

Meeting of the Council, Thursday, 22 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 (Cllr 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?
Question (2) by Councillor Atiya-Alla to the Cabinet Member Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Cllr 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?
Question (3) by Councillor Loxton to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)	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?
Question (4) by Councillor M Darling to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Councillor Law)	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?
Question (5) by Councillor Johns to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture	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?

(Councillor Morey)	
Question (6) by Councillor Amil to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Councillor Long)	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.
Question (7) by Councillor Douglas-Dunbar to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)	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 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?
Question (8) by Councillor Dart to the Cabinet Member Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Cllr Long)	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. 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.
Question (9) by Councillor Kennedy to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr Morey)	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? What monitoring system is currently in place regarding the cutting and planting of trees? If there is no monitoring system in place please provide an explanation why this would be the case and how this fits with our declared Climate Emergency. 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.
Question (10) by Councillor Foster to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr Morey)	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>Question (11) by Councillor Bye to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr Morey)</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 behaviour at Hopes Nose & Peaked Tor Cove where large crowds gather in the fine weather.</p>
<p>Question (12) by Councillor D Thomas to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr Morey)</p>	<p>The Council minute 140 of December 2017 <u>Minutes of the Council Meeting 17/12/17</u>, and in particular,</p> <p>‘(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.</p> <p>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>Question (13) by Councillor C Lewis to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr 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 Cllr 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>Question (14) by Councillor Sykes to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr 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.</p> <p>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?</p> <p>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>Question (15) by Councillor Barrand to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr 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>Question (16) by Councillor Barnby to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr 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>Question (17) by Councillor B Lewis to The Leader of the Council (Cllr 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>Question (18) by Councillor Jackie Thomas to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr 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>Question (19) by Councillor O'Dwyer to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr 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>Question (20) by Councillor Hill to the Cabinet Member for Finance (Cllr 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>

Second Round

<p>Question (21) by Councillor M Darling to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr 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>Question (22) by Councillor Atiya-Alla to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Cllr 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>Question (23) by Councillor Johns to the Cabinet</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>Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Cllr Long)</p>	
<p>Question (24) by Councillor Dudley to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr 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>Question (25) by Councillor Dart to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr Morey)</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>
<p>Question (26) by Councillor Pentney to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr Morey)</p>	<p>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?</p>
<p>Question (27) by Councillor Douglas-Dunbar to the Cabinet Member for Adults and Public Health (Cllr Stockman)</p>	<p>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?</p>
<p>Question (28) by Councillor Foster to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr 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>Question (29) by Councillor B Lewis to the Cabinet Member for</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. The current situation is not fair on residents where Motorhomes can be parked outside their house for months if not years.</p>

Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Cllr Morey)	
Question (30) by Councillor Dudley to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)	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?

Third Round

Question (31) by Councillor M Darling to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Cllr Law)	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?
Question (32) by Councillor Atiya-Alla to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Cllr Law)	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?
Question (33) by Councillor Dudley to the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services (Cllr Carter)	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?