

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 14th September 2021

Member questions (from Councillors not on the Committee)

- 1. The update report on changes to refuse collections stipulates that "there is also a risk that the planned saving of £150k is not achieved in 21/22." What is the likelihood of the saving being achieved?**

Jack Rydeheard

The achievement of the £150k saving in 21/22 is affected by a number of issues that are separate from the stabilisation of the new rounds. This includes unavoidable additional costs throughout the year as a result of already covering for long term sickness, Covid related absence, shortage of HGV drivers and holidays prior to the new rounds being introduced as well as ongoing cover. The budgets will be reported via corporate financial reports to Cabinet. The overall waste management budget is already forecast to overspend. If not achieved in 21/22 the saving will be achieved in 22/23 and ongoing.

- 2. The chaos surrounding missed bin collections is still ongoing. The Cabinet Member responsible, gave assurance at the last full Council in July that he accepted responsibility and would ensure the bin collection system would be back to normal. As this has not happened, would the Cabinet Minister resign and hand responsibility over to someone capable of doing the job properly?**

Councillor Jackie Harris

Since 21 June the performance had dropped below acceptable standards but performance has improved to near 'business as usual' over the past few weeks, however we've still more to do to build in resilience. The percentage of missed bins had a peak on 2 successive Fridays at the start of August when 22% of bins were missed because the rounds weren't working well enough as well as from issues such as holidays, sickness, shortage of HGV drivers, blocked access, and roadworks. At the end of the week beginning 16 August this had significantly reduced to 1.9% missed bins per day.

- 3. The Council has aired plans for the development of the basement at Radcliffe Market as part of the regeneration plans. Given that such a conversion would involve considerable sums of money what are the plans around the responsibility of day to day running of this operation.**

A Community Benefit Society is by its nature run by enthusiastic unpaid volunteers who are by no means certain to possess the skills required to manage such an operation.

Is a Community Benefit Society the best practice option, given the internal wrangling that has and is taking place at the moment and what options if any are being explored to maintain and expand upon the continued success of the Market.

Councillor Mike Smith

Response David Lynch – Assistant Director Regeneration

The Radcliffe Market Hall Community Benefit Society manages the market operation within the market hall building which is still owned by the Council. The Council also owns the spaces within the basement and chambers which are included within the Levelling Up proposals.

There is no contract in place between Radcliffe Market CBS and the facilities included within the Levelling Up proposals. It would be great if local councillors assisted the council in exploring options around integrating these spaces into the community. We have options for these spaces and as we get more clarity on the outcome of the funding, it would be great to collaborate with councillors and the community on the development of the specification and explore options for the long term management.

4. Why has the Council failed to fully engage with tenants of the commercial properties who will be impacted by the plans for the Hub in Radcliffe town centre especially after the Council bought the building in April 2021? With only short amounts of time remaining on their leases it has fallen to the shop owners to contact Bury Council to find out what is happening. Do you think engagement with these primary stakeholders has met the standards it should have done?

5. With rumours of changes at Radcliffe Market can the Leader please explain what the plans are for the Market going forward? How does the Council propose that it will ensure that this is investigated in an open way to ensure public confidence in the market going forward?

Councillor Jo Lancaster

Response David Lynch Assistant Director Regeneration

Commercial tenant engagement.

The Council acquired the estate from London & Associated Properties (LAP) in May 2021. It would be unfair to hold the council accountable for the actions (or inaction) of another organisation before we were involved.

However, the Council acquired the properties in May, with LAP continuing to act as the landlord, managing day to day issues, tenancies, payment and communication. Their managing agent called Carter Towler Surveyors immediately wrote to the tenants updating them on the change of ownership.

The Council is aware of the disruption to local businesses when we have to demolish the building to deliver the Radcliffe regeneration programme. With this in mind we also wrote to the tenants – updating them on as much info we have before the Levelling Up announcement later in the year – assigning a nominated council property officer to each tenant.

Since then each tenant has been contacted several times to understand their property requirements with a view to exploring the following options

- 1) moving the tenants to other council owned commercial property in Radcliffe town centre
- 2) moving the tenants to non-owned commercial property in Radcliffe town centre
- 3) moving the tenants to other council owned commercial property elsewhere in the district
- 4) moving the tenant to non-owned commercial property elsewhere in the district
- 5) moving the tenants into the completed Hub building once its complete in c.2 years time
- 6) interim arrangements for temporary relocation
- 7) exploring ways in which the council can assist with the moving
- 8) exploring ways in which the council can assist with the financial impact

Whilst written and phone communication is good, its not as effective as face-to-face meetings and building relationships with the affected tenants. As restrictions have been lifted, and when it has been safe to allow officers to do so, we have also commenced a series of face to face meeting with individual tenants – some of which have been attended by Councillors. We will continue to do this going forwards.

The disruption of demolishing the buildings (needed to unlock the regeneration of the town) and the uncertainty around timings is not ideal and we are sympathetic to the businesses in Radcliffe town centre. To facilitate further meaningful conversations and understanding of the property options available to tenants affected, we are actually opening a council regeneration office in a vacant shop on Dale Street. This will be open in the next couple of weeks and allow tenants, local businesses, politicians and members of the public to drop in and discuss the programme with officers from the Regeneration, Property and Planning teams. This office will also be used by the new community hub team when operating from Radcliffe.

Radcliffe Market

Radcliffe Market is open and continues to trade. The councils Market service is working with Radcliffe Market Hall Community Benefit Society regarding changes in their board of directors. We are happy to update councillors following the conclusion of this work.

As previously stated there is no contract in place between Radcliffe Market and the facilities included within the Levelling Up proposals. It would be great if local

councillors assisted the council in exploring options around integrating these spaces into the community.

**6. Can the Leader of the Council provide a list of the number of staff receiving gross salaries including Bury MBC NI Contribution and Pension payments in the range of:
£0-£40,000 / £40,001-£85,000 / £85,001-£120,000 / £120,000-£Above - Similarly, the same range as at May 2011**

7. Will the Leader provide the latest spend for all Covid Grants received from HMG

Councillor Caserta

The figures are as follows:

Small Business Grant/Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant	£39,623,000
Discretionary Grant	£1,956,589
Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSG) (Open)	£1,983,075
LRSG (Closed)	£8,184,642
LRSG (Closed Addendum)	£2,237,036
LRSG (Sector)	£4,716
Christmas support payment for wet-led pubs	£87,000
Closed Business Lockdown Payments	£6,772,000
Restart Grant	£9,206,101
Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) (To date)	£5,955,799

Of these grants, only ARG remains open and with funds (approx. £1m left) to spend (March 2022 closing date)

The grand combined total to date is £76,009,958