

## **COUNCIL**

**THURSDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2019**

### **STANDING ORDER 15 QUESTIONS**

**Councillor Nick Burns-Howell has asked the Cabinet Member for the Town Centre:**

1. Please could the Cabinet Member provide an update on progress with restoring the Corn Exchange in Old Town, and comment on rumours of an extension to the legal agreement between Swindon Borough Council and Swindon Corn Exchange Ltd?'

**The Cabinet Member for the Town Centre has responded:**

1. "The Corn Exchange is not a Council led project, and I cannot provide a commentary. There will be no renegotiation of the legal agreement, this is the developer's final opportunity to deliver.

If a milestone is missed then the developer will be in material breach of the legal agreement. This breach means the Council reserves the right to terminate the agreement.

Discussions have remained confidential over the last 11 months, and Officers have updated ward members where possible.

It would not be appropriate to confirm what the actions the Council may or may not take if a breach occurs. "

**Councillors Emma Bushell and Janine Howarth have asked the Leader of the Council:**

Last week Robert Buckland MP wrote to residents in Parks stating that the Council had agreed to buy back the public area of Cavendish Square and that the Council's aim is to purchase the site within the next six months.

1. Can the Leader of the Council confirm this is the case?
2. Can the Leader of the Council confirm why the ward members for the Cavendish Square area was failed to be informed of the Council's decision before it was publicly released?
3. Will the Leader of the Council commit to providing Ward Councillors for the Cavendish Square area a full briefing of the Council's position?

**The Leader of the Council has responded:**

1. I can confirm that the Council is committed to ensuring that there is a resolution in respect of the issues at Cavendish Square which includes negotiation with a view to purchasing Cavendish Square subject to usual requirements for any such purchase.
2. The Council has not made any official announcement on purchase yet since negotiations are ongoing.
3. Ward Councillors will be consulted as part of the decision making process

**Councillor Jim Grant has asked the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment:**

1. Can you confirm whether the Council intends to cut down all fruit bearing trees?

**The Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment has responded:**

1. The Council has an on-going programme to remove large fruit bearing trees such as Malus (ornamental apple) trees which cause numerous problems as and when such problems are reported to us. There are many other fruit bearing trees which are beneficial to wildlife and cause minimal issues that we will not be removing

**Councillor Jane Milner-Barry has asked the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment:**

I understand that SBC's current contract with Dial a Ride is coming to an end. Under the 2019 Budget the Dial a Ride service was to be put out to tender as part of a package of routes.

Can you please answer these questions about the future operation of Dial a Ride under any new operator?

1. Will the Dial a Ride service operate during the same hours as at present, i.e. from 8.45 to 16.45 Monday to Friday?
2. If so, for how long is this guaranteed?
3. Will the fares be unchanged?
4. If so, for how long is this guaranteed?
5. Will there be the same number of vehicles employed on Dial a Ride services as at present?
6. If so, for how long is this guaranteed?
7. Will the same number of Dial a Ride journeys be made as now?
8. If so, for how long is this guaranteed?
9. Will the vehicles providing Dial a Ride services be kept off road when not in use?
10. How will the current level of Dial a Ride service be maintained without the contribution of the volunteers who make up around half the personnel?

**The Cabinet Member has responded:**

The Community Transport contract is currently out to tender. However, I can provide details from the specification as follows:

1. The service specification states the service will operate from 0900 to 1630 Monday to Friday.
2. The Contract will be in place from 01/10/2019 until 30/09/2022.
3. Fares will be unchanged at the start of the contract.