

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
Monday 3 April 2017

AGENDA ITEM 6

Questions from Members

1. Question from Councillor R Raja to the Leader of the Council.

Wycombe District Council seems fond of paying consultants for consultancies and feasibility studies, which range from commissioning the report for a two unitary authority option for Buckinghamshire, (with the WDC share of the cost being £25K), to the consultations about the new cemetery in Hazlemere and now the proposed £100K for a feasibility study about the establishment of a heavy rail line between High Wycombe and Bourne End.

Would the Leader like to tell us how much has been spent by WDC on consultations and feasibility studies in the last two years and how many such exercises cost more than £5,000?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).

2. Question from Councillor M Knight to the Leader of the Council.

Five years on from the transfer of the District's housing to Red Kite would you consider the move to be a success and in particular what do you think the benefits have been for the wider community?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).

3. Question from Councillor M Clarke to the Cabinet Member for Planning.

The Bucks Free Press on 15 March 2017 ran a story on a consultation on the feasibility of reopening the High Wycombe to Bourne End branch line for heavy rail. It indicates that this consultation will cost £100k to be paid for in two equal tranches from CIL monies in this and the next year.

What steps have been or are to be taken before committing to spend £100k of CIL money to ensure that the appropriate authorities are content with the reinstatement of level crossings across the A4155 Cores End Road and the A4155 Station Road?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning).

4. Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Environment.

I am assuming the reason why the ANPR system at Wycombe District Council's car parks had to be abandoned was because the DVLA would not pass on the relevant information of car ownership to the Council.

Do you agree with me this seems to be a very peculiar state of affairs when information cannot be passed onto local authorities which are responsible and accountable, but can be passed on to unscrupulous and ruthless car park operators?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Teesdale (Cabinet Member for Environment).

5. Question from Councillor Mrs L Clarke OBE to the Cabinet Member for Environment.

Litter is becoming more and more an unsightly problem both in the town and on the kerbside, not to mention fly tipping.

Can we be told whether the contract for litter collection has been changed as it appears this is not as thorough as it once was?

There appears to be a general lack of care and pride in the District's surroundings.

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Teesdale (Cabinet Member for Environment).

6. Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Cabinet Member for Housing.

When WDC sold off the housing stock to Red Kite we were assured that Castlefield Regeneration Project was a top priority. This project has been delayed with one setback after another with no sign of any real progress in the near future.

Is this a failure on the part of Red Kite, and what is WDC doing to ensure that this much needed housing project does take off, to address the serious housing problems in the town?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing).

7. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Planning.

The Cabinet recently allocated £100,000 to make a final assessment of the feasibility of the Bourne End to High Wycombe rail link. I assume that this was in consultation with Bucks County Council Officers who are working on a cycle route.

Please inform us of how the £100,000 will be spent and whether it could include a cycleway from London Road to Wycombe Railway station in the meantime?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning).

8. Question from Councillor S Graham to the Cabinet Member for Community.

According to a recent study, NHS cuts were responsible for 30,000 excess deaths in 2015 an unprecedented rise in mortality. But despite these shocking statistics it is reported that the service has been asked to make another £22.bn worth in cuts.

Can the Cabinet Member tell me how many of these excess deaths in 2015 were reported for High Wycombe; and if any, whether the excess deaths in Wycombe were around the national average?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Adey (Cabinet Member for Community).

9. Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Planning.

Thames Water has been fined a record £20m after pumping 1.9 billion litres of untreated sewage into the River Thames. This follows spills in 2013 and 2014, resulting in the deaths of countless fish and birds.

The Cabinet Member will be aware that Judge Francis Sheridan in Aylesbury Crown Court was compelled to observe that it was a "shocking and disgraceful state of affairs" and that the scale of the problem was such that it must have been known up the chain of command. Will the Cabinet Member tell us whether or not the stretch of the river passing through WDC has recovered from this environmental disaster and in the light of this can she reassure us whether the sewage infrastructure at little Marlow will be able to cope with the proposed additional housing proposed in Wycombe, Bourne End and Wooburn Green?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning).

10. Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Cabinet Member for Housing.

It was reported in Feb 2012 that Red Kite had employed 13 residents at a rate of £12 per hour to act as watchdogs to ensure that the promised £100 million worth of upgrades to their acquired council housing stock was carried out.

Five years on, I would like to ask the cabinet member if she is able to confirm if these tenants were successful watchdogs and if not what role did WDC play during this time assuming that the tenants are no longer employed and the upgrades have still not been completed along with some other promised projects?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing).