evident that yet again, the Tories are failing to recognise the efforts of local government and failing to provide adequate financial support. What efforts has this Council made, to stand up for Sheffield and press the government for a fair financial settlement to deal with the real costs of Covid support?

A. At the start of the outbreak the government promised to "do what it takes", and described the situation facing local authorities as "unfair and unjust".

Whilst some extra funding has been made available there is a huge shortfall.

The cross-party Local Government Association has estimated that the financial

pressure of meeting the costs of fighting Covid-19 for local authorities, including lost income from council tax and other revenues, totals between £10 and £13 billion. So far, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has allocated only around £4 billion.

A number of councils have already signalled that they may have to issue s.114 notices, effectively declaring bankruptcy, triggering immediate in-year spending cuts in order to comply with legal duties to run balanced budgets.

We have been resilient in demanding more from this government and there has been, and remains to be, significant correspondence with various government departments demanding a fairer settlement for Sheffield. These include: the Leader of the Council writing to the Prime Minister setting concerns about our financial position and a joint letter with all Core Cities to the Prime Minister in June, who's response fell way short of what was hoped for.

The council also provided case studies for a joint report by the Core Cities on local economies, which was also used for joint lobbying to the Treasury and the MHCLG.

Other examples of lobbying government for funding include via Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA), and together with Yorkshire and Humber local authorities in a joint paper on the financial impacts.

This administration has also lobbied on the lack of support for leisure trusts (in contrast to the support for income losses for directly provided leisure), via Labour MP Clive Betts, and directly to MHCLG.

The government responses have focused on what they have done, though there is a complete lack of understanding the huge scale of the challenges facing local authorities. Furthermore the government responses have focused on their alleged commitment to 'levelling-up the economy', however it is clear, to this administration, that rather than level-up the economy the on-going financial crisis for local authorities will exacerbate the divides.

Questions of Councillor Mohammed Mahroof to the Leader of the Council to be answered by Councillor Terry Fox (Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)

Q.1 What percentage of Sheffield's population is from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background?

A.1 c20% of the population is from a BAME background. The breakdown is detailed in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

<https://sheffieldcc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=73885c6943cf47648ca5af9c49caa110>

Q.2 What percentage of Sheffield City Council staff is from a BAME background at the following levels:

- (a) Executive Management Team Level**
- (b) Senior Officer level - Salaries between £100k to £ £200k.**
- (c) Management Level. Salaries between £75k to £100k.**

A.2 19.2% - As reported in the 2011 National Census and referenced in our Workforce Data Report (rounded down to 19%).

Please see the JSNA report in the link below for the detailed data breakdown.

<https://sheffieldcc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=73885c6943cf47648ca5af9c49caa110>

Q.3 What percentage of Sheffield City Councils staff are women at the following levels:

- (a) Executive Management Team Level**
- (b) Senior Officer level - Salaries between £100k to £ £200k.**
- (c) Management Level. Salaries between £75k to £100k.**

See below

Q.4 What percentage of Sheffield City Councils staff are people with registered disabilities at the following levels:

- (a) Executive Management Team Level**
- (b) Senior Officer level - Salaries between £100k to £ £200k.**
- (c) Management Level. Salaries between £75k to £100k.**

A.3&4

	BAME (Including White Other)	Female	Employees with a Declared Disability
Executive Management Team Level	20%	33%	0%
Senior Officer level - Salaries between £100k to £ £200k (FTE)	20%	33%	0%
Management Level - Salaries between £75k to £100k (FTE)	12%	35%	0%

Councillor Mazher Iqbal (Cabinet Member for Business and Investment)

Questions of Councillor Martin Smith to Councillor Mazher Iqbal (Cabinet Member for Business and Investment)

Q.1 How many company insolvencies have there been in Sheffield since the coronavirus lockdown began, and how does that compare with pre-lockdown levels?

A.1 This data is not available. It is not data that Sheffield City Council compiles; we would access it via the Office for National Statistics and at this time, data for April to July 2020 is only available at a national level.

Q.2 When will the City Council's coronavirus economic recovery plan be available?

A.2 The Sheffield Business Response Group was set up very early in the pandemic. The group has helped steer communications and actions designed to support the economy and has helped to shape the emerging business recovery plan. From the outset, the group were very clear that they wanted to co-develop the plan, rather than simply comment on a Council produced document. The Group discussed the working draft of their plan at their meeting last week and are currently working on gaps and additions. A final version will be produced in the coming weeks.

Q.3 With regards to the Small Business and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure business grant schemes:

(a) How many businesses did the Council originally identify as being in scope for these grants?

The Council did not identify any in scope this was done by Central Government, who estimated 1,154 Retail, Hospitality & Leisure grants and 8,578 Small Business Rate Relief grants.

(b) How many businesses have been paid?

8,176 businesses have been paid a grant under the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grants and Small Business Rate Relief grant scheme as at 28/8/20

(c) How much money has been distributed to local businesses?

£96,820,000 have been paid under the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grants and Small Business Rate Relief grant scheme as at 28/8/20.

- (d) **What will happen to any money that is not distributed to local businesses?**

As per Government instruction, money not distributed under the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure grants and Small Business Rate Relief grant scheme will be returned to Government.

Q.4 With regards to the Council's Discretionary Business Grant Scheme:

- (a) **How many times was the eligibility criteria changed?**

Once. As published, there have been two rounds of the Discretionary Scheme. The criteria were amended at the end of the first round to give broader eligibility criteria.

- (b) **How many businesses did the Council identify as being in scope for these grants under the most recent version of the eligibility criteria?**

It has not been possible to accurately predict the number of potential businesses that might be eligible, except for those that were eligible as Business Rate payers. This has been one of the challenges in administering the Discretionary Fund.

- (c) **How many businesses have been paid?**

604 businesses have received a Discretionary Grant to date.

- (d) **How much money has been distributed to local businesses?**

£3.6m has been paid to date from the Discretionary Fund.

- (e) **What will happen to any money that is not distributed to local businesses?**

100% of the money from the Discretionary Fund will be distributed to local businesses.

**Questions of Councillor Jayne Dunn to Councillor Mazher Iqbal
(Cabinet Member for Business and Investment)**

- Q.1. Could you please explain the importance to the city of the recent agreement that has been reached with John Lewis?**

A.1 John Lewis is one of the key anchor retailers in the United Kingdom City Centre along with Debenhams and Marks and Spencer. Between them they drive a lot of the footfall in the city centre. Successful city centre retailing is driven by the presence of key anchors. According to data from Statista, John Lewis ranks 5th in the UK sitting behind the major food retailers.

The original plans for what was then the New Retail Quarter were anchored by John Lewis with their importance being recognised by all parties of this Council. It has taken time, however we have now secured John Lewis as a major retailing institution in Sheffield City Centre.

A modern John Lewis & Partners store still acts as a strong anchor to our central shopping area and therefore helps secure interest from other retailers, maintaining rental value and jobs.

**Questions of Councillor Dianne Hurst to Councillor Mazher Iqbal
(Cabinet Member for Business and Investment)**

Q.1 Could you please update on all the measures undertaken by the Council to supporting the city's bars to open outside to support them with the social distancing restrictions?

A.1 A full range of measures have been implemented and very well received by food and drink businesses which include:

- Production of a comprehensive guide on reopening and what every hospitality business should do to be Covid Secure
- Regular attendance at the Unight (City Centre Night Time Economy) meetings to offer support
- Taxi Marshalls for the first 3 weekends of reopening in the city centre
- 1,200 free face coverings given out to members of the public in the city centre at night to get home safely on public transport
- Development of a new process to reduce the time taken to approve outdoor seating requests from an average of 52 days to just 7 days. Majority of applicants are able to actually put tables out from day 1 with proviso that they abide by the conditions set. So far this has seen 68 applications, of which 51 have been approved, 9 withdrawn, 1 refused, 7 in consultation period. 70% of the applications have been in the City Centre, other main areas have been Abbeydale Road, Kelham, Fulwood, and Crookes
- 'Make Yourself at Home' café barriers which have so far enabled us to assist 59 hospitality businesses with individual sets of barriers and support them with their outside seating areas. This service is free of charge (with a small refundable deposit) and help businesses meet requirements within the Equalities Act, assist visually impaired people and help with social distancing restrictions. More sets have been ordered to cope with demand.
- Over 1,500 visits to premises across the city by officers to engage and educate on social distancing and being Covid Secure as part of an ongoing operation every weekend since the 4th July. Includes staff from Environmental Health, Health Protection Team, Licensing and City Centre Management/CCTV.
- Installation of over 3,000 'Be Smart Stay Apart' floor stickers
- Over 3,000 'Queue Here' stickers provided for businesses

- Provided temporary toilets (day time only) near the Peace Gardens
- Virtual Q&A webinars (as part of the Business Sheffield events programme hosted via zoom) specifically for hospitality businesses to ask questions on guidance and initiative with representatives from public health, environmental health, Marketing Sheffield and licensing

All these initiatives have been provided across the city. All provided from SCC revenue except for the barriers which are funded from ERDF – Reopening High Streets Safely Fund.

There are more initiatives to come from the ERDF fund which are currently in development to be agreed with Cabinet Member which include:

- Comms and marketing campaign including a dedicated officer using the ‘Make Yourself at Home’ brand to reinforce the message that Sheffield is safe and open for business.
- 4 SME advisors dedicated to district centres to help businesses be covid secure and remain viable. Our City Centre team will cover the city centre and able to call the specialist advisors in if needed.
- Lamp Post banners and posters in every key district centre to remind people that the virus is still here.

Questions of Cllr Shaffaq Mohammed to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore) to be answered by Councillor Iqbal

Q.1 Can you please provide information on the how much of the Government Business Support Grants did the council provide to local church halls?

A.1 We have not provided grants to Church Halls as a whole, although we have provided some grants to businesses that trade out of Church Halls.

Q.2 Can you tell me if you are aware of the Government Covid-19 support grants that Northumberland Council has provided to local church halls?

The guidance for the Discretionary Grants scheme left the criteria largely in the hands of each Local Authority to determine in order to meet their local economic priorities. The funds made available for the Discretionary Scheme were a fraction of what we needed if we were to help every business that was in need and Government refused our request to reallocate unspent money from the main business rates grants programme into the Discretionary Fund. We therefore had to prioritise those trading activities most impacted by the pandemic and in many cases this means that church halls and community facilities do not qualify. If Northumberland determined that Church Halls were a priority in their area then that was their decision.

Councillor Bob Johnson (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)

**Questions of Councillor Ian Auckland to Councillor Bob Johnson
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

Q.1 Would you support the addition of local travel concessions to holders of the Senior National Concessionary Travel Pass?

A.1 Local travel concessions are an issue decided at a Sheffield City Region level and the funding would be met from South Yorkshire transport funds, the changes were made due to the severe cuts in government funding for transport over the past decade, any decision to recommit funds to this would have to be judged against other priorities for spending such as bus re-regulation or subsidised bus routes.

Q.2 Has the planning service re-structure concluded?

A.2 I will write to you with a response to this question and publish the answer on the councils website

Q.3 What contingency plans have been made to complete all stages of “The Sheffield Plan” considering the potential impact of COVID-19? and further so called “reforms” of the planning system?

A.3 I will write to you with a response to this question and publish the answer on the councils website

Q.4 Are you aware (and please indicate the figure) of the total sum of additional public funding given to bus operators in Sheffield? (including concessionary fares for passengers not carried, if known or estimated) Could this sum be related to passengers actually carried?

A.4 We do not have a figure for the total sum of public funding being provided to bus operators in Sheffield. The funding provided by DfT and SYPTE to support current bus operations is allocated direct to regional operators not on a local area basis.

**Questions of Councillor Tim Huggan to Councillor Bob Johnson
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

Q.1 After the recent Active Travel trials, when will the evaluations from the trials be available in order to inform the Council the way forward for ‘Active Travel’ schemes across the city?

A.1 The Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) Phase 1 programme was primarily related to social distancing and the majority will be in place for some time. Some measures have been reviewed and removed either as a result of the queues outside shops dissipating from the peak of lockdown or as a result of increased pressure on the highway network. Reviews of the remaining schemes will be undertaken in due course.

Q.2 Does the Council have a plans for a strategic vision for ‘Active Travel’? If so, when will a draft be published and consulted on?

A.2 Sheffield Transport Strategy sets vision for active travel in an integrated transport system – not a silo approach. This has been based on an evidence approach, taking into the propensity to cycle and where the benefits of this investment will be maximised.

We have supported the development of the SCR Active Travel Implementation Plan which was recently endorsed by the SCR MCA. Together these documents form the strategic vision for active travel investment across the city.

Q.3 What consultations were carried out and with who prior to the introduction of previous ‘Active Travel’ measures?

A.3 At the start of lockdown measures were implemented without consultation due to the emergency nature of the response. Residents and businesses in the immediate vicinity were informed in advance of implementation through direct letter and information was supplied through our media channels. Some of the schemes that have been implemented have required a traffic order to be produced, and in the cases where these are experimental, consultation is live and continually assessed.

Q.4 What plans are in place across Sheffield to encourage Children to be able to walk and cycle to school when they can? Are any pilot schemes in place or any are planned and where are they?

A.4 The Council has a number of ways that it encourages children to be safe and active in their travel and works closely with schools to help deliver this. The ModeSHIFT stars programme is carried out at participating schools to help raise awareness of the social, physical and environmental benefits of using active travel modes to school. This takes the form of in class materials, online resources, practical workshops and events, such as school streets and walking buses to name a few.

Last year, a number of trial schemes of school streets were implemented across the City. These are considered to be a success and this year, we will be implementing a number of School Street projects which will see the roads at school entrances closed to school traffic.

Q.5 Broomhill Pedestrianisation, what is the expected reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the introduction of the scheme? What mitigation measures have been put in place to offset the displacement of Greenhouse gas emissions in the neighbouring areas?

A.5 A reduction in greenhouse gas emissions has not been estimated. There will potentially be some minor localised improvement in air quality related emissions but overall it is expected that people driving may either park in one of the other available car parks in Broomhill centre or choose a different way to travel to the

local shops.

Q.6 What plans are in place for 'Active Travel' Measures in Crookes and Crosspool ward?

A.6 The Council has submitted a bid for money from the Government's Emergency Active Travel Fund – Tranche 2. The primary project to deliver under this funding would be an Active Travel corridor along the Sheaf Valley.

In addition, consideration is being given to creating "Low Traffic Neighbourhoods". These projects look to removing extraneous traffic from residential streets, to create an environment that is suited to walking and cycling. These neighbourhoods should also deliver a number of other environmental benefits.

Crookes is being considered for this treatment. Crosspool is not being considered at this moment in time.

In addition, the local centre review programme will consider what improvements can be made to local district centres. A number of sites across the Ward are likely to be considered.

Question of Councillor Ruth Mersereau to Councillor Bob Johnson (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)

Q. What is the Council now able and willing to put in place to ban pavement parking in the city centre as promised in the Parking Strategy?

A. A budget has been allocated to controlling pavement parking in the City Centre. This will see specific hotspot streets targeted.

Earlier this week, a consultation document has been released by the Government asking for comments on this topic. This might result in effective enforcement without having to spend huge amounts of money on traffic orders and signing.

The Council will respond to the consultation document.

Questions of Councillor Douglas Johnson to Councillor Bob Johnson (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)

Q.1 What length of (a) segregated and (b) non-segregated cycleway currently exists on the Sheffield highway network?

A.1 Total length of cycle infrastructure in Sheffield, including shared use paths, lanes, cycle lanes segregated by paint from pedestrians, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, the

temporary works on Attercliffe Road is 122.51km. 5.1km of this is segregated, thus 117.41 being unsegregated.

Q.2 Given that the new Local Plan will not be in force until 2023 at the very earliest, what Interim Planning Policies are considered to be necessary in order to meet the Council's 2030 climate change commitments?

A.2 I will provide you with a written response to this question and publish on the councils website.

Questions of Councillor Angela Argenzio to Councillor Bob Johnson (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)

Q.1 What measures has the Council put in place to alleviate the distress caused by construction noise and vibration to people who were isolating and more generally to people restricted to their homes during the long weeks of lockdown?

A.1 See response below.

Q.2 With more people working from home long-term, what measures will the Council take to alleviate the disruption and stress caused by construction noise and vibration?

A.2 See response below.

In both cases the Council would investigate any issues raised by members of the public to ensure any construction activity is taking place within reasonable hours and, as appropriate, reasonable steps are being taken to reduce nuisance. Such investigations would normally led by the Environmental Protection Service, who are responsible for implementing the relevant legislation.

In circumstances when a planning condition is in place to control construction hours, which is not common given this is generally managed under environmental legislation; the local planning authority needs to be mindful of the government's published written ministerial statement on planning and construction working hours. This statement was produced in May and expects local planning authorities to approve requests to extend construction working hours temporarily to ensure safe working in line with social distancing guidelines until 9pm, Monday to Saturday, unless there are very compelling reasons against this.

Implications for surrounding residents would form a key consideration in such circumstances.

Question of Councillor Julie Grocutt to Councillor Bob Johnson (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)

Q. Could you please provide an update on the Upper Don Valley Cycle Trail Project?

A. We have now announced the funding to develop the next stage of the project

The aim of this project is to and provide an attractive off-road cycle and walking-link from Herries Road to Hillfoot Bridge and is proposed to be delivered in two phases.

Phase 1 plans to provide off-road cycle and walking link from Herries Road to Wardsend Cemetery – creating a link from Southey / Owlerton to Hillsborough College, Penistone Road

Phase 2 plans to provide off-road cycle and walking link from Wardsend Cemetery to Hillfoot Bridge thus connecting Kelham-Neepsend, Pitsmoor, the City Centre, Hillsborough College, Penistone Road

Currently the scheme is at the feasibility stage meaning Landscape and Engineering Design and an Ecological Study will be undertaken in order to deliver designs to RIBA 2 , Planning Application Drawings and cost estimates to support the outline business case

The scheme will be the completion of a first phase in the largest missing link in the long distance National Cycle Route 267 and Upper Don Trail, it will provide increased opportunities for active travel, provide improved access to green and open spaces for leisure as well as sport and exercise.

The feasibility stage of the project is due to be completed next month.

**Questions of Councillor Ben Miskell to Councillor Bob Johnson
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

Q.1 The vast majority of bars and pubs have played by the rules, working tirelessly to make Sheffield venues Covid secure, including promoting social distancing and playing their part in Track and Trace. We should praise those establishments who are sticking to the rules, including those in my own ward of Park and Arbourthorne

For the small minority of those suspected of flouting the rules, could the Cabinet Member explain how many Covid-19 related Warning Letters have been sent out to establishments in Sheffield by the Licensing team? Furthermore, could the Cabinet Member outline how many proactive visits to venues have been undertaken by the council's enforcement team during the pandemic and what measures the council plans to take over the coming month to ensure that venues are safe and stick to the rules?

A.1 Yes I would agree that the vast majority of businesses and their staff have worked

really hard since re-opening of the Hospitality industry, to apply the guidelines and keep people safe.

We too have been working extremely hard, both leading up to and since the re-opening of the Hospitality Industry to help, support and encourage businesses to apply the guidelines effectively. Teams from Licensing, Environmental Health and City Centre Management have combined extremely well and have made over 1500 visits to businesses to date.

Unfortunately, there have been exceptions to businesses complying with the guidelines and so far 78 warning letters have been issued, 36 joint inspections with Police Licensing, 123 inspections following specific complaints. This activity has seen 2 prohibition notices issued, 2 reviews of Licensed Premises, 2 License Revocations, 6 Action Plans agreed and 11 voluntary Closures of Premises.

It is intended to continue with this and other necessary activity as part of the Outbreak Control Plan

**Questions of Councillor Julie Grocutt to Councillor Bob Johnson
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

Q.1 Public transport is important in many rural communities not just in the north of the city but across the whole city. If we are to effectively tackle climate change, we need a good public transport system. The issues that have arisen with public transport during the pandemic show how we need to have a fresh approach to dealing with public transport. It is welcome news therefore that Clive Betts has completed his review. When will Sheffield City Region start to implement its recommendations?

A.1 In short, implementation of the review has started. The outcomes of the review are broadly supported, with a recognition that things need to change to enhance the customer offer, and ultimately grow bus patronage.

A report on the SCR Bus Review was presented at the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority on Monday 27 July 2020, outlining the proposed framework for how the MCA will respond to the Bus Review and the associated work programme. A terms of reference for the work is being drafted for October and the Council fully expects to be involved.

The bus review has outlined some of the main issues not working in Sheffield and shines a light on the current deficiencies in the operating model. We are looking at developing a Bus Charter, to which the findings of this review tie this need together.

Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to the Leader of the Council to be answered by Councillor Bob Johnson (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)

Q.1 What consultation took place with all interested parties linked to the Shalesmoor Active Travel Scheme before it was introduced earlier this year?

A.1 At the start of lockdown measures were implemented without consultation due to the emergency nature of the need to implement, this includes Shalesmoor. This was supported by a specific amendments to the legal instruments of the Traffic Orders Procedure. This relates to traffic orders, which are required to make and enforce changes to a road's use or its design. The Council has followed these processes during the implementation of the covid-19 schemes.

With regard to Shalesmoor, the information was displayed on the Council's Website and a number of press releases were used to spread the message of the scheme. Through feedback to the various teams and discussions with local businesses and residents, there were a number of substantial changes made to the scheme since its initial implementation. This has included removal of the Shepherd Street road closure, the relocation of some of the barriers to assist with vehicle manoeuvres, the creation of an emergency vehicle access for the cycle lane (to be used in blue light situations) and constant dynamic changes to traffic signalling to respond to demands on the numerous approaches.

Q.2 Can you please state how much money was spent on the Active Travel Scheme in Shalesmoor?

A.2 All costs associated to the scheme were funding by Central Government through the Emergency Active Travel Fund Phase 1 via Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority. There has been no Council Funds allocated to this project.

The direct implementation costs are £33,100 (rounded up to the nearest £100). This includes the introduction of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood in Kelham Island. It should be noted that these works are temporary, and this figure is for the costs accrued from scheme implementation to 9th August.

Councillor Mark Jones (Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate Change)

Questions of Councillor Mike Levery to Councillor Mark Jones (Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate Change)

The online reporting system for roads and highways problems, pollution and nuisance etc. has not been operational for a number of weeks. The 0114 273 4567 is shown as the reporting number for the general public for all these issues. Many people have either failed to report due to long delays in the answering service, or no action has taken place when reported, and have contacted local Councillors for resolution. It appears that a system upgrade is taking place.

Q.1 When did the upgrade commence, and why weren't Members informed?

A.1 The plan was to move our infrastructure from Capita, update the new customer service system including the maps which are an essential part of the service requests to Amey.

The move from Capita was not completed because it has more dependencies/impacts on to our systems than previous appreciated.

Q.2 Why wasn't an alternative reporting mechanism put in place?

A.2 Reporting of StreetsAhead issues has remained possible through email. It wasn't practical for the service to operate with the old version of the forms due to the manual inputting this would require- the form info would need re-input so, essentially an email was easier for us to manage. We have been working with Amey and Customer Service team to resolve this and will now offer the old forms which will be directed through to Amey during office hours by our Customer Service Team as the call centre is now working to business as usual. Outside of hours the default remains to report emergencies directly and the online and emails will be processed when the call centre is open 8am- 5pm Monday to Friday.

Q.3 What was the timescale for this upgrade and when will it be complete?

A.3 IT and digital services are continuing to work on the infrastructure move and other untangling of capita but don't have a final timescale for this yet.

Firstly I'd like to make it clear that although there have been some technical challenges with our migration from Capita (we are not upgrading the site at this time) that the vast majority of our online forms have remained available.

The highways forms could have remained available during this period however would have lost the automation that sit's behind them.

I have had numerous meetings with the Highways Client team and Customer Services where I have proposed options for re-instatement with manual tasks replacing the automation however ultimately the Highways Client team decided not to take these options due to operational reasons described below:

- Concerns about the amount of manual processing Amey would need to do

and the operational impact of this

- Concerns about contract management implications and analytics
- Concerns about potentially missing urgent reports due to manual processes

Highways reporting has been re-instated with Customer Services completing manual tasks to input online reports and send to Amey. This will be in place until we are able to complete our move from Capita and perform robust testing.

**Questions of Councillor Colin Ross to Councillor Mark Jones
(Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate
Change)**

Regulations on permissible fuels allowed in wood and coal burning stoves are due to change in February, 2021. Sales of bagged house coal will be phased out as well sales of wet wood in units of less than 2 cubic metres.

Q.1 What steps in Sheffield are planned to be taken to monitor whether retailers comply with the new regulations?

A.1 See response below.

Q.2 What steps will be taken if a householder continues to use household coal or wet wood on their stoves or open fires?

A.2 See response below

The proposals originate from the objective of the Clean Air Strategy 2019. The resulting 'Environment Bill' hasn't progressed far as the public bill committee meetings were suspended due to covid* They are due to report on the bill on 29 September according to the parliament website. The bill policy statement talks about the legislative framework needing updating (i.e. Environment Act 1995 & Clean Air Act 1993) so we'll need to see how it will be enacted before we can comment on details on how we'll implement any new regulations. We don't know what the final extent of our powers will be yet.

**This Bill was being considered by a [Public Bill Committee](#) but due to current circumstances the sittings of the Committee have been suspended until further notice. The Committee is now scheduled to report by Tuesday 29 September 2020.*

The membership of the Public Bill Committee has been announced by the Committee of Selection:

Environment Bill: [Public Bill Committee membership](#)

**Questions of Councillor Tim Huggan to Councillor Mark Jones
(Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate
Change)**

Q.1 How many fixed penalty tickets were issued outside Household Waste Recycling Centres since their reopening?

A.1 I will provide you with a written response to this question and publish on the councils website.

Q.2 Are there plans to make the new earlier opening hours for Household Waste Recycling Centres permanent?

A.2 I will provide you with a written response to this question and publish on the councils website

**Question of Councillor Douglas Johnson to Councillor Mark Jones
(Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate
Change)**

Q. How many tonnes of litter have been collected from on-street bins and litter-picking in each of the last 24 months?

A. I will provide you with a written response to this question and publish on the councils website

**Questions of Councillor Alison Teal to Councillor Mark Jones
(Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate
Change)**

Q.1 How many fixed penalty notices have been given for littering in each of the past 12 months?

A.1 Litter FPNs by month September 2019 to August 2020.

Month	Num
Sep-19	96
Oct-19	128
Nov-19	234
Dec-19	186
Jan-20	287
Feb-20	272
Mar-20	208
Apr-20	13
May-20	4
Jun-20	5
Jul-20	9

Aug-20	24
Total	1466

Q.2 The plans to increase the amount of waste burnt in the incinerator appears to be at odds with the Council's plans to reduce carbon emissions, not least of all from the number of lorries carrying waste into and out of Sheffield. Does the Council plan to make an effort to reduce waste in Sheffield?

A.2 The application to vary the Planning for the Energy Recovery Facility does not change the total amount of waste the facility will treat. The maximum amount of waste for treatment remains 245,000 tonnes.

Q.3 If yes, what initiatives are planned?

A.3 I will provide you with a written response to this question and publish on the councils website.

Q.4 Does the Council intend to recruit additional officers to work on the reduction of carbon emissions across the city to meet our 2030 target? If yes, when will positions be advertised?

A.4 The process to commence recruitment of additional officers to support and progress the reduction of carbon emissions across the city is underway, with the confirmation of grades of the posts due to be confirmed at a Corporate Grading Panel soon. There has been a delay to this process arising from Covid-19, but we expect to be in a position to be able to advertise the first of the posts shortly.

Q.5 Does the Council plan to increase the number of officers working in Ecological services?

A.5 Question answered by Councillor Mary Lea

Q.6 Does the Council still intend to hold a citizens assembly on the climate crisis?

A.6 As you are aware, the Council was planning on holding a climate citizens assembly earlier this year however it was necessary to postpone this initiative due to the Covid pandemic and lock-down / social distancing restrictions.

In recognition of the need to maintain progress on decarbonisation, it's important to note that work hasn't stopped and that the focus of the Council and our Green City Partnership Board has been on progressing the development of its Zero Carbon Commission.

Working with stakeholders across the city, this initiative has been establishing a detailed carbon footprint and exploring the options to achieve net zero carbon and will help to inform the creation of city-wide zero carbon plan.

We are now considering in view of both existing current and likely future Covid

restrictions relating to meetings and gatherings, how we can use different approaches to engagement and co-design, such as the use of web-based applications to still support and deliver a significant, meaningful and equitable engagement as an alternative to the previously proposed face to face assembly that does not delay our plans being finalised or action being delivered.

We will be seeking the support of our Green City Partnership Board in developing the best approach to engagement, noting that membership includes cross-party representation and Sheffield Climate Alliance.

Questions of Councillor Sioned Richards to Councillor Mark Jones (Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate Change)

Q.1 Could you please provide information around how Sheffield's recycling centres compared in retaining opening hours compared to other Core Cities?

A.1 We do not have specific figures across Core Cities, however, Sheffield has been recognised as one of the few councils able to keep open its Household Waste Recycling Centres throughout the pandemic

Government have recognised the work we did in Sheffield and Rebecca Pow MP and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) made a virtual visit to Sheffield in June, to find out more about the city's success in keeping all five HWRCs open during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to thank the Council and Veolia for providing the model for authorities across the country to reopen their facilities.

Government said that the city was looked upon as a beacon for the practices put in place to adapt, continue operating and allow residents to dispose of their essential waste safely.

Officers from Sheffield City Council & Veolia, assisted DEFRA in producing guidance for other authorities who had closed facilities and were looking to reopen.

Councillor Mary Lea (Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks and Leisure)

Questions of Councillor Roger Davison to Councillor Mary Lea (Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks and Leisure)

Q.1 When did it become apparent that SIV/Sheffield City Trust's (in the period before covid19 lockdown) monthly revenue budget could not be attained?

A.1 This matter was subject to Scrutiny in October 2019 – link to report attached and

will be subject to further scrutiny of the Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee on 8th September 2019 – link to report also attached

<http://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s36866/Sheffield%20City%20Trust%20Update.pdf>

<http://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s40422/Leisure%20Re-opening%20Subsidy%20-%20SCT-Places%20Leisure.pdf>

Q.2 SIV offer free day passes to attract new members and visitors. How many free day passes were issued in the last financial year?

A.2 Questions 2-6 will have been referred to SCT for full answers and will reply in due course.

Q.3 Were the people issued with free day passes monitored, to find out whether they returned to SIV venues as a visitor or joined as a member?

A.3 See A2.

Q.4 How many re-branding schemes have taken place over the last 10 years?

(a) How much money was spent on the re-branding SIV?

(b) What investment(s) costing £10,000 or more did not receive expected returns?

A.4 See A2.

Q.5 What changes have taken place in the catering supplied by SIV to members over the last five years?

A.5 See A2.

Q.6 To what degree has Leeds Arena affected Sheffield's Arena in terms of potential revenue?

A.6 See A2.

**Questions of Councillor Ben Miskell to Councillor Mary Lea
(Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks and Leisure)**

Q.1 Arbourthorne Pond has been a haven for many members of the community in my ward this summer. It is a peaceful and tranquil space that the community loves.

Will the Cabinet Member join with local elected members and Councillor

Sophie Wilson, in encouraging residents to take part in our Big Online Community Conversation about Arbourthorne Pond, which we set up to gather people's views about the how the space could be improved in the future? Many residents have already taken part and have told us about how they would like to see weeds removing from the pond in order to allow fishing to recommence and the shipping container 'hut' to be brought back into use for the community.

Funding permitting, would the Cabinet Member support measures to improve this well valued space?

- A.1 Yes. The Parks team have been working with Local Councillors and the Environment Agency to improve the pond and area with a view to allowing fishing to once again take place. I understand that local councillors are eager to explore and encourage a new 'Angling Club' be formed and we would be very supportive of this. I am aware that a grant request has been made in the hope of bringing in some funding to deliver some of the improvements the area requires.

Questions of Councillor Alison Teal to Councillor Mary Lea (Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks and Leisure)

Q.1 Does the Council plan to increase the number of officers working in Ecological services?

- A.1 There are no plans to increase the number of officers working in Ecology at present. Currently the size of the team is appropriate for the demands of the service. If this should change in the future, this would be reviewed.

Questions of Councillor Mohammed Mahroof to the Leader of the Council to be answered by Councillor Mary Lea (Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks and Leisure)

Q.1 What work is this Council doing to ensure that Ponds Forge can be safely reopened as soon as possible?

- A.2 The Council have received a proposal from the diving, water polo and swim clubs regarding the re-opening of Ponds Forge, we need some time to review the proposal, which was received on 1st September. We are looking at how we can support the reinstatement of facilities at Ponds Forge and will consider the proposal as part of that work. These are complex financial and operational decisions, and the Council and SCT are liaising directly with the aquatics clubs in response to this matter.

The Council are supporting UK Active and Sport England in highlighting the need for urgent financial support for the leisure industry from the Government but to

date the support package identified does not currently allow for losses where councils, such as Sheffield, subsidise leisure services. Ponds Forge is an iconic and integral part of the city, and working with Sheffield City Trust the Council are committed to securing its future.

Appendix 1

			SCC Performance and Analysis Service
Summary of requests for EHCP assessment 2019 - 2020 to date			
<i>Source: All EHCP Initial assessment Involvements Capita ONE as at 03/09/20</i>			
<i>(Requests overturned at mediation/tribunal for non agreement for assessment are taken as one case and use the original request date Year is calendar year.</i>			
Requests for Initial Assessment 2019-2020			
	Requests in calendar year		
	2019	2020 to date	
All requests for EHCPs	600	348	
Requests for EHCPs pending	6	179	
EHCPs issued	429	123	
Requests not proceeding to EHCP	165	46	
<i>Requests not proceeding to EHCP include cases not agreed for assessment and others discontinued after the assessment has started.</i>			
Of requests for EHCPs pending			
	Calendar year		
	2019	2020 to date	
Awaiting decision to assess	0	15	
Assessment in progress	2	96	
Assessment complete	0	1	
Draft	4	67	
Total	6	179	
	Out of all pending requests		
	In timescale	Out of timescale	
Awaiting decision to assess	15	0	
Assessment in progress	91	7	
Assessment complete	0	1	
Draft	47	24	
Total	153	32	
<i>Pending out of timescale - 17.3% of total.</i>			
03/09/20			

Appendix 2:

Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health offer during the Covid-19 Crisis- Updated September 2020

Communications and Early Intervention

Citywide coordination of a wide range of practical resources for supporting mental health and emotional wellbeing for pupils, teachers and parents/carers have been offered through the Sheffield Schools platform link developed by Learn Sheffield, this continues to be in place as schools return. – The platform can be found [here](#)

The CAMHS Early Intervention Team and the Healthy Minds offer in schools has produced a number of materials for schools and pupils to help with emotional wellbeing (available also on the schools platform above), There is also advice for parents and carers [here](#) and [via](#) the Healthy Minds [website](#).

Sheffield City Council Children's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) continue to provide individual support, group work, consultations and information provision advice sessions. Further information can be found on the MAST website [here](#) and they are contactable via EHWB@sheffield.gov.uk

Advice and information videos have been developed by SCC Public Health team including from Director of Public Health Greg Fell [here](#) and also by Sheffield Futures on their [Twitter](#) , [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.

CAMHS, Crisis and Online Support

Description of how CAMHS have flexed their services in response to Covid-19 Sheffield Children's Foundation Trust Community and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) have operated a flexible model in providing a response to the needs of children during the COVID-19 crisis. For example, some staff have transferred from the wider community CAMHS to bolster the crisis service provision from the STAR team and CAMHS have risk assessed everyone that is currently receiving a service and are offering telephone and video conferencing support as a way of continuing provision whilst maintaining social distancing rules.

As of September, CAMHS are offering a combination of distanced support and assessment alongside restarting some face-to-face provision where appropriate to the individual needs of the child.

Sheffield continues to provide the Kooth online Counselling and Support service for Children and Young People aged 11-18 <https://www.kooth.com> with online forums and self-help articles available 24/7 and online counselling from 12 noon -10pm on weekdays and from 6-10 pm at weekends

VCS Support

SAYiT, Sheffield Young Carers, Sheffield Futures/Door 43, Chilypep and Gold Digger Trust continue to offer telephone support and virtual groups to support vulnerable young people's emotional health and wellbeing.

As of September 2020, some VCF provision is returning to face-to-face where safe and accessible, such as for some of wellbeing and counselling sessions run by the Door 43 service at Sheffield Futures.

Schools and SEND

- Sheffield Children's Foundation Trust Early Intervention and Prevention in Mental Health team are holding two sessions in in the [COVID Recovery Festival](#) in September looking at response to the local needs of children as they return to school. Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing needs for children will be included as part of the plan that we produce after the festival to guide our recovery work as a city.
- Support continues to be provided for those children that have Special Educational Needs as they return to the school environment and care planning and communications will be adapted to the individual need of the child.
- Sheffield will be in receipt of some funding from the Department for Education for the Wellbeing for Education programme, which will be integrated into the local delivery model to meet the needs of children as they return to school and will supplement the current provision.

Governance and Long term planning

Sheffield City Council and partners from Sheffield CCG and Sheffield Children's Foundation Trust and the voluntary and community sector have implemented structures for both immediate responses and the planning for the post-crisis and longer-term impact on Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health for Children and Young People:

- As established during the height of the Covid crisis, a subgroup of the Sheffield All-Age Psychology Board continues to meet regularly to look at the dynamic need in the city and oversee consistency and coordination of the communications sent out to young people on mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- The Children's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Working Group is undertaking a programme of work looking at both short term provision and "back to school" need and developing responses to expected future need. This need has been identified by local services and in the all-age Mental Health Rapid Impact Assessment and the working group will help to align and link providers.
- In order to help further align health and education services, the COVID Recovery Education plan will form part of the new education and skill strategy (currently in development).

Sheffield Children's Mental Health Helpline: 0808 275 8892

Sheffield Listening Ear/Amparo: amparo.service@listening-ear.co.uk/ 0330 088 9255, see also : <https://www.sheffieldmentalhealth.org.uk/support/listening-ear/>

Appendix 3.

Email:
mazher.iqbal@councillor.sheffield.gov.uk

Our reference: MI/EH/JH

Date: 29 June 2020



**Councillor Mazher Iqbal
Cabinet Member for Business and Investment
and
Councillor for Darnall Ward**

Town Hall
Sheffield
S1 2HH

SENT VIA E-MAIL

The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP
Secretary of State for Business,
Energy & Industrial Strategy
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Minister

I am writing in respect to the £113m allocated to Sheffield City Council for the delivery of the Business Rates Grant Scheme and subsequent Discretionary Grant Scheme.

Firstly, I think it is important to recognise the value of both grant schemes in supporting local businesses and the speed at which it was made available to Local Authorities. We are aware that it has been a lifeline of support for many local businesses and hopefully means they will now be in a position to re-open, trade successfully and contribute to the economy.

You will be aware from our Delta returns that we starting to 'max out' in respect to our Business Rates Grants at around £90m (80%), which follows numerous publicity exercises to increase awareness of the opportunity.

In addition to this, we have committed £2.5m of our Discretionary Grant allocation using some very tight criteria following a first round of applications and expect a second round to easily see the remaining £3m defrayed in July.

On this basis we can expect to have c£17.5m left available to support local businesses who remain in severe need of support out of the original allocation.

The level of demand for our first round of the Discretionary Grant allocation is not unsurprising and does question the flat rate allocation of the 5% limit across all Local

Authorities. Whilst the original allocation to all LA's reflected their rate paying business base we consider the 5% unfairly affected larger cities for a number of reasons including:

- Cities have a far larger number of single person and knowledge businesses that are likely to be located in shared workspace where they are not the ratepayer.
- By their sheer size Cities will have a larger number of uses that missed out on a Business Rate grant due to the Relief they have access to – Charities and Nurseries in particular.

In respect to the Discretionary Grant scheme, we were always concerned that the 5% allocation of £5.51m would be insufficient to meet demand and in this respect, whilst we largely followed the Government Guidance in respect to prioritised Business Types, we have had to put in place some additional strict criteria to manage the funds. This has included an 'entry level' property cost threshold (which does not apply to BR Grants), excluding any business eligible for SEIS and we also reduced grant payments to £3k, £5k and £10k.

Payments to date show that the majority are £5k at 56% and then £3k at 29%. What is clear, with over 600 eligible claims against a tight criteria, we were never going to be able to provide grants at the levels provided through the Business Rates grant scheme.

Even with maintaining the reduced grant levels we consider there is a very strong case to allow the Council to retain the uncommitted funds to help businesses to reopen and survive particularly as we feel that the funding under the two schemes still leaves many missing out.

I set out some these gaps and issues below:

- 1) SBRR gaps: Many small businesses with more than one property have not been able to access a SBR grant even where the second property may have just been a rateable storage facility. We do not see why a small business that has progressed to have the need for two or more properties should be excluded from support. To this effect we will be looking to address this gap in the second round of the Discretionary Grant scheme.
- 2) The Business Rates grants scheme neither captured nurseries nor charities who would have been able to secure a SBR Grant but for the Relief they can access. Our first round of Discretionary grants have addressed this gap caused by the BR Grant scheme but this has clearly eroded our ability to support other businesses and grant values.
- 3) We have had to rejected many BR Grant applications where a trading business was deemed not to be in rateable occupation due to a whole range of reasons, including refurbishment or redevelopment. Our second round of the Discretionary Grants will look to address this gap.

- 4) There have been many instances where a property RV is above the BR Grant threshold but their actual rent is below. This has created an unforeseen disparity in our first round of grants that will need to be addressed in the second round.
- 5) We have also rejected many applications where a business secured a SEIS grant but in some of those the SEIS grants have been largely meaningless at below £100. Our second round of grants will look to address this inadequacy of the SEIS scheme in part.

By addressing the issues above in our second round of Discretionary Grants we are certain confident that balance of the 5% funding will be fully committed, even at our lower grant levels. However we are still left not being able to support many businesses in sectors such as the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure supply chain, the arts/culture sector and the night time economy who have seen lockdown have massive implications for their income. Many of these are still 'small' businesses and in as much need of support as those that were originally identified in the Business Rates grants scheme.

In light of the above, I have a simple request; let us and other Local Authorities retain the uncommitted allocation from the Business Rates Grant Scheme to both address remaining gaps in support and, in some cases, increase the value of the existing grants so that they are in line with Business Rates Grant Scheme. This would introduce parity across all the grant schemes.

I trust this is useful information and I look forward to a positive response both from BEIS and HM Treasury.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Mazher Iqbal
Cabinet Member for Business and Investment



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Councillor Mazher Iqbal
Cabinet Member for Business and Investment
Councillor for Darnall Ward
Town Hall
Sheffield
S1 2HH

Minister of State
Department for Business,
Energy & Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000
E enquiries@beis.gov.uk
W www.gov.uk

Our ref: N10#2020/22433
Your ref: M/IEH/JH

3 July 2020

Dear Councillor Iqbal,

Thank you for your letter of 29 June to the Secretary of State about business support grants. I am replying on behalf of the Department.

As you know, the Government has put forward a package of support to help businesses with their ongoing business costs in recognition of the disruption caused by Covid-19. This includes the Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF), the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund (RHLGF), and the Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund (LADGF).

The schemes have been designed to support the smallest businesses, and small businesses in some of the sectors which have been hardest hit by the measures taken to prevent the spread of Covid-19. As of 28 June, over £10.5 billion has been paid out under the SBGF and RHLGF to over 860,000 business premises. I am grateful for the hard work of Sheffield City Council in delivering this funding and I am pleased to hear that the grants have been a great help to businesses locally.

With regards to the Discretionary Grants Fund, local authorities are responsible for defining precise eligibility for the scheme in their area, within the criteria set out in the [guidance](#). We are asking local authorities to prioritise certain types of businesses but allowing discretion to adjust schemes to local circumstances.

I appreciate that there is substantial demand for the LADGF in Sheffield, and the scheme will not be able to support every business. The Council will need to manage their scheme to stay within their funding allocation and will have to make choices about which businesses to prioritise. Unfortunately, for reasons of fairness, we cannot allow those local authorities with underspend from their initial funding allocation to use this to top up their LADGF. Ultimately, once all grant monies have been paid out, the Council will need to carry out a reconciliation exercise with Government.

Officials are keeping in close contact with local authorities to understand how the schemes are rolling out and advising ministers on any additional support which could be offered to help businesses and support local economies.

Businesses which are not eligible for grant funding should be able to benefit from other measures in the Government's unprecedented package of support for business. For further information please visit: [/www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder](http://www.gov.uk/business-coronavirus-support-finder).

Thank you again for taking the time to write. I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kwasi Kwarteng', written in a cursive style.

RT HON KWASI KWARTENG MP
Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth