

Dear Mr [REDACTED],

I cannot let your email pass by without responding to some of your comments.

Firstly, as you didn't attend the Cabinet meeting on September 15th, there was no requirement on the part of Cabinet to answer your questions.

However, as Chair, I decided to try and assist you by answering the questions in the meeting. I could have refused to do so.

However as this did not constitute part of the formal meeting – Public Questions, it was not recorded as part of the minutes. This was the decision of the Monitoring Officer, not Cabinet or myself.

With regard to your assertion that I laid blame at the Conservative led administration, that is completely untrue.

If you read the response again, YOU will note that I simply stated a fact 'that the Travelodge deal was not undertaken by this administration (which you seemed to imply) but by the previous Conservative led Cabinet.'

That is simply a statement of fact, and was in no way intended to lay any perception of blame on anybody. The Travelodge has not become a political issue. The previous administration developed a Commercial strategy which I, for one, supported and still do.

No one could have foreseen COVID, but the administration I lead made decisions which in the circumstances we are faced with, we believe, are in the best interests of the Council. I am sure the previous administration would have dealt with this in the way they felt was in the best interests of the Council.

As an aside, I think we have been more than accommodating in trying to answer your continuing questions regarding Travelodge.

Regards.

Steve
Cllr Steve Siddons
Leader of the Council