

COUNCIL
15 SEPTEMBER 2016**QUESTION TIME - CONTINUED**

Question 5 – Cabinet Members

5. Mr R M Udall will ask the Leader of the Council:

"Last week a member of his Cabinet accused me, in the Worcester News, of being Worcestershire's very own version of Katy Perry; I have no idea what he was talking about. However, he also went on to defend the decision to recruit a new officer at a cost of over £60,000, who will be responsible for selling off services to the private sector; something which will have a clear impact on service users. Both comments are clearly eccentric and strange, can he as Leader justify and explain both comments and does he continue to have confidence in the Cabinet Member?"

Question 6 – Bus services

6. Mr R C Lunn will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"Does the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways believe that the Diamond Bus service provision in Redditch has improved, after the major issues we debated in January? Is he now satisfied with the service provided by the company both in Redditch and the rest of the county?"

Question 7 – Plymouth Road, Redditch

7. Mr R C Lunn will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"Can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways inform me when Plymouth Road, a major road in central Redditch, is due to be resurfaced and relined? Is the plan to do it in stages?"

Question 8 – Use of bus lanes in the city of Worcester

8. Mr P Denham will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"I refer the Cabinet Member with Responsibility to the minutes of the meeting of this Council on 12 November 2015, question 14 at Question Time. This was a question to your predecessor, Cllr. John Smith, asking when there would be some progress on investigating the use of bus lanes by taxis in Worcester City.

This followed a decision of this Council on 9 July 2015 to carry out this investigation. John Smith's reply, as minuted, said:

'I can confirm that a comprehensive review of the business case for permitting taxis to use bus lanes in the city of Worcester is currently underway, and will include detailed assessment of the various options. This work is expected to be published for consideration early next year'

It is now late in the year yet no such publication has appeared. When will this happen?"

Question 9 – Air quality

9. Ms P Agar will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"Magnetite particulates from traffic pollution have been found in large quantities in the brains of Alzheimer's patients and are now thought to be implicated in causing the condition. Will the Council take further action to review Air Quality Action Areas with a view to a more rigorous approach to the reduction of traffic pollution, especially in traffic congested areas?"

Question 10 – Bus Services Bill

10. Ms P Agar will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"The Bus Services Bill has been making its way through Parliament this summer. It offers three options for the control of local bus services, namely, Franchising, Enhanced Partnerships, or Advanced Quality Partnerships. These arrangements offer local transport authorities three different levels of control, with Franchising offering the greatest control over services and Advanced Quality Partnerships the least control. Is there an emerging view among the council leadership as to which option would be best for Worcestershire?"

Question 11 – Hoobrook Link Road

11. Mrs F M Oborski will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"When it was agreed that the new Wyre Forest Leisure Centre would be sited adjacent to the Hoobrook Link Road we were assured that every effort would be made to ensure that the road would open at around the same time as the Leisure Centre and negotiations would take place to ensure that the Leisure Centre would be served by a bus service.

Could the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways please tell me:

- (a) when the road will open to traffic, and
- (b) what negotiations have been/are being held to ensure that the badly needed bus service is provided?"

Question 12 – Grammar Schools

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

"Will the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Children and Families please confirm that Grammar Schools are not the answer to raising standards within Worcestershire and would not be encouraged to open in this county?"

Question 13 – Bus routes

13. Mrs S Askin will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"The number 37 bus route has recently been re-routed by First Bus to Green Lane via Bevere Drive. Residents have complained, and I agree, that Bevere Drive is an unsuitable route for such a large vehicle. What mechanisms can the Council bring to bear on First Bus in such matters?"

Question 14 – Speed limits on roads

14. Mr G J Vickery will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways:

"As I understand the law, a 30 mph speed limit is defined by the presence of street lights and the absence thereof implies the higher national limit, variously 60 mph for single carriageway roads and 70 mph for dual carriageways. These conventions can be modified by Local Highway Authorities but have to be signposted. After the initial signs, repeater signs have to be displayed additionally. In the light of recent legislative changes, can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways inform Council of the standards for the display of these repeater signs currently being applied, and whether the county's roads everywhere conform to the standards?"

Question 15 – Sustainable travel

15. Mr G J Vickery will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure:

"Would the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure provide an update on the Council's bid against the Government's £60million fund for sustainable travel?"

Question 16 - Apprenticeships

16. Mr R W Banks will ask the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure:

"Would the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy, Skills and Infrastructure tell me what progress has been made in the recent past in the number of apprenticeships arranged in Worcestershire?"

Question 17 – New Homes Bonus

17. Mrs E B Tucker will ask the Leader of the Council:

"Would the Leader of the Council list the amounts of New Homes Bonus received by this council for each year since its introduction, including funding guaranteed for future years. Would he list how the money has been allocated for each year's New Homes Bonus and how much remains unallocated?"

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Email: worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk

Specific Contact Points for this report

John Higginbotham, Committee and Appellate Officer

Tel: 01905 846607

Email: jhigginbotham@worcestershire.gov.uk

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.