

Council

12 February 2016

Member Questions (6)

1.	Question from Councillor Tim Harman to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	<p>The Borough Council has previously written to Lettings agents concerning a code of practice on the display of Lettings boards particularly in the Conservation Area but there are limited resources available for enforcement.</p> <p>Will the Cabinet Member agree to convene a meeting with Officers, myself and a concerned resident in my ward to discuss a practical solution?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member Development and Safety
	<p>The Built Environment Local Enforcement Plan (planning) was approved in January 2014 following extensive member consultation. This document sets out the priorities for action for an enforcement team which is stretched in terms of demand on its services. The priorities laid down in the Plan enable planning enforcement to be done in an equitable, <i>transparent</i> and consistent way. The Council has had some success in tackling this issue, but it remains a low priority in terms of the range of planning enforcement work carried out, much of which has a more direct impact on local amenity and public health.</p> <p>A meeting can be convened with Cllr Harman's constituent to discuss these issues in more detail.</p>
2.	Question from Councillor Anne Regan to Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment, Councillor Chris Coleman
	<p>Will the Cabinet Member please inform this Council on the number of brown waste bins still held unsold at the Depot and the value of this stock?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member Clean and Green Environment
	<p>Cheltenham Borough Council has seen a year on year increase in the number of subscribers to the garden waste service which has resulted in the brown bins stock continuing to reduce.</p> <p>In addition, we have been able to sell 1,000 of the brown bins each year for the last 3 years to Tewkesbury Borough Council at cost, which means that as of 27th January 2016 there were 1,764 bins in storage.</p> <p>The average cost of a new 240 litre bin is at present around £23. At the current cost we have £40,572 worth of stock. It is important to note that because the bins were ordered in bulk at the outset the cost per unit was £15.45. At the original cost, the stock is worth £27,254.</p> <p>As noted, there has been a year on year increase on the number of subscribers. The figures are as follows:</p> <p>March 2012 - 11,205 March 2013 - 12,781</p>

	<p>March 2014 - 13,699 March 2015 - 14,703</p> <p>The number of subscribers has risen by nearly 1,000 again in 2015/16 and there are currently approximately 15,600 bins in use.</p> <p>Given the successful campaigns that we have run to increase the number of subscribers, it is reasonable for us to hold stock at around the levels they presently are.</p> <p>I am encouraged by the early indications that a significant number of customers have already taken the opportunity to renew early. By doing so they benefit from an "early bird" discount. We are also seeing new customers signing up to the service and they too will benefit from a discounted price if they apply between 1st February and 31st May.</p>
3.	Question from Councillor Matt Babbage to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Will the Cabinet Member advise the number and value of parking fines issued in council car parks between 6pm and 8pm over the past 12 months?
	Response from Cabinet Member Development and Safety
	The Council does not collate and report specific details relating to the value of fines issued with particular time slots. This is because the issuing of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) is not for the purpose of income generation, but is one of the tools available to encourage compliance with parking charges. The authority does not and should not set out to make a profit from this activity.
4.	Question from Councillor Matt Babbage to Cabinet Member Development and Safety, Councillor Andrew McKinlay
	Will the Cabinet Member advise the total income generated from council car parks between 6pm and 8pm over the past 12 months?
	Response from Cabinet Member Development and Safety
	<p>An officer assessment suggests that income between 6pm and 8pm is in the order of £122,000 per annum.</p> <p>Whilst the 'Parkfolio' system used in three of our car parks does provide good data on ticketing, this is not the case in all car parks. As a result, it is not currently possible to accurately state the income collected for specific hourly periods.</p> <p>There are some uncertainties regarding how removing charges between 6pm and 8pm will impact on customer behaviour, which could result in a reduction in visits to car parks in the pre-6pm period. This will therefore be closely monitored during the first 12 months of the new arrangements.</p> <p>The Car Parking Working Group is currently considering wider issues around the Council's parking strategy and how this relates to and supports the local economy. This will help to inform the future charging strategy across all of our off-street car parks.</p>

5.	Question from Councillor Nelson to Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Jon Walklett
	What Council organised or supported events are planned for Cheltenham to celebrate Armed Forces Day on Saturday 25 June this year?
	Response from Cabinet Member Corporate Services
	<p>As I am sure you are aware Armed Forces Day is a component part of the nationally celebrated Armed Forces Week which this year commences on Monday 20th June.</p> <p>Cheltenham Borough Council in parallel with many other local authorities follows the guidance of Bruno Peek the Pageantmaster in arranging to fly the armed forces flag for a period of one week - from Monday through to the following Monday.</p> <p>The Mayor also hosts a memorial service with invitees representing veterans, officers and elected Councillors at the Promenade war memorial.</p>
6.	Question from Councillor Chard to the Cabinet Member Finance, Councillor John Rawson
	Could the Cabinet Member advise us of the latest plans which the administration has to move this Council out of the Municipal Buildings and into Delta House which this Council purchased last year and when he anticipates that this move will have been completed?
	Response from Cabinet Member Finance
	<p>We treasure the Municipal Offices as part of our heritage and therefore there is no question of moving out of it until we have a joint venture partner ready to move in with a suitable redevelopment scheme that will enhance the Promenade.</p> <p>We have had significant informal interest. However, before we can even go as far as marketing the Municipal Offices, we need to know whether we are confined to our existing footprint. The development brief approved by full Council envisages redevelopment of both the Municipal Offices and the wider Royal Well. Potential partners have told us they need to have clarity about the extent of the developable site. In order to determine this, we have established a dialogue with Heritage England to establish their view about the extent of any development. This also requires some certainty about whether the Boots Corner section of the Cheltenham Transport Plan will go ahead after the trial scheduled for spring 2017.</p> <p>Once the property is on the market and it is possible to predict when redevelopment is likely to begin, we will seek to secure space at Delta Place to relocate the council headquarters. This is likely to be as a sub-tenant in the short term, as the head lease is due to continue until 2023. In order to progress this, officers have undertaken considerable work in refining our space needs which continue to reduce as we change the nature of the way we deliver services.</p> <p>It is important to recognise that Delta Place has already delivered on part of the objective of the accommodation strategy. Delta Place was always seen as partly a new home for the Council and partly a source of rental income from sub-letting surplus space. Currently Delta Place is already helping to close our medium term funding gap by delivering an income to the Council of £100,000 a year, over and</p>

	above the cost of acquisition. Furthermore, the fact that it is now fully occupied is a strong indication that it is likely to prove a very effective income generator for the Council in the future.
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