

QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

To the Leader of the Council:

1. The publication of the draft Local Plan, which highlights the importance of residents having access to public transport, coincided with the decision by First to axe the bus service between Audley and Hanley. The frequency of services on other routes has also been reduced.

Does the Leader of the Council agree that the time is right to: a) reconsider the current arrangements for operating bus services across the Borough; b) for the Borough Council to work with the City Council and other authorities across Staffordshire to put in place a new structure for providing bus services which could involve services being run by new bus operators?

Cllr Richard Gorton

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To the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment

2. In the Leaders statement it expresses that the administration will continue to improve the recycling and waste service, can the portfolio holder for sustainable environment please tell the residents and members what his action plan is for this service to improve? It also states that agency staff will be employed to help with the service, can the portfolio holder also inform members how many agency staff will be employed?, how much this is costing the council? and how many colleagues in the waste and recycling service are currently off on long term sickness?

Cllr Joel Edgington-Plunkett

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To the Leader of the Council

3. Can the Leader give members an overview of the performance of jubilee 2 since the opening of JD Gym and provide us with the current membership figures compared to this time last year?

Cllr Joel Edgington-Plunkett

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To the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centre's and Growth

4. I note that the outturn for 2022/23 shows a favourable variance of £8,000 against the budget.

Given the financial pressures that the Council is under, how did you achieve such a positive outcome?

Cllr Amy Bryan

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To the Leader of the Council

- 5. This year, Love Parks week runs from 28 July to 6 August. This annual campaign celebrates parks, green spaces, and the dedicated volunteers and workers that look after them all year round. These vibrant, living spaces bring communities together and provide an opportunity to connect with nature in the heart of our cities, towns, and neighbourhoods.

Can the Leader provide council with an update and explanation as to why council has decided not to support this initiative?

Cllr Jacqueline Brown

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To the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centre’s and Growth

- 6. The Office of Budget Responsibility has predicted that “Real Household Disposable Income” (The Measure of Real Living Standards here in the UK) per person, is expected to fall by a cumulative 5.7 per cent over the next two financial years. Would the Portfolio Holder for Finance update us how the Borough Council will step in to protect the most vulnerable here in the Borough who are facing the largest two-year fall since records began in 1956-57.

Cllr Mike Stubbs

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To the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centre’s and Growth

- 7. Nationally, the Conservative Government have crashed the Economy leaving Newcastle Residents to pick up the pieces. Does the Portfolio Holder for Finance agree with the Prime Minister that my residents in Talke and Butt Lane, and residents across the Borough, should “hold their nerve” when it comes rising interest rates and stubborn inflation, or does he agree with me that the Prime Minister is simply out of touch?

Cllr Mike Stubbs

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To the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centre’s and Growth

- 8. End Child Poverty is an organisation that highlights the real impacts that poverty has on the daily lives of Children across the UK. Would the Portfolio Holder care to comment on the latest figures for Newcastle under Lyme suggesting that around 7,829 children are currently living in abject poverty?

Cllr Mike Stubbs

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To the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centre's and Growth

9. According to the Office for National Statistics, the average family in Newcastle-under-Lyme has seen the price of the weekly food shop rise by a staggering £700 per year – given there will be an estimated 30,200 households within the Borough directly affected by this, that is a further £21.1M being absorbed by struggling families with minimal help. Given this question, and indeed my previous questions, would the Portfolio holder agree to join with me in writing to our Local MPs to demand more support from a Government that is currently failing our residents?

10. Cllr Mike Stubbs