

Petitions, Public Questions and Statements – Full Council

Meeting Date: 06/11/2024

(Note: This document will be published prior to the Council meeting, containing details of statements received for the meeting and answers to questions relating to the remit of full Council. It will then be updated and re-published within 10 working days of the meeting, containing details of responses to petitions submitted to the meeting and answers to questions relating to items of business on the published agenda and supplementary questions relating to the remit of Full Council.)

Details of ordinary petitions, and questions and statements received for this meeting from members of the public are set out below.

Answers to questions relating to the remit of Full Council are published one clear day before the Council meeting. These questions will not be asked and answered at the Full Council meeting.

All statements received from members of the public are published on the day prior to the Council meeting and circulated to all Members of the Council. If time allows, statements can be read out at the meeting. Statements do not require a response, but the Lord Mayor (as chair of the meeting) or Leader of the Council or relevant Committee Chair reserves the right to reply at the meeting.

Representations in relation to petitions can be made at the Council meeting, and the Leader of the Council or relevant Committee Chair will respond.

Questions relating to items of business on the published agenda and supplementary questions relating to the remit of Full Council (arising from the original written question and/or the response), can be asked at the meeting, and the Leader of the Council or relevant Committee Chair will respond. Written responses to both these types of questions are published within 10 working days of the meeting.

A period of up to 60 minutes shall be allocated at meetings of Full Council for members of the public to present ordinary petitions, ask questions and make statements. The order for receiving public participations within the allotted time is – 1) Petitions; 2) Agenda-Related Questions; 3) Supplementary Questions to the (Initial) Remit-Related Questions; 4) Statements (Agenda-related & Remit-related).

Questions (Remit)

From: Adi James

Question: It has emerged that the official emails and inbox of former Bristol Council Mayor, Marvin Rees, have been deleted following his removal from office⁽¹⁾. Councillor and Council Leader emails are important political and historical documents that will shed more light on how decisions were made in years to come.

Will the Council review its data retention policy to consider how Councillors' emails are preserved, and will the Leader commit his own emails to the public record - and publish non-sensitive emails he sends and receives within six months, to show his commitment to democratic accountability?

(1). <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/official-inbox-of-rees-has-been-erased/>

Response from Councillor Tom Hunt (Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee and Leader of the Council) -

In line with the Council's Retention Schedule, mailboxes are deleted after 30 days. If there is a legitimate reason for keeping a mailbox, for example, an ongoing public inquiry, then the Council will retain the mailbox during that period of time.

There is no standard retention period for particular emails as the retention period is set for the category of data. The Council processes thousands of emails every day, on a wide range of topics and so relevant emails are retained and stored in the relevant case management system or business folder specific to the relevant retention period.

Although it may be possible to retain a sample of emails from councillors when they leave office, factors such as the rights of the individual, the cost of storage and the cost of human resources to manage this would have to be weighed against any anticipated public benefit.

Whilst I am committed to being open and transparent, I deal with confidential, personal and sensitive matters on a routine basis. It would therefore not be either appropriate or practicable for my emails to be published in the way that you have suggested.

Supplementary Question: NO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION/S WERE RECEIVED

From: Arshad Azam

Question: 1. Considering that you are charging £1,430 (which I assume includes back fill) for digging an earthen grave, can you please share the dimensions of an earthen grave and how this is impacted as to whether a coffin or casket is used?

2. Considering that you are charging for a concrete liner £1,050 and £1,430 for digging the grave, can you please explain what the additional digging cost for liner is at £370?

Response from Councillor Kurtis Crossland (Chair of the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee) -

When we prepare a grave it needs to be dug wider than the coffin, this allows for timbers that help make the ground safe, this is called shoring. It usually involves 4 sets of timbers (two each side of the grave) set at the mid-point of the grave and close to the opening of the grave. These timbers are held in place by 'acro' props.

Our charges include digging and back filling the grave and the disposal of any waste earth (spoil) not used after back filling.

Every earthen grave is dug to 7ft in length, depending on what type of coffin is used the width will vary.

For a coffin measuring 6'2 x 22" we would dig the grave 7ft x 32". Fee for digging: £1430

For a coffin measuring 6'6 x 26" we would dig the grave 7ft x 34". Fee for digging: £1560

For a coffin measuring 6'6 x 30" we would dig the grave 7ft x 39". Fee for digging: £1690

If a coffin is a casket up to 39inch a further charge is added of £260 making the total fee for a casket to be buried in an earthen grave £1950.

A lined grave is dug to 8'6 x 42". For every 2 lined grave spaces used 3 earthen grave spaces are taken up.

Lined graves must also be dug 7'0 deep to allow for 18" of soil to be placed on the cover slabs of the liner.

Standard digging fee	£1430
Provision of the liner	£1050
Additional digging for the liner	£390
Total Cost	£2870

The cost for lined graves does not vary on the size of the coffin used as the coffin is placed within the liner.

Supplementary Question: NO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION/S WERE RECEIVED

From: David Hadleigh

Question: My question is about the road conditions throughout Sheffield.

Why are the conditions of our roads under the current contractor being allowed to degraded to such a poor condition that some sections of the roads are now becoming dangerous and damaging vehicles.

One example, is City Road, which in large parts is crumbling and littered with potholes, sunken drain covers and damaged surfaces, this is mirrored across the entire city, where almost every road has some degree of damage.

When is someone going to take control of this situation, the roads are degrading at such a rate that some may need complete resurfacing in the near future?

Response from Councillor Joe Otten (Chair of the Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee) -

Sheffield, as a local highway authority, work with our contracting partner, Amey, in accordance with the guidance contained within “Well-managed Highway Infrastructure” code of practice and promote an integrated asset management approach to highway infrastructure based on the establishment of local levels of service through a risk-based assessment.

The main types of maintenance that is carried out are reactive, routine and programmed works as set out below:

Reactive maintenance. This is carried out when Amey responds to defects found during regular inspections, responding to complaints, and emergencies. Inspectors carry out regular safety checks on each part of the network and if a member of the public calls to report a problem, these issues are also inspected, and jobs are raised with response times related to the severity of the defect. Any defect categorised as urgent is repaired as a priority and Council officers monitor Amey’s performance on a quarterly basis. Amey consistently performs with respect to repairing the hazardous potholes or defects, although we have noticed an increasing backlog in the repair of lower category defects. This was reported to Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee in September 2023 and Amey were asked to provide Service Action Plans to address shortcomings in their service. They have put in place additional resources and their progress is being monitored with a review due in March 2024.

Routine maintenance. These are scheduled works, or cyclical or routine maintenance, such as grass cutting, street cleaning and jetting gullies.

Programmed maintenance works are developed from regular condition surveys. In Sheffield, condition surveys are carried out on the roads and the entire network are surveyed every two years. Only those sections of road that fail these condition surveys both the visual condition and machine surveys, and further inspection, are resurfaced. Any sections of road that have not failed condition surveys are kept safe as part of ongoing reactive maintenance. If the surveys indicate a poor condition road, such as cracking or deformation, Amey programme resurfacing works. These are typically resurfacing type schemes but can include surface dressings to keep roads waterproof until they require more significant surfacing. Because of the time required to survey roads and plan works, sometimes the condition deteriorates further, and the roads are maintained in a safe condition by carrying out reactive repairs which can include patching.

With regards to the state of the roads in Sheffield, the latest 2023 Department for Transport data ([Road condition statistics: data tables \(RDC\) - GOV.UK](#)) shows that 87% of A roads and 83% of B and C roads are in good condition.

With regards to reactive maintenance, this is recorded and addressed following the report of a defect either from the council's officers, Amey's inspectors or through members of the public. For carriageways, we categorise defects into the following:

Hazardous potholes. These are potholes which are greater than 40mm in depth. Repairs to hazardous potholes have shown good performance throughout the year averaging a repair rate of 99% per month up to month ending January 2024. Hazardous potholes/defects are responded to within 24 hours and usually it is only possible to make a temporary repair given availability of specific construction materials and to ensure the workforce can safely access these areas which are usually in the carriageway and require traffic management. It is usual therefore to follow up with a planned permanent repair.

Lower Category Potholes. These are potholes that require attention but do not represent an immediate or imminent hazard. Typically, these repairs would be identified and repaired within a planned 28-day period.

During Autumn 2023, the Council's officers noted that the number of recorded lower category potholes and the response times for repairing these potholes had increased. Since then, Council officers have been working with their counterparts at Amey to address this and in January 2024, Amey had committed additional resources to undertake these repairs and to reduce this backlog. Data compiled on the number of open lower category potholes shows that good progress was made over the summer period due to favourable weather conditions and up to the end of September 2024 shows the backlog continues to progressively reduce.

With regards to defects on City Road, Amey have undertaken localised surfacing works in two sections during this year. Council officers have requested inspections of the road, which is now scheduled for the week commencing 4th November, after which all hazardous potholes will be repaired immediately, and other recorded defects will be incorporated into a planned programme for repairs.

As noted above, Amey undertake regular inspections of the highway network to identify defects, however the Council encourages anyone who wishes to report a pothole can do so by contacting Customer Services on 0114 273 4567, or going to [Report a problem with a road, pavement or cycle lane | Sheffield City Council](#) and include as much information as to where the pothole is, e.g. nearest house/door number or street light column or by using a what3words location. Reports can also be made via the [FixMyStreet](#) app too.

Supplementary Question: NO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION/S WERE RECEIVED

From: Julie Pearn

Question: Under pressure of the People of Rotherham, Rotherham City Council have agreed to fly the Palestinian flag on November 29th, UN Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

United Nations agencies, the most senior international lawyers, the majority of countries, and millions of citizens around the world agree Israel is committing genocide in the Gaza Strip. We can see it with our own eyes on our screens and the statements of Israeli leaders make plain their genocidal intent. Israel is carrying out a systematic programme of ethnic cleansing and extermination in Northern Gaza; Palestinians who do not evacuate are being starved, bombed or shot. Children are starving to death in the most horrific circumstances.

The People of Sheffield have spoken in their thousands demanding immediate ceasefire, a complete two-way embargo on arms sales with Israel and condemnation of Israel's war crimes. I repeat their demands.

Will Sheffield City Council show solidarity with the suffering Palestinian people by flying the Palestinian flag, along with Rotherham, on 29th November?

Response from Councillor Tom Hunt (Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee and Leader of the Council) -

Strategy and Resources Policy Committee approved a revised Flag Protocol at its meeting on 24 March 2024. This sets out which flags are to be flown above the Town Hall on which dates, and how – and under which circumstances – requests to fly a particular flag outside of the annual calendar may be made. I have received a number of requests for the Palestinian flag to be flown and in line with

the flag protocol, I have asked the Chief Executive to consider the request in line with the decision-making guidance detailed in Appendix C of the Flag Protocol.

The flag protocol can be found here:

<https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/documents/s66624/Flag%20Protocol%20-%20March%202024.pdf>

Supplementary Question:

On 29th October 2024, in a welcome move, a Declaration of Friendship was signed between the cities of Sheffield and Nablus “to promote friendship, understanding and exchange experience and knowledge”. I hope this bond will strengthen empathy with Palestinians throughout Palestine, who suffer daily humanitarian catastrophe at the hands of the Israeli Occupation.

Will the City of Sheffield give a first concrete expression to its Declaration and fly the Palestinian flag on November 29th, UN Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People?

Response: *A verbal response to the supplementary question was given at the meeting by the Leader of the Council. That response was summarised in the minutes of the meeting, as follows:-*

In response, Councillor Tom Hunt (Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee) stated that the Council had a protocol for the flying of flags, and he had requested that the Chief Executive follow the procedure for considering the request to fly the Palestinian flag on 29th November. He would inform Ms. Pearn of the outcome of that process in due course.

Regarding the friendship agreement with the city of Nablus, on the West Bank, Councillor Hunt advised that he had been proud to be at the signing ceremony with the Lord Mayor and other group leaders the previous week where he had a positive conversation with the Mayor of Nablus and other members of the Nablus municipality about how to extend the hand of friendship, and extend the links between the cities of Sheffield and Nablus. He added that the Council would explore options for further expressing the city’s solidarity and friendship with Nablus and would welcome any suggestions in that regard.

From: Annie O’Gara

Question:

Ethical Procurement Review:

PCR 2015 specifies that companies can be excluded from tendering by Councils, using their power of Discretionary Exclusion (as contrasted with Mandatory Exclusion).

Discretionary Exclusion specifies that, if “*the contracting authority can demonstrate by any appropriate means that the economic operator is guilty of grave professional misconduct, which renders its integrity questionable*” then the Council can use its discretion to exclude that operator.

The Council’s PQQ from 2018 says that it “*will consider any cogent evidence*” that helps it exercise Discretionary Exclusion.

QUESTIONS:

1. Is Discretionary Exclusion included in the revised Ethical Procurement Policy?
2. Will the Council accept that the rulings of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) are “*cogent evidence*”, including the prohibition against rendering aid or assistance to Israel in its criminal actions.
3. Will the Council now use the rulings of the ICJ to assess the integrity of companies like Barclays Bank, which provides aid and assistance to Israel by its investments in, and financial support of, arms dealers who are knowingly complicit in Israeli crimes?
4. Finally, will the Council accept that its own reputation as an ethical body is at risk if it chooses to deal with complicit companies like Barclays?

Response from Councillor Tom Hunt (Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee and Leader of the Council) -

Question 1:

A new Ethical Procurement Policy is being developed and all new contracts will be let in line with this once it is approved. This includes the Council’s banking contract.

This will set out the Council’s approach to:

- Maximising the Council’s ability to use its discretion to apply ethical standards to behaviour throughout its supply chain;

- Using the money we spend to increase the social value and benefits for local people and businesses; and
- Addressing environmental and climate sustainability in our decision making and procurement activities.

This policy will also set out the scope that the Council has within the law for taking into account issues of the type that have been raised regarding Barclays Bank.

The current Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) and the new Procurement Act 2023 (PA 2023) both outline grounds for Mandatory and Discretionary Exclusion.

PA2023 (set to be enacted Feb 2025) includes all the exclusionary grounds from PCR 2015 and adds new ones such as bribery, terrorism, and tax evasion. The revised Ethical Procurement Policy will align to the 'PA 2023' and the new 'National Procurement Policy Statement' when this too is published by the government (date to be confirmed).

Question 2:

The Council will consider all available evidence available to it in line with the legislative requirements when considering the Discretionary Exclusion grounds. That may include final decisions of any competent court, including the International Court of Justice.

Question 3:

The ICJ has issued a number of advisory opinions in relation to the actions of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. None of these opinions mention the actions of any companies. Whilst the Council will consider the rulings of courts to be 'cogent evidence' in helping us to exercise Discretionary Exclusion, they would normally need to evidence that a company has met a ground for Discretionary Exclusion at the time of tendering for a contract.

Question 4:

We act at all times in line with our values and the Council's ethical procurement policy.

Supplementary Question:

Discretion means the freedom to decide, in the light of one's own values, what should be done in any situation. You say SCC operates "at all times in line with our values."

SCC's PQQ of 2018 said this about grave misconduct which can trigger Discretionary Exclusion: **"To be considered grave misconduct [the matter] does not have to have been ... established ... by a judgment which has the force of res judicata. The authority will consider any cogent evidence"**. Yet in your reply to me you emphasise res judicata, referencing a court's naming of companies, seemingly minimising your own power to exercise discretion.

The ICJ ruled that the Occupation is unlawful, that there is evidence of genocide, that countries must not provide aid/assistance to Israel. Those who invest in, and underwrite, the weapons trade slaughtering and maiming thousands, DO provide aid/ assistance --- like Barclays, complicit to the tune of billions of pounds in the arms trade.

Your powers of discretion are greater than you choose to use regarding Barclays, a complicit and compromised bank, you refuse even to express concern to Barclays.

Which moral values permit the Council to prop up a bank that props up genocide?

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Response: A verbal response to the supplementary question was given at the meeting by the Leader of the Council. That response was summarised in the minutes of the meeting, as follows:-

In response, Councillor Tom Hunt (Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee) stated that he would repeat what he had said in answer to the original question, i.e. that the Council acted at all times in line with its values and its ethical procurement policy and would continue to do so. He added that the policy would be brought back to the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee later in the municipal year. On the specific point around PQQ, Councillor Hunt confirmed that he would provide a written response, but he was clear that the Council was acting in line with both its values and the ethical procurement policy.

Further to the Leader of the Council's undertaking to provide a written response on the specific point around PQQ, his response is below:-

The Council operates its discretion in line with its values, but also in line with the legal principles that provide that discretion. That includes considering all cogent evidence in line with the original answer you cite and my answer to your second question. My answer to your question 3, which was about a specific opinion of the ICJ, does not reference res judicata but merely emphasises the point that a court ruling must provide cogent evidence of the discretionary exclusionary test being met by the relevant organisation.

From: Jonathan Feldman

Question: I am a Jewish person. It is time for non-Jews on this Council to understand that Israel is a State and not a symbol of Judaism. Zionism is a relatively new political not spiritual idea.

Per se, criticism of Israel is no more antisemitic than criticism or mocking of Tottenham Hotspur, a team known for being supported by many Jewish people.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition on Antisemitism has been adopted by this Council. It has examples of antisemitism that equate criticism of Israel with antisemitism, stifling open debate.

This is undemocratic at best and, ironically, antisemitic at worst.

It seems urgent in the face of what is widely agreed by international bodies as a genocidal onslaught on Gaza, that councillors and council employees are freed up to speak out against Israel, and to do so without being worried that they will be accused of antisemitism with reference to the IHRA.

There is an alternative and much more intelligent definition of antisemitism that seeks to ensure we treat antisemitism like any other racism called the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism. <https://Jerusalemdeclaration.org>

When will the Council abandon the outdated IHRA and adopt JDA?

Response from Councillor Tom Hunt (Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee and Leader of the Council) -

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism was adopted in 2016 and is the most widely used definition of antisemitism today. The IHRA defines antisemitism as:

“A certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

The IHRA definition has been widely endorsed by various governments, institutions, and organisations worldwide, making it the commonly referenced standard for recognising and addressing antisemitic behaviours. The UK Government, European Parliament, the

EU monitoring centre on Racism and Xenophobia (now the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights), and the UK College of Policing have all formally adopted the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's \(IHRA\) working definition](#) of anti-Semitism.

Sheffield City Council adopted the IHRA definition in 2019. Whilst we are aware that the definition is subject to a substantial debate, the Council remains committed to the IHRA definition.

We do not believe that the IHRA definition has limited political discourse within the Council.

The broader picture is that in the last year we have seen a rapid increase in the reporting of both anti-Semitism and Islamophobia across the UK over the past year. The fear, anxiety and harm this causes is a stain on our society.

This Council stands against and works to eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation and actively seeks to foster good relationships between people, even when or especially when there is division, and when this is challenging.

Supplementary Question:

It is disingenuous to quote from the IHRA without reference to the examples in it - most of these associate anti-semitism with criticism of Israel, and have quite clearly played a role in the political discourse.

First, how does the Council know that the IHRA has not stifled debate? There is plenty of evidence (eg from European Legal Support Centre - their report is here - https://res.cloudinary.com/elsc/images/v1694507437/Freedom-of-Speech-and-Academic-Freedom-in-UK-Higher-Education-BRISMES-ELSC/Freedom-of-Speech-and-Academic-Freedom-in-UK-Higher-Education-BRISMES-ELSC.pdf?_i=AA)

that people are worried about accusations of anti-semitism in any institution where the IHRA has been adopted. The Council themselves referred to the IHRA when they asked Julie Pearn to stop speaking at a meeting. It took months, and the intervention of a legal letter, before the Council back tracked.

Second, the Jerusalem Declaration is an improved version leaving no doubt that criticism of Israel per se is NOT anti-semitic, in contrast with the IHRA where the examples are used to stifle comment as described above. To say that the IHRA is widely adopted is a defensive position that also seeks to limit discussion. Capital punishment was once widely adopted too. Why would the Council not seek to review and improve its policies?

Response: *A verbal response to the supplementary question was given at the meeting by the Leader of the Council. That response was summarised in the minutes of the meeting, as follows:-*

In response, Councillor Tom Hunt (Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee) stated that the Council had adopted the IHRA definition in 2019, and whilst he was aware that the definition was subject to a substantial debate, the Council remained committed to it. The Council did not believe that the IHRA definition had limited its political discourse within the Council.

Councillor Hunt added that the IHRA definition had been widely endorsed by various governments, institutions, and organisations worldwide, making it the commonly referenced standard for recognising and addressing antisemitic behaviours. Additionally, the UK Government, European Parliament, the EU monitoring centre on Racism and Xenophobia and the UK College of Policing had all formally adopted it.

Councillor Hunt stated that he found it disappointing to be having the conversation when the broader picture was that in the last year there has been a rapid increase in the reporting of both antisemitism and Islamophobia and the fear, anxiety and harm this caused was a stain on society.

Councillor Hunt confirmed that the Council stood against and worked to eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation and actively sought to foster good relationships between people, especially when there was division, and when this was challenging.

From: Iqra Besharat

Question: 1. What is the real reason behind the claim of copyright issues blocking the publication of the ground risk water issue report? We have been told by the author that this is not the case, so who is responsible for these misleading claims, and why is the Council hiding behind legal technicalities instead of providing transparency?

2. What will the Council do to ensure that there is full transparency and accountability moving forward? Will the Council commit to publishing the Tier 2 report in full and laying out a public timeline for resolving this issue?

Response from Councillor Kurtis Crossland (Chair of the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee) -

A detailed report summary was shared with members of the SCC Muslim Bereavement Partnership Forum in the meeting on 24th September. At this meeting a request was received for the full report to be shared. Following the meeting we checked with the report authors and our internal colleagues who cleared its release.

The report summary and the full report were shared with all members of the SCC Muslim Bereavement Partnership Forum via email on 2nd October 2024, and further copies have since been shared with other members of the Muslim community who have requested a copy.

There is no intention to mislead or otherwise cause confusion. Openness and honesty are important to us, which is why the full report was shared on 2nd October 2024, alongside a summary document which was quality checked and approved by the independent survey provider before release.

The 44-page full report has already been shared with members of the Muslim Bereavement Partnership Forum along with a 3-page report summary and both documents are available to others on request. We plan to release information aimed at reaching the wider community once we have more information to share about follow up remedial activity within the cemetery.

Sheffield City Council now needs to discuss the report and potential follow-up action with the Environment Agency. Further information will be shared once it is available.

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Supplementary Question: NO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION/S WERE RECEIVED

From: Asif Ditta

Question: How does the Council justify not taking immediate action when families are enduring anxiety, depression, and health issues as a result of the conditions in which their loved ones are buried? How much longer will these families be left without the respect, transparency, and solutions they deserve?

Response from Councillor Kurtis Crossland (Chair of the Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee) -

We understand the ground conditions at Shiregreen Cemetery are causing pain and anguish for many people. I would like to reassure you that we are taking all necessary measures to investigate these concerns fully and we commit to taking any appropriate action needed in line with expert advice. We are also seeking theological advice from scholars from The Sheffield Federation of Mosques.

At this stage of our investigation, it is important to share the positive findings from the recent ground water survey work which will hopefully alleviate some anxiety.

The investigation found that ground water was generally absent at shallow depth beneath the site. The water witnessed in the pre-dug empty graves is surface water which, because any rainfall is unlikely to be attenuated by the overlying soil material, will naturally travel down and through the cemetery ground, perching into the pre-dug empty graves. This is important good news as it confirms that the ground in which loved ones are buried is not permanently saturated, and that the water witnessed is surface water naturally making its way down through the cemetery ground and away.

Now we have received the investigation findings, the next stage of our work is to discuss possible surface water drainage solutions aimed at reducing the amount of surface water travelling through this burial plot with independent consultants and the environment agency. We will share an update on this work as soon as possible.

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Supplementary Question: NO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION/S WERE RECEIVED

Questions (Published Agenda)

From:

Question: NO QUESTIONS RECEIVED RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

Statements (Remit)

From: Paul Wimpney

Statement: Since October 2023, even when in receipt of a petition signed by 7500 people, the Council has taken no meaningful action to recognise the suffering of the Palestinian people.

They insisted that to declare Sheffield an Israeli apartheid-free zone, would be merely “symbolic”. In reality, many organisations, like Amnesty International, have seen the point in labelling Israel an apartheid regime.

Furthermore, in July 2024 the International Court of Justice ruled that Israel is also in breach of the “Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination”.

We refute, therefore, that any actions taken would be symbolic only. They have a persuasive moral force.

Other suggestions:

- Demand Barclays bank withdraws investments in the Israeli arms trade, or change banks.
- Urge the South Yorkshire Pension Fund to divest from companies with Israeli interests.
- Offer advice to all Sheffield businesses regarding the legality of trading with Israel at this time.
- Fly the Palestinian flag above the Town Hall on 29th November, “International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people”, as Rotherham Council has decided to do.

Sheffield City Council has to decide whether it opposes injustice or seeks merely to appease those who justify apartheid and genocide

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Statements (Published Agenda)

From:

Statement: NO STATEMENTS RECEIVED RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

Petitions (The representations made at the meeting on behalf of the petitioners, and the response to the petition given at the meeting, can be viewed in the webcast of the meeting and are summarised in the minutes of the meeting; these can be found here – [Agenda for Council on Wednesday 6 November 2024, 2.00 pm | Sheffield City Council](#))

From: Callum Sweet

Details of Petition: Petition for Residents Only Parking on Troutbeck Road, Sheffield S7

The residents in the petition, all of Troutbeck Road, are in favour of a permit holders only policy. We are happy for some exceptions to that rule. For example, whether you can pay to park for a limited time if you are not a resident, or a restricted amount of time you can park for free without a permit, and what time the permit hours are in place for.

Collectively, we have had many difficulties finding a space to park, both during the day and at night. From conversations with staff members from Steps (Rehabilitation Centre, Abbeydale Road), located at the bottom of Troutbeck Road, we are of the understanding that the facility doesn't allow all employees to park in their designated car park. According to staff, only certain employees can park at the facility. They then park on Troutbeck Road, leaving nowhere for residents to park. We also find that residents, and staff members of businesses of Abbeydale Road also park on Troutbeck Road during the day. Residents of Abbeydale Road then tend to leave their vehicles on the street during the evening which still doesn't allow anywhere for residents of Troutbeck Road to park.

Response from Councillor Ben Miskell (Chair of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee) –

Thank you for submitting your petition to Full Council on Wednesday 6th November 2024. Please see my response below:

As you might know last week, at the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee, we made a decision to introduce several measures on Abbeydale Road, aimed at improving bus transit times. This is a strategically important step for the city as we work to reduce congestion, support economic growth, and offer people more travel options. This decision is also part of a broader effort, led by South Yorkshire's Mayor, Oliver Coppard, on bus franchising, which is set to transform our public transport network. Given this, it is only right that we begin preparing the city for the future.

However, in making this decision, the Committee did remove a small number of parking spaces on Abbeydale Road. This was a necessary step to meet our city-wide priorities, but we are aware of the concerns you've raised about parking availability on Troutbeck Road. Your petition highlights long-standing parking pressures highlighted by residents, and we understand these concerns. As you said, 13 out of 15 households have supported your position in regard to a residents parking scheme.

After speaking with my colleagues on the Committee and consulting with transport officers, I will be recommending that this petition be referred back to the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee for further consideration. The issue you've raised is clearly felt by many residents in the area, and it's important that we explore potential solutions to mitigate the issue, including the potential for a limited parking scheme.

As I am sure you will understand this is not the forum for those policy decisions to be made, but we are receptive to your request and encourage you to continue attending our committee meetings, and we welcome your ongoing engagement as we work together on this matter.

From: Alistair Tice

Details of Petition: Request the Council to Restore the Winter Fuel Allowance

page 18 We, the undersigned, are completely opposed to the Labour government's withdrawal of the Winter Fuel Allowance for most pensioners, especially when the energy price cap is being increased by 10% (average £149) over winter. An estimated 75,000 pensioners in Sheffield will lose this vital payment. In view of the fact that all the council party leaders signed a letter to the Chancellor asking her to suspend and review this policy, we call on Sheffield City Council to expand its Household Support Fund in order to restore the withdrawn payment to any pensioner requiring it.

Response from Councillor Tom Hunt (Chair of the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee) -

Thank you for attending the Council Meeting on Wednesday of last week and presenting the petition on behalf of the Trade Unionist & Socialist Coalition, requesting that the winter fuel allowance is restored.

I am setting out below my response:

The change to the Winter Fuel Payment was a tough choice but a necessary one. It was made because the previous Conservative government made commitment after commitment without knowing where the money was going to come from.

Everyone here will support the fact that the Winter Fuel Allowance will continue to support those most in need.

The Council - in partnership with Citizens Advice Sheffield and the Department for Work and Pensions - is increasing its work in Sheffield to increase the uptake of Pension Credit and target additional support to the poorest pensioners.

The Council is identifying all households in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support, but not Pension Credit - over 7000 households - and help to claim is being provided via the Council's income maximisation process and through Citizens Advice. We encourage any pensioners who may qualify for Pension Credit, or who are struggling with bills, to reach out to us.

I am sure that the signatories to your petition will also welcome the Government upholding the "triple lock" on state pensions.

As was detailed in the recent National Budget – the Government is helping ensure pensioners are protected in their retirement, confirming a 4.1% increase to the basic and new State Pension as well as the standard minimum guarantee for Pension Credit, from April next year.

This will mean over 12 million pensioners will benefit from this as the full new State Pension will rise from £221.20 to £230.25 a week, providing an additional £470 a year, while the full basic State Pension will increase from £169.50 to £176.45 per week, worth an extra £360 annually.

It is also worth noting the Pension Credit Standard Minimum Guarantee will also increase by 4.1% from April 2025, meaning an annual increase of £465 in 2025-26 in the single pensioner guarantee and £710 in the couple guarantee.

The Strategy and Resources Policy Committee will be examining this issue further at our December meeting, and therefore I am happy to refer your petition to there. We are committed to finding solutions that best support Sheffield's residents during these challenging times.

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