

## Appendix A to the Council Minutes – 25 March 2015

### **Item 6 - Questions from Members of the Public.**

6 questions were submitted from members of the public.

#### **1. From Mr Goddard to Councillor J. Kent**

*Could he explain why we did not get the Harris Academy Free School, after so much publicity regarding the possibility of it being built for 2015?*

#### **Mayor**

Mr Goddard has provided notice that he is unable to attend the meeting this evening to ask his question in person and so a written response will be provided.

#### **2. From Mr Bridge to Councillor J. Kent**

*With reference to the proposed set up of the parish council on the frost estate in Corringham do you think it's fair just to move forward with this proposal when a large part of the estate, which includes older persons, who haven't a clue as to what is going on. Can you tell me how this is fair?*

#### **Mayor**

*The Mayor confirmed that Mr Bridge was not in attendance at the Public Gallery.*

A written response will be given to Mr Bridge.

#### **3. From Mr Guthrie to Councillor J. Kent**

*In relation to the Frost Estate Neighbourhood Council consultation, out of 715 forms that were sent out only 540 were returned. 380 voted YES but 156 voted NO. 179 did not vote. This is not an election or some union vote. If the parish council is approved it will cost every resident extra on their council tax and they will become bound to something that they may not want. The fact that 156 residents voted NO and a further 179, who did not vote, (who may not want to be part of the Frost Estate Neighbourhood Council), is too many to have this forced upon us. Do you think that it is right a decision could be made this evening to set up the Frost Estate Neighbourhood Council when the Council has not received responses from all residents affected on the Frost Estate?*

#### **Mayor**

Mr Guthrie has provided notice that is he unable to attend the meeting this evening to ask his question and so a written question will be provided.

**4. From Mr Perrin to Councillor Worrall**

*In your much lauded "Housing" report to Council on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2015, you state "Increasing number of residents happy with the quality of repair carried out – an increase from 76% in April, 2014 to 81% in October, 2014, whilst remaining at over 80% in each of the past five months". Can you tell me how the figures were calculated, were they based on the total number of repairs carried out or on the actual number of satisfied/dissatisfied replies received?*

**Councillor Worrall**

Satisfaction figures are calculated based on the total number of actual satisfied/dissatisfied responses received.

This year to date 3,525 responses have been received this represents 34% of all our tenants.

The independently assessed results are based on a five point scale (Excellent, Good, Poor, Fair and Terrible), with the top responses (Excellent and Good) counting as satisfied.

In the last month the rating provided by our residents was 87% good to excellent, which takes our overall year to date rating to over 85%. This shows that according to the residents who receive the service we continue to improve our repairs and our repairs partner is now Mears.

Thank you Mr. Perrin I hope that answers your question.

**Mayor**

Thank you councillor Worrall, Mr Perrin do you wish to propose a supplementary question?

**Mr Perrin**

Thank you Mr Mayor I was going to propose a supplementary but in view of the fact that you've already stated that you have a large agenda and this is the last meeting before the council closes for election period I will postpone my question to another day.

**5. From Karen Barker to Councillor J. Kent**

*Does the Council feel happy to proceed with this proposal, given that the majority of residents have not been kept fully informed or made fully aware of the legalities and implications of creating a Parish Council, nor have they been asked to attend meetings held since the process began?*

## **Mayor**

Ms Barker has also provided notice that she is unable to attend the meeting this evening to ask the question and so a written response will be provided.

### **6. From Mr Gorham to Councillor J. Kent**

*Good evening to you, this is in regards to the proposed parish council that we will discussing later on this evening on the frost estate in Corringham my question is as follows: Within the Frost Estate, the road "Lampits Hill Avenue" has already been adopted and is maintained by Thurrock Borough Council. Does the Council feel it is acceptable that residents of this Avenue will be expected to contribute towards the Parish Council, and ultimately receive very little in return? And to a lesser extent, residents of Chamberlain Avenue who have already addressed problems with their road, by paying for new roads to be laid?*

#### **Councillor Kent**

If created, and it is an if, the new parish council would be a completely separate Council and legal entity and would not be subject to Thurrock Council's control – however it is my understanding that should the parish council succeed in purchasing the private roads from the official receiver and then succeed in acquiring an ability to use the general power of competence it could seek to repair the roads – this does not mean using any of its powers to precept for the cost of such maintenance whilst ignoring the obligations or the pre-existing discharge of those obligations by the frontagers – to do so I am advised would be challengeable.

## **Mayor**

Mr Gorham, do you wish to pose a supplementary question?

### **Mr Gorham**

I do yes. The Frost Estate Committee has suggested that this Council's resident's such as Lampits Hill Avenue and Chamberlin Avenue etc could be done on the precept. Does the Council not feel that this would cause a lot of arguments between residents of the estate? And would there be a possibility of deferring this decision so that we could ask residents of the different streets to be included or if they wish to be excluded from the parish council?

#### **Councillor Kent**

Thank you Mr Mayor I don't particularly want to kind of pre-empt the debate we are going to have this evening but it is clear to me that there is a sizeable chunk of the frost estate that is not content with the proposal as it stands. I don't know whether a Parish Council has the power to stand down part of its precept for some residents or others. I just don't know whether that is possible or not. I don't know whether during this process it will be possible to

rewrite or redraw boundaries of the possible parish council. I do hear what you say about deferring the decision, and I have circulated a possible amendment for later to that effect – that we would defer the decision so that a public meeting can be held at which we would provide council engineers, council legal staff, council finance staff, democratic staff to try and answer the questions that people clearly still have. We are advised that to do so wouldn't put back the potential start date of the parish council as you couldn't hold elections until May 2016 anyway. I think we will debate that later so I can't give an absolute answer but I think I do hear what you say about possible deferment and I hope that is of some comfort.