

Appendix A to the Council Minutes – 21 July 2021

Item 6 – Questions from Public

No public questions were received.

Item 12 – Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the Chamber that 1 question to the Leader had been received and 5 questions to Cabinet Members.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

1. **Question 1 was withdrawn.**

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO CABINET MEMBERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS APPOINTED TO REPRESENT THE COUNCIL ON A JOINT COMMITTEE

1. **From Councillor Byrne to Councillor Coxshall**

Plan 3 for Stanford Station has no provision for Buses as previous plans explain why please?

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall

Councillor Coxshall

It's a great question and to ensure we make the best available space and given the best passenger experience provision for the interchange for bus services will be provided outside the station area and as part of the wider masterplan for the zone.

Mayor

Councillor Byrne do you wish pose a supplementary question.

Councillor Byrne

Yes please. Will you give a written guarantee written in stone that the second phase will have a bus provision and parking as promised? That Stanford residents are thinking that the land will be sold for development, they are not going to get their parking and DP will keep their money. Can you write it in stone for us please?

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall

Councillor Coxshall

I can promise you that we will deliver the parking spaces my conservative colleagues across Stanford have had 10 years of misery for lack of spaces in the town centres. This government wants to town centres back, live and running and we must now get Stanford back on the market for people wanting to open their business here and walk there and we need parking spaces there. We need cars, people still need cars we need to deliver that. So the parking spaces are a 100% guarantee. For the wider area needs a master plan and that what's happened over the last year we really do need to get that and the bus interchange has got to happen somethings got to stop, those buses stopping that road when the barrier goes down, 20 minutes of misery of sitting people there. We've all done that, sat there and we can solve that by the interchange, the interchanges is really important as part of it but I think first of all we need to get phase 1 which went through last week, I'm really really glad that did to get a station, state of the art, new station there and that will be part of the wider regeneration there of all our stations, Grays station we've done last month we got really good news this week, last week, Tilbury station, Purfleet station is moving so that means that all of our stations under this administration will be refurbished and new stations across it to get C2C back into London and Stanford one of the most important ones and will be the first to be delivered.

Mayor

Councillor Byrne do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor Byrne

Yes please madam mayor can you explain how it is possible to spend a mind blowing £11 million on consultation on other fees to be able to build a £9.6 million station that is more than the actual build itself and your actually delivering less facilities. How can you possibly spend more money on consultancy than on the actual build? Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Coxshall

Councillor Coxshall

In this day and age it is frustrating, it annoys me as a conservative to make to do this and it does frustrate me that professional fees are going through the roof. What we do need to do, we are discussing this later, we need to sort these planning bills out and planning acts to make sure this is the problem we have got motion earlier we continuously have to and businesses and another

councils are no different to any other business, if you look at the cost of the professional fees on these sites and whether it is a public building or private buildings they are too high, professional fees are too high but that's because of the system that we have to go through, the hoops we have to jump for every public body and I'm glad this government is looking at that and we are discussing that in a minute with the Planning Act but part of that is to remove and reduce the burden of professional fees and get more money spent on buildings and that's why I want to deliver and I'm glad that this conservative government is doing that.

2. From Councillor Muldowney to Councillor Mayes

Residents contact me daily with their concerns about primary health care in Chadwell. They report waiting for hours to get through to their GP surgery and lack of appointments once they do get through. Can the Portfolio Holder tell the Chamber what conversations or meetings he has been having with health partners to help drive improvements in primary health care?

Mayor

Councillor Mayes

Councillor Mayes

Thank you madam mayor. Thank you councillor for your question. Lots of residents have raised issues with access to primary care and I know the conservative councillor for Chadwell raised this with me a few weeks ago and in regards to Chadwell surgery. Quite frankly it is struggling with the current climate as you can imagine and wasn't great beforehand. What I have done is I've raised this primary care access issue and a number of recent discussions with health partners including the Thurrock CCG. Most recently I discussed this specifically with Rahul Chaudhari, he is the CCG Director of Primary Care, on Monday 5th July. He advised that primary care is currently experiencing an unprecedented challenge in terms of patient demand plus also staffing capacity challenges as they continue to roll-out the Covid vaccination programme as well as providing the usual care. We suggested that some communications for local residents might be useful, including on alternative sources of care and advice where appropriate including the use of the 111 health scheme which will also allow triage of people as they come through. The current challenges are primary care access have also been discussed at some length at Thurrock Integrated Care Partnership Board in recent weeks and are being picked up by the MSE Health & Care Partnership.

Mayor

Councillor Muldowney do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor Muldowney

Yes thank you madam mayor and thank you for your reply Councillor Mayes. I am very concerned about access to GPs in Chadwell over the last year there's been at least two cases of elderly residents ending up seriously very seriously near death ill because they could not get treatment from their GP. Chadwell residents have since heard that the opening of the Tilbury integrated medical centre may mean the closure of both Chadwell surgeries. Can you reassure Chadwell residents that the opening of the new Tilbury integrated medical centre will not result in GP surgeries being moved out of Chadwell.

Mayor

Councillor Mayes

Councillor Mayes

Thank you councillor, obviously the effects of COVID have meant that residents are either concerned to come forward and basically there's been a bit of a lag in the system because of the isolation period. The Thurrock Tilbury and Chadwell IMC will be obviously for that area and servicing the whole of Thurrock as well. There will be surgeries that will move into there as was highlighted in the HOSC meeting recently however what surgeries they are will be down for the healthcare professionals to decide not this council. Thank you.

Mayor

Councillor Muldowney do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor Muldowney

Thank you madam mayor. I would. I'm afraid that's not good enough. You're the portfolio holder for health promises have been made that the new integrated medical centres will improve GP services and now Chadwell potentially faces less services with a much greater distance to travel. Please will you meet as a matter of urgency to discuss how more immediate improvements to GP services can be made and go back to health partners to gain reassurances that the new Tilbury integrated medical centre will not mean that primary healthcare will be moved further away from Chadwell residents.

Mayor

Councillor Mayes

Councillor Mayes

Thank you madam mayor. Thank you for that. I'm not sure where you got that information from. I would be happy to meet with anybody who comes forward

as I did with the conservative councillor of Chadwell and also Councillor Van Day. Anybody that comes forward with an issue with primary care I would be more than happy to speak to as it does quite frankly affect all of our residents and shouldn't be political however it is sad that the only people that actually come to me directly are my conservative colleagues so I'll be happy to meet if request and thank her very much.

3. From Councillor Muldowney to Councillor Jefferies

Given the recent vandalism of graves and other antisocial behaviour in Chadwell cemetery, will the Portfolio Holder now agree to resume locking the cemetery gates after dark?

Mayor

Councillor Jefferies

Councillor Jefferies

Thank you madam mayor, thank you Councillor Muldowney for your question. The pedestrian gates that provide access to the walkways throughout the borough cemeteries have not been locked for several years. Additionally the vehicle gates have also remained unlocked for over 18 months. This has provided access to our cemeteries for those visiting the sites with mobility limitations, with no restrictions on visiting times. It would appear that leaving the vehicle gates open has not attributed to this incident occurring as the pedestrian gates remained open for several years prior to this without any incident. In relation to this particular incident the Police and the officers from the council have been liaising to discuss the matter further and as I said in conversation with the newly elected councillor for Chadwell, just recently, this form of anti-social behaviour is clearly both very unsettling and unacceptable but thankfully it's very rare. Most members of the public are respectful when visiting their loved ones in our cemeteries.

Mayor

Councillor Muldowney do you wish to pose a supplementary question.

Councillor Muldowney

Thank you madam mayor. I would. We've just heard how £109,000 was spent on the bin sites for waste during the bin strike some of that money was spent on security who were there to watch the gates. I think the Council needs to take some responsibility for the security of where our borough's loved ones rest and that make sure they lie in peace. I expect we would all like to leave our houses or car doors unlocked but we know that we can't, the argument that some gates have never been locked doesn't wash, and maybe they haven't but may be now they should. Given the recent problems, at least after dark. If you will not commit to locking the gates at night or providing security

will the portfolio holder agree to install CCTV in the cemetery so that the Police might have some hope of catching the culprits in "future?"

Mayor

Councillor Jefferies

Councillor Jefferies

Thank you madam mayor. Thank you Councillor for your question. As I've just said in my answer to the previous question these incidents are incredibly rare, totally unacceptable but very rare. Over the last 18 months when the vehicle gates have been open and for a lot longer period of time the pedestrian gates have been open they are very rare so I will really don't think you could really justify saying we need CCTV or we need security guards. Most people when visiting our cemeteries respect these areas. Are considerate to everybody and again I repeat these incidents are pretty rare but should always be condemned.

Mayor

Councillor Muldowney do you wish to pose a second supplementary question.

Councillor Muldowney

Yes thank you madam mayor. Although it has been denied recently I have received an email from March which says quite clearly this change was made to save on overtime pay not just for our residents with mobility problems to access the cemetery which of course I'm in favour of. I was also told that if anti-social behaviour reoccurred the council would be happy to review its decision not to lock the gates so I call on you again please - your willing to spend money watching waste sites, your willing to you know you're willing to not to install CCTV so that the Police can actually have a chance of catching culprits. This was a really really bad act of vandalism and a lot of residents not just in Chadwell but from all around the borough are really upset about this and have been writing to me. Please will you agree to meet with me to see if we can find a way to improve the security not just on Chadwell cemetery but all our cemeteries in the borough?

Mayor

Councillor Jefferies

Councillor Jefferies

Thank you councillor, the council makes reference to the £109,000 spend on bin sites we wouldn't have actively had to spend that money if the Thurrock Labour party did not support a politically motivated strike. To try and get votes - it failed. Councillor Carter is proof of that, the new councillor for Chadwell so perhaps the group opposite might like to look at their policies towards these

things not supporting a politically motivated strike wouldn't have the cost the council money. As for the cemeteries, I have a cemetery in my own ward, the gates aren't locked people have, see everything is falling down over there even the walls, is that there at the red wall calling. In my own ward – are you going to stop clapping and let me finish my answer - actually if you look through all these papers its Councillor Muldowney, Councillor Muldowney is it because she's up for elections next year and she's worried that Councillor Carter will actually win again.

4. Question 4 was withdrawn.

5. Question 5 was withdrawn.