

(5) MEMBER QUESTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, the following question has been submitted:-

From Councillor AR Brassington to Councillor Sue Coakley, Cabinet Member for Health, Environment and Communities

'In the Cotswolds there are many publicly-spirited members of the community who regularly go out, often by themselves, and pick litter up off the streets and road sides. Cotswold District Council should recognise the efforts of these individuals in some manner, such as a letter from the Chairman which could be presented to them at a future Council meeting. We should also try to get a local business to sponsor the occasion and present them with something - for instance, Whitbread could offer them two free drinks at one of their shops since their Costa Coffee cardboard cups are frequently a source of road side litter; another example is McDonalds, for the same reason. Will the Cabinet Member consider this suggestion and report her findings to the next meeting of the cabinet?'

Response from Councillor Coakley

Whilst we recognise and appreciate the efforts of these individuals, the difficulty of identifying who they are makes this suggestion impractical. Even if some of them could be identified, it is unlikely that all of them would be, and then we would be in a position where we were opening ourselves up to criticism for not treating all of these public-spirited members of our community equitably.

We should also not forget the individuals, local communities and local councils who contact us to request pickers, bags etc. for an organised litter pick; and, perhaps even more fundamentally, the many people who just quietly do this and put the litter in their own bins or local litter bins.

Having said that, I am pleased to tell you that the Council will be highlighting a clean-up effort by one group of volunteers in the near future, as we have recently launched a prize competition linked to the national 'Clean for the Queen' campaign. When the competition concludes at the end of April, a panel of judges will award £1,000 funding for local environmental improvements (thanks to the generosity of Ubico Ltd) to the 'best tidy up' by a group of volunteers. We have already had a healthy response to the competition and, although we will select an overall winner and name them publicly, all contestants will deserve praise for their efforts.

I am happy to place on record (as, indeed, we have in the past), the Council's sincere thanks to all in our District who help in their own way to strive to ensure that the Cotswolds is litter-free.

Notes:

(i) The above question was submitted after the deadline by which an answer could be guaranteed either in advance of, or at, the Cabinet Meeting. However, the Cabinet Member has been able to provide a response in the time available, which has been sent to Councillor Brassington.

(ii) If Councillor Brassington is present at the Meeting, he will be entitled to ask one supplementary question in respect of the original question. Any supplementary question must arise directly out of either the original question or the answer given thereto.

(iii) An immediate answer cannot be guaranteed to any supplementary question, but Councillor Coakley will try and answer any supplementary question(s) at the Meeting. However, if this is not possible, then Councillor Coakley will answer as much as possible at the Meeting and then provide a full response within five working days. If, for any reason, a full response cannot be provided within those five days, then a holding response will be sent to Councillor Brassington, along with the reason for delay and a likely timescale for the full response.

(END)