

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

TUESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2019

ADDITIONAL PAPERS

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QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR J GEARY TO COUNCILLOR R ASHMAN

Travellers Site within our District

“I would like to refer you to the return of the travellers who were located in Coalville, firstly on the town centre car park until the Police moved them on. They then decided to set up home on the old Snibston Discovery Park site on Ashby Road, allegedly destroying part of the fencing to enable them to gain access, at yet another cost to the Local Government taxpayer.

This will be the third time I have tabled a question at a Council meeting asking just what we are doing to address this problem and when will we have a Warden Controlled Site within our District.

I ask this question of Officers just to be told that they are still looking at sites and how many they have considered to date. Well maybe it's now time for me to say just looking at sites is no longer sufficient, we have been looking at sites for three years or more, we now need to identify and establish a traveller site as a priority so we are able to take some control of this ongoing problem.

Would the Portfolio Holder respond to the points I have made?

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR R ASHMAN

“The identification of suitable sites is a matter for the Local Plan Committee as part of the Substantive Review of the Local Plan.

In March 2018 officers had prepared a draft allocations document which identified a potential site for transit purposes at Ashby de la Zouch. However, members and the local community expressed significant concerns about this and so the plan was not taken forward. The plan had also identified a potential site for travelling showpeople on the former Measham Mine site. A planning application was subsequently submitted on this site for travelling showpeople but due to a change in the circumstances of ownership this was withdrawn. Additional consultancy resource has recently been taken on to undertake a further search for potential sites.

The outcome of this will be a matter for the Local plan Committee in due course as part of the Substantive Review. It is anticipated that a draft plan will be published in 2020 which will identify potential sites.”

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QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR C SEWELL TO COUNCILLOR A WOODMAN

- a) What consideration has the Council given to the safety of glyphosate?
- b) What would be the cost to the Council of -
 - (1) an immediate cessation of its use of glyphosate
 - (2) phasing it out over two years
 - (3) minimising its use?

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR A WOODMAN

“Glyphosate is used and, as with all chemicals, usage is strictly controlled and kept to an absolute minimum. All the recommended safety precautions are adhered to, including the use of appropriate PPE, the delivery of regular training, and we are in close contact with our suppliers for any health and safety updates that are released so we can modify our approach. In addition, we do proactively attempt to reduce chemical usage, an example of this being a steam machine that was recently purchased that can be used to kill weeds. We keep abreast of developments within the industry and are made aware of new products and methods coming onto the market that are safer and more environmentally friendly to use.

We are aware of the concerns around Glyphosate and the fact that it's been banned in some countries and that some local authorities in this country are also reviewing the use of it. This needs to be balanced against the fact that the US Environmental Protection Agency have stated it's unlikely to cause cancer in humans, the German pharmaceutical company Bayer have stated that Glyphosate based products can be used safely and that it is not carcinogenic, and that the EU has a 5 year licence to use Glyphosate until the end of 2022. Currently there are no comparable effective alternatives to Glyphosate that control weeds and their roots. Using steam, manual removal, or any alternative methods to kill weeds is far more time consuming, not as effective, and would prove extremely problematic on some of the more difficult areas that need treatment.

Our intention is to continue keeping its use to an absolute minimum with a view to stop using it totally when there is an equally effective alternative. To know the cost of ceasing its use immediately or phasing it out over 2 years is a complex piece of work and more time would be needed to assess this - not using Glyphosate and retaining the same levels of service would require additional manpower, equipment and vehicles”

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