

**Council  
28 July 2021  
Item 6 - Questions from Members of the Public**

**In accordance with Part 4 Section E of the Council's Constitution, Jacques Olmo has asked the following question:**

"Can the executive member provide an update on any proposed work for the Frimley Green recreation ground, including, but not limited to, extra picnic tables and seating around the children's playground. I appreciate that two tables are to be installed shortly but they simply replace those removed earlier in the year. Given the number of residents who use the park, this cannot be considered sufficient. Please could you also advise when improvements to the public lavatories will be taking place as they are in serious need of renovation?"

**The Places & Strategy Portfolio Holder has provided the following response:**

"Over the past 18 months Frimley Green Recreation Ground, like a number of our parks, has suffered from significantly increased levels of vandalism compared to previous years. Picnic tables and benches have been a particular target and it reached a point where they were being damaged beyond repair within days or weeks of being replaced. However, we appreciate that with the recent run of very good weather these facilities are now in demand by regular park users so we have reinstated the existing benches. To support the reduction in vandalism and anti-social behaviour we will soon be installing CCTV as well as implementing additional security patrols overnight. Once these new measures are in place and we hopefully see a reduction in vandalism then we can consider installing additional benches. We will also continue to work closely with the local community police team who will continue to make regular visits to the park, which should act as an additional deterrent.

The toilets in Frimley Green Recreation Ground are just one of 11 public conveniences that are managed by the Council and although regularly serviced, are also subject to vandalism which we hope will be reduced by the increased security measures already mentioned. From now on the toilets will be opened and locked in line with park opening hours and we are also looking to install stronger doors and windows to further deter out of hours anti-social behaviour. If these measures work then, as with the request for additional benches, we could consider seeking funding for improvements or renovations to these and our other public toilets across the borough."

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**28 July 2021**  
**Agenda Item 7 – Questions from Councillors**

**Procedure Rule 11 - Questions from Councillors**

The following question has been submitted by Councillor Morgan Rise under Procedure Rule 11:

**To the Leader**

"With the recent letter from the Secretary of State responsible for local government that signalled the Government's intention to pursue full devolution for England, which seems to be unitary authorities and Metro Mayors, can the Leader of the Council provide an update on discussions he has had with officers and with his counterparts in the other 10 Surrey Borough and District Councils, and at Surrey County Council, on proposals for local government reform in Surrey?"

**Response from the Leader**

"Thank you Cllr Rise for your question.

The Secretary of State's (SoS) letter informed but did not direct specific action. The thrust being the desire from HMG to see improved services and reduced costs in Local Authority through collaborative working, which can range from shared services to unitary authorities. The SoS has been clear that re-structuring must be locally led and locally supported.

The Surrey Leaders are determined to see these kind of improvements and are keen to work collaboratively with neighbouring Boroughs and Districts and Surrey County Council. Discussions are taking place as to what best suits each B&D, whether through shared services or moving to a unitary authority, and if so with whom. The B&Ds commissioned a report last year outlining the "best" options for unitarys within Surrey and this will inform discussions.

It is interesting that of the three recent changes to unitary authorities (Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Somerset) two have gone for a single unitary, albeit with significantly lower populations than Surrey.

Mr Roberts and I have discussed how we expand shared services with our neighbours that can replicate the success of the shared services we currently have. We have also discussed what the road map may look like if SHBC were to go down the unitary authority route."

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