

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 15 QUESTIONS – QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

Notice of the following questions has been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 15:

**1. Question to the Executive Member for Leisure and Community from Councillor Fitzsimon**

I have been told that Mill Green Museum is closing during the week and will no longer be open during the summer holidays for families and local residents to enjoy. Additionally, I understand that the holiday training project for young people to support them in preparing for the world of work and independence through experience of working in catering and hospitality at the Miller's kitchen won't be taking place.

Could the portfolio holder reassure members and residents that these rumours aren't true and Mill Green Museum will continue to remain open for families and residents to enjoy?

**2. Question to the Executive Member for Housing from Councillor Kingbury**

The redevelopment of Queensway House has been due to take place for several years. Whilst I understand there may be issues with decanting leaseholders, this surely could have been resolved by now. Can the portfolio holder update us on the situation and when the things will move forward?

**3. Question to the Leader, and Executive Member for Economic Development & Climate Change from Councillor Mitchinson**

As it is essential for the council to maximise revenue to protect vital services could the relevant portfolio holder tell us how many retail units are owned by the council in the borough, how many are currently vacant, such as the former carpet shop in WGC town centre, and what measures are being taken to secure tenants as soon as possible?

**4. Question to the Leader of the Council from the Councillor Platt**

A year or so ago the Joint Administration launched the HEART vision for the community. As we know, Local Govt is full of acronyms and buzzwords, so can the Leader give examples of how this vision is more than one of these, and if (and how) the 5 areas of HEART have been implemented to benefit WelHat residents?'

**5. Question to the Executive Member for Environment from the Councillor Panter**

In previous year, there have been complaints about the grass cutting over the spring period. Can the portfolio holder for Environment please tell us what has been put in place this year to improve the situation?

**6. Question to the Leader of the Council from the Councillor Hobbs**

Since 2010, local government has endured central government funding cuts of more than 50%. Although the current Labour Government's recent increases in local government spending are a positive development there is still a huge demand on local government. Between 2010 and 2020, councils lost 60p out of every £1 they have received from central government.

Research by UNISON has shown that councils across England, Wales and Scotland are facing a collective funding shortfall of more than £4bn by the financial year 2024/25 and a cumulative funding gap of £8bn by 2025/26.

Since 2010, the local government workforce has endured years of pay restraint with the majority of pay points losing at least 25 per cent of their value since 2009/10. Staff have endured the worst cost of living crisis in a generation.

At the same time, workers have experienced ever-increasing workloads and persistent job insecurity. Across the UK, 900,000 jobs have been lost in local government since June 2010 – a reduction of more than 30 per cent.

In addition, local government has arguably been hit by more severe job losses than any other part of the public sector. There has been a disproportionate impact on women, with women making up more than three-quarters of the local government workforce.

Recent research by UNISON shows that if the Government were to fully fund the unions' 2025 pay claims, (such as the pay claims submitted by UNISON, GMB and Unite) around half of the money would be recouped thanks to increased tax revenue, reduced expenditure on benefits and tax credits, and increased consumer spending in the local economy.

Will the Leader and Deputy Leader of the council write to the Chancellor to acknowledge the pay rises that local government workers deserve, and to explore reimbursing local councils to fund such pay increases?