

## Questions from councillors

### Question 1 – Councillor Malcolm Beecher

"Could the Leader or Chair of the Audit Committee, advise what is the current market value of Spelthorne's commercial property portfolio?"

### Question 2 – Councillor Helen Harvey

"Broken down by ward and out of ward/borough, please can you identify the amount of staff time, and cost of that time (appreciating this might be an estimate), which has been dedicated to answering questions from members of the public about the Council's developments across the borough and is this impacting on service delivery in any areas?"

### Question 3 – Councillor Olivia Rybinski

"As the Deputy Chair of O&S during the previous Boughtflower strong leader model administration, I have continued to take a particular interest in transparency and scrutiny of the business of the council and during the past months, have become increasingly concerned with the apparent failure of each committee to scrutinise their own decisions and also the leader and deputy leader seemingly acting outside their remit.

I recall that during the full council debate on the introduction of the committee system, Cllr Leighton, the then long-standing Chair of O&S, raised her concern over the risk to the authority of no longer having an O&S committee. Apparently, it was the decision of the committee system working group to no longer have an O&S committee!

In view of the clear ongoing need for an O&S committee function does the leader think it was a mistake to lose an O&S committee and will he be recommending in the upcoming review of the committee system, that such a committee be formed or added to the role of another committee such as Administration, as there is at our neighbour at Runnymede council?"

### Question 4 – Councillor Helen Harvey

"During the last full council meeting on 9th December 2021, I asked the leader a formal question regarding how was the £23m Capital funding gap for the new leisure centre going to be met? This was a concern that I had previously raised to the former cabinet portfolio holder Cllr Attewell during the council meeting (and additionally in part 2) on the new replacement leisure centre proposal 22 October 2020.

GetSurrey gave an incisive report on 10th December on the issue, highlighting the weak and vague answer provided by the leader and failure to provide a credible financial solution to meet such a significant estimated gap of £750k per year for the revenue budget, on an ongoing sustainable basis.

My follow-on question was: - 'Are you confident that this chamber should proceed with this state-of-the-art leisure centre, when it appears to me that this answer does not project far enough into the future as to how the gap will be closed?'

In reply, Cllr Nichols informed me that I would be provided with a written answer. On 2nd January 2022, I wrote to remind him that members were yet to be furnished with that

answer. On 12th January Cllr Nichols replied to me saying that he had a draft response but was just checking some things with Finance.

I have still not yet received this answer and it's now over 2 months and today is the deadline for submitting questions for the next Full Council. Due to this failure, I am now compelled to ask the following additional question irrespective of whether Cllr Nichols retrospectively sends me the answer before next weeks' full council meeting:-

One wonders if there is something been hidden. Why have I and members, not been provided with a clear and unambiguous financial plan for how this huge funding gap will be met on a long term and sustainable basis and since the tender for the build has not yet been agreed, will you give an undertaking to provide members with a detailed, transparent and sustainable financial plan covering the short term up to 5 years, 6-20 years and 20-50 as to how this gap is to be met before you proceed to enter into the build contract?"