

WRITTEN QUESTIONS – FULL COUNCIL – 24 April 2019

1. Relating to Minutes 125 and 135 of Council meeting of 27th February 2019

Questions submitted by Councillor Mrs N Woollatt and the response of the Deputy Chief Executive (S151)

In relation to information published regarding the special urgency decision to agree in principle for this Council to make a loan to the NHS of £2.1m.

1. Why, despite it now having been raised on several occasions, do both the summary details and statutory notice published on the website (as at 13.4.19) still not contain a note of correction of the false information published in the notice stating that the project had the benefit of planning permission when it did not?

RESPONSES

It has been pointed out that the initial urgent decision form included reference to the site having planning permission, this was incorrect and has been apologised for. However, in order to keep a transparent record of the Council's formal decision making process, our records must keep the original unaltered decision recording form to enable anyone wishing to see on what basis a decision was made.

It should be remembered that this was an "in principle" decision that was made prior to all of the necessary due diligence that the Council would undertake in order to protect/mitigate any of the potential risks associated with this commercial transaction. Members can be and have been reassured that until the Council receives all the detailed information that is necessary to enter into a loan arrangement of this magnitude, then no decision will be formally agreed.

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2. Relating to Minute 138 of Council meeting of 27th February 2019
(question to Leader regarding weed spraying)

Questions submitted by Councillor Mrs N Woollatt and the response of the Leader

Some years ago the then Head of Environmental Services gave me an assurance that the Council did not use glyphosate based weed killer in any of our operations.

1. Please will you confirm whether this is still the case?
2. Does the Council currently subcontract any of this type of work out?
3. If we do, or were to subcontract in the future, does the Council have any policy to set conditions preventing the use of glyphosate?

RESPONSES

1. The Council's response to media and social media enquiries has been '*In a heavily regulated industry and within national guidelines, we can confirm that we do use Glyphosate in the form of Round Up Pro Vantage.*' The Head of Environmental Services is a legacy role; glyphosate has been the industry standard for many years and as such Mid Devon District Council has been using it for many years.
 2. The provision of grounds maintenance is in-house and not subcontracted. From time to time in order to cover staff absence a suitably trained agency member of staff may undertake weed spraying.
 3. The Council do not have a policy to set conditions preventing the use of glyphosate. At present a suitable and effective alternative has yet to come to market.
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