
Council Meeting

15 October 2019

Booklet 1

Answers to Written Questions

1.	<p>QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor G Williams</p> <p>TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor K Maton, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</p>
<p>TEXT OF QUESTION:</p> <p>“Some Councils across the UK have suggested that nutritional standards in school meals will be drastically reduced after a ‘no-deal’ Brexit. Could the Cabinet Member confirm that school meals in Coventry are already of a high nutritional standard and, deal or no-deal, will remain so after Brexit? Does he also agree with me that this is another example of ‘Project Fear’ something which local authorities should avoid promoting at all costs?”</p> <p><u>Answer:</u></p> <p>“I can confirm that meals served in Coventry maintained schools are of a high nutritional standard. In terms of the second part of the question, this may relate to a BBC online story that raised concerns.</p> <p>The documents quoted by the BBC date from the end of 2018. They point out that most Councils have taken at face value the government’s national assessment for March that there will be no impact of a no-deal Brexit on overall food supply, but there could be an impact on price and choice. An October no-deal Brexit would come, however, at a time when the UK is particularly dependant on European imports for its fresh food, and when there is little to no excess warehousing space, unlike in March.</p> <p>There is nothing Councils can do to magic away these facts or that 30% of the food we eat in the UK comes from the EU, and another 20% comes from non-EU countries. With half of the UK’s food being imported, any change to its trading arrangements could affect its food supply with a consequent impact on school meals.”</p>	

2.	<p>QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor G Williams</p> <p>TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor T Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities</p>
<p>TEXT OF QUESTION:</p> <p>“Would the Cabinet Member tell me when he expects this Council to stop using the Allesley Hotel as temporary accommodation?”</p>	

Answer:

“The Council is faced with unprecedented demand for temporary accommodation in the city and this has resulted in a number of households being accommodated in hotels across the city. We have reduced the number of families living in B&B’s/hotels to zero and are scoping out a range of actions to reduce the number of single people being placed into hotels and the length of time they spend in temporary accommodation. I would like to reassure you that one of my priorities is to ensure we decrease the number of people placed into hotels.”

3.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor G Williams

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor P Hetherton, Cabinet Member for City Services

TEXT OF QUESTION:

“How confident is she that bin collections over the coming Christmas period will be up to the standards that residents should expect?”

Answer:

“Following last year’s Christmas collections, that saw a significant drop in both the levels of complaints and missed bins, planning for this year is well advanced. We are as confident as we can be that collections will run as smoothly as possible.”

4.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor G Williams

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor P Hetherton, Cabinet Member for City Services

TEXT OF QUESTION:

“Does the Cabinet Member agree with the Local Government Association that Councils in England (outside London) should have the authority to fine lorry drivers who use rural roads, or suburban roads, against weight restriction limits? Would she also tell me what existing powers this Council can use to discourage HGVs from using residential roads, such as those lorries going to the Amazon warehouse?”

Answer:

“Yes, it would be helpful if Councils were able to fine lorry drivers who ignored weight limits. We have the power to introduce weight limits for protecting weak structures and weight restrictions for environmental reasons. However, we do not have the powers to enforce these limits - that is for the police.

We can sign HGV routes to encourage drivers to use appropriate roads as we

have done for Amazon and advisory signs to discourage HGV drivers using inappropriate roads. We work with hauliers and businesses where there are problems caused by lorry traffic to identify and encourage the use of the most suitable routes, but we have no powers to enforce this.”

5. **QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor G Williams**

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor K Caan, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport

TEXT OF QUESTION:

“With regards to the £2.05m that this Council approved for building a new indoor bowls facility in January 2018, would the Cabinet Member tell me how much of that money has been spent so far and on what has it been spent?”

Answer:

“The Council has spent £124,000 on the project to date, the costs incorporate professional fees, survey work and planning application costs. The spend is in line with what was approved in the original Cabinet Report in January 2018.”

6. **QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor T Mayer**

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor T Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

TEXT OF QUESTION:

Given the, I'm sure innocent mistakes made by elected members, planning matters have gone via delegated authority rather than being scrutinised at the Planning Committee. Recent clarification from the ICO states that GDPR DOES NOT prevent planning authorities from publishing applicant details. Will Coventry City Council join other councils like Warwick, Manchester City, Ashford, New Forest, Leicester, Welwyn Hatfield, Reading, Worcester, Northampton, Bedford, Leeds, Corby, Sheffield and many more including the National Planning Portal and The official Planning Advisory Service whom also confirm they DO NOT redact applicant name and addresses?

Answer:

“The requirements of the Council’s Planning function to operate in a democratic, accountable, and transparent way must be balanced against the City Councils obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Inherently planning applications contain “personal data” as defined by GDPR and dependent on circumstances applications may contain “special category data” which require additional safeguards, both of which must be considered

during the consultation and publication process.

The disclosure of personal data (publishing) online requires a lawful basis under Article 6 of the GDPR and special category data requires an additional condition under Article 9 of the GDPR. If a lawful basis and, where necessary, additional condition, cannot be identified for publishing the data in relation to planning applications or appeals decisions, the personal data should be redacted prior to publishing.

GDPR Article 5 (1)(C) requires that personal data shall be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed ('data minimisation') therefore the inclusion of personal data in the planning process does not permit a blanket approach to publishing it on the internet.

With the exception of applications submitted under section 191 or 192 of the Planning Act (certificate of lawfulness of existing or proposed use or development) there is no specific guidance/requirement in respect of the publication of applicant details. Planning Advisory Service interim guidance, published in May 2018 advises that the various requirements/obligations set out under planning legislation to consult with the public does not mean a blanket upload of the full application and supporting information is necessarily appropriate.

Coventry City Council has received legal advice regarding the processing of personal data and is acting in accordance with the legal advice provided. Decisions on what information is published online is a matter for individual planning authorities. While Local Planning Authorities legally do similar things, they vary from one another in scale, scope and attitude to risk. Coventry City Council has carefully considered its operating principles in order to match this with the systems, processes and resources available within the City Council. This is in line with the advice provided by the Planning Advisory Service in its interim guidance."

7.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor T Mayer

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor P Hetheron, Cabinet Member for City Services

TEXT OF QUESTION:

WCC approved the A46 Strategic link road on the 12th September with details showing a more defined route. Despite various requests, Westwood Councillors and residents have not had an opportunity to input into the process despite being promised otherwise. Please can the Cabinet Member provide a full briefing about any public consultation in regards the A46 Strategic link road and what the plans are?

Answer:

"This project is being led by Warwickshire County Council and the route lies within Warwickshire. The route indicated in WCC's cabinet report has no

status and was only an indicative alignment. The WCC Cabinet decision was to approve the development of route options for public consultation; these options will be developed by WCC officers in close consultation with CCC officers. The consultation is likely to be held early in 2020 and will include, in advance of the consultation, briefings for Ward Members within both CCC and WCC areas as well as with specific community representative groups such as local Parish Councils and Residents Associations.”

8. **QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor T Mayer**

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor P Hetheron, Cabinet Member for City Services

TEXT OF QUESTION:

The Coventry Telegraph are blaming Coventry City Council for errors contained within its publication in reference to parking in Spon Street and Lower Hollyhead Road. The newspaper have admitted that the information that they posted in their article was inaccurate, ie cars can't actually park here after 18.00. They say there basis of this was due to the times being incorrect on Coventry City Council's website.

Additionally, they mention that they do not want to post a correction without the Council confirming what the correct information is. Can the cabinet member reassure us this will be rectified as this complaint has been going on for 9 months with no response from the council?

Answer:

“The inaccurate information on the Council's website consisted of a list of taxi ranks in Coventry. This was removed in January 2019.

In June 2019, the Appy Parking app displayed inaccurate information relating to the shared use bay in Spon Street. This information was corrected in June.

The taxi ranks in this area are:

Spon Street (just east of Watch Close)

A shared use bay that becomes a taxi rank after 9pm until 8am.

Lower Holyhead Road

A shared use bay that becomes a taxi rank after 6pm until 8am.

An electric vehicle charging bay that operates 24/7, and limits parking to 1 hour no return in 2 hours.

Fleet St

A shared use bay at the western end which becomes a taxi rank from 6pm to 8am. A taxi rank at the eastern end outside St John's church that operates 24/7.”

9.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor T Mayer

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor P Hetherton, Cabinet Member for City Services

TEXT OF QUESTION:

In relation to the above question can the cabinet member confirm whether or not the website was incorrect, what the correct information is, how long the website stated the wrong information, if not correct now when it will be corrected?

Answer:

“See answer to Q8”

10.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor T Mayer

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor A Khan, Cabinet Member Policing and Equalities

TEXT OF QUESTION:

In 2016 Coventry City Council repeatedly committed publicly to refunding 13,282 members of the public if they requested it. This was up to a total £796,920 (@ original £60 per PCN) in PCNs at three of Coventry’s bus gates. It was further confirmed that the council would not put a time-limit on this refund process. Why has this significant potential outflow not been disclosed as a contingent liability in the council’s year-end financial statements?

Answer:

“The Council is required to declare contingent liabilities of a significant financial value within its Statement of Accounts and these should be sufficiently material in the wider context of the overall financial size of the Council. The value of outstanding penalty charge notices in this case are not sufficiently material to justify a contingent liability.”