

To: All Members of the Council
(Other Members for Information)

When calling please ask for:
Fiona Cameron, Democratic Services Manager

Policy and Governance

E-mail: fiona.cameron@waverley.gov.uk

Direct line: 01483 523226

Calls may be recorded for training or monitoring

Date:

Dear Councillors

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2018

I refer to the agenda for the Council, on Tuesday, 11 December 2018 and now enclose the text of the questions and responses for the following agenda items:

5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To answer the following questions from members of the public, received in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.

The deadline for receipt of questions was 5pm on Tuesday 4 December 2018.

The following question has been submitted by:

Gill Leslie and Lynda MacDermott, of Cranleigh

"We are very much aware of the scourge of Modern Slavery today. We are told by Surrey police that all of us in the county live within 3 miles of a modern day slave.

Will Waverley Borough Council sign up and implement the Charter against Modern Slavery, as actively promoted by the Co-operative Group, following the example of Surrey County Council and 50 other councils throughout the country?

The Charter is itemised below.

The Modern Day Slavery Charter

Waverley Borough Council will:

- 1. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.*
- 2. Require its contractors to comply fully with to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance.*

3. *Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.*
4. *Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.*
5. *Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.*
6. *Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.*
7. *Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.*
8. *Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.*
9. *Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.*
10. *Report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually.* “

Response by the Mayor:

“Waverley takes the issue of Modern Slavery very seriously.

It is referred to in our adopted Safeguarding Policy and is discussed with our partners within the confidential Community Safety meetings focused on Serious and Organised Crime. In addition the Modern Slavery Act 2015 formed part of our Health Inequalities report created by our Overview & Scrutiny Panel and adopted by Council earlier this year.

The Council has committed to making a clear statement on this subject which will be on our website in the new year following discussion with councillors. Modern Slavery and all the safeguarding issues relating to it are a high priority for us. Waverley Borough Council and our partners will continue to work together to eradicate this horrific crime.”

6. QUESTION TIME

To answer any questions received in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.2.

The deadline for receipt of questions was 5pm on Tuesday 4 December 2018.

The following question has been received from Cllr David Beaman, Farnham Castle Ward:

“WBC's recently adopted Economic Development Strategy includes in its vision the need to provide high quality business and employment support but this will be frustrated if the Post Office in Farnham is closed and replaced by a facility in W H Smith on The Borough. There is limited space in W H Smith and as a consequence it is unlikely that all the services provided in the current Post Office will continue. In addition The Borough where W H Smith is located has limited pavement space and high levels of air pollution are recorded in the area.

Farnham's current Post Office is well used both by local residents and businesses and there is significant opposition to the proposal as evidenced by

a petition undertaken on three consecutive Saturday mornings on which there are now just over 1,500 signatures (over 2 signatures being collected every minute). Since postal deliveries will continue from the same building closing the Post Office will not allow any potential redevelopment of the existing site.

Will, therefore, WBC oppose the closure of Farnham's Post Office and any transfer of services to W H Smith and an invitation sent to the management of Post Office Counters to appear before a meeting of one of WBC's Overview and Scrutiny Committees to answer questions on these proposals?"

Response by the Mayor:

“The Leader of Waverley Borough Council, Cllr Julia Potts was dismayed to hear that there was to be a consultation concerning the potential closure and proposed move of the much valued Farnham Post Office. The Post Office is a key footfall driver on West Street and often a vital service for small businesses. Cllr Jim Edwards Portfolio Holder for Economic Development will be writing on behalf of Waverley Borough Council to express concerns at this proposal. The Chamber of Commerce have also said that this would be disastrous, not just for small businesses; they added that they use this daily for all special/recorded mail and the Post Office always seems to have a queue therefore it is hardly underutilised

The Council feels very strongly that it is important to retain an efficient and full post office service in the heart of the community in Farnham, which is one of Surrey's largest settlements. Officers have spoken to the Post Office network and have been informed that a formal 6 week consultation will be launched in the New Year. Farnham Ward Councillors have been contacted and have already expressed strong views about the proposed move. The matter will be considered in the public domain by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In the meantime, Officers are arranging to meet with representatives from the Post Office and Royal Mail to ensure that they are clear on the strength of feeling that this Borough has on the closure and move of a vital community service which is highly valued and used by residents.“

Yours sincerely

Fiona Cameron
Democratic Services Manager

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