

## School Council - Questions for Local Councillors - 02.11.23

### Year 3

- Why did you want to be a councillor?  
*Sometimes it's difficult to get things done and know where to go. People always wonder how to make things happen and I wanted to make things happen.*
- What is your daily job as a councillor?  
*Lots of emails! Finding housing for people, talking to them, trying to help them and make them happy.*
- Is it hard being a councillor?  
*Yes sometimes. People want more than you can give them and they get disappointed which is hard because you want to help them.*
- How does it feel to be a councillor?  
*It's a very big honour.*
- What's a recent big decision that you've made?  
*The Cambridge Road Estate. We are hoping to create 2000 new homes at a cost of nearly £1 billion.*
- Was it hard to get elected?  
*It was quite hard. To get elected we had to knock on a lot of doors, post letters through letterboxes and talk to lots of people. People ask you why you want to be a councillor and if they like your answers they will select you.*
- Has anything ever gone wrong?  
*Cost increases have had a major impact on big projects which is hard.*

### Year 4

- How did you reach the decision to give us a new school?  
*The old building structurally isn't very good so it needed to be replaced as a priority. And there are always more people coming to New Malden as it's a popular area so we will need a bigger school.*
- What are your future plans?  
*The building of the new Burlington Junior School is very important to the school and the community. We're also planning the leisure centre in Kingston and rebuilding at Coombe Boys' school.*
- Is the council a busy place?  
*Yes! It's a very big building with lots of people but when you're out of the office you have to do lots of things on your own.*

- Do you have to check with anyone before making a decision?  
*Yes local councillors do consult with others to make decisions*
- What qualifications do you need to be a councillor?  
*You don't need formal qualifications, you just need to want to help people. Qualifications do help but lots of people become councillors when they have retired and have time and an interest in people.*
- Why are you changing Blagdon Park?  
*The areas for little children are fine but the area for older children is not very good and needs to be renewed.*
- What would you do if you weren't a councillor?  
*I work in the media and I enjoy that. I would also like to be an MP.*

## Year 5

- How long have you been a Lib Dem councillor?  
*Lesley, 10 years. Mark 9 years.*
- Do you recommend being a councillor?  
*It's very rewarding and there are really nice aspects like taking part in cultural events and festivals which is very exciting. We've been to Korean festivals and Tamil festivals.*
- Have you met anyone important?  
*This week we went to a reception for the Korean Ambassador and met lots of people there. We've also been to a Royal garden party.*
- How do you ensure councillor diversity?  
*Luckily we live in a very diverse area and our councillors reflect that. We have Korean and Tamil councillors and others from around the world.*
- What were your ambitions when you became a councillor?  
*Projects like building work. There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes before the building even starts and it's very time consuming.*

## Year 6

- Where does the money for new schools come from?  
*It mostly comes from taxes but also from the Education Department and Council tax*
- Do children who find it hard in school still have a chance to be a councillor?  
*Yes, you don't need to have lots of qualifications. You just need to want to help people and to be elected.*
- Is the new building good for the environment?

*Yes, building work does have an impact on the environment but the old building is very leaky and not environmentally friendly.*

- What was your dream when you were our age?  
*Lesley - my dream was to learn languages and travel to other countries to use them so I learnt French and Spanish.*  
*Mark - I always wanted to work in the media and politics. I would like to be an MP.*
- Are there lots of difficult people?  
*Not too many. It's hard when you want to help and you try but you can't always get them what they want. You have to be honest and say that you're sorry and you'd like to help but you can't.*
- How does seeing the building work make you feel?  
*Very proud. We're going to have a world class school.*
- What preparations do you need to make to be a councillor?  
*It can be very daunting to start, like starting a new school or new job. You have to get to know who does what and who to contact.*