

<b>Council/Committee:</b>	Council
<b>Report Title</b>	Member's Question Time
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	22 July 2025
<b>Report Author</b>	Anthony Lloyd Democratic Services Officer <a href="mailto:Ant.Lloyd@sandwell.gov.uk">Ant.Lloyd@sandwell.gov.uk</a>
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Mike Jones Assistant Director Legal and Assurance and Monitoring Officer <a href="mailto:Mike.Jones1@sandwell.gov.uk">Mike.Jones1@sandwell.gov.uk</a>

The following written questions have been received:-

**6(a) From Councillor William Gill to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Highways:**

Residential areas of Great Bridge including cul-de-sacs like the Square and Gordon Drive are currently having to deal with significant issues with weeds in the gutters - following the significant issues last year that the Council faced with our partner SERCO. Can the Cabinet member clarify what steps are in place to address the ongoing concerns regarding the quality and consistency of weed cleansing in residential streets?

**6(b) From Councillor Richard Jeffcoat to the Cabinet Members for Education, Business and Skills:**

The date of the Christian festival of Easter falls on a Sunday, in line with the phases of the moon. Easter can be any date between March 22 and April 25, and the English Bank Holidays of Good Friday and Easter Monday align with this date. Almost all local authorities decide the dates of the schools' two-week Spring Holiday with reference to Easter. Easter falls somewhere within a period of 35 days, and it does not progress evenly across the years, as some other religious festivals do – in 2024 it was March 31, this year it was April 20, and next it is April 5.

Since 2016 Sheffield City Council has fixed their two-week break for schools as the first two weeks of April. This has allowed schools to function with the same shape of term timetable between Christmas and July – here in Sandwell the current term has had a 'half' of four weeks and a 'half' of seven. I understand that families have found it easier to plan their holidays, with less unauthorised absence.

Can the Cabinet Members consider making contact with Sheffield City Council to learn from their experience, and to consider if this would work for the children and families of Sandwell?

**6(c) From Councillor Justyna Kordala to the Statutory Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources:**

Can the Cabinet Member confirm when the Strategic Review of VCS Grant Funding commissioned in July 2024 and scheduled for completion by October 2024, will be made public, and what steps have been taken to communicate the findings to the voluntary sector community?