

COUNCIL

Thursday 22 February 2018

Agenda Item 6

Questions from Members

Unanswered Questions – Responses sent subsequent to Meeting

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?

The Cabinet considered the recommendation from the High Wycombe Town Committee and noted their Band D requirements and the overall impact of any change on the budget. We took into account the timing of the HWTC meeting and the budget requirement. However given that the amount that will be raised is still in excess of their budget requirement by £4k we feel that keeping a review of the overall position is fair and as I said in Cabinet and I repeat now. We will keep the position under review and if necessary then a virement for the £8k will be considered.

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?

We will do all that we can within our remit to provide and engage with young people, and I am pleased to tell you that includes establishing a new youth council for the district and working closely with Thames Valley Police to better engage with young people and understand their safety concerns. I have also secured £60,000 to invest in a project to mentor those local young people most at risk of disadvantage and exclusion, which will start in the new financial year.

We believe that services for young people are important, but Wycombe District Council is not in a position to step in and fund County Council services.

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.

I am well aware of the work of Revive the Wye, and am supportive of the good work that they do. It is a partnership organisation, and WDC supports the partnership with an officer attending their meetings on a regular basis. We worked very closely with them on our mayor river corridor improvements in our parks over the last few years.

We continue to work with them regularly through the year in particular Roger Wilding who leads volunteers working on our sites at Desborough, The Rye, Kingsmead and Hughenden Parks.

Projects include

- removal of Himalayan Balsam, and other invasive species along the river corridors.
- Habitat improvements
- Habitat monitoring and surveys
- Rubbish removal from water courses on our land with collection and disposal by our grounds contractor.