

QUESTION TIME

Questions from Members to the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs of Committees or Members appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee in accordance with Chapter 2, Part 2 (Rule 14) of the Council's Constitution.

There are 4 questions to the Leader and 6 questions to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee.

1. From Councillor Spillman to Councillor Gledhill

Does the portfolio holder agree that efficiency and efficacy appear to be absent considerations within Thurrock Council's current approach to the replacement of blown and faulty windows in council homes?

2. From Councillor Spillman to Councillor Gledhill

Can the portfolio holder assure me that areas outside the borough, known to be rife with prostitution, drug use and associated crime, will no longer be considered suitable locations for the temporary housing of homeless Thurrock residents?

3. From Councillor Pothecary to Councillor Gledhill

There is an ongoing issue with parking for the western High Rises in Grays. Residents and tenants of Davall, Butler and Greenwood Houses are struggling to park their cars in the small car park dedicated to them. Can the Portfolio Holder give an update on any forthcoming plans to provide more parking for the High Rises?

4. From Councillor Redsell to Councillor Gledhill

Could the portfolio holder tell me how many fixed penalty notices have been issued for littering or similar environmental offences under the clean it, cut it, full it initiative?

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO CABINET MEMBERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERS APPOINTED TO REPRESENT THE COUNCIL ON A JOINT COMMITTEE

1. From Councillor Duffin to Councillor Hebb

While the Council has made some progress in its short term and medium term investments please can you announce how many long term investments of over 5 year the Council have made since you took over the administration?

2. From Councillor B Rice to Councillor Halden

Are the Integrated Medical Centres dependant on the closure of Orsett Hospital?

3. From Councillor Maney to Councillor Halden

The building occupied by Little Friends Pre-School and the nearby sports pavilion on Blackshots Playing field are in a very poor state of repair having essentially exceeded their life expectancy. Would the Portfolio Holder for Education and Health advise what plans the council has to replace or fully refurbish the said buildings given that they are still widely used by the community?

4. From Councillor G Rice to Councillor Coxshall

Councillor Coxshall please can you inform the Council this evening what meetings you have had with Highways Ministers and Chris Grayling Secretary of State for Transport to secure the best environmental measures to protect our green belt and residents from the scars of the proposed Lower Thames Crossing in Thurrock?

5. From Councillor Gerrish to Councillor Coxshall

Can the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration outline the next steps in the development of the Local Plan?

6. From Councillor Redsell to Councillor B Little

I understand that council policy currently prohibit residents acquiring a dropped kerb if the road / pavement is on a radius. Would the portfolio holder advise whether this policy could be amended so as to allow for discretion to be exercised in cases where there are no obvious safety concerns?

Appendix A to the Council Minutes – 28 February 2018

Item 14 – Questions from Members

The Mayor informed the Chamber that 4 question had been received to the Leader of the Council and 6 questions had been received to Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and Member appointed to represent the Council on a Joint Committee had been received.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

1. From Councillor Spillman to Councillor Gledhill

Does the portfolio holder agree that efficiency and efficacy appear to be absent considerations within Thurrock Council's current approach to the replacement of blown and faulty windows in council homes?

Mayor

Councillor Gledhill

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Thank you Mr Mayor and indeed thank you Councillor Spillman for your question.

What you are talking about here are two different issues, it's very important to distinguish between blown windows and those that are broken, damaged or in urgent need of repair. Any window with a faulty security feature such as hinges, locks or indeed broken glass can be reported as a standard repair and dealt with as such by the timescales in the contract, which is a maximum of 24 hours for an emergency repair.

As you know the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee recently received details of the improvements made within this key service to our tenants, with improvements in performance this year to date being 97% for repairs within target, emergency repairs at 99% for those done within target time, appointments kept 97% of those and tenant satisfaction 92% and also the fallout from that a deduction in complaints.

So it's quite clearly being done and being adhered to quite well. Now turning to blown windows these are also sub categorised in two categories. 1. Where visibility seriously effected and 2. Where the impact is marginal.

In the first case where glazing is permanently faulty where there is not visibility, these can be dealt with as a responsive repair. In the second case they are likely to be included in the batch programme. However like all repair work it is currently being reviewed and we're are looking to move away from this somewhat reactive approach as we always find people are left far too long and we really shouldn't be waiting till there is a critical mass, we should just be getting on with the job.

As always if any particular case which you have a cause for concern please feel free to see me before the meeting and I'm quite happy to give you an update on the individual case or as we have this evening our general response time.

Mayor

Thank you Councillor Gledhill. Councillor Spillman, do you wish to ask a supplementary question?

Councillor Spillman

I've seen a number of cases including one recently which is just ridiculous. You've got a series of windows which are all blown and the contactor comes round says that *yes they are all blown they all need replacing* but he then says his budget only allows for him to replace two of these windows even though they are part of a two three piece set.

Now this is why I talk about efficiency and efficacy. Don't you think it's a ridiculous situation where that's occurring and its occurring on a semi regular basis and I think it is quite standard now that, that sort of ridiculous decision making is going on due to you know they batch programme being just you know not fit for purpose.

How are we going to deal with that not just in a few years' time, how are we going to deal with that ridiculous situation now?

Mayor

I'm sorry Leader of the Council before you come to this you will note that the time is now 9.30pm that is the official end time of the meeting there was no motion asking for this to be extended so we are now at the end of the meeting.

I will now ask Members who have already got questions do you want to withdraw your question or do you want an answer in writing.