

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 15 July 2019

AGENDA ITEM 7

Questions from Members

1. Question from Councillor R Raja to the Leader of the Council or the Cabinet Member for Environment

The UK produced 11M Metric tonnes of Plastic waste in 2017 and recycled two thirds of it, or so it seemed. However, according to a report by the National Audit Office half of the UK's recyclable waste was sent overseas for recycling but much of it is likely to have ended up in landfill or the ocean instead. The dumping of our waste in the laps of poor countries has recently been exposed by TV programmes and newspaper articles which have shown that waste from the UK including from Local Authorities ends up as toxic mountains in third world countries where it causes birth defects, impaired immunity, respiratory diseases, cancers and other ailments, not to mention the devastating effects it has on wildlife and marine life.

Would the Leader of the Council /Cabinet Member for the Environment categorically assure us that no waste belonging to WDC is ending up in poor countries in the Far East on the pretext of being recycled there or are we guilty of large scale fly-tipping as well?

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

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

In October last year the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published an influential report on climate change. This report warned of the serious and devastating consequences of global warming and the human contribution to the warming of the planet.

Since then over 100 councils have led the way in the UK by formally declaring a "climate emergency" and setting targets in place to reduce the use of fossil fuels and the release of carbon into the atmosphere. For example, Oxfordshire County Council has pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Climate change is real and is already having a negative impact on the natural ecosystems, flora and fauna of our planet which in turn is presenting a risk to human life. It is essential that those of us with power do all we can, at all levels, to take action.

Do you agree with me that as a council we should be declaring a climate emergency and together working to identify actions which can alleviate the problem?

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

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

Do you agree with me that Wycombe District Council and the travellers liaison office in Aylesbury, worked very efficiently and swiftly in removing the travellers from the Dean Street Recreation Ground in Marlow (I believe in less than 24 hours) and also when the same travellers descended on Fernie Fields Recreation Ground in less than 7 hours.

Can we therefore assume that this efficiency will continue if travellers descend on any other area in Wycombe District?

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

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

The incidents of fly-tipping appear to have increased since BCC started to make it difficult for residents to dispose of excess household rubbish by closing Re-cycling waste stations. Most residents see a clear link between closing of Recycling waste collection points and increased levels of fly-tipping, which blights residential areas and increases health risks and safety concerns. Also it is seen as a revenge of the consumer society we live in.

Would the Cabinet member for the Environment/Waste recycling agree there is indeed a link between closing of recycling waste collection points and increased levels of fly-tipping, accepting also that the council's waste management strategy is nothing short of shambles and is a result of this council being in cahoots with the BCC by not opposing the waste site closures or do you have another explanation for this mess?

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

5. Question from Councillor S Graham to the Cabinet Member for Environment

The Bucks Free of 21st June 2019 carried a picture of over grown bushes along John Hall Way, High Wycombe.

The picture showed the overgrown bushes covering a large part of the footpath, which means that people have to step on the road and this would be especially difficult for anyone in a wheelchair.

Would the Cabinet member for Environment agree with me that this is an unacceptable state of affairs and can she tell me of any steps she has taken to ensure that overgrown bushes are cleared from roads and sidewalks on a regular basis before they cause an obstruction, especially during the summer months?

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

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

We will have a considerable number of challenges and decisions to make as we move towards a unitary council.

Does the leader agree with me that the officers are key to a successful delivery and that we have the team in place to do this?

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

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

On the 31st July 2019 we celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the Addison Act, which paved the way for large-scale council housing. We must now be mindful of the 200,000 people in temporary housing across the UK and the 1.2 million households on social housing waiting lists.

In High Wycombe there is a lack of new social housing being built. Social housing has been sold off under the Right to Buy scheme without being replaced, leaving people in Wycombe without the opportunity to rent at an affordable price. Can I ask if the leader is happy with the general state of social housing in Wycombe and what she has done to address these issues, in light of additional borrowing available from central government?

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 Community

How many public events does Wycombe District Council support each year through funding, staffing or use of premises, can a list be provided?

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

9. Question from Councillor Ms A Baughan to the Cabinet Member for Community

The multi-use games area at Ash Hill Primary School was recently refurbished using CIL funding of £30,000. The Micklefield Neighbourhood Action Group felt that it not being used enough by the community and so my colleague Cllr Julia Wassell enlisted the support of Guy Britton of High Wycombe Lawn Tennis Club to deliver free tennis training for local young people. This has been a great success, engaging over 20 young people in sport and physical activity. There are now plans to run similar sessions on the Rye.

This is a wonderful example of bringing together different funding streams and local organisations to deliver opportunities to the community and particularly to young people. Will you join me in congratulating all those involved in this successful project?

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

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

Would the Leader of the Council like to give us an update on the housing front as far as the number of dwellings to have been built under the Local Plan by now?

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