

## COUNCIL – 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

### QUESTIONS RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. **Question submitted by Councillor Bliss to the Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee (Councillor John Kelly)**

“The Local Government Association is lobbying the Government to modify Licensing Fees so they can be set locally rather than nationally as is the current case. The supporting evidence is that some Councils' are running their Licensing Operations at a loss. What is the profit or loss for our Licensing Operation for the last full financial year and so far this financial year?”

**Response:**

“In Sefton for the year 2015/16 there was a surplus of £63,433. For the year 2016/17 so far (as at 31/08/2017) there is a surplus of £25,796.

These figures, however only take into account the direct costs of processing the various applications by the Licensing Unit. There are additional costs which are currently not tracked. These costs relate to the work done by other Council services acting as Responsible Authorities who are consulted in the application process e.g. Environmental Health and Trading Standards. Work is currently underway to identify the real cost to these “non-Licensing” services to allow the appropriate adjustments in budgets to be made in the future and to advise LGA of the real cost of these application to this Council.”

2. **Question submitted by Councillor Jones to the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Safeguarding (Councillor John Joseph Kelly)**

“A Lib Dem Councillor has been quoted as saying that prostitution should be given as an option to our school children as a future career option. Can you please confirm that this ridiculous proposal never sees the light of day in Sefton?”

**Response:**

“It is a duty for all schools to provide independent careers advice for their pupils in years 10/11 and clearly it would be completely inappropriate for schools in Sefton to suggest pupils become sex workers.”

3. **Question submitted by Councillor Keith to the Cabinet Member for Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough)**

“Can the Cabinet Member confirm if any consultation took place with parents, carers and students (users) as part of the new contract procurement for the Specialist Transport Unit?”

**Response:**

“Group consultation did not take place.”

4. **Question submitted by Councillor Thompson to the Cabinet Member for Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough)**

“Can the Cabinet Member confidently state that all drivers and escorts for the Specialist Transport Unit hold current DBS safeguarding certification?”

**Response:**

“Yes”.

5. **Question submitted by Councillor Hands to the Cabinet Member for Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough)**

“Bearing in mind the comments raised in the extract of the email below from Crosby High School regarding the Specialist Transport Unit which has been utilised by all special schools in the borough. Can the Cabinet Member for Locality Services inform us when the service will return to normal and does the Cabinet Member recognise the distress caused to parents, pupils and schools?”

*First we had no list of which pupil was on which bus. We only gained that information on the Monday morning from the escorts. We had to take copies of the information they had been given,*

*I started to receive calls from Parent from 7.30am onwards to say their child had not been collected and what time would they be collected. As we had no list we could not at this time help them, but we could advise to either stay where they are or could they kindly bring their child into school.*

*Myself and my admin officer have tried to contact STU by phoning them, we have not able to make contact the message request is to email them which we have done.*

*We have phoned and sent numerous email as yet no replies We have copied the emails into xx and also to xx, but they have also not replied.*

*We have a situation regarding one family where both children attend Crosby High but come to school on separate buses!!!*

*We have been told there is a back log of emails and when we get to the top they will responded.*

*Since early this year parents cannot contact STU before 9.15am to find out why their child has not been collected. After a meeting with xx and xx here at Crosby High, it was agreed that I will be available for the coach companies to contact me if there is a problem with transport so that I can text parents.*

*As you can see from above we are struggling to maintain a professional service to our parents.”*

**Response:**

“The transport arrangements are now completed”.

**6. Question submitted by Councillor McGuire to the Cabinet Member for Locality Services (Councillor Fairclough)**

“Can Cabinet Member confirm the number of routes re-tendered as part of the Specialist Transport Unit and what was the timeframe for the tender process?”

**Response:**

“50 adult runs and 350-400 children runs were re-tendered”.

**7. Question submitted by Councillor McGuire to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Maher)**

“Can the Leader of the Council confirm what the legal situation is in terms of private security staff patrolling the streets of the borough and what powers would such a security force have?”

**Response:**

“Operatives of a private security firm would have no more powers than an ordinary member of the public whilst on the public highway.

They may be employed to guard private property but have no powers to take enforcement action. Statutory enforcement powers are vested in the Police and authorised Council officers.

Operatives of private security companies must be licensed by the SIA (Security Industry Association).”

8. **Question submitted by Councillor Barton to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Building Control (Councillor Veidman)**

“It is generally acknowledged that everything possible must be done to protect the history and heritage of the buildings in Southport town centre and the Borough as a whole.

With that in mind can the Cabinet Member assure me that the appropriate planning policies and mechanisms are in place to safeguard our Conservation Areas across the entire width and breadth of the Borough to ensure we do not end up in a similar situation to that in Liverpool where proposed developments have raised high level concern from UNESCO?.”

**Response:**

“Yes”.

“With regard to the Councillor’s remarks regarding UNESCO, I find them quite puzzling and I do not understand why UNESCO would have any interest in Sefton’s heritage, notwithstanding its significance at a local and national level, and so we do not anticipate any concerns will be raised from UNESCO.”

9. **Question submitted by Councillor Dawson to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (Councillor Cummins)**

“Given that Mears Care is being replaced as the Council's care provider a few months short of the normal deadline for their tender to end, will all the Council's domiciliary Care contracts due to be re-considered in early 2017 be subject to a competitive re-tendering exercise.”

**Response:**

“As with any contract at this stage of delivery a review is taking place and options for future commissioning identified. These will be provided in a report for Cabinet to consider in the near future.”