

Questions and Answers

Executive

Thursday, 12th February, 2015

West Berkshire Council is committed to equality of opportunity. We will treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, disability, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation.

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12 February 2015

Questions and Answers



Public Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

(a) Question submitted to the Leader of the Council by Mr Ed Sturgess:

"Does not responding to email correspondence from a member of the West Berkshire electorate contravene 2 of the seven principles (openness and accountability) and the general obligation to 'Treat members, officers, members of the public and service providers with courtesy and respect' found in the Code of Conduct for Members of West Berkshire Council - December 2013?"

The Leader of Council answered:

In answer to your question, my expectation is that all Members will respond to queries from their electorate in a timely and efficient manner. In response to your point about a possible contravention of the Nolan's principles and the Code of Conduct I would suggest that this would very much depend on the nature of the problem. For instance, is this a one off or have you consistently failed to receive a response? If you feel that the Code of Conduct has been breached then you could make a formal complaint through the Standards Committee.

You have not been specific about what Councillor you are referring to. If this is one of my Members (Conservative) then I will address your concerns with this person. If this happens to be a Member from the Liberal Democrat's then I will refer this to the Leader of that Group.

(b) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Emergency Planning, answering on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport (Operations) and Newbury Vision by Mr Peter Norman:

"Why is the Council pushing ahead with a new junction to the A339 when they don't yet know what traffic is going to be generated from a regenerated London Road Industrial Estate?"

Written response from Councillor Garth Simpson, Portfolio Holder for Emergency Planning, answering on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport (Operations) and Newbury Vision:

The London Road Industrial Estate Strategic Feasibility Study shows how the estate might be redeveloped based on a number of mixed use development scenarios. A potential high density development of retail, industrial and housing has been modelled thus ensuring the junction design is robust and provides longer term future capacity.

(c) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport (Policy), Culture, Customer Services, Countryside, Waste, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Licensing by Mr Peter Norman:

"The traffic modelling that has been done regarding the new junction on the A339, does it account for all the new traffic being generated by the over development of South Newbury?"

Written response from Councillor Hilary Cole, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport (Policy), Culture, Customer Services, Countryside, Waste, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Licensing:

Traffic modelling accounts for projected vehicle numbers in relation to all committed development within Newbury.

(d) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economic Development, Health & Safety, Human Resources, Pensions, Property by Mr Peter Norman:

“Why is the Council putting so many jobs in jeopardy by not engaging with current employers on the London Road Industrial Estate with their plans for regenerating the area?”

Written response from Councillor Alan Law, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economic Development, Health & Safety, Human Resources, Pensions, Property:

A specific aim of the London Road Industrial Estate redevelopment is to protect and enhance long term employment opportunities by delivering an environment that better supports employment. Part of this process will be to engage with existing estate employers; this has and will continue to be done.

(e) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economic Development, Health & Safety, Human Resources, Pensions, Property by Mr Peter Norman:

“In appointing Strutt and Parker to consider options for the regeneration of London Road Industrial Estate does the Council consider that the criteria they set: i.e. Employment and Revenue enhancement for the Council, are still relevant?”

Written response from Councillor Alan Law, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economic Development, Health & Safety, Human Resources, Pensions, Property:

Yes, they remain relevant.

(f) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport (Policy), Culture, Customer Services, Countryside, Waste, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Licensing by Mr Peter Norman:

“Does the Council now accept that the original criteria used to select Sandford as a strategic site are totally redundant as they totally underplayed the infrastructure needs of the development that makes a mockery of what the local area can provide in terms of schooling, health provision and sports facilities?”

Written response from Councillor Hilary Cole, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport (Policy), Culture, Customer Services, Countryside, Waste, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Licensing:

No. The independent Planning Inspector approved Sandford as a strategic development site after examining all the evidence for all the sites put forward at the Examination in Public back in 2012.

Members' Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

There were no Member questions received in relation to items not included on the agenda.