

CABINET – 20 DECEMBER 2011

ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Questions received from the following Members:

1. Councillor Zoe Patrick to Councillor David Robertson

"Why are the sandwiches sold in the Common Hall cafe being bought from a company in London rather than being purchased locally according to the County's procurement rules? According to the Source Oxfordshire website it states "We are supporting the Federation of Small Businesses' Keep Trade Local campaign - the Oxford part of which was launched in November 2008." This is certainly not consistent with that policy. It has also meant that there have been some days where there have been no sandwiches available because they have not arrived from London."

Answer

"When originally looking for suppliers of ready-made sandwiches for The Common Hall Cafe we invited several companies to produce trial samples of their products, including a local company called Brambles. Only one company, Greencore, provided us with these samples and met with us, despite the other companies stating they would deliver samples, etc.

We are aware that there have been some problems recently with delivery from Greencore which we have addressed, however we are currently looking again at alternative suppliers. We will consider local suppliers, as we did in the first instance, however, while our preference would be to use a local provider, our choice of suppliers will be governed by cost and location as well as reliability."

2. Councillor Jean Fooks to Councillor David Robertson

"The lack of an information board in the reception area of County Hall is meaning that people, whether members or visitors, have to ask the reception staff where their meetings are. This is unwelcoming to visitors and an unnecessary nuisance for members and the reception staff. I understand that in the present financial situation, it is not possible to provide a new electronic board giving the information. There is usually an A4 sheet to which the staff refer. Would it be possible to enlarge this to A3 or bigger and display it on the wall, so that it is immediately visible and would help people find where their meeting is without having to bother reception staff and often have to wait in a queue to ask?"

Answer

"The details of the meetings on the ground floor is now displayed on a notice board on the right hand side of the reception desk. This should help visitors

find out where their meeting is to be held and, hopefully will reduce the need to wait in a queue. To cut down on costs we have utilised a notice board that was retrieved from Cricket Road for this purpose.

Visitors to meetings in secure areas of the Council building will still have to report to reception.

My thanks to Cllr Fooks for her suggestion.”