

Cabinet – 18 April

Written question from Cllr Chris Jarman to the Leader

1. Is the Cabinet aware and do they support the decision of the Leader to disregard the democratically supported budget amendment provision that the Contact Centre opening on Saturday mornings should be retained to support those residents, many working, that are unable to attend Monday to Friday – noting that this was at zero net cost due to a small reduction of hours during the week when the resident demand was lowest.

The Cabinet supports the Leader with the decision to reduce the opening hours of the council's contact centre. Following a review of the numbers of calls received and the nature of enquiries being made it was identified that there was a limited number of calls being made by residents on a Saturday morning between 9am and 1pm. The data clearly demonstrated that our residents preferred to contact the council's contact centre on weekdays between 9am and 5pm and therefore the service was realigned around the needs of our customers. The refresh of the website has also given our residents the opportunity to self-serve and take advantage of the many automated functions which can include a request for an appointment or call back from an advisor thereby providing a more tailored service at a time convenient to the customer.

2. Does the Leader agree that council owned land should be used for council houses affordable to rent by those on the housing register and not sold to private developers to build houses that maximise their profits and Islanders cannot afford, and will the details, including the purchase price, of the 23 building plots owned by the council that the leader and his deputy propose to sell to private developers be concealed from the public?

The Council is working to provide housing for Islanders as a key corporate priority. All methods of delivery to enable this are considered appropriate whilst ensuring best value is achieved for council owned assets. There is no single preferred delivery method for housing.

The sites may be sold to a range of providers or developers that build market housing. It is the council's priority to deliver affordable housing wherever possible. Offers made for sites will be to be treated in confidence. While negotiations are on-going confidentiality will remain in place.

Once the sales are complete the details of price agreed will be made publicly available. Approval by the council's Finance Director or team is always required as part of any formal council approval to dispose, ensuring best consideration is achieved.