

**Full Council 7 October 2021 – Schedule of written responses to Public Questions not answered at the meeting**

Agenda Reference	Question	Response
7C	<p><b>Dr. Charles of Rochester submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services, Councillor Filmer:</b></p> <p>When will the Council take action regarding the excessive congestion across Strood/Rochester bridge? The journey from the Esplanade is taking anywhere from 30 minutes and I hate to think of the amount of pollution being caused as a result.</p> <p>I would like to know what will be done and when?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question Dr Charles. This is one of the busiest roads in Medway and has always carried a large volume of traffic during the peak hours, as it provides a strategic link between Rochester, Chatham and Strood. Whilst there are currently no plans to make any physical changes to the bridge, my Engineers are planning to review the operation of the traffic signals between Star Hill and Rochester Bridge, to make sure they operate as efficiently as possible. We will also continue to promote the use of different modes of travel, particularly given the proximity of Rochester Station and the frequent bus services that operate along this corridor.</p>
7F	<p><b>Stuart Bourne of Rainham submitted the following question to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services, Councillor Doe:</b></p> <p>Like many other residents, I have noticed that the demolition of Splashes hasn't taken place despite approval being granted at the beginning of June. And without any detailed updates from the Council on what is happening, there's lots of negative speculation on what is happening and whether it'll be ready by 2022 as promised.</p> <p>Please can you me tell me when the demolition is scheduled to take place and what is the exact timetable for the rest of the project?</p>	<p>Thank you for your question Mr Bourne.</p> <p>We have contracted a company to undertake the demolition works required to remove the existing Splashes facility. As part of this process, UK Power Networks (UKPN) have recently identified a transformer which needs to be relocated. Demolition works cannot proceed until the transformers are removed, and this has to be done by UKPN. Whilst unfortunate, this will not delay the overall programme, as our Demolition contractors are ready to mobilise once we have the confirmed date. We are planning to appoint consultants to develop the design for the new building in early November. We will, of course, ensure we keep local residents and interested parties up to date with developments at the relevant points, as I am sure you would agree, this is a superb development for Medway and is very much part of our Child-Friendly City ambitions.</p>

Agenda Reference	Question	Response
7M	<p><b>Catriona Jamieson on behalf of Medway Green Party submitted the following question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, Councillor Chitty:</b></p> <p>Medway Green Party are wondering if you agree with the quote below from the RSPB who are clearly not convinced that fences will prevent cat roaming and that cat covenants are enforceable.</p> <p>"We have been consistent in our advice to Medway Council that a 400m buffer is the only secure and sustainable way to safeguard the nightingale population at the Chattenden Woods &amp; Lodge Hill SSSI. We do not believe that lesser distances are consistent with the evidence based on cat roaming distances, and we remain unconvinced of the efficacy of alternative mitigation measures such as fencing or cat covenants. We believe that building substantial numbers of new houses within less than 400m of the boundary of the SSSI will create a significant and permanent predation problem for the UK's most important population of nightingales - a problem that can and should be avoided."</p>	<p>Thank you for your question Ms Jamieson.</p> <p>We do understand the importance of the SSSI, particularly for nightingales and appreciate your point about 400m and cat predation. This is why as part of HIF and the Local Plan work we have commissioned a Cumulative Ecological Impact Assessment for Hoo and are working with Natural England on the findings of that, specifically following the requirements for avoid, mitigate, compensate. While we recognise that with Lodge Hill there is the triple fencing that exists to the former MoD area, that in itself is not sufficient. Through the CEIA and discussions with Natural England we are considering a package of measures that will provide the equivalent of the protection that would be achieved through a 400m buffer.</p>