

Agenda Item 5

CITY OF SHEFFIELD

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL – 5 SEPTEMBER, 2012

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. How many times have you personally met with GMB officials in your capacity as Council Leader to discuss strikes at Sheffield's five household waste recycling centres? | Sheffield City Council, Veolia and SOVA have met with GMB on numerous occasions to discuss the strikes. |
| 2. How many times have you personally met with workers at Sheffield's five household waste recycling centres in your capacity as Council Leader to discuss strikes? | Sheffield City Council, Veolia and SOVA have met with staff to discuss the strikes. |
| 3. What correspondence have you personally had with GMB officials with regard to the strikes at Sheffield's five household waste recycling centres? | We liaise with partners across the City regularly. |
| 4. When will the Council publish its review of trade union facility time? | When it's complete. |
| 5. Have you or any members of your Administration been on foreign trips in relation to their duties since May 2011? If so, please list members and the total cost of the trip including expenses. | Councillors Harpham (£228.84): Damms (£228.84); Mirfin-Boukouris (no cost to the Council). Any costs come from the annual budget which also includes trips within the UK. Other recent single trips from this budget include Councillor Bagshaw £355, Councillor Ross £659 and Councillor Auckland £383. |
| 6. When will a new Corporate Communications Strategy be produced? | Our priorities are clearly set out in the Corporate Plan. |
| 7. What progress has been made over the summer in delivering more shared services with other authorities within | An external report on Legal Services has been worked up over the summer and discussions are ongoing with all South |

Sheffield City Region?

Yorkshire Authorities.

8. When do you estimate work will begin on Sevenstones?
The earliest possible start on site would be Autumn 2014.
9. How many 'Members Task and Finish Groups' or 'Policy Working Groups' have been set up since May 2011? Please provide the names of all such groups that have been formed in the time period.
Task and Finish/Policy Working Groups:
Lettings Policy Review
Effective School Governance
Waste Policy review
10. Which of these groups have been serviced by the Council, in terms of meeting rooms being provided or Council officers being present?
All three.
11. How many events have you attended in relation to the 2012 London Olympic Games?
Two: Jessica Ennis Civic Reception and Sheffival (see below).
12. How many gifts have you received in relation to the 2012 London Olympic Games?
None.
13. How many free tickets have you received to events in relation to the 2012 London Olympic Games?
One ticket for one day at Sheffival.

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

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| 1. When will a Cabinet report be published to implement the next stage of the early years review? | A Cabinet Report is currently being prepared on the re-organisation of Children's Centre areas. This will be taken to Cabinet before the end of the year. |
| 2. Will the next Cabinet report on the early years review include 'reductions' in children's centres? | The recommendations will be available when the report is published. |
| 3. Will the next Cabinet report on the early years review include proposals to close children's centres? | See above. |
| 4. If so, which centres do you plan to close? | See above. |
| 5. Will the next Cabinet report recommend any reductions to the budgets of Sure Start Centres? | See above. |

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

How many green spaces, open spaces or parks are managed by Children, Young People and Families Directorate as opposed to Culture and Environment?

There are 30 green spaces, open spaces or parks managed by Children, Young People and Families Directorate. I understand there are 794 sites managed by Culture and Environment.

Question of Councillor Jillian Creasy to Councillor Harry Harpham (Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods)

What arrangements are in place to deal with the likely increase in non-payment of rent, court cases and evictions as a result of the proposed housing benefit changes from April 2013?

A key priority for the Council and Sheffield Homes is our continuing work on mitigating the potential impact of welfare reform on tenants and on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and to do what we can as early as possible.

The Council is committed to minimising any effects of welfare reform on tenants and on the HRA and to do this through continuing early intervention and arrears prevention.

Our objectives will be to support tenants to continue to pay their rent through a range of actions. These include a comprehensive communication strategy (including letters, home visits, local radio etc) to ensure that tenants understand the changes and how they might be affected. Initially this will be targeted at tenants who will see a reduction in benefits paid from April 2013 and those tenants who are claiming housing benefit and who are under occupying their properties. The intention is to visit all those affected to support and advise customers what their options are and help them make informed decisions.

We will be offering additional support to tenants with money management, budgeting, benefits and debt advice. We are promoting Home Swapper and investing in the Smartmove scheme. From October 2013, Universal Credit will be introduced and will be paid direct to the claimant and we are looking at new ways of supporting tenants affected by this to pay their rent including further promoting the use of direct debits. We are working in partnership with the Citizen Advice Bureau, the Credit Union and other partners to ensure our support to tenants is joined up.

We are looking to provide funding for a

debt support worker to provide early intervention debt advice to tenants and we are supporting unemployed tenants who are looking to get back into work.

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

1. How much of the Local Growth Fund has so far been allocated to specific projects? Please list all spend agreed within this fund, including the sums allocated to each project.

I refer you to my previous answer at the last Full Council.
2. What was the cost of producing and distributing the '*Capturing the Sheffield Decent Homes Story*' publication, to which you included a foreword?

There was no cost to the Council.

Questions of Councillor Alison Brelsford to Councillor Mazher Iqbal (Cabinet Member for Communities and Inclusion)

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| 1. Will you provide the Council with an update on your Administration's ongoing review into Community Assemblies? | This question was asked in July. I suggest you read the reply I gave then. |
| 2. Which officers and Councillors are leading on the review? | See above. |
| 3. How many times has the review panel met since the start of the review? | See above. |
| 4. Which officers have been called to give evidence to the review? | See above. |
| 5. Have any reports been presented to the review and if so, can they be shared with all Council Members? | See above. |
| 6. When do you plan to consult Community Assembly Chairs as part of the review? | See above. |
| 7. When do you plan to consult community groups as part of the review? | See above |

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

What progress has been made in locating a site for the proposed 120-bed intermediate care unit since the last meeting of Full Council?

There is nothing further to report to Council although council officers will be meeting NHS Sheffield officers in September to discuss intermediate care and the proposed facility.

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

1. What consultation was carried out prior to the decision to close Newton Grange and not replace it with non-residential accommodation?

Consultations with residents, relatives, staff and trade unions began as early as 2002 following proposals to transfer or decommission the remaining Council owned residential care homes.

A formal period of consultation commenced in 2006 until 2008, when it was requested by residents in Newton Grange and the tenants in the Sheltered Scheme that the consultations cease until funding had been secured for alternative accommodation and there were agreed proposals for the Stocksbridge area.

Staff have, however, received regular reminders that the home was scheduled for decommission as part of ongoing briefings. Since 2007 new residents and their relatives have been informed, (before they moved into Newton Grange), that the home would close at some point in the future.

In February 2007, Cabinet approved the Older People's Housing Strategy. This report set out the vision for Stocksbridge and included the Council and local community's aspirations for the provision of an Extra Care Housing development on the site of Newton Grange and Balfour House sheltered scheme. However, this ambitious scheme was dependant on securing significant capital funding for a development of this size.

As no suitable developments were

forthcoming for several years Newton Grange was allowed to remain operating as a care home under a special agreement with the CQC (Care Qualities Commission). Technically, Newton Grange does not meet the required standards for a residential care home. Discussions took place in late 2011 with the Cabinet Lead Member, other ward Councillors and the MP for Stocksbridge, when the opportunity for a new build non-residential scheme was first realised. By request, an assessment was undertaken to identify other alternative suitable sites to Newton Grange. However, none were deemed suitable due to their size, access and location in relation to other local village facilities.

Sheffield City Council is in the process of implementing the vision of transforming adult social care by providing services that are personalised and meet the needs of local citizens. The proposals to decommission Newton Grange support these principles by offering a site on which to build updated and modern homes and facilities and opportunities for more individualised care and support at home. Older people have told us that they want to be able to remain in their own homes for longer rather than have to move into residential care and the decommissioning of Newton Grange and building of new lifetime homes meets their aspirations.

2. What arrangements will be made for current residents at Newton Grange?

All residents have/or will have an individual reassessment. This is being undertaken by a small dedicated team of experienced social workers. The reassessment will also involve their family members.

Residents will be fully supported to find a new home of their choice, within appropriate funding levels, that is able to meet their ongoing care and support needs. For some residents, should they

wish, this could mean a move to be nearer to relatives in other areas of Sheffield or other parts of the country. Where residents are part of a friendship group they will be supported to find care homes where they can move together. However, this depends on their individual requirements for ongoing support and care. All residents will be provided with the full care and support that they need in an environment that can meet their needs.

Eight residents have already moved out of Newton Grange. Having visited other care homes in the City and having been offered homes with large bedrooms and en-suite facilities they decided that they would prefer to move sooner rather than later. They are now settling well into their new homes. The remaining 12 residents are making plans and some have already chosen a new home but are awaiting a date to move.

3. Where is the nearest residential accommodation of the type offered at Newton Grange to Stocksbridge?

There are 2 care homes located within a mile of Newton Grange. Both are registered to provide residential and nursing care including specialist dementia care. There is a residential care home in Oughtibridge, approximately 4 miles from Stocksbridge. In addition, a new care home has just opened in Penistone, approximately 4.5 miles from Stocksbridge. This is proving to be a preferred home of choice for a number of Newton Grange residents and to date, 11 residents are considering this as their home of choice. The care home has agreed to hold places for the residents pending reassessments and discussions are now underway to develop a schedule for planned moves to this new home.

Questions of Councillor Simon Clement-Jones to Councillor Bryan Lodge (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)

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| 1. How much of the Keep Sheffield Working Fund has so far been allocated to specific projects? Please list all spend agreed within this fund, including the sums allocated to each project. | Answered by Councillor Bramall. |
| 2. What is the estimated annual revenue cost to the Council within the 2012/13 financial year of
(a) Sorby House,
(b) Vestry Hall and
(c) Forum House? | These three properties form part of the Burngreave project. The properties are now the responsibility of the Property and Facilities Management Directorate within the Resources Portfolio. However, no budgets have been allocated to these properties. Any costs during 2011/12, which have not been fully itemised, will have to be managed within existing Property and Facilities Management resources. |
| 3. When will the Council publish its review of trade union facility time? | When it's complete. |
| 4. Please list all communication between yourself and trade unions, regarding the Council's review of trade union facility time. | None. |

Questions of Councillor David Baker to Councillor Jack Scott (Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste and Streetscene)

1. How much has the Council contributed to the red sack service, in each of the last three financial years, excluding contributions from community assemblies?

£1,350.00 for the purchase of 20,000 red sacks.

Other resources such as officer time, project planning, communications etc have also been deployed.
2. How many red sacks has the Council distributed in each of the last three financial years?

2010 - 9,940
2011 - 9,821
2012 – 10,874
3. How many complaints did the Council receive this year regarding uncollected waste of departing students?

Waste Management received 2 complaints and Environmental Regulation received 5 complaints.
4. Do you plan to apologise to residents who missed their first collection under the new fortnightly system, because the Council failed to communicate their collection date?

On 13th August, we made around 220,000 service changes at the same time. Officers and Veolia estimate over 99% of these were completely successful.

In any cases where customers reported they did not receive the leaflets, apologies were issued and additional collections were made.

I am happy to reiterate the apology for any inconvenience that was caused. I note that you have still not apologised for your reckless Government's destructive cuts that forced this change upon Sheffield.
5. Do you plan to apologise to residents for failing to communicate your proposal that extra sacks could be left next to bins in the opening weeks of the new fortnightly system?

I am not responsible for what the media choose to report.

The call centre has handled over 30,000 calls during August and proactively advised customers that additional sacks would be removed during the first 2 scheduled black bin Alternate Week collections.
6. Do you plan to apologise to residents for spending £400,000 on a communications strategy that so clearly

The communications strategy has not failed.

failed to communicate effectively?

Almost all of the 220,000 households across the city are fully aware of the changes to waste collection services and are successfully using the alternate week collection system.

After less than a month, we have already seen a 27% increase in mixed glass, cans and plastic collected for recycling compared to average week last year and 17% increase in paper and card, which is clear proof of the success our communications strategy.

The strategy would have failed had we not resourced the change sufficiently - as you suggested.

7. Does your Administration plan further cuts to Household Waste Recycling Centres in next year's budget?
8. How many local residents have so far opted-in to the charged-for service for the collection of green bins?
9. How many local residents, outside of the area that is currently offered the green bin, have expressed an interest to Veolia in the charged-for green bin service?
10. How many green bins have so far been collected in by the Council?
11. How many green bins have so far been destroyed by the Council?

This question was asked in June. I suggest you read the reply I gave then.

There are 3464 green bin customers.

Up to 24/8/12, 228 customers had expressed an interest

The Council has not collected in any green bins as it is not the waste management operative. Since 2001 this has been Veolia. You do not appear to understand the distinction.

The Council has not destroyed any green bins as it is not the waste management operative. Since 2001 this has been Veolia. You do not appear to understand the distinction.

Furthermore, Veolia has not destroyed green bins. Veolia has either recycled

them or stored them. Despite being informed of this on several previous occasions, you do not seem to understand the difference between recycling, storing and destroying.

12. What provisions have been made with the Streets Ahead planning process for displaced parking when multiple on-street parking roads are closed?

Street closures will be kept to a minimum.

The Community Stewards that Amey are employing will support communities to plan and manage the impact of work taking place, such as parking. They will also ensure people are equipped to manage through regular and effective communication.

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

Regarding your plan to issue more fixed penalty fines for littering in Sheffield's parks, how many fines have been issued since the last meeting of Full Council?

Since the last meeting on 4th July 2012, two additional temporary members of staff were appointed on a part time basis, to tackle littering and dog fouling in parks and other locations across the City.

As planned, we have also undertaken the training of Police and Community Safety Officers (PCSOs).

Since the last meeting 66 tickets have been issued for littering and dog fouling.

For reference, 78 tickets were issued during the whole of 2011/12, which is further proof that our tougher approach is working.

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

1. In the last 12 months how many Penalty Charge Notices appeals (bus lane and parking) have been upheld due to not being contested by the Council?

From August 2011 to July 2012 the figures are : 92 Parking appeals have been “not contested” and 65 Bus Lane appeals have been “not contested”.
2. Do Quality Contracts still remain your Administration's long term aspiration for Sheffield?

We are concerned with delivering improved bus services for the people of Sheffield. In terms of how this is delivered, as you are aware, we have recently committed to a Bus Partnership Agreement, which is expected to deliver significant improvements to bus services from October. Should the Bus Partnership Agreement ultimately fail, the work that has been undertaken on Quality Contracts is ready to be progressed further.
3. In the 2011/12 financial year, what was the overspend in the winter maintenance budget?

The winter maintenance overspend for 2011/12 was £740k.

Question of Councillor Simon Clement-Jones to Councillor Leigh Bramall (Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development)

1. How much of the Keep Sheffield Working Fund has so far been allocated to specific projects? Please list all spend agreed within this fund, including the sums allocated to each project.

This question was asked in July. I suggest you read the reply Councillor Lodge gave then.

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

1. Regarding the transfer of Bishops House to the Friends of Group, will you commit to providing funding for the facility in 2013/14?

Like all services and grants, Bishops House will form part of the budget setting process for 2013/14.
2. What progress has been made in supporting the University of Sheffield to find a permanent solution for the Traditional Heritage Museum on Ecclesall Road, so that this treasured local asset can be re-opened to the public?

As previously stated, Museums Sheffield has offered support to the university. However, the Traditional Heritage Museum is the sole responsibility of the university and it's future is a decision entirely for them.
3. What steps have been taken by the administration, the university and Sheffield museums trusts to ensure the collection of the Traditional Heritage Museum is preserved and retained?

Ditto above.
4. How much income has the Council so far generated from the policy of charging for parking in
(a) Graves Park,
(b) Millhouses Park and
(c) Hillsborough Park?

Graves	£6,457
Millhouses	£7,140
Hillsborough	£3,342
Total	£16,939

On schedule to hit Year 1 income target of £20K total.
5. What future plans are in place to increase further the number of Green Flag awards held by Sheffield parks?

Given the budget position, the City has a 3-pronged approach:-

 - a) protect and sustain existing Green Flag (GF) sites
 - b) where resources permit, increase number of sites achieving Sheffield Standard
 - c) be opportunistic i.e. if a site receives an injection of funding or a new partnership is identified, then GF status will be considered.

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

- Will you offer a guarantee to the residents of Stocksbridge that Stocksbridge Leisure Centre will not be closed by your Administration?
- Like all services and grants, Stocksbridge Leisure Centre will form part of the budget setting process for 2013/14.

