

12 February 2015

9. QUESTION TIME - CONTINUED

Question 2 – Tobacco Control

2. Mr A T Amos will ask the Leader of the Council:

"Would the Leader of the Council join with me in congratulating the Government for legislating to introduce brand-free cigarette packets and a ban on smoking in cars with children; and would he also accept my personal thanks for the County Council's action in supporting the Government's continuing anti-smoking campaign by ensuring we signed up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control, thus committing the Council to ensure tobacco control is part of mainstream public health work and to take comprehensive action to address the harm from smoking; and in so doing will he note that over 80 councils nationwide across the political spectrum have so far signed the Declaration, recent signatories being Surrey County Council, Suffolk County Council, and Middlesbrough Council; and has been endorsed, inter alia, by the Public Health Minister, Chief Medical Officer, Association of Directors of Public Health, Public Health England, Trading Standards Institute, and Chartered Institute of Environmental Health?"

Question 3 – Road works and repairs

3. Mr P M McDonald will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"Would the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways please inform me how many road works/repairs have not started on the proposed date?"

Question 4 – Home Carers

4. Mr P M McDonald will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care:

"Will the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care please inform me how she is ensuring that contracted home carers are being paid between visits to clients and not having to pay their own petrol?"

Question 5 – Discharge from hospital

5. Mr G J Vickery will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care:

"Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust has reported in the context of its £28 million forecast budget deficit, an £8 million cost of delayed discharges. Can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care say how

Question 6 – Living Wage

much of that is the fault of the County Council?"

6. Mr G J Vickery will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Change:

"82 Councils in England are paying, or committed to pay, their staff the living wage, including Worcester City Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Redditch Borough Council and Wyre Forest District Council. In addition all 32 councils in Scotland are now Living-Wage employers, paying their staff at least the living wage. Will the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Change say why the County Council does not intend to be a Living-Wage employer?"

Question 7 – Oversight of schools

7. Mr R C Lunn will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families:

"Does the Cabinet Member for Children and Families agree with the comments of Councillor David Simmonds, Chair of the LGA's Children and Young People's Board, that 'Councils are best placed to ensure oversight of all schools is effective and any action needed can be taken quickly'."

Question 8 – Free School Meal Offer

8. Mrs F M Oborski will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families:

"Could the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families tell me:
- what percentage of Key Stage 1 pupils across the county have taken up the Free School Meal Offer?
- what assistance the Council is giving to encourage take up?"

Question 9 – Excess winter deaths

9. Mr P J Bridle will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Health and Well-being:

"This winter it is predicted that the death toll of vulnerable pensioners will be the highest since the decade 1999 - 2009 when the influenza toll was 36,450. It is predicted that this figure will be exceeded by 3,000 to 4,000 this winter. According to the Office for National Statistics, there were 8,800 more deaths than the average of 25,000 in the short time between early December 2014 and 16 January this year. The reportedly useless 'flu vaccine issued this winter and the appalling fuel costs, boosted by the pointless environmental charges have condemned our precious elderly citizens to death by hypothermia or cold induced sickness in their own homes.

Have we any comparative statistics for Worcestershire?"

Question 10 - Female

10. Mr P J Bridle will ask the Cabinet Member for Health and Well-being:

Genital Mutilation

"The practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is barbaric and appalls any right-minded citizen. I notice that not one case of this is reported in our county, let alone any charge or conviction of a perpetrator. The law is clear and holds anyone and everyone accountable who performs such an act or conceals such an act. Surely we must be seen to take this matter extremely seriously and not just pay it lip service. Are we giving a woman so violated every opportunity to report her ordeal and to protect her identity so that investigation can take place with her safety and confidentiality paramount?"

It is difficult to believe that this dreadful practice is not going on in our county. There isn't even the lowest of drum beats from the authorities or the afflicted.

Why? Are we being complacent or far too politically correct? Are we doing too little to empower these poor women to come forward? What reports are available from our GPs and hospital maternity wards?"

Question 11- Speed cameras

11. Mr A T Amos will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"Will the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways ensure that, where relevant and appropriate, local members are in future consulted on proposals to install speed cameras in their electoral divisions?"

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

Worcester (01905) 763763, Kidderminster (01562) 822511 or Minicom: Worcester (01905) 766399

Specific Contact Point for this Report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.