

COUNCIL MEETING – 15 SEPTEMBER 2021

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO
COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14.3**

Q1 Councillor Dixon to the Chair of the Economic Committee, Councillor Cooper

Q1 On 17 June I sent you suggestions from my Group for the work programme of your Committee. I have not even received the courtesy of an acknowledgement. Three months have gone by already - when can we expect these matters to be considered by the Committee?

A1 Councillor Dixon thank you for your question,

On the 17 June 2021 I received your email, the contents were duly noted, I can confirm that it was given consideration by myself and the Vice-Chair and Leader of this Council, Councillor Gunner. The items suggested will filter on to the Committee agenda as and when time allows considering the workload and Officer's availability.

Q2 Councillor Dixon to the Chair of the Planning Policy Committee, Councillor Bower

Q2 On 17 June I sent you suggestions from my Group for the work programme of your Committee. I have not even received the courtesy of an acknowledgement. Three months have gone by already - when can we expect these matters to be considered by the Committee?

A2 I did read the email and I have to say there was nothing in it for me to actually answer. It was a list of suggestions which I read as being the objectives of his Group's Members. On these terms, I was not prepared to enter into a discussion via email on the matter. Under the Committee system, the Chair of a Committee does not have any Executive powers so I cannot dictate to the Committee what its Work Programme should be. This has to be presented to the Committee by the Officers for the Committee to agree. Most of the items that were sent to me in the email will be on the next agenda for the Planning Policy Committee to be held on 6 October 2021.

Q3 Councillor Dixon to the Chair of the Economic Committee, Councillor Cooper

Q3 Your Committee has expressed an aspiration to sell the London Road Coach and Lorry Park.

JRR Tolkien said: "“If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world.”"

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What is the intended use of the money likely to be generated from the sale? Is it for food and cheer and song? Is it for hoarding? Or is there some more serious intent and if so, will you allow the public in on the secret?

A3 Councillor Dixon thank you for your second question.

The option regarding the sale of any land at London Road Coach and Lorry Park has not been determined, the item has simply been brought forward from the October meeting when it was set to be on the agenda to the July meeting, allowing Council officers to explore marketing possibilities for the site to prevent delay as has been the case perpetuated by the previous Liberal Democrat administration, and continues to be the case as we can see by this evening's motion to attempt to rescind the decision taken democratically by the Economy Committee. Delay followed by delay and for what reason is the question I ask myself? Time to make decisions and move forward, I do not subscribe to the position of delay and stifle as it seems you and your Liberal Democrat counterparts would like.

To answer the part of your question regarding any monies that may or may not come from any sale of any Council land. You and other Councillors in this room should be aware that any capital receipt arising from the sale of land would be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Property Investment Strategy 2017-2022 (reviewed by [Audit & Governance Committee in November 2019](#) and revised of Cabinet Recommendation by Full Council on 22 July 2020). *"...50%, of any sale proceeds from land and property disposals, is automatically allocated to the Property Investment Fund..."*

I personally don't get your Tolkien reference, but I am sure that others in this room might.

Q4 **Councillor Coster to the Chair of the Corporate Policy & Performance Committee, Councillor Gunner**

Q4 As Chair and representative of the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee I should be grateful if you would let us know what is the Conservative Group's and therefore your Committee's potential strategy for the restoration of the seriously depleted financial reserves of this Council, resulting from the previous Conservative administration's splashing of most of our reserves, being some £16 million, on a project in Littlehampton. Please do not tell us that this involves any asset-stripping, such as your recent consideration of the sale of the Council's land and property assets.

Please also let us know what quick-win projects are in hand to immediately begin to improve the financial situation, and when these will commence.

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I'm sure I do not need to remind you that your Conservative administration has had two years since the last election to form your strategies and plans, and it is now nearly four months since you took over – and the Covid emergency is no longer a significant obstruction, as it was last year. So there really is no excuse for delay in implementation of the projects you have in mind – that is, if you HAVE any projects in mind. If so, please let us know what they are.

- A4** I do not accept the premiss of the question. The £16 million that this Council prudently spent was in order to invest in the future health and wellbeing of the District in delivering a new Leisure Centre I do not see this as 'splashing of the reserves' this was about the delivery of a vital asset to the residents of this District.