

Member questions to Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs

Council meeting: 1 February 2024

Question: 1.
From: Councillor P Wright
Response by: Councillor Higginbottom (Cabinet Member Environment and Highways)

Question:

A recent Freedom of Information request revealed that in the 4 months ended November 2023 there were 1,781 incidents of fly tipping across the Borough. Can the Cabinet member please tell me what the annual cost is for dealing with this scourge on our town?

Information for response:

Thank you for your question, Councillor Wright.

The annual cost for disposal of fly-tipping for 2022/23 was £264,453.23. For the period you identify, this cost was £121,261.69.

Costs include labour, machinery, materials, and disposal costs relating to incidents.

In addition to the direct costs, the council has invested resources in our enforcement team to pursue the people who choose to break the law.

I am sure that Councillor Wright shares my absolute abhorrence of those who blight our borough and will continue to support every effort to bring those responsible to justice.

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Question: 2.
From: Councillor Christmas
Response by: Councillor Higginbottom (Cabinet Member Environment and Highways)

Question:

There have been a series of accidents at the junction of Keresforth Road and Stainborough Road. This is the same location where a lady was knocked down suffering life changing injuries. Will the cabinet member be willing to explore all available options to stop cars parking on the blind bend, which is causing motorists to use the opposite side of the road to navigate the bend, leading them into oncoming traffic?

Information for response:

Thank you for your question and for raising this important issue with me, Councillor Christmas.

I am aware of the serious accidents that have occurred at the junction of Keresforth Road and Stainborough Road, and I share your concern about the safety of pedestrians and drivers in this area.

The junction of Keresforth Road and Stainborough Road is within the traffic team's annual work programme, and they are in the process of investigating the problem and developing an appropriate solution in due course. Traffic engineers have already met with local members on site to discuss the situation and possible measures to improve the visibility and reduce the speed of vehicles.

I can assure you that Officers are working hard to deliver a solution that will address the concerns of the community and enhance the safety and accessibility of the junction. Officers will keep you and your ward colleagues updated on the progress of the project and the expected timescales for implementation.

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Question: 3.
From: Councillor Denton
Response by: Councillor Higginbottom (Cabinet Member Environment and Highways)

Question:

The 'South Yorkshire Bus Promise' sets out what bus users in Barnsley should expect of the public bus service and what actions should be taken if standards are not met. It was developed by the SYMCA Enhanced Partnership Forum and was approved by the Enhanced Partnership Board in May 2023 with an agreement to publish on the 'Travel South Yorkshire' Website within 6 weeks. This still has not happened. Is the Cabinet Member familiar with this document and supportive of its content?

Information for response:

Thank you for the question, Councillor Denton.

The Council and I are familiar with, and very supportive of, the work that the Mayor of South Yorkshire Oliver Coppard is doing to improve public transport in the region and applaud his continued efforts to lobby government for the investment our area deserves.

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Question: 4.
From: Councillor C Wray
Response by: Councillor Higginbottom (Cabinet Member Environment and Highways)

Question:

Could the cabinet member please update on progress regarding the Park & Ride Scheme for Barnsley Hospital following the promise in summer 2022 for a feasibility study to be carried out?

Information for response:

Thank you for the question, Councillor Wray.

The detailed work on the feasibility study is still ongoing, the consultants have had to undertake a lot of data gathering both with the Council and the hospital, which is time-consuming.

My officers have project meetings arranged to discuss progress and will update accordingly on the back of those meetings.

We appreciate it has taken longer than anticipated, but where information has not been available, the consultants have had to do the necessary data capture to ensure the study is robust.

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Question: 5.
From: Councillor Christmas
Response by: Councillor Higginbottom (Cabinet Member Environment and Highways)

Question:

The new footbridge over the railway line between Penny Pie Park and Pogmoor Rec has been installed with lighting. However, the paths through Pogmoor Rec and Penny Pie Park have no lighting whatsoever. Residents continue to complain that the area feels unsafe to walk through after dark, particularly the elderly and women, meaning some residents choose to walk the long way around to get from Pogmoor Rd to Broadway. Can the cabinet member confirm if the council has any plans to install and improve lighting in Penny Pie Park and Pogmoor Rec to ensure it meets its commitment to make the parks accessible for all?

Information for response:

Thank you for your question, Councillor Christmas.

The delivery of both the Dodworth Road Gyratory, improvements to Penny Pie Park and the installation of the footbridge linking to Pogmoor Recreation Ground have been a great success in achieving its overall objectives in addition to improving the quality of the park's offer.

The delivery of these schemes has been undertaken sympathetically, balancing the potential concerns regarding lighting of the public areas, against potential anti-social behaviour concerns and against ecological information gained during the development of the planning application.

The Preliminary Ecological Assessment undertaken for the scheme identified that it is likely that there are bats present in the area, and probably using the site to some extent.

Therefore, it was recommended that lighting options were carefully considered along the route of the new roundabout, particularly near the railway line, and measures to reduce the impact of artificial lighting and reduce light spill should be considered and adopted as part of the planning process.

In addition, officers are also mindful of the impact that additional lighting could have on the properties that overlook the recreation ground.

Therefore, there are no current proposals to provide any additional lighting at this stage.

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Question: 6.
From: Councillor Christmas
Response by: Councillor Higginbottom (Cabinet Member Environment and Highways)

Question:

Does the cabinet member feel it is acceptable that run off water from the council owned green space on Saville Road, Gilroyd, continues to flood a resident's garden, rendering the back garden and back door inaccessible, while also causing significant damp and mould within the property?

Information for response:

Thank you for your question, Councillor Christmas.

The ongoing flood resilience of all our communities is a hugely important area of work for the council, even more so given the most recent October 2023 flood event. Officers from across my portfolio are aware of this situation, and I sympathise entirely with the resident who is affected.

As you will be aware, this issue has been ongoing for some time and there are a number of challenges in finding the most appropriate solution.

Several options are under active consideration but further investigation and consultation with affected residents and stakeholders is required before a solution can be agreed.

I can assure you, Cllr Christmas, that this issue is being taken seriously and that the council is committed to finding a feasible and sustainable solution as soon as possible.

I would encourage both yourself and your constituent to continue to report any further problems to us as this will help to build a robust evidence base for whatever intervention is required.