

## **Council – 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

### **Public Questions**

#### **Question 1 from Maureen Butler to the Leader of the Council**

##### **Question**

A short while ago the area at the end of York road by the High Street was repaved with an oblong bed put in for plants. A week later when my husband and I went to park our car there, we saw two Lorries blocking the whole road with a crane lifting large girders into place to make a pagoda. The following week we parked there again and low and behold everything had gone.

On 6<sup>th</sup> August I sent an email to the leader of the Council to explain to me why the pagoda had been removed as I felt that the cost of this in man hours must have wasted a lot of tax payer's money

Two weeks later, on 21<sup>st</sup> August I emailed Cllr Gilbert again asking why he had not replied to my email, and giving him the opportunity to do so before I brought it to the attention of The Echo. I got a response from him the next day stating that the Pagoda was commissioned as part of the Government funded 'Cool Cities' project. Unfortunately, it drew objections from the business community, so to avoid the money being wasted it has now been relocated to one of our parks. However, he failed to inform me which park it had been erected in.

I have asked 9 businesses surrounding where the pagoda was erected, and none have said they had objected to it, or put in a formal complaint about it.

I therefore do not accept Cllr Gilbert's reason why the pagoda has been removed, which to say the least is a great deal of time and money being wasted.

Perhaps He can now explain how such a faux pas could have happened and inform Council which park it has now been erected in?

I also request that Scrutiny Committee should look into this matter to clarify the situation.

## **Answer**

The pagoda was installed to provide shading as a pilot to help to prevent or limit heat stress to counteract the negative effects of climate change; and was funded by the EU.

The pagoda was erected but some of the parts were incorrectly supplied by the manufacturer and the seating needed some changes. These problems could not be rectified immediately by the manufacturer because of Covid, and the Council responded to complaints received about the pagoda, and health and safety of the equipment, and it was removed to be re-purposed into one of the Council's parks. At present I am unable to confirm the exact location, as possible suitable sites are currently being surveyed.

The purpose of a pilot is to explore different options and this option was reviewed and deemed not to be suitable, the site in the High Street will be replaced later this year with some larger planters with benches at the same location, where trees and various greenery will provide shading to the High Street.

## **Question 2 from David Webb to the Executive Councillor for Environment and Planning**

### **Question**

How many tonnes of pink, black, paper, food, garden has been recycled between 2017 - 2018, 2018 - 2019, 2019 - 2020 and what ways will they raise the lowest recycled figures in the list?

### **Answer**

Tonnes Collected	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Pink Sack (kerbside)	7,484.39	6,805.87	9,226.84
Food waste (kerbside)	4,430.62	4,169.03	4,348.08
Garden waste (kerbside)	5,799.90	6,691.63	6,566.05
Paper/Card (Kerbside)	4,298.06	3,685.64	3,048.40
Black Sack [Residual] (kerbside)	33,816.73	31,922.56	31,331.12

The above table shows the tonnes of pink sacks, food waste, garden waste, paper and card and black sacks collected from the kerbside (from residential properties) over the years requested.

Veolia have recently produced a Recycling Action Plan (RAP) that is currently being discussed with Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. The RAP contains a number of actions proposed by Veolia, which are all intended to support the achievement of the current recycling target of 50%.

### **Question 3 from David Webb to the Executive Councillor for Environment and Planning**

#### **Question**

Who and what is the procedure and time frame it should take to cut down a diseased tree down and will it be replaced with a new tree?

#### **Answer**

Council managed trees are inspected by our Arboricultural Officers who undertake scheduled and unplanned inspection throughout the year. If as a result of an inspection, a tree is found to be diseased the condition of the tree and its likely decline will be assessed. Trees that are diseased will not necessarily be removed immediately, and depending on a number of factors, the tree may be retained for several years.

When it is necessary to remove a tree due to disease, an order is raised with the council contractor. The timescale to complete the work is subject to a number of factors. In some cases, it is necessary to remove the tree immediately on an emergency basis. However, in the majority of cases the work is programmed, and the timing is influenced by a variety of factors such as existing priorities and workload, any requirements for traffic management and other activities in the area.

Completing the work can also be impacted by the presence of parked cars, the need for road closures, parking suspensions, and the requirement to create diversion routes. The presence of nesting birds is also a factor which affects the timing of work.

Any tree which is removed is noted for replanting. This will rarely be in the exact same spot, as is not practical or cost-effective to remove all of the root systems below the ground. Some pathogens will also remain in the soil for some time, which can be detrimental to any newly planted tree.

The council continues to plant trees every winter helping to maintain and enhance the towns canopy cover.

In addition to the ongoing tree planting program, the council committed to planting an additional 1,000 standard trees over a three year period from 2019 and committed the additional funding this requires.

The council is currently updating its tree strategy, which includes approaches to tree removal and planting and is currently available for review and comment on the council's website.

#### **Question 4 from Jonathan Garston to the Executive Councillor for Transport, Capital and Inward Investment**

##### **Question**

Residents in the area of Eastern Avenue are deeply concerned about speeding and dangerous vehicles, especially between Hamstel Road and Sutton Road

Please can the Council and I have an update on safety measures that will be installed and would he support a Traffic Safety Camera?

##### **Answer**

The service has currently commissioned a full investigation to look at the full collision history which result in personal injury (data on accidents where there is no personal injury is not recorded). This investigation will look at all contributory factors and an assessment of whether the current speed limit is appropriate to the nature and construction of the road.

This data will then be used to inform and give the service the information required to bring back to Traffic Regulations Working Party options for consideration in due course.

Liaison with the Safer Essex Partnership is also being explored on the installation of speed cameras.

## **Question 5 from Jonathan Garston to the Executive Councillor for Transport, Capital and Inward Investment**

### **Question**

Please can I have data of recorded speeds along Eastern Avenue between Hamstel Road and Sutton Road?

### **Answer**

Thank you for your question. This information is not held by the council but by Essex Police and we have requested it. As soon as we receive it we will pass it to you.

However; further speed monitoring units were installed on 4 September 2020 just west of Bournemouth Park Road. The results should be available around 18 September 2020 which will be forwarded to you.

## **Question 6 from Andy Atkinson to the Executive Councillor for Environment and Planning**

### **Question**

The public survey consultation into conservation designation in the Hamlet Court area had an exceptionally poor 8 responses and was reported to the Environment & Planning Working Party.

Why has the community survey with 125 responses (now over 200) and 91.5% support for wider conservation designation not be recognised?

## **Answer**

The results of the 'community survey' conducted by the Hamlet Court Conservation Forum were very helpful and were provided to independent heritage experts Purcell (working on behalf of the Council) to help inform their work. The community survey, it should be noted, does not directly relate to the initial report by Purcell. The Council's own survey related directly to the draft report undertaken by Purcell (who are independent and very experienced heritage consultants) that considered the potential for conservation area designation at Hamlet Court Road, giving full consideration to relevant legislation and guidance. The Council also held public drop-in sessions at the Civic Centre in Southend during the consultation period of the draft initial report by Purcell. Following this, having reviewed the Council's consultation responses, the decision was made to progress with a full Conservation Area Appraisal for Hamlet Court Road. That appraisal is being brought before Cabinet later this year, when Cabinet will be able to consider the details of the appraisal being proposed for formal public consultation.

## **Question 7 from Andy Atkinson to the Executive Councillor for Environment and Planning**

### **Question**

In terms of the wider study suggested by consultant's Purcell in assessing the Hamlet Court area for conservation designation what contact has the Councillor had with the new businesses in the area such a Adonia spa, Ramsey Moore estate agents, Frank & Luna's cafe, A Mile and a Third bar – the very companies investing in the future of the road who will be key in helping the economic regeneration in the area?

## **Answer**

As part of the Council's initial public consultation earlier this year on the draft report produced by Purcell, a letter was sent to all properties within the 'blue line' study area. Public drop-in sessions were also held during the public consultation period at the Civic Centre. Representations received during the consultation period, and other relevant information, have been considered as part of the process and it was determined that a full Conservation Area Appraisal for Hamlet Court Road should be produced. Following its consideration at Cabinet later this year, there will be a further round of public consultation during which any interested parties will have the opportunity to comment on the draft Conservation Area Appraisal for Hamlet Court Road.

Businesses investing in Hamlet Court Road is to be very much welcomed and the work the Council is progressing in respect of Conservation Area designation will help to support that investment. However, it must also be recognised that decisions on whether or not to designate a conservation area and the extent of any conservation area designation, needs to be taken only on the basis of conservation and heritage (architectural or historic interest) grounds. The extent to which companies choose to invest in an area is not of direct relevance to the conservation area designation process.