

**COUNCIL, 25 JANUARY 2018 : WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**CLEAN STREETS, RECYCLING AND ENVIRONMENT**  
**(COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MICHAEL)**

W1	<p><b><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR SANDREY</u></b></p> <p>It has been suggested that public drinking water fountains could be a way of reducing the use of plastic-bottled water. Has Cardiff Council looked into this possibility at all? Hull and Bristol have recently installed some.</p> <p><b><u>Reply</u></b></p> <p>Yes, this is something that we are looking into, particularly in relation to how we can encourage the refilling and reuse of plastic water bottles or other drinks containers in order to reduce the amount of plastic waste produced here in Cardiff. However, we currently have no plans to support the widespread provision of public drinking water fountains across the city.</p>
W2	<p><b><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR SANDREY</u></b></p> <p>A man called Brian Harper is the inventor of the UK's first dog-poo powered street lamp. He was featured in the Guardian on January 1st and says he is looking to interest managers of urban parks in the technology. Is this something Cardiff Council could express an interest in trialling?</p> <p><b><u>Reply</u></b></p> <p>No.</p>
W3	<p><b><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOYLE</u></b></p> <p>Are you satisfied with the rigour and findings of the ecology reports produced as part of NRW's planning application for the Roath Flood Scheme?</p> <p><b><u>Reply</u></b></p> <p>The ecology reports were considered by officers to be thorough and adequate to enable an informed determination of the application by Planning Committee back in April 2016 when I was the Chair.</p>

W4	<p><b><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BERMAN</u></b></p> <p>Is the council satisfied that that the works being undertaken by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) as part of the Roath Brook Flood Scheme are proportionate to the identified level of flood risk to properties in the area, that NRW has suitably assessed all the available options for mitigating against the identified flood risk and that NRW has appropriately determined the best approach, including when taking account of the impact on the local environment?</p> <p><b><u>Reply</u></b></p> <p>The planning application for the flood scheme was approved by the Council's Planning Committee in April 2016 and the scheme was subject to relevant technical scrutiny and assessment by council officers at the time. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is the competent regulatory body responsible for the management of flood risk from main rivers in Wales. The Council considers that NRW has suitably assessed the available options to minimise the impact on the local environment from a flood risk perspective.</p>
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**CULTURE AND LEISURE**  
**(COUNCILLOR PETER BRADBURY)**

W5	<p><b><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR CARTER</u></b></p> <p>How much money was raised as a result of the sale of the Dome Education centre in Pentwyn and how much was subsequently invested at Pentwyn Leisure Centre?</p> <p><b><u>Reply</u></b></p> <p>The disposal of the former Dome Community Centre site in 2015 realised a capital receipt of £460,000, which was ring-fenced for investment in improving local facilities in Pentwyn, including the leisure centre. £161,000 was spent on accessibility and internal works at the leisure centre, which included the installation of automatic doors, fire risk assessment modifications, conversion of a changing room into a community room and the conversion of a store room into a first aid room. In addition, £123,000 was spent on tile replacement in the swimming pool.</p>
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W6

**WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BERMAN**

At the last full council meeting, I asked if you would look again at the trees in Roath Brook Gardens and Roath Mill Gardens which Cardiff Council has asked Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to fell at the same time as implementing the next phase of the Roath Brook Flood Scheme, even though these trees are not required to be felled to facilitate the flood scheme works. I understand there are three trees in this category (with another five such trees having been felled in the earlier phase of the scheme). Can you update Members as to what reconsideration, if any, has taken place and what the outcome was?

**Reply**

I discussed this matter with officers following the Council meeting in November and they reviewed the position regarding the three trees in question. They have concluded that the original decision to fell them on safety grounds due to their poor condition is appropriate and, on this basis, should proceed. The situation is that, if these specific trees are not felled as part of the flood risk management scheme works, then the Council will need to follow on within a relatively short timeframe and undertake the work itself.

**EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS**  
**(COUNCILLOR SARAH MERRY)**

W7

**WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DE'ATH**

A number of primary schools in the city have participated in the Operation Christmas Child (OCC) initiative run by US-based group Samaritans Purse, whereby gifts are collected in shoeboxes to be sent to children in hardship overseas. After being collected by the group, each donated shoebox has religious literature added, alongside the gifts, which aims to convert the recipient to evangelical Christianity. This act has attracted criticism for attempting to convert potentially vulnerable young people to a different faith – with the OCC website containing a supposed case study of an African child who “led her Muslim family to Christ” after receiving a OCC shoebox. What guidance has been issued to schools around participating in OCC and will the Council seek to ensure that all parents and carers at schools that do participate are made fully aware of what OCC entails?

**Reply**

I am aware of the concerns which have been expressed in relation to Operation Christmas Child and I can confirm that this issue is due to be discussed next month at a meeting of Cardiff's Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE).

W8

**WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BERMAN**

What timeframe do you currently envisage for taking forward the recently announced and very welcome proposals for an expansion of Cardiff High School and, given that this expansion will take some time to be delivered, will you consider making any temporary provision in the interim to increase capacity so more pupils who live within the school's catchment area can secure a place at the school in the intervening period?

**Reply**

As was set out in the report on the Council's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Band B priorities, which was considered by the Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017, our Band B submission seeks to address the most acute sufficiency and condition issues in Cardiff. Any project to increase the size of a school establishment, change its configuration or location will require statutory consultation and Cabinet determination. The statutory consultation will set out the detailed proposals and proposed location for each scheme in line with the School Organisation Code 2013. It is anticipated that any statutory consultation on the matters contained within the report on Band B would commence in batches from Spring 2018, pending confirmation of the Council's budget position, as this will inform the match funding associated with the programme for the forthcoming year.

Similarly, it should be noted that because of the scale and number of proposed projects in the Band B investment programme, the delivery of the schemes will also be undertaken in batches over the timespan of the programme commencing in 2019. As a result of the phasing, it may be necessary to put interim measures in place where sufficiency issues present and there are no local alternatives available.

It is recognised that Cardiff High School may be parents' first preference for their child(ren)'s secondary education. However, there continues to be sufficient English-medium secondary education places available in the locality, including in neighbouring catchments areas, that are able to provide for demand and the Local Authority continues to be able to offer places.

**FINANCE, MODERNISATION AND PERFORMANCE**  
**(COUNCILLOR CHRIS WEAVER)**

W9

**WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BERMAN**

Given that the council's most recent budget monitoring report shows that directorate budgets are projected to be overspent by £4.956 million by the end of the current financial year; that a shortfall of £1.954 million is projected in meeting savings agreed within the budget for 2017-18; that the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee has expressed concern about unrealistic savings proposals; and that a balanced position is only likely to be obtained by drawing down the entirety of the £3 million general contingency budget coupled with management actions to control expenditure in the current year and the identification of in-year targeted savings, do you accept that the council's administration is failing to ensure the provision of effective financial rigour and that the council's financial management appears as a result to be in chaos with a not insignificant level of unplanned savings now having to be made?

**Reply**

The key point is that the Budget Monitoring – Month 6 Report, which was considered by the Cabinet in November 2017, showed that, at an overall level, the Council is projecting a balanced position against budget.

Yes, there are pressures within directorate budgets and, yes, there are potential shortfalls against budget savings; however, these have been effectively managed through a combination of prudent budget setting and the in-year management of resources.

With regard to the directorate positions, the major element of this relates to demographic pressures in relation to Looked After Children and children with Additional Learning Needs; pressures that are common to many local authorities across the UK.

Given the quantum of the budget savings that this Council has had to achieve in recent years and the increasingly challenging nature of the savings proposals themselves, it is unsurprising that some degree of risk to the achievement of in-year savings will exist. These risks are clearly set out the Council's Budget Report.

	<p>It is also worth noting that, in the majority of cases, the projected shortfalls are simply due to timing issues, rather than any failure to achieve the savings as a whole. These factors were recognised in the Council's 2017/18 Budget with the £3million General Contingency being set aside to reflect potential risks in this area.</p> <p>I agree that fiscal management and discipline is important, and Cabinet colleagues share that view. The consequences of decisions committing the Council to a policy or project can be significant. For example, the business case for subsidising the Dr Who exhibition that was signed off in July 2011 assumed that the scheme would be cost neutral, but has actually left the Council with a liability of £1.147 million, creating an additional challenge to setting a balanced budget. All decision makers ought to be conscious of the impact that such decisions can have.</p> <p>I would submit that, rather than the position being as you set out in your question, the financial management of this Council continues to be very effective, both in terms of managing the in-year position and in identifying and managing financial risks in the medium term.</p>
W10	<p><b><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BERMAN</u></b></p> <p>As referred to in paragraph 4 of the month 6 budget monitoring report to the November Cabinet meeting, can you please provide full details of all the management actions taken across directorates to control expenditure in the current financial year and a full breakdown of the in-year targeted savings which have been identified by directorates?</p> <p><b><u>Reply</u></b></p> <p>The management actions undertaken during the year included a review of all key areas of spend by directorates. This included any non-essential purchase of goods and services, a review of agency engagements, overtime working and the timing and need to fill posts as they became vacant. Directorates have also reviewed income sources in order to seek new opportunities to maximise income in the current year. In addition, directorates also identified targeted in-year savings, which were reflected as part of their Month 6 projections in the Budget Monitoring – Month 6 Report that was considered by the Cabinet in November 2017. This included a variety of different measures, including holding vacancies, the identification of additional income, use of reserves, maximisation of grant funding and targeted reductions to external spend.</p>

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES**  
**(COUNCILLOR LYNDA THORNE)**

W11

**WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR CARTER**

What steps are taken to keep drugs out of night shelters and other accommodation for rough sleepers?

**Reply**

With regards to the management of premises, all homeless accommodation providers fully comply with the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. This means they will not knowingly permit or suffer the production or attempted production of any controlled substance, the supply or attempted supply of any controlled substance or the smoking of cannabis, cannabis resin or prepared opium.

As part of this, each organisation works closely with the Police and will share all relevant intelligence. A resident in breach of these conditions would also be in contravention of their occupancy agreement and would face disciplinary action, up to and including eviction. These issues would never be ignored and all evidence and suspicion will be followed up.

In relation to personal use of controlled substances, each scheme will have its own drug policy. These were developed following direct consultation with South Wales Police.

All recent counts have found that approximately 70% of people sleeping rough have very significant substance misuse issues. As such, frontline services must work with active users to try to assist them to address this support need and policies must reflect this to avoid multiple exclusion and increased vulnerability. This would relate only to the accommodation occupied exclusively by a service user. Clearly, drug use in shared sleeping space and other communal areas would never be tolerated in any scheme.

Treatment, rehabilitation and other second stage schemes working with people who are actively engaging with support to address their drug use will apply stricter conditions on personal use. This ranges from close monitoring to voluntary drug testing and is necessary to ensure that any relapse suffered by an individual does not impact on the recovery of other service users. The Council's Gateway model ensures that we can work towards placing people according to their need and preference.

**LEADER**

**(COUNCILLOR HUW THOMAS)**

W12	<p><b><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR BOYLE</u></b></p> <p>Has UEFA told us why our late bid to be a host city for the 2020 European Championships was unsuccessful?</p> <p><b><u>Reply</u></b></p> <p>I met with the Chief Executive of the Football Association of Wales (FAW) following the decision that was announced by UEFA on 7 December 2017 and I know that we received only positive feedback that Cardiff's bid was solid and strong.</p> <p>The decision making process by UEFA's Executive Committee was based on the votes of committee members and, unfortunately, we lost out to London's Wembley Stadium, which was already due to host matches as part of EURO 2020.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work in partnership with the FAW, Welsh Government, South Wales Police and other organisations to bring major football events to Cardiff in the future.</p>
W13	<p><b><u>WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR WOOD</u></b></p> <p>Revised security measures during the autumn rugby internationals saw extensive queues form on pavements and open spaces outside the stadium. Some fans expressed concerns these crowded, and often confined queues put them at increased risk. With the upcoming Six Nation internationals these queues may reoccur, have revised risk assessments been undertaken?</p> <p>Can any reassurance be provided to rugby fans, regarding their safety, whilst queuing to enter the stadium before passing the security check points?</p> <p><b><u>Reply</u></b></p> <p>The safety and security of the visiting public and, likewise, the staff at each of the stadium venues in Cardiff is the responsibility and first priority of each venue's safety management team; similarly, the Council led Sports Grounds Safety Advisory Group works with each venue to deliver this goal.</p>



Members of the public also have a responsibility to themselves and others and in this respect, and they are advised to follow the advice and guidance provided for their own benefit when attending such events. In recent months, part of this advice has been – and will continue to be for the foreseeable future – that people arriving at the venue allow additional time to negotiate the necessary safety and security checks and that they should avoid carrying bags or other items that are not essential.

The Autumn Series of rugby internationals at Principality Stadium were the first rugby matches where these additional safety and security measures had been implemented. Following the problems that were experienced at the first match of the Autumn Series on 11 November 2017, which attracted a crowd of over 70,000 people, the Chief Executive and I, in our capacity as directors of Millennium Stadium plc, raised matters directly with Welsh Rugby Union officials in order to ensure that improvements were made in accordance with safety and security requirements. Throughout the Autumn Series, operational plans were re-evaluated and refined to minimise queuing and, wherever possible, to minimise the perceived risk to the queuing public. This same approach will be applied to future events, including the upcoming Six Nations matches.

Although it is not possible to provide blanket guarantees with respect to public safety, I can assure you that there is a detailed risk assessment process in place for each event. This process involves stadium managers, South Wales Police, the intelligence services, other emergency services and the Council, who together determine the appropriate measures required to provide reassurance and safeguard the public.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT** **(COUNCILLOR CARO WILD)**

W14

### **WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR CARTER**

Who agreed the installation of anti-terrorism barriers on the new Cardiff Bay cycle path?

#### **Reply**

The installation was agreed by Cardiff Harbour Authority following advice from the Welsh Extremism and Counter Terrorism Unit.

W15

**WRITTEN QUESTION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR CARTER**

When the original Cardiff East park and ride was established, Cardiff Bus (and previously First) won the tender to operate for the service for the council on a commissioned basis. Under the current contract, could you explain who is responsible for changing services and prices in the current Cardiff East Park and Ride contract?

**Reply**

Cardiff Bus operates the bus services and manages the site. Revenue generated is retained by Cardiff Bus. The current contract allows Cardiff Bus to change the operation and tariffs charged, subject to agreement to the changes by the Council.