

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 13 DECEMBER 2018

QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|--|--|
| 1. | Cllr Mrs A.F. Tarrant | Cllr M.A. Brunt, Leader of the Council | Surrey County Council
(Libraries and Cultural Services) |
| 2. | Cllr J.C.S. Essex | Cllr M.A. Brunt, Leader of the Council | Gatwick Airport |

Council Meeting: 13 December 2018

Councillor Mrs A.F. Tarrant will ask the **Leader of the Council, Councillor M.A. Brunt** the following question:

Question:

Surrey County Council – Libraries and Cultural Services

Surrey County Council has begun a county wide consultation which could negatively impact on our libraries and cultural services. Ironically, the questions being asked are very difficult to interpret and there is no information as to what these questions are leading our residents to. Given that once our libraries and the support services they offer are gone they are gone forever, could the Leader of the Council please advise what can be done to ensure our libraries remain open? Thank you.

Response / Observations:

I wholeheartedly agree about the important role that libraries play for our residents and communities, having recently seen the opening of the new Merstham library in my own ward, which is highlighted as a success story in the current Surrey County Council consultation.

This new library, co-located with other community facilities, is a great example of partnership working between the Borough Council and County Council. The new library currently being fitted out in Horley is another good example of where the two authorities have worked together to secure provision of an enhanced library services offer.

However, I also share your frustration about the lack of detail in the current Surrey County Council (SCC) consultation, which has created uncertainty and concern amongst our residents.

We need to recognise the financial challenges that SCC is faced with; but also that there is scope for them to provide services in a more effective and joined up way.

In response to the consultations that are currently underway, I will be writing to the new Leader at the County.

I will make it clear to him that the negative impact of service changes on local residents must be minimised, especially on the most vulnerable of our residents.

But the fact that no final decisions have been made gives us the opportunity to influence what future library provision in the borough looks like.

I will therefore also be asking that the County Council works in close partnership with us as they plan for the future of library provision in Reigate & Banstead, and encourage them to consider innovative delivery models – such as we have seen in Merstham - to ensure that library services to continue to remain easily accessible to all our residents.

Council Meeting: 13 December 2018

Councillor J.C.S. Essex will ask the **Leader of the Council, Councillor M.A. Brunt** the following question:

Question:

Gatwick Airport

Gatwick Airport Ltd is currently consulting on a master plan which includes proposals for use of its emergency runway in the short-term and a second runway in the longer-term. The Airports Commission's final report concluded that with a 3rd runway at Heathrow Airport it would only be possible to stay in the UK's current carbon budget for aviation and shipping if flights from all other airports were to reduce. The International Panel on Climate Change's 1.5C report (October 2018) notes that globally we must dramatically reduce emissions globally in the next 12 years. This would require far stronger carbon reduction targets in the UK. The impacts of Gatwick expansion also include more noise for local residents, more pressure on transport and for housing and other services, air pollution and loss of green open space. There will be significant cost to the public purse, including local authorities. Please confirm that Reigate and Banstead Borough Council objects to Gatwick Airport Ltd's proposals for expansion, and will respond accordingly to the airport's master plan consultation.

Response / Observations:

The Government's Interim Aviation Policy published earlier this year confirmed that it supportive of airports other than Heathrow making best use of their existing runways.

Gatwick Airport's Masterplan consultation includes three scenarios.

- Firstly, making greater use of the existing runway.
- Secondly, using the current standby runway – to the north of the existing runway – routinely for smaller departing aircraft.
- And thirdly continuing to safeguard land for a new runway to the south of the existing runway sometime in the future.

As you would expect, I have considered and discussed these proposals with other Executive members.

The amount of information in the Masterplan consultation is very limited. In our view, is not sufficient for the Council to take an informed view of the impacts (positive or negative) of either the proposal for regular use of the standby runway or of a longer term scenario that sees three operational runways at Gatwick.

We have therefore concluded that we should reserve our position in relation to specific proposals until more information is provided, while also recognising that the continued success of Gatwick Airport is important to our local economy, attracting businesses and jobs for local people.

That said, I agree that our consultation response must emphasise the continuing need for the Airport to invest in reducing the environmental impact of its current and future activities. This includes carbon emissions, air pollution, noise pollution and the impact of increased surface access movements.

More technical detail about the local and global impacts of expansion will need to be provided by Gatwick Airport as part of any future development consent application.

I can reassure you that this Council will fully scrutinise that evidence at the appropriate time to reach an informed and evidence-based position with respect of any proposals for more intensive use of the standby runway or an entirely new runway.