

**1) Councillor Whitaker asked Councillor Brookes:**

*In the case of severe fly-tipping on the back streets of the West End of Morecambe and where there is a clear arson risk, what is the standard timescale of a complete clearance?*

Councillor Brookes answered:

You probably won't be surprised to know that the timescale hasn't changed since you last asked the question about three months ago. So, the Council's corporate service level agreement for removal of fly-tipping is five working days. This is the timescale that the budgeted level of resource is designed to achieve in normal circumstances. We don't have any verified data on response times, but officers assure me that a high percentage of fly tips are collected same day as we have a dedicated crew in Morecambe solely assigned to the removal of fly-tipping. They do have to be reported; council staff don't necessarily go trawling round the back streets looking for stuff. Although obviously while they're out if they find things they will remove it. As I said in March, which is when you originally submitted this question, if you evidence that properly reported fly-tips are not being collected within the five day timescale, then I would invite you to supply it.

**2) Councillor Morris had submitted the next two questions for Councillor Dowding. He had left the meeting before the end, therefore the Mayor permitted Councillor Gardiner to ask the questions for him:**

*Please could the portfolio holder explain why LCC is charging the Fire Authority for car parking in the Cable Street car park?*

Councillor Dowding answered:

Lancashire Fire and Rescue and North West Ambulance services are invaluable partners of the Council. During the planning and construction of their new combined station negotiations with the Council took place in order to provide the amount of land they needed and to ensure they had on-site parking for vital staff. Basically, there was a land deal and it was agreed between the Fire service and North West Ambulance service with the City Council. It was all agreed and part of the deal was we had some dedicated spaces in our car park as a result, for their staff. So it was a mutually agreed arrangement that provided the outcomes that they wanted and there was a contribution to the value of our car parking spaces, in effect. But everyone was very happy with the arrangement and as far as I know, nothing has changed.

**3) Councillor Gardiner (on behalf of Councillor Morris) asked Councillor Dowding:**

*With LCC's plan for the regeneration of our high streets, would you not agree with me, that small businesses in town centres should have one free car parking permit, to help reduce their costs?*

Councillor Dowding answered:

For any business, including us as a Council, transport costs, including parking, represent a cost which forms part of the business modelling considerations of the business. For small businesses, the existing parking permits, which are charged for but at very reasonable rates, for use on our car parks represent very good value for money and many of the businesses do make use of these. We provide information on these to representatives of the business community via BID etc. If you would like me to read out the rates, I have them here to show you just what good value they are.

**4) Councillor Hanson asked Councillor Heath:**

*Could the cabinet member for Morecambe's economic prosperity please tell us what plans if any are being worked up for Frontierland?*

Councillor Heath answered:

The Frontierland site has been listed as one of Cabinet's four top priorities for the coming year. It's proposed to ask for leisure community based expressions of interest for the site, which will then go out to consultation, as promised before a decision is made. We are aware that several companies have expressed interests in an informal way particularly in the build of a new hotel. The Cabinet has every intention of ensuring that action takes place on this very important site, important to us all, as soon as possible. I have not had a response to officer to your question but I'm giving you the Cabinet answer. There is a meeting taking place this Friday, when we've asked for an update from officers.

Supplementary question from Councillor Hanson:

I'm as passionate about Morecambe as you are and we're very concerned about Frontierland. With your new Morecambe Advisory Group, I'd ask you to consider to putting me down as a member of that group. I know it's a bit cheeky, but it's the only way I can get to you.

Councillor Heath answered:

I will consider that, Councillor Hanson.

**5) Councillor Hanson asked Councillor Dowding:**

*Could the cabinet member for planning please tell us if the Morecambe Area action plan is still viable and if not what is to replace it?*

Councillor Dowding answered:

This is quite a long response, but I won't try and edit it. The Morecambe Area Action Plan (MAAP) was formally adopted by the City Council on 17 December 2014. This means that it is a Development Plan Document that forms part of the Local Plan for the District and it remains an important framework document that sets out specific policies and actions to improve the local environment in Central Morecambe, and it guides planning decision-making in the district.

The Council has implemented a number of public realm improvement projects that were guided by the policies and objectives of the MAAP, including one of the "key elements" of the MAAP - achieving better pedestrian connections between the town centre and promenade area and investment in the pedestrianised area. Many of the other "key elements" of the MAAP continue to be relevant objectives today, such as encouraging people to "stay longer and spend more". However, I understand that some things in the MAAP could be considered out of date, but producing a completely-updated replacement Area Action Plan is a lengthy process. Such documents have to proceed through various statutory stages before being examined in public by a Government Inspector. And that period, whilst that change is going on can introduce a period of uncertainty for developers who may be seeking to take forward investment proposals.

So an example is, when the Eden North Project was first being discussed, one of the initial concerns from the Eden Project International Team was the planning status of the Central Promenade site. They were reassured that Morecambe had an adopted Area Action Plan that envisaged regeneration across the town and, more specifically, provided policy support for their proposed development.

So the MAAP's implementation plan anticipated that progress on implementing many of the policies initiatives, would have been made by 2021. A monitoring report could be prepared this year and that is what I am now suggesting, that whilst there is no current plan to commence work on a new Area Action Plan, particularly given that planning continue to advance the aspects of the Climate Emergency Local Plan Review and various other planning documents, that this monitoring report will, in effect, help to give us up to date information whilst not being part of a formal review of the MAAP. Initially our planning and housing strategy team will do that and it will be reported to the Local Plan Review Group and, of course, you are a member of that group.

Supplementary question from Councillor Hanson:

Thank you, Councillor Dowding. So, from what I can gather, the plan was devised in 2014, we're now in 2022, so obviously quite a lot of it is out of date, and I don't really see anyone working on a revised version of that because I feel that Morecambe – although some things have been done, I don't deny that – it's really been behind the times as far as other things have gone on, you know the Bailrigg Garden Village project seems to have taken over and taken our officers away from the Morecambe regeneration area. That's what I feel and I think that's true, so I want to know if officers are going to be specifically put back on to the MAAP and the regeneration of Morecambe as a whole?

Councillor Dowding answered:

I'm told that the annual monitoring report about the MAAP says that the policies will be maintained through document review when necessary and no review is currently anticipated. All I can reiterate is that actually, a formal process of reviewing the MAAP creates an element of uncertainty and that's one reason why it's not felt to be the best route to do the formal review and I gave the example of how Eden actually welcomed the fact that there is an adopted policy in place, because it gives some certainty.

**6) Councillor Whitaker asked Councillor Brookes:**

*What staffing Ratio is in place in regard to cleansing the back streets of Morecambe of litter that is spread out all over consequently causing the back street to look a mess and unsightly?*

Councillor Whitaker asked:

There are 26 staff in total, 14 allocated to the Morecambe area team; 54% of the total cleansing staff. These staff cover all street cleansing tasks including fly-tipping, litter, litterbins, graffiti, chewing gum and street sweeping. Cleansing hours of operation are up to 5.30am to 9.30pm seasonally and equate to 518 hours per week over a seven day rota. There is no practical way to calculate how much of this time is spent specifically on the back streets as much of the work is responsive. Removal of fly-tipping being the obvious example.

Supplementary question from Councillor Whitaker:

*Its just a concern that it seems that a lot of the back streets are being left littered and nothing is being done. I don't know whether its due to staff not seeing it or missing it. I know how hard they work and they are very dedicated, our staff, I've never seen staff work harder, but streets are being missed. The consequences really are bad management of private landlords, etc, bins tipping over, litter being everywhere so I'm just asking if we could look at a bit more proactive work and seeing if we can get these streets cleaned more regularly? Thank you.*

Councillor Brookes answered:

Okay I'll have to refer that to officers regarding resourcing but I would re-iterate the points I made before about reporting things. They are very responsive to reports.

**7) Councillor Whitaker asked Councillor Brookes:**

*I have been informed that it is the job of elected representatives to undertake cleaning of back streets due to lack of staff -Is that the case? (Councillor Whitaker qualified the question he had submitted, by saying he knew that it was not the case but it seemed to be the perception of a lot of people within the Morecambe area now).*

Councillor Brookes answered:

I think you have answered that question in asking it really. Yes, I would agree with you that it is not the case.