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Queen Victoria Road
High Wycombe
Bucks HP11 1BB

Council Supplement – Public & Member Questions

Date: 23 March 2020
Time: 6.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber
District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe Bucks

Membership

Chairman: Councillor P R Turner
Vice Chairman: Councillor S K Raja

Councillors: Mrs J A Adey, Mrs S Adoh, K Ahmed, Z Ahmed, M C Appleyard, M Asif, D H G Barnes, Ms A Baughan, S Broadbent, Miss S Brown, H Bull, D J Carroll, M Clarke, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, A D Collingwood, M P Davy, C Etholen, R Farmer, R Gaffney, S Graham, A R Green, G C Hall, M Hanif, M Harris, C B Harriss, M A Hashmi, A E Hill, A Hussain, M Hussain, M Hussain JP, D A Johncock, Mrs G A Jones, M E Knight, D Knights, Mrs J D Langlely, A Lee, Mrs W J Mallen, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, I L McEnnis, R Newman, Ms C J Oliver, B E Pearce, G Peart, R Raja, S Saddique, J A Savage, R J Scott, D A C Shakespeare OBE, N J B Teesdale, Mrs J E Teesdale, A Turner, Ms J D Wassell, D M Watson, C Whitehead, R Wilson, L Wood and Ms K S Wood

Fire Alarm - In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit. Do not stop to collect personal belongings and do not use the lifts. Please congregate at the Assembly Point at the corner of Queen Victoria Road and the River Wye, and do not re-enter the building until told to do so by a member of staff.

Filming/Recording/Photographing at Meetings – please note that this may take place during the public part of the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders. Notices are displayed within meeting rooms.

Agenda

Item		Page
5	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	1
	Written questions may be asked of the Leader or any Cabinet Member if submitted to the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services no later than 12 noon on Monday 16 March 2020. Questions will be submitted in the order in which they were	

received.

A questioner will have a maximum of 1 minute to ask a question and the answer shall not exceed 3 minutes. Any questioner may put one supplementary question without notice within a maximum time of 1 minute and the answer may not exceed 2 minutes.

6 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

2 - 6

Questions to the Leader or any Cabinet Member must be submitted by 12 noon on Monday 16 March 2020.

A questioner will have a maximum of 1 minute to ask a question and the answer shall not exceed 3 minutes. Any questioner may put one supplementary question without notice within a maximum time of 1 minute and the answer may not exceed 2 minutes.

Questions shall be taken first from the Group Leaders of the political parties who shall be entitled to ask an initial Leader's question from his/her group, of which written notice shall have been given to the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services prior to the meeting.

The order of questions shall then permit the first question from each other Councillor to be asked before any subsequent questions from the same Councillor. One question will be taken in turn from the same Councillor unless there are no other questions to be asked.

Every member asking an oral question is permitted to ask one supplementary question without notice provided that it is not substantially the same as a question that was put to a Council meeting during the past 6 months.

Any question remaining unanswered after 30 minutes will be answered within 10 working days in writing after the meeting by the appropriate Member and appended to the minutes of the meeting.

**For further information, please contact Peter Druce - Democratic Services Officer
01494 421210 (ext 3210) peter_druce@wycombe.gov.uk on 01494 421210,
committeeservices@wycombe.gov.uk**

Agenda Item 5

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 23 March 2020

AGENDA ITEM 5

Questions from Members of the Public

1. Question from Ms S Jamil to the Cabinet Member for Environment.

On Marlow Hill, the Nitrogen Dioxide monitoring station S4 which was closed in December 2018, consistently had the highest concentrations of this pollutant - Nitrogen Dioxide of anywhere within Wycombe's air quality management area. This is far below the target of 40µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic metres). What has or is being done to remedy this?

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

2. Question from Mr T Snaith to the Cabinet Member for Housing.

In the light of the decision to transfer council housing stock to Red Kite, is the Cabinet Member for Housing, and though her the Councillors nominated on the Red Kite Board, satisfied that the level of social housing is adequate to meet the needs of residents, and in particular are there sufficient homes available for families with 2 or 3 bedrooms; those in need of social sheltered housing and those over 55 and are there any issues or concerns we need to be aware of given the current social homes crisis?

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

Agenda Item 6

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 23 March 2020

AGENDA ITEM 6

Questions from Members

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

WDC has wasted over £65,000 of the council's reserves by hiring three sets of professional bodies to undertake a consultative exercise, as part of its Community Governance Review and then disdainfully rejected the outcome of the consultation, which favoured a Town council for High Wycombe, by cravenly deferring the issue of the Town Council to the Shadow Executive of the New Buckinghamshire Council for a decision.

Why do you disrespect the views of the residents of High Wycombe so much by not accepting the outcome of the consultation?

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

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

It is entirely fitting that we should celebrate the many good things that Wycombe District Council has done over the years. It is understandable that the Conservative Group, which has led this authority for all but four years of its history, will take much of the credit for these achievements. However, I would like to pay tribute to the many opposition councillors who have served on this council; the local campaign and pressure groups that have contributed to bringing positive change in our communities; and the many members of the public who have contributed to the work of the council by attending meetings and getting involved.

Will you, the Leader, echo these sentiments and outline some of the ways that you feel our District has seen positive change through the work of constructive opposition councillors, campaign groups and individual residents?

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

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

I am sure that you agree with me, it is a great honour, privilege and personal pride to have served as a Councillor for Wycombe District Council, particularly in its last term.

Could you assure members and the public that this wonderful, iconic building will still be used by the Unitary Council?

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

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

I understand that the High Wycombe Society wrote to the Leader of the Council on 28 February expressing fears that the over £200m WDC reserves were to be handed over to the new Bucks Council.

Naturally, the trustees of the society, like the rest of the residents of WDC, would like to have assurances that the monies so transferred will be ring fenced and only spent on projects in the current Wycombe District Council area rather than dropped in the black hole at Bucks County Council?

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

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

Last July, we were told by the leader that 'Officers are key to supporting our transition and to maintaining the provision of essential public services during transition'. We were further told that a new chief executive had been hired to replace Karen Satterford, and that it would be up to the new chief executive to steer the new organisation and plan for the long term.

Can either the Leader or the new chief executive enlighten us as to how this has panned out since and how many officers have been saved from losing their jobs?

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

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

A fortnight ago Chris Whitty, England's Chief Medical Officer, was predicting that by the time of today's council meeting the government may have to consider becoming more proactive and may have to take more drastic actions to halt the spread of the Coronavirus.

If the unfortunate prediction by Mr Whitty has been realised or about to be realised in the next few days or weeks, is the Leader confident that sufficient contingency plans exist to inform and support lonely and vulnerable individuals to survive the potential 'lockdown'?

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

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

What kind of a legacy will Wycombe District Council leave for the people of High Wycombe?

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

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

Regarding the coronavirus, what support, advice and services have been put in place by the Council to support Wycombe residents?

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

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

There has been much Social Media interest in Red Kite's pilot project with Twenty11 Housing. As I understand it, there are many positive aspects to this scheme. How can we support the people on the Homechoice lists while waiting for further homes planned in RKs current development programme?

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

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

Friday 8th May 2020 will be a bank holiday to commemorate 75 years since VE day.

High Wycombe played a significant role during WW2, with so many factories manufacturing arms and of course the famous Mosquito Bomber.

In addition the RAF Bomber Command Station was situated nearby, plus the Headquarters of The American Eighth Army Airforce located at Wycombe Abbey (which incidentally served more than once as a concert venue for the late Glenn Miller - including his very last concert in fact).

Will there be events to be held in the town to celebrate this anniversary?

I'm hoping that you would agree with me that High Wycombe should celebrate this anniversary and that it will bring this community closer together after the divisions brought about by Brexit.

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

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

Would the Leader give us some idea of the total number of employees at WDC, by category (Managers, members of staff, number of manual workers) and say how many of these have no jobs to go to with the New Unitary Authority?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Barnes (Deputy Leader of the Council).

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

WDC has consistently prided itself on the way it kept the council tax down over recent years. However, we now find that residents of WDC not only face the highest rise in council tax of any other residents of the New Buckinghamshire Unitary Council but are unlikely to have any control over the reserves either.

As Leader of WDC do you not regret not having spent these reserves on the people of WDC?

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

13. Question from Councillor M Knight to Cabinet Member for Finance

Over the years there have been many wild theories and suppositions about the Wycombe District Council financial reserves. Scandal and conspiracy theories have been rife. Depending on who you listen to they have apparently been lost in Iceland, siphoned off to only fund vanity projects in Marlow and in a final twist, according to some commentators, are soon to be sucked into a black hole somewhere north of Princes Risborough.

Could you please give us a clear and transparent account of our reserves – how much they are worth, what projects they are allocated to and the value of funds being transferred to the new Buckinghamshire Council?

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

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

In view of moving to a Bucks wide Council, what is the total number of people on the Housing waiting list in the whole of Bucks and Wycombe specifically?

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

15. Question from Councillor Ms A Baughan to Cabinet Member for Housing

Given the Housing situation; under our Unitary Authority, will increased Section 106 money be available to benefit social housing within the Wycombe District?

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

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

It is a great shame and disappointment that WDC Cabinet deferred the question regarding the High Wycombe Town Council to the Shadow Executive of the Buckinghamshire

Unitary Authority who in turn have deferred it to the new Full Council Buckinghamshire Authority to be discussed at some later date in the future.

Do you agree with me therefore that it's now going to be a very long delay before the people of High Wycombe have a chance to see anything like a Town Council?

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

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

As we are marking the closure of Wycombe District Council today, would it be a good idea to permanently close the Abbey Way pedestrian underpass at the same time? It is unfinished and obsolete business.

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