

**QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 30 MARCH 2023**

The following questions have been received under Standing Order 8.1. The draft replies, which are subject to amendment, are set out below.

“Councillors are thanked for their questions.”

1. Question from Councillor Rob Leach

“How many residents are benefiting from the Meals on Wheels Service?”

Reply from Councillor Ellen Nicholson

“During February 2023, we delivered 4,595 meals to 197 customers. The biggest take-up was hot lunches (3,118 delivered) followed by the tea time bag (1,153 delivered). As discussed previously the Community Meals Service offers so much more than a meal and is a highly valued service by our vulnerable residents.”

2. Question from Councillor Steve Dorsett

“Considering the recent decision to scrap the Town Centre Buggy, Cllr Forster said the Council would be looking at other methods to replace those services for the residents who rely on them. Can he update Council as to where we are with that?”

Reply from Councillor Will Forster

“As I stated during the February Full Council meeting in my response to a question from Councillor Colin Kemp, the Council did not make the decision to end the town buggy service. Although aware of it, the provider did not meet the deadline to submit a full application for funding from the Council's Community Grants budget.

Despite best efforts, the town buggy service had seen dwindling passenger numbers, coupled with increasing running costs in recent years. The service is sadly no longer financially viable.

The town centre buggy service was just one of a number of offers of support for vulnerable residents in Woking. Woking's Town Centre offers accessible shops and facilities and a well designed public realm. The Council supports Woking Shopmobility services which enables residents to access a range of equipment and specialist transport. The full offer is published on the Woking Shopmobility website.”

3. Question from Councillor Steve Dorsett

“As part of this Council's commitment to a greener Woking and a more sustainable environment, the Council would provide blue recycling bins to local events taking place in the Borough. This service was convenient for event organisers and ensured waste was properly recycled. I understand the Council has now decided to stop this practice. Can the portfolio holder update the Council on this and explain the reasoning behind it?”

Reply from Councillor Peter Graves

“The Controlled Waste Regulations categorise waste from a market or fair as commercial waste. Producers of commercial waste are responsible for employing suitably licensed waste collection contractors and paying for its collection and disposal. There are a range of local providers able to offer this service and provide a range of bins. The service can continue to be arranged via the Council's waste collection contractor. If an event organiser wishes to employ the Council's household waste collection contractor (Amey) they are now asked to contact Joint Waste Solutions (JWS) directly to discuss their requirements. JWS manage the Amey contract on the

Council's behalf and are best placed to oversee these arrangements. JWS will liaise with Amey and provide the event organiser with a quotation for providing the service (providing/retrieving bins, separate collection of the commercial waste and commercial waste disposal etc). The event organisers would need to pay this cost to Woking Borough Council (in-turn the Council will pay Amey's commercial collection and Surrey County Council's commercial disposal costs). This arrangement ensures that the full cost of a commercial service is met by the event organiser, which may not have always been the case in previous years. This arrangement was successfully used for the Surrey Half Marathon Event in March."

4. Question from Councillor Louise Morales

"How much in repayments does the Council have to find each year to pay back its borrowing? Please could the portfolio holder provide the figures for the next 3 years."

Reply from Councillor Dale Roberts

"In 2023/24 the debt service costs charged to the Revenue Budget will be £62m and in the two years following the figure is likely to rise to £67m by 2025/26. Clearly this will depend on the cost of borrowing which is not in the Council's control and the extent to which the Council chooses to invest in assets funded by prudential borrowing."

5. Question from Councillor Melanie Whitehand

"Would the Leader of the Council agree with me that our Residents expect us to attend all Council meetings to fulfil our duties as elected Members.

Obviously circumstances may change at short notice and cause a Member to miss the occasional meeting, but to repeatedly miss meetings may be considered a dereliction of duty.

Would the Full Council attendance by all Members be published as part of the reply please?"

Reply from Councillor Ann-Marie Barker

"I thank Councillor Whitehand for her question and agree that attendance at meetings, whether Council, Committee or Working Group, is an important responsibility of all elected representatives.

Set out below are the attendance records for the meetings of Full Council held in the 2022/23 Municipal Year. The figures for this evening's meeting have not been included.

The attendance figures for all meetings are published on the Council's website, under the details of individual Councillors.

In May 2017 the Council considered the attendance record of Councillors at Committee meetings. The Council resolved the following, in light of the poor attendance record at some meetings:

"The relevant Group Leader be advised in the event a Member fails to attend two or more meetings of a Committee or Working Group to which they had been appointed with a view to improving general attendance."

In accordance with this resolution, the Head of Democratic Services notifies the respective Group Leader in writing in the event a Member of their Group fails to attend two or more consecutive meetings of the Council, the Executive, Committees, Working Groups, Task Groups or Panels."



Questions to Council – 30 March 2023

Roberts, D	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Sanderson, J	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Spenser, T	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7/7
Whitehand, M	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	6/7
Attendance	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	

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REPORT ENDS