

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be responded to by the Chair, Councillor Daniel. A Member who asked a question may ask one relevant supplementary question which shall be put and answered without discussion.

(1) Councillor West - The Bridge

Last month, when the shocking news broke that the Bridge Community Education Centre was being forced to close due to financial difficulties following loss of funding, I wrote to Cllr Yates, as incoming Leader of the Council, and yourself Councillor Daniel, as Chair of NICE Committee. I'm disappointed to say that I received only a referred reply from the Executive Director for Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing and no acknowledgment from either yourself or Cllr Yates. In the Executive Director's reply she states that officers were unaware of the financial crisis faced by the Bridge before the Board sought emergency funding at the eleventh hour. However, I understand that the Chair and CEO of the Bridge met with Cllr Yates and Cllr Meadows Chair of Housing on the 11th April to brief them about the situation, but there was then no follow up from either of these leading councillors. The Bridge also inform me they engaged with funders and a number of other high profile figures in the city.

Chair, did Councillor Yates inform you of the perilous situation facing the Bridge, and if so what did you and the rest of the Administration decide to do to help save the Bridge?

(2) Councillor West - Community and Voluntary Sector

We understand a number of community voluntary organisations are struggling and vulnerable as a result of funding cuts and loss of contracts. We are aware of valued community learning services at Whitehawk Inn, a threat to Brighton and Hove Food Partnership work through loss of Public Health funding, the loss of a key contract for Direct Payments held by local group Possability People, and concern expressed by RISE about likely contract changes, as well as Brighton Women's Centre. As with The Bridge, these highly respected organisations provide vital services that support and enhance the lives of thousands of vulnerable people in the city.

Chair, what consultation are you making with Community Works to establish the financial vulnerability of community voluntary sector organisations providing essential services in the city, and what lead is the Administration as a whole taking to ensure these organisations will be supported to not only survive but to thrive?

(3) Councillor Nemeth - Street Homelessness

Will the Chair list what actions this committee has taken to date in discharging its function of co-ordinating the Council's policies and actions with a view to reducing and eliminating street homelessness?

(4) Councillor Knight

Can the Chair confirm what progress has been made in installing gender neutral toilets in buildings other than the Brighton Centre, Hove Town Hall, University of Brighton and the University of Sussex? Additionally, please clarify whether current gender neutral toilets in the listed buildings are set up as facilities in their own right, and what provisions have been made for any signage denoting gender neutral facilities?

Furthermore is there a means of sharing location information, to help alleviate concerns as mentioned in the Trans needs assessment 2015, about entering public buildings with no gender neutral toilet facilities?