

COUNCIL - 25 July 2024

Member Questions

From Cllr Mann to Lead Member for Community Cohesion

"Can the Lead Member please details what meetings he has had, and with whom in relation to the community cohesion aspect of his portfolio. Given the widely reported concerns raised during the general election campaign of the impact on community cohesion, what steps did he takes during the campaign to provide leadership on this front, and what does he propose to prioritise in the coming weeks."

Reply

Thank you, Cllr Mann, for your important question regarding community cohesion during the general election campaign. I appreciate the opportunity to address these concerns.

Firstly, I would like to say that the responsibility for cohesion within our community lies with us all, and each and every service and Member of the Council will have a role to play in this area.

As the Lead Member responsible for Leisure, Sports, Culture, and Community Cohesion, I have taken several steps to ensure we maintain and strengthen community bonds. Here's a summary of my actions and plans:

Meetings and Engagements:

1. On 2nd May, I had my first introductory meeting with the directorship as part of the onboarding process for the new cabinet.
2. Prior to this meeting, I participated in the LGA training workshop to quickly get up to speed with my responsibilities.
3. On 23rd May, I joined a meeting with the directorship focused on Public Health, which has overlapping elements with my portfolio.
4. I also had a meeting with the Culture and Community Cohesion executive in May and follow up with various Assistant Directors.
5. Regular bi-weekly and monthly meetings have been established to ensure ongoing communication and progress.
6. I have attended numerous events and met with various community faiths and groups and have tried to listen to their concerns and build trust.

I am continuing to learn about relevant programmes across the council, community safety for example and have an ongoing programme of briefings planned.

Campaign Leadership:

During the campaign, although I had pre-planned leave (before snap election were called out) to perform a pilgrimage and I was away for most of June but where possible I ensure to get regular updates and reports on Slough's situation. I am

actively looking into maintaining communication with community leaders to understand and address their concerns.

What I offer or Priorities Moving Forward:

1. I propose our MP to prioritise rebuilding of trust with all communities and faiths in Slough.
2. I am committed to facilitating discussions with community leaders to address concerns and promote unity both on domestic and internal humanitarian issues which I believe is key in this.
3. I propose our MP to bring necessary investments for the betterment of Slough's development as well as to address the funds for the community needs and foster cohesion.
4. In near future I will be meeting various faiths groups to encourage and promote unity in Slough.
5. The Director of Public Health and the new Director of Strategy will be working together with me to explore this in more detail to strengthen our work and engagement across Slough to promote and build community cohesion, so that Slough continues to offer a sense of belonging for all and positively values diversity.

I hope this provides a clear and concise answer to your question. Thank you.

From Cllr Anderson to Lead member for Environment, Environmental Services and Open Spaces

“Please provide a summary of all the cost breakdowns for the food waste caddy program, including unit cost, total cost, cost per annum, cost of collection vehicle, carbon cost, disposal cost, transport cost, and expected tonnage reduction.”

Reply


Thank you, Councillor Anderson, for your question, there are 5,050 household properties in the pilot.

- 5,100 – 23 litre caddies @ £6.68 per caddy. £34,068 (capital)
- 5,100 – 7 litre caddies @ £1.45 per caddy. £7,395 (capital)
- Supply of collection vehicle and operatives - £850 per day. £221,000 (all-inclusive cost staff vehicle etc)
- Disposal of food waste - £10 tonne (based on current disposal of 5 tonnes per week) £2,500.

The caddies have been purchased using the DEFRA capital grant.

We are not able at present to give any indicative costs for conducting borough wide food waste collection. A cabinet report will be prepared for early 2025 when the pilot will have been operating for over 6 months and we have actual data. Food waste collections are likely to become mandatory by March 2026

Carbon costs – carbon data for pilot to date

Vehicle	Emissions ▲	Avg. Emissions	Distance
DU688BV		1,425 kg 1.209 kg/km	1,179 km

- Disposal costs – disposal costs for the pilot is £10 per tonne . The cost of residual waste for disposal is £120 per tonne so a saving of £110 per tonne of food waste collected. The more we collect in the pilot the bigger the saving will be.
- Expected tonnage reduction - National data indicates between 40% to 50% reduction in residual: waste tonnage for authorities operating food waste collection. We need to let the food waste trial run a few more months before we can start to analyse and forecast tonnage differences in Slough as a result of the introduction of food waste collection in the pilot areas.

I hope this clarifies your question, thank you.

From Cllr Matloob to Lead Member for Environment, Environmental Services and Open Spaces

"Can you advise on progress with the Environmental Hit Squad, what have been the achievements as visibly I cannot see any improvements so could you highlight what's been achieved?"

Reply

Thank you, Councillor Matloob, for your question,

Improvements in Chalvey specifically as the pilot area, included resurfacing of the highways, fly tip clearance, street cleansing and grounds maintenance and road markings.

Further plans are being made to address identified hot spots across the borough.

A dedicated fly tip crew has been established, launched back in June, and is collecting on average over 10 tonnes of reported illegal fly tipping incidents per week and is collating data on type of loads and hot spot areas.

I hope this clarifies your question, thank you.

From Cllr Gahir to Lead Member for Environment, Environmental Services and Open Spaces

"In the full council meeting, information was given that Slough Borough Council has appointed an environmental hit squad. Can you please tell us the exact number of people that are in that squad, how much it is costing the taxpayers and how long does the council expect the scheme to be working as the council is better of installing mobile spy cameras on hot spot areas."

Reply

Thank you, Councillor Gahir, for your question,

The Hit Squad consists of officer from across several disciplines working together as part of a cross council team to address environmental problems This consists of the following:

- 2 x officers from highways
- 2 x officers environmental services
- 2 x officers' enforcement
- 1 x housing officer
- 1 x housing regulation officer

Cost is mainly officer time, and all staff have substantive roles.

The dedicated fly tipping team consists of 1 x HGV driver and 1 x operative. They will report all reported fly tips from around the borough. They have no enforcement powers but will look for evidence of origins of the fly tip at each reported incident collected. They operate Monday to Friday.

- 1 x driver - £42,161 (with on-costs)
- 1 x operative - £34,753 (with oncosts)
- Cover for annual leave and sickness - £11,000
- 1 x vehicle - £25,000, and £5,000 for maintenance costs per annum.

Disposal costs at £180 a tonne. Averaging 10 tonnes a week. £93,600 per annum.

I hope this clarifies your question, thank you.

From Cllr Instone to Lead Member for Environment, Environmental Services and Open Spaces

"What is the cost so far of the kitchen caddy trial scheme? How much of this is capital investment in the plastic caddys and what is the additional weekly collection cost? What will be the additional capital cost in rolling the scheme out to all of Slough?"

Reply

Thank you, Councillor Instone, for your question,

Trial is running for a 12-month period, based on 5 days a week for 52 weeks.

5,100 X 23 litre caddies - £34,068 (capital)

5,100 X 7 litre caddies £7,395 (capital)

Supply of collection vehicle and operatives - £850 per day, £4,250 per week.

£221,000 for 12 months

Disposal of food waste - £10 tonne – averaging 5 x tonnes a week at present saving of £110 per tonne

Additional capital costs to roll out borough wide likely to be funded by DEFRA in all or part.

- 4 x 11 tonne food waste vehicles - £480,000
- 36,000 X 23 litre caddies - £240,480
- 36,000 X 7 litre caddies £52,200
- 500 x 240 litre bins for flats - £22,500

I hope this clarifies your question, thank you.

From Cllr Parmar to Council Leader

"What discussions, if any, have taken place between SBC and DWP, regarding the impact on claimant services at Slough Jobcentre as a result of the sale of the Upon Lodge office site. What alternative Jobcentre office accommodation is to be provided for DWP service users in Slough?"

Reply

Thank you, Councillor Parmar, for your question.

The freehold of the building in question is owned by the Council but the DWP have a long lease which has a further 4 years to run so their occupation is unaffected by the sale and one assumes they will review their requirements in Slough over the coming years.

I hope this clarifies your question, thank you.

From Cllr Hulme to Lead member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation

"Will the LM for finance provide the cost of the claims for Travel and Subsistence (including overnight expenses), by officers in FY 23/24"

Reply

Thank you, Councillor Hulme, for your question,

Please see the figures below:

Travel		82,456
Carpark Charges	766	
Congestion charges	100	
fuel	741	
Bicycle Allowance	107	
Car Mileage	77,240	
Public Transport	1,708	
taxi fare	153	
Train fare	1,641	
Accommodation & Subsistence		1,632
Accommodation	1,531	
Subsistence	101	
Total		84,088

I hope this information clarifies your question.

From Cllr Mohammad to Lead Member for Environment, Environmental Services and Open Spaces

"Will the LM for environmental services please state the amount spent on street cleaning in the borough in 22/23 and 23/24 and provide the actual budget for 24/25. How many FTE staff were/are employed on street cleaning in the above financial years?"

Reply

Thank you, Councillor Mohammad, for your question,

	Street cleaning budget	Staff Employed FTE
2022/23	£1,536,000	48
2023/24	£1,428,000	24
2024/25	£1,340,000	24

I hope this clarifies your question, thank you.

From Cllr Gill to Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets and Transformation

"I see that on the Cabinet Committee Asset Disposal one of the agenda items is Surplus Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Assets, can you advise what assets are part of this ?"

Reply

Thank you, Councillor Gill, for your question. The assets which were declared surplus to requirement by the HRA are publicly available as part of the Cabinet agenda from the meeting held on 15th July 2023 which is available on the Council website. The link to these can be found here:

[4abcd. F HRA Surplus Assets - July Cabinet - Appendices.xlsx \(slough.gov.uk\)](#)

I hope this clarifies your question, thank you.

From Cllr Escott to Lead Member for Equalities

"Serious concerns were recently raised about allegations of homophobia amongst Conservative councillors. As lead member for Equalities, can you please detail what meetings you have held with LGBTQI+ groups, such as Spectrum since taking up your role, and how as Lead Member you celebrated the recent Pride month in June."

Reply

Thank you, Cllr Escott, for your question. There is no place for homophobia or discrimination of any kind. As Lead Member for Equalities, I am proud of the rich diversity within our communities in Slough, and I will champion this going forward.

The Council promote any relevant events relating to Pride Month and LGBTQ+ matters through internal communications and staff networks.

I hope this clarifies your question, thank you.