



Council – 20 September 2018

Councillors' Questions

Part A – Supplementaries

1	<p>Cllrs Chris Holley, Peter Black, Mary Jones</p> <p>Will the Leader /Cabinet Member tell Council what the current position is with regards to the sale of the Civic Centre and</p> <p>(a) What plans are there for the Central Library if and when the site is sold and</p> <p>(b) What plans are being developed for the Archive Service.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Members for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism and Better Communities (Place)</p> <p>Further advice is being sought on the most commercial advantageous time to market the Civic Centre site to generate the greatest benefit from the Arena and associated developments being undertaken in the City Centre. Once that is known, all options will be considered for all the current and potential occupations and activities within the Civic Centre, including Central Library and West Glamorgan Archive Service. Any future plans will be shaped in the context of the wider cultural service provision in Swansea, the statutory functions of both services and requirement to engage with Welsh Government and in the case of Archives, the joint service agreement with Neath Port Talbot.</p>
2	<p>Cllrs Mike Day, Mary Jones, Lynda James</p> <p>While we welcome the reduction in NEETs over the years, can the Cabinet Member give the published figures for the last 3 years, and explain what actions and resources are in place to ensure the numbers do not rise any further.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement & Learning / Cabinet Member for Children's Services Young People</p> <p>Please see answer at Appendix 1.</p>
3	<p>Cllrs Will Thomas & Lyndon Jones</p> <p>The Ambassadors Group who are going to be managing the new Arena in Swansea run a pantomime in every theatre they operate, with this in mind, will the iconic Swansea Christmas Pantomime be moved from the historic Swansea Grand Theatre to the new Arena.</p>

	<p>Response of the Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>Our cultural venues and services will work collaboratively to determine best programming opportunities and audience development as part of ongoing agreements across city venues. At this stage, it is too early to confirm the programme of events specific to the Arena, but there is no plan to relocate the pantomime. Whilst ATG operate a portfolio of mid-scale theatres elsewhere, to which pantomime is suited, the Swansea Arena will focus on programming large scale productions and events that are not suitably, or able to be, accommodated elsewhere.</p>
4	<p>Cllrs Wendy Fitzgerald, Peter Black, Graham Thomas</p> <p>What is the Council's definition of Affordable Housing.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Homes & Energy</p> <p>For the LDP and all supporting documents, policies and strategies relating to the provision of affordable housing, the Council adopts the definition of Affordable Housing as set out in National Planning Policy and Guidance and Technical Advice Note 2 (TAN2). TAN2 defines Affordable Housing as 'housing where there are secure mechanisms in place to ensure that it is accessible to those who cannot afford market housing, both on first occupation and for subsequent occupiers'. There are two main types of affordable housing defined in National Planning Policy and Guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Rented Housing: provided by local authorities and registered social landlords where rent levels have regard to the Welsh Government guideline rents and benchmark rents; and • Intermediate Housing: where prices or rents are above those of social rented housing but below market housing prices or rents. This can include equity sharing schemes. Intermediate housing differs from low cost market housing. Low cost market housing is private housing for open market sale or rent and the Local Authority does not control occupation. The Welsh Government does not consider low cost market housing to be affordable housing for the purpose of the land use planning system.
5	<p>Cllrs Chris Holley, Graham Thomas, Jeff Jones</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member tell Council what work will be done with the £6 million we are borrowing to use on our Leisure Centres prior to them being handed over to a different provider.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism</p> <p>Freedom leisure are due to take operation of the facilities from 1st October 2018 and the planned investment is due to commence throughout 2019, with a number of major changes scheduled during school summer holiday period at the dual use venues. The project plan is currently being developed between Freedom Leisure, their consultants and the Council and is subject to final agreement. The scope of the proposals identified within Freedom</p>

	<p>Leisure’s tender, for works across the property portfolio, amounted to a total of £5M, to be funded through prudential borrowing. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1.5M of backlog maintenance work, identified through the condition surveys commissioned by the Council. • Energy improvement works of £1M to improve overall energy efficiency of the facilities. • Improvement works of £2.5M through increased gym and fitness studio capacity, utilising existing unused spaces by introducing mezzanine floors, passenger lifts/stairs and repurposing spaces. Reconfiguration of public access and changing /WC spaces to improve the customer journey and improve management of safeguarding at a number of school sites. • Welcoming entrances and offering a new catering services where they don’t currently exist. • Introduction of new attractions, such as a climbing wall at community sites and new water features. <p>Additionally there was a further £1.2M of Freedom Leisure investment into continuing to upgrade and renew state of the art fitness equipment and systems throughout the contractual term.</p>
6	<p>Cllrs Brigitte Rowlands & Will Thomas</p> <p>Can we have assurances that lessons have been learned from the construction of the Liberty Stadium, and those findings will be used on future construction projects such as the Arena.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Business Transformation & Performance</p> <p>The council have employed specialist consultants to advise on the building specification and construction procurement who have significant experience of undertaking projects of this scale and nature. In addition the contractor is being brought on board early to work with the council to deliver the project.</p>
7	<p>Cllrs Peter Black, Wendy Fitzgerald, Mary Jones</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member state the Council's policy with regard to the monitoring of black bags put out for kerbside collection to check whether they contain any recycling materials. Have officers been instructed to open up bags for this purpose.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>I can confirm that whilst the Council does not routinely monitor black bags put out for kerbside collection to check whether they contain any recycling materials, the Waste Management Team do undertake periodic survey to</p>

	<p>assess recycling participation levels and waste management behaviours to inform recycling promotion activities.</p> <p>As well as checking the percentages of properties placing out recycling containers for collection, these surveys can also include assessing the percentage of households placing all or most of their recyclables in their black bags.</p> <p>If there is the occasional need to open black bags, they are re-tied or re-bagged if split, as necessary, to prevent any spillage or litter.</p>
	<p>Part B – No Supplementaries</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Cllrs Mike Day, Jeff Jones, Mary Jones</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member tell Council the figures for each of the last 4 years of how long it takes for the department to respond to complaints about litter bins that are overflowing, dog bins that need emptying and reports of fly tipping. Can he also tell Council for each of those years, the number of staff employed on those activities.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>Response times to reports of overflowing litter and dog waste bins are not collated, however all reports are dealt with as soon as resources allow, bearing in mind the need to maximise planned works and minimise reactive works for efficiencies. Whilst all bins are emptied on set frequencies (based on their general use and officer knowledge over the years) any bin can become full at any given time particularly if they are subject to misuse.</p> <p>Our performance in clearing fly tipping within 5 working days is as follows:</p> <p>17/18 - 97% 16/17 - 95% 15/16 – 99.6% 14/15 – 99.7%</p> <p>The number of staff employed varies both seasonally, and dependent upon how the Cleansing work is organised. During 14/15 and 15/16 Cleansing was undertaken in conjunction with Highways work under Street scene. Since 16/17 and 17/18 the Cleansing function was merged with Parks Operations and the integration of the Parks and Cleansing operations has continued to evolve, so it is not really practical to directly assign numbers of staff directly to just Cleansing functions as a comparison over the different years.</p> <p>In broad terms, a new Cleansing Project Team of 3no. additional operatives was created in 16/17, and a dedicated Fly Tipping Team was created using existing operatives. Since 16/17 5no. operatives primarily undertaking Cleansing functions have left the Council and not been replaced due to budget pressures.</p>

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Cllrs Mike Day, Mary Jones, Jeff Jones

Can the Cabinet member tell Council how many waste bins and dog mess bins have been removed in the City and County of Swansea by ward since April 2017.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management

Of the approx. 1500 bins across the Authority, the number of bins removed since April 2017 is of the order 10-15 no.

These are not collated on a ward by ward basis, however Ward Members are informed when it is proposed to remove or not replace a bin.

Bins have generally been removed due to misuse, lack of use, vandalism, or for consolidation, although efforts to prevent misuse through monitoring and stickering ('use this bin properly or lose it') are tried before resorting to removal. Emptying of bins due to continual misuse is not sustainable.

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Cllrs Mike Day, Mary Jones, Cheryl Philpott

Will the Cabinet Member give Council statistics for the last four years on statementing of children in Swansea? Data should include the number of applications considered for each of those years, the average duration taken to consider applications, the longest time taken to deal with an application, and the number of applications that have been approved and the number turned down.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills

Tables 1 and 2 provide the information requested for the past five years. The data in table 1 indicates that in total the number of statutory assessment requests has not risen over the past five years. Up to 2016–2017 we saw increasing referrals from primary schools and Health but this reduced last academic year. Referrals from parents also does not show a significant trend although the numbers are above the 2013-2014 figures. There has been a decrease in statutory assessments requested by the local authority (LA).

Table 1

Statutory Assessment Requests received - numbers in brackets () refer to assessments not started

Source	Academic Year				
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
School	119 (61)	123 (61)	106 (47)	140 (65)	131 (51)
Primary		90	76	104	
Secondary		33	30	36	
Health	171 (88)	196 (109)	198 (123)	201 (124)	148 (87)
Local Authority	10 (3)	16 (5)	17 (9)	6 (3)	3 (1)
Other Authority	0 (0)	1 (0)	2 (2)	4 (3)	1
Panel	8 (1)	2 (1)	5 (1)	3 (1)	3 (3)

Parent/Guardian	25 (14)	43 (30)	41 (22)	32 (19)	37 (17)
Social Services	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	2 (1)	1
Total	333 (167)	381 (206)	370 (204)	388 (216)	324 (159)

The data in Table 2 shows that at up to 2016 the average time to issue a Statement was less than the statutory 26 weeks required by the SEN Code of Practice 2002.

Table 2
Number of Statements of Special Educational Need issued, longest time to issue and average time in weeks

Calendar Year	No of Statements Issued	Longest time taken to issue Statement (weeks)	Average time taken to issue Statement (weeks)
2013	188	42.57	22.67
2014	154	58	22.21
2015	168	106.86	24.18
2016	151	41.43	22.96
2017	148	73	27.39

The longest time to issue varies but reasons for delays are objections to Proposed Statements from schools or parents as well as statutory advices not received on time. For the years 2013 to 2016 delays in advices were largely due to medical and school advices not being received on time. However, last year some educational psychology and specialist teacher advices were delayed. This can be due to a number of reasons such as parents and children not attending assessments and also related to the reductions in frontline staff in these teams over the past three years as part of necessary budget efficiencies.

The Additional Learning Needs Unit (ALNU) are now required to report on performance on a termly basis and there will be an emphasis this year on statutory timelines. We are also now asking for data on numbers of statutory assessments requests and statutory deadlines to be reported on a monthly basis for better tracking of performance. Following the ALN Commissioning Review there have been changes to the staffing of the ALNU which will support parent partnership and engagement aiming to reduce requests for statutory assessment. The ALNU would also like to improve capacity building activity with schools so that learners with ALN are better supported without the need for statutory assessment. To this end bids for transformation funds held at a regional level are being prepared to provide capacity for this work.

Finally a joint working group of LA officers and headteachers is looking at the funding formula for learners with ALN in preparation for the implementation of the ALN and Education Tribunal Act 2018 (ALNET Act 2018) in September 2020. At the moment schools receive funding for pupils with Statements as part of the formula for delegating funds to schools which provides a financial incentive to request a statutory assessment as evidenced by the 2014 to 2017 data above. The ALNET Act 2018 is replacing the statutory assessment process and Statements with a person centred process in which a learner's

	<p>ALN and additional learning provision (ALP) is set out in an individual development plan developed and maintained by the school or further education institution (FEI) in the majority of cases. This means the current funding formula would be unworkable and therefore needs changing.</p>
11	<p>Cllrs Mary Jones, Mike Day, Wendy Fitzgerald</p> <p>Can the relevant Cabinet Member state what the programme for weed control will be for the coming year in the City and County of Swansea.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management</p> <p>The highway weed spraying programme is based on a 4 year contract comprising of 3 sprays per annum.</p> <p>The current weed schedule can be viewed at www.swansea.gov.uk/weeds other useful links are www.swansea.gov.uk/weedsFAQs</p> <p>Parks Services use 1 or 2 applications, as necessary, on weeds on Council land for internal clients including Cemeteries, Educations, Housing, and Estates. Knotweed usually receives 2 applications a year on both Council land where necessary, and on private land on a commercial basis.</p>
12	<p>Cllrs Mike Day, Sue Jones, Mary Jones</p> <p>Can the Cabinet Member tell Council how many teaching and non-teaching posts have been lost, and will be lost by 1 September 2018, in all Primary, Secondary and Special schools through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) compulsory redundancy b) voluntary and/or early retirement c) non-filling of vacant posts <p>since the 1 April 2018.</p> <p>Response of the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement & Learning</p> <p>A verbal update will be provided at the Council meeting.</p>