

Clerk: June Gurry
Telephone: 01803 207013
E-mail address: governance.support@torbay.gov.uk
Date: Thursday, 29 July 2021

Governance Support
Town Hall
Castle Circus
Torquay
TQ1 3DR

Dear Member

COUNCIL - THURSDAY, 29 JULY 2021

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the Thursday, 29 July 2021 meeting of the Council, the Members' questions and responses.

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Yours sincerely

June Gurry
Clerk

Agenda Item 6

Meeting of the Council, Thursday, 29 July 2021

Questions Under Standing Order A12

A member may only submit three questions for consideration at each Council Meeting. Each member will present their first question in turn, when all the first questions have been dealt with the second and third questions may be asked in turn. The time for member's questions will be limited to a total of 30 minutes.

First Round

Question (1) by Councillor Pentney to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)	I am delighted that Torre Abbey Sands is set to hold the much coveted blue flag status this summer. Can you please confirm when this beach last held this accolade and advise us what has been put in place to get this over the line for this summer?
Councillor Morey	The last time Torre Abbey Sands was awarded a Blue Flag was 2019. We have now established a relationship with a new anchor tenant (WeSup) at the beach who have agreed to provide some of the services required by the Blue Flag criteria. WeSup recently won the tender to operate from Torre Abbey. We have also had to put in a new water supply to the promenade which was installed at the end of June.
Question (2) by Councillor Atiya-Alla to the Cabinet Member Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Councillor Long)	Many residents contact me about the Sanctuary owned site at Hatfield Cross which historically had a care home and sheltered accommodation on it, what encouragement is the council giving to Sanctuary Housing to bring this site forward for affordable housing for local residents?
Councillor Long	The Council has met with Sanctuary on a number of occasions to receive updates on the progress of this site. Sanctuary originally acquired the site to deliver open market housing for sale on the site but following a number of conversations are now proposing a 100% affordable housing scheme and a planning application has been submitted and awaiting determination.
Question (3) by Councillor Loxton to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing	It is welcome news that Wickes are due to establish a new store in Edginswell, Torquay. Can I have some reassurance how the council will be seeking to develop employment and skills opportunities around the development of this site?

(Councillor Long)	
Councillor Long	<p>The Council has committed to supporting the development of opportunities for local people and local businesses in the delivery of its capital projects in support of the economic repositioning of Torbay. Contractors will be required to demonstrate as part of their tender proposals how they will bring forward packages of work for sub contractors and how they will support the employment and skills needs of the local community. This might be for instance through the provision of work experience, training and apprenticeships, as well as local recruitment. While the numbers of opportunities that this scheme might present have not yet been confirmed the principle of creating greater local wealth through the capital investment planned across Torbay is fundamentally important to the Council's economic recovery intentions.</p>
<p>Question (4) by Councillor M Darling to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Councillor Law)</p>	<p>I understand that the Government have changed the calculation of the pupil premium that supports children at school from deprived backgrounds. I understand that this is likely to be in the region of £117,000 for Torbay. How is this likely to impact on our pupils?</p>
Councillor Law	<p>The Government changed the allocation of Pupil Premium Funding from numbers taken in the January 2021 census to numbers on the October 2020. This meant that children who were eligible for pupil premium by the normal January allocation date were not recognised in the allocation. For Torbay this equated to approx. £117,000, this was split across a number of schools. Pupil Premium Funding is provided to help increase social mobility and reduced the gap in attainment between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. Schools receive funding for each disadvantaged pupil and can use the funding flexibly. Our schools follow evidenced informed practices regarding how to best use pupil premium funds and adopt the recommendations of the Education Endowment Foundation. Common approaches to the use of pupil premium are:- paired or small group additional teaching, improving feedback between teachers and pupils, additional teaching hours and tuition, social emotional support programmes, personalised learning plans, improving attendance and activities to improve metacognitive/independent learning. By not counting all pupils that are eligible for pupil premium in the latest allocation of funding, schools have needed to share the resources amongst more pupils and inevitably the types of support offered will be reduced.</p>
<p>Question (5) by Councillor Johns to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>The Whitsun bank holiday saw high levels of demand on all facilities across Torbay including public toilets. It would appear that with a potential stay at home summer for lots of UK tourists it is likely to be continuing pressure on our facilities across Torbay. What options are being considered to enhance our toilet facilities and what consideration is being given to opening closed toilets?</p>

<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>As well as investing £36,000 in opening seven more toilets at Preston South over the summer, we are putting in place some temporary chemical toilets on Torquay Harbour side and at Broadsands beach. Additional chemical toilets are being purchased to give extra, flexible capacity across the Bay as required. New signage has been installed to direct visitors to Abbey Sands toilets, and signage on the beach identifies the location of the toilets and the public shower at Abbey Sands. We are also working with WeSup on the beach to help direct visitors to Abbey Sands toilets.</p> <p>Furthermore we are investing more into additional toilet cleaning and extended opening hours this summer to help cope with anticipated demand. However, we are also continuing to ask users to please respect the staff during this period of high use, with evidence that some toilets in the Bay are being deliberately vandalised and disrupted.</p>
<p>Question (6) by Councillor Dudley to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Torbay have recently planned to take on 7 Safe Clean and green ambassadors. Can you please confirm that these are now in post and advise what impact their activity have had on our being safe, clean and green?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>Recruitment has been challenging, however SWISCo is now delivering the Safe, Clean and Green initiative with a combination of recruitment of staff and additional hours for existing staff. The result is that SWISCo will be much better placed to be able to respond over the course of the summer.</p>
<p>Question (7) by Councillor Amil to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Councillor Long)</p>	<p>There have been recent press reports regarding the viability of horse carriage rides at Cockington. Can you please advise how Torbay Council have been positively supporting the tradition and continuation of horse carriage rides at Cockington and thereby supporting the current operator, K & H Cockington Carriages.</p>
<p>Councillor Long</p>	<p>Councillors and officers from the TDA have been working with the operator to explore potential solutions that support the heritage of carriage rides from Cockington Court. TDA as the operator of the court has set out that it values the presence of a viable operator and wishes to be able to sustain that in the future. The current operator believes that it requires alternative grazing to be able to sustain or grow the business. Cabinet members are supporting the attempts of TDA to find a solution with K & H Cockington Carriages and the Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust, which might allow the current operators to continue if the business can resolve the issue of viable grazing land.</p>
<p>Question (8) by Councillor Douglas-Dunbar</p>	<p>I was pleased that the Council chose to restart its consideration of what sea defences would be appropriate to protect Paignton. Can you please advise</p>

<p>to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>how Torbay is engaging with other local authorities to see what lessons may be learnt from other areas in the country and how to appropriately consult with the community so that we get the best outcome when the consultation concludes?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>We have reached out to a number of other local authorities who have gone through engagement exercises for sea defence schemes and we will be learning from them on how best to carry out our own consultation. A meeting took place on Tuesday 20th July with Portsmouth City Council, who are carrying out a large scheme that will protect over 8,000 homes. We have also made contact with West Kirby who have very kindly shared their engagement and consultation documents and some of their learning points. Discussions with the Environment Agency are ongoing who have lots of resources and examples from other schemes such as Exmouth, Starcross & Cockwood, Teignmouth and Shaldon tidal defence schemes. All of this learning will assist us in creating an Engagement Plan that is appropriate and right for the scheme at Paignton and Preston</p>
<p>Question (9) by Councillor Dart to the Cabinet Member Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Councillor Long)</p>	<p>I was pleased some months ago to learn that the Government awarded Torbay Council £1.3m for Next Steps accommodation to help those with a housing need.</p> <p>Can you please advise what pressures there are on those in housing need that may have been exacerbated by the pandemic? I would also welcome an explanation on how the local authority have identified locations for such tenancies.</p>
<p>Councillor Long</p>	<p>The pandemic has resulted in a changing need for accommodation in Torbay. Both with regards to access to emergency accommodation but also for move on, as in the Next Steps program. Temporary accommodation is particularly hard to access due to the buoyant holiday season. There has also been a shift in the size of accommodation required. During the initial stages of the pandemic there was a need for single accommodation. This has now changed to more of a need for family accommodation. Of the approximate 150 households in temporary accommodation in Torbay approximately 30% are occupied by families, which can vary in size. The housing market has also changed during the pandemic as landlords are selling properties or changing to holiday let. Also rent levels are increasing due to supply and demand. This is making it hard for everyone to find affordable accommodation to enable them to move on to settled homes. Any general move on accommodation for those moving out of temporary accommodation will be from the open market, so hence supply and demand by private or registered landlords.</p>
<p>Question (10) by Councillor Kennedy to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure,</p>	<p>In the last two years how many trees including those with Ash Dieback have been cut down across the Bay? How many trees have we planted in the same period?</p> <p>What monitoring system is currently in place regarding the cutting and planting of trees? If there is a monitoring system in place please provide an</p>

<p>Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>explanation why this would be the case and how this fits with our declared Climate Emergency.</p> <p>If we are cutting down more trees than we are planting, please provide me with a full and detailed explanation as to how this might fit with our declared Climate Emergency.</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>Approximately 1000 to 2000 trees, including areas of woodland have been cut down in the last two years. The exact number of trees removed are not known as whole areas removed can consist of up to 900 trees within one woodland.</p> <p>We have planted 187 trees in the last two years. The Council is also in negotiations with the Forestry Commission for a substantive tree planting programme in the Willows area, Torquay.</p> <p>The monitoring system in place is Torbay Council's Tree Management Software System - Ezytreev.</p> <p>Currently we are cutting down more trees than we are planting, largely due to Ash Die Back. As part of the Tree Warden scheme and the development of Torbay's second iTree Survey to establish the eco-system benefits of trees, a proactive tree planting programme, engaging with the community (Tree Warden Scheme), is to take place over the next 3 years. The Council have committed a budget of £150,000 to this scheme and continue to bid for grant funding as and when it is made available.</p>
<p>Question (11) by Councillor Foster to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>At the Council meeting held on 19 June 2019 Torbay Council allocated £25,000 to support climate change. Can we please have an update on what this money has been spent on?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>I can confirm that a wide range of initiatives have been supported from the Climate Change budget, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net Zero Torbay report, • GHG (Greenhouse Gas) baseline data for Torbay, • Carbon Literacy Leadership Training • the replacement low carbon heating scheme, and • the technical support for roof mounted solar schemes. <p>More projects are evolving from the Carbon Neutral Officers Group and more will follow from the new Torbay Climate Partnership initiative.</p>
<p>Question (12) by Councillor Bye to the Cabinet</p>	<p>Please could the relevant Councillor please advise how many fixed penalty fines have been given out for littering & other forms of anti social behaviour in the Wellswood Ward since the new Enforcement Regime came into place earlier in the year? Also what can be done to reduce littering & anti social</p>

<p>Member for Corporate and Community Services (Councillor Carter)</p>	<p>behaviour at Hopes Nose & Peaked Tor Cove where large crowds gather in the fine weather.</p>
<p>Councillor Carter</p>	<p>There have been 38 FPNs issued following 70 hrs 44 mins worth of patrols since the commencement on 2/2/21</p> <p>A Public Space Protection order will be in place from 30 July 2021 for Hopes Nose and Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust are currently recruiting enforcement officers. In the meantime, the Council's contracted Environmental Enforcement Officers have been tasked to include Hopes Nose as part of their work.</p>
<p>Question (13) by Councillor D Thomas to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>The Council minute 140 of December 2017 <u>Minutes of the Council Meeting 17/12/17</u>, and in particular, 'v) that the Executive of Assets and Business Services be given delegated authority to award a contract which ensures that all remaining public toilets remain open and be maintained at current levels, meaning that no toilets are proposed to close.'</p> <p>shows the decision taken by Council to award a contract to Healthmatic. Could you please provide me with the date when this Council decision was rescinded and a new decision was made to close public toilets across Torbay?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>In short, the answer is that the earlier decision has been superseded by the 13 February 2020 decision by Full Council.</p> <p>The changes to the toilet provision were approved through the budget setting for 2021/22 on 13 February 2020. The proposal, together with an equality impact assessment was before Full Council to approve.</p>
<p>Question (14) by Councillor C Lewis to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>On the 13th Feb 2020, the Council debated and voted on the Budget proposals brought forward by the Liberal Democrat/Independent Partnership. An objection to the budget was placed by myself and seconded by Councillor Sykes which stated</p> <p>"That the Council formally objects to the Cabinet's revenue budget proposals on the basis the Cabinet's draft Community and Corporate Plan has a commitment to becoming the UK's premier tourist resort, whereas the budget proposals see a reduction in the amount of public toilet facilities at Preston Beach, Goodrington South and Corbyn Head. It is ridiculous and irresponsible to assume that a single cubicle at Goodrington South can cope with the amount of visitors to the beach that the whole block used to deal with. In addition Preston is expected to lose more than 20 toilet units and rely on a single block comprising 4 or 5 units. As such this proposal is considered to be contrary to the desire to become the UK's premier tourist resort, and consequently Council believe that the provision should be maintained at Preston and Goodrington South.</p> <p>Could you please provide the names of all those members who supported in favour of this motion, and those that voted against.</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>A recorded vote was taken on the objection. The voting was taken by roll call as follows: For: Councillor Perry, Barrand, Brooks, Bye, Foster, Hill,</p>

	<p>Kavanagh, Kennedy, Barbara Lewis, Chris Lewis, Mills, O'Dwyer, Sykes, David Thomas, Jacqueline Thomas and John Thomas (16); Against: Councillors Amil, Brown, Carter, Cowell, Mandy Darling Steve Darling, Dart, Douglas-Dunbar, Doggett, Dudley, Ellery, Howgate, Law, Long, Loxton, Manning, Morey and Stockman (18) and Absent: Councillors Atiya-Alla and Pentney (2). Therefore, the objection was declared lost.</p>
<p>Question (15) by Councillor Sykes to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>I understand that the Cabinet are keen for business or community groups to work alongside the Council to help out through what has been some difficult financial times. Indeed we have a fine example of a business at Oddicombe Beach running the public toilet facilities and creating a great beach environment for everyone to enjoy and this is be recognised and applauded. Why is it therefore that the Council are not as keen to work with a business in Preston, who wishes to take over the closed public toilet block, to run it at his/her cost, provide a first aid point, running water facilities and potentially other beach facilities ie air pump to blow up inflatables? The offer has been made, however there appears to be no political will to make this happen. Why ask for help, then when it comes forward, simply reject it out of hand?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The toilet block at Preston was opened on 24 July 2021 in readiness for the potential high demand of public toilets arising from this staycation summer. Whilst the offer to open the facility by a local business seemed a good community led initiative; the property (the old toilet block) could not simply be handed over without formal marketing. Furthermore, re-opening the facility to another provider would have had an impact and possibly undermine the established public toilet contract with Healthmatic. The rationalising of the Bay's public toilets followed on from a data led demand assessment, which formed part of the procurement exercise. Healthmatic's commercial decision to enter a contract with the Council is an issue that had to be considered. The toilets generate an income for the contractor and any member of public would clearly default to a free facility if given a choice. Any new lease arrangement is subject to due diligence and evidence of how the facility would be financed and operated. On this basis the proposal was considered by the Director of Place in consultation with TDA colleagues and correspondence was exchanged with a ward Councillor.</p>
<p>Question (16) by Councillor Barrant to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>The Council has gone out for expressions of interest with 2 x old toilet blocks namely Corbyn Head and Preston North. Thus far I have had no information as to what is proposed. Councillor Lewis raised this issue in January of this year, when he was informed that Ward Councillors would be kept up to speed with any progress. Do I presume that nothing has happened as I haven't been informed and if that is the case, why are we not currently allowing the public to use the facility as a facility in the short term, as many residents and holiday-makers do seem to be taken short, with no current solution on offer?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>Both assets were marketed via TDA, for expressions of interest, during the 2020/2021 winter period. The Council received multiple expressions from potential operators. The bids were short-listed and requests for further information made. TDA is currently negotiating Heads of Terms with preferred bidders to enter a Lease for both sites. TDA is close to agreement on Preston, but progress is slower on Corbyn Head. It is the intention for the Council to undertake the redevelopment directly and then seek a market rent</p>

	<p>for the space once converted. Redevelopment of both properties is conditional on obtaining planning consent. It was my understanding that local ward Councilors were being briefed on the progress of these schemes, I will ask TDA officers to provide you with an update on the Corbyn Head proposals as soon as possible. Council officers have explored the feasibility of reopening closed toilet blocks to deal with the forecast and unprecedented high demand this summer. Unfortunately, not all of these assets can easily be brought back into use in a timely fashion but where possible this is happening i.e. Preston South toilet block.</p>
<p>Question (17) by Councillor Barnby to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Many of us have witnessed or at least heard of the huge queues to access the toilets on various beaches across the Bay including Goodrington South. The administration's answer is to spend £33k on 2 x more cleaners and extending the opening times to 10pm. Although the extra cleaners may be helpful, could you please advise me what my response should be to an elderly gentleman waiting in the queue, clearly desperate to use the toilet in the middle of the afternoon. Clearly the toilets being open to 10pm is not going to be helpful to him, capacity is the issue, not what time they close. So my question would be, what practical advice should I offer as a helpful Councillor caught in this very real situation?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>May I firstly reassure you that we have been monitoring our public convenience facilities over the last 2 months for any signs of unacceptable levels of queuing. I confirm that there is no sign of unacceptable queuing at public conveniences anywhere in Torbay. If queues are spotted, operatives on the ground are advised to encourage people to use facilities that may not be in use.</p> <p>The practical advice I would offer is to check that the queue is not simply because the door is being held open to facilitate free use of the toilet whilst other toilet cubicles are available. We have clear evidence that this is happening and therefore a queue doesn't necessarily mean that we have a capacity problem.</p> <p>If as expected the Bay experiences many more visitors than in a normal year it is inevitable that queues may form for public conveniences at peak times and although this is not ideal it is not a sign of a fundamental problem with our infrastructure. However, we are creating additional capacity, where we can, to deal with what might well be unprecedented demand this summer. This additional capacity will be introduced at Broadsands, Preston and Torquay harbourside</p>
<p>Question (18) by Councillor B Lewis to The Leader of the Council (Councillor S Darling)</p>	<p>I understand Torbay Council is set to invest £221,293 into Torbay's Seafronts and Town Centres this summer. As quoted in the Council's Press Release dated 18 June, areas to benefit include Meadfoot, Broadsands, Babbacombe, Brixham, Torquay Harbour and Princess Pier.</p> <p>Can the Leader of the Council please tell the good people of Paignton why Preston, Paignton and Goodrington have not been included?</p>
<p>Councillor S Darling</p>	<p>The Council has and is investing at Paignton, Preston and Goodrington. Examples include measures to prevent illegal encampments, the re-opening of the Preston South Toilets and works to the illuminations, promenade lighting and handrails. Total investment value is circa £97,000. Councillor Barbara Lewis is reminded that she voted against investment in the Paignton</p>

	<p>Illuminations when it was considered at a Council budget setting meeting earlier this year.</p>
<p>Question (19) by Councillor Jackie Thomas to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Can the Portfolio Holder please advise me when the weeds in the roadside Kerbs will be sprayed with weed killer. Many of the Kerbs throughout the Bay are in a dreadful state and do not help to promote Torbay as a Premier Resort. I have many complaints from local residents that they have never seen our roadsides looking so bad!</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The rainfall in May was 224% of the average for that month. The main consequence of this has been that SWISCo was only able to use the granular herbicide application whilst the ground was so wet therefore the weed growth rate was accelerated. Throughout June the weed growth rate was estimated to have been 40% in excess of the 10 year average – this was due to optimum soil temperatures and moisture contents coupled with the longest daylight hours of the year. Due to these extenuating circumstances SWISCo are behind schedule.</p> <p>It is also relevant to note that as part of austerity related budget reductions in recent years, the weed spraying of the highway was reduced to a twice yearly cycle and this continues. As stated above, both weed growth, and the ability to carry out spraying, are affected by weather. SWISCo are expected to recommend to the Council that the current level of spraying would benefit from being increased to provide a more appropriate level of highway weed control. The availability of additional resources for this purpose has yet to be determined but in the meantime if there are any particular areas of concern these should be reported to the SWISCo street cleansing team, in order that these can be considered for potential prioritisation in the next round of cyclical spraying.</p>
<p>Question (20) by Councillor O'Dwyer to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Two, Wellswood residents, both doctors at Torbay Hospital, have contacted the ward Councillors regarding the perils of cycling to work at the hospital especially on the Newton Road. Both advise they feel less safe cycling in Torquay compared with London, Bristol & other large cities where they have lived previously; both have had to deal with the results of road accidents involving cyclists which have resulted in admission into the Torbay Hospital. What consideration was given to making cycling safer when the recent improvement scheme for the Newton Road was drawn up & what can be done to make cycling safer more generally in the Bay?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The Council have recently approved the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan which proposes a step change in the infrastructure provision across Torbay. That plan, in line with the latest Government position, supports schemes delivered to the higher standards of safety and quality now expected.</p> <p>The current Newton Road improvements are the last phase of a wider Torquay Gateway plan which has already seen the walking and cycling provision installed ahead of the on highway works, prioritising active travel over other modes. That improvement has seen the introduction of a shared route on the opposite side of the railway, connecting Shiphay Lane to the Hospital and providing the segregation between vehicles and cycles expected by Government design standards. It then connects to the north with the</p>

	<p>provision along Newton Road, under Hamlin Way, and out of Torbay on Torquay Road through Kingskerswell. To the south it connects to the route between Shiphay Lane and Crownhill Rise and onto Avenue Road. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan recognises that further improvements to this route are needed which will include a crossing on Shiphay Lane and a ramp onto the path in place of the existing steps. Additionally further improvements along Avenue Road will be made. Through previous investments with the Local Sustainable Transport Fund we were able to provide the connection from Crownhill Park across to Torre and onwards into the town centre.</p> <p>A proposal has been developed for improved cycle infrastructure on Babbacombe Road, linking from St Marychurch to The Strand but this was under the previous design guidance and requires updating but again it is included within the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan as a proposal that we aim to deliver.</p> <p>We continue to work with the Department for Transport on funding streams to support these investments and hope that the Spending Review expected in the Autumn will confirm the anticipated longer term funding arrangements for Active Travel as set out in the Governments National Walking and Cycling Strategy.</p>
<p>Question (21) by Councillor Hill to the Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Cowell)</p>	<p>How much has/is being spent on replacing and renewing the Safety Warning Signs along the beaches, many have been lost and damaged due to the rough weather over the last year?</p>
<p>Councillor Cowell</p>	<p>The Beach team have replaced some damaged and lost signs with ones that were held in stock. Furthermore, they have spent circa £2,000 on new beach information signs from the beach services revenue budget. Further one-off funding is available to renew any safety related warning signs along the beaches. If there are any particular examples or areas of concern these should be forwarded to the Director of Place.</p>

Second Round

<p>Question (22) by Councillor M Darling to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>What plans do the Council have to take advantage of the Queens Green Canopy and the Urban Tree challenge fund to add value to the tree warden scheme and tree planting that the partnership have already identified?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>As part of the development of the Tree Warden Scheme we will be encouraging and supporting our Wardens to apply for community tree planting funds.</p>

<p>Question (23) by Councillor Atiya-Alla to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Councillor Long)</p>	<p>I understand that the government plans to cut discretionary housing payment by 22%. How could this money have been used to support people in Torbay?</p>
<p>Councillor Long</p>	<p>As a result of the reduced monies this means that proactive work with local landlords to help tenant with rent arrears will be reduced. Last year we spent £170k on this, and we restricted it to social housing. Both Sanctuary Housing & Westward Housing fed back that it was really helpful and saved tenancies. It will also mean a reduction in proactive “outreach” via- for example, foodbanks, debt relief organisations, elected members, contacting vulnerable families etc.</p>
<p>Question (24) by Councillor Johns to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Councillor Long)</p>	<p>I understand that the date for the hearing for the compulsory purchase order for Crossways has been delayed from the 12 July to mid-September. What opportunities do the council have to attempt to accelerate this frustratingly slow process?</p>
<p>Councillor Long</p>	<p>The inquiry is listed for 4 days from 27 September 2021. This is the earliest date that the Planning Inspectorate was able to offer, based on all parties availability.</p> <p>Whilst the delay is frustrating, it has allowed the Council to continue to negotiate with objectors and other parties, which is critical to support the Compulsory Purchase Order case and strategically, has put the Council in a better position going into the public inquiry. The Council remains hopeful of reaching agreement with the two objectors before the September inquiry date, which would allow the public inquiry to be cancelled or significantly shortened. While the Inspector would still need to consider the Compulsory Purchase Order and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State in respect of confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order, the consideration period is likely to be shorter if a settlement is reached.</p>
<p>Question (25) by Councillor Dart to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture</p>	<p>I understand that the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee recently recommended that builders who do not start work on houses within 18 months of being given the green light would lose planning permission. How helpful would this be to deliver homes to local people in Torbay?</p>

(Councillor Morey)	
Councillor Morey	Yes, this would focus the minds of developers and speed up the delivery of sites. There is also the option for Torbay to attach a shorter implementation planning condition to any residential schemes, providing that is reasonable, and this conversation is now happening on each larger residential scheme, to seek an opportunity for quicker implementation dates
Question (26) by Councillor Pentney to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)	A recent study from Exeter University stated that there is land mass the equivalent size of Dorset that could be used to grow wildflower meadows and create habitat for wildlife. In the report it suggests by reducing mowing to one or twice a year could provide more flowers for pollinators, allows plants to set seed and creates better habitats for other animals. How is Torbay Council working towards this?
Councillor Morey	As part of the SWISCo Business Plan, Parks and Green Infrastructure are planning to develop a Local Grass Verge Good Management Scheme for the improvement of biodiversity on highway grass verges that will incorporate natural wildflower meadows. The creation of a Parks Management Action Plan working alongside 'Friends Of' groups for parks and open spaces will also work to achieve further developments on the current local pollinator patches and urban flower meadows.
Question (27) by Councillor Douglas-Dunbar to the Cabinet Member for Adults and Public Health (Councillor Stockman)	The pandemic has clearly taken its toll on Council staff , who have gone above and beyond over the course of this crisis. How are we as a local authority seeking to acknowledge this?
Councillor Stockman	<p>The Council takes its responsibility for supporting staff and their wellbeing very seriously and this has been a top priority, especially in view of the challenges that our staff have faced in the past 18 months. It continues to be a priority and as such will be an area of focus within our workforce strategy to ensure that it is embedded across the organisation. The Health and Wellbeing Group, established last year with representatives from Health and Safety, HR and Public Health, will continue to ensure that wellbeing actions remain a priority and are included within our key organisational change projects.</p> <p>In the meantime, please see below a summary of actions we have taken to address support for staff so far:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced a short-term Wellbeing Covid response group, with members of Public Health and HR to identify and implement immediate wellbeing support actions at the start of the pandemic – many of the below were implemented as outcomes from this group. • Developed an employee helpline, Staff Reach, which originally was open during working hours and weekends/Bank Holidays at the start of

	<p>the pandemic. It's still open to employees who may need signposting to support services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed new wellbeing resources and intranet pages for all staff to support physical and mental wellbeing, signposting to specific covid support services in the community and wider. • Introduced a new bi-weekly <u>Wellbeing Update</u>, to keep staff regularly up to date with any changes and support/help available to them. • Strengthened our network of Wellbeing Supporters, these are staff volunteers who are trained in MH interventions (Connect 5) to provide 1:1 support to staff where needed. • Developed a Covid toolkit for managers, with resources/tools to help them to support staff– includes links to the HSE stress awareness tool and wellness action plan. • Rolled out a series of COVID support workshops for all our managers, to discuss/share any wellbeing concerns for them/their teams and to signpost to the COVID toolkit and resources available. • Developed new policies/guidance – Bereavement Support, COVID Mental Health Workplace Guidance, Emotional Distress and Suicide Awareness guide. • DSE and Homeworking assessments rolled-out to pick-up any health, safety and wellbeing concerns. Health and Safety still encouraging uptake of the DSE assessments across the council. • Delivered a series of Wellbeing training courses to all staff and managers through our external training providers. • Introduced an Employee Assistance Programme scheme. • Currently reviewing our former Staff Wellbeing Group to guide our wellbeing agenda – this is currently under review as part of the Wellbeing Guardian model proposal. Ran a Staff Check-in Survey in June 2020 which focused on staff wellbeing – key actions from this were the COVID workshops for managers, Wellbeing training, Break and a Brew trial, roll-out of DSE and Homeworking assessments
<p>Question (28) by Councillor Foster to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Two years ago at the July Council meeting I called for more recycling from waste & rubbish in parks, beaches and public spaces. At the last Council meeting I asked for an update on the Dual Bin trial in Cary Park which was not available. Can we please have an update on any progress in Cary Park and any proposals for recycling or Dual bins at other sites including Babbacombe Downs.</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>I am sorry but I am not aware of any trial at Cary Park or plans for Babbacombe Downs. This has never been discussed to my knowledge. My only recollection was to increase the littering provision on the Downs, which with SWISCo we have achieved. The only Parks Recycling bin trial that is underway is currently in Princess Garden and on Torquay Promenade. This trial is ongoing, and we aim to review the data towards the end of the year after the summer season has ended.</p>
<p>Question (29) by Councillor B Lewis to the</p>	<p>Can the Portfolio Holder please provide an update on Motorhomes parking in residential areas. In particular, we have a problem at the top of Roundham.</p>

<p>Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>The current situation is not fair on residents where Motorhomes can be parked outside their house for months if not years.</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The issue of Camper Vans on the highway is not straight forward. Firstly it should be appreciated that camper vans are used as a legitimate form of transport by many people and therefore may be parked in a safe location on the highway, unless restrictions are in place.</p> <p>It is possible to restrict Camper Vans from parking in certain areas by the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order, however this can result in the displacement of the vehicle to another nearby location. Therefore, there may be a need to take a view across the whole Torbay area as to how this may be implemented in the future, however there will be no quick solution to any current issues.</p> <p>It should be noted that discharging any waste or effluent from camper vans on to the highway or adjacent land is an offence and any such issues should be reported to the Community Safety Team. Unfortunately, the occupation of a camper van on the highway is not, in itself, an offence and therefore, the authority has no powers to take action to restrict a legitimately parked camper van, unless there are environmental issues resulting from it, or a parking restriction is in place.</p>
<p>Question (30) by Councillor Dudley to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>I understand that the local authority have newly employed recycling support coordinators in recent months. Can you please advise what impact they may have had in increasing the rates of recycling in Torbay and improving our built environment?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The Recycling Support Co-ordinators have been working in targeted areas across Torbay, based on collection rounds. Through the monitoring of the communications and education, there has been an average of 7% increase in the participation of residents using the food waste service and an average of 3% increase in the number of recycling boxes presented for collections in the areas the Recycling Support Co-ordinators have been working in.</p> <p>Between March and June 2021 the Recycling Support Co-ordinators have provided residents with over 250 recycling boxes, 160 food caddies, and 160 food waste bins. In the areas visited, all residents are provided with recycling information and recycling box stickers.</p> <p>In addition to the above the Recycling Support Co-ordinators have been making contact with residents where it has been identified further assistance and advice could be provided with increasing recycling and containing waste correctly, to prevent littering and improve the environment.</p>

	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic has had a big impact on waste performance, with more people working and spending time at home, as well as the Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC) being closed during the first lockdown, until 10th May and the reduced capacity allowed on site. The overall recycling figure for 2020/21 was 35.6%.</p> <p>Analysis of the 2020/21 data showed, overall, kerbside collected domestic residual waste increased by 3477 tonnes (12.61% increase) compared to 2019/20. There was also a rise of 14.5% in the tonnage of residual waste collected from litter bins. All other types of domestic residual waste decreased including HWRC waste (800 tonnes decrease / -28.28). The decreases were smaller than the increases, so household residual waste rose overall.</p> <p>Overall, during 2020/21, kerbside collected household recycling increased by over 1000 tonnes (7.8% increase) compared to 2019/20. Paper collection decreased by 16% (over 250 tonnes) this is a trend that has been ongoing over several years as more paper is replaced by digital technologies. Textiles were down by 30% (20 tonnes) possibly as people have been more limited in their fashion purchases through lockdown and also due to a drive for increased quality by the reprocessor, meaning that more textiles had to be rejected, after collection, as they were not suitable for reuse or recycling. Glass increased by over 15% (540 tonnes); Aluminium increased by 17.8% (28 tonnes); Plastics increased by 19% (170 tonnes); Cardboard increased by 20% (500 tonnes); Steel cans increased by 28% (80 tonnes); Food waste increased by 15% (450 tonnes).</p> <p>The amount of recycling collected, co-mingled and sent to a Material Recycling Facility (MRF) for sorting before recycling decreased by approx. 23%. As co-mingled collections have been used in previous years to help catch up on late / delayed collections, this can be seen as an indicator of the collection rounds being completed successfully throughout the year with less delays to collections than in previous years.</p> <p>At the Household Waste Recycling Centre there was a decrease in residual waste for 2020/21 (noted above -800 tonnes / -28%) The recycling collected at the site has decreased by over 3000 tonnes (-42%) with garden waste being the most affected material with a 49% reduction in tonnage (2700 tonnes). The site was closed during the first lock down, which was also at a time of year when garden waste tonnages are usually high, due to its seasonal arising</p> <p>The unaudited recycling rate for quarter 1 of 2021/22 is 36.8%, this is an improvement on last year, 31.8%. Although the quarter 1 figures are showing a recovery in the recycling rate, it is still not back to pre-covid performance.</p>
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Third Round

<p>Question (31) by Councillor M Darling to the Cabinet Member for</p>	<p>I was pleased to learn that Torbay have recently entered into a contract with Home for Good to help develop adoption and foster care opportunities in Torbay. Have we been able to gauge the support of our churches in Torbay to this project?</p>
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Children's Services (Councillor Law)	
Councillor Law	<p>I am very pleased to advise that we have now entered into a three year contract with Home For Good, and have entered into the engagement phase with our local families of faith. Peter Clayton delivered a speech to the congregation of St Mary Magdalene's Church in Torquay on the 19th June 2021, and delivered the message about the joint work being undertaken by Home For Good and Torbay Council to consider fostering.</p> <p>The Home for Good Torbay coordinator role is now being advertised and we have regular catch up meetings between Regulated Services and Home for Good in respect of the progress of their engagement work.</p> <p>All fostering social workers have also now been subject to Home for Good Faith Literacy training which took place on the 22nd June 2021.</p>
Question (32) by Councillor Atiya-Alla to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Councillor Law)	<p>The LGA suggests there is going to be a £3.1 billion gap for Children's Services. The last census placed the number of young carers in England at nearly 166,000 but recent research suggests that the actual figure may be as many as 800,000. What are our young carer numbers in Torbay and how have we been supporting them through the pandemic?</p>
Councillor Law	<p>There are 730 young carers who have been identified and assessed as young carers. These young carers are held on the Young Carers Register. In order to support them during the Covid 19 situation a number of activities have been in place. We have had two successful on line activity programmes which were run from January 2021 to April 2021. One in the February half term. There were 60 places offered and 50 young people signed up to the programme. For most of the activities, packs were delivered to the home of the young carer beforehand so they could actively engage in the sessions. This meant that the Young Carers service were able to offer a variety of craft activities, alongside martial arts, and online Karaoke.</p> <p>The second was in the Easter holidays. This programme had 43 young carers sessions, but whole family events were also offered to 10 families.</p> <p>*An online art project was developed over a number of weeks from February Half Term: spaces were offered to 24 young carers with ages ranging from some of our youngest primary school carers upwards.</p> <p>*The Young Carers service have been working with Bath Philharmonia to present an opportunity to our primary school leavers and to those currently in year 7, in order to support the primary transition phase.</p> <p>*All of our young carers aged 16 and above have been supported to develop their awareness of access to Covid vaccinations. Young carers were also supported in transport to their vaccinations and help in terms of finding their way through the process of organising appointments and signing up.</p>
Question (33) by Councillor Dudley to the Cabinet Member for Corporate and	<p>The MP for Torbay has been demanding that the Council consult with neighbours regarding the location of Government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme to help those in housing crisis within Torbay. What legal ramifications could the Council find itself in if it followed the MP's request?</p>

Community Services (Councillor Carter)	
Councillor Carter	<p>Whilst we understand that neighbours would wish to be consulted, we must consider that consulting neighbours would the reveal personal information about the people who would moving into these properties. Therefore the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) apply and we would have a duty to protect the rights and freedoms of those residents. Under the GDPR we would need a lawful basis in order to reveal this information and the only one we could rely on would be obtaining the consent of those occupying the property. We would therefore need the consent of the individual to share this information and they would need to know what was being shared and with whom. To share this without a sound lawful basis and without the individual's knowledge would be breach of GDPR and could leave the organisation open to enforcement action from the Information Commissioner's Office.</p>