

COUNCIL – 8 FEBRUARY 2018

QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 FEBRUARY 2018

The following questions have been received under Standing Order 8.1. The draft replies, which are subject to amendment, are set out below.

“Councillors are thanked for their questions.”

1. Question from Councillor W P Forster

“I was pleased to read that the Council was successful in its bid for funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund for the Sheerwater Regeneration Project. However, it was not successful in its bid for funding to enhance parking provision in the Victoria Square Project.

Please could the Council explain why it was not successful?”

Reply from Councillor D J Bittleston

“It was excellent that we achieved £9.384m for Sheerwater and a clear indication of the Government’s support for our regeneration efforts. The bid for Victoria Square was to finance the additional fire escapes that were proposed in light of the Grenfell Tower fire. This proposed use did not meet the core criteria but was worth a try just in case the scheme was undersubscribed.”

2. Question from Councillor W P Forster

“Please could the Council confirm how it deals with food waste in the Civic Offices, Community Centres and other Woking Council buildings?

If food waste is recycled and composted, please could the Council state at what rate? Is this in line with household’s recycling rates?”

Reply from Councillor Mrs B A Hunwicks

“Food and general waste is collected and sent for incineration.”

3. Question from Councillor A E Murray

“Due to recent media coverage regarding the recycling of black plastic food trays, can the Leader advise whether Woking residents should place black plastics in their recycling bin or their residual waste bin.”

Reply from Councillor Mrs B A Hunwicks

“All plastic tubs, pots and trays regardless of colour can be placed in the recycling bin where they are sorted at the Materials Recovery Facility.”

4. Question from Councillor A E Murray

“6 Feb 2018 marked the 100th Anniversary of the Representation of the People Act 1918 and enabled women over the age of 30 to vote for the first time. What events are planned in Woking, in 2018, to mark this important anniversary?”

Reply from Councillor M Pengelly

“As part of Celebrate Woking, “Woking Remembers” is a year long programme of cultural activities to commemorate two significant national centenaries. In 2018 “Woking Remembers” celebrates 100 years of British Women’s right to vote and marks 100 years since Armistice Day ended the horrors of World War One. The programme will remember prolific suffragette Dame Ethel Smyth, a proud Woking resident and

talented composer, who fought side by side with iconic women's rights activists, including Emmeline Pankhurst and Emily Wilding Davidson, to win the vote for Women. Further information on "Woking Remembers" can be found on the Celebrate Woking website, <https://www.celebratewoking.info/woking-remembers>. The programme of events and initiatives for "Woking Remembers" has been tabled this evening for Members information."

5. Question from Councillor A-M Barker

"Lakers is an important youth facility for Woking, and in particular for young people living in Goldsworth Park and surrounding areas. Whilst recognising the facility is operated by Surrey County Council will this Council commit to be supportive of the county to ensure the facility is returned to use as soon as possible?"

Reply from Councillor M Pengelly

"Yes, Officers are already providing positive support to County colleagues."

6. Question from Councillor A-M Barker

"Freedom Leisure, the Council's leisure operators announced on 26 January plans to increase recycling, cut the use of plastics and discourage use of single use cups. What steps is the Council taking in response to growing concerns about the long lasting impacts plastics are having on our environment?"

Reply from Councillor Mrs B A Hunwicks

"We have already removed plastic water bottles from meetings in the Council Chamber and this reduction will equate to some 720 bottles per annum. We are now working our way through the Council's operations to identify how we can remove as much plastic as possible. As a member of the Surrey Waste Partnership, the Council will support schemes which reduce waste production, including potentially avoidable single use plastics, and increase the range of plastics which can be recycled.

I would be very happy to have a detailed discussion on this subject at the next meeting of the Climate Change Working Group."

7. Question from Councillor A-M Barker

"How many season tickets have Surrey Police purchased for Brewery Road car park?"

Reply from Councillor D J Bittleston

"Under its lease agreement, Surrey Police pays for seven spaces which are reserved for their exclusive use and for 16 spaces which are unallocated."

8. Question from Councillor A-M Barker

"How many fines for begging were issued in Woking borough during 2017?"

Reply from Councillor Mrs B A Hunwicks

"There were no fines issued by Woking Borough Council for begging in 2017."

9. Question from Councillor A-M Barker

"Many borough residents commute by train or use rail for business or leisure trips. The new SWR operator recently consulted on a timetable it proposes to roll out at the end of this year. The plans appeared to have unintentionally reduced the number of trains from Woking to Waterloo in the morning peak and to also have reduced the number of trains to and from Clapham Junction in morning and evening peak. What representations has the Council made to the operator on these timetable proposals?"

Reply from Councillor D J Bittleston

“The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Johnson, raised this matter at the meeting of Council held on 19 October 2017. He accepted my offer to attend a South Western Railways Stakeholder Consultation in November last year. Following that engagement, Officers drafted a response to the consultation exercise which both Councillor Johnson and I agreed. A copy of the response is attached at Appendix 1.”

10. Question from Councillor A-M Barker

“In 2017 how many street properties, in lieu of provision of affordable homes on development sites, did Thamesway: a) purchase b) let.”

Reply from Councillor D J Bittleston

“The Council has not allocated any Developer Contributions to Thamesway for acquisition of street properties. In 2016/17 Thamesway acquired 39 properties of which 24 were let as affordable. In 2017/18 Thamesway is concentrating on new build for which the Council has provided £5.9m subsidy for the Brookwood Lye development subject to planning consent. It has also acquired, without subsidy, 13 street properties of which three have been let as affordable and a further 10 acquisitions are in progress, all of which will be affordable.”

11. Question from Councillor I Johnson

“In March 2017 a public consultation over safeguarded sites under the Site Allocations Development Plan Document ended. In December, the Leader said that officers were currently preparing a timetable for the next stages and once completed he would issue a statement clarifying when the Council would be considering the responses to the consultation. He then said the Council was preparing the DPD as expeditiously as possible.

- 1) Why, a year on from the conclusion of the consultation, are residents still waiting;
- 2) who, or what, is holding up the process; and
- 3) when will the Leader issue the timetable?”

Reply from Councillor A C L Bowes

- “1. The consultation ended on 27 March 2017. Overall, 3,018 individuals and organisations made comments comprising of 32,164 separate representations. Due to the sheer volume of the representations, their complexity and the need to take into account changes in national policy, a bit more time had been needed to make sure that all issues are carefully considered and addressed.
2. No one is holding up the process. Officers need time to deal with representations made by me, in my role as Portfolio Holder and also Chair of the LDF Working Group, before the Site Allocations DPD report goes to the Working Group for consideration and to Council for a decision to publish it for Regulation 19 consultation.
3. In January the Leader of the Council requested that a public position statement be issued in March 2018.”

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REPORT ENDS



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11 December 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

South Western Railway - Timetable consultation for December 2018

Thank you for giving Woking Borough Council the opportunity to comment on the above document. As you already know, Woking station is a major interchange hub with a significant volume of usage on a daily basis. The volume of people using the station also continues to grow. For example, in 2014/15 there were 7,963,172 entries and exits to the station. This had increased to 7,989,232 by 2015/16. Apart from the car, the train is the second most popular means of travel in Woking. This is against a national trend in which the train is the fifth most popular choice of travel. Against this backdrop, the Council will be concerned about any changes to the timetable that would undermine local residents' and businesses' ability to access train services for work and other day to day activities.

The Council has an adopted Core Strategy that make provision for the delivery of 4,964 new homes, 28,000 sq.m of office floorspace and 93,600 sq.m of retail floorspace. A significant proportion of the development will be located at the Town Centre with limited parking provision, and it is expected that majority of the people who will occupy the development will use the train as first choice of means of travel. In this regard, it is essential that adequate capacity is provided, taking into account future demand, in particular, during the rush hour for commuters and other users.

The Council welcomes the overall service improvements that South Western Railways is proposing to introduce in the coming years as part of their franchising commitments. However, it has the following detailed comments to make regarding the proposed timetable for 2018:

- The Council is pleased that the Woking stop in the Waterloo to Weymouth service is going to be reinstated contrary to the original proposal. It is important that the subsequent stages of the consultation process do not lead to a change of this decision.
- The Council urges you to insert a Woking stop in the Waterloo to Exeter service because it would offer the best interchange opportunities for passengers travelling from the suburban area to Yeovil and Exeter. It would also offer accessibility and easy interchange with coach travel to Heathrow airport. The proposal to interchange the stopping service between Woking and Clapham Junction should only be a last resort.
- The Council accepts that with increasing patronage, extra trains will be needed to cope with demand. However, the current proposal regarding the reduced number of stopping services



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at Clapham Junction is too severe and needs a re-think. For example the reduction of fast service trains stopping at Clapham Junction to Woking during the 7am to 9am morning peak period from 6 trains to 2 and during the 5pm to 7pm afternoon peak from 5 trains to 1 is a significant jump that would adversely impact on commuter travel to and from Woking. The Council has worked hard to encourage and promote a shift in the mode of travel to sustainable modes such as trains, and this dramatic change in the service provision could undermine that effort. The Council would request that you re-consider the proposals and introduce another stopping train at Clapham Junction nearer to 8am.

- Whilst Woking Station is identified as a major interchange hub, there are other four stations that serve the Borough at West Byfleet, Byfleet and New Haw, Brookwood and Worplesdon. Usages at all these stations are high. To put it into context in 2015/16 entries and exits at West Byfleet station was 1,399,582 and at Brookwood it was 995,142. The Council would welcome the introduction of the new Sunday stopping service at Worplesdon because of its significant and growing usage. In 2015/16, the station had a usage of about 210,012 entries/exits. The additional non-stop peak services to and from West Byfleet is welcome to create the necessary capacity for current demand and the projected growth of West Byfleet as a District Centre. Whilst it is unfortunate that the half hourly Alton service will cease to stop at West Byfleet, the assurance given by South Western Railways that overall West Byfleet will gain an additional capacity and number of trains must be kept.
- South Western Railways has admitted that the delivery of the Woking fly over will enhance the operational efficiency of the rail network. This will have a direct positive impact on the proposed changes to the time table. In this regard, the Council will encourage you to lend your support for its funding and implementation at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

Ernest Amoako
Planning Policy Manager

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