

Questions for Full Council Monday 20th January, 2020

Question 1

Cllr Sally Beardsworth to Cllr Jonathan Nunn

In June 2019 Mrs Dagmar King presented a petition signed by 1100 local people to this council. The petition asked the council to take action to deal with the increasing number of rough-sleepers and homeless people having to sleep in the open or in tents around our town. In particular the petition asked for the council to look at providing sites where people would feel safe and where there are basic sanitary facilities.

Can the leader of the council tell me what progress the Borough Council and its partners have made towards providing somewhere safe and clean for the ever growing number of people forced to seek refuge on our streets?

Response

The petition proposed “a transit facility that will help persistent rough sleepers with the first step on their journey to a better life”.

This proposal – for a dedicated site where homeless people can bed down and set up their tents – has been discussed, on a number of occasions, with the organisations working with people who are sleeping rough.

Most of these organisations (including NAASH and the Hope Centre) have expressed the view that, based on their knowledge and experience, most rough sleepers would not want to live together on one site. They have also expressed concerns about the security of the site and the unintended consequences of creating an extra barrier to people coming off the streets.

I have asked Officers to arrange for Mrs King to meet with the Director of Housing & Wellbeing, local homelessness services and myself to discuss the matter and provide her with the opportunity to ask any questions.

Cllr J Nunn
Leader of the Council