

FULL COUNCIL MEETING – 2 MAY 2018

AGENDA ITEM 3 – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – ORDER IN WHICH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL WILL INVITE QUESTIONS BELOW RECEIVED IN WRITING IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING

1. From Ms Davis to the Leader of the Council - Councillor Mrs Brown
2. From Mr Gotheridge to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services – Councillor Wotherspoon

THE FULL DETAIL OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IS DETAILED BELOW

NOTE: The Chairman will:

- invite questions from members of the public who have submitted in writing their questions in line with the Council's Constitution;
- explain that the questions received will be answered by the appropriate Members of the Cabinet or the Chairman of the Overview Select Committee
- confirm that Public Question Time allows Members of the public to ask one question at a time and that a maximum of one minute is allowed for each question.
- state that questions will be invited in the order in which they have been received and that if there is time remaining from the 15 minutes allowed for Public Question Time, questioners will be allowed to ask a supplementary question.

QUESTION ONE

From Ms Davis to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown

Question

I am secretary of the Bognor Community Gardeners and our group has been working with Arun Parks on the planting and maintenance of the Hothampton Sunken Gardens (amongst other town centre green spaces) for nearly 7 years now. This garden has a poor reputation locally and is avoided and underused by the majority of local residents because of the many incidents of anti-social

behaviour that take place there. I feel that should a major makeover of this park go ahead it simply will not be enough on its own to change the problems with anti-social behaviour or the reputation of this park.

Question:

Will the Council consider a proposal to house community groups within the new linear park should the redevelopment proceed, or even to house them there if the redevelopment of this area does not go ahead? We have been in communication frequently with both Sussex Police and ADC Neighbourhoods team regarding the need to address the problems there and as you will see (below) from the response to a recent FOI request, the responsible authorities are simply not issuing fines or penalties for littering, dog fouling or anti-social behaviour . I am quite confident that a Sussex Police FOI regarding urinating in a public space and vandalism will produce the same disappointing results. I firmly believe that what is needed is to change the people dynamics in all of our parks by installing a few of our many community groups within them to make sure that our parks are occupied by responsible adults; the planned makeover of Hothamton Sunken Gardens would be the perfect opportunity to launch just such an initiative. The Police do often advise us that our presence in this garden (when we work there as volunteers) makes a difference but, of course, we can't be there all of the time. A couple of large log cabins occupied by very active community groups would make a much more significant impact than we are able to. The response from Information Department (which covers the entire Arun District over the last 5 years) is below:

Community Safety has not issued any fines in relation to anti-social behaviour in the District under their powers. Dog Fouling: 6 Fixed Penalty Notices issued from 03.06.13 - 31.10.16 covering the Kingdom contract for Dog fouling. Urinating in a public space – Please contact Sussex Police at the following:

www.sussex.police.uk

Littering: 6 Warning letters as littering from vehicle and unable to identify drivers
0 Fixed Penalty Notices issued for littering Damaging Public Property: Please contact Sussex Police, as this is classified as criminal damage, at the following:

www.sussex.police.uk”

Response

The following response has been sent to the questioner in writing:

Thank you for your question.

The Council fully recognises the sterling work undertaken by the volunteers of the Bognor Community Gardeners. The group have made a positive difference to this area over many years now working alongside Arun District Council.

However, the installation of log cabins or similar structures is not aligned with the proposals for the regeneration of this area including the Linear Park. There are currently challenges relating to anti-social behaviour which will be addressed with the design of this space. For example, better lighting, natural surveillance and the addition of attractions such as a café.

The Council has recently committed to a further two year enforcement project to tackle environmental crime in our town centres and open spaces. In the last year alone the Council, through its enforcement contractor, has issued two fixed penalty notices within the park and five in the vicinity of Hothampton car park, for littering offences. The Environmental Enforcement Officers are a district wide resource and they target areas based on need.

The Linear Park will provide a green corridor between the Town and the seafront and will feature top quality play and leisure facilities for all of the family. The detailed design being prepared will give the area the look and feel of a park rather than a car park and will be well lit so that it can be enjoyed in the evening too. The quality of the overall design will also seek to address any anti-social behaviour issues.

QUESTION TWO

From Mr Gotheridge to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Wotherspoon

Question

When will the Arun District Play Strategy be updated and made public? The last Play Strategy 'ran out' in 2016, and there has not been any response to the consultation undertaken in 2017 yet".

Response

The following response has been sent to the questioner in writing:

Following consultation with the public and Parish & Town Councils, the 2018-2028 Arun Play Area Strategy was drafted and considered by the Environment & Leisure Working Group on 24 October 2017 and approved by Cabinet on the 11 December 2017.

Our excellent Officers within the Council's Greenspace Service are currently determining an action plan for delivery of the strategy's immediate priorities. The strategy will be published on the Council's website by the end of May 2018.