

# Member Forum

## 11 December 2018

### Statements from councillors



#### Procedural note:

#### STATEMENTS FROM COUNCILLORS:

- A maximum of 1 minute shall be allowed for the presentation of each statement (subject to overall time constraints).
- There shall be no debate on the statements and the Lord Mayor shall refer them to the Mayor for information/consideration.
- Statements will be dealt with in the order of receipt (subject to time).

#### The following statements have been submitted – full details are attached:

CS 01 - Cllr Bolton – subject: Blue Finger Land by M32

CS 02 - Cllr Brain – subject: Logical incrementalism as a decision making tool



**Statement: CS01**

**Full Council – 11 December 2018**

**Statement submitted by –Cllr Charlie Bolton**

**Subject: Blue Finger Land by M32**

I have received reports that the 'blue finger' land may again be under threat. The 'blue finger' land is grade A agricultural land running up the side of the M32, and including the Stapleton Road allotments. It is both rare and of national importance.

I had understood and still understand that the whole of the 'blue finger' land is to be protected in the revised local plan.

However, the threat -if there is one - comes from plans for a park and ride on the M32. Queries to officers seeking reassurance over the site resulted in the following response.

*We are considering a number of sites around the M32 between J19 of the M4 and J2 of the M32 on both sides of the road. We carried out an initial options assessment but are commissioning further work to ensure that all sites are fully explored. We have not committed to any specific site as yet and will consider all options, some sites have been ruled out. I expect a further update to be available following the completion of the next study in Summer/Autumn 2019.*

*Park and ride sites are a key element of the Joint Transport Study and mitigation for the Joint Spatial Plan and will be included in the Joint Local Transport Plan which will go to consultation in the next few months. They are a necessity to enable us to reduce traffic volumes in the city centre and mitigate the associated pollution impacts and impacts on other public transport, walking and cycling routes. Reducing traffic volumes that enter the city centre has significant benefits for all bus services that are affected by congestion and enables delivery of other infrastructure such as cycle routes and bus lanes.*

I do not find this response reassuring.

Could I therefore ask officers and the mayor to confirm that this land will be retained for agricultural use?



**Statement: CS02**

**Full Council – 11 December 2018**

**Statement submitted by –Cllr Mark Brain**

**Subject: Logical incrementalism as a decision making tool**

My friends, in the light of present-day developments, let me say right away that I'd not regard existing conditions lightly. On the contrary, I have always regard them as subjects of the gravest responsibility and shall ever continue to do so. Indeed I will even go further and state quite categorically that I am more than sensible of the definition of the precise issues which are at this very moment concerning us all. We must build, but we must build surely.

Let me say just this. If any part of what I am saying is challenged then I am more than ready to meet such a challenge. For I have no doubt whatsoever that whatever I may have said in the past or what I am saying now is as to state the case, the exact, literal absolute truth.

I put it to you that this is not the time for vague promises of better things to come. For if I were to convey to you a spirit of false optimism then I should be neither fair to you nor true to myself. But does this mean that we can no longer look forward to the future that is to come? Certainly not. We should grasp it with both hands and the opportunities that are offered. Let us assume a bold front and go forward together. Let us carry the fight against ignorance to the four corners of the Earth. Because it is a fight that concerns us all

And finally in conclusion let me say that if you have made it this far you will have noticed this statement is about nothing at all. As a member's statement it will not have been read out in the chamber and it will have been largely ignored by everyone associated with today's meeting. If you are still reading then come and see me during the meeting and you will receive a small chocolate as a prize. Congratulations!

*With thanks to the late great Peter Sellers*

You are probably wondering what the heck this is all about so I shall explain. This 1958 'political speech' by Peter Sellers' is a work of genius in that it says absolutely nothing. Even Richard Nixon wasn't this good. The reason I am doing this is to demonstrate that councillors no longer have the ability to stand up and speak in the council chamber on a matter of their choosing. The public can submit 160 public forum statements all on the same subject but councillors are effectively silenced. I am betting that hardly anybody notices this statement and perhaps nobody will. It's a silly statement but it is making a very serious point, that councillors no longer have a means of raising ward issues or council wide issues that are of concern to them. As Chair of the Group I see it as my job to champion the rights of its members and that is what I am doing here although this applies to all members not just Labour members.

