

COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

PART A - SUPPLEMENTARIES

1.	<p>Councillors E W Fitzgerald, D G Sullivan, L James, S M Jones, K M Marsh, I M Richard & G D Walker.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member outline to Council the advantages of turning libraries into book clubs.</p> <p>Response by the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Regeneration</p> <p>There are currently no plans to turn libraries into book clubs. The future of the whole service is being considered within the context of a library review due for completion in March and the Sustainable Swansea commissioning Strand.</p>
2.	<p>Councillors MH Jones, CA Holley & JW Jones.</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member for Education explain to Council the meaning of her statement which she made at the last full meeting of Council on the 6th January 2015 (during the question on Parklands School land provision) namely that schools should provide only their statutory obligations.</p> <p>Will she :-</p> <p>(a)Confirm that Primary schools in Swansea will have Nursery class provision for all children over the age of 3 which is in line with Welsh Government guidelines and is funded by them through the grant given to the Council and :-</p> <p>(b)Will she also confirm that in any calculation taken of space this will include pupils in Nursery classes</p> <p>Response by Cabinet Member for Education</p> <p>Schools will have to prioritise funding allocated to support statutory education provision. There is a pre-school age provision at Parkland Primary and full cost recovery should be made for this non statutory provision.</p> <p>Local Authorities are required to ensure that every child is entitled to a minimum part time nursery place from the term following their third birthday and in Swansea this provision is made at school settings. This Authority has no plans to change this provision.</p> <p>Current capacity calculations exclude provision for nursery classes as per Welsh Government requirement, and there are no plans to change this in the future.</p> <p>However, in assessing the available outdoor space against Building Bulletin Guidance, the calculation takes into account Nursery pupils in accordance with the Guidance.</p>
3.	<p>Councillors CL Philpott, MH Jones & AM Day</p> <p>Will the Leader / Cabinet Member tell Council what steps are being taken to ensure that any future maintenance of Council Buildings (including schools) which have had significant investment in them is carried out and monitored.</p>

	<p>Response by the Cabinet Member for Education/Leader</p> <p>The Council Revenue Maintenance budget is not allocated against individual premises but pooled to ensure suitable cover is provided for all buildings. An annual servicing programme exists for all Mechanical & Electrical installations and a Compliance Strategy ensures the Authority conforms to all appropriate statutory requirements.</p> <p>In relation to schools, statute requires that all maintenance budget and responsibilities are devolved to the relevant governing bodies and professional advice/guidance is provided during any major schemes development. In addition, Service Level Agreements are also provided both for technical advice and for all Mechanical & Electrical servicing and repairs after testing.</p>
4.	<p>Councillors CA Holley, JW Jones & J Newbury</p> <p>Swansea West Business Park should be seen as a top priority for the future of any job creation. Will the Cabinet Member tell Council what progress if any has been made on the new access road to the Business Park and :- (a) Will he tell Council what the cost of this access road is likely to be and :- (b) the cost of the business case in preparing any bid to the Welsh Government?</p> <p>Response by the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development & Regeneration</p> <p>As part of the Draft Proposals Map Consultation Dec 14/Jan 15 the Council published a draft Concept Plan for the Waunarwydd/Fforestfach Strategic Development Area. The Concept Plan recognises the need to develop Swansea West Business Park as a strategic/regional employment site and the importance of providing a new highway link road to improve accessibility to the site. In accordance with the LDP Preferred Strategy the LDP team have negotiated the delivery of a new highway link road to the Business Park from the A484 Llanelli Link Road to the north. In accordance with this scheme, the road would be fully funded and delivered by a private sector housebuilder in conjunction with a residential development scheme on land to the north east of the Business Park. The prospective site developer is currently in pre-application discussions in anticipation of submission of a detailed scheme later this year.</p> <p>Link to Strategic Site Concept Plan. http://swansea.gov.uk/media/7485/Waunarwydd-Fforestach-Strategic-Development-Area---Concept-Plan-August-14/pdf/Waunarwydd-Fforestach Strategic Development Area - Concept Plan August 14.pdf</p>
5.	<p>Councillors E W Fitzgerald, D G Sullivan, L James, S M Jones, K M Marsh, I M Richard & G D Walker.</p> <p>In view of the negative comments by the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data, and Methods, what action does the Cabinet Member believe is now necessary to ensure that the Foundation Phase delivers in respect of its main aim of breaking the link between poverty and low attainment.</p>

	<p>Response by the Cabinet Member for Education</p> <p>Your question does not clarify which of the reports by the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, data and methods (WISERD) you are referring to. WISERD have produced a number of reports monitoring the progress of the Foundation Phase. The report published earlier this year does draw attention to the fact that in the data we have so far it appears that children in receipt of free school meals and those with special educational needs still indicate a gap in attainment for deprived children from the rest of the cohort.</p> <p>The Foundation Phase was introduced across Wales at different times and with different groups. All the reports indicate that the foundation phase is having a positive effect on the wellbeing of learners and that science is making most progress.</p> <p>With regard to breaking the link between poverty and low attainment, there is considerable research to show that targeted provision, not just a universal service produces the best results. To support this approach, schools are using the pupil deprivation grant effectively.</p> <p>Going forward, the most effective course of action is to ensure that all schools are implementing the Foundation Phase correctly with additional support from the pupil deprivation grant. Councillors are aware that the Flying Start projects across the County are working to address the link between poverty and lower attainment.</p>
6.	<p>Councillors E W Fitzgerald, D G Sullivan, L James, S M Jones, K M Marsh, I M Richard & G D Walker.</p> <p>Could the Cabinet Member inform Council of the cost of the cycle link between Morryston and Gorseinon, either via grants or Council input.</p> <p>Response by the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transportation/Wellbeing</p> <p>The cost of the recently installed signage and dropped crossings between Gorseinon and Birchgrove amounted to £27,012.06 (funded in totality by Corporate Budgets). There are further aspirations to create off-road shared use paths along this route, but there is currently no funding identified and would therefore need to be funded via grant in future years.</p>
7.	<p>Councillors AM Day, PM Meara & LG Thomas</p> <p>Will the Leader/ Cabinet Member tell Council if any more land at the Recreation Ground on Mumbles Road is going to be used for car parking to accommodate the expected increase in staff working in the Guildhall? What action will the Council take to ensure that the residents living close by will not be unduly affected by more parking in their street.</p> <p>Response by the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Regeneration</p> <p>There are no immediate plans to increase the designated car parking area at the recreation ground as a result of its continuing approach to accommodation</p>

	<p>but the Council will continue to maximise the beneficial use of all of its land and assets as part of the management of its land and assets portfolio.</p> <p>The majority of on-street parking around the Guildhall and surrounding streets is already regulated, with residents afforded priority over other users in the form of residents parking or limited waiting permit holders exempt traffic orders. These Traffic Regulation Orders are regularly enforced by the Council's Civil Parking Enforcement officers, and therefore, residents should be relatively unaffected by the increase in staff working in the Guildhall.</p>
8.	<p>Councillors E W Fitzgerald, D G Sullivan, L James, S M Jones, K M Marsh, I M Richard & G D Walker.</p> <p>With regard to Youth Clubs, could the Cabinet Member advise on the following: 1)What new budget cuts are being implemented to Youth Club funding. 2)How many Youth Clubs face possible closure, and if so which ones. 3)Is the Council planning to work in partnership by part funding any new voluntary run Youth Clubs that may emerge from closures. 4)How many ethnic minority and gender orientated Youth Clubs are there in Swansea and does Council help fund these, and can these be identified. 5)How many Welsh language Youth Clubs are known to exist in Swansea e.g. URDD GOBAITH CYMRU, and does Council help fund these.</p> <p>Response by the Cabinet Member for Services for Children & Young People</p> <p>Following our consultation with Young People and paying due regard of what they had to say, there are no planned savings currently being implemented to Youth Clubs. Our Young People had plenty to say about the valued support they receive from our Youth Clubs and Youth Workers. As a result, there are no planned closures as part of the budget savings. All clubs will continue to be analysed in terms of performance, strategic alignment, value for money and viability.</p> <p>I would keep an open mind on working with volunteers. However, there is no plan to part fund any now voluntarily run Youth Clubs that may emerge. Where we can, we will offer support, knowledge and guidance. The Service's Management Information System will continue to be offered to all partners to enable them to capture the impact of their work. The Youth Service also works in partnership with YMCA College Wales to run Youth Work training that is accessible to workers from all sectors.</p> <p>The Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST) currently runs a youth club for ethnic minority young people and receives funding from a wide range of sources, but the council does not provide funding for the Youth Club element. This is the only known traditional Youth Club project for Ethnic Minorities in Swansea.</p> <p>There are no known gender orientated Youth Clubs as such in Swansea, but a number of the uniformed clubs often only have members from one gender ie. Brownies. We have supported transgender young people at Swansea's first LGBT youth club which opened last year at the YMCA. We continue to work in partnership to enable young people to be themselves in a safe environment.</p>

	<p>Menter Iaith currently run 2 Welsh Language Youth Clubs in partnership with Young People Services. The service funds Menter Iaith £25 000 via the Welsh Government Youth Service Strategy Revenue Grant, which pays for a Welsh Language Lead Worker that supports both of the Welsh Language Clubs and for some bi-lingual support across Young People Services Clubs. The service also provides the venue for one of the Welsh Language clubs as part of the partnership.</p>
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PART B – NO SUPPLEMENTRIES

None