

Questions under Procedure Rule 11.2 for Council Meeting

19 February 2019

Q1. Question from Councillor Mrs Woodward to the Leader of the Council

“In a statement issued by Cllr Wilcox following the warning he received regarding a breach of policy over the use of his LDC email address for business purposes, he said "I have apologised for this infringement". Can he tell me please to whom he has apologised and whether he feels he should also now apologise to the Council and to local residents?”

Response from Leader of the Council

I can confirm that following my warning for this breach of policy, I apologised to our Head of Legal Services Bal Nahal for this infringement, and stated that at the time back in 2011 a web page was created which should not have quoted my council email address alongside my personal email details which I did not at the time realise was a breach of policy.

The page has remained dormant since 2011 and I was only reminded of this by a tweet appearing on a local social media platform recently, once I was made aware of this the site was suspended and I am endeavouring to get this page removed.

Out of interest the property is now not advertised for rental anywhere (as far as I'm aware).

I do not feel that this minor infringement requires any further apology than the one I have already issued to the Council.

Q2 Question from Councillor Mrs Woodward to the Leader of the Council

“Would the Leader of the Council please explain to me how the proposed spending of almost three quarters of a million pounds on short-term cosmetic improvements to the BRS site can be classed as a "do-minimum" scheme, as described in the Minutes of the BRS Working Group?”

Response from the Leader of the Council

The proposed short term improvements and enabling works are essential for health and safety reasons. The bus station buildings are in a poor condition and as such have been boarded up for this very reason. Maintenance expenditure on the bus station during the period whilst Friarsgate was being finalised was minimal such that there are defects in the surfacing used by buses, coaches and cars and the facilities used by pedestrians and customers.

Given the above estate management issues facing the District Council as land owner it is felt appropriate to address these now.

Also it should be borne in mind that whilst the Council has commenced a cross party working group to determine the long term future of the whole of the BRS, it is unlikely that any agreed development would take place within twelve to eighteen months.

It therefore seems sensible to bring forward a scheme of works which enables the Council to address the immediate health and safety issues and in doing so provide improved facilities, enhanced environment and better aesthetic appearance to the site for an interim period.

Q3 Question from Councillor Mrs Evans to the Leader of the Council

“Can the leader tell me what are the totals that have been paid in grant funding to The Garrick, in the years 2015 to the present and what has been the total annual spending for other arts activities in the District during this period?”

Response from the Leader of the Council

The expenditure relating to the Lichfield Garrick and other arts activities is set out below.

	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Budget
Garrick - grant subsidy	460,000	310,000	310,000	250,000
<u>Arts Development</u>				
Direct Expenditure	21,748	19,878	19,583	17,010
Direct Income	(3,600)	(750)	0.00	0.00
Net Direct	18,148	19,128	19,583	17,010

In addition funding was given following the sale of the statue gifted to the people of Lichfield by Swinfen Broun:

- St Chad's £50,000
- Erasmus Darwin £25,000
- St Mary's £44,979
- Puppetry and Community arts website £13,000

Q4 Question from Councillor Mrs Banevicius to Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks & Waste

“Could the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks & Waste update me on the progress to date on the transfer of parks within the district.”

Response from Cabinet Member for Leisure, Parks & Waste

Public Open Space transfers since 2014:

Site	Party Involved	Position
Gentleshaw Common	Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	Transferred on 25 year lease
POS by Gentleshaw School	Longdon Parish Council	In progress with solicitors – freehold transfer
Hospital Road Playing Fields	Burntwood Dragons and Burntwood Phoenix FC	Transferred on 25 year lease
Lichfield canal route land	Lichfield and Hatherton Canal Restoration Trust	Transferred with freehold
POS in Whittington	Whittington Parish Council	Transferred with freehold
POS at Armitage with Handsacre	Armitage with Handsacre Parish council	Decision made to arrange transfer in Feb 2019
Ongoing discussions		
Bowling greens in Beacon Park	Museum Bowls Club and Lichfield Crown Green Bowls Club	Potential 5 -25 year lease being discussed
Chase Terrace Park (Burntwood)	St John's Community Church	Potential 25 year lease being discussed
Beacon Park tennis courts	Lichfield Tennis CIO	Potential 25 year lease being discussed
POS at Fradley and Streethay	Initial discussions have taken place	
POS at Burntwood	Ongoing discussions regarding what a transfer might look like	
Land at Albutts Road (Walsall)	Potential transfer to WMBC or sale	