

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 1**

#### **Question to Cllr Bottwood from Cllr Beardsworth:**

The standard of performance in maintenance of open spaces and the street scene, across the borough, has clearly fallen in recent months. Can the Cabinet Member tell me what sanctions have been placed on Enterprise and whether there is a recovery plan to improve performance over the remaining period of the contract?

#### ***Response***

Grass cutting by Enterprise/Amey this year fell well below the required standard. Admittedly the weather was particularly favourable for grass growing but, nonetheless, the service we received was unacceptable. I therefore saw fit to use the default remedy mechanism, which led to the development of an improvement plan which eventually brought the service back on track.

However, other than for grass cutting, performance standards overall have not fallen in the past few months. Performance standards are dealt with through the contract's performance management framework which provides a range of mechanisms to tackle contract failures.

I continue, as ever, to closely monitor this challenging contract that my Administration has inherited and I do not hesitate to promptly use all or any of the mechanisms available to the council when I judge it necessary. Part and parcel of this monitoring activity, is to put pressure on Enterprise/Amey to raise the overall standards of cleanliness and maintenance in order to achieve improvement.

Councillor Alan Bottwood  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 2**

#### **Question to Cllr Bottwood from Cllr Beardsworth:**

Can the Cabinet Member tell me why the method used for the roadside collection of recyclables has changed? Residents separate paper, glass and other materials but in many areas of the town this is then mingled together prior to being put in the collection vehicle?

#### ***Response***

The weekly recycling collection methods have not changed.

Normally, the materials to be recycled are collected in a vehicle called a Kerbsider. This vehicle is specifically designed to be able to keep the different material streams separate on the vehicle and therefore remain separate when they are tipped at the depot. Unfortunately, when these vehicles breakdown they are very difficult to replace. Enterprise therefore often have to use a standard refuse freighter and this does mean that the recycling becomes commingled in the vehicle. However, the materials are still recycled, but have to be sorted by the material processor, before they are recycled.

Councillor Alan Bottwood  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 3**

#### **Question to Cllr Hibbert from Mr Adams:**

The self-financing of council housing

The coalition government made a number of promises about the self-financing of council housing in the period before April 2012, in part to convince local authorities to accept the deal. The power to make changes to it rests solely with the Secretary of State, and offers no redress.

Given subsequent developments, it is now rather surprising to note that the settlement was essentially made 'in good faith' on the part of local authorities.

Question: Would you agree this was high level gullibility by this council?

#### ***Response***

No

Councillor Stephen Hibbert  
**Cabinet Member for Housing**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 4**

#### **Question to Cllr Markham from Cllr Stone:**

What is the latest development on Station Car Park?

#### ***Response***

The Council continues to work closely with Network Rail and the Department for Transport regarding the provision of a new multi-storey car park at the Railway Station.

A report on the outcome of these discussions will be presented to Cabinet shortly.

Councillor Mary Markham  
**Leader of the Council**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 5**

#### **Question to Cllr Hadland from Cllr Haque:**

How is this Borough Council going to support Spring Borough residents in defence of their Local Neighbourhood Plan, as the County Council seem determined to develop the Castle House site as they see fit?

#### ***Response***

If a planning application is submitted for the redevelopment of the site, the Borough Council will assess the proposal and its impacts in light of national planning policy and adopted local policies, including any relevant adopted Neighbourhood Plans.

Councillor Tim Hadland

**Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 6**

#### **Question to Cllr Markham from Cllr Ashraf:**

Has the feasibility study into Unitary Status been jointly agreed by the District Councils?

#### ***Response***

This is a continuous work in progress. I can inform you that our next meeting is in early October.

Councillor Mary Markham  
**Leader of the Council**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 7**

#### **Question to Cllr Hibbert from Cllr Chunga:**

How many of our houses have been lost to RTB in the last 2 years and how many have been replaced?

#### ***Response***

During the two year period ending 30 June 2016, a total of 202 of the Council's homes (flats and houses) were sold under the Right To Buy. During the same period, the Council acquired 10 homes.

Councillor Stephen Hibbert  
**Cabinet Member for Housing**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 8**

#### **Question to Cllr Bottwood from Cllr Smith:**

How is the Council dealing with the problem of overflowing commercial waste from Euro bins in the town?

#### ***Response***

Under the Environmental Protection Act (EPA), businesses have a duty of care in relation to the disposal of their commercial waste and it is a criminal offence to fail to comply with this duty of care. The responsibility includes the requirement to store waste safely and securely. If a business is reported for failing to comply with their duty of care by, for example, allowing their bins to overflow they will receive a visit from a neighbourhood warden who, in the first instance, will offer advice to the business about their duty of care responsibilities. This can then be followed up with legal action, resulting in prosecution, if the business fails to respond promptly and appropriately to this advice.

Councillor Alan Bottwood  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**



## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 9**

#### **Question to Cllr King from Cllr Birch:**

Northampton Borough sold the Sekhemka Statue to pay for the town centre museum expansion. When will the expansion take place?

#### ***Response***

Preliminary works for the museum expansion are currently underway. The feasibility report has been completed and planning documents are being prepared. Mobilisation of the project will commence in April 2017 and the refurbished museum will open in July 2018.

Councillor Anna King  
**Cabinet Member for Community Engagement**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 10**

#### **Question to Cllr Eldred from Cllr Marriott:**

Its great news that we are bringing Human Resources and Legal back from LGSS. Just one query though, how much extra will it cost the Council to have these back in house?

#### ***Response***

The Council is currently working through the implications of bringing back services from LGSS. In line with the Council's financial challenges over the medium term the intention is to reduce the cost of support services over this period.

Councillor Brandon Eldred  
**Cabinet Member for Finance**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 11**

#### **Question to Cllr Bottwood from Cllr Davenport:**

What are smokers supposed to do with their cigarettes to put them out in town as their few facilities to put them out (bearing in mind that smokers are no longer able to smoke inside shops etc.)?

#### ***Response***

Smokers have a responsibility to ensure their cigarettes are properly extinguished and placed in the nearest bin or other disposal facility. Appropriate disposal facilities are widely available throughout the town. In addition to facilities provided by the council, pubs, restaurants, etc. also provide for the proper disposal of cigarettes within their smoking areas. I am confident that responsible smokers have no great difficulty in complying with their responsibilities to dispose of their cigarettes appropriately when they are out and about in the town.

Councillor Alan Bottwood  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 12**

#### **Question to Cllr Bottwood from Cllr Davenport:**

There are problems around the entire town with the lack of poo bins for dogs - how is this being addressed in the interim until new contract is implemented?

#### ***Response***

Following changes to national guidance, there is not now a need to separate dog waste from other types of waste. There is therefore no longer a requirement to provide dedicated dog waste bins, as dog waste can now be placed in general litter bins. There are therefore no plans, under either the current or future contracts, to provide any more dog waste bins anywhere in the borough. However additional general litter bins are, and will continue to be, provided where the need is identified.

Councillor Alan Bottwood  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 13**

#### **Question to Cllr Bottwood from Cllr Davenport:**

Is it true that the £100,000 extra funding for trees is just being allocated to ONE area, Ecton? If £100,000 is given each year to one area does this mean that currently held Labour wards will be financed in 26 years time? How are the areas to be tackled with this funding decided upon?

#### ***Response***

In response to the recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the council's Tree Policy has been reviewed and a proposal to improve the standard of tree maintenance across the borough has recently been shared with O&S. The proposal splits the town into just five areas. A programme of tree management and maintenance will be carried out in one area per year for the next five years, at a cost of £100,000 per year. At the end of the five year period the entire town will have been covered. The five area approach has been designed to ensure maximum impact from the level of resource expended. The programme is of course over and above tree work that is routinely carried out across the borough under the council's environmental services contract.

Full information about the revised tree policy and associated implementation plans were presented to O&S on 15th August and are available on the council's website.

Councillor Alan Bottwood  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 14**

#### **Question to Cllr Hadland from Cllr Culbard:**

Is an Article 4 directive going to be placed for the Far Cotton area?

#### ***Response***

Officers are currently assessing the number of houses in multiple occupation in the Far Cotton area. If there is found to be a situation where the concentration of HMOs is, or could in the future, given the relocation of the University, affect the character of the area, then an extension of the existing Article 4 area would be considered. I am grateful to the local community for providing up to date information.

Councillor Tim Hadland

**Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 15**

#### **Question to Cllr Hadland from Cllr Ashraf:**

Now we now there will not be a waste to energy plant at Westbridge Depot, what are the plans now for the site?

#### ***Response***

The Council has said that it will continue to work closely with Rolton Kilbride regarding the position of a Waste to Energy Plant.

There are no new plans for the Westbridge site at the current time.

Councillor Tim Hadland

**Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 16**

#### **Question to Cllr Bottwood from Cllr Stone:**

Following their recent cabinet meeting, Northamptonshire County Council is looking at charging borough and district councils for disposing of garden waste as part of a "harmonisation project". This also includes "harmonisation of collection services". What is Northampton Borough Council's response to this?

#### ***Response***

We have no intention of charging for green waste at this point, and we have told Northamptonshire County Council that that is the case. We are, however, in the process of under taking a detailed and wide ranging options appraisal and also an extensive public consultation exercise. All the data we have gathered will be fully analysed in the coming weeks and we will then be in a position to make some long term decisions on the future delivery of environmental services in the borough, including our policy on green waste collections.

Councillor Alan Bottwood  
**Cabinet Member for Environment**



## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 17**

#### **Question to Cllr Markham from Cllr Chunga:**

The Labour Group has apologised for supporting the NTFC loan in July 2013. The Labour Shadow Cabinet should have asked more questions and done an Overview and Scrutiny “call-in” on it. We are sorry.

The Labour Group has apologised. Will the Conservative Group now also apologise?

#### ***Response***

I believe I should make no apology for supporting NTFC or any other sports club. Supporting the town’s sports clubs was an important part of our manifesto in 2011 and again in 2015.

Councillor Mary Markham  
**Leader of the Council**

## **Question for Full Council Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

### **Question 18**

#### **Question to Cllr Markham from Mr Croucher:**

Given that Northampton now has, on its own, a higher incidence of deaths from conditions related to poor air quality, as compared to England as a whole and that St James is one such area singled out for special measures, and the recent concerns over air quality from the proposed gasification/incinerator, of which this council acknowledges residents' concerns and recognises the woeful consultation on this issue; will the leader give her assurance that residents who are directly affected by the site of any such waste plant and/or proposals that affect air quality, that those residents will have a strategic role to play in any discussions or review?

#### ***Response***

As leader of the council, consulting and engaging with local people is of the utmost importance to me. I am happy to give assurances that the council will always do its best to involve and consult all of its communities on any project or initiative that affects them, no matter what it is.

Councillor Mary Markham  
**Leader of the Council**