

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday 22 February 2018

AGENDA ITEM 6

Questions from Members

1. Question from Councillor R Raja to the Cabinet Member for Planning

It appears to be WDC policy to allow affordable housing targets to be renegotiated downwards after the contracts have been agreed with developers.

If it is the case then is it possible for me to know the circumstances which merit renegotiation and can such practice be justified given that targets of affordable housing have never been met and when the definition of affordability does not make houses affordable by people on modest, low or medium income levels?

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

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

In the light of the collapse of Carillion could you outline what safeguards are in place to protect the public services which Wycombe District Council has contracted out to private companies?

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

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

What progress is the Council making to reduce the human and economic cost on local residents of rising level of rough sleeping and homelessness?

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

4. Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Leader of the Council

I assume you are aware that there is an action afoot to try to establish parish councils in the un-parished areas of High Wycombe Town.

Do you agree with me that this would be disastrous and that a Town Council would be much more advantageous for everyone concerned?

One voice for the town as opposed to many voices with divisions.

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

5. Question from Councillor M Asif to the Leader of the Council

Is the council ready to deal with one unitary authority for Bucks if that is the decision of the secretary of state for Communities and Local Government?

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

6. Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Housing

The government's own statistics released this year show the number of people in Wycombe accepted as statutorily and unintentionally homeless rose again in 2016-7 to a record 121.

These people were supported through temporary accommodation in 2016-17 which costs the local taxpayer both dearly and needlessly.

What strategy does the Council have to reduce the number of people being made statutorily homeless?

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

7. Question from Councillor Ms A Baughan to the Leader of the Council

As it looks likely that Bucks County Council will withdraw funding and close Children's Centres across the county - it has been suggested by the BCC Cabinet Member that centres may be devolved to local communities and Parish Councils.

Will Wycombe District Council be offering any support, financial or otherwise, to similar initiatives for example to continue to have Children's Centres established in the unparished wards of the District?

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

8. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

I am concerned £150,000 is being spent on the Council Chamber at Wycombe District Council. What are the nature of these improvements?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Watson (Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources).

9. Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration

Now that Costco have withdrawn from their proposal for their new store on Cressex Island, can you tell me what measures are in place to encourage another establishment/business to develop the site?

Although I with many residents had reservations regarding the infrastructure capability, it is a great disappointment that Costco have withdrawn.

I understand that the said site cannot be used for housing due to measured poor air quality.

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor S Broadbent (Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration).

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

The national picture is one of housing availability being in crisis.

Wycombe has people living on the streets and families in temporary accommodation.

Looking at the councils own advice note which requires you to build between 30-40% affordable housing.

Can you explain why the figure given in the Wycombe local plan works out at a 23.5% affordable housing ratio?

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

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

At the cabinet meeting on 5 February 2018, the cabinet amended the special Expenses budgets for the town of High Wycombe.

Whilst the cabinet minutes note that the cabinet member for finance and the leader of the council assured town committee members that they would openly consider a virement if the resultant £8K reduction in contribution to Special Expenses reserves proved problematical.

My question is does she feel happy about ignoring the wishes of the Town Committee again, and can she offer anything more than reassurance to openly consider?

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

12. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Youth & External Partnerships

The future of Wycombe's Youth Centres appear to be uncertain due to County Council cutbacks. Can Wycombe District Council provide any assistance to enable these centres to become sustainable?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Carroll (Cabinet Member for Youth & External Partnerships).

13. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Environment

Is the Cabinet Member aware of the very good work being undertaken by the organisation Revive the Wye?

They recently held a litter and rubbish clearing event which engaged the public.

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