

CITY OF SHEFFIELD

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL – 3 JULY 2013

COPIES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THERETO

Questions

Answers

Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore)

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| 1. At the April meeting of Council, you stated that you expect there to be a start on the Sevenstone site within the 2014/15 year. Do you still believe this to be the case? | Yes |
| 2. At the April meeting of Full Council, you stated that you expect Hammerson to submit a planning application for Sevenstone this year. Do you still believe this to be the case? | Yes |
| 3. Do you believe the people of Sheffield are beginning to lose patience with Hammerson and the Council in delivering the Sevenstone project? | I believe the people of Sheffield wish to see a new retail quarter in Sheffield. That is what we are committed to delivering. |
| 4. On which dates in past eight weeks have you personally met with representatives from Hammerson? | We are continuing our negotiations with Hammerson and, as I have previously stated, the Cabinet Member for Business Skills and Development and I have attended several meetings. |
| 5. Do you welcome reports that your Cabinet Member for Business is considering imposing a 'hotel tax'? | As made clear in our amendment to your Notice of Motion, the Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development is not considering 'imposing' a hotel tax. |
| 6. What progress has been made since the 20th March in allocating the £1 million earmarked for the Fairness Commission outcomes? Please list the specific budget allocations for each project. | Any further expenditure related to the Fairness Commission outcomes will be published in accordance with the usual decision making process |

Questions of Councillor Joe Otten to Councillor Jack Scott (Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene)

1. When do you expect that you will be a position to brief the Council on your Administration's legal attempt to secure further savings from Veolia?

This question will not be answered as the Council will not prejudice its legal position.

I refer you to the answer given on 3rd April:
"It is a revealing indication of your approach to a serious matter that you would seek to score trite points rather than focus on securing the best deal for the people of Sheffield. As such, further questions in this vain will be referred to this answer".
2. How many households in Sheffield have currently signed up to the Veolia's new charged-for green bin service?

5045.
3. What publicity have you undertaken to promote the city-wide provision of the charged-for green bin service?

We have published this on the website and via the press.

As it is a Veolia product, they have undertaken their own publicity.
4. How much has the Council contributed to the red sack service this financial year?

£13,000 in total
5. How many red sacks has the Council distributed in this financial year and each of the last three financial years?

2010 - 9440 sacks handed to students (previous Administration)

2011 - 10360 sacks handed to students (current Administration)

2012 - 10500 sacks handed to students

2013 – over 16000 sacks have been handed to students.

Overall 20,000 bags could be used this year.
6. What proportion of highway trees have been removed in completed Streets Ahead zones?

For obvious reasons, trees are not removed exclusively in line with zone works

In terms of proportions, 0.9% of Sheffield's highways trees have so

far been removed.

These have been for trees that are identified as dead, dying, dangerous or diseased.

7. How many requests for the removal of highway trees from Amey have so far been refused by the Council?

Removal is a last resort. Each tree removal request is reviewed by Council officers and in many circumstances there is a dialogue between Amey and officers before a final agreement is reached.

We employ qualified tree inspectors within the Highway Maintenance team who verify and provide robust auditing and challenge of tree felling requests. This approach ensures agreement can be reached.

8. What communication has the Council provided so far, regarding the disruption of buses due to Streets Ahead project?

Our programme of planned works are on the Council's website. We communicate with the public through the letters and leaflets we distribute and the roadshows that are held.

The bus and tram companies are fully aware of our project programme. Project staff meet regularly with transport companies and the Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) to mitigate disruption.

There is then daily contact with the operational manager from the PTE from Amey.

The PTE has stated that the arrangements are working well and minimising disruption.

9. What progress has been made in agreeing a verge protection strategy with Amey?

This is an entrenched issue across the country.

Good progress has been made in identifying a series of options that can be applied consistently across the City. These will be refined further over the summer.

Streets Ahead will continue to make

safe any verges that represent a danger.

10. In November 2011, the Cabinet Highways Committee granted the power to remove a vehicle, where “if left in its current position, would impede the undertaking of highways works by the PFI Service Provider on a highway to which a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order applies”. How many times has this power been used since the start of the Street Ahead project?

Parking Services have used the power 21 times.

Questions of Councillor Andrew Sangar to Councillor Jack Scott (Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene)

1. How many farmers have been sub-contracted for snow-clearing work by the Council in each of the last five years?

Three local farmers have been employed in the past. We have continued this under Streets Ahead. Farmers supplement the main winter clearance operations carried out by a fleet of gritters.

It is important that the equipment farmers use is safe, effective and GPS enabled so their locations can be tracked against our official treatment routes to optimise results.

2. How many farmers had their services for snow-clearing declined in 2012-13, who had previously been sub-contracted by the Council?

I understand my officers have provided a briefing to you on this matter and so I am surprised you remain unaware of the issues.

At the start of the Streets Ahead, project, Fleet Technicians inspected the machinery that would be used, which is owned by the three farmers.

Minor corrective work was required to one of these farmers' equipment and this was completed.

The other two farmers' equipment needed more substantial work to be acceptable and safe. The cost of this work would be returned in a single winter season.

One chose to have this work undertaken and his services were re-

commissioned.

The third farmer chose not to have this improvement work carried out and so did not provide gritting services for Streets Ahead. However, he did provide support with snow-ploughing as his equipment for this activity was at the correct standard.

Questions of Councillor Ian Auckland to Councillor Leigh Bramall (Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development)

1. What additional allocations have been made from the Council's Keep Sheffield Working Fund since the last meeting of Council?

Total allocations made to date from the Keep Sheffield Working (KSW) Fund are £742,000 out of the £800,000 total to deliver jobs and business growth through six new and innovative projects. For example, RISE has created 30 new job opportunities with local SMEs and attracted over 700 applications from graduates. Proposals for the final £58,000 in the KSW fund will be considered shortly.

2. Can bus users in Sheffield expect major changes to bus routes in the next six months?

It is for the Partnership to decide on any route changes. None are due until October and so it is too early to say what changes may occur at this stage, although the move of Castle Market will be a consideration.

3. What steps have you taken so far to ensure that the Sheffield Bus Partnership is effectively monitored by bus users?

The Partnership Agreement is posted online for the public to view and it has been to Sheffield on the Move. Performance is monitored by the ITA (who's reports are open to the public), and the latest data has shown that punctuality is 2 percentage points up on last year, satisfaction is now the best in the County, complaints are down 29% and adult fare paying passenger numbers are up 5.8%. The first year of the Partnership Agreement has seen the initial changes made as part of the Agreement being implemented and established. It is felt that, from a year onwards, implementation of a network will enable stable performance monitoring and we are now considering how best the public can be involved in this – something I have asked SYPTE to develop proposals for. The Partnership are also looking at how best to publish this data for the public to see.

4. In each of the last 6 months, how many Penalty Charge Notices have been

January - 9
February - 7

cancelled due to failure to respond to formal representation within the statutory timescale of 56 days?	March - 5 April - 8 May - 14 June - 1
5. In each of the last 6 months, how many Penalty Charge Notices appeals (bus lane and parking) have been upheld due to not being contested by the Council?	January - 15 February - 15 March - 17 April - 15 May - 18 June - 29
6. In each of the last 6 months, what has the average response time been to informal challenges of Penalty Charge Notices?	January - 28 days February - 21 days March - 35 days April - 50 days May - 60 days June - 65 days
7. What progress has so far been made in awarding JESSICA funding?	CBRE manage the JESSICA Fund. Currently, three potential developments are being negotiated on, with a number of others being assessed for viability.
8. How much of the £25 million allocated to Sheffield City Region through the third round of the Regional Growth Fund has been successfully awarded so far?	Roughly £24m of the £25m has been allocated. Of the £25m Regional Growth Fund, a total of £3.8m has been awarded/approved and is the process of being contracted. Of the remaining £21.2m based on the current pipeline position, which is subject to change as projects move through the appraisal process, around £20m is committed. The balance of funding will be allocated to the project reserve list.
9. Will each Streets Ahead zone have a minimum level of PFI opportunities and enhancements investment guaranteed?	No minimum level has been set. Each Ward and Local Action Partnership, which are co-terminus with former Community Assembly areas, have a number of zones within them. The schemes shortlisted by each former Community Assembly will be assessed by officers, in conjunction with local councillors. Each LAP area/former Community Assembly

area will get new schemes, depending on that process and the funding available.

Questions of Councillor Alison Brelsford to Councillor Isobel Bowler (Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Leisure)

1. What practical steps have the Council taken to raise funds to support Richard Caborn's proposed vision for the future of the Don Valley Stadium site?

The Council is preparing a marketing brief to seek expressions of interest from potential private investors which will be issued this month. In addition, the Council has made a funding bid for a new primary and secondary school along with a sponsor bid for a second University Technical College. If successful, these schemes will form an anchor to the sport and well-being activity proposed for the site. The capital, if received, will help with site redevelopment.
2. I am sure you will be aware of reports in the local media in March this year that up to £2.5 million could be invested upgrading Woodbourn Road. To what extent do you believe these proposals helped to placate athletics group who at the time were campaigning to keep Don Valley stadium open?

The Council has never said that we need to invest £2.5M in Woodbourn Road in order to reopen the athletics training facilities. The first phase investment to refurbish the venue requires £300K and this money has been secured (150k from the Council and 150k from Sport England). Work has already started and is on schedule. The athletics clubs have been part of the discussions, are fully aware and supportive of the current level of investment. Of course there is always the potential to invest more in future but efforts are currently centred on meeting the September deadline, with available finance used to create a first class track and field footprint that allows all future development to be considered.
3. Can you confirm that the current committed spend at Woodbourn Road is significantly short of £2.5 million?

There has never been a requirement nor a commitment to invest £2.5M in Woodbourn Road. If additional funding were available (over the 300k already identified and currently being spent) there could potentially be an indoor facility to sit alongside the outdoor track. This would, of course, require additional revenue support which would also need to be identified. Any such development would require a wider

demand, funding and business case. The current view of Sheffield City Council, the local athletics clubs, Sport England and the athletics governing body is that the combination of a refurbished Woodbourn Road outdoor facility plus the indoor facilities at the English Institute of Sport close by give Sheffield some of the best athletics facilities in the UK.

4. I am sure you will have noted comments by Toni Minichiello that “At the moment, [Woodbourn Road] is a potato field surrounded by a running track”. To what extent, do you think your Administration has misled members of the Sheffield athletics community like Toni Minichiello?

The athletics clubs are fully backing the refurbishment plans for the stadium and the details have been shared with them. The current £300K programme of works is underway and includes the floodlights, jump pits, throws area, a deep clean of the track, spectator seating and of course the infield. Landscaping the infield is in the end of the programme after the other works which could damage grassed areas have been completed. This is on schedule and on budget.

5. If Woodbourn Road cannot be brought up to a satisfactory standard by September, will your Administration still plough ahead with the closure of Don Valley Stadium?

The work is on schedule and Woodbourn will be of the required standard by the time Don Valley Stadium closes.

6. What progress has been made since June in awarding £5 million of unallocated Olympic Legacy Funding?

This is a city partnership project – not just Sheffield City Council. Work continues on examining the business cases and funding sources for a number of options. I understand that the partnership will wish to make further announcements in the autumn

Questions of Councillor Colin Ross to Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families)

1. When the original consultation on discretionary transport for denominational schools was approved were you aware that the proposed timescales did not meet statutory guidelines?

The original consultation was 22 days rather than the 28 days set out as best practice in the statutory guidance. We did this slightly shorter consultation in order to allow Y6 parents to hear a decision and then to reconsider their preference for a school place within the admissions deadlines. Having listened to what people said, we decided to reconsult in order to allow more time for reflection and comment on the proposals. The questionnaire used in the second consultation provided a much better response rate (16% as opposed to the 4% response in the first consultation).
2. What was the cost of further consultation agreed by Cabinet Member Decision on 21st February, 2013?

All the costs of the second consultation have been absorbed within existing budgets. The majority of the cost was officer time in managing the consultation. There was no charge for the use of premises. The final cost will be just below £5,000.
3. What steps have you taken to ensure that the effects of changes to the Council's Home to School Transport policy will be effectively monitored?

We have written to parents and set out the steps for them to appeal if they are no longer eligible for a discretionary free bus pass. We will take all reasonable steps to hear those appeals before the beginning of term. We will also provide individual advice and support for any parents who contact us about needing to transfer their child to another school. In the longer term, we will maintain our close liaison with the Church Authorities over admissions and will review with them whether there has been significant change to the pattern of applications as a result of this policy change.

Question of Councillor Andrew Sangar to Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families)

Will parents of children at Notre Dame and All Saints schools have sufficient time to appeal Home to School Transport decisions prior to the start of the 2013-14 academic year?

We have given a commitment to doing everything reasonable to enable appeals to be heard before the start of term, including appeal panels members setting aside time throughout the whole of August to hear cases.

Questions of Councillor Penny Baker to Councillor Harry Harpham (Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods)

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| 1. How many empty homes have been brought back in to use in a) the 2012-13 financial year and b) so far in the 2013-14 financial year? | I will write to you with this information. |
| 2. What progress has been made in the Construction and Building Services retender for Social Housing Repairs and Maintenance since the Cabinet agreed a report on 10th April? | I will write to you with this information. |
| 3. What action will your administration take to ensure the standard of private sector housing in Sheffield is improved? | I will write to you with this information. |

Questions of Councillor David Baker to Councillor Mazher Iqbal (Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion)

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| 1. How many community groups have you personally met regarding the running of libraries, since the publication of the libraries prospectus? Please list all groups that you have met. | Please see my answer from last month. |
| 2. How many commercial operators have you personally met regarding the running of libraries, since the publication of the libraries prospectus? Please list all commercial operators that you have met. | Please see my answer from last month. |
| 3. Have you yet made any financial guarantees to community groups or potential commercial operators, regarding the running of libraries? | Please see my answer from last month. |
| 4. How many libraries received no specific expressions of interest? | There have been 27 Registrations of Interest |

Questions of Councillor Roger Davison to Councillor Mary Lea (Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Independent Living)

1. What steps have been taken to support dementia sufferers who currently use the service provided by Bole Hill View and Norbury resource centres?

Norbury closed at the end of March 2013. All services were transferred to Hurlfield View. All service users were offered the option to use this service or supported to find alternative support solutions using their personal budget. However, most users have chosen to continue to have the support provided at Hurlfield View. Responses from users and carers have been positive.

Bole Hill View will close at the end of September. The same approach is being adopted with centre staff supporting users and carers on an individual basis to find alternative support solutions.

In addition the City Council has secured alternative respite bed provision from SheffCare. This means that 6 respite care beds will be available in 3 of the Sheffcare centres and offered exclusively for people with Dementia. These can be pre-booked and was something carers and users said were important to them.

Plans for the extension to Hurlfield View to accommodate additional emergency care beds are now progressing.

Finally – the Age UK day centre will be relocated to the Centre in the Park from September; this will also offer a more flexible type of service which will allow users to buy hours and half day care.
2. How many local residents have opted-out of the Council's City-Wide Care Alarm Service following changes to the council's charging structure?

1,999
3. I am sure you will be aware of reports in the local media that the Council are using almost £300,000 from City-Wide Care Alarm fees to subsidise general overheads. Which other care fees in your portfolio are used to subsidise general overheads?

To be clear City-Wide Alarm fees, or any other care fees, are not used to subsidise general overheads. Costs attributed to City Wide care alarms, are legitimate costs of running an in-house service. In terms of charging for other care provision there are two areas of care, Residential and Nursing home care and home care, the vast majority of these services are delivered through private providers.

Questions of Councillor Andrew Sangar to Councillor Bryan Lodge (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)

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| 1. How many Council employees have been appointed on a salary greater than £50,000 since June, including new starters and internal appointments? Please list each post with corresponding salary. | No change from last month. |
| 2. What progress has been made since June in recovering outstanding Trading Standards debts from other South Yorkshire local authorities? | In the last month, discussions have been had at Chief Executive Officer level and we are awaiting proposals from the other Local Authorities. |
| 3. What practical steps will you take to ensure that historic slippage in the capital programme is not repeated? | We have centralised and standardised more project management activity in one team – the Capital Delivery Service in Place under the Director of Capital and Major Projects. This team, along with the finance team, is leading a thorough review of capital spending by working with the other key services involved in Capital. |