

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

TUESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2018

ADDITIONAL PAPERS

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QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR J GEARY TO COUNCILLOR T J PENDLETON

“On the 17th October, travellers once again moved onto the town centre car park for the third time in little than twelve months.

Back in 1996, I first pointed out to the council the need for this council to develop a warden controlled traveller site similar to the one at Aston Firs, Sapcote Road, Burbage, within our district, to reduce the impact and costs of travellers setting up camp on district or county council owned land.

The council has now to undertake an assessment of their needs before we are able to move them on, when the only thing really needed is a controlled site within North West Leicestershire to accommodate them.

We are all aware of the need for such a site within our District Plan so could you please give me some indication as to when such a facility is likely to be achieved”.

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR T J PENDLETON

“The need to make provision for gypsies and travellers is something which the Council is aware of. We have been working to identify potential sites since early in 2016. This has included two separate ‘call-for-sites’ issued to landowners, parish and town councils and residents. Unfortunately neither of these ‘call-for-sites’ resulted in any potential sites being notified to the council. At the same time officers have been, and are, looking at a variety of potential sources of sites and to date over 500 sites have been looked at. When the current assessment has been completed a report will be taken to a meeting of the Local Plan Committee for it to consider how to take this issue forward as part of the Local Plan”.

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QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR T EYNON TO COUNCILLOR N J RUSHTON

“It has been announced that North West Leicestershire is one of the eleven local authorities across England taking part in Voter ID pilots for the 2019 local elections. The pilots are intended to provide further insight into how best to ensure the security of the voting process and reduce the risk of voter fraud.

Of the four models of Voter ID checks:

- photo ID
- photo and non-photo ID
- traditional poll cards
- poll cards with scannable barcodes

I understand that North West Leicestershire is to test making it mandatory for electors to bring their poll cards with them when they vote.

QUESTIONS

- (1) What is the current estimated prevalence of voter fraud in elections in North West Leicestershire?
- (2) How will the post-intervention prevalence of voter fraud be measured?
- (3) What impact if any will there be on the process for postal votes?
- (4) How will North West Leicestershire be communicating this change to electors?
- (5) How will this communication campaign be funded?”

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR N J RUSHTON

- (1) “There is no evidence of voter fraud in North West Leicestershire. However, in August 2016 Eric Pickles published a report on electoral integrity in general, which set out a number of recommendations, one of which was to introduce a requirement for ID to be shown at polling stations. Before agreeing to this recommendation, the Cabinet Office wanted to satisfy itself of the best model to adopt in order to achieve this. There were 5 pilots carried out last year, but the Electoral Commission asked that these pilots be extended across the country to capture differing demographics and locations. NWLDC was invited to assist with this initiative in order to help shape the future of elections across the country.
- (2) Whilst NWLDC does not have an issue with voter fraud, we were invited to assist in the pilot process to help change the perception of voters in general. The Cabinet Office will carefully analyse all the data collected from each pilot Authority to ascertain the future direction of election management based on the findings.
- (3) A different process is undertaken to verify postal votes and this has been in place since 2007. This process verifies identity by matching the signatures on the postal vote application form with those on the statements which accompany the postal ballot

papers. We use sophisticated software for this matching process followed by a manual check and sign-off by the Deputy Returning Officers. This process will not be affected by being a pilot voter ID authority.

- (4) Each local authority is required to develop a public awareness campaign plan in line with the Government Communications Service guidance. This helps provide assurance to the Cabinet Office that our public awareness campaign will be effective, evaluated and provide good value for money for the taxpayer.

Our Communications Team has the support of the Cabinet Office Communications Team in all campaign planning. They have met once already and will meet fortnightly in the run up to the election in 2019. Cabinet Office have already provided us with example campaign plans and templates and evaluation templates, which we will now use to develop our own campaign.

Our campaign will include social media activity, digital media work, press announcements and printed publicity, and will include regular updates to all parish councils and elected members. Further, a legal order will be made to enable NWLDC to change the wording on its poll cards advising electors that they will need to retain it and take it with them to the polling station in order to vote.

- (5) The Cabinet Office will be funding all aspects of the Voter ID Pilot. In addition, the Communications Team will benefit from any training required to run the campaign successfully”.

Council Procedure Rules – Motions and Amendments

What members can do

- When seconding a motion, a member may reserve their speech until later in the debate (rule 14.3).
- Members may only speak once on a motion or amendment whilst it is being debated (rule 14.5, 14.5(a)).
- Members may also move a further amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke (rule 14.5(b)).
- Members can exercise a right of reply, raise a point of order or make a personal explanation during debate (rule 14.5(d), (e) and (f)).
- Members can speak on the main issues if their first speech was on an amendment (rule 14.5(c)).
- The mover of a motion has a right of reply at the close of debate on the motion, before it is put to the vote (rule 14.9.1).
- The mover of a motion has a right of reply at the close of debate on any amendment (rule 14.9.2).

What members can't do

- Members cannot make a speech until a motion has been seconded (rule 14.1).
- Members cannot speak again whilst a motion is being debated, except to exercise a right of reply, raise a point of order or make a personal explanation (rule 14.5, 14.5(a) to (f)).
- Members cannot speak for more than 5 minutes without the consent of the Chairman (rule 14.4).
- The mover of a motion may not speak on an amendment, other than to exercise his right of reply (rule 14.9.2).
- The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the close of debate (rule 14.9.3).

Motions and Amendments – Flowchart

