

Meeting of the City Council

20 September 2023

Report title	Written Questions by Councillors	
Referring person	Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman, Councillor Jacqui Coogan, Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN, Councillor Christopher Haynes, Councillor Stephanie Haynes, Councillor Wendy Thompson	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Bhupinder Gakhal, Cabinet Member for Visitor City Councillor Chris Burden, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education Councillor Jasbir Jaspal, Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing Councillor Stephen Simkins, Acting Leader of the Council	
Accountable director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
Originating service	Governance	
Accountable employee	David Pattison	Chief Operating Officer
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Recommendation for decision:

The Council is recommended to:

That the relevant Executive Members respond to the questions received in accordance with Council's procedure rules for a maximum of 30 minutes.

1.0 Purpose

1.1 For the Cabinet Members to respond to the questions received:

a. The Halls

Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman to ask the Cabinet Member for Visitor City:

The new-look The Halls Wolverhampton has received a ringing endorsement from Blur's agent and customers. Legendary magicians Penn & Teller and music stars The Script, James Bay and The Vamps are just some of the performers who have so far attracted thousands of visitors to the city centre venue.

Can the Cabinet Member for Visitor City provide an update on the impact of the opening of The Halls – e.g., footfall into the city, benefit to the local economy etc?

b. Cost of Living Crisis

Councillor Jacqui Coogan to ask the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education:

Interest rates remain at a current 15- year high of 5.25% and this is affecting everything from loans and credit cards to mortgages. There is a continued squeeze on families who are already struggling to make ends meet, with some homeowners facing mortgage hikes of up to £2,600 per year.

Can the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education provide some reassurance that this Council will continue to help Wulfrunians through this cost-of-living crisis, by outlining its plans over the coming years?

c. Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Councillor Barbara McGarrity QN to ask the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education:

The Department for Education has announced that school buildings made from reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) should close immediately until safety work is undertaken. Pupils across the country will be forced to resume their studies either online or in temporary facilities after the government ordered more than 100 schools to close immediately following fears over a type of concrete, described as "80 per cent air" and "like an Aero Bar".

Can the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education confirm if there are any schools in Wolverhampton (including academies) that are affected by this?

d. Local Police Stations

Councillor Christopher Haynes to ask the Lead Member on the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel:

Has the Lead Member on the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel asked for the reinstatement of local police stations in Wolverhampton, such as we previously had in Merry Hill?

e. Life Expectancy

Councillor Stephanie Haynes to ask the Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing:

Please can the Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing explain what the Council are doing to address gap in the average life expectancy of Wolverhampton residents compared to the national average?

f. Beatties

Councillor Wendy Thompson to ask the Leader of the Council:

Could the Cabinet Member concerned give an updated report on the efforts made by this Council to urge development to take place on the site in the city centre that previously was known as "Beatties"?