

## COUNCIL – 17 NOVEMBER 2022

### QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1.	<b><u>Question submitted by Councillor Prendergast to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Ian Maher)</u></b>
	<b>Subject: DBS Checks</b>
	Given that this Council has rejected the option of mandatory DBS checks for all Elected Members, can the Leader of the Council please explain how he and his administration are going to ensure that this Council is complying with its obligations under the Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022?
	<b>Response:</b>
	<p>“Candidates standing for election must formally consent to their nomination in writing. The content of the consent to nomination form is fixed by law and the entire form must be returned to the Returning Officer in order for their nomination to be valid. On the form, the candidate is asked to state that they are qualified and not disqualified from standing.</p> <p>The full range of disqualifications are attached to the consent to nomination form. It is the responsibility of the candidate to check that they are not disqualified before submitting their nomination papers. They must be sure that they are not disqualified as it is a criminal offence to make a false statement on their nomination papers as to their qualification for being elected. The Returning Officer is unable to confirm whether or not a candidate is disqualified.</p> <p>Prior to the implementation of the Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022 the Council did not undertake any checks to make sure that a member continued to be qualified to hold office pursuant to s.80 Local Government Act 1972 (<i>has within five years before the day of election or since his election been convicted of any offence and has had passed on him a sentence of imprisonment [whether suspended or not] for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine</i>) so practice going forward will be consistent with previous practice.</p> <p>Legal proceedings can be brought against a person if they continue to act as a member when disqualified from doing so.”</p>
2.	<b><u>Question submitted by Councillor Prendergast to the Cabinet Member for Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough)</u></b>
	<b>Subject: Cycle Lanes</b>
	Can the Cabinet Member please explain at what point does a temporary cycle lane become a permanent cycle lane?
	<b>Response:</b>
	“A temporary cycle lane becomes a permanent cycle lane if and when a decision is made to make it permanent.”

3.	<b><u>Question submitted by Councillor Evans to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Ian Maher)</u></b>
	<b>Subject: Video-Streaming Council Meetings</b>
	<p>In November 2019, Council passed the following resolution:</p> <p><b>Video-Streaming Council Meetings</b></p> <p>The council agrees, in principle, subject to cost and having regard to current budget restraints, to the video-streaming of council meetings in accordance with the drive towards more open *inclusive* and transparent government with recordings to be archived and made available on the Council's website.</p> <p>Furthermore we should explore the possibility of making available sign language and subtitles so we can be as accessible to as wide a range of our residents with their additional needs as possible.</p> <p>Can the Leader of the Council, or an appropriate Cabinet Member, please update us on progress and when we can expect to see video-streaming implemented?</p>
	<b>Response:</b>
	"Officers have explored options to implement full video streaming facilities in both Town Halls, however, the estimated cost of circa. £100,000 has proved prohibitive."
4.	<b><u>Question submitted by Councillor Shaw to the Cabinet Member for Education (Councillor Roscoe)</u></b>
	<b>Subject: School Budgets</b>
	<p>The Cabinet Member will no doubt be aware that within the last month the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) has warned that 90% of schools are in danger of running out of money by the next academic year, unless the Government increases funding to meet inflationary pressures.</p> <p>Like many Sefton Borough councillors I am a school governor and I know that the NAHT's warning is very far from being "scare-mongering". Massively increased energy costs are a factor. However, the biggest issue is that both the Teachers pay increase (from September 2022) and the NJC LGS pay increase, covering Teaching Assistants, School Admin staff and other non-teaching employees (from April 2022), although below current inflation, are way in excess of what schools budgeted for more than 6 months ago, and what Government funding provided for.</p> <p>The Council provides financial services to the majority of local primary schools (i.e. those which are not academies). To give some local context, would the Cabinet Member please supply the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total Maintained Primary School Balances carried forward as at 31 March 2022.</li> <li>• Currently Projected Total Maintained Primary School Balances carried forward as at 31 March 2023.</li> <li>• Currently Projected Total Maintained Primary School Balances carried forward as at 31 March 2024.</li> </ul>

	<b>Response:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Total Maintained Primary School Balances carried forward as at 31 March 2022<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>2021/22 Outturn - 68 Primary Schools with total balances of £13.62m.</i></li></ul></li><li>• Currently Projected Total Maintained Primary School Balances carried forward as 31 March 2023<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>2022/23 Forecast - 66 Primary Schools (Holy Spirit conversion and St Teresa's closed) overall balances are projected to be down to £9.41m (reduction £3.79m).</i></li></ul></li><li>• Currently Projected Total Maintained Primary School Balances carried forward as at 31 March 2024<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>2023/24 Forecast - 66 Primary Schools with balances projected to reduce to £3.18m (a reduction of £6.23m).</i></li></ul></li></ul>