

(5) MEMBER QUESTIONS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11, questions have been submitted, and responses provided, as follows:-

- (1) From Councillor JA Harris to Councillor C Hancock, Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Partnerships

'Question 1

Once again, travellers set up site in Beeches car park last week. This is now happening more frequently and each time costs the Council money in staff time, legal fees and the cost of clearing up the sites when they are vacated.

What is the Cabinet Member doing to ensure that this unacceptable problem is stopped as soon as possible?

Question 2

How much have Cotswold District Council spent on legal fees and clearing up after travellers parking in the Beeches Car Park?'

Responses from Councillor Hancock

Question 1

Clearly the Council would not wish to prevent the free movement of travellers through our District, but we do understand that illegal encampments can cause disruption to residents, businesses and other car park users. We need to balance the action we take to deter illegal encampments with the needs of other motorists who may have larger vehicles and wish to park in our car parks. The approach the Council has taken is therefore to ensure it has an Injunction in place which enables swift action to be taken, with officers visiting the travellers within a few hours of being notified of their arrival, advising them that an Injunction is in place and working with the Police and our legal team to ensure we can enforce the injunction if the travellers do not move on. In the majority of cases they have left within four days, and Ubico have then responded quickly to remove any waste left behind.

Question 2

When the Injunction was first obtained in June 2015, the total legal costs incurred were £5,780. There have been no further legal costs since that time, as any preparation and service of legal papers has been dealt with in-house.

The clear-up of any rubbish left behind by the travellers has been undertaken by Ubico's street cleansing crews and incorporated into their Cirencester rounds; and has therefore formed part of the contract cost. There has not been a need for separate or additional resources requiring additional costs.

(2) From Councillor AR Brassington to Councillor Mark Annett, Leader of the Council

'Will the Leader please confirm that CDC has introduced a recruitment freeze and state when this came into effect and explain why members were not informed?'

Response from Councillor Annett

I can categorically confirm that CDC has not introduced a recruitment freeze, and I can see no reason why it would need to in the present climate.

Notes:

- (i) The questions from Councillor Harris were submitted by the deadline by which responses were guaranteed to be provided at least 24 hours in advance of the Meeting - and the responses were duly sent to the Member concerned.
- (ii) The question from Councillor Brassington was submitted after the deadline by which an answer could be guaranteed either in advance of, or at, the Cabinet Meeting. However, the Leader has been able to provide a response in the time available, which has been sent to Councillor Brassington.
- (iii) If any of the questioners is present at the Meeting, they will be entitled to ask one supplementary question in respect of each original question. Any supplementary question must arise directly out of either the original question or the answer given thereto.
- (iv) An immediate answer cannot be guaranteed to any supplementary question, but the Cabinet Member will try and answer any supplementary question(s) at the Meeting. However, if this is not possible, then the Cabinet Member 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 the questioner, along with the reason for delay and a likely timescale for the full response.

(END)