

CITY OF SHEFFIELD

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL – 5 FEBRUARY 2014

COPIES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THERETO

Questions

Answers

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

1. What local events, or funding available to community groups, will the Council be supporting to mark the centenary of the start of the First World War?

The Council is supporting events to mark the centenary of the start of the First World War by co-ordinating the activities being planned by various organisations and community groups across the City. These events will be publicised on Sheffield City Council's website from February 2014. Funding is available to organisations and individuals who wish to organise activities that support the aims of the Community Covenant which are to:

- encourage local communities to support the armed forces community in their areas, and vice versa
- promote understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the armed forces community
- recognise and remember the sacrifices made by the armed forces community
- encourage activities which help to integrate the armed forces community into local life.

2. I am sure you will have noted the article in the Sheffield Star on 2nd January, which reported that the Highway Agency have submitted no concerns to the proposed Ikea development. Will you now work with the developers to ensure this planning application is approved?

As previously said and repeated often, I would like to see an Ikea development in Sheffield.

3. Do you agree with the Sheffield Star that your reaction to Sheffield City Council's bludgeoning consultancy bill was "pathetic"?

I am not aware of the context or detail of this quote.
4. Do you agree with the Labour Party's Housing spokesperson on the London Assembly when she called on the Labour Party to "apologise" for its dire record in building social housing?

I am not aware of the context or detail of this quote.
5. Do you agree with Ken Livingstone who accused the Labour Party of "cowardice" for building up billions in debts rather than taking difficult decisions?

I am not aware of the context or detail of this quote.
6. What is the current cost of conventional autopsies at the Medico Legal Centre and how are these costs met?

The fee paid to the pathologist – is £96.80 for a straight forward autopsy and £276.90 for a forensic case – in both these cases costs are met by the Authority.

If you mean the full actual cost then this would include apportioning the full costs of the Medico Legal Centre and Coroner's Service to the number of actual autopsies, this varies from period to period.
7. What progress has been made in your campaign for free digital autopsies at the Medico Legal Centre?

Actually the campaign is being led by Councillor Ibrar Hussain.

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

1. Do you still intend to only deliver five libraries through your proposed community library model?

There will be no decision on the current proposals until Cabinet on the 19th February 2014. The feedback from extensive public consultation is being analysed and will be published with the Cabinet report.
2. Will the quality of submitted business plans have any impact on the priority lists of eligibility for your proposed community library model?

The current proposals are that all initial business plans submitted by the deadline of 24th January will be evaluated and groups will be notified re moving on to the next stage which is submission of a full business plan by end of June 2014 at the latest.
3. As a result of the recent consultation, do you plan to alter any of the services that will be offered pro-bono under your proposed independent library model?

As previously stated we are currently analysing the public consultation feedback and the issues raised by people re concerns and ideas for Sheffield's future library service.
4. Will all groups managing libraries – under both the independent and community models – receive the library building at peppercorn rent?

Yes, for community groups managing independent and community libraries.
5. Please outline how much discretionary funding each ward will receive through its Local Action Partnership in 2014-15.

Details of 2014-15 will be made available when the budget is published.

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

1. Have Veolia consulted you about their green waste offer for 2014? If so, do you support their proposals and when will these be announced?

I have discussed this matter with Veolia. The proposals are not yet finalised.
2. What progress has been made on the climate change adaptation strategy, as reported to the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 21st March 2013?

The report has been drafted. Following the previous Scrutiny Committee meeting, I understand this is due to be further considered by them in the near future.
3. I am sure you will be aware that the Government's Code of Practice for Safety at Street Works recommends that when sites on footways are unattended, an enhanced barrier around the excavation should be provided. Why have you failed to provide this basic requirement during Streets Ahead works?

This requirement has been met. Excavations are not left exposed when unattended. There are occasions where barriers are blown down, moved or tampered with, in which case they are replaced.
4. How many trees have so far been felled through the Streets Ahead project that will not be replaced within the immediate or near vicinity?

Tree removal is always a last resort. Trees are only removed where they are damaged, diseased, dangerous, dying or damaging the footway.

Where trees are removed, they are almost always replaced in the same location.

Sometimes this isn't possible. For example if there is a large amount of utility equipment under the pavements - electricity, gas, cable companies etc, which can make it difficult to find a safe and suitable place in which to plant a replacement tree.

In addition, pavements need to be passable and comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.
5. I'm sure you will be aware that under the Streets Ahead contract Amey are required to achieve a number of milestones in each milestone year of the

As you are fully aware, this information is commercially sensitive.

Core Investment Period. How many of these milestones did Amey successfully achieve in Year 1 of the contract?

This view is shared by both the Director of Legal Services and the Director of Commercial Services.

6. What financial gain did the Council make in Year 1 of the contract through financial damages or reductions to the Annual Unitary Charge as a result of the failure to meet the contractual milestones?

See question 5

7. Since the commencement of work how many milestones, or starting milestone indices, have been retrospectively altered? Please list all examples.

See question 5

8. What financial gain would the Council have made in Year 1 of the contract through financial damages or reductions to the Annual Unitary Charge had any retrospective changes to milestones, or starting milestone indices, not been agreed?

See question 5

Question of Councillor Trevor Bagshaw to Councillor Jack Scott (the Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene)

What specific progress has he made in resolving the issues raised in the petition to December's Full Council from the residents of Newgate Close, High Green?

Regrettably, we have still not received a reply from your Government's Minister on this issue, which is absolutely necessary to make further progress.

Question of Councillor Robert Murphy to Councillor Ben Curran (the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)

Answered by Councillor Jack Scott (the Cabinet Member for Environment, Recycling and Streetscene)

What will be the financial consequences of the recent change to the Highways PFI contract for this and future years?

We do not anticipate any net financial consequence.

I note that you continue to oppose this project whilst taking credit for the improvements we have delivered in Central Ward.

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

1. You have previously stated that work is being undertaken to assess additional revenue raised from the increases in city-centre parking charges. When will you be a position to brief the Council on the additional revenue?

This information has already been provided to you by John Bann, Head of Transport, Traffic and Parking Services.
2. How many of the Moor Market units have now been successfully let and what percentage occupancy does this represent?

177 of 190 have been let, equating to 93%. Discussions to let the remaining stalls is ongoing.
3. How many applications for let in the Moor Market have been declined by the Council?

Of the 150 applications received up to the closing date for expressions of interest, 22 were declined as they did not reach the required criteria and 17 were declined due to lack of available space in the “miscellaneous section” or “café area”.

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

1. In the years 2011-12; 2012-13; and 2013-14 how much was budgeted for the maintenance in each of the following parks at the start of the financial year and what was the actual final spend at the end of the financial year, in both cases excluding car parking income: Millhouses, Graves, and Hillsborough?

As Parks and Public Realm teams were integrated for the first time in 2012/13 there is no comparable data for the years you have requested.

2. What discussions have you held with South Yorkshire's Police and Crime Commissioner regarding charging for events?

The Council has an ongoing discussion with South Yorkshire Police (SYP) about charging for policing events in the City. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) discussed this in his presentation to Council in December. The SYP Policy on Special Police Services and what charges they will levy has still to be released and is still going through their internal process. We have taken legal advice as have the organisers of Tramlines and Fright Night and made it clear that in our opinion based on case law, events such as Fright Night and majority of Tramlines festival does not fall within the ACPO Guidance for Charging and therefore cannot have a levy against it. The PCC is fully aware of the Council's position on this and I was pleased to hear his assurance that the police would not be charging to police Fright Night as potential charging was a risk to the viability of the event.

3. What allocations of community funding in relation to the Tour de France have already been made and what future allocations will be made?

There is a fund to be allocated towards community based artistic commissions for the Tour de France. This comprises 5k Sheffield City Council funding, 45k Arts Council funding and the cultural consortium is seeking to double this with corporate contributions. Community organisations have been invited to bid for grants to put

on animation and activity in the hubs on the route on race weekend and in the City Centre for the launch of the 100 day Yorkshire Festival on 27 March. Hubs where we are seeking to fund community commissions are Coronation Park Oughtibridge, Grenoside Park, Abbeyfield Park, and Wincobank Common.

Applications are due in by 9 February and groups will be informed by the end of the month.

In addition there is a range of in kind support for community organisations and a programme of well attended community workshops are being held to support people to make the most of the great opportunity the Tour de France offers for our communities and our City.

Question of Councillor Diana Stimely to Councillor Isobel Bowler (Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Leisure)

What proposals exist to transfer the management of more open and green spaces to trusts and what consultation has been undertaken on these proposals?

There are no proposals to transfer the management of open and green spaces to other organisations or trusts. If proposals were to be made in the future these would be subject to public consultation and due Council decision making processes. This process of consultation and Council decision making was most recently used for the proposed transfer of long term management of Burbage to RSPB/National Trust (Cabinet – July 2013).

Questions of Councillor Andrew Sangar to Councillor Ben Curran (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)

1. Will you recommend further revenue and capital allocations for Sorby House, Forum House or Vestry Hall as part of your 2014-15 budget recommendations?

Details of the 2014-15 will be made available when the budget is published.
2. What steps have you taken since joining the Cabinet to recover outstanding debts relating to South Yorkshire Trading Standards?

I have given the Chief Executive a mandate to take any action he feels appropriate.
3. Do you intend to protect the pay of high earning staff as part of your 2014-15 budget?

Details of the 2014-15 will be made available when the budget is published.
4. How many external organisations does the Council pay subscription fees to? Please list each organisation with relevant costs.

Up to date figures are not available as the figures for the year 2013/14 aren't available because the financial year has not ended.
5. How much could the Council save from the Capita contract by charging for the collection of trade union membership subscriptions?

Collection of trade union membership subscriptions is undertaken by Capita as part of payroll services not by Sheffield City Council. Any change in the terms of the contract would need to be renegotiated.
6. How many funded parking permits for staff have been approved by the Council and at what cost?

The Council purchases approximately 85 permits which are all for social workers at a cost of £54k from external car parking providers.
7. To which external groups does the Council provide administrative support and at what cost?

The Council provides administrative and committee support to the South Yorkshire Joint Committees on Archives and Archaeology. Other South Yorkshire authorities provide similar support to other joint arrangements (such as the Committee for the Rotherham and Sheffield Shared Emergency Planning Service, and the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel), and therefore the net cost is close to Zero.

To the best of officers' knowledge, we do not provide administrative support to any external organisations or groups that are independent of the Council.

8. When will you be in a position to brief the Council on the eleven expressions of interest in the Don Valley stadium site?

The Don Valley site is subject to complex negotiations. Information will be disclosed in due course.

9. How much of the £250k allocated for the demolition of Don Valley Stadium has so far been spent and how much is expected to be spent upon completion? Please list all spend and income.

£24,774.33 has been spent so far. Officers estimate that £124,284.81 will be spent on completion. The remaining amount has been used to fund the feasibility study to remediate the site.

10. What assessment was made of the value of the scrap of the former Don Valley Stadium prior to the tendering of a demolition contract?

I have instructed officers to give you a briefing on this issue.

Question of Councillor Robert Murphy to Councillor Ben Curran (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)

What will be the financial consequences of the recent change to the Highways PFI contract for this and future years?

Question to be answered by Councillor Jack Scott.

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

1. How many two year olds in Sheffield have so far taken up the offer of fifteen hours a week of fully funded childcare?

1,168 children are accessing their fully funded 2 year old Free Early Learning. This meets the target that the local authority set for the autumn term. However, due to parental choice some children may not be accessing full 15 hours FEL per week, as since the rules changed families can choose to take either 15 hours per week term time only or less hours over the week over the whole year.

2. In light of public concern over the proposed use of Tinsley Recreation Ground, please could you provide the detailed timetable for the statutory consultation?

On 15th January 2014, the Cabinet's decision was to publish the proposals for a new school at Tinsley. This is a formal process which involves the posting of a notice about the proposals and seeking views in writing during a six week period (24th January 2014 to 6th March 2014). Anybody with a view about the proposals is encouraged to respond and make their views known in a written response. All responses will be received and read by Cabinet Members before a final decision anticipated on 16th April 2014.

Given that there are strong local views about the proposals, the Council also wants to continue to have a face to face dialogue with local stakeholders during this period. Therefore, the Council has set up a Working Group made up of a range of local representatives and officers that will meet weekly during this period to review the options for the location of the proposed new school and provide further information and answers to questions as required. The response from this group will be fully reported to Cabinet. A further newsletter is also being circulated in

the area with a summary of the consultation to date.

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

In the each of the last three financial years, how much has the Council received in discretionary housing payments and what percentage has been spent?

For the years 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13 the Council received £452,486 in discretionary housing payments and spent 99.8% of this.

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