



COUNCIL – 17TH JULY 2018

**SUBJECT: ANSWER TO QUESTIONS RECEIVED UNDER RULE OF PROCEDURE
10(2)**

REPORT BY: INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER

1. TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT

To the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy, Infrastructure and Sustainability from Councillor Kevin Etheridge.

- (1) To ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with the recent unfilled and deletion of the Assistant Town Centre Manager Post would he provide re-assurance and detailed reasons that all the front line services to all the Town Centres, High Street and Retailers will not be reduced and each town will be protected equally.
- (2) To ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member to provide the terms of reference, timescale and implications of any re-structure in regard to the Town Centres, and how this will affect retailers, and define what consultation has been undertaken with Town Centre Management Committees in each location in this regard and in relation to question 1.
- (3) To ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member to provide a list of services he proposes to reduce, and stop following the removal of one full time post, and will he reconsider this decision within the interests of our Town Centre, and list the consultation undertaken with the local elected members in the Towns and Wards affected prior to this decision being implemented.

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR SEAN MORGAN, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY.

Question 1 – Answer

There has been no decision taken at this time to delete the post of Assistant Town Centre Manager. As any post becomes vacant a decision must be taken in terms of whether or not to fill that post as part of the ongoing work on the Medium Term Financial Plan. The current post holder is in post until 5th August 2018. With regard to the services delivered to all of the Town Centres this question is far reaching as our services are provided by a multitude of staff across many service areas and are not restricted to the work of the Town Centre Management Team (e.g. street cleansing, waste collection, highways maintenance)

Question 2 – Answer

The restructure that is being undertaken is for the whole of Regeneration & Planning and will be undertaken in order to be implemented in readiness for the next financial year. There will not be any consultation with retailers or the town centre management committees concerning the Planning & Regeneration Restructure.

It is worth noting however that the dynamics of town centres are altering from what was once almost a purely retail function to a much greater mixed tenure of lifestyle café/bars, bespoke service centred businesses, entrepreneurial start-ups and offices. This change in dynamic will have to be reflected in the reorganisation of the business team structure.

Question 3 – Answer

At this point in time a decision has not been taken to delete the post. I would however make the point that many difficult decisions will have to be made moving forward if we are to meet MTFP obligations.

The Town Centre Manager has been in discussion with the Head of Service and additional resources within Planning & Regeneration have been identified to take on some of the functions currently undertaken by the Assistant when that post becomes vacant. I would however request that Members be mindful that the Town Centre Management Team will reduce in the short term, although I am confident that we will continue to provide an excellent service, as far as we are able, given the reduced resources for this service.