

Appendix 1

Questions by Members of the Council under Procedure Rule 10.0

Council – 16 October 2018

Question from Councillor Asif Khan
Received on 08.10.18

Question

Q. The independent charity, End Child Poverty, has shown that Leggatts and Holywell ward have the highest child poverty figures in Watford. What has the impact been following the redundancy of play workers and the end to supervised play available for families at the Adventure playgrounds in The Harebreaks and Holywell on child poverty figures in Watford?

Answer

The provision of free supervised play facilities does not impact on child poverty figures in Watford.

Watford Borough Council recognises that all areas do have families who need a little more support and hence we have invested in areas which we know make a difference to Watford families to ensure there is an exciting range of activities on offer they can enjoy.

We provide:

- Free Big Events – which we know are well attended by Watford families. The Big Beach is a great way for families who might not be able to get away for a holiday to give their children a seaside experience. The annual Cassiobury fireworks event is free – one of the very few that does not charge for entry.
- Free supervised play activities – for Easter and summer holidays with a mix of indoor and outdoor fun including sports, adventurous play, arts and crafts. These are held across the borough so that families can find an activity close to home
- Free gym and swim for under 18s at our leisure centres in the Easter and summer holidays
- Cassiobury Park – free splash pools from April to September
- Cassiobury Park – free mini explorers (under 5s) and Forestry school (over 5s)

- Watford Museum – free to enter and holds a wide range of free activities for children and families
- Harwoods and Harebreaks Adventurous Playgrounds – which are well-used and extremely popular

And our plans for Oxhey Activity Park and Woodside will create even more opportunities for our younger residents to enjoy themselves – no matter what the income level of their family.

For more information please contact: Kathryn Robson, Head of Corporate Strategy & Communications, Kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk

**Question from Councillor Asif Khan
Received on 08.10.18**

Question

Q. How much money will the council give to Hertfordshire County Council for the running of the replacement 324 service?

Answer

Hertfordshire County Council in conjunction with the Bus Operators have put the following replacement services to cover the 324 service.

- Uno 635 rerouted via Meriden
- W1 new Mon-Fri peak period service Watford - Kingswood or Francis Combe Academy
- W2 new Mon-Fri off-peak service via Radlett Road reintroducing operation via York Way and Phillipers
- 319 Mon-Fri rerouted via Kingswood to provide off-peak links to Watford town centre
- W3/W4 new Saturday services (when the 635 does not operate)

HCC have had to procure the new contract on an “Emergency” basis so it only runs until the end of the financial year and they will need to include the long-term replacement in their next annual local bus tender round. HCC are currently gauging the effectiveness of the new services and review any public feedback.

It is the primary responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council to fund bus routes and

at present Watford is not making a financial contribution to the replacement services as we do not have a budget for this. We will continue to work with Herts County Council and bus operators to ensure that there are adequate services to replace the 324 route.

For more information please contact: Andy Smith, andy.smith@watford.gov.uk

Question from Councillor Nigel Bell
Received on 11.10.18

Question

Q. What is the latest position on the £70,000 owed to the Council by the company that formerly ran Watford Market, TCM?

Answer

The council is still owed the sum detailed above. The previous market operator, Town & Country Markets (TCM) has entered a company voluntary arrangement (CVA). The council is listed as a creditor to TCM.

For more information please contact: Chris Fennell chris.fennell@watford.gov.uk

Question from Councillor Nigel Bell
Received on 11.10.18

Question

Q. When did the Council first know that TCM were in financial trouble and on what date did Officers and the Mayor know that such a large sum was owed to the Council?"

Answer

The timeline below details the correspondence from TCM to the council:

- 20 December 2017, TCM write to the council regarding cash flow issues linked to a development in Cornwall

- December 2017 – July 2018 WBC followed its debt recovery process, taking appropriate actions to recover any monies owed
- 3 July 2018 the council was sent a letter from TCM's legal representatives confirming that they had applied for a CVA
- WBC issued invoice for approximately £25,000, which was duly paid by TCM, so preventing the amount of owed monies escalating
- 31 July WBC takes back operational control of the market

For more information please contact:

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