

Adjourned Meeting of the Council

Wednesday, 15 May 2013

Questions Under Standing Order A13

Question (1) by Councillor Baldrey to the Executive Lead for Finance – Mayor Oliver	With the cuts in Benefits now starting to happen for the people of Torbay, does the Executive Lead for Finance consider that a hardship fund which I understand has been allocated of only £80,000 will be sufficient to meet the needs of the current financial period?
Question (2) by Councillor Stockman to the Mayor – Mayor Oliver	Can the Mayor confirm that there has been sufficient resources reserved to support those who find themselves in difficulties regarding the cuts to Welfare and the Bedroom Tax. Please could you also confirm: When Debt Collectors will be used? Whether there are sufficient resources reserved to pursue arrears through the courts and how much you anticipate this will cost.
Question (3) by Councillor Darling to Councillors Brooksbank and Mills?	In a recent radio Devon interview, I was horrified to hear, the Chief Fire Officer, describe full time Fire crews as a Luxury. Do you share my concerns about this statement?
Question (4) by Councillor James to the Mayor – Mayor Oliver	In September we put a motion forward asking that you support the desire of the LGBT community in Torbay to be able to get married to the people they love. In December you suggested that we should wait to see the details of the coalition government's bill before making this decision. This bill has now been published and very importantly contains a triple and quadruple lock to protect those who may have concerns about this for reasons of conscience. Now that these conditions have been fulfilled and the plans for equal marriage will soon finish their passage through Parliament, will you today assure the LGBT community that you support the policy of this government to give them marriage equality?

<p>Question (5) by Councillor James to the Executive Lead for Adult Social Care – Councillor Scouler</p>	<p>This week a report was published by Astra Zeneca and the homeless charity Depaul UK (Making it matter: Improving the health of homeless people) calling on strategic health bodies like ourselves to ensure there are joined up services for homeless young people that recognise their complex needs. It points out that there are over 80,000 young people homeless in the UK each year and that number is rising. They often suffer from poor physical and mental health and the report calls for easier access to support services and better co-operation between all providers. In light of this report, could the Executive Lead for Adult Services answer the following?</p> <p>How many young people (aged under 25) are classified as homeless in Torbay and how has that number changed over the last 5 years?</p> <p>What are Torbay Council and its partners doing about homelessness among young people at present?</p> <p>How will we be responding to this report and what lessons will we be learning from it?</p> <p>What action will we be taking to engage housing associations, homelessness services and other independent providers who have considerable experience in integrating health, housing and care and support for vulnerable groups?</p>
<p>Question (6) by Councillor Darling to the Mayor – Mayor Oliver</p>	<p>The Devon and Somerset Fire Authority has a conservative majority. How have you been using any influence you have with Tory colleagues in Devon and Somerset to stop the loss of a Fire Engine in Torquay and ensure the cuts are redirected to back office functions rather than front line fire crews?</p>

<p>Question (7) by Councillor James to the Executive Lead for Business Services – Councillor Pritchard/Mills</p>	<p>A recent report by UNISON shows that 28,000 local government workers are earning below the national minimum wage of £6.31 due to come into place in October. It also points out that 13% of councils have asked staff to take unpaid annual leave and unsocial hours payments are being taken away. In light of this, please can you assure the council of the position of staff in Torbay by answering the following: -</p> <p>What number and percentage of local government staff in Torbay are earning below £21,000?</p> <p>What number and percentage of local government staff in Torbay are earning below £6.31 an hour (the new national minimum wage)?</p> <p>What number and percentage of local government staff in Torbay are earning below £7.45 an hour (the living wage)?</p> <p>Have any staff been asked to take unpaid annual leave?</p> <p>Have we had “unsocial hours payments” and if so, have we removed or reduced any of these?</p>
<p>Question(8) by Councillor Faulkner (A) to the Executive Lead for Community Safety – Councillor Excell</p>	<p>As you are aware there has been many landslides at Oddicombe Beach destroying one property on the top cliff and putting others at risk. Visitors etc are still going to the beach to view this situation and have been actually seen climbing the rock fall. Could the Council make signing larger to stop people doing this making them aware of the greater danger? As I would hate to see a fatality there.</p>
<p>Question (9) by Councillor Cowell to the Deputy Mayor and Executive Lead for Strategic Planning, Housing and Energy – Councillor Thomas (D)</p>	<p>Are you satisfied that the number of staff within our planning department, particularly enforcement, is sufficient to provide a good service to residents?</p>

<p>Question (10) by Councillor Cowell to the Deputy Mayor and Executive Lead for Strategic Planning, Housing and Energy – Councillor Thomas (D)</p>	<p>When can we see a draft of the emerging Housing Strategy?</p>
<p>Question (11) by Councillor Cowell to the Executive Lead for Safer Communities an Transport – Councillor Excell</p>	<p>Would you join me in congratulating Hele’s Angels on their initiative in setting up an activity in the near future that focuses on anti-social behaviour relating to dogs. An initiative in partnership with the RSPCA, council, police and community to educate some dog owners about dog fouling and unruly behaviour.</p> <p>Would you also analyse the success of this project with a view to carrying out a Bay-wide initiative in an effort to deal with a significant problem that blights our communities?</p>
<p>Question (12) by Councillor Cowell to the Executive Lead for Safer Communities an Transport – Councillor Excell/Hill</p>	<p>Following the recent review of parking charges, can you tell me what plans you have to continue with this review and how business and residents will be involved?</p>
<p>Question (13) by Councillor Darling to the Mayor – Mayor Oliver</p>	<p>Under the Member/Officer Support Compact: Members Will:</p> <p>16. provide regular feedback from the outside organisations they are appointed as Council representatives to other members and officers; As a member of the Devon and Cornwall Police Authority since May 2011 and now a member of the Police and Crime panel, When and how do you intent to give feedback to Members?”</p>
<p>Question(14) by Councillor Hytche to the Executive Lead for Strategic Planning, Housing and Energy – Councillor Thomas</p>	<p>I am concerned about the new local plan and the possible number of new homes, all of which could be built on green field sites so favoured by developers. Could we stipulate in our local plan, that only brown field sites will be considered for new homes till the surplus has been addressed?</p> <p>We have derelict sites that are in desperate need of development, for example the old steam laundry in Rock Road, derelict for over forty years,</p>

(D)	there are several more, list available at the Town Hall.
Question (15) by Councillor Darling to the Executive Lead for Tourism – Councillor Richards	Please find below an email sent to you on the 7th April 2013 regarding a problem at Oddicombe Beach. When Can I expect a response? Good Afternoon Over the Christmas break I watched a small green catamaran break up on Oddicombe beach. Since then it has been next to the compound awaiting someone to claim it. I was disappointed to see it there over the Easter bank holiday weekend and contacted officers regarding its removal. I was shocked to receive an email saying no budget had been allocated to date. As part of the budget round we were assured that beaches management would be more of a proactive service, responding to problems as they arose. This level of service suggests it is dead in the water. I would welcome your assurances?