

Paragraph 12.02 of Part 4 of the Rules of Procedure contained within the City Council's Constitution provides that a Member of the Council may submit a written question to any Cabinet Member.

This document informs Members of Council of written questions put to Cabinet Members and written replies thereto.

Council is recommended to RESOLVE to note the written questions submitted and corresponding responses.

No.	Question from/to	Question
1.	From Councillor Haigh to the Cabinet Member for Environment	Can the Cabinet Member state the policy on reporting drug and psychoactive paraphernalia (needles, NO ₂ canisters, and balloons etc) picked up as 'litter' as evidence of the prevalence of the use of psychoactive substances in the City?
	Response:	
	The Council does not have a policy or procedure on reporting evidence of drug and psychoactive paraphernalia. There is an operational procedure which obliges our waste and street scene contractor to respond within 4 hours to a report of syringes found in a public place. The Council's customer service records show that 9 reports were referred in the past month. NO ₂ canisters, balloons etc are simply collected and dealt with as litter and there is no reporting arrangement in place.	
2.	From Councillor Hilton to the Leader of the Council	Can you tell me whether you or any member of your cabinet have met Redrow Homes or their agents since 5th of August 2016 to date, to discuss planning applications 16/00968/FUL or 18/00306/FUL related to the building of between 89 to 100 dwellings on the former Civil Service Club Sports Ground? If so, when did you meet Redrow Homes or their agents, who was with you and what did you specifically discuss?
	Response:	
	The Cabinet Member for Housing Strategy and Planning (Cllr Organ) and I met representatives of Redrow at their request on 14th February to brief us on their latest application for the former Civil Service Ground. In addition, I met with them on my own on 5 th August 2016 to be briefed on their earlier application. It is not unusual for developers to brief the Leader and relevant Cabinet Members on their plans in the same way that they often brief ward members.	
3.	From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Strategy	Can you tell me whether you have met Redrow Homes or their agents since 5th of August 2016 to date, to discuss planning applications 16/00968/FUL or 18/00306/FUL related the building of between 89 to 100 dwellings on the

		<p>former Civil Service Club Sports Ground?</p> <p>If so, when did you meet Redrow Homes or their agents, who was with you and what did you specifically discuss?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The Leader and I met representatives of Redrow at their request on 14th February to brief us on their latest application for the former Civil Service Ground. It is not unusual for developers to brief the Leader and relevant Cabinet Members on their plans in the same way that they often brief ward members.</p>	
4.	<p>From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Environment</p>	<p>This question is related to planning applications 16/00968/FUL and 18/00306/FUL.</p> <p>Can you tell me whether you have had discussions with other cabinet members, officers of this council or Redrow Homes in regard to a Section 106 contribution towards sport provision, most likely at Blackbridge but possibly elsewhere in Gloucester that might result from the granting of planning permission for up to 100 dwellings on the former Civil Service Club Sports Ground?</p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>I have occasionally been briefed by officers, especially in advance of Full Council, in case a question was asked of me. I have had no discussions with any Members of Cabinet.</p>	
5.	<p>From Councillor Hilton to the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources</p>	<p>As Cabinet Member you made a decision to close the council's public advice reception at Herbert Warehouse and also the help line on the last Wednesday of every month, to enable, as you said, staff training.</p> <p>The public advice reception has been closed on the following dates: 30th May 2018, 27th June 2018, 26th July 2018 and 30th August 2018.</p> <p>For each date please answer separately the following questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many staff were trained on this day? 2. How many staff who were eligible for training, but did not attend due to illness, annual leave or were working normally? 3. What time did the training start and what time did it end? 4. What specific training did staff receive? 5. Who was the trainer? 6. How much did the training cost?
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The monthly office closures between May and August has allowed the Housing and Customer Services teams to engage in a diverse training programme to improve their operational effectiveness in dealing with customer requests as shown in the attached table.</p>	

Over the course of the four one day training session a total 112 staff participated in the training, which equates to 80% of staff eligible for training.

This dedicated training time enabled teams to receive technical training on changes to processes and practice following new legislation (homelessness) and key processes (Council Tax; Elections, Canvassing). It also enabled all staff to engage training to improve personal resilience and providing effective customer service.

Training delivery was through a mix of providers, drawing on internal resources (including the County Council) where appropriate, but investing in external expertise where required.

Reported impact includes:

for the Housing Team:

- More proficient officers delivering the frontline housing service within the constraints of differing new legislation in the housing service which has resulted in reducing the appointment waiting time from 2 months to one week.
- Staff are better equipped to respond to vulnerable households presenting with domestic abuse concerns.
- More competent decision making recognising prescribed requirements in the making of homeless decisions avoiding our exposure to costly legal challenge.
- More confidence and improved morale within the workforce as a consequence of their improved knowledge of legislation concerning their area of work and improved resilience skills for working on the front line
- The service have trained all Housing Officers on the new Homelessness Reduction Act and the new Homelessness system both have meant learning one of the biggest changes to homelessness legislation in over a decade. This has been a steep learning curve for everyone but these days have meant we are in a better place than many of our county colleagues and we are operating almost fully paperless.

for the Customer Services team:

- Staff have better understanding of how to use current systems (ie Uniform) and are able to input data and use the system better and more consistently
- Staff are able to use a wider range of systems and platforms, leading to a better customer service experience and greater resilience
- The organisational commitment to dedicated and high quality training has led to improvements in staff morale and feeling valued.