

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

QUESTION PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 8:2

FROM COUNCILLOR P.J. CLARKE

TO THE LEADER

VOLUNTARY MERGERS

Members will be aware that the Welsh Government is currently seeking a response to the White Paper whereby expressions of interest for voluntary mergers are required by November 2014.

There are financial incentives available to any local authority which merges with another in advance of the inevitable forced mergers under the proposed legislation. The Vale of Glamorgan Council are faced with cuts of £35m, and there are considerable savings to be made from voluntarily pursuing a merger with Cardiff as recommended in all options proposed by the Williams Report and favoured by the Welsh Government. An additional four years of savings would have a significant impact, reducing the need to make cuts in front line services.

Can the Leader explain why this Council has not entered into dialogue with another authority to voluntarily expedite the process in the interest of the Taxpayer?

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

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FROM COUNCILLOR R.L. TRAHERNE

TO THE LEADER

WILLIAMS REPORT

It is abundantly clear that the First Minister and the Welsh Government are ramping up the pressure on Local Authorities with a view to implementing the Williams Report's recommendations in regard to the reorganisation of Local Government.

It would seem that not a month goes by without someone of note praising the Williams Report in the media and encouraging the First Minister to "wield the axe" without delay. It is also of note that Leighton Andrews has been recalled to the Welsh Government Cabinet to mastermind reorganisation. The Welsh Local Government Association appears weak and vacillating and rumours abound. One of the most sinister is the existence of a tawdry deal between Labour and Plaid Cymru to force reorganisation through the National Assembly for Wales after the 2016 Elections.

Can the Leader answer the following questions?

Firstly, can he tell Members whether he has had any discussions with the First Minister and or any other Welsh Government Minister about the Williams Report and its proposals for the future of Local Government?

Secondly, if he has had such discussions, and I cannot believe that he has not, could he tell Members what was discussed?

Thirdly, can he confirm whether our Assembly Member, Jane Hutt, is supportive of a merger between Cardiff City Council and the Vale of Glamorgan Council? I think that it is important that there is absolute clarity on this issue.

And, finally, is he aware of any 'National Deal' between the Labour Party and Plaid Cymru with a view to forcing the Williams Report's recommendations for the reorganisation of Local Government through the National Assembly after the 2016 Assembly Elections.

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FROM COUNCILLOR R.L. TRAHERNE

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND VISIBLE SERVICES

COLLECTIONS OF RUBBISH AND RECYCLING

The collection of rubbish and recycling affects every single family in the Vale of Glamorgan and this Council has made excellent progress in meeting Welsh Government targets to date. However, whilst we have managed to increase our recycling rates from 54% in March 2013 to 55% in March 2014, in 2016 we will be expected to recycle 58% of our waste which is, I would suggest, going to be difficult under the current arrangements.

I was wondering whether the Cabinet Member could update Council on his plans for meeting this demanding target. In particular could he let us know?

Whether he intends to move to monthly 'black bag collections' in order to encourage recycling?

Whether he intends to move to three weekly 'black bag collections' in order to encourage recycling?

Whether he intends to limit the number of 'black bags' per collection per household in order to encourage recycling? For example, in Swansea each household is only allowed three black bags every two weeks.

Whether he intends to introduce 'see-through' bags in order to highlight those households who are failing to recycle?

And finally, whether he would like to introduce a 'pay as you throw' policy, meaning the more that households recycle the less they pay for the service.

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QUESTION PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 8:2

FROM COUNCILLOR N.P. HODGES

TO THE LEADER

KNAP LIDO

Are there any plans to build a lido at the Knap in Barry?

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FROM COUNCILLOR N.P. HODGES

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, INNOVATION, PLANNING
AND TRANSPORTATION

WATERPARK AT BARRY ISLAND

Would you consider specifically marketing part of the former Butlins site for a waterpark?

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FROM COUNCILLOR N.P. HODGES

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, INNOVATION, PLANNING
AND TRANSPORTATION

KNAP LIDO

What were the profit and loss figures for the former Knap Lido in the last 5 years of its operation?

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FROM COUNCILLOR N.P. HODGES

TO THE LEADER

PORTHKERRY CEMETERY

How many burial spaces are there available at Porthkerry Cemetery and what are the plans for the future?

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FROM COUNCILLOR N.P. HODGES

TO THE LEADER

CABINET RESPONSIBILITIES

Would you consider changing the Cabinet responsibilities to ensure that the future role of the Library Services is properly represented to the Council and its residents?

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QUESTION PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 8:2

FROM COUNCILLOR C.P. FRANKS

TO THE LEADER

INSULATION OF COUNCIL BUILDINGS

With the growing cost of energy, the risks to the security of supply and the need to reduce dependency on non-renewable fuel, will the Leader comment on what progress has been made to improve the insulation of council buildings, including schools, detailing the financial investment involved?

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FROM COUNCILLOR C.P. FRANKS

TO THE LEADER

FINANCIAL IMPACTS ON OUR BIO-DIVERSITY

Will you indicate how the current financial situation will impact on our bio-diversity aspirations, especially in respect of cutting grass verges and other public spaces?

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

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FROM COUNCILLOR R.L. TRAHERNE

TO THE LEADER

INCREASING MEETINGS OF FULL COUNCIL

I think I am right in saying that Cardiff City Council and Rhondda Cynon Taff Council meet in 'Full Council' 12 times each year to discuss Council Business in order that the Administration can explain to Members how it is tackling current and, indeed, future issues. In view of this fact it is perhaps rather worrying that the Vale of Glamorgan Council only meets 5 times each year in 'Full Council' and, as such, Members have relatively few opportunities to question the Administration. In view of the current and ongoing 'Review' of the Council Constitution is the Leader minded to increase the number of times that 'Full Council' meets each year in order to promote greater democracy and transparency in this Council.

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FROM COUNCILLOR R.L. TRAHERNE

TO THE THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS

Earlier this year it was announced by the Welsh Government that 20 million pounds would be given to 40 underperforming schools from a new Schools Challenge Cymru Fund to help them improve. The Cabinet Member will be aware that Barry Comprehensive is one of these schools. Whilst I feel sure that the additional support will be most welcome there is the wider issue as to why Barry Comprehensive School is underperforming to such an extent that it has been selected for this special assistance from the Welsh Government. Perhaps the Cabinet Member can explain why things have gone so badly wrong?

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FROM COUNCILLOR R.L. TRAHERNE

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, INNOVATION, PLANNING
AND TRANSPORTATION

VALE OF GLAMORGAN HERITAGE CENTRE

I would be most grateful if the Cabinet Member could update Members on her plans for a Vale of Glamorgan Heritage Centre. She may recall that when I last asked for an update she did not provide much clarity as to whether or not a Vale of Glamorgan Heritage Centre would be established during this Administration's term of office. Instead she directed us to read Charles Leadbeater's work on the Virtuous Circle of Social Capital, which I have done. Now it may be that some Members have failed to explore Charles Leadbeater's fascinating work and as such I will try to sum up the Virtuous Circle of Social Capital as succinctly as possible. The Circle consists of six stages:

Stage 1 is The Initial Endowment of Social Capital – A network of relationships and contacts which are tied together by shared values and interests.

Stage 2 is Physical Capital – Normally a Building.

Stage 3 is Financial Capital – Normally 'start-up funding'.

Stage 4 is Human Capital – Normally the recruitment of the right people to run the Project.

Stage 5 is Organisational Capital – Normally the development of a more formalised management structure, financial systems and a stronger set of relationships with partners.

Stage 6 is Paying Dividends – Basically the physical success of the project and the creation of more Social Capital, which completes the "Virtuous Circle".

It has been over a year since the Cabinet Member last addressed this issue in this Council Chamber. As such, in regard to the establishment of a Vale of Glamorgan Heritage Centre, can she tell us where she thinks the project lies in the Virtuous Circle of Social Capital? It seems to me that we may still be languishing at Stage 1 and after a year's work this seems somewhat disappointing. Would she agree?

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FROM COUNCILLOR DR. I.J. JOHNSON

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND VISIBLE SERVICES

HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

What powers does the Vale of Glamorgan Council have to prevent hydraulic fracturing from being undertaken within its boundaries?

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QUESTION PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 8:2

FROM COUNCILLOR DR. I.J. JOHNSON

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING, BUILDING MAINTENANCE AND
COMMUNITY SAFETY

BEDROOM TAX

How many households are there in the Vale of Glamorgan to which the bedroom tax currently applies, and how many of these include a disabled resident?

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FROM COUNCILLOR DR. I.J. JOHNSON

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, INNOVATION, PLANNING
AND TRANSPORTATION

BARRY REGENERATION AREA REPORT

When is the Welsh Government report on the Barry Regeneration Area due to be published?

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FROM COUNCILLOR DR. I.J. JOHNSON

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, INNOVATION, PLANNING
AND TRANSPORTATION

MEMBERSHIP OF REGENERATION BOARD

What is the currently constituted membership of the board responsible for furthering the regeneration of Barry?

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FROM COUNCILLOR DR. I.J. JOHNSON

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, INNOVATION, PLANNING
AND TRANSPORTATION

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN HOUSING

How many completions have been made of the target 9,950 houses for the 2011-2026 Local Development Plan, and what percentage of that target does this represent?

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FROM COUNCILLOR DR. I.J. JOHNSON

TO THE LEADER

PERMANENT AUSTERITY

Could the Leader define what he means by 'permanent austerity', a phrase that he has been quoted as using in local press reports?

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FROM COUNCILLOR C.P. FRANKS

TO THE LEADER

ENTERPRISE ZONES

According to Welsh Government, Enterprise Zones are of crucial importance to the economy. How many jobs have been created in the Vale of Glamorgan Enterprise Zone?

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FROM COUNCILLOR C.P. FRANKS

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, INNOVATION, PLANNING
AND TRANSPORTATION

CARDIFF AIRPORT

Will you report on the measures being undertaken to improve the attractiveness of Cardiff Wales Airport for both passengers and freight, detailing the authority's discussions with Welsh Government?

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FROM COUNCILLOR C.P. FRANKS

TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR REGENERATION, INNOVATION, PLANNING
AND TRANSPORTATION

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Will you report on progress that has been achieved over the last 2 years to improve the infrastructure which will reduce traffic congestion across the county?