

Council 24th July 2023

Questions submitted by Members.

1. Submitted by Councillor Bateman to the Leader

The 4 party coalition of Huntingdonshire District Council (Independent / Liberal Democrat/ Labour / Green) have published their full and detailed coalition agreement, together with detailed outlines of their aspirations and strategy for their four year term of Office?

We are now some two months in from the current administration being formed, and both members and the residents of the District have no clear knowledge of the details of the administrations coalition agreement, nor any information on the administrations strategy or aspirations moving forwards.

Whilst it was welcome to hear the Leader talk of his desire to be open and transparent at the Annual Meeting, that was two months ago and still there is a deafening silence with no information being released.

Will the Leader confirm that the full details of the coalition agreement will be openly published for all to see, or will it continue to be shrouded in mystery?

Response:

The new administration has given officers guidance on its key priorities for the current year. The officers are working to ensure that the delivery plan for 23/24 includes these priorities and a report will be brought to cabinet in September with the reviewed and amended delivery plan.

The process to review priorities for future years will be done as part of the budget setting exercise, to ensure that the resources available are targeted at the priorities. Members will be involved in this in the usual way.

2. Submitted by Cllr Bannister to the Leader

Can the Leader assure the Council that he will circulate the Minutes of the Member Advisory Group Meeting (MAG) to each member of the Council as soon as is reasonably practicable after each MAG meeting.

Response:

The Members Advisory Group is advisory in nature and has no decision-making powers. However, we will be raising this matter with MAG and will keep Members updated on any progress.

3. Submitted by Cllr Mrs Page to the Portfolio Holder for Environmental and Climate Change

Can the cabinet member for the CSP communicate effectively with the ward member and residents what actions are being taken to combat ASB in the Ullesthorpe Ward so their needs are addressed and their voices heard – and not just by social media?

Response:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the anti social behaviour in the Ullesthorpe ward. As you maybe aware this ward is adjacent to the Mere lane traveller site which has been the source of a number of complaints.

There was a public meeting in Lutterworth on the 27th which raise a number of issues around the site and the police have assured us that they have raised their profile in the area to act as a deterrent. There is a Joint Action Group meeting as well this week where this will be one of the discussion items.

I will let you if there are any updates after the meeting and as I find out more.

4. From Councillor Mahal to the Leader

Can the leader please explain why the job advert recruiting a new CX says more about the political composition of the council and doesn't mention ambitions and the process of seeking the best person to lead on behalf of all the residents of the Harborough District?

Response:

The editorial, which was an interview conducted by a journalist at the MJ where the advert was placed, was an opportunity to provide prospective candidates with up to date information on the changes, opportunities and challenges we face in our District. The recruitment advert details what we are looking for in a candidate, inviting them to work with us to deliver our vision for our communities. The link in the advert through to Starfish who are supporting us with our search, leads to further information about the council including the role prolife and links to key documents, policies and strategies.

5. From Cllr Rickman to the Leader

Will the leader publish as soon as possible the priorities [of the administration] and allow all members a debate on priorities and ambitions going forward ?

Response:

The new administration has given officers guidance on its key priorities for the current year. The officers are working to ensure that the delivery plan for 23/24 includes these priorities and a report will be brought to cabinet in September with the reviewed and amended delivery plan.

The process to review priorities for future years will be done as part of the budget setting exercise, to ensure that the resources available are targeted at the priorities. Members will be involved in this in the usual way.

6. From Cllr Nunn to the Leader

How will the leader assure that the independence of a [Chief Executive] candidate is paramount to drive this council forward with pride, to thrive , to grow and to be an acknowledged force in these uncertain times?

Response:

The member appointment Panel as appointed by Council is there to exercise the Council's function of the appointment to statutory posts. The panel, which is politically balanced, consists of three members appointed in accordance with the proportionality rules of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. At least one member of the Panel will be a member of the Cabinet in accordance with Part 4(8) of the Constitution. There is a report going to Council on the 24th July to appoint the member panel. The Leader of the opposition, Cllr Bateman has been nominated to join the panel for the final interviews. The recommendation for appointment for the preferred candidate will come back to full council on the 24th September 2023 to approve the appointment.