

Questions received under Standing Orders following the despatch of the Council Agenda and not answered at Council

Questions asked by Councillor Mrs. M.D. Lloyd Hayes regarding Bartonsham and adjoining areas Residents Parking schemes to which the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) has now replied as indicated below.

Question: Could Council be advised why implementation of the resident's parking scheme took over 3 years, despite continuous progress meetings between Central Ward Members and officers?

Work on the residents parking scheme for Bartonsham was started in October 1999 with a detailed consultation exercise to establish the views of residents. This was followed up in March 2000 when detailed proposals were presented and again consultation took place with local residents. The results of this consultation led to much discussion with both local Members and the public in order to refine the scheme to provide the best possible scheme for all concerned. This inevitably took some time. The proposals were then subject to statutory advertisement which, not surprisingly for a complex scheme of this type over a wide area, drew a large number of objections. The Council is required to consider these objections, which took further time. The scheme was also slightly delayed in order to avoid any conflict with emerging recommendations from the Bartonsham Residents association local travel project. Local Members were kept informed throughout development of the scheme. Faster implementation of the scheme would have required either less consultation/amendment to reflect local concerns or greater resource from the

Council at the expense of other transportation projects. The Council's priorities, as set out in the Local Transport Plan, would not have supported a transfer of resources to this scheme. Subsequent increases in Local Transport Plan funding have allowed additional staff resources to be provided which might assist future delivery of any similar schemes.

Why was advising residents of details delayed until April 2003 just before the election, causing significant anger, confusion and despair at the Council's ability to deliver services effectively?

Residents were notified of the scheme at the earliest opportunity once the proposals were finalised. Within the resources available, the lead in time after final development of the proposals was kept as short as practicable. I am not aware of any delay brought by your Administration, nor any lack of Council effectiveness in delivering services.

Why no steps were taken to consult the large numbers of residents who were not in occupation when the initial consultation took place in 1999?

It is not possible for the Council to track all changes of residency and so inevitably some new residents will be "missed". Since July 2002, the Council has included details of the Residents Parking Scheme, where relevant, in the reply to the question about agreed traffic schemes in Local Searches. This would not, however, cover rented occupation but any enquiries made to Council about traffic proposals in the area would have acknowledged the parking proposals. As explained above, two area-wide consultation exercises were undertaken with residents. Further general consultation could well have been badly received by those who had already responded. In any event, all current residents were given an opportunity to express their views in response to the statutory advertisements of the legal orders published in the local newspaper.

Why was an experimental order for Residential Parking in a neighbouring area (Zone 5) was completed in months when other residents had waited 3 years?

The need to extend the scheme to cover Meadowbank Road was identified during the consultation & development process. This extension was not contentious and was processed as an Experimental Traffic Order, avoiding the consideration of objections prior to making the order. It nonetheless took nearly a year to implement. Whilst it is hoped that this Experimental Order will be converted to a permanent Traffic Order without further amendment, that order-making process has yet to be completed. It is potentially costly, wasteful and confusing to use Experimental Traffic Orders for large schemes where any changes after implementation could lead to removal/amendments of signs, markings and permits.

Why, above all, have petitions and letters of protest submitted to the authority allegedly remained unacknowledged or otherwise to this day?

Council staffs are not aware of any outstanding correspondence on the scheme and believe that all those who made representations have received a reply. Staff would be happy to receive further details of these allegations so that the records can be checked and any outstanding matters, if found, corrected.

Why were a number of promises made by the Transportation department in April 2003, stating they would respond urgently to residents not honoured, in particular an agreed written communication to residents regarding a review of the scheme within 12 months.

Again, it is believed that all those who made representations have received a reply. I would wish to see further details of any commitment to review the scheme in a particular timescale, as the Transportation Unit has not confirmed this. Residents were informed that the scheme could be reviewed after a suitable time in operation but it would be for the Council to decide that such a review is necessary.

Question asked by Councillors D.C. Short and Mrs. E.M. Bew to which the Cabinet Member (Environment/Planning and Waste Management) has now replied as indicated below.

Is the Chairman (of Planning Committee) aware that the application submitted in respect of changes to the Building and change of use of the building at Wooldridge Court is defective in so far as the proper notification notice was not given to the owners of the site – Herefordshire Council and the owners of neighbouring sites - Herefordshire Council (Scudamore School)?

Will the Chairman give an assurance that no further action will be taken in respect of this application until

- 1. Proper notices have been served*
- 2. Consultation with the site owners has taken place*
- 3. Ward Councillors have been kept properly informed of progress in this matter?*

Furthermore, will the Chairman instruct the Chief Executive to investigate the reason for this error and the apparent secrecy surrounding this extremely sensitive application?

Firstly the planning application is not concerned with a change of use to the building but for detailed alterations to the exterior of the building. No consent is needed for a change of use in relation to either the self contained units of intensively managed and supported transitional housing for single homeless people or for self contained units for people recovering from alcohol misuse.

The contention that the application is defective does not stand up to scrutiny.

Site notices were posted on 28 March with comments to be made by 18th April. Herefordshire Council is the freehold owner of the land with the application site being let to Stonham Housing on a 99 year lease. Stonham Housing constructed and own the building in question. Certificate C required to be served on owners under the terms of Article 7 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 defines “owners” as follows:

“a person having a freehold interest or a leasehold interest the unexpired term of which is not less than 7 years.....” ie Stonham Housing.

The applicants have declared that Stonham Housing as site owners by definition have been properly notified.

Only direct neighbours with a common boundary are required to be notified directly. Lord Scudamore School is too distant from the site to be interpreted as a neighbour.

In addition to the consultations undertaken as part of the application process the Council in its Strategic Housing capacity has been fully consulted through Jane Thomas (Strategic Housing Enabler) and the project is part of the Council's strategic housing programme.

As Ward Councillors you have been kept fully informed regarding the progress of this application and the application file is open for public inspection.

Question asked by Councillor J.P. Thomas to which the Cabinet Member (Environment/Planning and Waste Management) has now replied as indicated below.

When is the recycling of trade waste to be started ?

There are currently no plans to introduce an extensive scheme of recycling for trade waste. Trade waste is open to market competition and businesses can use any licensed contractor they wish, there is no requirement for businesses to use the Council's contractor or services. Commercial waste, overall, has much higher levels of recycling than domestic waste and this is an issue reflected not only locally but at a national level.

The Council has carried out a trial involving the some separate collection of glass from licensed premises but the scheme is currently being reviewed because the savings businesses could make, on landfill tax, do not appear to be a big enough financial incentive to participate. The scheme will be reviewed to take advantage of the much larger forthcoming rises in Landfill Tax which may create a large enough financial incentive for businesses to participate