

## **COUNCIL MEETING – 25 JULY 2018**

### **Question 1 to be put to Councillor Ross by Councillor Cenci**

**Mayor:** Question 1 was due to be from Councillor Cenci to Councillor Ross, but as Councillor Ross is not present and this relates particularly to him, it has been deferred to the next meeting after consultation with Councillor Cenci.

### **Question 2 to be put to Councillor Jones by Councillor Harsant**

**Councillor Harsant:** Could the Portfolio Holder give an update on the long-awaited signs to be installed on the Orwell Quay?

**Councillor Jones:** I understand from Officers that this question relates to signage on highways and they provided me with this answer.

As we will all be aware responsibility for signage to a restricted byway rests with Suffolk County Council as they are the public right of way authority. However, IBC is aware of the wider issues relating to access along the Waterfront such as anti-social behaviour from motorcycles at the Orwell Quay, and to this end IBC Officers have met with Officers from Suffolk County Council in attempts to resolve the matter and progress the potential erection of signage, but these discussions are ongoing.

**Councillor Harsant:** I'm not sure whether Councillor Jones is aware that ABP have actually located the right places for the signs. The police have also been on the quay with them and with one of the Officers from the County Council, and I wonder Councillor Jones, if you could perhaps contact I think Mr Fulcher is dealing with this now, to see if we could get those signs up fairly quickly while the weather remains so beautiful and the school holidays have started and we're likely to get more and more motorbikes riding up and down the quay causing lots of concerns to lots of people.

**Councillor Jones:** Madam Mayor, I must confess that until this question tonight I was unaware of this issue but I'm very happy to look into it further, but I understand from my relatively brief discussion with Officers on the matter that it's not as straight forward a matter as simply putting the signs up. That there are ramifications to putting them up, ramifications to not putting them up and none of that is simply. However, I'm very happy to meet with Mr Fulcher, with Councillor Harsant and anybody else to resolve the matter.

### **Question 3 to be put to Councillor Rudkin by Councillor Fisher**

**Councillor Fisher:** I welcome the offer of free i-cards to Ipswich children, which is not means-tested, but can the Portfolio Holder explain if the offer is open to all Ipswich children?

**Councillor Rudkin:** The offer is intended to benefit those children who live within or go to a state-funded school within Ipswich, that includes pupil referral units.

**Councillor Fisher:** Could the Portfolio Holder explain if it was a political decision to not include public school children in the same offer.

**Reply by Councillor Rudkin:** I think it is obvious that there are consequences if one makes economic choices about how to spend money in any element of your upbringing of your children and that's perhaps one of them. This is aimed at supporting a wide-range of children in Ipswich. I understand, and I understand you've had correspondence from the Leader of the Council on this, that consultation was taken up with the county council so as to make sure that children, for example who live in Ipswich but go to a school just over the border elsewhere in Suffolk and the PRU children and indeed the home-educated children were also included. And the county council offered very helpful advice about how to contact people and didn't raise any issues of children who might be disadvantaged perhaps through no fault of their own but that of their parents choices.

### **Question 4 to be put to Councillor MacDonald by Councillor Cenci**

**Councillor Cenci:** Having visited flats in Chesterton Close to find the stairwell areas dirty and a main door coming off its frame as well as windows in need of repair, could the portfolio holder advise if the Ipswich borough standard for council homes is still being upheld?

**Councillor MacDonald:** Thank you for the question Councillor Cenci. The Ipswich standard for council homes is being upheld. The windows in these flats and the main doors are well within their life-cycle period and any repairs reported by tenants are dealt with through the response of the repair system.

The cleaning frequency of communal areas to these flats is going to be doubled going forward after a review of the operation of the community caretakers so that we should see more cleaning in that particular area.

To pick up on your point about the doors, I'm told that there's an issue with the UPVC doors because they expand slightly when it's very hot and we occasionally get problems with the control system but that's not something that we experience very often in these parts.

**Councillor Cenci:** This was actually only when it first started to get hot, but my question then would be, because as the stairwell was just so filthy, what

checks have we got in place in between checking that the caretakers are doing what needs to be done and not just doing a sweep up, and a regular review of windows and doors are checked. I'd quite like to know what the process is, please, and I don't mind if that's in writing actually.

**Councillor MacDonald:** In terms of checking windows, the Ipswich Standard is of course written down in black and white, and who knew that chimneys had a 57 year cycle for maintenance checks. But there is all that about UPVC windows and when they get checked.

The responsibility for checking that the caretakers are doing their work is down to the supervising staff of the caretaking service and again, up to their line manager who is one of the operations managers within the housing department. If you've any complaints you can bring it up with Ian Blofield, who's the Head of Service.

Pledge visits have been made, as I call pledge visits for cleansing in January and again they've been checked since your question came in to make sure everything is ship-shape and we believe they are okay just at the moment.

#### **Question 5 to be put to Councillor P Smart by Councillor Reynolds**

**Councillor Reynolds:** Following Ben Gummer successfully stopping the dock noise a few years ago, who will now take this up for residents in several wards who are complaining that the noise has started up again and is having a detrimental effect on people as far afield as Sprites/Gipping/Bridge/Stoke and even Holywells?

**Councillor Smart:** Noise problems need to be reported to the same people who have dealt with it previously and who will continue to deal with it and that is the Environmental Health department at Ipswich Borough Council so that these complaints can be addressed.

People can get in touch with the council by a number of ways. There's the borough council's website; there's a phone number to ring in Office hours which is Ipswich 433115; or out of office hours by phone 433444.

Over the last year we have had fewer than one report a month in relation to noise allegedly connected with the Port and even then it's turned out that the number didn't in fact relate to noise from the Port at all. For example we had two that related to the adjacent sewage works.

The only complaints that I've had about noise in my inbox, comes from people worried about traffic noise that's likely to be generated by Mr Gummer's misbegotten wet dock bridge scheme.

**Councillor Reynolds:** Very clever distraction at the end there, but I will stick to the question. The council may well have only have had one complaint per

month but our excellent councillor for Stoke Park has had many more than that and that is why it's a serious issue.

What I would like to know is, not the telephone number that a resident would contact but what would actually happen if the noise levels do persist. Could we look at possible hour restrictions on operations or even decibel limits if needed.

**Councillor Smart:** Well, I would encourage any councillor who has had complaints to take them up with the council using the methods I've described or by email to the relevant officer. And by all means copy them to the relevant portfolio holder which incidentally is that for Public Protection rather than myself because the council can only act on the complaints that it receives, not by those that are necessarily filtered out by others who may have had complaints.

So I'll talk about the complaints that we have had. The ten complaints of noise from the Port relating to several locations, seven of these were unsubstantiated and two related to the sewage works as previously described. In relation to the other complaint, we are currently working with Associated British Ports to address a low drone noise. This has included servicing machinery, installing sound-proofing and replacing machinery parts, and this work is ongoing.

The Environmental Protection Team deal with noise nuisance on behalf of the council. Officers are able to provide advice or assistance and residents concerned by noise nuisance need to contact the team who will endeavour to visit and witness the noise

### **Question 6 to be put to Councillor Meudec by Councillor Phillips**

**Councillor Phillips:** Myself, Cllr Carnall and Cllr Ross attended an Army Engagement Event back in May. Will this Council consider actions it can take to promote our local Suffolk Army Cadet Force, to give our young people the option of such opportunities, and make Ipswich Residents more aware and proud of our local military connections?

**Councillor Meudec:** What this council would be happy to further promote are local cadet force and Ipswich's proud links to the military. So if Councillor Phillips has ideas about how this could be done I'd be very grateful if he would share them with me.

**Councillor Phillips:** Thanks Councillor Meudec for that answer, yes I do have an idea which is my next question, so would you agree that it would be good to have more cadet units in schools? I full accept that that is the control of the county council in terms of education establishments, but I think this council should be working with the relevant education officers and councillors across the road at Suffolk County Council to encourage more cadet units in schools, so would you agree that that's something we should do?

**Councillor Meudec:** Well are you asking the council's view, or my own view? I'm not 100% sure. But, what can I say. This is a different approach using military options, feels such a different approach to support young people. Now it can work and it may not work so I would like to see the full initiative and then maybe then the council might see whether we could welcome this new initiative that Councillor Phillips is suggesting.

### **Question 7 to be put to Councillor P Smart by Councillor Hall**

**Councillor Hall:** The cut in no. 16 bus service to once an hour has caused residents in Stoke Park several issues resulting in less use of the hourly service. Can the portfolio holder give assurances that IBC will look to subsidise this service, as it did in other areas, if the Operator withdraws completely?

**Councillor Smart:** As Councillor Hall knows Service 16 also operates through my own Ward at Bridge, so I have an interest in making sure that this Service continues. As he is aware, Service 16 is operated on a commercial basis and as such any changes to the frequency, route, timetable or fares for this service are a decision for the operator to make.

The council is not aware of any plans for this service to be withdrawn but certainly if any service in Ipswich is withdrawn and if Suffolk County Council as the public transport authority don't themselves act, then I'd certainly ensure that we continue to support this service as we have others.

### **Question 8 to be put to Councillor Rudkin by Councillor Lockington**

**Councillor Lockington:** Can I ask the Portfolio Holder to outline how many and where, extra sessions for the young ICard Holders will be put on during this summer holiday compared with last summer holiday?

**Councillor Rudkin:** By increasing our programme this year we've increased - we've created 1200 more places on the activities at our sports centres, which is a 33% increase on last year. We know that many summer holiday ICard holders will want to make use of the swimming pools and we have capacity in the public swimming sessions at our pools for over 100,000 people to go swimming over the school holidays.

In addition, we've increased the number of different activities in our Jumper for Goal Posts park activities from 64 to 156 this year, which increases the number of possible participants by some 2,200. As well as firm favourites of football, basketball and tennis, we've added some extra fun on inflatables, a climbing wall, bubble football (I've no idea what that is), battle zone archery (sounds like one for Councillor Ross doesn't it), bazooka ball and extreme dodge ball, which is something I do know about because one of my sons is a University Ranked player in that.

**Councillor Lockington:** Will the Sports Centres and the Swimming Pools keep a record of which activities are most popular and also a list of where, if where possible, they have had to turn youngsters away, given that some of the activities has to sort of be booked beforehand, so that we, for next year, might know where to put on extra sessions and where not to do it.

**Councillor Rudkin:** Indeed, we will be keeping a record of everything that's popular. I'm not entirely sure that bubble football will be top of anybody's list next year. It might be a new thing that people are doing, but we will absolutely use this as an opportunity to gain more information and hopefully to build on the fact that the cards are free this summer but there are other family members who might want them. We'll be using this as a great opportunity to engage with all our families and young people in particular to provide what they want, and what's popular for them.