

COUNCIL MEETING
8TH NOVEMBER 2017
UNANSWERED QUESTIONS LETTER

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Democratic & Central Services

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To: All Members of Council

Dear Councillor

COUNCIL MEETING – 8TH NOVEMBER 2017

At the above meeting, the thirty minutes of Question Time expired with questions 12 to 26 unanswered. Council Procedure Rule 11.6 requires that each Member of Council is sent responses to such questions.

Q12 Councillor J McKenna - Can the Executive Member please provide an update on the Council's approach to the Apprenticeship Levy?

A The Apprenticeship Levy is not just about the recruitment and training of young people, important though that is. It will also be the means to fund the skills development of our existing workforce throughout their careers.

Nor is the Apprenticeship Levy restricted to areas traditionally associated with apprenticeships such as construction. We already provide apprenticeships in many areas, such as administration.

We expect more Apprentice Standards to be developed such as accountancy, surveying and ICT. We are also exploring ways in which we can do this more effectively and currently the Council is exploring how we can fund in-house expertise to drive this forward. We are looking to become a Registered Employer Provider to ensure we can manage the quality of the Apprentices and use some of the Levy funding to support this.

The Apprenticeship Levy went live in April 2017 and the Council now pays 0.5% of its pay bill into the Levy Fund – This is around £1.7m for LCC and £0.7m for schools. There is also a public sector target - set at 2.3% of headcount and equates to employing c300+ apprentices within the Council and an additional 200 apprentices for schools.

The levy can only be spent on Apprenticeship training and assessment and this fund can be used anytime up to 24 months from first being levied.

We want to optimise the use of the levy and are undertaking the following to achieve this:

- Building on our strengths as an employer to hire Apprenticeships – Over the next 24 months our work-force planning shows that we expect to hire/start a further 260 Apprentices – This is on top of the current 180 already working for us – And wherever possible we will look to support priority groups to find work as Apprentices with LCC.

If members are interested a report on our approach was also discussed the Scrutiny Board Resources and Strategy in October which details this.

Q13 Councillor K Ritchie - Can the Executive Member for Children and Families please update Council with regard to Post-16 SEND education?

A Working with SILC principles and other providers our ambition is to improve outcomes for our young people with special educational needs and disabilities and better prepare them for adult life including, where possible, promoting their independence and autonomy.

We have been working with the SILC Principals, their Chairs of Governors, and representatives from health and care services to find a way forward for our post 16 students in SILCs with special educational needs and disabilities. We have also had external support from the National Development Team for Inclusion, which has helped us to learn from national best practice. The DfE has described the approach that we are taking as 'trailblazing'.

We will continue to fund their education offer on the basis of 600 hours per year, in line with the approach we have taken since the school funding reforms of 2013. In addition, we have identified funding which we will use to commission support for the other 400 hours per year to meet young people's assessed care needs, promote their independence as far as is possible, and improve their preparation for adulthood. This new approach will affect students entering post 16 education from September 2018. Transitional funding will be given to the SILCs to allow them to continue with the existing five day offer for their current students in Years 12, 13 and 14 and enable them to complete their programme of study.

We have written to parents and carers to inform them about these important developments and to encourage their involvement in planning for their young people's future.

Q14 Councillor D Cohen - Does the Executive Member for Highways agree with me that schemes seem to take too long to finish, and are regularly not completed to a high enough standard and what do they propose to do about it?

A Highways and Transportation's programmes of work have increased significantly in recent years. In 2015/16, Highways and Transportation's Capital Programme expenditure was circa £80m; last year it was £77m and comprised a wide range of schemes from major schemes such as a park and ride scheme to flood risk management projects and hundreds of maintenance schemes. This year the expectation is that the outturn figure will exceed £70m. In terms of the type of scheme Cllr Cohen may be referring to such as The Avenue, in 17/18 there were 154 Local Road Schemes.

In addition highways have:

34 Main road and Distributor Road schemes
9 City Centre schemes
12 strategic footway schemes
346 surface dressing/micro-asphalt overlay schemes
57 footway sealant schemes,

Working in and maintaining a total of 612 streets in 17/18.

I appreciate that the disruption during a highway scheme can be inconvenient and it is for that reason that highways officers put in every effort to complete schemes as quickly as possible. There can be occasions of inactivity on construction sites due to waiting for deliveries of materials, lorries to take spoil away or concrete to set but these should be the exception rather than the norm.

On the whole the standard of workmanship is good. There are very few occasions of poor workmanship and when this is apparent it will be rectified and lessons learned. Where a contractor's work is deemed to be at fault, the contractor will be required to carry out remedial work at their expense. We have regular meetings with our contractors and there has been a Scrutiny Meeting session recently which included discussions on such issues.

The service has previously utilised a customer feedback card system and is working on moving towards an electronic system to help to capture concerns and enable the service to take any necessary corrective actions.

The service is naturally keen to complete work 'right first time' and will continue to train staff, monitor their workmanship and improve outcomes.

Q15 Councillor J Bentley - With the imperative on the Council to save on energy costs and carbon emissions would the Executive Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning tell me what plans the Council has to replace the current street lighting with LED lights over the next five years.

A Saving energy on street lighting is a priority for the council and has been for a number of years now. The council has already replaced around 1,500 street lights with LED and will continue to do so where it makes economic sense. In addition all new developments are fitted with LED lights from the outset.

The vast majority of the street lights in Leeds have been replaced since 2006 with the most efficient lamps available at the time. The savings gained from conversion to LED do not always outweigh the cost of replacing these relatively new lights. An extensive replacement programme has been considered a number of times but has so far failed to make a long term case to invest. Other councils are replacing their much older inefficient lights and can therefore demonstrate a case more easily.

The recent uptake in other areas is now having the effect of dramatically reducing the cost of LED lights. A further complete review is therefore underway. This will be undertaken in parallel with consideration of the extension of part-night street lighting which is also helping to reduce energy consumption. An element of the review will be a public consultation exercise on both options over the coming months.

Subject to the outcome of the review and consultation a proposal on further energy saving measures will be considered in the Spring (2018). In the meantime LED lights will continue to be rolled-out when it makes economic sense to do so and I can only see that position improving over the next five years or so.

Q16 Councillor M Harland - Would the Executive Member like to comment on the outcome of the government's review of gaming machines and social responsibility measures?

A This is the outcome of the triennial review of all gaming machines which has resulted in a three month consultation on three mains areas –

- Regulatory changes to the maximum stake for Category B2 machines (FOBTs) , looking at options between £50 and £2
- The retention of the current stakes and prizes for all other gaming machines
- Social responsibility measures across gaming machines that enable high rates of loss, on player protections in the online sector, on a package of measures on gambling advertising and on current arrangements for the delivery of research, education and treatment

The council will be providing a response to the consultation, in conjunction with partners across the city who are involved in the mitigation of the social impact of gambling, and this response will be approved by Licensing Committee in their capacity as Licensing Authority for the City of Leeds.

The council has previously raised concerns about fixed odds betting terminals and have been supportive of restrictions which can help prevent the potentially devastating effects of problem gambling. Working with the Money Information Centre, we have also recently promoted help and support services for those struggling with gambling addiction.

Q17 Councillor M Robinson - Will the Executive Board member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning explain how a resident in East Keswick can use public transport to reach Leeds Bradford airport to catch a 7am flight.

A Our transport strategy recognises that the residents, visitors and business of this city have a variety of transport needs of which this example is indicative. This is why we are taking a balanced approach to transport strategy and delivery which respects user choices but also acknowledges the need to respect the environment community and diversity.

The programmes we are currently developing including a mix of major and local transport improvements with significant new road investment in the pipeline including East Leeds Orbital Road and a link road from the A65 and A658 to the airport as well as a range of smaller local schemes and investment in facilities for cycling and walking for more local journeys. Similarly through the West Yorkshire Transport Fund and the new Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme we are aiming to develop both the rail and bus systems to provide higher levels of service that improve choice and encourage the use of these services.

Through this approach to investment the aim is to ensure that whether the journey is made by bus, train, car, taxi, bike or on foot the transport system is developed to make the journey as efficient and timely as possible and that the information and tickets are available to enable well informed choices about the best way to make the intended journey.

Q18 Councillor D Cohen - Can the Executive Member for Community Safety set out what the council is doing to support the "Ask for Angela" campaign in Leeds?

A Suggested reply: "Ask for Angela" is a campaign largely based on giving vulnerable individuals an opportunity to seek support whilst out in the City Centre. It is a scheme, implemented in other Districts as good practice, where if a woman was getting unwanted attention or had met someone and was really concerned about their manner they could go to a member of staff in a premise as "ask for Angela". Staff would be aware of the scheme and alert door staff and safeguard the female by taking them to an office out of the way / arranging transport home etc. It was discussed and progressed as part of the Purple Flag working group in Leeds.

Partner agencies, led by WYP and LCC are looking to implement an accreditation scheme for premises who go beyond the requirements to safeguard those vulnerable through over intoxication by having;

- paramedic in there or nearby premises to check on wellbeing and confirm intoxication as opposed to any medical condition
- room where individuals can sit and be given water to sober up
- Selection of chargers so if individuals have a flat battery and separated from friends they can charge their phones and hopefully get reunited or call family
- Reputable taxi firm that will take them home and ensure they get in their home safely

The Partnership is working towards stronger links into the City's purple flag work, it will be implemented in the coming months to be included in our 2019 Purple Flag renewal. The principles of 'ask angela' are the basis of these proposed new practices.

Q19 Councillor G Wilkinson - Will the Executive Board Member responsible please tell me how many drains in the Wetherby Ward that have been identified as in need of further investigation, after attempted clearing and jetting, have been repaired and brought back into use.

A Highways and Transportation have a two year programme in place to attend, and clean where possible, every gully in Leeds that is on the adopted highway. This programme commenced in July 2016, and will be completed by the end of May 2018, and is monitored using an electronic database.

The published data gives information on the number of gullies that have been cleaned, how many have been found to be blocked and how many have not been cleaned due to access issues, such as parked cars.

This programme is published on the internet and updated on a monthly basis. Currently Wetherby is programmed for cyclic cleaning for February to March 2018, so there is currently nothing to report from the programme.

In addition to this programme, there are requests from elected members and citizens of Leeds to carry out ad-hoc reactive cleaning when gullies are reported as being full of silt or do not drain water away effectively. Since July 2016, there have been 726 such reports for the Wetherby area, of these 352 were successfully cleaned by the gully team at first visit, 374 were reported as requiring further attention. Of the 374, 285 gullies have been brought back into service, leaving 89 that are still awaiting attention and resolution.

Q20 Councillor D Cohen - Does Executive Member for Environment and Sustainability agree with me that current policy on tree pruning is not serving Leeds residents well, with too many of our residents living in shade and darkness because of LCC trees?

A Resources for tree works are allocated on an inspection and risk assessment approach which allocates a category to each tree that defines the timescale applicable for any work that might be appropriate. This in turn enables priorities to be determined in allocating resources to address any issues identified. The main categories and timescales, where applicable, are as follows:

- Category 1: Emergency completed within 24 hours
- Category 2: Urgent completed within 7 working days
- Category 3A: developing risk completed within 6 months
- Category 3B: developing risk completed within 18 months
- Category 4A: trees affecting health and wellbeing
- Category 4B: trees affecting quality of life
- Category 4: no unreasonable risks and therefore no mitigation required

Category 4A and 4B were originally introduced in April 2014 in response to concerns raised by council housing tenants that some trees in their gardens caused extreme shade or interference with TV/satellite signal that could pose a risk to health, wellbeing and quality of life. A decision was therefore taken to allocate £160k from the housing revenue account to address these issues under specified circumstances and subject to consultation with other residents that may be affected.

A report to the council's executive board in June 2016 approved a mechanism whereby the council can approve works on category 4A and 4B trees provided that the interested party is prepared to fund all associated work. The criteria applied is the same as that used for trees in council house gardens and can enable private residents, local businesses or other organisations to pay for work should the issue be of sufficient concern.

Q21 Councillor G Wilkinson - Will the Executive Board Member responsible please tell me how many Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued in the Outer North East Community Committee area in 2016/17 and so far in 2017/18 for littering and failing to pick up mess left by their dogs.

A The figures are as follows:

From 1/1/2016 to 31/12/2016:

Littering FPNs – 4

Dog Fouling FPNs – 1

From 1/1 17 to 1/11/17:

Littering FPNs – 0

Dog Fouling FPNs – 0

The numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices issued are reflective of the difficulty in witnessing offences and identifying individuals in the wide geography of the Outer North East area.

This type of enforcement activity will always be limited if completely reliant on enforcement staff to witness offences and take action. We are presently looking at how others, including those beyond the employ of LCC, can assist by reporting incidents to followed up by an enforcement officer with the possibility of a FPN being issued on the evidence provided. We would hope to receive the support of local communities in providing evidence and information which can be taken further by enforcement staff. There is also value in the promotion of acceptable, legal practice with regards to dog fouling and littering that comes from within communities themselves.

There is currently a consultation exercise to seek views on new Public Space Protection Orders to require dog walkers to have the means to pick up after their dogs. Whilst the consultation is not yet complete, there appears to be good support for the introduction of this measure in areas covered by the PSPO. This would be used to further publicise the need for responsible dog ownership in addition to issuing FPNs, an approach which does have its limits, as described.

Q22 Councillor M Robinson - Can the Executive Board Member for Employment, Skills and Opportunity please share with Council how many apprenticeships have been created in Leeds, year on year, since 2010?

A The Education and Skills Funding Agency provides information on the number of individuals taking up an Apprenticeship each academic year.

The figures below show apprenticeship starts at all Levels and all ages from 2011/12 to 2016/17.

Apprenticeship Starts

Age	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 (Provisional)	Totals All Years 2011 to 2017
Under 19	2210	1520	1640	1870	1920	1790	10950
19-24	2140	2200	2110	2150	2050	1850	12500
25+	2960	3120	2260	2840	3130	3440	17750
Total All Ages	7310	6840	6010	6860	7100	7080	41200

The Single Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data collection system was introduced in 2011/12. Prior to 2011, young people (U19 yrs) and Adult (19 yrs+) apprenticeship data were collected separately by two different government departments. Data for the period before 2011/12 is not comparable.

The most recent academic year 2016/17 figures are provisional based on the End of Year returns data, however these are not usually significantly different to the final figures published later in the year.

Based on the table above, apart from the drop in delivery in 2013/14, the number of apprenticeships created has been just above or under the 7,000 mark.

Q23 Councillor M Robinson - Will the Executive Member for the Environment please outline what the Council's tree replacement policy is specifically how many trees are replanted for every one cut down?

A The approach adopted to managing trees on council land is to retain trees where possible unless they pose a health and safety risk, and to plant at least one other tree for every tree that needs to be felled. On average we plant around 15,000 trees each year in the city and around 3 hectares of new woodland are established.

For example in the near future there is the planned creation of a 3 hectare woodland between the M621 motorway and South Leeds High School. Planting will commence in December with 13,500 trees planted before the end of the winter. A further scheme will contribute to the Green Streets programme led by highways which aims to improve the highway network for all user groups by incorporating carefully considered tree planting (including semi-mature trees) as part of wider landscape benefits. This due to start early in 2018 on the outer ring road from King Lane to Roundhay Park Lane.

All of this fits within a wider vision and there is an aspiration as part of the Leeds City Region Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy to plant 3 million more trees by 2036 of which there would be 780,000 trees planted in Leeds which is one tree per resident. It is anticipated that a plan will be in place to deliver this aspiration by April 2018. This will be informed by a tree survey led by Leeds University which will set out the benefits that trees in the city provide and target tree planting programmes.

Another important area of tree planting is the flood alleviation scheme for Leeds which recognises the value that trees bring in slowing water down as a contribution to other measures that are being put in place. A good example of this is already in place Water Haigh Woodland Park. The Maltings housing development was identified as vulnerable to flooding and a naturalised flood alleviation pond was therefore created in the park centred on a large attenuation pond, containing 2.3ha of new wet woodland. Surrounding this is a further 1.7 ha of mixed woodland. On Boxing Day 2015, the River Aire burst its banks and flooded across the canal and instead of flooding the Maltings, this water was successfully redirected and discharged into the naturalised attenuation pond.

Building on the success of this scheme is a planned naturalised flood management scheme in the Wyke Beck Valley. This will include the creation of a new reservoir area at Killingbeck Fields (with a maximum capacity of 48,000m³) which will only fill up with water in the event of a flooding event. To complement this will be over 5,000 trees planted in order to slow the movement of water as well as enriching biodiversity and enabling public access. Smaller scale schemes will be implemented further downstream.

Q24 Councillor M Robinson - In August 2017 the Executive Board Member for Resources and Strategy said that Leeds Gender Pay Gap data would be published prior to October 2017, has this data been published and made available?

A "All large employers are required by law to publish information on Gender Pay Gap no later than 31 March 2018. Leeds City Council intends to publish this information earlier than the date required by law. Officers from Human Resources, Shared Services and Finance are working together to produce this information."

Q25 Councillor R Stephenson - Will the Leader of Council provide detail of any correspondence she has had to date with British Airways or Heathrow Airport in respect of lobbying for a night-stopper at Leeds & Bradford International Airport, so passengers can travel from Leeds to London on an early morning flight and return in the evening after a full day's business?

A The Council recognises the importance of LBIA's connections to international hub airports. On that basis I have been supportive of opportunities for LBIA to expand BA services that link to Heathrow, particularly where this allows passengers to seamlessly transfer to their onward journey with the same carrier.

It is clearly the position that the British Airways connection to Heathrow plays a very important role in connecting Leeds and its city region to the rest of the world. Critically Heathrow is one of the busiest hub airports in the world and there are clear benefits in being able to link through its main carrier to a wide range of international destinations.

Now that LBIA is under new ownership the council is in active dialogue about how we can support the ongoing growth and development of the airport including its route network.

Q26 Councillor R Stephenson - Does the Leader of Council believe that there should be no place in local politics for those who make insensitive, offensive or derogatory statements online about those suffering from mental health issues?

A The Equality Act 2010 protects disabled people, which includes people with a mental health condition from unfair treatment. The Act protects such individuals from harassment or victimisation, in terms of a code of conduct for public life nobody should discriminate against anybody in terms of mental health conditions as this is inhumane, a poor standard of behaviour and is in fact against the law. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 public bodies have certain responsibilities and this naturally includes the Council. The Equality duties are as follows:

- To stop discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To promote equality between people with a protected characteristic (a mental health issue) and those without
- To promote good relations between people with a protected characteristic and those without

Yours sincerely

Kevin Tomkinson
Principal Governance Officer