

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
Monday 16 April 2018

AGENDA ITEM 6

Questions from Members

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

The initial decision of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for the future of Buckinghamshire under a unitary system of local government is potentially devastating for WDC residents.

Is the leader of the council happy with her own inept and weak advocacy of a two unitary option for Bucks?

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

This is what some residents of the Wycombe District said to me about the recent increase in Council Tax.

"Increase in Council Tax but decrease in services. How is that fair?"

"I personally would rather a 1% increase every year than a 6% rise out of the blue."

"I have big increases this year on my bill. I am a single mother who works but struggle to pay and have fallen behind year in year out. Yet again I'm going to fall behind and they will charge me more. I will never be free."

As Leader of the tax collecting authority how would you respond to these comments?

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

3. Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Leader of the Council

In December 2016 several social care services, including Bucks Care, were brought back in house, after the county council said it "lost confidence" in the care provider.

Bucks County Council has now been accused of "not learning lessons" after it announced plans to cancel its contract with Bucks Learning Trust and bring the service back into the council offices.

I'm sure members here will agree with me that things in this local authority are not that squeaky clean either. Can the members be reassured that we have learned lessons from some of our ill-conceived practices and safeguards are now in place to avoid the misuse of public funds?

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

4. Question from Councillor Abdullah Hashmi to the Cabinet Member for Youth & External Partnerships

In 2015 the Leader made a big point of appointing a dedicated cabinet member for Youth, can we be told as to what this appointment has achieved in improving youth provision or addressing issues faced by the young & unemployed in the District?

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

5. Question from Councillor Ms A Baughan to the Cabinet Member for Environment

There has been a real escalation in our Ward of dog fouling on pavements and green areas as well as open gardens.

The Penalty Notices are difficult to administer without proof.

The Dog Warden is extremely hard working and always responds quickly to requests to visit the area and phone calls.

With Summer on its way, this situation will get worse and poses a risk to children and vulnerable people's health and is generally really unpleasant.

What can be done about this situation as it is a District wide problem?

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

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

During the recent Great British Springtime litter picking events, large areas of litter were cleared around East Wycombe.

It was apparent that some of these areas would benefit from having a litter bin in the vicinity.

Could the Cabinet Member advise myself and residents of the process for obtaining these bins?

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

7. Question from Councillor S Graham to the Leader of the Council

In view of the fact that we are going to have a unitary system of local government. Would the Leader accept that it is high time for a feasibility study about the formation of a Town Council with the necessary powers to deliver the essential services to the local residents?

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

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

It was reported in the Bucks Free Press and read out in the budget report at last council that Wycombe District Council was recently awarded £273,000 to tackle homelessness.

It was stated that this would be split into payments of £40,000 each year for the next three years.

This comes to £120,000, for the three years; to help us understand would you please say how the £120,000 is to be spent and what is to happen to the balance?

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

9. Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Cabinet Member for Environment

Last year travellers left mountains of rubbish on former sports centre site of Marlow Hill and WDC had to fork out £41000 to remove tonnes of waste.

We read this week that travellers have moved a bit upmarket this year and they have set up camp opposite an upmarket Marlow health club. I'm sure the members would like to know what lessons were learned from previous incidents and the safeguards that were put in place as a result to avoid waste of more public funds in the clear up operations?

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

10. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Leader of the Council

Are you planning to hold a Local Governance review of your own volition, in light of the imminent decision about a Unitary Authority?

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

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

We all recognise the efforts of our housing officers who do exceptional work to deal with the ever rising challenge of homelessness.

Could the leader or her cabinet member for Housing assure this council that they equally take on the issue of tackling homelessness as a priority?

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