

## COUNCIL MEETING – 27 JANUARY 2022

### MEMBERS' QUESTIONS RULE OF PROCEDURE 15

#### AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 (A)

**Questions from Councillor Peter O'Brien to Councillor Garry Purdy, Leader of the Council:**

*“As Leader of the Council you will, like all Members, be aware of the unsatisfactory refuse collection service that our residents have endured over the past months, and that officers have recently acknowledged that the service provided by the contractor has been poor and financial penalties issued.*

*In the light of this, will you support a scheme for an appropriate level of compensation for residents, and work with Group Leaders and the Chief Executive to agree the details of a proposal, for consideration by the Council?”*

**Councillor Purdy will provide a verbal response.**

#### **RESPONSE:**

No. Any consideration of compensation to residents would be something for Members to consider at a future Council meeting when other facts are known, perhaps at or after the extraordinary Council meeting that is to consider the outcome of the Independent Waste Review.

In addition, Members should be aware that such a compensation scheme could be time-consuming to devise and implement at a time when officer resources are already stretched to capacity.

The Council has not previously given council tax refunds where residents are dissatisfied with the standard of service that they have received. The main reason for this is that Council Tax is a tax, much like income tax and VAT, and not a charge for different services.

Though the Council is applying KPI's this is an ongoing process and the final amount is still to be determined and Serco have the right to challenge the penalties determined by the Council.

Income from the KPI penalties has not yet been agreed with Serco or entered in the council's accounts. It has not yet been included in a revised budget for 2021/22 and has not yet been committed to be used for any particular purpose.

It will be for councillors to determine how this additional income will be used. Councillors have already agreed that residents who subscribed to the garden waste service in 2021 will be charged £35, rather than £50, for the service in 2022/23 to compensate for the problems experienced this year. In addition, some of the KPI

income might be required to offset unforeseen expenditure or lost income on the waste service in 2021/22 (such as from reduced recycling credits), which have not yet been quantified and could be significant. Any remaining income could be set aside in a reserve to fund future liabilities, such as the replacement of waste collection vehicles, which is expected to require around £4m in 7 years' time.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 8 (B)**

### **Questions from Councillor Peter O'Brien to Councillor Garry Purdy, Leader of the Council:**

*"In September 2020, on your recommendations the Council agreed that a site on Knabhall Lane in Tansley should be taken forward as a permanent site for travellers; and that it should be used in the interim as a temporary site. The Council's Corporate Plan subsequently identified March 2022 as the date by which the necessary planning application(s) for the development should be determined.*

*In the light of the fact that 17 months later no planning application has yet been submitted, let alone determined, can you confirm that it is still your intention that the proposals for a) a temporary travellers site and b) a permanent site on Knabhall Lane should be actively pursued?"*

**Councillor Purdy will provide a verbal response.**

### **RESPONSE:**

In accordance with the resolution of Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020, Officers have been progressing the provision of a temporary and a permanent Traveller site at Knabhall Lane, Tansley.

As a pre-cursor to the formulation and submission of an application for planning permission, the Council has commissioned works to secure the clearance of materials and temporary structures on the land. Due to the presence of a previously unidentified badger sett, a further Ecological Survey has been undertaken and a land contamination survey has been undertaken – the result of which are currently awaited. Upon receipt of these results and the quantification of anticipated costs of any remediation that may be deemed necessary, further reports will be brought back to Members.