

Cabinet Meeting: Monday, 12 January 2026

Question from: Sam Barnes

Question to: Councillor Durrans, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Services and Communities

QUESTION

FOI 53680 confirms that the Council holds no legal advice, risk assessments, officer briefings, analysis of consultation sufficiency, or records explaining how responses to Item 3.2 were interpreted or presented to Cabinet. It also confirms that consultees were not offered a retention option and that conditional or qualified views were reduced to a single binary "Support / Do not support" outcome.

Given this, what assurance was Cabinet provided with at the time of decision-making that the consultation complied with the Gunning principles and accurately reflected public views, and in light of the FOI response, will Cabinet now review whether its decision to approve the disposal of The Shay was taken on the basis of incomplete or potentially misleading consultation evidence?

Response

The Council undertook a comprehensive consultation as part of its financial planning and budget-setting process. This included an online survey, Facebook Live Question & Answer, attendance at ward forums, youth council, and parish council liaison meetings, aiming to reach all stakeholder groups, especially local taxpayers and service users. The survey sought views on the principle of the proposed saving, not on the specific method of disposal, and provided opportunities for free-text comments on each Directorate section.

The consultation was conducted at a formative stage, with sufficient information provided to enable intelligent consideration, and adequate time for responses. All feedback was conscientiously considered, including both quantitative and qualitative data, in line with the Gunning Principles.