

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answer which will be included in an addendum that will be circulated at the meeting. A Member who asked a question may ask one relevant supplementary question which shall we put and answered without discussion.

**A) Councillor Nemeth - American Express Hove History Boards**

“What progress has been made since the last meeting of this committee, and prior to the submission of this question, in contacting American Express, or carrying out alternative investigations, with regard to the restoration/replacement of Hove’s local history signage (that was kindly sponsored by American Express some years back)?”

**Reply from Councillor Robins, Chair of the Tourism Development & Culture Committee**

“Two approaches have been made to the Public Affairs and Communications Team of American Express requesting them kindly if they would like to re-sponsor the Hove Heritage signs. To date no response has been received from them indicating that they would like to re-sponsor. A further approach to American Express will be made to ascertain if they wish to continue to sponsor the Hove Heritage signs.

A cost analysis has been sought from Brighton & Hove City Councils Print and Design department and it is estimated that the cost of refurbishing each Heritage sign will be in the region of £1,500 per sign. There are estimated to be approximately 14 Heritage signs in Hove which would mean the cost of refurbishing all of the signs would be in the region of £21,000

As there are many Heritage signs in Hove and whilst it is acknowledged that they are much loved by residents and any decision for the Council to fund their replacement would need to be made at the relevant budget committee in the event that we are unable source sponsorship for the Hove Heritage signs.”

**B) Councillor Nemeth - Planning Delay**

“How many ‘old’ planning applications are still set aside from new applications and how much slower on average are they being answered? How many of these old applications have there been each month over the past six months? What are the oldest and newest of the old applications which are live currently?”

**Reply from Councillor Robins, Chair of the Tourism Development & Culture Committee**

“The Planning Service is improving and there are a number of modernisation projects underway that aim to make all aspects of the service better – however it will take time to complete implementation these priorities and projects.

One of these projects has been to introduce direct allocation of planning applications to case officers from 1<sup>st</sup> February. I can therefore confirm that all planning applications are now allocated to case officers soon after registration. I can also confirm that both the ‘old’ (pre February) and ‘new’(post February) applications are being dealt with concurrently by case officers. In the case of ‘new’ applications – these are being determined within the eight week period, unless there is good reason to agree an extension.

In terms of the numbers, in January of 2017, before the introduction of additional resources and directly allocating planning applications - there were 327 applications that had not yet been allocated to a case officer. All applications are now allocated and will be determined as soon as possible. In terms of the statistical information requested – we do not include analysis relating the rate of determination of old applications over the past six months in our current weekly performance monitoring, so we would need some more time to collate this information.

You ask about the oldest and newest of the ‘old’ applications. As with all local planning authorities there are a very small number of older applications that may have been submitted as long ago as 2015 – these are often majors or complex which is why they can be subject significant delay. The majority of the ‘old’ applications remaining were submitted between November 2016 and January 2017 and therefore include the newest of the ‘old’ applications. These numbers are diminishing and I can assure you these will be dealt with as soon as possible alongside the ‘new’ applications.”

**C) Councillor Nemeth - Tennis**

“Please describe in detail what role the Chairman has had, in his role as head of sport for Brighton & Hove, in developing the Administration’s plans to completely change the way in which all public tennis courts in the city are funded and managed.”

**Reply from Councillor Robins, Chair of the Tourism Development & Culture Committee**

“Whilst this committee oversees the overall strategic approach to sports and leisure across the city, the operational management of the tennis courts is through the City Parks service. I can confirm that consultation and engagement with representatives of the city’s tennis community, clubs and coaches along with the involvement of the Lawn Tennis Association is continuing.

As a member of the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee, Cllr Nemeth will be aware that an update report on the Open Spaces Strategy, including tennis court management, is going to that committee in four days’ time.”

**D) Councillor Nemeth - King Alfred**

“Has the Chairman had any involvement at all in the King Alfred major project in his role as head of major projects for Brighton & Hove?”

**Reply from Councillor Robins, Chair of the Tourism Development & Culture Committee**

“As with other strategically significant major projects, the King Alfred development is overseen by the Leader of the Council and is within the remit of the Strategic Delivery Board, a cross-party group of which Cllr Nemeth is a member. The Strategic Delivery Board receives a written update on major projects at every meeting, and I am aware the King Alfred has been the subject of detailed updates in recent months.

Updates have also formed part of the business of our predecessor committee (ED&C), again as a standing item, through which I am briefed ahead of such meetings. I also receive regular briefings from the Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture and Ward Councillors are briefed at key stages of the process as required.”

**E) Councillor Nemeth - Cycle Track**

“Will the Chairman provide an urgent update on the recent repairs that had to be carried out at Preston Park Cycle Track?”

**Reply from Councillor Robins, Chair of the Tourism Development & Culture Committee**

“The works to the Preston Park Velodrome have yet to be completed as it had taken longer than anticipated to find a suitable surfacing supplier and road lining contractor due to the highly specialised nature of these works. However, suitable contractors have now been identified and the City Council has been working with the surfacing supplier’s engineering team in order to produce a crack infill repair material specifically tailored for velodromes as there was nothing available in the market place to meet the City Council’s strict criteria for use on the velodrome. The need to develop this specific material has obviously delayed the works being carried out. However, it is felt this delay is worthwhile to ensure the long term durability of the repairs that will be carried out.

Due to the specialist nature of the repair material to be used a trial repair is to be carried out shortly to ensure that all parties are happy with the proposed material and repair method. Following this, extensive crack repairs will be carried out to all of the velodrome and once the crack repairs have been completed a specialist road lining contractor, who has previous experience with velodromes will be coming in to re mark the track in accordance with British Cycling’s current guidelines. The complete cost for these works is anticipated to be in the region of £8,000 to £10,000. And the works are expected to be completed during this summer.

All works are being carried out in consultation with British Cycling.”

