

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

COUNCIL - 16 DECEMBER 2010

QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1) **QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR PAPWORTH TO THE CABINET MEMBER – REGENERATION (COUNCILLOR MAHER)**

“Will the Cabinet Member (CM) please tell us what discussions have recently been held with Sainsbury’s plc about their intentions for the redevelopment of Crosby? What progress has been made?

Have our officers made a serious effort to represent the opinions of such groups as” A Better Crosby”, and the clear views expressed at the recent Planning Committee meeting in Crosby Civic Hall? What hope have we that Sainsbury’s will produce an acceptable proposal? Does the CM appreciate that the people of Crosby will not tolerate another unsympathetic proposal? Does the CM understand that it is his job to take the lead in securing an acceptable redevelopment plan?”

RESPONSE OF THE CABINET MEMBER – REGENERATION

Subsequent to the decision of Planning Committee, Officers met with senior representatives of Sainsburys and their Agents in early October to confirm the reasons for the refusal of planning permission. It also provided an opportunity to impress upon them the Council's desire to work with ABetterCrosby group and with Sainsburys to find an acceptable solution. There has however been no subsequent direct contact with the company. As a consequence it is not clear whether Sainsburys intend to appeal the decision or to submit a new application (or possibly both). However in anticipation of further liaison on matters of design we have started a process of procurement of specialist advice to assist in any new dialogue. The applicant has six months from the date of the Decision Notice (6th October 2010) to lodge a planning appeal.

In the meantime, a dialogue has been maintained with ABetterCrosby group through the Neighbourhoods Team. Amongst other matters discussed has been the preparation of an Area Plan and the group's participation with this.

I would agree the importance of maintaining dialogue and that the Neighbourhoods Team will take a lead on this but, of course, the responsibility for assessing any application or appeal rests with Planning Committee.

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2) QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR SHAW TO THE CABINET MEMBER – LEISURE AND TOURISM (COUNCILLOR BOOTH)

“At his early December Cabinet Member meeting, I understand that the Cabinet Member considered a report proposing the creation of a Single Registration Service for Births, Deaths and Marriages for Sefton.

Is the Cabinet Member aware of reports in parts of the media saying that this means that Southport Register Office is under threat of closure?

Will the Cabinet Member give an assurance that there is no threat to close Southport (or, indeed, Waterloo) Register Office?”

RESPONSE OF THE CABINET MEMBER – LEISURE AND TOURISM

“As the Cabinet Member, I am aware that that there are reports in the media that the Southport Register Office is under threat of closure.

These reports are based on a completely erroneous understanding and mis-representation, by the media, of the information contained in the Cabinet Member report.

To put the record straight, there is no proposal to shut either the Southport or the Waterloo registration offices. Both offices will be retained.

The proposal is to merge the two existing Registration Districts and create a Single Registration District to cover the whole of Sefton.

Rather than reduce the service to the public, this proposal will actually allow service users the additional flexibility to use **either** of the existing offices for the registration of births, deaths and marriages.

Currently service users are restricted by law to using **only** the registration office that covers their home address. This often causes great inconvenience.

Within the proposed Single Registration District, one office will be referred to as the nominated head office and the other as a nominated outstation.

Both offices will continue to offer all the existing services.”

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3) QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR TONKISS TO THE CABINET MEMBER – TECHNICAL SERVICES (COUNCILLOR FAIRCLOUGH)

“(i) What would be the approximate loss in parking income if the Crosby Village was to have free parking for two hours all year round seven days per week? and

(ii) Is this a proposal that the Cabinet Member could support?”

RESPONSE OF THE CABINET MEMBER – TECHNICAL SERVICES

- (i) Up to £200,000

- (ii) Taking into account just a few of the many Liberal Democrats’ proposals to:-
 - (a) reject facilities for disabled children at the Netherton Activity Centre (£400,000)
 - (b) cease the children’s clothing grant for the Borough’s poorest families (£201,000)
 - (c) cease good neighbourhood skips (£72,825)
 - (d) cease cleansing Linacre Bridge team (£25,000)
 - (e) cut £1m from the Highways Maintenance Programme
 - (f) cut learning services for 14-19 year olds (£406,000)

which are all part of his Government’s removal of £44m from the Council’s budget next year, in addition to an increase of up to £9,000 per year to tuition fees for students attending universities as well as the scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance and a 90% cut in devolved capital to schools, Cllr. Tonkiss, in the light of his Party’s draconian proposals, may wish to reconsider his question.