

Councillor Questions for Council 16th November 2010

(NOTE: The following questions and answers will be published on the Council's website as soon as possible after the meeting and linked to the published draft minutes of this meeting.)

1. Question from Councillor Nigel Roberts

A number of bins have gone missing in Odd Down and other parts of Bath, we have repeatedly asked for them to be replaced, some requests stretch over 6 months.

Who is making the decision not to replace these bins?

A bench has gone missing from Rush Hill, who has made the decision not to replace this?

Answer from Cabinet Member for Service Delivery

The Council is aware that a number of litter bins have gone missing over recent months; it is believed that these are being stolen for their scrap metal value. The Council is liaising with the Police over this matter and is taking steps to ensure that bins are installed to avoid such thefts in the future.

The Council has a dedicated officer to manage the day to day installation of litter bins and review requests for new ones. A judgement is made on whether the allocation of the bin will help to reduce litter levels in the immediate area, having consideration of the number of bins that are already in situ. With respect to Odd Down, the Council replaced a bin in Old Frome Road recently and assessed a request for a bin in Odins Road. Upon inspection it was not deemed necessary for a bin in the Odins Road area as there is a play area nearby that already has a bin in it. The missing bench on Rush Hill was located outside of Haycombe Crematorium. Steps will be taken to replace it.

The Council will be reviewing its policy for in the installation of litter bins in the near future to ensure that the most appropriate bins are located in the right places. This will also involve consideration of installing bins for recyclable materials in appropriate locations.

2. Question from Councillor Brian Webber

1. When does the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery expect to make a decision on the future of the experimental visitors' parking permit scheme in the Bath central zone?
2. In which parking zone does the part of Upper Hedgemoad Road, Bath, between its junction with Lansdown Road and its junction with Lower Hedgemoad Road lie? If it lies in no zone, could it be added to the existing central zone and made available exclusively for residents with parking permits?
3. To which cul de sac does the traffic sign at the junction of Upper and Lower Hedgemoad Roads, Bath, refer?

4. Would it be to the environmental and economic benefit of Bath if coaches were banned from the Circus and its adjoining streets, thereby encouraging visitors to view these popular sites either on foot or from our excellent tour buses?
5. What are the arrangements for eliciting and resolving any concerns of the emergency services regarding their ability to pass along streets, which are severely constricted by the presence of parked vehicles?

Answer from Cabinet Member for Service Delivery

1. The current permit system does not allow adequate interrogation of data to establish current levels of use and activity. In order to obtain an accurate assessment of this scheme therefore I intend to wait until after the introduction of the new permit system which is currently being procured and should be operating by Spring 2011.
2. The junction you refer to is situated at the boundary of two different parking zones. Upper Hedgemoad Road lies in zone 15 and Lansdown Road lies in the central zone. As mentioned above the current permit system does not allow adequate interrogation of data to establish current levels of use and activity. In order to obtain an accurate assessment of the impact of your proposal I intend to wait until after the introduction of the new permit system.
3. The sign, which is in the grounds of the park at the above junction, has been inspected. The sign is very old on an old grey post. I cannot see the purpose of the sign so I will arrange for the sign and post to be removed as soon as possible.
4. A study is currently in progress to consider the benefits of introducing traffic management measures in the Circus area and it is proposed to extend the study to investigate the impact of banning coaches from the Circus. The lack of legislative powers to allow local highway authorities to enforce moving traffic offences however limits the traffic management options available.
5. Highways and Parking services officers have frequent discussions with the police and other emergency services regarding highway safety and other issues. They are aware that they should bring any concerns to our attention and we will make any necessary adjustments to address them. The emergency services have not expressed any concerns in relation to access recently but if I am made aware of any specific issues and name locations, I would be happy to get officers to assess the position.

3. Question from Councillor Neil Butters

1. Following an informal local referendum in 2000, the spelling of the village and parish of South Stoke was corrected from one word to two. (This followed an error by Somerset County Council, which only came to light in 1999). Further to requests from the parish council, could the Divisional Director for Legal and Democratic Services please detail the steps he has taken, including dates, to advise all parties who need to know of such changes - from the Council's own departments to, for example, Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG), the Ordnance Survey, Royal Mail, Google and BT?
2. Could the Divisional Director for Legal and Democratic Services please advise on the most appropriate route, or routes, to effecting a review of parish boundaries? Including where a county boundary might be concerned.

Answer from Leader of the Council

1. A letter was sent on the 29th February 2008 to the Major Address Change Officer Royal Mail Address Management and copied to the DCLG, Director General of the Ordnance Survey, Registrar General and Parish Clerk South Stoke Parish Council advising them of the request to change the name of the Parish Southstoke to South Stoke. The Council report dated July 2004 (South Stoke Parish - Change of Name) advised who should be written to with this notification.
2. Parish boundaries may be varied as a possible outcome of a Community Governance Review (a CGR) which the principal authority for an area undertakes (such as this Council for the 46 parishes in Bath & North East Somerset).

A CGR may be triggered by a petition of residents of an area or by the Council itself deciding on its own initiative to undertake one. Where an area to be reviewed has more than one principal authority, both authorities would need to be involved. Enquiries are being made of Central Government whether, as a result of such a joint review, a parish boundary could be altered so as to transfer a portion of a parish from one principal area to another.

A CGR is a full Council, rather than a Cabinet, function. Council would resolve to undertake one by majority vote on a notice of motion published on the agenda and after consideration of the implications, including cost.