

Public Questions Dated 25 April 2023

- a) Ed Wilson of Clewer and Dedworth West ward will ask the following question of Councillor Cannon, Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection**

Does RBWM agree with the transfer of CCTV to Thames Valley Police?

RBWM have made a significant investment in our CCTV network which will remain independently managed and will not be part of the TVP CCTV centralisation project. We have held numerous meetings with TVP and they have visited our CCTV Control Room which confirmed that we have an excellent facility and a professional service that does not need altering.

- b) Ed Wilson of Clewer and Dedworth West ward will ask the following question of Councillor Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor; Armed Forces Champion**

What plans does the Royal Borough have for the many empty flower containers around Windsor?

The council is reviewing the use the flower containers around Windsor as no budget is assigned though review of partnership funding is ongoing.

- c) Ian Haggart of Clewer and Dedworth East ward will ask the following question of Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Growth & Opportunity**

How many applications for the Energy Bill Support Scheme have been received and processed by the Royal Borough? What percentage of Park Homes does this represent in the Royal Borough?

This scheme is not run by the Council, its a national scheme that provided a £400 discount automatically to households across England, Scotland and Wales. This equated to £66 in October and November and £67 in December, January, February and March. The Council has no involvement in the scheme.

- d) Ian Haggart of Clewer and Dedworth East ward will ask the following question of Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport**

The AL21 site, to the west of Windsor, is being brought forward with planning applications from developers. What considerations have been given to infrastructure upgrades and cycle/pedestrian improvements to support the forthcoming developments; particularly the A308, Oakley Green Road, Dedworth Road and Ruddlesway?

Active travel considerations have formed part of the site's planning application process. Work to complete the legal agreement is ongoing which will include improvements to cycling and walking provision.

- e) Mohammed Ilyas of Belmont ward will ask the following question of Councillor Carroll, Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation**

It is pleasing to see that the Council proposes to invest in new primary and secondary schools in the borough. Could I ask what steps the Council will be putting in place to ensure that even more of our schools are awarded outstanding by Ofsted.

Thank you for your question, which is a really important one for the children and young people of the borough. I am pleased to report that currently, 93% of schools in the borough are judged to be good or outstanding. This is a positive position for the borough and our vision continues to be that every child and young person in the borough receives an excellent education. RBWM School Link Advisors work closely with individual schools on any identified developmental needs and broker a 'school by school' approach for peer learning, so that best practice is shared between schools.

The new Ofsted Inspection Framework was launched in September 2019 and in November 2020 the Department for Education (DfE) made the decision that outstanding schools should no longer be exempt from inspections, which until then had been the case. This has changed the education and inspection landscape as reported by the DfE (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hundreds-of-formerly-outstanding-schools-reinspected>).

Over 80% (308) of outstanding schools that had a graded inspection last year did not retain their outstanding grade. The majority were judged to be good. However, around a fifth were rated as requiring improvement (17%) or inadequate (4%). We are seeing a post pandemic effect, which must only redouble our efforts to ensure excellence is delivered and moreover learnings from the pandemic are captured. However, as a local education system, we are aspirational in our drive for high quality education, including achieving an outstanding judgement.

f) John Affleck , resident of Southampton will ask the following question of Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Growth & Opportunity

On the RBWM website it says “As a publicly funded organisation, we have a duty to the residents we serve to be transparent in our business operations and outcomes.” My question is; “How does RBWM’s transparency policy work alongside a secret Non Disclosure Agreement?”

The Council has a very wide transparency duty which arises from various sources of legislation such as the Local Government Act 1972, The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. However, it should also be appreciated that the Council handles information which it may not be in the public interest to disclose, for example commercially sensitive information. The legislation which creates the transparency duty also contains certain exemptions and exceptions in relation to the transparency duty, some of which are absolute and some of which require the Council to demonstrate that withholding the information is in the public interest. Where information has been withheld by the Council it will be subject to future review for the Council to determine whether the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information at a particular point in time. The Council cannot “contract out” of its legal transparency duties.

g) John Affleck, resident of Southampton will ask the following question of Councillor Carroll, Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation

Councillor Carroll previous answer quote: "If you have any evidence or allegations of corruption or anything in addition I urge you to take it immediately to the police and you will have my full support in doing so". Question; I now have the evidence does your offer still stand and will you meet with me to discuss the details?

As per my previous response to you; if you have any evidence of corruption, I would urge you take it immediately to the police. In light of your question, I have contacted Thames Valley police again, which I did immediately on receipt of the question, and the police have advised any evidence must be taken to them directly as the appropriate authority.

h) Hillary Su of Oldfield ward will ask the following question of Councillor Stimson: Cabinet Member for Climate Action & Sustainability

The Tempo building, from what I heard, is now delayed for completion. What is the reason for such delay? How has the council ensured the remaining project would be delivered as soon as possible in order to minimise further disturbance to public? Also, once completed, what can we expect from such a landmark building please?

Response to follow

i) Sir Brian H Donohoe, Resident of Ayrshire will ask the following question of Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Growth & Opportunity

How many Non Disclosure Agreements has the Council made and why do you think this practice is good Governance??

The Council does not archive its contracts and agreements under the title "Non-Disclosure Agreement" and some contracts and agreements may contain elements relating to non disclosure; therefore we are unable to provide you with an exact number of such agreements. It is very common for parties to commercial transactions to enter into non-disclosure arrangements and even though the Council has a wide transparency duty there are certain circumstances where it is appropriate and lawful to withhold information and necessary to enter into such arrangements. The Council is under a legal duty to review such arrangements and will apply the public interest test for a request for disclosure at a particular point in time; therefore the withholding of information is not absolute even where the Council has entered into a Non-Disclosure Agreement.

j) Sunil Sharma of Cox Green ward will ask the following question of Councillor McWilliams, Cabinet Member for Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure

It is brilliant to see such a wide range of Leisure Centre Facilities across the borough. RBWM's leisure centre attendance broke through 2,000,000 visits between April 2022 - Feb 2023. What is behind the record levels of Leisure Centre attendance in RBWM?

The main increases in attendance at the Leisure Centre's was seen in adult attendances at the Borough's two main sites. Total Braywick Leisure Centre attendances are up around 30% vs the Magnet Leisure Centre which it replaced, with adult attendance up approximately 75%. Windsor Leisure Centre has an overall increase of around 15%, with adult attendance up approximately 30%.

The Borough's leisure operator, Leisure Focus have provided a high standard of leisure services which has contributed to an increase in participation. Leisure Officers are continuing to work in partnership with internal and external stakeholders and organisations,

including our leisure operator, to increase awareness and access to facilities. Targeting underrepresented groups, particularly those identified through research undertaken as part of the Borough's Leisure Strategy refresh, will be a focus for Officers in 2023/24.

k) Will Scawn of Belmont ward will ask the following question of Councillor Bhangra, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Parks and Countryside

As part of local efforts to clean up Belmont ward, could the Council please consider installing new dog waste bins on the footpaths that run between Gringer Hill, Belmont Park Avenue and Linden Avenue?

We do not generally place dog waste bins in residential areas and they are usually limited to parks and open spaces, however dog waste may be put in normal street litter bins. Officers will look into the provision of litter bins in the area and assess whether any additional litter bins are required.

l) Will Scawn of Belmont ward will ask the following question of Councillor Cannon, Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection

With tackling crime and antisocial behaviour an important part of the Conservatives' ten point plan and a key issue in my home area of Belmont, could you please provide an update on outcomes from the recent crime event and survey, and any details of the recruitment of the four new extra police officers?

The recent crime and ASB summit was very well attended and provided some excellent feedback from a cross section of key partners and residents.

The key issues and themes identified were:

- Communications / transparency / partnership working – improved and expanded communications, better information sharing, increased transparency and more police presence.
- Customer service – better responses from officers, improved methods of reporting and better linking between departments in order to better problem solve.
- Enforcement - more police and community wardens, stronger penalties and more investment into preventative approaches.

We also carried out a survey which received 430 responses and residents indicated that the top three priorities for additional police officers in the borough should be burglary, drug misuse and anti social driving.

Regarding the recruitment of the four new police officers TVP are recruiting internally for these positions and are confident the positions will be filled shortly. RBWM and TVP are finalising details of the contract which is in the legal process currently.

m) Genevieve Gosling of Sunningdale and Cheapside ward will ask the following question of Councillor Carroll, Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation

Can you provide an update for Sunningdale residents on the Medical Centre and a timeline to secure funding to bring this forward?

Thank you for your question. I have continually spoken to our partners in the NHS and they have asked me to relay this update. We would like to reassure residents, our partners and stakeholders, that we continue to be committed to the Sunningdale Health Hub Development to offer the best possible care for patients in a meticulously designed building to meet both present and future health needs. We appreciate the support we have received locally to get

us to the point of having planning permission approved. We will continue to update the webpage on a monthly basis - <https://www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/about-us/transforming-the-way-we-work-improving-services-local-to-you/sunningdale-health-hub/>.

The planning application for the Sunningdale Health Hub was approved in March 2022 by the planning committee of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. As part of the governance around investing public funds an outline business case for the development was submitted at the time. To continue to progress the development, amongst other things, we will submit a full business case, which will need to include a refreshed economic and financial case which is expected to change due to the timeline and market forces on costs of new developments. As with all Public Funding, this business case is still subject to approval both locally within the Integrated Care System (ICS) and also through national organisations such as NHS England and the Department for Health and Social Care. Whilst we focus on the business case, there is now a national pause on the Estates Investment Programme, which locally we have no control over, but we continue to highlight the importance of this facility as an essential to patient care in our fast growing community. We will update the website once there is clarity on the timeline going forward.

I wish to emphasise that I have raised this issue with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and also made representations to The Treasury given the critical importance of this investment for the local community. I am also aware of misinformation being circulated suggesting the council has somehow not been active and proactive in this matter. That is plainly and totally incorrect. I am therefore pleased to set the record straight again and to note with some emphasis this is a vital priority, and we will continue to work with our NHS colleagues to ensure this investment pulls through with some efficiency.