

Council Questions

Wednesday 3 February 2021
2.00 pm

1. **Leader of the Council** (Pages 3 - 10)
Questions to Councillor Bob Johnson
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3. **Cabinet Member for Business and Investment** (Pages 19 - 22)
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CITY OF SHEFFIELD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL – 3RD FEBRUARY, 2021
COPIES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THERETO

Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Bob Johnson)

Q.1 Since taking up the role of Leader of the Council, what contact have you had with the Leaders of the three South Yorkshire Councils? Please list all contact and what was discussed.

A.1 Numerous meetings have already taken place including the Combined Authority, South Yorkshire Leaders' Meeting along with individual conversations with Leaders and the Mayor.

Q.2 How many Non-Disclosure Agreements have been entered into with Council employees on departure during the last three years and what was the cost to the Council?

A.2 I will provide you with a written response to this question

Q.3 What lessons have you learnt from the infamous business deal with Sichuan Guodong/Mr Wong?

A.3 Please see the statement from Councillor Mazher Iqbal on this issue from July 2019

Q.4 Since the report by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman on Street Trees was published, what are the key lessons you have learnt?

(a) in particular in relation to transparency and openness of the Council; and

(b) operating with humility and respect towards those who have a different opinion/do not agree with the Council.

A.4 Many of the lessons identified through the Ombudsman Report had already been identified in work in recent years, you are aware that the council had already produced a lessons learnt report on this issue and already apologised.

With specific regards to transparency and openness, the council has already embarked on a project to develop its openness and transparency focussing on 4

key goals:

- Citizen engagement - Increased participation from, and engagement with, Sheffield citizens
- Constitution and Code of Corporate Governance - Simpler, more accessible and understandable governance in order to improve customer participation
- Pro-active information disclosure - Pro-active disclosure of information where possible, rather than re-active, in order to improve customer trust and satisfaction
- Open & transparent by design - Staff that understand, support, and are skilled to operate in an open and transparent way, in order to embed open and transparency design principles throughout SCC.

Q.5 Do you accept you and your colleagues in the Leadership team were wrong in the manner in which you dealt with the situation?

A.5 The administration accepted the findings of the report and apologised when it was published.

Q.6 How will the findings of the above Local Government Ombudsman report inform any changes you make as to how the Council runs?

A.6 This was reported to Cabinet in October, in addition to this please see answer to Question 4

Q.7 Many people in the city are requesting an independent inquiry into the Street Tree fiasco. Will you, as one of your first acts as Leader, support this inquiry?

A.7 There has been an investigations by the Ombudsman which you have referenced in your questions. The council has also undertaken lessons learned work which identified 10 specific lessons learned and 14 actions. We have also committed to the archive project.

If there are any new issues or questions relating to this issue I have already said that we are happy to look at them personally.

Q.8 How many residents have applied for hardship/finance support from Sheffield City Council during the Covid 19 outbreak? Please list total number of applications and what type of support has been provided.

A.8 From 19th October 2020 to 29th January 2021, the Covid-19 Hardship Related Assistance Provided under the Local Assistance Scheme (LAS) has made payments totalling £331,297.24 to 576 residents. The scheme is not means-tested and is open to all residents of Sheffield. Information about what this covers is available on the council website where people can apply. Payments continue to be made from this fund on a daily basis.

We also provide the Sheffield Local Assistance Scheme Crisis Grant which

provides Sheffield residents with financial assistance in a number of circumstances. This scheme has been in operation since 2013 and is a discretionary scheme funded by SCC with no support from Central Government.

Q.9 During the Summer 2020, as Cabinet Member, you introduced the infamous Shalesmoor cycle lane, personally what lessons did you learn and going forward how will this inform your future decisions?

A.9 Ultimately this was always intended to be a temporary scheme and was introduced as part of the temporary active travel measures which were funded by the government, I have made a number of statements about this issue where we have set out what was learned.

**Questions of Councillor Mike Levery to the Leader of the Council
(Councillor Bob Johnson)**

Q.1 In response to my written question on the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) and Green Belt Review in November 2020, you stated “Most sites that were submitted in 2014 (and included in the 2015 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)) were also submitted in the 2019 call for sites and shown in the 2020 HELAA. However, a small number of sites (including some sites in Council ownership) were not resubmitted in 2019 and these were omitted from the HELAA map in 2020”. When I identified some significant Council owned Parks and Green Belt sites not in the HELAA in my written question in December 2020 you stated “Ideally, sites submitted through the 2014 call for sites would have been included in the HELAA published in September 2019. However, due to IT difficulties arising from officers working from home (as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic), it was not possible for officers to run a full cross-check against sites submitted in the 2019 call for sites. The decision was therefore taken to proceed only with sites submitted in 2019”. At the meeting of the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee held on 19th January, 2021, the Officer response to a Member’s question on the HELAA and Green Belt Review question was the same as the written response you gave in November 2020.

Can you please clarify, is it “a small number of sites from the 2014 call for land (including some sites in Council ownership) were not resubmitted in 2019” or “The decision was therefore taken to proceed only with sites submitted in 2019”?

A.1 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

Q.2 If you confirm that none of the land in the 2014 call for land has been included in the first version of the HELAA, will it be included in the next version, and can you confirm when the next version of the HELAA will be published? Will you now publish the fully revised Green Belt Review including the 2014 land

so that the public have a full picture of all the land submitted, and identify which land is owned by Sheffield City Council?

A.2 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

Q.3 If you confirm that none of the land in the 2014 call for land has been included in the first version of the HELAA, it will mean that the Options and Issues consultation during September/October 2020 was done with only a partially complete document missing all the land from 2014. Will you carry out a further consultation with the public on the HELAA and Green Belt Review, so they again have the opportunity to comment on the full picture?

A.3 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

**Question of Councillor Martin Smith to the Leader of the Council
(Councillor Bob Johnson)**

Q. Including officer time, consultancy fees and other costs;

(a) How much has the Council spent since 2011 on developing the Sheffield Local Plan and the issues and options document (Citywide Options for Growth to 2034)?

(b) How much does it expect to spend on future work to secure the adoption of the Local Plan (now forecast for 2023)?

A. It is not possible to calculate this information for such a long period as numerous officers have worked on the Local plan but also other planning issues during this period.

**Questions of Councillor Sue Auckland to the Leader of the Council
(Councillor Bob Johnson)**

Q.1 Do we have any analysis of the effectiveness of our Covid 19/Corona Virus Council public information communications such as emails and Director of Public Health videos (How many of the emails are opened by members of the public etc.)?

A.1 Yes. There are messages going out across a huge range of channels, for a real mix of audiences and communities, and regular analysis is carried out.

To give you an idea of how things are looking on a weekly basis, there's a snapshot from Jan 22-28:

Main sources of council Covid information:

- 2 email bulletins went out to residents who have subscribed. Opened 100,000+ times. The bulletins included links to further information and they were clicked 24,000+ times
- SheffNews - 23,154 page views
- Twitter (29 tweets) - 196K views
- Facebook (24 posts) - 82K views

In terms of a deeper monthly look:

In December the council's content was seen a minimum of 2.7 million times

Emails to residents who have signed up for bulletins, and YouTube videos, tend to be our top performing channels. Subscribers to email bulletins rose in December.

December figures:

Email:

- 395,121 covid email opens in Dec
- That's an 81% open-rate
- Links to further information in the bulletins were clicked on 151,924 times (an average of 600 per bulletin)

Director of Public Health videos:

- Planning a safe Christmas video:
 - 4.5k views (1.5K above average)
 - 228 hours total watch time
 - 42% of views came from our email bulletins
 - 39% aged 65+
- Greg Elf video (reassuring children that Father Christmas would still be visiting, and reminding everyone to celebrate safely)
 - 4.3k views (1.3K above average)
 - 130.7 hours total watch time (average)
 - 41% of views came from our email bulletins
 - 38% aged 65+

The communications team can access further detail if required.

There is also obviously a lot of engagement and communications work offline.

Q.2 Do we look specifically at any local misinformation campaigns and consider how these might be combatted?

A.2 Yes. A wider and dedicated council campaign to target misinformation is being worked on, based on research suggesting that rather than repeating the myth we should focus on reinforcing accurate fact.

Throughout the pandemic the approach has been to offer concise, accessible and factual information, whether it's around the vaccine, self-isolation or transmission, for example.

Channels have included digital, outdoor advertising (buses, digital boards, vans), radio advertising, direct mail and through the community.

The council is working with partners to make sure we have a consistent approach to misinformation.

Questions of Councillor Douglas Johnson to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Bob Johnson)

Q.1 Is the Council's Fire Safety Board still in existence? If not, when did it cease to meet?

A.1 The Council's Post Grenfell Fire Safety Board meets on a monthly basis and its membership includes key services and statutory partners to oversee Fire Safety in the city and is chaired by Director of Housing Janet Sharpe who reports progress and key issues to cabinet Member lead Paul Wood and, where required Cabinet.

Q.2 What is the position with the action plan developed to ensure residents living in high rise accommodation (regardless of tenure) in Sheffield are safe?

A.2 The work of this board focuses on the following:

Residential:

- Fire Strategy for residential sector – oversight for city
- Developed/updating city database that has oversight of all residential buildings over 18m, populated with information across SCC and Fire Service (including new high-rise applications that are coming through the planning system and any office to residential conversions)
- Building list with flammable cladding, any buildings with significant fire or building safety issues across all tenures and investment taking place to remedy
- Risk Assessed Planned Inspections by PSH and SYFRS
- KPI performance information and compliance with fire and building safety regulations - action plan
- Just commenced project for collation of date for buildings over 11m

- Reporting into MHCLG DELTA system
- External funding environment oversight, that can be used to support building owners and agents

Non-residential Buildings:

- Database regarding the number of SCC non-residential buildings that it owns and manages
- KPI: Progress updates regarding compliance with fire regulations
- Risk assessed planned inspections
- SCC planned investment and performance reporting
- Action plan

Q.3 When will this be published?

A.3 The action plan for the board contains sensitive data and so all of the information cannot be shared publicly. However, a public version of the action plan is being prepared to inform a new annual report on the Council's fire strategy & fire and building safety compliance and when completed will be placed on the SCC housing tower block website. This can be shared wider if required.

Information on compliance of Council owned residential assets are routinely published by Council.

Q.4 I am pleased to see you take a stand against “shameful ‘fire and rehire’ tactics” of British Gas. Will you bring an end to the same shameful ‘fire and rehire’ tactics used by Sheffield City Council, for instance in the ongoing Planning Service restructure?

A.4 The restructure of the planning service under MER 476 remains ongoing, and has been delayed for a number of reasons, not least of which has been COVID19. The MER has followed the Council's established procedures with regard to staffing restructures at every stage.

Q.5 In December, you stated, “Licensing Accounts are published as part of the Council's Annual Accounts on an annual basis.” The Council's annual accounts are published at <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/your-city-council/statement-accounts> and your statement is categorically untrue. Will you:-

- (a) confirm that - contrary to the earlier statement - the Council does not publish its Licensing accounts;**
- (b) explain why the previous answer was given in December; and**
- (c) arrange for the Council to publish the Licensing Service accounts at the end of this financial year?**

A.5 Licensing accounts are incorporated as part of the published City Council's

Statement of Accounts annually but aren't split or identifiable as a separate function. However there is an opportunity for any member of the public to inspect the detailed accounts including those associated with Licensing from the 1st September to the 12th October every year.

When fees are reviewed they are taken to Licensing Committee for approval and publication. This years will be presented in March.

**Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to Councillor Terry Fox
(Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)**

- Q.1 During 2020, how many Fire Risk Assessments did the Council undertake in buildings that it owns and how much did this cost?**
- A.1 738 Fire Risk Assessments were undertaken from the 1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020 at a cost of £180,216.
- Q.2 In the last two years, how much has Sheffield City Council spent on debt repayment?**
- A.2 This information is publicly available in the council's budget documents
- Q.3 For each year, how much is this as a percentage of Council tax and business rate income?**
- A.3 See above
- Q.4 What was the annual income from business rates for each Council Ward for the past three years?**
- A.4 The business rates system doesn't categorise businesses by Ward
- Q.5 What is the estimated income from business rates for each Council Ward for the financial years 2021/2022?**
- A.5 The business rates system doesn't categorise businesses by Ward
- Q.6 How much Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money has been spent by Wards?**
- A.6 Question to be answered by Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety).
- Q.7 How much CIL money is still available for each Ward?**
- A.7 Question to be answered by Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety).

**Questions of Councillor Simon Clement-Jones to Councillor Terry Fox
(Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)**

- Q.1 How many external consultants have the City Council appointed in the last three years?**

A.1 Information on all council spend over £250 can be found on the Council's website, using the following link:

<https://datamillnorth.org/dataset/sheffieldcitycouncil-spend-over-f250>

Q.2 What areas of work did these external consultants undertake?

A.2 As above

Q.3 What was the total cost of this? Please give a detailed breakdown into work streams.

A.3 As above

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

Q.1 How many Test and Trace support payments have been made to date?

A.1 1218 totalling £609,000

Q.2 For each of the last 3 years:-

(a) how many payments from the local assistance scheme have been made?

(b) What sum has been paid out each year?

A.2 (a)
 17-18 1605
 18-19 1392
 19-20 1259
 20-21 719 (to date)

(b)
 17-18 £814,309.30
 18-19 £909,092.41
 19-20 £751,442.44
 20-21 £453,821.04 (to date)

Questions of Councillor Paul Turpin to Councillor Terry Fox (Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)

Q.1 How many redundancies has Sheffield City Council made in the last twelve

months? How many of these were already planned before lockdown?

A.1 The numbers are as follows;

	Reason for Leaving	Number
People	Retirement - Voluntary Early	2
People Total		2
Place	Redundancy - Compulsory	1
	Retirement - Voluntary Early	1
Place Total		2
Resources	Redundancy - Voluntary	4
	Retirement - Voluntary Early	7
Resources Total		11
Grand Total		15

Finance, Resources and Governance

13 of the 15 relate to changes to structures where the consultation and engagement with staff had commenced prior to the first lockdown in March. For info, the other two, one relates to a retirement of a member of staff and the other one was the ending of a fixed term contact.

Q.2 What disciplinary action was taken against the individual in Legal and Governance who attempted to stop the Hillsborough inquiry and still works at Sheffield City Council?

A.2 It's unclear what this question refers to. When the request for organisations to provide material into the Hillsborough Independent Panel process was received, the Council proactively and positively responded and were supportive of the process.

Q.3 Who authorised and instructed Legal and Governance to attempt to stop the Hillsborough inquiry?

A.3 As above

Q.4 How many complaints have been made about Members to the Monitoring Officer since May 2016? What is the breakdown by political group? How long did each complaint take to resolve?

A.4 As I said last month, Standards matters are the responsibility of the Council's Audit & Standards Committee working with the Monitoring Officer and it is entirely

appropriate that I hold no information on this to be able to answer your questions.

Q.5 How many Code of Conduct complaints have been raised on the subject of Members not declaring personal or pecuniary interests since May 2016?

A.5 As above

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

Q.1 Why is the Seven Hills Convenience Store on Ecclesall Road still operating five months after the Licensing Committee made the unusual decision to revoke the premises license for a breach of conditions and the law?

A.1 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

Q.2 Why are Ward Councillors not routinely informed of such decisions in their wards?

A.2 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

Q.3 How many licences were revoked in the last year and how many revocations were upheld after an appeal?

A.3 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

Q.4 Whilst I applaud the rolling out of equipment and the adaptation of systems and softwares to allow staff to work from home during the pandemic, I am acutely aware that changing staff working patterns on top of the worry stemming from the Covid crisis have had a huge impact on our officers:

(a) What measures have been put in place to support staff to cope with working from home and particularly to support them with coping with hardware and/or software not always working well, or working intermittently?

(b) How are staff being supported to deal with stress deriving with the difference in pace that can happen when working from home?

(c) How are staff being supported if they are having to home school their children?

(d) How many staff have been affected by stress and have been off sick in the last year and how does this compare to the previous 12 month period?

A.4 Measures put in place to support staff

Policy / procedure changes:

- Flexible working - hours of work / place of work / type of work
- Supporting with childcare and other caring responsibilities – offer of reduced hours and flexibility to help manage work / like balance
- Workspace creation – an offer to pay reasonable expenses to employees who need to create home workspaces
- Regular and consistent messages on health and wellbeing – encourage people to take regular breaks, create social time to connect with colleagues etc

Learning and Development support;

We have created 50+ bespoke online learning, e-learning or information resources under the following headings

Covid-19: Health & Wellbeing Support for Employees & Managers

- Resources designed to help employees adjust to the challenges of the current pandemic and adapt to new ways of working.
- Covid-19: Moving Forwards...
 - Additional guidance and support for some of the key issues employees may be experiencing as they continue to adapt to new ways of living and working.

We do not hold the numbers of staff supported to homeschool children, but I believe our approach demonstrates that as a good employer we have done all that we can to support staff to work flexibly wherever possible, whatever the reasons for this.

Numbers of staff affected by stress in the last year with a comparison from the previous year;

Anxiety/stress/depression/other psych.			
Individuals Absent per month			
Jan-19	228	Jan-20	281
Feb-19	212	Feb-20	248
Mar-19	175	Mar-20	240
Apr-19	176	Apr-20	188
May-19	182	May-20	167
Jun-19	192	Jun-20	194
Jul-19	209	Jul-20	201
Aug-19	230	Aug-20	189
Sep-19	268	Sep-20	203
Oct-19	252	Oct-20	219
Nov-19	270	Nov-20	254

Dec-19	251	Dec-20	228
	2645		2612
	923		938

The Council has rolled out unprecedented levels of IT improvements and investment in the past year including over 7,000 laptops to staff and investment in Office 365, against the backdrop of Covid, enabling the Council to continue to function. With such rapid and significant changes, there are always bumps, but the IT infrastructure is now settled and enabling all staff to work effectively and feedback from employees is very positive

Questions of Councillor Alison Teal to Councillor Terry Fox (Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance)

Q.1 Can you please provide information on the Big City Conversation and actions taken since the pandemic began?

- A.1
- The Big City Conversation was a fantastic experience where councillors from all parties and officers spoke to people in communities and high streets across the city.
 - We also ran an online survey which over 2,700 Sheffielders responded to talking about the issues that mattered to them, and how they want to get more involved in their local areas
 - Members will recall we considered some of the findings as part of our governance proposals in January and February 2020
 - The Big City Conversation was intended to carry on but Covid-19 has changed everyone's lives and brought huge challenges to communities in every part of Sheffield
 - Throughout the pandemic, our communities have stood together and with our partners in the public and VCF sector, we've stood with communities to get them the support and services they need.
 - We've set up Local Community Response Teams (LCRTs) – working with our communities in neighbourhoods in every part of the city, delivering food and support to the people that needed it the most in the first lockdown and as the pandemic has continue

Q.2 What is being done within the Council on the impending Referendum?

- A.2 The majority of the work to prepare for the Referendum was completed in advance of May 2020. The Elections team are working to deliver the referendum together with the local election and PCC election in May 2021.

Q.3 Has Sheffield City Council requested that the Central Government delay the local elections?

- A.3 Sheffield City Council has been liaising with the Cabinet Office, Electoral Commission and the Association of Electoral Administrators regarding the 2021 local and PCC elections. We have made representations to the Government through the Yorkshire and Humber Chief Executives group, and support the calls made by SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) and others that the Government should take an early decision about whether the elections in May can safely go ahead. If the Government does decide that the elections should take place on 6 May, we are planning extensively for this to happen in a Covid-secure way, ensuring that voters, candidates and agents are as safe as possible during the casting of votes and at the count. We will encourage as many voters as possible to apply for a postal vote, whilst taking steps to ensure that all polling stations are Covid-secure.

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**Question of Councillor Andy Bainbridge to Councillor Mazher Iqbal
(Cabinet Member for Business and Investment)**

Q. The Council's Information Officers have been a big help to businesses across the city's district centres – providing advice and guidance on operating safely under Covid-19 regulations. Will these officers also be available to support businesses after the current lockdown, and after any further easing of restrictions which may see some non-essential premises reopen?

A. Yes

Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to Councillor Mazher Iqbal (Cabinet Member for Business and Investment)

Q.1 How has the Council supported business tenants in Council-owned properties if they are struggling to pay their rent?

A.1 The Council is supporting tenants in non- residential properties if they are struggling to pay rent through a deferral of rent or a rent suspension. Voluntary / Community Groups can apply for rent suspensions. Commercial Retail, Food & Beverage and Leisure Premises can apply for rent deferral with payment plans for rent to be agreed over a period of time. Other tenants e.g., Commercial Industrial and Office Premises - can apply for rent deferral with payment plans for rent to be agreed over a period of time.

The decision to offer support is based upon a range of factors including closure of the building or lockdown restrictions; additional costs and obligations required to adhere to social distancing etc; previous track record under lease; any concessions to the tenant already agreed; receipt of any grants or loans; Cashflow/reserves and Financial status.

However, individual cases will be considered on their merit and any tenants in difficulty are encouraged to speak to the Council.

Tenants are also encouraged to apply for business grants which can be used to cover rent costs and other forms of support.

Q.2 How many business tenants in Council-owned properties have been given a rental holiday by the Council?

A.2 29 deferments, 7 rent suspensions

Q.3 How many business tenants in Council-owned properties have Company Voluntary Arrangements (CVAs)?

A.3 One

Q.4 How much rental income has the Council lost due to Company Voluntary Arrangements (CVAs)?

A.4 £234,882

Q.5 Since the start of the Covid-19 outbreak, how many Sheffield businesses registered at the home address of the owners, have applied for business support from Sheffield City Council?

A.5 Business Sheffield provides support to all businesses regardless of size or sector. Many home-based businesses have accessed our support and have been working with expert advisors through our COVID critical response team. We do not collect data on how many are homebased.

Q.6 How many of the businesses operating from home address have been successful?

A.6 It is assumed that this question relates to grant awards, although that is not clear.

To date, home based businesses have not been eligible for the national grant schemes as they do not have rateable values or property costs. As a result, the Council has developed a scheme that was launched on 28th January 2021, specifically designed to support homebased businesses, and other businesses with no or low property costs.

Q.7 How much business support grant has been awarded to these businesses to date?

A.7 The scheme was launched on 28th January 2021

Q.8 How does Sheffield's approach to supporting businesses registered at home addresses compare to other councils in the region such as North East Derbyshire and York?

A.8 Each Local Authority has an ability to set its own eligibility criteria when providing support through the Additional Restrictions Grant. As a result, there is likely to be considerable variation in approaches to the provision for grant support with this funding.

As indicated above Sheffield has launched its support to home-based businesses. The Sheffield scheme will provide a £1,000 grant to a home-based business in a sector that has been forced to close plus their supply chains. The business will be required to demonstrate how Covid has had a detrimental impact on their trading.

Q.9 How many businesses have relocated to Sheffield in the past two years?

A.9 It is impossible to say how many businesses have located to Sheffield in the past 2 years. We do not have this data.

Q.10 How many of these did Sheffield City Council actively support in their relocation?

A.10 We have actively supported 13 inward investments into Sheffield during 2019/20 and 2020/21 to date totalling 262 jobs.

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

Q.1 How many Sheffield businesses have been refused a Lockdown Support Grant on the grounds that they have a detrimental impact on the city, and by what criteria were those decisions assessed?

A.1 It is assumed that this refers to the Local Restrictions Support Grant.

Officers have established a Panel to review contentious applications but to date no businesses have been refused a grant on the grounds that they have a detrimental impact on the city.

Q.2 How many new applications for a Lockdown Support Grant has the Council received from businesses that did not receive a grant in 2020 and how many of those applications have been approved?

A.2 It is again assumed that this refers to the Local Restrictions Support Grant and the previous grants schemes operated earlier in 2020 – SBRR and RHL.

A comparison of applications from the various schemes cannot be undertaken automatically and will require a significant manual task for officers to review over 8,000 applications. This information will not be available for the forthcoming meeting.

Q.3 What is the current occupancy rate for retail units in the city centre?

A.3 Total Ground Floor units = 902
Vacant Units = 119
Vacancy Rate = 13.9 %

Q.4 How many meetings of the Sheffield Business Response Group have taken place in the last three months?

A.4 The group meets every other week. Allowing for Christmas and the New Year, this means the group has met 5 times in the last 3 months

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**Question of Councillor Andy Bainbridge to Councillor Julie Grocutt
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

- Q. Chapeltown residents living on Smith Street are concerned that vehicles are parking on double yellow lines on their street – and I greatly appreciate the fact that you have given me recent assurances that officers will patrol the area more frequently, and issue fines for any rule breaking.**

As well as this, will you commit to working with residents and I, to look into further possibilities to make the road safer?

- A. Thank you Councillor Bainbridge for our recent correspondence, to which I have provided a response on the practicalities of implementing each of the options you have proposed. I have taken your suggestions very seriously. Part of working together is looking at the alternatives available and understanding the wider implications. I am happy to continue this discussion with you.**
On a wider perspective, the funding for local transport projects is limited and this needs to be based on an assessment of the likely impact and the trade off of what doesn't happen elsewhere as a result. Road Safety funding is based on accident records and takes into account the severity and occurrence of incidents, as a result, the suggestions will be kept on file and assessed against other city wide requests.

**Question of Councillor Josie Paszek to Councillor Julie Grocutt
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

- Q. Large parts of Hillsborough will soon become 20 mph zones – this has been greatly welcomed by residents and there is widespread acknowledgment that this will make the streets safer – particularly for children, elderly adults and animals. However, are there air quality benefits to the changes as well, and how are these measured?**

- A. Our monitoring of air pollution in Hillsborough has demonstrated that air quality levels are within compliance, especially within residential areas. We do not expect there to be a negative impact as a result of the introduction of 20mph zones. Research conducted by Transport for London suggests 20mph zones have no net negative effect on emissions and improve driving style. In 20mph zones, vehicles move more smoothly with fewer accelerations and decelerations. This driving style produces fewer particulate emissions. There are also other wider health benefits; Slower traffic also reduces road danger, improves noise and reduces severance, and helps to encourage an increase in physical activity through supporting a shift towards walking and cycling.**

**Questions of Councillor Andrew Sangar to Councillor Julie Grocutt
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

- Q.1 What new public health information has come to light in late January 2021, which suggests to you that planning site visits are 'not in the spirit of**

lockdown' despite such visits being possible between June 2020 and early January 2021?

- A.1 It is appropriate for the approach to site visits to be kept under review in light of the ever changing situation with the current pandemic. The health and wellbeing of Members and officers will understandably be at the forefront of any decision in this respect.

If a deferral does occur for a site visit at Committee then the appropriateness of visiting that site during the period when COVID-19 cases remain extremely high will need to be reviewed. In some cases it may be considered that the interests of progressing the application in the short term do not outweigh health risks.

Q.2 Why is it not for an elected Member to decide what is 'clear and substantial benefit' of a site visit?

- A.2 Any Member can propose a motion to defer a decision at Committee for a site visit if they feel there would be clear and substantial benefits in doing so. As the Committee Members will benefit from seeing the officer presentation and hearing from third parties and will therefore be able to reach an informed view on this. This has always been the case.

Q.3 It is my understanding that Members have had for many years, the option of visiting a site in their own time prior to Planning Committee. What new regulation or guideline from Central Government has been provided to the Council for you to advise that such visits should be avoided?

- A.3 It is reasonable to review existing arrangements in order to ensure these are appropriate. In this case, following discussions with colleagues across both Planning and Legal Services, it is felt that Members cannot benefit from the factual explanation of the issues and impacts from the professional planning officer on site and therefore the benefit for the attending Member is limited. Also, access to the full site is clearly better if by arrangement and with the officer who can explain the application and planning considerations and additionally attest to the fact that members on that visit were not approached by owners/applicant or members of the public so fettering their ability to decide the matter with an open mind.

Q.4 What guarantee can you provide that Members' site visits will be re-introduced at the earliest possible date?

- A.4 As already noted, if Members did consider there to be clear and substantial benefits to visiting a site then the balance of progressing the application in the short term, verses other factors such as health risks, will need to be reviewed.

**Questions of Councillor Ian Auckland to Councillor Julie Grocutt
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

- Q.1 In respect of your portfolio, what are your particular policy and/or personal priorities over the next few months?**

A.1 Over the next few months I will be taking forward the policy projects we are developing to help create a safe, sustainable and thriving city. There are several important pieces of work including the Connecting Sheffield, taking forward the Local Plan to protect our green belt from development and the ambitious development of the city centre.

Q.2 Should Planning officers visit every planning application site provided that this can be arranged in a “Covid secure” way?

A.2 The approach taken is informed by SCC Risk Assessments and is intended to limit any risk of COVID transmission. Therefore site visits are kept to a minimum and other forms of information gathering, such as up-to-date photographs are attained. The health and wellbeing of officers is at the forefront of any decision in this respect.

**Question of Councillor Cliff Woodcraft to Councillor Julie Grocutt
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

Q. At the December Council meeting, I enquired about the progress of providing a safer crossing on Hangingwater Road. I asked for an indication of when this would be likely to be completed and your predecessor said that he would get back to me. Please could you let me have this information?

A. All requests for pedestrian improvements are assessed using the Council's approved prioritisation process. The request for a crossing and footpath on Hangingwater Road was not prioritised for the 2020/21 Local Transport Plan funding as it did not fall within the highest scoring schemes. This is partly because there are other locations with higher accident records. The request remains on the list for future consideration, should sufficient funding become available.

Scheme requests for funding in 2021/22 are currently being prioritised and I can confirm that this scheme will be considered along with all other similar citywide requests.

To reiterate, the Council has already put some measures in place at Hangingwater Road since 2015 to help reduce the speed of traffic and therefore assist pedestrians in crossing the road. The Greystones 20 mph area was extended to include this section of Hangingwater Road and a Speed Indicator Device (SID) installed, as well as two 'children crossing' warning signs. The lighting times on the street lights at this section have also been changed to come on earlier in the day and stay on later in the afternoon/evening

**Question of Councillor Barbara Masters to Councillor Julie Grocutt
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

Q. The Government, Sheffield City Region and Sheffield City Council all claim to

be promoting Active Travel. The Council is also pursuing its Outdoor City agenda. It has stated its commitment to the Connecting Sheffield Scheme intended to 'create safe, high-quality and convenient walking, cycling and public transport routes into and around the city centre to transform travel in the city.'

The Council is looking to recruit a new Countryside Service Manager, promoting the Woodland Discovery Centre at Ecclesall Woods as an enticement to potential recruits. Ecclesall Woods themselves are used as an active travel route into the city centre from the suburbs. They are also extremely popular with walkers, runners and cyclists for leisure and health purposes. This location lends itself perfectly to showcasing the Council's stated ambitions.

The woods are also sliced through by two roads carrying a large volume of speeding traffic. It's a huge disincentive to walkers and cyclists to make more use of the space. Local councillors and local groups have been campaigning for years for measures to be put in place to make it safe for all users. So far without success because of the criteria used by the Council to apportion funding for such work. Even the Police and Crime Commissioner has commented that the evidence base on which such decisions are taken is too limited.

When can residents, users and visitors to Ecclesall Woods expect to see road safety improvements along Abbey Lane/Whirlowdale Road as a key measure in the Council's Connecting Sheffield Scheme? They need action not words.

- A. The Local Transport Plan funding for pedestrian improvements is extremely limited which means that only a small number of schemes (usually 3-4) can be built each year. This means that we have to assess and prioritise locations for measures according to certain criteria, including the number of people crossing, volume and speed of traffic, and accident statistics, particularly those recorded as serious or fatal involving pedestrians.

The accident records for the sections of Abbey Lane and Whirlowdale Road near Ecclesall Woods show that there have been no reported injury accidents involving pedestrians, and 3 involving pedal cyclists, in the last 5 years. There are locations across the city which score higher, partly due to having much higher accident rates, which must be prioritised first.

We know that locations such as this are seeing increased use as more and more people access their local outdoor spaces to exercise and this will remain on the request list to be considered along with other requests in future.

Where possible we also aim to incorporate local requests into other major projects. There are a number of national and regional funding streams available for the delivery of major highway improvements, all of which have specific criteria depending on the funding objectives set out by the Department for Transport. Connecting Sheffield has a specific objective to focus investment in economic areas that can assist with sustainable access to employment. The SCR approves the programme and have secured the money from DfT based on the biggest impact, focussing on areas on high employment to help people access jobs and education. Currently this location isn't one that will be a strategic priority for Connecting

Sheffield.

**Questions of Councillor Gail Smith to Councillor Julie Grocutt
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

Q.1 Who owns the car park at the rear of Rother Valley Park? On the map, the land is in Sheffield, but is it Sheffield or Rotherham who need to make it fit for purpose?

A.1 The car park is owned by Sheffield City Council

Q.2 On-road parking in the above area is causing major problems to residents. What action will the Council take to manage the parking issues?

A.2 We are concerned about the impact the excess traffic generated by the most recent lockdown is having on local residents and thank them for highlighting the issues to us. Currently the areas effected don't have restrictions in place that Parking Services could enforce. Colleagues in South Yorkshire Police were able to issue some fines for some of the dangerous parking observed last week.

We would like to remind all visitors to Rother Valley that there are off street parking places to use to access the park, and if choosing to park on street, please be considerate to local residents.

Q.3 Are the Council considering putting double yellow lines for the area?

A.3 Just adding double yellow lines can simply displace the issue from the immediate area to nearby roads. Introducing new parking restrictions can be a lengthy and costly process. We want to put the best solution in place for residents to improve the situation, and get it right first time. Officers will review potential options to improve the situation and, subject to funding being confirmed, will bring forward a plan in due course.

**Question of Councillor Alison Teal to Councillor Julie Grocutt
(Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)**

Q. Local Authorities are going to be allowed to ramp up their standards above national rules on Planning. This is a vital opportunity for Sheffield. Will you be consulting on the changes we can make in line with recognition of necessary mitigation and adaptation to the climate and ecological crisis?

A. Planning policies dealing with mitigation and adaptation needed to respond to the climate emergency and ecological crisis will be included in the Publication Draft Sheffield Plan. We expect public consultation on the Plan to take place in October-November 2021. We plan to involve the Green City Partnership in the work developing the policies during spring and early summer this year.

Questions of Councillor Mike Levery to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Bob Johnson) to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)

Q.1 In response to my written question on the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) and Green Belt Review in November 2020, you stated “Most sites that were submitted in 2014 (and included in the 2015 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)) were also submitted in the 2019 call for sites and shown in the 2020 HELAA. However, a small number of sites (including some sites in Council ownership) were not resubmitted in 2019 and these were omitted from the HELAA map in 2020”. When I identified some significant Council owned Parks and Green Belt sites not in the HELAA in my written question in December 2020 you stated “Ideally, sites submitted through the 2014 call for sites would have been included in the HELAA published in September 2019. However, due to IT difficulties arising from officers working from home (as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic), it was not possible for officers to run a full cross-check against sites submitted in the 2019 call for sites. The decision was therefore taken to proceed only with sites submitted in 2019”. At the meeting of the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee held on 19th January, 2021, the Officer response to a Member’s question on the HELAA and Green Belt Review question was the same as the written response you gave in November 2020. Can you please clarify, is it “a small number of sites from the 2014 call for land (including some sites in Council ownership) were not resubmitted in 2019” or “The decision was therefore taken to proceed only with sites submitted in 2019”?

A.1 For completeness, we intend to include all sites submitted through either the 2014 and/or the 2019 call for sites within an amended version of the HELAA (which we now intend to publish this spring). The only exceptions to this will be where the landowner has told us that they no longer wish the land to be considered. The revised HELAA will, however, also include details of any new sites submitted through the Issues and Options consultation in 2020. We will invite comments on any sites that were not included in the HELAA 2020.

It should be emphasised, that inclusion of a site in the HELAA does not mean that it is going to be allocated for development. The HELAA provides a pool of sites from which sites are selected for inclusion as proposed allocated sites in the Publication Draft Sheffield Plan.

Q.2 If you confirm that none of the land in the 2014 call for land has been included in the first version of the HELAA, will it be included in the next version, and can you confirm when the next version of the HELAA will be published? Will you now publish the fully revised Green Belt Review including the 2014 land so that the public have a full picture of all the land submitted, and identify which land is owned by Sheffield City Council?

A.2 Most of the sites that were put forward in the 2014 call for sites were also put forward in 2019, so are included in the HELAA (2020). However, there are a handful of sites where that is not the case – these sites will be included in the revised HELAA (see answer to the previous question). Again, as noted in the previous answer, there are some sites where the landowner has confirmed that they no longer wish the site to be considered – these will not be included in the revised HELAA.

We will include land ownership information in the revised HELAA where that information is available.

Q.3 If you confirm that none of the land in the 2014 call for land has been included in the first version of the HELAA, it will mean that the Options and Issues consultation during September/October 2020 was done with only a partially complete document missing all the land from 2014. Will you carry out a further consultation with the public on the HELAA and Green Belt Review, so they again have the opportunity to comment on the full picture?

A.3 The Green Belt Review involved assessing land in the Green Belt against the purposes of Green Belt. This has been done at both a strategic level and for smaller parcels of land. It covers all land in the Green Belt that was put forward in either the 2014 or 2019 call for sites. We will publish an addendum to the Green Belt review to cover any additional small parcels of land that have been put forward through the Issues and Options consultation.

As noted in response to the previous question, we will invite comments on any sites in the revised HELAA (2021) that were not included in the HELAA 2020.

Questions of Councillor Mohammed Mahroof to Councillor Mark Jones (Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate Change) to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)

Q.1 Since the introduction of the “Anti-Idling” policy outside schools, what monitoring and evaluation has been undertaken by Sheffield City Council to measure the success of the scheme?

A.1 The aim of the anti-idling scheme is to raise the awareness of the adverse impacts of people waiting in their cars close to schools and the health of children and therefore change their behaviours. Whilst we record the number of fixed penalty notices that are issued given that the legislation requires us to observe the idling taking place and then speak to the driver before any FPN can be issued.

The experience that we have is that people tend to turn engines off once approached, and there has only been the need to issue one FPN since the start of the scheme, which we consider to be a positive indication. During the consultation on the proposed roll out of the anti-idling scheme it was clear that people didn't want the focus to be the fine and that raising awareness and encouraging change was a

primary driver.

Q.2. What lessons have been learnt to inform future roll outs?

A.2 All of the schools in Sheffield are now covered by the anti-idling signage. One of the issues that was learnt was that the engagement through the school to raise awareness with the parents and guardians that were primarily waiting in vehicles was really important. So, in considering any wider roll out of further restrictions the engagement with the people we are trying to influence will be key.

Q.3 Residents of Cairns Road and Selbourne Road, Crosspool, are extremely concerned about parking on their roads with drivers idling. The roads are used as a car park to access nearby services. Will the Council put up road signs banning idling in the area?

A.3 Engine idling is a significant contributory factor to local air pollution in some areas of the city such as the taxi rank near Midland Train Station. In other areas of the city, engine idling may not be a significant additional factor when set against background levels of air pollution but is a preventable and unnecessary source of emissions, particularly at locations with sensitive receptors such as children.

Our approach to rolling out the anti-idling signs has been to follow National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommendations which support Local Authorities in introducing 'no vehicle idling' areas, particularly where vulnerable people are located (such as outside schools, hospitals and care homes).

Whilst there is the potential for drivers to idle their engines at many locations across the city it would not be practical or affordable to introduce signs at all of these locations. NICE guidance suggests that driver training for public service vehicles and raising public awareness of smoother driving styles, including idling, as a way to contribute to reducing emissions. Through our clean air communications we will continue to promote awareness of the need for drivers to switch off and not idle their engines.

Q.4 How quickly can this be done?

A.4 As above we do not intend to provide signage at isolated locations across the city at this time but raise the awareness of the need for drivers not to idle in the communications we promote.

Questions of Councillor Angela Argenzio to Councillor Terry Fox (Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance) to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development)

Q.1 Why is the Seven Hills Convenience Store on Ecclesall Road still operating five months after the Licensing Committee made the unusual decision to revoke the premises license for a breach of conditions and the law?

A.1 Unfortunately, this is how the law works, following on from the premises review hearing an appeal was lodged by the licence holder. Due to the current circumstances with the pandemic, there is a backlog of cases in Magistrates Court and therefore the appeal has not yet been listed by the Courts.

As you may know once an appeal is lodged with the courts, the decision made by the Licensing Committee doesn't have effect until the disposal of the appeal, which is why the premises are currently still operating.

Q.2 Why are Ward Councillors not routinely informed of such decisions in their wards?

A.2 The Council does publish the minutes of each meeting on the Council Website once they are approved by the licensing committee. However, depending on case loads the next full committee meeting to approve minutes may be some weeks after the initial meeting.

There is no further requirement in the law for us to send out such decisions routinely to Ward Councillors. However in the interest of keeping ward councillors informed and up to date with licensing decisions I will look into the possibility of us emailing all councillors such decisions.

The main issue will be the legal timeline in notifying the relevant parties (licence holder/applicant etc), approving / publishing minutes and then circulating such information to ward councillors. I will also need to check if there are any data protection issues.

As a service we will make look into this and do what we can to make it happen.

Q.3 How many licences were revoked in the last year and how many revocations were upheld after an appeal?

A.3 Due to the pandemic and staff working from home I am unable to produce the exact numbers.

I can confirm that there are very few premises licences revoked by licensing committee each year.

We have a very good record in court in defending appeals and I would estimate that around 75% of cases are upheld in the Councils favour.

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

Q.1. During the past three years how many Household Waste Recycling permits were issued for each year?

A.1.

Permit Applications	2018	2019	2020
Beighton	74	86	54
Blackstock	117	164	118
High Green	50	48	52
Douglas Road	148	123	108
Deepcar	61	62	65

Q.2 How many one-off visits have been made to recycling centres in each of the past three years?

A.2.

One-off visits	2018	2019	2020
Beighton	1225	1169	743
Blackstock	1312	1363	996
High Green	337	379	553
Douglas Road	1959	1880	1042
Deepcar	322	320	356

Q.3 Since declaring a Climate Emergency in Feb 2019, could you please list what practical changes have taken place to ensure we are Carbon Neutral by 2030?

A.3 Written response to follow

Q.4 What plans are there to further reduce our City's Carbon Footprint?

A.4 Written response to follow

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

Q.1 An Ecological and Biodiversity Emergency is becoming more vital and needs to be debated, discussed and hopefully approved so that it can be embedded into Council policy. When will Motions be allowed to Council so that a Motion to declare such an emergency can take place?

A.1 I refer you to the answer I have provided to the public petition and questions, we are fully committed to taking this work forward.

Q.2 Sheffield City Council is piloting four areas under the banner of 'Cleaner, Greener, Safer'. How and who were involved in the selection of the pilot areas proposed and what metrics were used?

A.2 The Cleaner, Greener, Safer Project aims to improve how the council and council services are responsive to the concerns of local communities to make sure every part of the city has a clean physical environment, somewhere that people feel safe and secure, an environment that is treated with respect and is a good place to live.

The pilots are the first step in developing a new approach to achieve this. The areas that have been selected for the pilots have largely been based on where issues have been raised from local residents relating to the services we are looking at, however, the ambition is that this is something that we take forward across the whole of the city, it is not limited to these areas. In addition to this there are a number of innovative projects working in different neighbourhoods throughout the city.

This work was originally planned before COVID however has been delayed due to the situation over the past year. We had planned more extensive engagement however the current situation has placed limitations on the types of exercises we can undertake and on staff capacity. We therefore hope to take this forward in a much more extensive way when the current situation eases.

Q.3 During the current Covid crisis, many more people are taking daily walks and wish to dispose of their litter safely. Regularly when I take my daily walk on a Monday, the litter bins on Bolehills are full to overflowing. Has the Council prioritised the emptying of rubbish bins on Sheffield City Council's parks so that the bins are not frequently overflowing with rubbish strewn around the areas surrounding the bins?

A.3 Question to be answered by Councillor Mary Lea (Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks and Leisure).

Q.4 What proportion of Sheffield's domestic recycling did garden waste constitute in 2018, 2019 and in 2020 and how does this compare to other councils across the country?

A.4 Sheffield's garden waste figures relate to financial years as per our normal data reporting periods:
 2018/19 = 4.65%
 2019/20 = 5.45%
 2020/21 = 5.61% (this is a year to date figure)

The most recent data we have for some of the other core cities is the 2018/19 data as below, Sheffield's figure as shown above was 4.65%.

Leeds (a free collection service, fortnightly collections) = 10.9%

Nottingham (a free collection service, fortnightly collections) = 11.87%

Birmingham (collection cost of £40 for 20 collections) = 10.11%

Manchester (Free collection, weekly collection in peak season once a fortnight Dec-March) = 19.81%

Q.5 If 'garden waste' was counted in Sheffield's domestic recycling figures, what would be Sheffield's total household waste recycling rate?

A.5 Figures relate to financial years as per our normal data reporting periods. Whilst we do record composting and recycling separately the combined figures are generally considered to be the recycling figure when reported:

2018/19 = 31.51%

2019/20 = 32.97%

2020/21 = 32.86% (this is a year to date figure)

Q.6 If domestic food waste was collected, what would be Sheffield's estimated total household waste recycling rate?

A.6 Modelling we have had undertaken to explore the basic parameters of collecting food waste indicates that introducing a separate food waste collection whilst making no other service changes would increase the recycling rate by up to 4% in total

Q.7 Please provide the number of reports of fly tipping for the following time periods:

(a) March 2019 to March 2020; and

(b) April 2020 to February 2021.

A.7 Full data has not yet been collated for all service areas of the Council beyond December 2020, however the figures for each of the periods from Highways / Amey are as follows:

(a) 14,231 and

(b) 9,016.

Officers in that service advise that they saw a huge drop in fly tipping numbers during the first national lockdown, which has been enough to carry through to deliver a full year significant reduction versus previous years.

This was almost certainly because the HWRCs were kept open

A secondary contributing factor based on the amount of construction waste being dumped during that period suggests that rogue tradespeople who would normally fly tip were not doing any work in other people's houses."

Q.8 Will the Council consider providing a direct phone number on the City Council website for people to report fly tipping?

- A.8 People can call 0114 273 4567, it is also possible to submit reports online through the councils website which has a dedicated a form for fly tipping and collects the information more efficiently

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

- Q.1 Since the introduction of the “Anti-Idling” policy outside schools, what monitoring and evaluation has been undertaken by Sheffield City Council to measure the success of the scheme?**

A.1 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

- Q.2. What lessons have been learnt to inform future roll outs?**

A.2 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

- Q.3 Residents of Cairns Road and Selbourne Road, Crosspool, are extremely concerned about parking on their roads with drivers idling. The roads are used as a car park to access nearby services. Will the Council put up road signs banning idling in the area?**

A.3 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

- Q.4 How quickly can this be done?**

A.4 Question to be answered by Councillor Julie Grocutt (Cabinet Member for Transport and Development).

Question of Councillor Barbara Masters to Councillor Mark Jones (Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate Change)

- Q. In your recent response (22/01/2021) to an open letter asking you to declare an ecological emergency for Sheffield, I noted that you declared your interest in hearing what could be brought to the table to help the whole city to build gains in Biodiversity in a sustainable and deliverable manner.**

I agree with you that it is critical that the whole city plays its part in addressing both the challenge of Climate Change and Biodiversity loss as both are inextricably linked.

In last October’s meeting of Full Council I asked about a policy being

developed by Highways officers and Amey that would allow residents to manage verges and small pockets of land for the benefit of wildlife. And also whether it be in place in time for rewilding preparatory work to take place in the coming weeks. (Members questions page 43-44))

You stated you hoped to have a draft policy over the coming months, but it has not yet materialised.

We are now coming up to the spring planting season. How much longer will local residents have to wait before the draft policy is released so that they can implement their plans to improve biodiversity in their areas? They want to play their part but the lack of a clear policy from the Council prevents them doing this in a sustainable manner.

A. Written response to follow

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

Q.1 Will you provide a list of streets that were originally due to be resurfaced in the Streets Ahead Core Investment Period that have still not been resurfaced?

A.1 Written response to follow

Q.2 How many streets have not been resurfaced since the start of the Streets Ahead contract in 2012?

A.2 Written response to follow

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

Q.1 Two years ago, Sheffield City Council declared a Climate Emergency. It seems the Labour group lack the political will to take action. For example, we have all been campaigning for a Green New Deal. We know a significant number of jobs must be created to enable retrofitting of homes to occur. We need to train people who can do these jobs. The Council could be at the forefront of establishing a programme of retrofitting its own housing stock. What is stopping the Labour Administration taking actions like this?

A.1 Question to be answered by Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety).

Q.2 What progress has been made on recruiting an environmentally sustainable officer team?

A.2 Written response to follow

Q.3 A cross party working group to address the climate and ecological crisis could make a substantial difference to gaining greater momentum for progress of implementation of carbon reduction actions like retrofitting buildings and homes. Is there the political will to facilitate this?

A.3 Yes

Q.4 Litter is causing significant damage to habitats and ecology, often thousands of miles away from the point it is carelessly discarded. Sheffield needs a Litter Strategy focused on litter prevention. Many local groups are willing and able to provide knowledge and experience to develop a strategy. Will the Council consult with these groups and formulate a strategy in addition to reviewing research on successful approaches in other cities?

A.4 We already have.

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

Q.1 How many complaints has the Council had about slippery pavements and roads since the Streets Ahead contract began?

A.1 Written response to follow

Q.2 What had been done to assess the suitability of the tarmac used in Sheffield by Streets Ahead for the weather conditions here?

A.2 Written response to follow

Q.3 What do you propose to do about the many failing roadworks that are only a few years old?

A.3 Written response to follow

Q.4 By which point in time will Sheffield have completed road surfaces without any potholes?

A.4 Written response to follow

Q.5 How many potholes and failing surfaces are considered acceptable by you?

A.5 Written response to follow

Q.6 How many street signs have needed maintenance since the Streets Ahead contract began?

A.6 Written response to follow

Q.7 How many street signs have been installed by Streets Ahead?

A.7 Written response to follow

Q.8 How much does a street sign cost at installation to cover maintenance for the duration of the contract?

A.8 Written response to follow

Q.9 Is this cost of future maintenance (the “commuted sum”) reduced as time goes on, as the period remaining in the contract reduces?

A.9 Written response to follow

Q.10 How much has Sheffield's carbon footprint been reduced by since the Tyndall report in July 2019?

A.10 Written response to follow

Q.11 How many officers have been taken on tasked specifically with dealing with the climate crisis since May 2020?

A.11 Written response to follow

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

Q.1 Do you join with me in congratulating The Friends of Porter Valley in their magnificent fund-raising efforts for the restoration of the mill pond at Forge Dam?

A.1 Yes absolutely.

Q.2 Do you agree with me that the Forge Dam project is a model partnership between a local friends group and the City Council which can be used as a template for other projects across the city?

A.2 Yes, the Forge Dam project is a great partnership model which will inform our development of further project partnerships with Friends groups. Equally it is important to note that there are also a large number of other excellent Friends of Groups of various size and capacity who have achieved fantastic things in their local areas, across the whole city. Funding opportunities and voluntary capacity vary across Sheffield, so partnership models do need to fit to local circumstances. There is a proven, internal procedure for developing and delivering projects that officers work through with Friends Groups that also forms part of the 'template' approach. Evolving how we all work together is part of this process and all models can be seen to add to that success

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

The following questions were asked in September and you indicated they had been forwarded to SIV/Sheffield City Trust to provide an answer. I have still not had a response from SIV/SCT.

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 You were emailed with answers to these questions by Andrew Snelling on 19th October

Q.2 How many free passes were issued in the last financial year?

A.2 See above

Q.3 Were the people issued with free passes monitored, to find out whether they returned to SIV venues?

A.3 See above

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

A.4 See above

Q.5 How much money was spent on the re-branding?

A.5 See above

Q.6 What investment(s) costing £10,000 or more did not receive expected returns?

A.6 See above

Q.7 What changes have taken place in the catering supplied by the venues to members over the last five years?

A.7 See above

Q.8 To what degree has Leeds Arena affected Sheffield's Arena in terms of potential revenue?

A.8 See above

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

Q.1 In a Council press release of November 2018, you said "I'd like to make it explicitly clear that the Council will not be selling any park land and that under all circumstances the parks will remain under Council ownership and control." Do you still stand by this statement?

A.1 Yes. We are not selling parks land. Where lease or license arrangements are entered into with service providers, these agreements will be the basis for controlling what is permissible. All agreements allow P&C as landlord to retain a level of control over the land/property.

Q.2 How close is the Council to reaching the '£1 million additional revenue generated annually from a combination of sponsorship, leases, car parking income and fees and charges' as laid out in the Building Better Parks Strategy, March 2019?

A.2 The Council has some way to go to reach its £1m additional revenue generated annually. Initially good progress was made in the promotion of parks for Better Parks opportunities, including a launch event drop-in session at the Crucible in July 2019. This launch and promotion generated many expressions of interest. Projects take time to develop, especially if they require significant investment, design, consultation and planning permission. The COVID pandemic has had a significant impact on the progression of many of these schemes and continues to do so. A further Better Parks promotion and engagement event was planned for summer 2020, however this has been postponed for the time being.

Review and renegotiations of current café agreements has increased income and these rent reviews will be used as bench marking for new cafés that are being developed as part of the Better Parks initiative. Ice cream concessions within parks saw increased revenue and these are currently being reviewed for 2021 tenders. Children's rides concessions are also being advertised for 2021.

Whilst the 2020 event was postponed the team have invested time in seeking interim short-term agreements for the use of a number of underused properties. We The team have also increased locations across the city for fitness coaching/classes and mobile catering in parks within guidelines of the Covid restrictions.

Although P&C Service is looking to generate income through the Better Parks initiative, it is equally seeking proposals that bring benefits to parks and countryside sites and the wider community, through the provision of services and possibly through capital investment in green space assets. This capital investment is important as, along with improving the quality of parks and green spaces, it can also reduce liabilities to SCC.

Q.3 The Building Better Parks Strategy agreed in March 2019 that the term 'open space' in the Strategy included a wide range of areas, including small parks, woodland (including ancient woodland), allotments, paths in open spaces and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS). It was not just a case of cafes within parks being leased and operated by external bodies.' How many expressions of interest have there been in each of these types of open space in the 18 months since?

A.3 Following the launch event for the Better Parks initiative 45 Expressions of Interest were received. These can be split into the follow areas:

- Cafes, Mobile Catering and Cafés with additional offering e.g. bike hire/community space – 19
- Camping – 2
- Children's rides/activities - 3
- Community Offering e.g. classes, flower growing – 5
- Education - 3
- Outdoor activities - 3
- Sport - 4
- misc. (dog training/bee keeping) – 3
- Other – 3

Split by green space typology (there are some that crossover and some applicants with multiple proposals so they don't add to 45):

- parks – 32 (11 could be considered as small parks)
- ponds – 4 (water bodies in parks)
- woodland (including ancient woodland) - 6
- paths in open spaces – 2 (catering concessions)

P&C Service has received a range of additional commercial enquiries since June 2020:

- For fitness classes there have been over 100 enquiries. The number of enquiries that went ahead/materialised was 40, although through lockdown these are not operating.
- For catering concessions there have been a total of 17 enquiries and currently 2 of these are operating. Further concession proposals are on hold until after lockdown.

We are currently progressing agreements for 4 Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) Schemes at sites across Sheffield. We are also exploring proposals for 3 further SUDs schemes – these are at a design stage of development.

Question of Councillor Tim Huggan to Councillor Mark Jones (Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate Change) to be answered by Councillor Mary Lea (Cabinet Member for Culture, Parks and Leisure)

- Q. During the current Covid crisis, many more people are taking daily walks and wish to dispose of their litter safely. Regularly when I take my daily walk on a Monday, the litter bins on Bolehills are full to overflowing. Has the Council prioritised the emptying of rubbish bins on Sheffield City Council's parks so that the bins are not frequently overflowing with rubbish strewn around the areas surrounding the bins?**
- A. Litter management including emptying of litter and dog bins are been prioritised by Parks and Countryside alongside a number of other critical Health and Safety tasks. Parks and green spaces across the city have seen a significant increase in usage that puts a strain on our resources particularly in periods of good weather, holiday times and weekends. We have invested in a significant amount of new permanent litter bins alongside a number of temporary bins to help manage increased demand. We plan to add a number of additional litter bins in busy sites this year and will continue to replace damaged dog bins with new dual waste bins to increase capacity (including at Bolehills). In recognition of the increased demand on Bolehills we are adding additional temporary bins over the next few days.

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

Q. How many care homes have closed in the last three years in Sheffield? Please list each closure.

A. 5 Care Homes have closed in the last 3 years and 2 closed but relocated.
The Care Homes were:

Newfield Nursing Home – 60 bed Older People’s Nursing

Bowden House – 11 bed residential Mental Health

Cardwell Avenue closed but relocated – Kirkby View (net loss of one bed Learning Disability Respite)

Silver Lodge – 32 bed Older People’s Residential – closed but relocated to Hilltop Lodge – 61 bed Older People’s Nursing (net gain of 29 beds including some nursing)

Ash House – 40 bed Older People’s Residential

Jasmin Court - 50 bed Older People’s Nursing

Fulwood Lodge – 42 bed Older People’s Nursing

Questions of Councillor Sue Alston to Councillor George Lindars-Hammond (Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care)

Q.1 There have been reports nationally about a high proportion of care workers declining covid 19 vaccination. Do you know what proportion of care home staff have accepted vaccination in Sheffield?

A.1 We were pleased to be able to announce last week that all care home residents in the city have been offered the vaccine.

The city’s health and care partners are working closely to maximise take up of the vaccine in terms of both logistics and delivering key messages.

I will write to you with figures about the numbers of staff who have accepted vaccination.

Q.2 Is the Council doing any work to encourage take up among this group of workers who are at higher risk themselves but also could transmit the virus to their residents who are a very vulnerable group?

A.2 The Council is working closely with the employers of these crucial workers. Support includes online sessions, videos, information for circulation, support for their managers.

Q.3 There are issues with people being called for vaccine if they are not registered with a GP. What effort is the Council making to encourage people to register with a GP so that they are called when they meet the criteria for vaccination?

- A.3 There is significant ongoing work led by Sheffield GP practices and the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to increase registration at GP practices. The Council will continue to support these in any way we can. We can request more information around this work and forward it at a later date.

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

- Q. How will the sum of £544,498 from central government for Covid community champions be spent?**
- A. This funding was announced on Monday 25th January, and we are still developing our plans. We will, of course, provide Members with more information once it is available

Question of Councillor Garry Weatherall to Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

- Q. It is incredible news that the Council is to provide over 6,000 laptops to support children who are currently having to home school, and currently without a suitable device to do so.

This shows real local leadership at a time when the Government's response has been simply inadequate – leaving many children without the basics to learn from home.

Can you please confirm how the rollout will take place, and what measures are being put in place to ensure that the most vulnerable are being contacted and will receive a device?

- A. The provision of laptops to support children and young people will be a major boost to the learning opportunities of the most vulnerable.

A project team lead by Council Officers and reporting to the Chief Executive has been stood up to oversee delivery. The roll out will be carried out by the Laptops for Kids campaign in conjunction with Council Resources, using a mixture of new and refurbished devices. 1,000 of these will be refurbished devices from the Council.

We have been working with our partners Learn Sheffield to survey schools, who know their children well. We have been able to establish the level of need, to ensure that the most vulnerable and those without a device are provided for.

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

Increasing numbers of parents were choosing to home school even before the Covid-19 pandemic which has forced schools to close. Statistics from pre-covid show that more parents are home-schooling than anywhere else in the country and many parents may now choose to home school even when schools reopen.

- Q.1 What support does the Council have in place to support parents home schooling?

- A.1 We have an Advisory Teacher who has been the Advisory Teacher for Home Education for the last 8 years. She has been able to manage the demand within Home Education during this time

With the change in DfE guidance (April 2019) affording more responsibility to Local Authorities for children who are Home Educated and the surge in numbers caused by the Pandemic, numbers have increased significantly. As a result of this we are

recruiting an additional 3 posts to provide additional support. This will include an additional Grade 7 who will work with families who are escalating or de-escalating in need for support and 2 additional grade 5s who will continue to contact families we are less concerned about and who's education is consistently appropriate.

We continue to support families through

- The Advisory Teacher who is supporting families with their new curriculums and ensuring children are accessing a full time and suitable education.
- We have support from a project officer who has been calling families and requesting further information from families about their offer of education and enquiring about the welfare of children (this has been effective in encouraging curriculum returns and education plans, seeing 253 returns in 3 months, for the new to EHE, compared to only 50 for the existing EHE parents)
- Inclusion and Attendance have provided an officer who is calling all Y11s to start with pursuing engagement in post 16 provision and access to Sheffield Progress
- We are identifying the children we have the most concerns about through a RAG rating process and any children not seen by professionals will have a priority call / visit.
- We have continued to work with MAST around the initial visits which are now virtual, but parents are spoken with about their choice to EHE and ensuring this was choice and not coerced.
- The Inclusion and Attendance Team have continued with schools' meetings ensuring there is a response to the school and parent when children are coming off role (this has been targeted to the schools with the highest number of children exiting)
- We have the EHE enquiries line where parents can call for advice if they haven't had a contact from the Advisory Teacher.

Q.2 What percentage of the Council budget is allocated to supporting home schooling?

A.2 We spend £382k on Children Missing in Education, which includes the Elective Home Education Team

Q.3 How many full-time officers are involved in supporting home schooling?

A.3 Please see answer to question 1

Q.4 Is there a plan in place to support home schooling as we move forward post Covid-19?

A.4 We have the staffing structure as we have identified above. In addition to this there will be a review in July to look at the impact of the vaccination programme and how / if this is affecting children returning to school (consideration of admissions time and school pace availability)
Once we know this, we can plan what this support needs to look like and with what capacity – we do know the support needs to be more consistent that we have previously had and there is a need for the resource longer term, which is acknowledged.

We will follow the DfE guidance ensuring we:

- Follow up on children safe and well, not just safeguarding
- Review the education of all children through the year, including when there is a change, including year group, age, house move etc...
- Create an agreement with all families known to EHE about a frequency of contact that is in line with our concern and their need for support.
- Even when there are no concerns, we will ensure annual contact to the families.
- We will continue to engage with families and offer support – identifying to them with mail outs and online comms when services are changing and accessibility of service provision
- We will continue to work with our SENDSARS team to ensure all children known to EHE with an EHCP have access to their Annual Review
- We will continue our work with MAST and Social Acre colleagues ensuring we add into conference, core groups and meetings for children who are EHE
- Once legal pathways re-open we will pursue the SAO and ESO pathway to ensure we have a clear escalation within statutory duties. (when support has been exhausted.)

Schools and key worker parents

Q.5 There are a number of parents considered key workers who are having problems with schools not accepting their children because of capacity issues. It is causing a great deal of angst as parents have to choose between working and schooling their children at home. Why is this becoming a problem at some schools?

A.5 The number of parents requesting a place in some primary schools has dramatically increased. This is because the definition of key worker is much broader now than it was in previous lockdowns. Some of our schools have 40% of children attending. Heads need to balance both pupil and staff safety when allocating places. In some cases Heads have had to cap numbers in order to ensure that staff are confident enough to continue working.

Q.6 Is the Council aware that some schools are only allowing children to attend if both parents are critical/key workers rather than just one parent?

A.6 This has been the case in some schools as place numbers have had to be capped. However, in many cases schools have been able to gradually increase their numbers for vulnerable and key worker children. Following the letter issued by the council several Heads have remarked that this has made some parents reconsider whether they need to send their children everyday and this has resulted in some additional capacity over the course of a week.

Q.7 What advice and support is being offered to parents who find themselves in this position?

A.7 Any concerns which have been raised with the school complaints team have been investigated and replied to personally by Andrew Jones. The team have phoned

schools and discussed individual cases with Head teachers. Several cases have recently been resolved through this approach. We have also been in frequent touch with Sheffield Teaching Hospitals when a concern has been raised about NHS access to a school place. This close working has enabled us to resolve a number of issues.

Q.8 Does the Council have any contingency plans to support a school with a very high proportion of families who are critical/key workers?

A.8 Education and Skills continues to support schools with high numbers of critical workers through ongoing advice and support. A contingency plan is that should it be required a place for a child could be negotiated at another nearby school if this were required.

Q.9 Is there any scrutiny process to ensure that access to school during this lockdown is as fair as possible for children across the city?

A.9 We are continually monitoring this issue across our schools. As an LA we only have jurisdiction over our LA maintained schools. The DFE are involved in overseeing this issue in Trusts.

Question of Councillor Colin Ross to Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Q. The digital divide in the opportunities for our young people in education are stark. I welcome the Laptop for Schools Initiative with WANDisco but have the Council done a full audit of all of our IT resources to see if there are surplus laptops that can be provided to young people in schools?

A. The Council's Tech2020 Programme has provided over 7,500 new laptops to staff over the past year. This has created a stock of old devices that could be made available for repurposing and we have been able to identify circa 1,000 laptops, which the Council is donating to children and young people through the Laptops for Kids initiative.

Question of Councillor Alison Teal to Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

Q. Digital inclusion has been a topic of much discussion in the context of supporting children from disadvantaged backgrounds to maintain their educational progress during the pandemic. Has the Council considered supplying textbooks to households which do not require internet access to be effective? Has the Council considered calling on volunteers amongst retired teachers to take the role of tutors to children who might benefit from a phone call to encourage and support learning?

A. • We recognise that school leaders are best placed to determine the approach to remote learning that best meets the needs of their pupils and communities.

- We know that some schools, where the barriers to online approaches are significant, are using learning packs (delivered or collected packs containing learning materials and resources) as a key part of their approach.
- In the same way that Sheffield schools, academies and colleges have loaned out approximately 6000 devices (of which half have been purchased during the pandemic for this purpose) to support online working – many will have also loaned textbooks to support their learning packs (although we don't know the number of these).
- In addition to note: in recent years the use of textbooks has perhaps reduced and where they are used there isn't always a clear choice about which would be used.
- SCC has committed to a significant investment to support remote learning but has chosen therefore to focus this on the digital divide through purchasing of devices and connectivity.
- The government has committed funding to the National Tutoring Programme but feedback from school leaders suggests that access to this is currently limited by the impact of the pandemic and the provision of on site and remote learning.
- In terms of volunteers this is currently something for each setting to consider – taking account of the capacity to capitalise on volunteering opportunities. The research on programmes of this kind suggests that the external support has the most impact when it is linked closely to, and is directed by, the school, academy or college.
- There may be opportunities to take a city wide approach to mentoring, I am working with officers and schools to develop this as part of the long term recovery planning

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Question of Councillor Dawn Dale to Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q. Can you please confirm what support is in place to help residents who are struggling to afford food or keep their home warm due to Coronavirus?

A. Residents and tenants are being supported financially in a number of different ways during the pandemic. Some of this relates directly to food provision for example, whilst others support more generally with their finances, helping people to afford to pay for food and heating.

- Foodbanks are available throughout the city for those struggling to provide food
- The Winter Grant has supported 30,000 children with food vouchers at Christmas, and will again be supporting them at February half term. This includes the Free School Meal cohort but also children receiving support from MAST, social care and income assessed early years support. Each child received a £35 food voucher at Christmas (£15 food x 2 weeks plus £5 towards fuel costs) and they will receive a further £20 voucher for February half term (£15 food x 1week plus £5 towards fuel costs).
- Further to this, food vouchers will be given to individuals and households without children. SCC are currently identifying vulnerable people and will be sending out the vouchers in the next few weeks.
- Self-solation grants – up to £500 is available for people financially affected by having to self-isolate.
- DEFRA emergency assistance grants - £750k is available and needs to be spent by March 2021
- Support is available for people who need to claim Universal Credit. Mainly via the Citizens Advice 'Help to Claim' project, but other partners around the city are also helping people to claim
- Additional funding to reduce Council Tax bills by up to £150 for those claiming Council Tax Support – approx £6m in total made available
- The local Council Tax Hardship Scheme has a budget of £1.6m, which can be reduced to reduce the Council Tax bill for households in receipt of Council Tax Support
- Residents are supported to access the Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme, which is funded by the DWP to provide assistance to households in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, and are experiencing financial hardship as a result of their housing costs. The budget for 2020/21 is £1,353,200
- The Council's Local Community Response Team are on hand to do shopping and pick up medication for individuals that are struggling due to Covid-19. In instances where individuals have no money for food, electric or gas, Emergency Food parcels with 2–7 days' worth of supplies are delivered and support is given to pay for utilities. Support is also provided long term to address finances to make sure individuals do not go without.
- The Council are helping those who are clinically extremely vulnerable by contacting those on the Government's CEV list, and providing support (including access to food, medication etc) to those who have needed it. Adult Social Services have also been proactively contacting vulnerable people to ensure they have access to whatever they need during this difficult time, again including food and help with

their finances.

- In addition to the citywide support highlighted above, SCC tenants can also access the HRA hardship fund when struggling to manage their finances. The amount available/awarded this year is over £500k

Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q.1 How many houses/homes owned by Sheffield City Council have been vacant for longer than one year, as of 1st January, 2021?

A.1 There are a total of 89 properties which have been vacant for over 12 months. Of these, 56 are now fit to let and will be let in the coming weeks.

Q.2 How long has each of these properties been empty? Please list.

A.2 I will write to you with this information.

Q.3 During lockdown, we have seen within the Ecclesall area the misuse of off-road vehicles and quad bikes. Most recently on a public green space where a four-wheel drive vehicle managed to gain access and damage the grass due to hand break turns etc. Since the Covid-19 lockdown, how many incidents of anti-social behaviour have been recorded that have involved off road vehicles and quad bikes?

A.3 These sorts of incidents and complaints are recorded and held by the police. Incidents relating to off-road vehicles and quad bikes can be recorded in several different ways under police systems, such as anti-social behaviour or as criminal incidents relating to vehicles. Therefore because of the way in which they're recorded, it isn't possible to give accurate statistics around numbers.

Q.4 What actions do you plan to take?

A.4 The Council works in conjunction with the Police Neighbourhood Policing Teams to solve ASB issues, these sort of incidents may involve various services such as Community Safety, Environmental Protection Services, Housing or Parks and Countryside/ Woodlands.

Actions are ongoing include assisting with the identification of offenders including taking vehicle registrations, using SCC's own powers to tackle these issues depending where incidents are taking place, contributing to target hardening to reduce incidents and working alongside partners other than the police such as Housing Associations. In a previous year the Community Safety partnership led to purchasing a motorcycle for SYP's motorcycle team to increase resources dealing with this type of crime as well as working on engagement with young people on motorcycles.

Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to Councillor Terry Fox (Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance) to be answered by Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q.6 How much Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money has been spent by Wards?

A.6 Each Ward will be provided with their latest spend by request to their Community Services Officer.

Q.7 How much CIL money is still available for each Ward?

A.7 Each Ward will be provided with their available monies by request to their Community Services Officer.

Questions of Councillor Mike Levery to Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q.1 Where do Council tenants go to complain about the standard of the Repairs and Maintenance Service? Does the Repairs and Maintenance Service capture and categorise tenant complaints? What follow up action is taken to review tenant complaints and feed back to tenants?

A.1 There is a complaints process in place through our customer services team at Howden. The SLA for dealing with complaints is 28 days with all complaints followed through to identify what happened. Beyond this, trends are identified so that the service can learn from any common themes.

Q.2 Is the Housing Service aware of both volume and criticality of ongoing repairs and maintenance on their Council stock? Are they kept aware of any repair and maintenance issues which may affect elderly and vulnerable tenants?

A.2 The RMS service are monitoring the lack or repairs logged against previous years to identify the potential incoming numbers post pandemic. Any repairs that could impact the tenants health or be a detriment to the property, are being considered upon this being logged. Vulnerabilities are always considered upon a repair being logged so that the repair can be categorised.

Q.3 What is the productivity performance of the Repairs and Maintenance workforce? What is the average number of jobs completed by each tradesperson each week? Are there any productivity targets set?

A.3 Productivity targets are in place for the workforce. The measures range from measuring jobs per operative per day through to hours claimed. The current measures demonstrate that the RMS average was at 96% for December with 100%

being the target. There has been a slight dip in this due to the slower environment we work within due to safety guidance in place.

Q.4 What is regarded as a manageable backlog for the Repairs and Maintenance workforce in days? What is the current excess backlog over and above that figure, and how many person-years' work will it take to clear?

A.4 The RMS Service typically receives 2,000 repairs per week. Typically, the repairs service would expect to have approx. 8,000 live jobs to allow the turnaround times to be within target. The current live repair jobs stands at approx. 4,900.

Q.5 Please provide comparable data for the Kier performance against Q3 & Q4 measures for the final year of that contract.

A.5 As some of the measures and definitions were different then this would require some work to pull the information to be consistent.

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

Q.1 How many private sector buildings in Sheffield over 18m in height do not meet the new fire safety standards?

A.1 The inspections of all private sector building in Sheffield are ongoing by SYFRS and working jointly with Sheffield City Council. Half of the city has had an initial inspection. Any building that has been identified as not meeting fire safety standards must put in place an action plan to remediate/ mitigation measures to ensure the safety of residents in the block and delivered within an agreed timescale.

Where building managers/ responsible person do not comply suitable enforcement action is and will be taken without hesitation to ensure safety of residents.

Q.2 How many homeless people are the Council currently housing in hotel/B&B accommodation?

A.2 There are currently 173 households in Hotel/B&B accommodation. This includes rough sleepers placed through the winter plan and the everyone in initiative.

Q.3 How many burglaries were there in Sheffield in each of the last three years?

A.3 There were a total of 5,440 residential and business burglaries in 2018
5,517 in 2019 and
A reduction to 4,035 in 2020.
This information is available at <https://data.police.uk/>

Q.4 How many robberies were there in Sheffield in each of the last three years?

A.4 In 2018 there was a total of 813 reported incidents of personal and business

robberies
805 in 2019 and
A reduction to 599 in 2020
This information is available at <https://data.police.uk/>

Questions of Councillor Mohammed Mahroof to Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q.1 How many people are on the Council House waiting list?

A.1 There are currently 31,915 applicants on the Housing Register and we have around 12,000 active bidders for social housing in the city. Please note, the register does not differentiate between those seeking Council or Housing Association homes. We have a single register for accessing all social housing advertised through our Choice Based Lettings system.

Q.2 How many people are on the wider social housing list which includes Housing Associations and other providers?

A.2 Please see the answer above.

Q.3 How many affordable homes have been built in Sheffield in the last five years through the planning affordable housing policy? The definition of affordable housing being social rents of less than 80% of market value.

A.3 For the 5 years 15/16–19/20, 75 units have been delivered through the Affordable Housing Policy. This does not include the 3,100 HRA Stock Increase Programme (SIP)

Questions of Councillor Ian Auckland to Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q.1 What is your view on the Charing arrangements for the local response meetings?

A.1 Officers continue to chair the local response meetings as we are still at a critical point in the response to the Pandemic. This is supported by a weekly Member and MP Covid Bulletin. The lead officers will invite relevant Officers and Partners to the meeting to support the Local Area Partnership priorities and any other issues rising from the current corona virus pandemic.

Q.2 What progress has been made on proposals to bring forward a review of the LAPs?

A.2 The review of the LAP's began early last year and was paused due to the Pandemic. We have begun work again on the review recently and will be discussing this with

colleagues in the near future

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

Q.1 How many private buildings in Sheffield are you aware of currently having a waking watch in place?

A.1 We do not have an accurate reportable number as the number of private buildings with waking watch as it changes frequently and this is the responsibility of the building 'responsible person'. SYFRS working with SCC are visiting all blocks and working jointly with SCC on buildings over 18m and when this is completed this will provide a clear picture of the number of WW arrangements in place.

I will provide you with a written answer

Q.2 How many private buildings in Sheffield are you aware of currently, which are known to have issues with cladding and fire safety defects, such as internal compartmentation, which are under 18m?

A.2 The Council is presently collating information on buildings over 18m. Property visits are undertaken taking a risk-based approach and when complete this can be confirmed.

Q.3 How many private buildings in Sheffield are you aware of, where residents are currently unable to obtain an adequate EWS1 form?

A.3 I will provide you with a written answer

Q.4 How many privately-owned buildings in Sheffield are known to the Council to have cladding or other fire safety issues that do not meet current building standards?

A.4 As above. The Council has information that confirms the number of buildings with flammable cladding but only an intrusive inspection will 100% determine full compliance with fire protection measures in place. This will be confirmed when the inspection regime of all buildings over 18m when this is complete.

Q.5 Which are these buildings? Please provide a list.

A.5 This information can only shared with the permission of the building owner or responsible person.

Q.6 In the event the Council still maintains that this information is not to be disclosed because of commercial interests, please confirm:-

(a) whose commercial interests are being protected - the Council's, the building owners' or someone else?

(b) why do you consider the public interest favours keeping the information confidential instead of making it public?

A.6 (a) We need to ensure that building owners are happy for any information we hold about their building they are happy for us to disclose.

(b) Residents living in any block where there are issues will be meeting with their building owner or management agent to discuss and notification of any enforcement notice.

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

Q.1 Did the Council apply for Central Government grants for the 2020-21 round of Green Homes Grants? If not, why not?

A.1 No. Government grant funding for GHG has been short term and weighted to shovel ready projects. SCC considered scheme options but considered the risk too great at the time.

- The initial competition (Phase 1A) was launched in August 2020 with a delivery deadline of March 2021.
- We were not confident that new technology, at this scale could be checked, procured and delivered by the Government's deadline for delivery
- SCC were concerned about procurement risks arising from the specifications LAD (Local Authority Delivery Scheme) requested (Trust Mark/MCS accredited and PAS2035), and
- we also had concerns about risks regarding capacity in the supply chain to deliver retrofit under LAD
- Significant challenges in securing agreements for private sector properties to be included into the scheme given the very tight delivery timetable set out by Government and the required contribution from landlords.

Q.2 Did the Council apply for Central Government grants for the 2021-22 round of Green Homes Grants? If not, why not?

A.2 Under Phase 2 BEIS (business, energy and industrial strategy) are allocating a further £300 million in England for LA's to bid for in 21/22, through the five regional Energy Hubs and providing an allocation to each region. It should be stressed that the allocations remain indicative until the final allocation is confirmed by BEIS.

BEIS has again set out a challenging timetable for Local Authority delivery and requires 75% of all spend to be designed, procured, delivered or committed by September 2021 with final completion by December 2021.

Proposals are being drafted so that a bid can be submitted in March, subject to SCC sign off for public and private residential investment.

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

Q.1 The HRA business plan refers to the progress of insulating the housing stock against the Government's target of bringing all the stock up to Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) C rating. Does the Council use any measurements other than EPC to monitor the reduction in the carbon cost of heating a home? Please note the shortfalls of using improvements in EPC as a gauge of a reduction in carbon emissions [carbon reduction](#)

A.1 We currently use EPCs and SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) ratings to measure energy efficiency of properties. A range of measures are used to determine the carbon footprint on council properties.

Q.2 Does the Council use *space heating demand* as a metric when assessing the state of our housing stock? This also provides a method of estimating the energy demand of our housing stock, and measuring our progress against our net zero target; EPC can still be used as another measure as well, especially to measure cost reductions.

A.2 The council does not use space heating demand on its own when assessing council stock for energy demand or carbon footprint.

Space heating demand is defined as the amount of active heating input required to heat a building. We don't use it as a standalone metric. The information recorded in this category includes details of the system used to heat the building (gas boiler/communal boiler/heat pump etc.) and how that heating system is controlled. This feeds into the overall EPC calculation which provides the SAP score.

Q.3 Has the *space heating demand* been considered for use as the primary metric of energy efficiency?

A.3 See above. I am happy to meet with Councillors to discuss in more detail.

Q.4 How many Council homes fall into each EPC band?

A.4

Band	Count of SAP Band
B	4405
C	26680
D	7541
E	266
F	27
G	4
Data not available*	22

Grand Total	38945
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* acquired properties that do not yet have full stock condition information

All Council Homes in categories D-G will be improved in order to reach EPC C by 2030 funded from SCC HRA.

Question of Councillor Alison Teal to Councillor Mark Jones (Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate Change) to be answered by Councillor Paul Wood (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

Q.1 Two years ago, Sheffield City Council declared a Climate Emergency. It seems the Labour group lack the political will to take action. For example, we have all been campaigning for a Green New Deal. We know a significant number of jobs must be created to enable retrofitting of homes to occur. We need to train people who can do these jobs. The Council could be at the forefront of establishing a programme of retrofitting its own housing stock. What is stopping the Labour Administration taking actions like this?

A.1 The Council has a long tradition of investing in the energy efficiency of its housing stock. A large proportion of our stock has been insulated to current standards and we have a rolling programme to install efficient boilers. But we recognise that – along with the rest of the country – we must go further and faster to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change.

To this end, we are continuing to seek funding to invest in both public and private sector homes across the city. We are also working with contractors, supply chains and procurement frameworks to increase the capacity of qualified businesses and contractors to help the City rise to this challenge.

Technology is constantly evolving the world focuses on this challenge. New solutions are being developed and trialled across the world which have the potential to deliver ever-greater benefits, more quickly, cheaply and with less disruption to tenants. We will embrace these technologies and new ways of working. But we also need to make sure that the right products and types of retrofit are suitable and can be guaranteed long into the future so we can maximise the benefits for our residents and minimise future burdens to the public purse.

But in order to be able to develop a significant footprint on this and encourage businesses to invest in both qualified contractor/ installers and accredited products, We need to be able to give them a long term pipeline of work - ideally over many years. The monies released from this Government have, to date, been short term in nature. This makes it difficult for everyone to plan ahead and invest with confidence.

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Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children and Families)

Q.1 What has been the impact of Covid 19 on foster caring in the city, in particular the number of foster carers providing short-term and emergency placements?

A.1 The main impact of Covid 19 on foster care in Sheffield is that it has reduced the number of foster placements the in-house Fostering Service has been able to provide. This is because at various times during the pandemic some foster carers have had to shield and self-isolate due to be them being clinically extremely vulnerable, experiencing symptoms of Covid 19, or having tested positive for Covid 19.

We know that at the end of March 2020, at the very beginning of the pandemic, the Fostering Service was caring for 253 looked after children in mainstream foster placements and 64 children in 'Connected Persons' foster placements. At the end of January 2021, the number of mainstream fostering placements had reduced to 232. This was somewhat offset by an increase of 8 children in connected persons foster placements to 72.

While the capacity of the service has contracted during the year for the reasons above, most foster carers have carried on regardless offering a fantastic service. For carers who have had foster children in placement at the point anyone in their household has contracted the virus or become a 'contact' of someone with the virus, they have continued to care for those children in placement at the time and self-isolated as a family unit just like other families in the community. They have however not been able to take new placements at those times.

Despite the difficulties, the Service has managed to be flexible enough to continue to provide emergency placements for children and young people, relying heavily on the flexibility and generosity of our foster carers to provide this.

The Service has continued to support foster carers throughout the pandemic, largely through virtual means during the first lockdown. The Service very quickly adapted to providing support meetings, support groups, training, and consultation virtually via Zoom and has provided practical support including food and care packages for carers when isolating.

Q.2 Has there been a drop off in numbers of foster carers? If so, how many and what has been the impact on young people?

A.2 There has not been a reduction in the number of approved foster carers, although as set out above, the number of foster placements they are providing has reduced during the pandemic. We anticipate that the ending of the pandemic will lead to our approved mainstream foster carer pool being able to provide an increased number of placements again.

The Service has continued to approve new foster carers. So far in 2020/21 the Service has recruited 23 new foster carers, (3 more than the 20 carers who have resigned), and there are a further 19 assessments of new applicant carers booked

onto the Fostering Panel for consideration of approval before the end of March 2021. We anticipate we will meet our target to recruit 40 new foster carers in the year and have a net gain in carer numbers.

The Fostering Panel has been operating virtually via Zoom since March 2020 to ensure the Service can continue to recruit and approve new foster carers.

The impact on children and young people is that we have had to find alternative placements for them. This has meant that the number of children placed in children's homes has increased. We have 25 young people placed in our own in-house children's homes, as we did before the pandemic, but the number placed in external children's homes has increased from 27 in March 2020 to 35 in January 2021. In addition the number of children placed in independent fostering agency placements has increased by 5 between March 2020 and January 2021 from 120 to 125.

In the current lockdown we and our carers are supporting fostered children and young people to access school and direct family time/contact with close birth family members, subject to risk assessments and use of PPE.

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

Q.1 The Ofsted inspection of Children's Services in July 2019 identified "Arrangements for children who go missing from home and care" as an area for improvement. It stated "Arrangements for children who go missing from home and care are not strong enough. Most children are not contacted or seen soon enough following the missing episode, despite an independent commissioned service having responsibility for this important task." What has been the performance in this area since 2016/17 for the successive years until 2019/20, and performance in 2020/21 to date?

A.1 Performance has improved but only slightly and progress has been hampered by covid. However, we are asked to report on incidences rather than on individual children which does make compliance figures look worse. For example, if a child goes missing 4 times in 6 days, we would be expected to conduct four interviews to satisfy the compliance targets yet we take the pragmatic approach and do one interview with that child.

When we measure performance against the amount of individual young people interviewed, it is clearer. 66% of the young people who were recorded as missing were interviewed. 75% were interviewed within 72 hours. Attempts continue to be made if a young person is not seen within 72 hours and 98% of young people were interviewed within 14 days.

The ones that aren't interviewed are the more complex children with cases open to other services such as social care and youth justice. We are undertaking further analysis of that cohort to see if there are different ways in which we can engage

with them

Q.2 What are the remaining contracts commissioned with Sheffield Futures following the Youth Services insourcing on 1st October 2020? What are the end dates for these contracts? What will be the process for reviewing whether these contracts will be extended, re-let or insourced?

A.2 The only remaining contract we have with Sheffield Futures is for Project Apollo which is externally funded. The contract is until September 2021 although we have applied to the Department for Education for an extension due to Covid until March 2022. We expect to hear the result of this in February

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