

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
Monday 8 October 2018

AGENDA ITEM 6

Questions from Members

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

Table 13b of WDC's annual accounts for the year to March 2018 show a £10M increase in the value of investment properties compared with March 2017.

Can the Leader of the council explain how this surplus was used or will be used to benefit our residents?

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

Along with other Council Leaders in Buckinghamshire you are championing a major change in the delivery of local government in the Wycombe District and Buckinghamshire as a whole.

In leading this change do you believe it is your responsibility to ensure the best, and most well prepared solution for future local governance in the unparished area of High Wycombe?

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

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

Sometime ago, we had discussions about the unitary authorities in Buckinghamshire.

Could you please update us on the present situation?

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

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

According to a Sky News report based on Freedom of Information requests, dozens of councils have seized the initiative and produced their own analysis of the potential impact of Brexit on public services.

Brexit will ultimately be judged as a success or failure by local areas; real people in real communities. We need to take a lead on preparations for Brexit because our residents and our local businesses expect us to be ready.

What preparations has WDC made to address the impact of Brexit?

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

5. Question from Councillor Abdullah Hashmi to the Cabinet Member for Housing

According to our Draft Plan we set a target of 10,000 new homes to be delivered in the district by 2033.

Can the cabinet member for Housing please update us on the number of new houses that have been delivered to date?

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

6. Question from Councillor M Clarke to the Leader of the Council

The current MLG proposals agree on one thing, that being that the status quo is untenable. Therefore it would appear that Buckinghamshire is heading inexorably towards a unitary format, be it a single county wide unitary or a two unitary solution.

Will the Leader please tell this Council what steps she and her executive have taken to ensure the continuance of the Mayoralty of High Wycombe or are they content to condemn 750 years of continuous occupation of the position of Mayor and the unique customs of this Mayoralty to history?

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

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

With the increasing levels of obesity, one would expect all Councils would be doing all they can to encourage people to eat a healthy diet and exercise. I am therefore dismayed to note that the Leisure centre under the control of WDC is charging £6.45 for a child over 14 years, which means that anyone with average income and two or more children over 14 would be disadvantaged and discouraged from using the facilities of the Leisure Centre.

Would the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Leisure Centre tell us what incentives are provided for people to benefit from their local council Leisure Centre?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor G Peart (Cabinet Member for Community).

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

WDC has agreed to spend £200k on hiring someone to help regenerate the town centre.

This need for regeneration of the High Street and Frogmoor has been long overdue, so I say better late than never.

Can the Cabinet Member please tell us what the residents of Wycombe will be getting in return for £200k that you are intending on spending on their behalf?

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

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

Can the Leader of the Council please give a breakdown of monies spent on DFG (Disabled Facilities Grants) in the year 2017/18 and up to the end of September this year?

The breakdown in how many Grants permitted in groups of £1 to £5000 onwards.?

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

10. Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Community

Some years ago, at a full council meeting, a member of the public submitted a petition regarding toilets on the Rye. I understand that £30,000 was set aside for a feasibility study but my understanding is that said study only actually cost £20,000.

Could you please update us on the progress on having public toilets in the aforementioned vicinity?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor G Peart (Cabinet Member for Community).

11. Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration

One Public Estate, OPE provides practical and technical support and funding to councils to get the best use out of its land and property - for example, releasing land for new homes - and using the programme to deliver them.

Has WDC any plan of working in partnership with OPE to benefit from their programme to get the best use out of our land and property by taking a strategic approach to asset management?

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

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

Do you think that the unparished areas of our District, within the urban area of High Wycombe, are kept cleaned and maintained to a sufficient standard, particularly in terms of street cleaning, weeds and maintenance of footpaths?

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

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

It is reported that spending on welfare benefits for Britain's poorest families will have shrunk by nearly a quarter after a decade of austerity. By 2021 £37Bn less will be spent on working age social security compared with 2010.

In the light of this information would the Leader tell us how the introduction of the Universal Credit is progressing in the District and do you have numbers of those who have been unable to access their benefits for more than a week?

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

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

WDC has received hundreds of thousands and is due to receive many hundreds of thousands more by central government to tackle homelessness and rough sleepers.

Can the Cabinet Member please tell what net gains and benefits have been realised from the investment of this money?

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