

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 16 MAY 2018

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Question 1

Colin Arnott, Thorley, to ask the Leader of the Council:

With reference to the report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services Monitoring Officer, re: Recommendations to the Council from the Executive at para. 7.34, I note that the Draft Recommendation now proposes to make more limited changes to the Thorley Parish boundary than that requested by the Town Council. However, with regard to the areas still recommended for transfer to Bishop`s Stortford, whilst seeing the logic of a CGR to unify St Michaels Mead, the site south of Whittington Way is an entirely different issue. Why is a CGR of 53 ha's of agricultural land with no residents required at this time - or if ever? The Town Council (para.7.9) suggest that, if and when this site is developed, future residents "are likely to feel of part of Bishop`s Stortford" yet offer no compelling evidence for this, and indeed, the consultations with existing Thorley residents suggest the opposite. Is therefore a CGR of this area appropriate at this time or should it be left to await the outcome of any potential development and the actual views of any future residents?

Question 2

Roger Halford, Thorley, to ask the Leader of the Council:

What was the compelling evidence submitted to Bishop's Stortford Town Council that must have caused them to ask for a Community Governance Review to make drastic change to the town boundary with Thorley Parish, probably leading to demise of the parish? Now that a considerably changed version of the request has been put forward through the Executive, has the BSTC original request been withdrawn and a new CGR proposed by EHDC? If a new CGR is put forward by EHDC should this not be considered by an independent body having no interest in the outcome?

Question 3

Anthony Robins, Thorley, to ask the Leader of the Council:

This review is stated to be in response to the request for boundary change by BSTC. Given that the draft recommendations following the opinion expressed both by the Scrutiny and Executive committees differ so significantly in both fact and degree from the original BSTC request, would it not now be sensible for BSTC to submit a revised request, and for Thorley parish council to submit its own counter proposal before the second consultation?

Question 4

Russell Cox, Bishop's Stortford, to ask the Leader of the Council:

Would the Executive member agree that, given that Thorley and Bishop's Stortford have equal status as parishes, there is no reason why the proposed development land cannot remain in Thorley?

Question 5

Janet Rolph, Thorley, to ask the Leader of the Council:

Thorley is a parish of scattered, identifiable communities, each focusing on different activities because of circumstances, but also having in common tradition, sense of place, and linkages homing in from settlements all around to its central village church. It already has community, connectivity and cohesion that Community Governance Reviews are meant to achieve. On what grounds therefore, and with what benefits for Thorley Street and Pig Lane residents, can the boundary move to the bypass, allowing encroachment of town into the very middle of parish land, be justified?

Question 6

Sylvia McDonald, Thorley, to ask the Leader of the Council:

Why are two quite different issues, with nothing in common apart from being two examples of Bishop's Stortford town interests straddling Thorley village boundary, being linked together in one of the EHDC CGR recommendations [(B)2] proposed ostensibly as meeting the "need to secure community governance which is reflective of the identities and interests of the community in that area"? Looking at order of magnitude, some 16% of a town housing estate community physically falls in Thorley parish territory at its very western edge in the one case [St Michael's Mead], and in the other some 95% of parish territory is being proposed for what is town urban extension and encroachment into the very middle of the village environs right up close to two of the scattered communities that categorise so many of our rural Hertfordshire villages. They are different issues needing separate procedural treatment.

Question 7

Robin Lumsden, Thorley, to ask the Leader of the Council:

Does the combined effect of recommendations 3 and 4 mean that on a map of the proposed boundaries, if a straight line were drawn from end to end east - west following the line of the bypass across the areas, there would be ward boundary crossings from Thorley urban, into B.S. South, Thorley urban again, then Thorley rural? This arrangement does not lend itself to achievement of good governance and would mimic the already existing anomaly in Church Lane which has not been addressed in the BSTC's original request for boundary change.

Question 8

Ann Lowe, Bishop's Stortford, to ask the Leader of the Council:

Will the numbered recommendations under (B) be taken individually in turn, with any subsequent recommendations (or parts of recommendations) withdrawn if precluded by earlier approval or rejection of recommendations (or parts of recommendations)? Also, will a recommendation, linking together two unrelated issues, for example recommendation (B)2, be treated as two separate recommendations?