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Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Department of the Chief Executive

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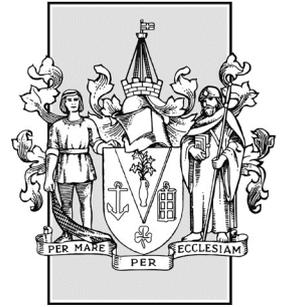
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Dear Councillor

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MONDAY, 9TH JULY, 2018

Please find enclosed, a copy of the questions from members of the public and the relevant responses taken at the Place Scrutiny Committee taking place on Monday, 9th July, 2018,

Yours faithfully

Tim Row

Principal Democratic Services Officer

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS FOR PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
9 JULY 2018

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Question from Mr Webb to the Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities & Wellbeing - Cllr Salter

Question 1:

Please can Southend Council celebrate the 60 years of Westcliff Library by getting every age to represent from 0 to 60 years old and by holding a Summer Tea Party and more events (reading with children and parents, grandparents, character book day) that year with Westborough Community Association and the Ward Councillors?

Answer:

Southend Borough Council will be delighted to support this celebration in 2020 by coordinating a series of community based events for the 60th anniversary milestone. Summer tea party events along with reading together days are already part of the library's annual activities. In 2020 we will plan further activity with community stakeholders and ward councilors.

Question from Mr Webb to the Cabinet Member for Public Protection – Cllr Flewitt

Question 2:

Since April 2017 I have been enquiring through questions about the recycling data. Since April 2017 to June 2018 what has the quarterly figures over this period; has the impact of November unusual recyclables made any impact and what steps is the Conservative Council and Veolia going to put in place to meet the new revised target for 2018/2019 of 46.38% household items recycled?

Answer

The end of year recycling figure achieved by Veolia for 2017/18 was 42.32%. The Council's target for 2018/19 is 46.38% and both Veolia and the Council are very confident that this target will be met. The 'Unusual Suspects' campaign was launched last November and this is already starting to have an impact on tonnages. Veolia have also engaged 3 new Recycling Officers that will be promoting recycling and undertaking household visits across the Borough to encourage householders to recycle. The officers will be particularly focussing on low performance recycling areas to encourage greater participation. A detailed recycling action plan has been completed, that provides specific information on actions that will be taken by Veolia, that will be tracked by the Waste Management Working Party (date is currently being set for its meeting) to ensure it will be delivered and that the recycling target will be achieved, and I as the active Portfolio Holder am confident that we will be back on track with our recycling performance going forward.

Question from Mr A Grubb to the Cabinet Member for Growth - Cllr Courtenay

Question 1

The proposed redevelopment of Queensway

"I understand it is the intention to demolish the four tower blocks which are located with the Queensway site. If I understand correctly, there are about four hundred residential units involved, most I understand are social housing. The intention is to replace the former tower blocks with nine hundred homes. How many of the additional 900 hundred homes will be social housing managed by the council or a social housing provider and will the council be able to withdraw "The Right To Buy" facility from any the new Social Housing created in the development where existing tenants have not been relocated?"

Answer

Mr Grubb is correct, there are currently 441 units on the site, most of which are managed by South Essex Homes. The Council is currently undertaking

a procurement process to secure a partner to fund, develop and manage the new development. Based on the indicative model produced to understand the potential of the site we are expecting bidders to return bids of circa 1300 units, subject to planning. Through the procurement process, the Council is requiring the new development to deliver more than 441 affordable homes, the total number will be determined through the procurement with bidders encouraged to deliver as many affordable units as possible, in balance with the other requirements and aspirations of the development, including the need for a financially viable scheme. These units will be managed through the partnership arrangements put in place through the procurement of a partner. They will not be managed directly by the Council, though we will be part of the new partnership.

The Council has confirmed that existing Queensway tenants wishing to return to the site will be able to do so under equivalent terms and conditions under an assured tenancy. This varies from the current secure tenancies in that secure tenancies can only be offered by a Statutory Housing Authority, i.e. the Council. As the new development will be delivered and managed through a partnership, including the Council, an Assured tenancy is the appropriate tenancy to be applied. This will include retaining the right to buy.

The Council has also required that affordable units, not occupied by existing residents returning to the scheme, must be genuinely affordable with rents at or below Local Housing Allowance levels on a continual basis.

Question: From Mr Grubb to the Cabinet Member for Growth – Cllr James Courtenay

Question 2

The proposed redevelopment of Queensway

“How many of the affordable rented properties will there be and will the stipulation be once they are completed, that the properties be managed by a social housing provider and will only be available to people who live and work within the Southend Borough?”

Answer

I would refer Mr Grubb to my previous response to help answer this question.

The Council is requiring bidders to deliver an increase on 441 affordable units within a financially viable scheme which can secure planning consent. The final total number of affordable units will depend on the preferred bidder selected and the scheme they have developed through the procurement process. I would also refer Mr Grubb to the procurement objectives agreed in the Cabinet report earlier this year for further information. Objectives 1, 6 and 10 all relate to the provision of affordable units with objective 10 prioritising that over other scheme aspirations of 1:1 car parking provision and building heights not exceeding 12 storeys.

All existing tenants on the Queensway estate will have the opportunity to remain in the new scheme. The management of the affordable units under the new partnership forms part of the procurement and the allocation of these units will follow the Local Connection Criteria defined by our Allocations Policy.

Question from Mrs I E Grubb to the Cabinet Member for Growth – Cllr James Courtenay

Question 1:

The proposed redevelopment of Queensway

I understand the proposed development will, once completed will increase the residential units from approx.400 to 1300 residential units.

This will bring additional vehicle parking problems not only to the residents, but also to the surrounding areas.

I understand from an item in the press some time ago, when there was a new housing estate planned elsewhere in the UK, the Council placed upon the planning decision a requirement the only vehicles being allowed to park on the estate would be cars.

No other vehicles, Trade Vans, Mini Buses or other commercial vehicles belonging to the residents or their employers would be allowed to park on the new estate.

Will this be a requirement when this planning application comes before the Council as this will reduce any parking problems at a future date?

Answer:

Based on our modelling, the proposed development is expected to include c1300 units. The Council has undertaken extensive traffic modelling on this basis and has developed a highways design, referred to at this stage as a highways alignment, which would allow for the additional residential accommodation and associated car movements without having a detrimental impact on traffic flows in the town centre.

The Council is currently seeking a partner to fund, deliver and manage the scheme and in its preparatory work has undertaken significant highways modelling and design work to develop a layout which could work with the new development. This has used the Council's tried and tested multi-modal-model which has been the basis on which funding from the Department for Transport has been awarded for other successful highways schemes in the borough. At the end of 2017 the Council undertook a public consultation on the overall regeneration project and the feedback indicated concerns about highways. In response to the feedback the Council agreed to provide the highways alignment and all the traffic modelling information to potential partners for them to consider alongside their own analysis and design a highways alignment as part of their overall scheme. The detailed highways design will be undertaken in discussion with the Council's highways team and the final highways scheme would be considered by Development Control Committee as part of the overall planning application made to the Council as Local Planning Authority and Highways Authority, and thereby considered in the same way as other applications for regeneration schemes in the Borough.

As part of the procurement process the Council has set out a number of minimum requirements which bidders must meet. It has also set out a number of aspirations which bidders, through the process, are encouraged

to aim towards within a financially viable scheme, but these are not absolutes. The car parking ratio is set out as an aspiration at 1-to-1, however it may be that this cannot be achieved within the totality of the scheme. There has been no requirement set out in the procurement documents as to the type of vehicles which may, or may not be able to park there, though bidders are required to develop a planning compliant scheme. A planning consent will be sought by the partnership following the procurement process.

Any application for planning permission will be considered on its individual planning merits against all the relevant material planning considerations. This will include assessing the parking implications of the development and any parking mitigation measures which may be appropriate.

Question from Mrs I E Grubb to the Cabinet Member for Growth – Cllr James Courtenay

Question 2:

The proposed re-development of Queensway

The Government has announced the phasing out of petrol/diesel vehicles from about 2040. With this in mind, will the Council require the developer to install vehicle recharging facilities on each properties which have dedicated parking facilities, before the property is completed and will the Council request the developer to install as standard, triple glazing, use the heat from Bed Rock below the property to heat the property and install solar power for power and hot water?

Answer:

Better Queensway will be brought forward as a partnership between the Council and the preferred bidder, resulting from the procurement process. The Council will therefore have an ongoing role and relationship in the development of the scheme both as partner and as the Planning and Highway Authority.

The Council has undertaken a significant amount of work in regards to energy, environment and the impacts of climate change across its operation and specifically in regards to the Better Queensway project. Relevant information has been made available to bidders to take into consideration.

During the public consultation process at the end of 2017 the Council asked stakeholders about a range of aspects of the Better Queensway project. Environmental sustainability featured strongly in the feedback with responses ranging from the outdoor space – minimising concrete and introducing more green space – to the aspect of homes and the right to light.

This feedback has been reflected in the procurement process. Procurement objectives 7 and 8 refer specifically to the Council’s aspirations in regards to environmental sustainability. Objective 7 states that *“the Council is seeking a sustainable development based on excellent design quality of homes, open spaces and supporting infrastructure delivered in accordance with the Better Queensway Design Policy and Principles document”*. Objective 8 says *“The Council requires the development to be environmentally sustainably delivered both during construction and its lifetime, taking into account the impacts of climate change.”* It is also an intrinsic part of other procurement objectives, such as being planning compliant (objective 11).

As part of the procurement process the Council has set out a number of minimum requirements which bidders must meet. It has also set out a number of aspirations which bidders, through the process, are encouraged to aim towards within a financially viable scheme, but these are not absolutes. The Council has not specified exactly what the energy and environment measures must be so as to drive innovation from the market, encouraging them to design the best schemes and solutions which meet these expectations. It has expressed a strong aspiration for all car park spaces to be pre-wired for electric vehicle charging during construction. The energy efficiency for the construction will be in line with or will exceed the standards required by the Building Regulations which already dictate low energy costs for householders. In respect to the supply and generation of energy, the planning regulations require that at least 10% of the energy consumption of the development must be provided from renewable sources.

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