

Oral Questions to the Audit Sub Committee—5th April 2016

The following questions have been submitted by Mr Bill Miller (Chairman of the Avalon Area Action Group) for oral response:

- (1) Will the Committee undertake an investigation into the tendering process for the refurbishment work and the award of the contract to Orchard and Shipman; when will this be completed?
- (2) Will the Committee undertake an investigation into the tendering process and the cost of replacing the boilers at the Manorfields site; when will this be completed?
- (3) Will the Committee undertake an investigation into the appointment of Orchard and Shipman to manage the Manorfields facility; when will this be completed?

ANSWER:

Orchard and Shipman have been the Council's managing agents for temporary accommodation since 2011. The Executive report of 14th October 2015 sets out both the business case and agreement for Orchard and Shipman to manage Manorfields under the wider temporary accommodation management agreement. The temporary accommodation gateway review went before Executive on 13th January 2016. This report agreed to enter into a new contract with Orchard and Shipman for the management of temporary accommodation, including both Bellegrove and Manorfields. Both reports were considered through Care Services and E&R PDS committees prior to the Executive meeting.

A public report will be published six months after the opening of Manorfields to provide an update on how the facility is operating.

Supplementary Questions:

- 1- Does the Committee recognise that it has abused its own processes?

Answer:

The Audit Team are looking at the various issues, and this is ongoing. A report will be published in due course.

2- Councillor Tunncliffe is unhappy with the cost of the refurbishment. Where is this issue being discussed?

Answer:

The issue is being discussed in the Part 2 agenda. It is hoped that a final report will be available in July, and subsequently published. The Audit Team are looking at all the issues.

3- It looks as though the number of people in temporary accommodation is now in excess of 1,000 and that the level of rent arrears is now £3.87m. Reconciliations have now begun with Orchard and Shipman—Is this an example of a good management agent?

Answer:

Reconciliation is an ongoing process. The results of the various ongoing investigations will be published in due course. The Audit Sub Committee will not hold back on transparency.