

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 1 NOVEMBER 2018

Questions by Members

No.	Question by:	To be answered by:	Subject
1.	Cllr S. McKenna	Cllr Mrs. N.J Bramhall, Executive Member for Property and Acquisitions	Property Market Inflation and Council Property Companies
2.	Cllr R.W. Coad	Cllr J.E. Durrant, Executive Member for Community Safety	Anti-Social Behaviour
3.	Cllr J.F. White	Cllr A.C.J Horwood, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Priory Park Playground (Play Equipment)
4.	Cllr J.P. King	Cllr R.H Ashford, Executive Member for Community Wellbeing	Children's Centres
5	Cllr Ms. B.J. Thomson	Cllr S. Parnall, Chairman of Planning Committee	Redhill Aerodrome

Council Meeting: 1 November 2018

Councillor S. McKenna will ask the **Executive Member for Property and Acquisitions, Councillor Mrs. N. J. Bramhall** the following question:

Question:

Property Market Inflation and Council Property Companies

Mole Valley council recently purchased the Axa building in Redhill town centre. Would the Council agree that our own property company should avoid competing with other councils for purchase of the same site, to avoid overbidding which is causing inflationary effects in the property market. What measures are in place to stop that happening and what more can be done in the future?

Response / Observations:

As part of any bid preparation, the Council would always seek advice about the market value of the property. This ensures the figure we bid can be substantiated by a formal RICS Red book valuation, which is required to ensure best value.

Should the Council wish to bid on a property outside our Borough, we would let the relevant District or Borough Council know as a courtesy. However the bidding process is private so it is unlikely any individual bidder would be advised of the details of other third party offers.

Council Meeting: 1 November 2018

Councillor R.W. Coad will ask the **Executive Member for Community Safety**, **Councillor J.E. Durrant** the following question:

Question:

Anti-Social Behaviour

Anti-Social Behaviour is a serious and growing problem because of the devastating effect that the process, the repetition and the context can have on victims, witnesses and communities, even when individual cases may seem trivial in isolation.

Please can the Executive Member for Communities reassure the many local Redhill residents, who feel increasingly threatened and ignored in their own communities, that their Council has adequate policies, such as Public Space Protection Orders, which can be used on individual housing estates and can be adequately resourced to enforce them.

Response / Observations:

We are fortunate in this borough to live in one of the safest areas of the country and this is due to the efforts of those responsible for our safety which includes officers of this council. There's a great deal of work put into protecting our residents, much of which goes unnoticed, so I thank Cllr Coad for the opportunity to inform members on what we have in place – I will apologise now, but due to the nature of the topic, I do need to refer to quite a few acronyms.

Different Council services will respond to complaints of ASB depending upon the nature of the issue. For example, fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, unauthorised encampments, graffiti, fly-posting and dog-related nuisance will be dealt with by the Joint Enforcement Team, noise or neighbour nuisance may be dealt with by Environmental Health, whilst other issues, such as child sexual exploitation, and our very successful modern slavery awareness campaign, will be picked up by Community Safety. Where there is a significant issue that requires a multi-agency response it may be referred to either the Community Harm & Risk Management Meeting (CHaRMM) or the Joint Action Group (JAG). The CHaRMM deals with problem individuals whose ASB is having an impact in the community, whereas the JAG deals with area based issues, such as those raised by Cllr Thomson at the last meeting of Council. Both bring together a variety of partners to identify solutions to the issues at hand and manage their delivery in a co-ordinated way.

Whether managed on a case-by-case basis, or via a multi-agency approach, there is a choice of evidence-led enforcement powers available to the Council under the ASB Crime & Policing Act 2014. These include Community Protection Notices (CPN) which can be issued to individuals, Closure Orders on premises, and Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) which can be implemented in defined areas, which we have

in Redhill. There are also other powers available to partner agencies under the Act, such as Criminal Behaviour Orders (Police) & Injunctions (Housing), all of which are used on a regular basis to deal with ASB locally.

There is also a wide range of other multi-agency responses to ASB available

- tenancy enforcement, incl. Anti-social Behaviour Contracts (ABC), possession orders etc.
- preventative work with local schools & pupil referral units (PRUs)
- 1:1 support for young people delivered by Surrey Family Service
- provision of positive activities for young people, including Surrey Fire & Rescue Service 'YES' [Youth Engagement Scheme] scheme & YMCA detached youth work projects
- multi-agency safeguarding processes
- referral to specialist substance misuse, mental health, homelessness and supported housing services
- crime reduction measures such as lowering the height of a hedge or improving lighting
- use of CCTV if appropriate
- working with local businesses
- access to ASB victim support service
- access to the Community Trigger or 'ASB review'

Raising awareness of what constitutes ASB, who deals with what type of issue, and how to report issues is also crucial in ensuring resident voices are heard and agencies are aware of current problems and able to respond. The council does this, for example through supporting ASB Awareness week, and throughout the year via various campaigns, and community engagement events. We also raise awareness amongst other professionals to encourage reporting via the Partnership Intelligence process. One example of this in action is updating some of the tests we ask taxi drivers to take where we now expect them to take tests created by Barnardo's around child sexual exploitation awareness.

Last but not least, our Community Development work is essential to help strengthen joint responses and develop resilient local communities.

I hope this provides reassurance to members and residents that we have the powers, practices and policies to deal with anti-social behaviour. I'd also add that we are reviewing the various services in this area to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Work on the Community Safety team has shown we perform very well in this area and we will be taking the lessons from that into other related services.

Council Meeting: 1 November 2018

Councillor J.F. White will ask the **Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor A.C.J. Horwood** the following question:

Question:

Priory Park Playground (Play Equipment)

There is currently a residents' survey being conducted by the council about the play equipment at the Priory park playground.

Can the portfolio holder tell us when the currently broken equipment will be repaired and what the timescales are to implement the changes that the survey is asking about?

Response / Observations:

The only outstanding item requiring repair in the Priory Park play area at this time is the cableway (Zip Wire). We are awaiting a date for this item to be fixed and have chased the contractor this week, but are hoping that it is imminent.

With regards to the survey, this is intended as a means of consultation with the parks users on the scheduled replacement of the play equipment, as it is coming to the end of its usable life.

The survey isn't directly linked to the issues relating to the repair of the existing equipment.

Once the survey results have been analysed the process of publishing the tender will commence within the next two weeks. The tender will be published by 9 October 2018 with a return date of 11 January 2019.

There follows a period of evaluation and preparation of contract, prior to placing an order for the works.

The proposed installation period is between 13 May and 11 July 2019.

Council Meeting: 1 November 2018

Councillor J.P. King will ask the **Executive Member for Community Wellbeing, Councillor R.H. Ashford** the following question:

Question:

Children's Centres

At the annual council meeting in May, the Leader of the Council indicated that Reigate and Banstead would try and support the Children's Centre providers in our borough, in light of the budget cuts proposed by Surrey County Council.

With the County's consultation being released this week, can the portfolio holder please provide an update on how we've been able to help support the centres, who provide a valuable service to local families?

Response / Observations:

Before dealing with the specific detail of the question I think it's important to stress that the proposed cuts to children's centres are part of wider cuts being proposed across services delivered by Surrey County Council. Technically therefore Reigate and Banstead Borough Council has no remit to interfere in the County's budget proposals. Having said this, we as a Borough are painfully aware that these cuts to children's centres will have a direct impact on our residents. Since our annual council meeting therefore, we have been working together with the children's centres to try to find a solution which brings about the very best outcomes for the Borough's residents.

Since May I have been meeting with our Borough Officers at least every fortnight - sometimes weekly - to keep up to date with the latest information from SCC and there have been a number of developments as Surrey has formulated its wider strategy for county-wide children's services.

Back in July, Borough Officers and I invited the managers of the children's centres here to the Town Hall to listen to their concerns about the cuts and the effects these were likely to have on our residents. The meeting was very positive and I think we all came away with a greater insight into the issues.

At the beginning of September I visited all of the children's centres to meet the managers, look around the facilities and discuss the services being offered to residents. I have to say at this point I was honestly touched by the passion and dedications the individual managers show for the services they and their teams provide to our communities - and they clearly deserve our thanks for this.

Yesterday officers and I met with the children's centre managers again - this time to examine the detail of the public consultation and to discuss the potential for them to work together with each other and the Borough to continue to provide a collective approach to delivering the best possible services to our residents. Our understanding is that the children's centres have recently been invited to arrange individual consultations with Surrey County Council officers. We have therefore encouraged them to engage in this process as soon as possible with a view to meeting with us again in a few weeks for further talks around a plan for delivering the best possible children's centre provision to our residents.

<ends>

Council Meeting: 1 November 2018

Councillor Ms B.J. Thomson will ask the **Chairman of the Planning Committee,**
Councillor S. Parnall the following question:

Question:

Redhill Aerodrome

When can we expect the enforcement for the removal of the unauthorised hard runway at Redhill Aerodrome to happen and why has it taken so long?

Response / Observations:

Councillor Thomson, thank you for asking this question.

As you know, planning permission for retention of the extended taxiway (which is also used as an unlicensed runway), was refused last October - October 2017 that is.

Upon the elapse of the six month window to appeal that decision the Council's Planning Officers contacted the Aerodrome to confirm the Council's intent to commence enforcement proceedings.

The Aerodrome requested that enforcement proceedings be stayed as they intended to submit a revised application to reduce the size of the taxiway and seek to overcome the reasons for refusal of the earlier application. We gave them until September to do so, but sadly a revised application was not forthcoming. Thus our Planning Officers met again with the Aerodrome on 11th October this year confirming the Council's intent to serve an enforcement notice which has been authorised this week and is awaiting formal issue by the Council's solicitors, probably this week or early next week.

The notice gives 15 months for compliance - a reasonable period given the extent of works involved.

I know that this does, on the face of it, seem like an unduly long period to take action. However, Government policy and the Council's Local Enforcement Plan are clear that formal enforcement action should be a last resort. This is partly because enforcement action itself takes considerable time and because alternative resolutions can be quicker, but it is also true that enforcement is a blunt tool. A negotiated position through retrospective planning permission would enable the use of conditions or legal agreements to manage and mitigate impacts which are not possible through enforcement or on appeal of an enforcement notice which, if allowed, would be granted unconditionally.

I understand that the Aerodrome still intends to pursue a further planning application. This is their right, but - of course - any such application would now run in parallel with the enforcement action.

Thank you again for your question.