

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
Monday 1 April 2019

AGENDA ITEM 6

Questions from Members

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

Now that the bid to challenge the imposition of Cllr Tett Leader of Bucks County Council, as the leader of shadow unitary authority has been rejected, I assume that the Leader of the Council will say what the costs were of this futile exercise and that she would allow members at least the sight of the judgement.

Is she still minded to waste more of the public money on another irrelevant legal challenge whilst taking her place on the shadow executive under Cllr Tett?

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

2. Question from Councillor M Knight to the Cabinet Member for Environment

Household waste collections are one of the most prominent services this council provides for residents, and one which impacts every resident in terms of the quality and convenience of the service offered.

As we look towards developing a new waste contract could you outline what opportunities you see to improve this service for the tax paying residents of the district?

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

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

In regards to the recent petition that was handed in at the last Full Council Meeting by Councillor Khalil Ahmed and member of the public, Trevor Snaith, requesting a Government review to look into a Town Council for High Wycombe (a petition which contained over 4,500 verified signatures) I am confident that you would agree with me that this is was a monumental task and a fantastic achievement.

However do you agree with me that a Town Council would be much more advantageous than to have individual Parishes around the town as has sometimes been referred to as, 'The Doughnut Ring'?

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

4. Question from Councillor M Clarke to the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources

Since the Lib Lab pact and more particularly since 2001 Wycombe District Council has had its finances prudently managed. This has led to substantial cash reserves. Some of these reserves are earmarked for projects starting in this financial year, however there will be some not insignificant unallocated cash reserves.

Will the Cabinet member please make clear the size of these free cash reserves both now and projected for the end of FY 19/20?

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

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

What valid reason, or indeed justification, does the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services have for the gross imbalance of parking charge increases across Wycombe District?

With some car parks in High Wycombe Town facing increases from 13% to a whopping 62.5%, Bourne End seeing an increase on their one car park of 59.8%, Princes Risborough on their two car park alone of 39.8% and 44.2% respectively, yet the good people of Marlow's who have the lowest increase from 15.5% to a mere 30.1%. This appears to be both, not only, disproportionate but grossly unfair.

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

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

Would the Leader of the council like to give us a progress report on the works being carried out to improve the Wycombe High Street and the market, and when can residents of the Town expect to see the end result?

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

7. Question from Councillor Ms A Baughan to the Cabinet Member for Youth & External Partnerships

At a recent presentation to councillors from Wycombe Youth Action we heard about how there are many young people in our district who are experiencing difficulties with their mental health, poor body image and low confidence. This is resulting in an increase in issues such as self-harm, eating disorders and can also be linked into some young people choosing to associate with gangs or become involved in criminal activity. As a councillor and a parent this causes me a great deal of concern which I think we all share.

There have been cuts to children's and youth services in the past decade and these cuts are continuing to happen. As a local authority we will end up picking up the bill for many of

the long term social and other issues caused by the problems which affect our young people. Do you agree with me that, regardless of the statutory duties we may have, we need to be responding by investing more resources in providing increased support for our young people now, to prevent a greater issue in the future?

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

8. Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Leader of the Council

On 26th Sep 2018, there was a BFP article that read 'Shabby' planter that was damaged in crash could finally be repaired'.

Your own cabinet member criticised the lack of action, the planter still remains in a state of disrepair well over a year later since it was originally damaged.

With all the other mess in and around area that you have caused since the town centre master plan was started. Can the residents of this town trust you and your cabinet to deliver what we need to make our great town something to be proud of?

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

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

Can the leader please tell us how much of taxpayers money in terms of officer time, resources and financial contribution was incurred trying to prepare for a judicial review against the government over the setup of the unitary authority which we now all know has been declined?

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

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

There are many new developments planned for East Wycombe and plans for Gomm Valley have now been submitted.

Is it time for a further review on the impact of our already overloaded infrastructure, particularly in view the UK Environment Agency report that there will be water shortages within 25 years, due to climate change?

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

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

I'm sure that you are aware of the recent events regarding Travellers congregating illegally on private land such as the former site of Homebase on London Road, Asda Superstore carpark, Buckmaster Road Playing Field, Cressex Empire Cinema carpark and many other locations.

Considering the cost to the Council and ultimately the Taxpayer in clearing up the left over debris and human excrement (which is definitely NOT from dogs as toilet paper is used!),

do you agree with me that this is an entirely unacceptable practice and could you inform Council what plans you have set up in order deal with this appalling situation both in the short term and indeed the long term?

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

12. Question from Councillor S Graham to the Cabinet Member for Housing

Does the Cabinet member for housing know when Red Kite are likely to commence work on the long awaited Star' Block' building in Pettifer Way and Chairborough Road and would she accept that this inordinate delay is not acceptable?

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

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

WDC has a cabinet of 10 members and around 7 deputy cabinet members.

The people of WDC are entitled to know whether you have carried out any performance related exercises to assess the performance of the cabinet members and deputy cabinet members and in particular whether there is a real need for so many deputy cabinet posts at considerable public expense, or are deputy cabinet positions needed to reward your supporters and keep them sweet?

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

14. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources

Thank you for recently clarifying the situation regarding reserves.

Please can you inform us, in full, where the £74 m reserves are currently invested?

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

15. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Housing

I am very pleased that Saunderton Lodge will be relocated to a central location for the benefit of families.

Can you inform us of the definite relocation site and when this will take place?

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

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

Recently you were kind enough to take up a case in Hawthorne Road where bins were on a slope.

Could you let me know the outcome of this and whether refusing to collect bins in our hilly areas is a growing problem?

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

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

The Great British Spring Clean is currently underway. The Sea Cadets, Police and local residents collected 50 bags of litter in East Wycombe on 23rd March. The event was supported by Chiltern Waste.

Do you encourage these initiatives and will you be taking part?

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