

Council 19 April 2012 Written Questions

1. Councillor McPherson to the Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services

The growing habit of dropping and leaving litter is a major problem, especially in public spaces such as play parks and green spaces particularly in the warmer months. Complaints are on the increase and at least twice the litter left over the weekend was so bad on Cambridge City public spaces last summer that it made headlines in the Cambridge News.

I would like to see greater support for the environmental team who are charged with tackling this problem, which is a blight on our open spaces. Can the executive Councillor confirm that the work undertaken by our environmental team including the small team of enforcement officers would be supported by temporary seasonal enforcement and/or educational officers who could join the existing team in their work with Schools and Colleges in providing education on this topic? This coupled with the introduction of fixed penalty notices for under 18 years olds (as at this time there is very little that can be done in Cambridge if an offender is under 18), would significantly reduce this problem especially at known hot spots. The aim of this would not be to 'criminalise' young people for the offence of littering but to assist the enforcement officers in focusing the attention of ALL age groups on this growing and very costly problem.

Response:

Littering is a major issue for us on our streets and open spaces and I fully support the work that we undertake in education and enforcement as well as cleaning up this problem.

We follow our Enforcement Policy and balance education with enforcement.

The Ranger Service, Enforcement Team and Service Delivery Team all undertake educational visits which include Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, CRC, Sixth Form and other Colleges and Freshers Fair. We undertake national campaigns with the Keep Britain Tidy organisation and benefit from their advertising and campaigning.

We have increased resources within both the Ranger Service and the Enforcement Team and now have officers specifically engaged to cover weekends and bank holidays. We will be evaluating the impact of these extra resources after the summer and if need be will make any appropriate bid for following years.

In addition we will be appointing a Street Champion to work with our communities and educate and encourage residents of all ages, community groups and neighbourhoods to tidy up their area.

The investment we are making through the capital funding of a four year programme for the installation of recycling and litter bins across our streets and open spaces will enable our residents and visitors alike to take a more responsible attitude to disposing of 'waste on the go'.

With regard to the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices to under 18 years olds. The issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution. Littering is a criminal offence and therefore if the fine remained unpaid the offender would 'be criminalised'. We have followed advice from legal services and preferences from the Youth Court not to issue FPN's for littering against juveniles.

Schools and colleges can help us to get the anti littering message across by supporting our endeavours and taking a firm line with their students who litter. We will continue to balance our resources between education, enforcement and disposal provision and clean up.

2. Councillor Price to the Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources

What measures have been put in place to ensure the standard of work undertaken by the planned housing maintenance contractor meets the council's highest standards, what examples are there and is the Council happy with the levels of sub-contracting? Can he provide a list of the main subcontractors and their trades? And have the contractor and contractors delivered on time, to quality, and assisted catch up on time lost in 2011?

Response:

1. Measures taken to ensure the standard of work undertaken by the planned maintenance contractor meets the Council's highest standard

- At end February 2012 the level of Customer satisfaction was 95%. The target for customer satisfaction in year one is 90%.
- Quality of work is currently 95.4%, based on site inspections carried out by Estates and Facilities surveyors the target being 90%.
- Volunteer resident site inspectors have inspected a number of properties to check welfare facilities, health and safety and work quality.
- Whilst the standard of service delivery is demonstrably high, it is inevitable that there may be some issues or complaints when carrying out work of this nature. As far as we are aware issues have been swiftly dealt with.
- Complaint records have not given rise to a material level of concern. However if Members have instances then officers will be happy to deal with them.

2. Sub-contracting

The Council has no concerns regarding the level of sub-contracting.

Please see below a list of sub-contractors and their trades.

Apollo

Contract Flooring Services	Vinyl flooring
ASB Environmental	Asbestos Removal
Kershaw Ltd	Asbestos Removal
G & S Hutchinson	General Builders / Windows
Bellcorp	Bathrooms
N&S	Bathrooms
GC Electrical	Electrical
TNS Scaffold	Scaffold
Dontel Roofing	Roofing
Lodge Roofing	Roofing/scaffold
Sustain	External Insulation works
Chaps	Plumbing / boiler replacement
BWC Construction	Ground works

MWC
Cube

Disabled modular ramps
Asbestos Surveys

Kier

Elite Contracts

General Builders

Apollo are carrying out kitchen, bathrooms, external cyclical works and disabled adaptations using their direct employees who transferred from the Council at the start of the contract. Sub-contractors are also completing some bathrooms.

3. Have the contractors and the (sub) contractors delivered on time, to quality and assisted catch up on time lost in 2011?

The planned works contract started in July 2011. This was three months later than planned because staff - transfer negotiations took longer than expected.

£5.3m of work has been ordered under the Apollo contract compared with the £4.5m forecast at the time of tendering the contract. At February 2012 the amount assessed as due for payment is £2.5m. The March 2012 payment is currently being assessed.

The Estate and Facilities team have had concerns about the slow progress of works in the first six months of the contract. However Apollo have mobilized their supply chain and have a full site team in place working from a shared office at Mill Road depot. Apollo have given assurances that all work ordered will be completed by the end of Year 1 of the contract in July 2012.

An internal audit of the planned maintenance contract management in November 2011 and gave a “significant” assurance rating.

A comprehensive contract performance review for Apollo has been completed for the first six months of the contract.

The Council has also placed orders for some planned works with Kier Services, who were appointed as the secondary contractor. The works include internal fire safety improvements at Ekin Road flats.

3. Councillor Herbert to the Leader of the Council

a) Can she update the Council on any progress in recovering the money that was never repaid for Folk Festival ticket receipts, on the position in relation to the earlier police inquiries, and on the current Insolvency Service investigation?

b) What does the Council think happened to the money?

c) Will she also write to the then Managing Director of SecureTicket, and invite him to Cambridge to explain where the city's money gone, after it was removed by the company from the 'secure account'?

Response:

a) Can she update the Council on any progress in recovering the money that was never repaid for Folk Festival ticket receipts, on the position in relation to the earlier police inquiries, and on the current Insolvency Service investigation?

1. The Police Investigation.

Hampshire Police investigated possible offences committed by directors of Secure Ticket (UK) Ltd. An arrest was made in March 2011.

Hampshire Police announced in August 2011 that they and the Crown Prosecution Service had decided not to bring a prosecution. The Crown Prosecution Service decided that they were not able to prove dishonesty beyond reasonable doubt.

It is very disappointing that the Police and the Crown Prosecution Service do not feel able take action but we have no reason to doubt that they carried out a thorough investigation.

2. Proceedings by DBIS (the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills).

In November 2010 one of the directors of the company, Michael Barnard, was disqualified from being the director of a company for nine years, following an investigation by the Insolvency Service. Action against the other directors was delayed by ill-health. These proceedings are being defended by both Mr Qajar and Mrs Oakley. Whilst there have been preliminary hearings, there is not yet a date for trial and the solicitor for DBIS does not anticipate that the matter will come before the court for trial until much later this year, or possibly early next. Council officers are co-operating with DBIS in relation to the proceedings.

3. Possible recovery action through the liquidator

SecureTicket (UK) Ltd went into administration with very limited assets and significant debt. Therefore it is not possible to recover the money from the company itself. As SecureTicket (UK) Ltd is in administration, the right to take action to seek to recover sums from third parties is given to the administrator, and the Council cannot take legal action in its own right. The City Council is therefore in contact with the administrators, Tenon Recovery, to explore steps to recover the money it has lost. The Council has been dealing with Tenon Recovery on a confidential basis and it is not possible to offer further information in response to a public question.

b) What does the Council think happened to the money?

We understand that the Folk Festival receipts were at first placed in a general client account of SecureTicket (UK) Ltd. Payments were then made both direct from the client account and via the company's current account. These payments were to a variety of parties, including related companies, third parties, employees and some payments to directors.

c) Will she also write to the then Managing Director of SecureTicket, and invite him to Cambridge to explain where the city's money gone, after it was removed by the company from the 'secure account'?

I am happy for an invitation to be extended and would welcome the opportunity this would give him to come and answer questions from the people of Cambridge.

4. Councillor Herbert to the Executive Councillor for Arts, Sport and Public Places

Given

- his media statement that over £80,000 would be provided to fund community organised 2012 Jubilee and Olympic-linked events,

Response:

Area Committee Budget for 2012-13

Leisure (£29,000) and Community Development (£55,000) grants have now been merged to provide a sum of £84,000 for Area Committee grants. This budget has been divided between the area committees in accordance with population and other considerations:

The amount available for each area is as follows:

Committee	%	£
North	37.8	31,752
South	20	16,800
East	32.2	27,048
West Central	10	8,400

This sum is the total for ACs and not limited to Jubilee and Olympic Events.

and

- That any grants under his arrangements would already have to have been submitted for groups to get prior funding for any of these events,

Response:

Any group can apply at any time for this funding if they meet the criteria in the guidelines (and as long as there's budget remaining, which there currently is). Constituted groups apply via the Cambridge Community Foundation, and non-constituted groups directly via the Council's own grants team. This can be done by area committees or for smaller sums applications can also be approved via Officer and Chair's Action.

a) What is the total of such funding that has been agreed to date?

Response:

See below for details – this includes applications from non-constituted groups.

b) What is the value of applications that will shortly be proposed at the 3 other Area Committees still to meet?

Response:

This is included below

c) What is his figure for the likely total funding for these community events? And

Response:

Its not possible to say, and depends on bids received but we hope we have made flexible arrangements to be able to respond to applications received on an ongoing basis.

d) Will he consider a fresh initiative to allow more groups to apply?

Response:

The initiative has received media publicity and a number of councillors have publicised the information in their communities

Olympic & Jubilee Bids and Awards @ 16.4.12

Awards

Hemingford Road	East	Jubilee & Olympics Street Party	£1,000.00
Barnwell Baptist Church	East	Jubilee BBQ and Olympic torch event	£250.00
28th Cambridge (St John's) Scout Group	East	Jubilee Street Party	£500.00
Sunshine Group	North	Jubilee Party	£300.00
Highfield Avenue	North	Jubilee Street party	£225.00
Not Quite over the hill	North	Jubilee tea party	£300.00
Meadows Centre Bowlers	North	Jubilee and Olympic tea parties	£100.00

Bids

£2,675.00

Cambridge & County Folk Museum	West	Street Party reminiscence project and event	£1,000.00
Cherry Hinton Residents Association	South	Jubilee Party	£900.00
Bermuda Community Room	North	Street Party	£600.00
Vie Residents Association	North	Local Olympic celebration inc street party	£338.30

£2,838.30

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