

CITY OF SHEFFIELD

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL – 5 JUNE 2013

COPIES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THERETO

Questions

Answers

Questions of Councillor Shaffaq Mohammed to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore – to be answered by the Deputy Leader (Councillor Harry Harpham))

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| 1. At the April meeting of Council you stated that you expect there to be a start on the Sevenstones site within the 2014/15 year. Do you still believe this to be the case? | Please see answer to the same question from April's Council meeting. |
| 2. At the April meeting of Full Council you stated that you expect Hammerson to submit a planning application for Sevenstones this year. Do you still believe this to be the case? | Please see answer to the same question from April's Council meeting. |
| 3. At previous meetings I have tried to ascertain how many meetings you have personally attended with Hammerson. I'm sure you will agree with me that the project is a pressing issue for Sheffield yet in previous responses you have failed to provide an answer. In the context of your pledge to be 'open and transparent', would you please provide the Council with a list of dates on which you have personally met with Hammerson in your capacity as Leader of the Council. If such information cannot be provided I will assume that such meetings have not taken place. | 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. Therefore to make this assumption would be completely incorrect. |
| 4. I have asked on numerous occasions what specific progress has been made in delivering more shared services with other authorities within Sheffield City Region. It appears that despite your reassurances no progress has been made. Would you like to provide information to dispute this? | Yes, I have provided you with numerous answers to this question in previous months which make your statement that no progress has been made clearly inaccurate. |
| 5. Have you discussed the outstanding Trading Standards debt of £3,000,000 | My personal discussions with other South Yorkshire Council Leaders are |

with the newly elected Mayor of Doncaster?

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.
7. How many international trips have you taken in your capacity as Leader of the Council in the past twelve months? Please provide the cost of the trip and the contribution to the cost made by the Council and other organisations.

confidential. However, be assured that this Administration will pursue any debts owed to this Council.

Any further expenditure related to the Fairness Commission outcomes will be published in accordance with the usual decision making process.

I attended a convention in Chengdu, China, this was at no cost to the Council.

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

1. How many Council employees have been appointed on a salary greater than £50,000 since May 2012, including new starters and internal appointments? Please list each post with corresponding salary.

See attached spreadsheet.

2. What practical steps are you taking to reduce Sheffield City Council's extortionate consultancy bill?

The figures that you have quoted on consultants are completely inaccurate and misrepresent the Council's 'consultancy bill' and this has been explained to you on several occasions. By inaccurately labelling projects as consultancy you have signalled your opposition to two initiatives which support local small businesses. There is a strong control scheme in place for consultants where every request has to have a business case defining the deliverables and benefits and explaining why consultants are the only available option, this has to be approved by the responsible director and scrutinised/approved by Commercial Services to ensure that we are getting the best commercial arrangements. These are in small numbers due to the stringent controls and, for instance, in March there were only three examples. Overall, the position is therefore that we only buy in professional consultants when required to support approved projects as the most cost effective option and, for the small number of management consultant assignments, these go through a very stringent senior level approval process.

3. How many members of staff within the Council have been granted trade union facility time? Please list each post with respective costs.

It is not possible to provide this information at this time. Shop Stewards and other Trade Union representatives carry out Trade Union duties in addition to their substantive work. The amount of time spent in this way will vary and will depend entirely on the level of activity

(in terms of change processes or case work) in the service or Portfolio in which they work at any given time.

4. How many members of staff within the Council have been granted trade union facility time, equivalent to performing trade union duties full-time? Please list each post with respective costs.
5. What progress has been made since April in recovering outstanding Trading Standards debts from other South Yorkshire local authorities?
6. How many international trips have you taken in your capacity as a Cabinet Member in the past twelve months? Please provide the cost of the trip and the contribution to the cost made by the Council and other organisations.

The refreshed Facilities Time Agreement has 7.9 FTE Convenors with a total cost of £223k, a reduction of over 50%.

We continue to have negotiations with the other South Yorkshire Local Authorities with a view to resolving this issue, we expect these discussions to conclude shortly.

None.

Questions of Councillor Ian Auckland to Councillor Bryan Lodge (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)

Have problems regarding the mis-posting of penalty charge notice payments now been resolved? How many individuals have been affected by this problem in each of the last six months?

Capita inform us that the problem has now been resolved.

Dec 2012 - 102
Jan 2013 - 77
Feb 2013 - 220
Mar 2013 - 119
Apr 2013 - 128
May 2013 - 54

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

1. Is it correct to assume that your Administration's legal attempt to recover further savings from Veolia through adjudication has now concluded? If so what were the outcomes, and were these outcomes satisfactory?

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 vein will be referred to this answer".
2. At the February meeting of Full Council you outlined the efforts you had undertaken to encourage new snow wardens to volunteer. Since that meeting how many people have volunteered to become new wardens? How many of these individuals have so far been recruited to the scheme?

We continue to take on new volunteers, despite your scare-mongering assertions to the contrary. It may have escaped your notice that as this is June, there has been little snow recently and so little demand for snow wardens.
3. How many households signed up for the recent Big Sheffield Switch?

10,710.
This is amongst the highest take up in England, despite no assistance from either opposition party.
4. How many of these accepted the offer that was made following the switch?

886.
This is amongst the highest take up in England, despite no assistance from either opposition party.
5. What is the expected average household saving through the switch? How does this average saving compare to what could have been achieved through a non-community switching route such as uswitch?

The average saving for people who switched is £111. The highest saving is £139.
This compares exceptionally well with other saving mechanisms, although dependent on individual circumstances, it is potentially possible that better deals could be secured.
6. How many households in Sheffield have currently signed up to Veolia's new charged-for green bin service?

4,570.
7. On 9th March 2011 the Cabinet agreed

There was an election in May 2011,

- a strategy which set out how the City can “reduce its dependency on global fuel stocks and how, with the major organisations in the city, is able to adapt to future changes to our climate and to reducing availability of oil and gas”. What progress has been made since May 2011 on delivering this strategy?
8. How many complaints have the Council so far received regarding poor communication during the Streets Ahead project?
9. How many vehicles have been authorised for removal as a result of the Streets Ahead project?
10. How many international trips have you taken in your capacity as a Cabinet Member in the past twelve months? Please provide the cost of the trip and the contribution to the cost made by the Council and other organisations.
- in which your party suffered its worst ever defeat. It is not my job to implement weak strategies that were passed in the dying days of the last Administration.
- Significant progress has been made in ensuring that Sheffield is a leading green city.
- We have received no formal complaints. We continually seek feedback and review how information is communicated to find improvements.
- Vehicles are not “authorised” for removal. Authorisation for a Traffic Regulation Order is granted to a specific area. You appear confused about the legal process for the removal of vehicles.
- I was delighted to be asked to represent Sheffield at the Living Labs conference in San Francisco (13th – 17th May), as part of the work we are doing to upgrade the District Energy Network with the University of Sheffield’s Sustainable Cities Programme. The cost was met by Department for Energy and Climate Change, at no cost to local taxpayers.

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

1. Regarding the £800,000 that has been allocated to the Council's Keep Sheffield Working Project, how much has so far been spent? Please list the specific budget allocations for each project.
- £742,000 of the Keep Sheffield Working Fund has now been committed to deliver the six projects outlined below:
- £90,000 for an export pilot project to help up to 30 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) break into new export markets
 - £70,000 to support unemployed people on the Work Programme to start their own business
 - £150,000 for a ground breaking project to provide graduate internships in SMEs. The project aims to place 30 graduates in businesses
 - £150,000 for an SME Loan Fund designed to address a gap in finance for businesses. This fund is expected to leverage in significant additional funding to help boost business growth
 - £200,000 for a Threshold Company Programme designed with local businesses that will work intensively with up to 25 SMEs with rapid potential for growth.
 - £82,000 for a Saturday Live project to give city centre retail a boost over the summer period. Details to be announced shortly.
2. (a) Have problems regarding the mis-posting of penalty charge notice payments now been resolved?
- Further ideas are in development to account for the remaining amount in the fund.
- (b) How many individuals have been
- Passed to Councillor Bryan Lodge

affected by this problem in each of the last six months?

for response.

- 3 How many international trips have you taken in your capacity as a Cabinet Member in the past twelve months? Please provide the cost of the trip and the contribution to the cost made by the Council and other organisations.

I attended a trade visit to China in September last year. The cost was £1,500 paid for by Creative Sheffield.

In January this year, I attended a 3 day visit to Dortmund, Germany, to look at regeneration projects and apprenticeships, at no cost to the Council.

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

1. What practical steps have you taken in the last two months to ensure alternative management arrangements are found for Stocksbridge Leisure Centre?

As the April Cabinet report indicated, the work to secure alternative management arrangements is rightly being led by the community, in the form of 4SLC. However, Sheffield City Council has committed to work with the group and provide support and advice. This includes meeting all current mothballing and security costs for the centre. Since April, officers have continued to work closely with 4SLC including:- two business planning meetings; the offer of funded expertise to assist the group in developing its detailed management plan; the offer of a specification for the proposed facility condition survey and securing financial support from Sport England to part fund the survey. Officers are also jointly working with 4SLC on potential time lines for implementation of the business plan. Finally, our legal officers are assisting the Town Council with their consideration of transferring the trusteeship of Oxley Park Charity.
2. I'm sure you will be aware of leaked e-mails in which the Director of Culture & Environment states: "I don't intend to declare the site of new north pool. Will simply say it's early days and no site been confirmed." Are you now in a position to reveal this secret location?

There are no 'leaked e-mails'. The Director released a series of internal e-mails in response to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request. The reference to north pool was simply stating that at the time, no decision had been made on the site for the proposed facility. This is still the case given that the proposed facility is currently subject to business planning and funding work and will then be subject to appropriate consultation with key interested parties.
3. I'm sure you will be aware of leaked e-mails in which the Chief Executive of SIV recommends that the Council "should drop the statement that attendances were falling" at

This also resulted from the FOI request. The Director of Culture and Environment concluded that the visit trends at Stocksbridge Leisure Centre over recent years were an

Stocksbridge Leisure Centre. Do you agree with this advice?

important part of the consultation and therefore the visit figures since 2007/8 were released as part of the consultation and information process.

4. I'm sure you will be aware of leaked e-mails in which the Chief Executive of SIV states that they could continue to operate the pool at Stocksbridge Leisure Centre for 180k. What consideration did the Council give this as a viable option?

You again refer to the FOI request. However, many months prior to the FOI, Sheffield City Council wrote to Stocksbridge Town Council (STC) on 10th January and indicated a lower cost option of operating the pool only at £180K. Similarly, this option was considered in detail by the independent Sport England study which was shared in full with STC and 4SLC.

The option was therefore considered by the Council in the period both prior to and during the public consultation. However, the Council took the view that it couldn't justify a commitment of £180K to fund a pool which served only a relatively small catchment area. The Sport England study concurred with this view by recommending the development of a new and much smaller (and therefore lower cost) pool to serve the local area. The option of a new pool is one that is still being formulated by a private developer in the area.

5. At the April meeting of Council, you stated that there had been three external expressions of interest in the Don Valley Stadium. Have any of these expressions of interest been progressed?

Exploratory officer meetings have taken place with a small number of potentially interested parties. By necessity, these were simply exchanging initial ideas and confirming the City's preferred approach to progressing expressions of interest.

6. Have any additional expressions of interest in the Don Valley Stadium been made since that meeting?

There have been a number of enquiries seeking information on the stadium and the site. Officers have referred these to the process outlined below.

7. What steps have the Council taken to raise funds to support Richard Caborn's

Richard Caborn has established a small working group to take the

proposed vision for the future of the Don Valley Stadium site?

vision forward. This includes senior City Council officers.

Two key steps have recently been taken by Sheffield City Council; we have invited expressions of interest from potential sponsors of a University Technical College specialising in sport and sports science. Secondly, over the summer, we will invite formal expressions of interest from private sector partners for investing and jointly progressing the sports vision for the site.

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

This project is managed by a city partnership, including the Teaching Hospitals, the Chamber of Commerce, both universities and Sheffield City Council. The partnership has previously announced the allocation of £5M towards the HQ development at Graves. Work on allocating the balance of the £10M fund is progressing and, when it is complete, an announcement on the further allocation will be made.

9. How many international trips have you taken in your capacity as a Cabinet Member in the past twelve months? Please provide the cost of the trip and the contribution to the cost made by the Council and other organisations.

None.

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

1. What practical steps are you taking to work alongside staff and Governors at Forge Valley School and King Edward VII School to ensure high educational outcomes are achieved for local families?

Forge Valley

It is the role of the school to work in conjunction with parents regarding communications. To this end, the school ran a parental workshop on 23rd May 2013 to inform all parents, and a further workshop is shortly planned regarding post 16 parents and students.

With regards to working alongside staff, the school was already working in partnership with schools, prior to the inspection. These partnerships were focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning, data management and self assessment, and improvements had already been made by the time of the inspection. To support Forge Valley moving forward, it is now important that one school takes the lead in providing the support and the Local Authority has brokered support from Tapton School to work with the school on further securing improvement.

Tapton School has experience of supporting schools from Special Measures. A variety of Tapton's staff will support Forge Valley with this, including the Head of Sixth Form, to develop a joint post 16 offer across both schools. The role of the Local Authority within this is to broker the support and to monitor its impact. This will be through regular School Improvement Board meetings which a Senior Local Authority Officer will Chair. This will allow for rapid decision making and support.

King Edwards

It is the role of the school to work in conjunction with parents regarding

communications, and the Local Authority has encouraged the school to do this and the school has written to parents regarding the inspection outcome.

With regards to working alongside staff. The Local Authority has brokered support from All Saints School to work with the school on further securing its improvement journey. All Saints was already working with the school prior to its inspection. This is in the form of developing the KS3 and KS4 curriculum, support for middle and senior leadership and also bespoke coaching for some staff.

2. How many international trips have you taken in your capacity as a Cabinet Member in the past twelve months? Please provide the cost of the trip and the contribution to the cost made by the Council and other organisations.

None

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

1. How many international trips have you taken in your capacity as a Cabinet Member in the past twelve months? Please provide the cost of the trip and the contribution to the cost made by the Council and other organisations.

One trip costing £199.90, paid by the Council.

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

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.

In all, 27 responses were returned to the Council after a call went out to local communities, businesses and entrepreneurs at the end of February to find alternative ways of delivering library services in response to the Government's cuts to Sheffield. The majority of the responses have come from community and voluntary groups and organisations (18), six have come from individuals, two from the private sector and one parish Council. I have met the majority of these groups, however, cannot at this stage, disclose specific details of the expressions of interest or our negotiations.

We are now looking at all the ideas and suggestions put forward, alongside research already undertaken and the 2012 consultation results, to identify the strongest, most viable and sustainable way forward for Sheffield's library services.

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.
3. Have you yet made any financial guarantees to community groups or potential commercial operators, regarding the running of libraries?
4. How many international trips have you taken in your capacity as a Cabinet Member in the past twelve months? Please provide the cost of the trip and the contribution to the cost made by the Council and other organisations.

See above.

See above.

None.

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

1. How many international trips have you taken in your capacity as a Cabinet Member in the past twelve months? Please provide the cost of the trip and the contribution to the cost made by the Council and other organisations. None.