

## CITY OF SHEFFIELD

### METROPOLITAN DISTRICT

#### MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL – 7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015

#### COPIES OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS THERETO

##### Questions

##### Answers

#### Questions of Councillor Colin Ross to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore)

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| 1. On your recent trip to China, what direct benefits were you able to secure for Sheffield?  | The benefits are numerous, ranging from establishing Sheffield as a city ready for investment, through to direct interest from major corporate and individual investors. To reveal the detail of those interested parties, as this stage, would probably compromise progress. |
| 2. Media reports suggested that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was seeking to obtain financial support for the Sheffield Retail Quarter development. Is this true? | The Chancellor launched a “pitch book” containing 19 of the most attractive investment properties in the North. The SRQ was one of those.   |
| 3. If it is true, was he or you successful in obtaining investment in the Sheffield Retail Quarter from Chinese sources?  | We are working to convert any interest into confirmed investment. It is naïve and unrealistic to expect an instant cheque to be written.  |

#### Questions of Councillor Richard Shaw to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Julie Dore)

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| 1. During your recent trade visit to China, did you at any point raise the issue of human rights with Chinese officials? | I didn't personally meet with officials senior in Government, we had discussions with individual investors. |
| 2. If so, with whom?   |   |
| 3. What response did you get?  |   |

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

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| 1. As we start the new school year how many admissions appeals are there left to be heard?  | As at 1st October there were 242 appeals waiting to be heard. This number includes 149 appeals received between 26 <sup>th</sup> August (the date used for the appeal figures supplied in answer to your questions at the September Council meeting) and 1 <sup>st</sup> October.   |
| 2. What is the time scale for hearing the outstanding appeals?  | It is anticipated that 3 <sup>rd</sup> December will be the approximate timescale for hearing these 242 appeals. This is based on approximately 42 appeals being heard each week. It is worth noting that, at this time of year, some appeals are being withdrawn, either by a change of parental preference or places being admitted off the waiting list at the preferred school, so this timescale could reduce. However, new appeals continue to be received. |
| 3. How many pupils awaiting an appeal hearing are not currently attending school?   | There is no reason why any child awaiting an appeal should not be attending school. All children are given an offer of a school place and parents must not keep their children off school pending an appeal.  |
| 4. What is the number of pupils in Key Stage 1 who are benefitting from free School dinners. Can you supply me with comparative figures for the previous two years? | <p>Key:<br/> <i>UIFSM – Universal Infant Free School Meals</i><br/> <i>MTFSM – Means Tested Free School Meals</i></p>   |

2014-15 Academic Year			2013-14 Academic Year	
Key Stage	Meal No.s	%	Meal No.s	%
1 - UIFSM	1,706,535	78	Free - 886,621	78
1 - MTFSM	345,616	81		

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

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| 1. Has any further consideration been given to the redrawing of catchment area boundaries to allow equal | There are currently no plans to review any catchment areas, other than for any prospective new schools. |
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opportunities to all the City's children with regards to finding a local school?

A City wide review was undertaken by the Authority on the existing admission arrangements in 2014, the review included Governors and parents. The Review concluded that the catchment area system is the best and fairest system for Sheffield children.

The current system of catchment areas was also examined in detail by the independent School's Adjudicator in the summer and was found to be "non-discriminatory"

2. Has any further consideration been given to the redrawing of catchment area boundaries to prevent unpredicted oversubscription caused by preference within joint catchment areas?

Whilst we aim to satisfy as many first preferences as possible it is not always possible to do so. King Egbert for example shares a joint catchment area with High Storrs Secondary. This means that parents have catchment priority for two schools. It became clear last year for example that a number of parents did not fully utilise their 3 preferences for Year 7 applications and that consequently they were not offered a place at a local school. Officers are providing parent drop-in sessions at primary schools this month to ensure that parents fully understand the system and have a better chance of obtaining a place at one of their preferred schools.

The key factor with a rising population is not catchment area boundaries but to ensure that there are sufficient school places. The Council is working closely with schools on a strategy on providing additional places.

Questions of Councillor Steve Ayris to Councillor Jayne Dunn (Cabinet Member for Housing)

1. At Full Council on 25th March, 2015, former Councillor Harry Harpham said that Phase 1 of the Council House New Build Project was due to start on 5th August, 2015. In July I asked if this was still correct and I was told by yourself that a start would be made on site in late Summer. We are now into Autumn, can you please now give me an up to date start date?

Phase 1 is now in contract and due to start on site in November.

2. Please will you inform me of the causes of these delays?

I understand that your Group have already been made aware of this information, the Phase 1 contractor went into administration in late April - just before we were due to enter into contract. We have been negotiating since then to get another contractor in place at a price within the original budget approved by Cabinet.

Questions of Councillor Martin Smith to Councillor Jayne Dunn (Cabinet Member for Housing)

1. In addition to the Council, which organisations and companies are involved in the current Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment?

The information requested will be available when the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is published. The assessment work for the SHLAA is currently ongoing.

2. Which ones have been provided with details of the 117 Green Belt locations identified in the Call for Housing Sites 2014?

See above

Questions of Councillor Joe Otten to Councillor Terry Fox (Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport)

1. What public support has been given to bus replacement on air quality grounds on the basis that emissions testing on buses was not, in fact, fraudulent?

Through bids to Government, funding has been secured to invest in measures to reduce harmful emissions from the bus fleet. Over the last few years this includes:

- In 2012 the Government awarded £3.3m direct to Stagecoach, over two years, through the Green Bus Fund. This was spent on the hybrid buses in Sheffield;
- The Clean Bus Technology Fund in 2013 awarded £351,875 to SCC and Stagecoach to retrofit flywheels to buses in Sheffield, which reduce emissions;
- The Clean Vehicle Technology Fund awarded £215,250 to SYPTE in 2014 for the retrofitting of a system to reduce emissions to First buses in Sheffield.

Looking forward, Central Government has announced further funding to support investment in the bus fleet. This funding comes from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV), Low Emission Bus (LEB) fund and the recently announced Department for Transport (DfT) Clean Bus Technology Fund (CBTF). Locally, we are developing bids (one for each fund) that both have a deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

These funds target the emissions from the bus fleet and aim to reduce NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> emissions, both of which are elevated in Sheffield.

The OLEV bid is for new buses, and we plan to bid for brand new buses fitted with Euro 6 engines and additional emissions reduction technology. The CBTF is for retrofitting of technology to buses to cut emissions and we are currently

working through the details of this bid with the local bus operators.

There haven't been any claims of fraudulent activity in relation to the emissions testing of heavy duty diesel engines in the UK or to link bus manufacturers to such underhand and short-sighted tactics. So far, the cheating on emissions testing is limited to the VW group and Euro V diesel engine cars.

2. In the event that emissions testing on buses turns out to have been cheated, what steps is the Administration, through the Transport Authority or otherwise, prepared to take to recover lost funds.

This would be an issue for Central Government and the bus operators, who will have been mis-sold buses.

Questions of Councillor Richard Shaw to Councillor Terry Fox (Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport)

1. What has been the net change in the the number of on-street parking spaces within each Council ward since 2012?

Any part of the highway that is not subject to some form of parking restriction (e.g. double yellow lines / single yellow line / urban clearway / bus lane) is, potentially, an on-street parking space. Even where bays are marked out individually for whatever reason, the Council does not hold a record of the total numbers of individual bays. Consequently, it is not possible to answer this question

2. Do you acknowledge that there are insufficient parking spaces for residents within Lowedges, Batemoor and Jordanthorpe and that the Streets Ahead programme is an ideal time to introduce additional parking spaces?

Yes I acknowledge that there can be considerable on-street parking taking place in these estates – and even more so in areas of terraced housing - because very little off-street parking was planned in previous decades before current numbers of car ownership were anticipated by anyone. However, the scale of the problem is very variable. Where specific problems do occur, some small-scale management of waiting has been successfully employed.

Whilst the Streets Ahead programme offers an opportunity for addressing a wide range of highway-related issues,

it has been made clear on many occasions that the Streets Ahead contract simply replaces and maintains the road layout that already exists. Any changes have to be financed separately and the Council is not in a position to use extremely limited capital resources to provide residents with improved parking facilities.

Questions of Councillor Roger Davison to Councillor Mary Lea (Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Independent Living) (to be answered by Councillor Mazher Iqbal, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Equality)

1. Does the Council have access to figures that show the ward by ward breakdown of:
  - (a) the percentage of smokers among the population; and  
Yes  
  
Sheffield City Council publishes Health and Wellbeing Profiles at both Ward level and at Neighbourhood level on its website: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/caresupport/health/health-wellbeing-board/what-the-board-does/JSNA/health-and-wellbeing-across-sheffield.html>
  - (b) the percentage of people who are obese among the population?  
This is not broken down by Ward.
2. If not, does it have any areas of the City that it believes needs targeting or are currently being targeted to bring these percentages down?  
Yes

Questions of Councillor Richard Shaw to Councillor Isobel Bowler (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods)

1. Do you welcome the success of the 2015 Lowedges Festival, with it being the largest and best attended in the Festival's seven year history?

Councillor Isobel Bowler is unable to attend the meeting. We will provide a written response to this question.

2. Can you confirm whether the Council is planning to charge organisers of the Lowedges Festival an additional £300 because of the Festival's success?

Councillor Isobel Bowler is unable to attend the meeting. We will provide a written response to this question.

Questions of Councillor Cliff Woodcraft to Councillor Ben Curran (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)

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| 1. I have been told that the Council invests in companies involved with fossil fuel industries. Is this true?    | Like you, I have received numerous emails from members of the public about this issue  |
|  | The Council does not hold any investments in the fossil fuels industry.  |
| 2. Does the Council have an ethical investment policy and if so, please detail those investments that it avoids. | The Council has an investment strategy which is approved by full Council. This strategy makes it clear that the Council does not invest in equities so ethical investment is an important part of the strategy |
|  | You will be aware that we are working on an ethical procurement policy which will be going to scrutiny in the near future.   |

Questions of Councillor Richard Shaw to Councillor Ben Curran (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)

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| 1. Can you confirm whether the Land Registry entry for Gulley's Wood Meadow has been updated to confirm the Council's ownership?                    | The Council has applied to the Land Registry to register a larger area of land of which Gulleys Wood Meadow forms part. In the meantime, the Council has also made an application to amend the register based on the fact that Gulleys Wood Meadow was incorrectly transferred and that this has been acknowledged by the party in whom it is vested. |
| 2. If the Land Registry has not been updated, when is this expected to be done?   | The paperwork has been submitted to the Land Registry. We are only waiting for them to process the paperwork.   |
| 3. Will you commit to not sell the land in future, to preserve and safeguard the meadow in its entirety?  | The Council has no plans to sell Gulleys Wood Meadow and recognises its importance to the locality.   |
| 4. Can you confirm that the land at the corner of Abbey Lane and Beauchief Abbey Lane is now protected from being sold by the Council or developed? | Councillor Bramall and I have said in the Chamber before that the decision to declare the land surplus has now been rescinded by the Council.   |
| 5. If so, what measures or covenants have been put in place to protect this land  | Councillor Bramall together with officers from Property and Legal Services met  |

from sale or development?

with community representatives to discuss the future of the land and identify how it can be protected from future development. The outcome of the meeting was an “in principle” offer by the Council to lease the site on a long lease at a peppercorn rent to a local community organisation to ensure that it was protected from development. A number of local community organisations capable of taking on a lease were identified and a further meeting took place with community representatives on 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2015 to identify a way forwards. We are awaiting further contact from the local community in order to progress the lease transfer.

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