



Council – 5 October 2023

## Councillors' Questions

### Part A – Supplementaries

1	<p><b>Councillors Mary Jones, Jeff Jones &amp; Lynda James</b></p> <p>There are a number of delivery firms using insulated bags to convey takeaway meals to customers. Can the Cabinet Member confirm whether there are any food safety checks of the hygiene of these bags.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Service &amp; Performance</b></p> <p>Every food business needs to register with the authority and the Food and Safety Team carry out inspections of all food businesses using a risk-based approach.</p> <p>During the inspections, if delivery drivers are on site at the time, the insulated bags would be looked at as part of the inspection. It is accepted that this may be a small proportion of the delivery drivers collecting from a premises but during the inspection, officers will establish whether or not a premises offers a delivery service and if so will then discuss how this is done and identify/address any issues that arise.</p> <p>The larger delivery firms operating nationally receive all their advice via a primary authority relationship, from the local authority in the area where they are based, which would include food hygiene advice.</p> <p>The food safety risk from insulated bags would be relatively low, on the basis that the food going into the bags is normally doubled wrapped or in sealed cartons, so the risk of cross contamination is limited.</p>
2	<p><b>Councillors Peter May, Allan Jeffrey, Sandra Joy &amp; Stuart Rice</b></p> <p>The relaxation of certain regulations by the Welsh Government during Covid allowed the facilitation by the council to position concrete structures on the public highway. This expanded outdoor seating assisting businesses.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Was this relaxation permanent or if not when did it expire;</li><li>How many of these structures still remain in place and what is the legal position on them remaining on a public highway;</li><li>Have there been any discussions between officers and cabinet members to develop a future strategy on any remaining structures;</li><li>If so, how long have they been going on, have there been any complications and have any options been tabled.</li></ol> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Service &amp; Performance</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Welsh Ministers pursued a non-legislative approach for the relaxation of powers for local authorities to grant pavement licences. This relaxation did not have</li></ol>

	<p>a specific expiry but was connected to Covid regulations. When Covid restrictions ended, the relaxed powers in Wales would have ended.</p> <p>b. 4 sites remain, these are licensed, within temporary footways.</p> <p>c. Yes, guidance has been agreed for the existing structures.</p> <p>d. Discussions have been ongoing for over a year during which time 6 sites have been stopped. The remaining 4 are being contacted with a view making the sites permanent but this will follow a formal consultation process and require private funding.</p>
3	<p><b>Councillors Peter May, Allan Jeffrey, Sandra Joy &amp; Stuart Rice</b></p> <p>In the council meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> May the Uplands group tabled a question about the shoddy condition of the overhead concrete fascia on the South Car Park of the arena development. Subsequently a piece of concrete about a foot long has fallen away from the fascia from height (picture attached).</p> <p>Are there any plans to inspect the fascia and remedy the defect.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism</b></p> <p>We are aware of the minor spalling of the fascia at this location. It has been recorded and in light of the contractor Buckingham going into Administration will be captured and remedied with a new contractor together with all outstanding snagging items.</p>
	<p><b>Part B – No Supplementaries</b></p>
4	<p><b>Councillor Chris Evans</b></p> <p>Are there any plans to repaint the railings along the Mumbles Road corridor from Brynmill Lane to Ashleigh Road, which are currently looking quite tired. For clarity these are the ones at Singleton Park, Pub on the Pond and Ashleigh Road Playing Fields.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism</b></p> <p>The Council is working in conjunction with Swansea University to replace the railings, two samples panels have been produced for planning approval.</p> <p>Once approval has been given we will go out to tender to replace the fencing on a phased programme over the next few years.</p>
5	<p><b>Councillor Chris Evans</b></p> <p>Has the Council taken into account the cost of the negative health impacts of the Swansea Air Show in terms of both air quality issues and the impacts of excessive sound? Whilst the economic benefits are clear, we should also acknowledge it comes at a cost. The show takes place close to an urban Air Quality Management Area and the aircraft engines put out a mixture of gasses including carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides and water vapour. Whilst the noise issue is significant as "The UK Government considers a L eq of over <b>57dBA</b> to represent the noise level for the</p>

onset of significant community annoyance. Evidence from *The Aircraft Noise Index Study (1985)* showed that people become moderately disturbed at LAeq 65 dB(A) and were considered **highly disturbed at LAeq 70 dB(A)** while 120-140dB is the threshold of pain." *Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, Environmental Noise, July 2009 Number 338*. A Jet flyover at 1000 feet produces 103 db, while a helicopter at 100 produces 100 db. Noise can also be a factor that triggers PTSD in patients including veterans returning from war zones and refugees fleeing from conflicts of which there are many as we are a City of Sanctuary.

## **Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism**

### Air Quality Management Area (AQMA):

The Council carries out air quality monitoring as a part of Local Air Quality Management duties under the Environment Act 1995. The Annual Progress reports can be viewed via the following link [LAQM Reports](#)

Data recorded does not indicate an impact upon the AQMA for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), the Council does not have equipment to monitor CO<sub>2</sub>. The likelihood of emissions grounding, and impacting local populations at concentrations, is greatly reduced due to the drop in concentration due to wind dispersion and dispersion with distance.

### Noise:

Initially it is important to confirm the indices being used when assessing the impact of sound pressure for individuals. The LA<sub>eq</sub> (dB) refers to an average sound pressure over a time period and within *The Aircraft Noise Index Study (1985)* they measured sound pressure levels and its perception around airports such as Heathrow and so the time periods were for measurements over longer periods with a greater number of plane movements.

When looking the potential impacts of sound at an Air show it is important to consider the time period of the whole event and the periods of time when aircraft noise is present.

The [World Health Organisation \(WHO\) Community Noise Guidelines](#) (1999) provided guideline values for noise in specific environments and referred to the following for Ceremonies, festivals and entertainment events:

*Critical health effects (patrons: <5 times/year) = 100dBLA<sub>eq4hours</sub> with a peak value 110dB L<sub>Amax</sub>*

With reference to the sound pressure levels produced by aircraft at an Air show, a 3dB reduction can be assumed for each doubling of distance from the moving noise source (a line source) and so the metric of primary interest would be the L<sub>Amax</sub>. The examples provided were for a jet at 103dB at 1000feet and a helicopter at 100dB at 100feet. Using the reduction of sound pressure with distance (3dB reduction per doubling of distance) would indicate that at the human receptor the L<sub>Amax</sub> value would be below 100dB and below the community guideline value for critical health effect. The second metric to assess would be the average sound pressure level (LA<sub>eq</sub>), the WHO 1999 guidelines refer to a 4hour time period and so the guideline for critical health effect provided is 100dBLA<sub>eq4hours</sub>. When looking at the aircraft movements over a 4hour time period there will be a greater proportion of time where the sound pressure is not effected by the noise from aircraft and so it is unlikely that the critical health effect guideline will be reached.

	<p>The flying programme at the Wales Airshow is spread over several hours, with breaks between each display. The total display flying time is approximately 90 minutes per day. The displays themselves are from a wide range of aircraft the vast majority of which are not the louder 'jet engine type'.</p> <p>Attendees to the Airshow are warned in advance about increased noise levels when appropriate, during some of the displays. In addition, the Council supported by The National Autistic Society provides two accessible viewing areas with assistance and support to families. As well as a quiet viewing area located on the first floor of the central library in the civic centre.</p>
6	<p><b>Councillors Chris Holley, James McGettrick, Cheryl Philpott &amp; Jeff Jones</b></p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member inform Council whether there is any cleaning regime for the Singleton Park ponds.</p> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism</b></p> <p>The Parks Service carries out the general maintenance of the ponds. Floating debris is removed regularly when build up is apparent. Inlet and outlet pipes are cleared of silt build up as required using plant equipment, water levels are monitored daily by the team based in the area. Outfall pipes located on the beach are also cleared of sand as required to facilitate flow.</p>
7	<p><b>Councillors Peter May, Allan Jeffrey, Sandra Joy &amp; Stuart Rice</b></p> <p>On a needs must basis, the council install street name signs. The older installations dating right back over many decades, some over a century old, are still clearly legible. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for more up to date installations. The black lettering has faded considerably and in some cases all you can see is a blank white plate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Is there any comeback on the company for these substandard products.</li> <li>b. Does the council propose to commission remedial work be taken to restore the lettering on the signs.</li> </ol> <p><b>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment &amp; Infrastructure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The current name plates are made with a diamond grade reflective plate which has a 10 year guarantee. The manufacturers will replace any faded plate free of charge during this guarantee period. The diamond grade plate became the default minimum specification in 2020. Prior to the new specification the name plates were non-reflective and they had a minimum three year guarantee, their life span is expected to be much longer. What is probably happening there's a batch of older plates fading now, especially if they are south facing. The old cast iron and die-press signs will undoubtedly last longer, but they are by far more expensive to purchase and they do not comply with modern reflectivity rules.</li> <li>b. Any faded sign will be either replaced or a replacement sticker overlaid once it has been brought to our attention.</li> </ol>
8	<p><b>Councillors Peter May, Allan Jeffrey, Sandra Joy &amp; Stuart Rice</b></p> <p>Volunteer street litter pickers from communities provide a welcome free contribution to the council when its resources are inadequate to keep up with demand. They fall</p>

into two categories: Those who participate in an organised event and those who merely do it casually on their daily walk in their local area. This question focusses on the latter category.

These welcome volunteers through their own accord help the council. Blue bags had been provided for them should they request them from Uplands councillors as they have using their own bags as well as advising them to place whatever bag they use by a public litter bin for ease of collection. Whilst many also have invested in litter grabbers through their own initiative, again Uplands councillors have provided them funded from the community budget.

A regime has evolved in recent years which is quite onerous for the casual volunteer.

- a. They are encouraged to fill in a data form with personal details giving at least 5 days notice to arrange collection of their efforts stating where their free work is to be collected from.
- b. They are encouraged to submit a record of how long they took, how many bags they collected, how many times they did it and photographs to an external organisation, Caru Cymru, so that organisation can generate a public statistic.
- c. They are advised that they have to take out insurance.
- d. They now have to use red bags which are not supplied by the council but from the abovementioned organisation Caru Cymru which includes effort to get hold of.
- e. They are now encouraged by Caru Cymru to engage with a project officer. All of these barriers are putting the casual litter picker off. They are finding the whole regime for a simple act of good will quite onerous and bureaucratic. It appears that red bags mean red tape.  
Is there any scope for a rethink of this to include more flexibility for valued casual volunteers.

### **Response of the Cabinet Member for Community (Services)**

The Volunteer Litter Picking protocol has developed over recent years in partnership with Keep Wales Tidy (KWT) and is consistent with the general approach taken by other Local Authorities. The Litter Picking Hubs provide those groups or individuals wanting to volunteer an understanding of the potential hazards associated with litter picking in the public realm and ensures that they are insured during the activity.

Those individuals that choose to litter pick outside of the agreed protocol do so at their own risk. The Council potentially places itself at risk where such activity is encouraged and supported by the provision of bags etc.

KWT uses information collected following litter picks to target their resources and develop future policy.

Cleansing Officers are currently looking to make it easier for individuals, families and small groups to volunteer by removing the requirement for the prior 5 day notification which will remain in place for larger groups.

### **9 Councillors**

The Civic Centre is a public building which was constructed in the 1970s using a substantial amount of concrete. RAAC is a lightweight form of precast concrete, frequently used in public sector buildings in the UK from the mid-1960s to the 1990s. Are the council aware of any components made with RAAC in the Civic Centre.

### **Response of the Leader**

	<p>We have carried out many condition surveys of the Civic Centre over the years, and we have carried out extensive reconfiguration, including compartmentalisation for fire safety and asbestos surveys all of which have required intrusive inspections.</p>
	<p>We have not found any RAAC in the building, with the concrete being poured reinforced as opposed to RAAC planks.</p>