

CABINET MEETING 4th February 2009

The following Statements and Questions had been registered by the time of publication.

REGISTERED SPEAKERS

There were 13 notices of intention to make a statement at the meeting. Where the intention is to speak about an item on the Agenda, the speaker will be offered the option to speak near the beginning of the meeting or just before the Agenda item.

- Fabian Richter
Re: On-street parking by staff at RUH
- Cllr Paul Crossley
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr Dave Dixon
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr Colin Darracott
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr Caroline Roberts
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr Loraine Brinkhurst
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr Tim Ball
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr Andy Furse
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr Adrian Inker
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr John Bull
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr Rob Appleyard
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr Dr Eleanor Jackson
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)
- Cllr David Speirs
Re: Council Budget (Agenda Item 13)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - COUNCILLORS

01 **Question from:** Councillor Nicholas Coombes

The minutes of 10th January 2007 show that I put a question to the then Executive member regarding a zebra crossing on Bathwick Hill. As traffic studies have now shown there to be a need for a zebra crossing over the canal bridge, what finance has been allocated for the works and when can we expect completion?

Answer from: Councillor Charles Gerrish

I confirm that the recent pedestrian survey near the canal bridge does provide justification for a zebra crossing at this location. The zebra crossing has a high priority and has therefore been included in the draft proposed Traffic and Safety Programme for 2009/10 for consideration. This proposal will need to be evaluated based on the established process against the other schemes in the programme for 2009/10 at which time the budgets will be allocated.

Supplementary Question:

Will the Cabinet member give an update on the promised cycling lane provision in Sydney Gardens?

Answer from: Councillor Charles Gerrish

I will be happy to speak to the member later and provide this information.

02 **Question from:** Councillor Nathan Hartley

Can the Cabinet Member responsible for recycling, cardboard and garden waste collection tell us:

- a) How many complaints Council Connect received in January regarding cardboard not being collected from the edge of properties?
- b) Does he agree with the view that the recent 'crack-down' on residents who do not either tie up their cardboard, or put it in the largest box, will have a negative effect and put people off recycling?
- c) How much money is being saved by only collecting cardboard that is either tied up or stacked in the largest box?

Answer from: Councillor Charles Gerrish

a) We received 567 calls regarding the garden waste collection service in Jan 2009. This compares with 496 in Jan 2008. The average calls per month

received in 2008 were 302. The number of calls received in January is always much higher due to the free Christmas tree collection service that we offer during this month.

b) Our message has always been to put cardboard out in another cardboard box or tie a bundle together so that it can be picked up and thrown into the vehicle. We have informally in the past collected material put out in green boxes or carrier bags but this has resulted in accidents involving collection staff. The bin lifts on the composting vehicles are automatic. As soon as the bin lift senses something close, it moves up in readiness to engage with the wheeled bin. Several instances of the loader accidentally activating the bin-lift mechanism and being injured by it when tipping cardboard out of bags & boxes have occurred. A health and safety audit has assessed the risk and recommended changes. We have therefore had to take a firmer approach regarding the requirements in order to reduce the risk of further accidents. We are revising our publicity material to ensure that when cardboard is left behind, the reason is made clear to residents. Ideally this would have been communicated before the change in process.

c) This is not a budget issue. It is a health and safety issue.

03

Question from:

Councillor Sarah Bevan

a) Could the Cabinet members responsible for Leisure and the promotion of public health explain why Aquaterra was allowed to remove the cafe selling healthy food from the sports centre in Bath, and replace it with more vending machines, which dispense only junk food?

b) How many children use the sports centre every week?

c) What justification, if any, did Aquaterra give for this action?

Answer from:

Councillor Terry Gazzard

The Council's Leisure contractor is Aquaterra Leisure, a charity (306153). The Charity is concerned with the provision of leisure, fitness and sports activities that are accessible for all. All other services operate on a break even basis, or have to make a contribution to the revenue streams of the business. The catering service in Bath Sport and Leisure Centre has consistently made a loss. There are no constraints in Aquaterra's present contract with the Council that relate to the provision of catering services and thus Aquaterra are able to make any proposals they wish. They investigated a vending service based wholly on 'Healthy Foods' however no company provides such a service.

The issue of providing a vending service has been only part of an upgrade to the immediate area. There are new tables and chairs as well as the provision of a relaxation area that includes related entertainment and information facilities - which are to be installed next week. These are improvements for customers.

a) With regard to the details of the foods provided within the vending service.

Aquaterra specifically selected a contractor that provided 'Healthy Options' within the selection of products. In the context of providing 'choice' 25% of the offer will include healthy eating options - specifically identified as such. A further range of snacks and foods are identified as 'low fat'. These options are placed as close to the centre line of the vending machines as possible.

The hot drinks use low fat ingredients. Of the cold drinks 60% are dedicated to 'school' compliant juice based drinks and water.

The 'Hot Food' range has started with paninis, pasties and burgers. The offer includes items that deliberately exclude cheese and other fats. The range is to be extended to include a range of healthier alternatives including rice and pasta dishes that are suitable for customers to handle.

Aquaterra are open to suggestions by customers. There has been an equal number of complaints (2) and expressions of support regarding these changes.

b) There are 15,000 visits by adults to the centre each week and 4,000 visits by young people of school age.

c) Aquaterra Leisure are concerned to offer value for money, choice and promote healthy eating.

04

Question from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p>In answer to my question (#01) at Cabinet in January 2009, the Cabinet member stated that "some £50,000 has been spent on the campaign to increase the understanding of how the package will benefit the locality". I understand that this sum was spent by the press and communications department between March and November 2008.</p> <p>Does this sum include the costs of the production and delivery of the leaflet entitled "Tired of Traffic Jams"? If not, what were the costs of production and delivery of this leaflet and from which budget were they drawn? To how many households in B&NES was this leaflet delivered?</p>	
Answer from:	Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p><i>The cost of producing the leaflet "Tired of Traffic Jams" is included within the £50,000 that has been spent on the campaign to increase the understanding of how the package will benefit the locality. The costs were drawn from the Bath Transportation Package Capital Budget. The leaflet was sent to every household in the Bath & North East Somerset area.</i></p>	
Supplementary Question:	
<p>a) Is the Cabinet still committed to its stated ecological policies? b) Do the changes to the Council's approach to the Bath Transport Package reflect a change to these policies?</p>	
Answer from:	Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p><i>I will provide an answer within 5 days</i></p>	

05

Question from:	Councillor Caroline Roberts
<p>In answer to my question (#01) at Cabinet in January 2009, the Cabinet member stated that "some £50,000 has been spent on the campaign to increase the understanding of how the package will benefit the locality". I understand that this sum was spent by the press and communications department between March and November 2008.</p> <p>Does this sum include the costs of setting up and maintaining the 'stopgridlock' website? If not, what were the costs of setting up and maintaining this website and from which budget were they drawn? How many unique hits has the website received since setting up and how many comments?</p>	
Answer from:	Councillor Charles Gerrish
<p><i>The cost of the "Stopgridlock" website is included within the £50,000 that has been spent on the campaign to increase the understanding of how the package will benefit the locality. The website has had approximately 6000 hits and the Council has received 280 comments.</i></p>	

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - PUBLIC

There were none