

Merton Council

Council

8 July 2015

Supplementary agenda

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Non Priority Questions to Cabinet Members and the responses

1) From Councillor David Williams to the Leader of the Council:

Would the Leader please list the meetings and correspondence he has had since the last ordinary meeting of the Council on 15th April 2015 to save St Helier Hospital?

Reply

Details of detail events and correspondence since that last meeting:

- Wrote to the Secretary of State calling on him to shelve the secret plans to close St Helier hospital
- Received a response from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health which did not commit to shelving the plans
- Wrote again to the Secretary of State asking that he give a clear commitment to keeping our hospital open
- Ensured a feature article in My Merton magazine highlighting the secret plans to close the hospital and making clear to residents that the council will continue to fight this
- Met with the new Chair of the CCG where I made clear the council's opposition to any plans to close or to reduce services at St Helier hospital.

If Cllr Williams would be willing to contact his Conservative colleague the Secretary of State to encourage him to give a clear response to my letter and to commit to shelving the secret proposals to close the hospital, I'm sure our residents would thank him.

2) From Councillor Oonagh Moulton to the Leader of the Council:

Does the Leader have any plans to follow the example of our neighbouring borough of Kingston and introduce a system of councillor recall to give local people the power to get rid of bad councillors?

Reply

There are no current plans but if Cllr Moulton has an example of a bad councillor in her ward I would be happy to look at this.

3) From Councillor Oonagh Moulton to the Cabinet Member for Finance:

At the last Full Council meeting, I submitted the following question:

“What is the council’s policy on offering incentives based on the number of enforcement notices/fines/penalty charge notices issued? Do any Merton employees or contractors operate in this manner? If so, which ones?”

However, only part of the question was answered as there was no reference in the response to contractors. Please could the Cabinet Member provide a full and transparent answer addressing the specific point about contractors?

Reply

All contractors' staff are salaried and not incentivised in this way.

4) From Councillor Abdul Latif to the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities:

How many residents associations in Merton have contributed towards the cost of CCTV cameras in their local neighbourhood and what is the council doing to ensure that such cameras are well maintained and kept in a good state of repair?

Reply

The Safer Merton division who had responsibility for installation of public space CCTV cameras has confirmed that there are no records of CCTV cameras being funded by residents associations. There were discussions with the relevant local residents association for Abbey Recreation Ground that they would help fund the current Abbey Rec CCTV camera but unfortunately that was not realised and the camera was funded by the parks section.

5) From Councillor Oonagh Moulton to the Leader of the Council:

Since when has it been this administration's policy not to answer multi-part council questions submitted by Opposition Members?

Reply

If Cllr Moulton is referring to question 6 from Cllr Bush at the April council meeting, she will recall that in fact all three of Cllr Bush's questions were answered. Question 1 was answered on the night of full council with questions 2 and 3 answered as part of the non priority responses published after council. A limit to the number of questions with written answers on the night of full council has been agreed by all political parties in recognition of the fact that there is not sufficient officer capacity to deal with more than the agreed number of priority questions in the time available, particularly as frontline services to residents should of course take priority. As she is aware, the number of council questions allocated is based on one question per member, according to the electoral strength of each political group.

6) From Councillor Najeeb Latif to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration:

What is this administration doing to tackle the problem of 'beds in sheds' here in Merton?

Reply

If there are any complaints received by Merton Council regarding “beds in sheds” the matter is passed to the planning enforcement team to investigate. If there is found to be an unauthorised occupation the enforcement officers will liaise with Environmental Health, Housing and Building Control colleagues respectively. At this time there does not appear to be a huge number of such reports but we are aware it is an issue in other London boroughs.

7) From Councillor Stephen Crowe to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration:

Please can you supply the statistics for the number of road accidents that have taken place in Merton as from 1st January 2015 and how that compares to previous years?

Reply

Title: Casualties in London Borough of Merton, 2012 - 28-Feb-2015 (2015 data - provisional)

Parameters:

	0	No. of Casualties	No. of Casualties	No. of Casualties	No. of Casualties
	Casualty Severity	1 Fatal	2 Serious	3 Slight	Sum
Year					
2012		3	62	471	536
2013		0	32	481	513
2014		3	47	567	617
2015		0	6	91	97

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