

CABINET – MONDAY 18 JULY 2022

AGENDA PART I

PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM 4)

Under Rule 16 of the Executive Procedure Rules members of the public may question the Executive and Portfolio Holders at meetings. There is a time limit of 15 minutes for the asking and answering of public questions.

1.

Questioner: Hugh Brown

Asked of: Councillor Jean Lammiman, Portfolio Holder for Community and Culture.

Question: “My family regularly use the tennis courts in our local park – in fact these are the same courts I used when I was a child. I am concerned that the council’s plans to privatise the courts and introduce fees will be a barrier to many, and will deter casual users especially, when instead the council should be promoting equality of access and striving to increase participation.

Several of the borough’s courts have in fact been refurbished in recent years; they are well-used and well-maintained by their brilliant ‘Friends of’ park groups, demonstrating what is possible without court fees. There seems little benefit to ending the free use of our courts, but there is a huge potential risk.

At the last Cabinet meeting, you considered three options, summarised as follows:

- Option A: secure LTA Funding, introduce fees, outsource to a private company
- Option B: secure LTA Funding, introduce fees, managed by the council
- Option C: do nothing

Your administration is choosing Option A.

While some of our public courts do need renovating, the introduction of fees is not a requirement of the LTA funding, it is the council’s choice. There is also considerable public opposition to introducing fees in our parks.

With this in mind, will you now consider a fourth option:

- Option D: secure LTA Funding, keep our parks free to use”