

Meeting of the Council, Thursday, 24 October 2019

Questions Under Standing Order A13

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.

<p>Question (1) by Councillor Chris Lewis to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Steve Darling)</p>	<p>In the past the Conservatives have offered the role of Civic Mayor to opposition members on a number of occasions. The Partnership, according to their agreement, will not be offering the role of Civic Mayor to a Conservative Councillor whilst the partnership are in control of the Council. By taking this action the Partnership is excluding a number of long standing and distinguished Members from holding the non political office of Civic Mayor. Will the Leader of the Council please inform us why the Partnership has decided to take this action?</p>																																							
<p><b>Councillor Steve Darling</b></p>	<p><b>For the Council and the Partnership, the role of Civic Mayor is very important both within Torbay and beyond - demonstrating leadership and the Partnership's commitment for positive change. It is the Partnership's belief that as such, it is appropriate for the role to be filled by a Member of the Partnership, rather than simply being given to a long standing Member of the Council.</b></p>																																							
<p>Question (2) by Councillor David Thomas to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Steve Darling)</p>	<p>Can the Leader of the Council please provide a 'line by line' document outlining the cost of the second phase of Town Council Consultation. The document should include officer time, printing of material, room hire, direct mailing, creation of videos, online promotions and any other items of expenditure.</p>																																							
<p><b>Councillor Steve Darling</b></p>	<p><b>The costs incurred during the second phase of consultation of the Community Governance Review are listed below. The officer time spent on this stage of the consultation has not been centrally recorded.</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="443 1585 1358 2089"> <tr> <td>Printed copies of surveys</td> <td>£</td> <td>464.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Roadshow postcards</td> <td>£</td> <td>208.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Posters</td> <td>£</td> <td>122.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Banners</td> <td>£</td> <td>144.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Delivery costs</td> <td>£</td> <td>100.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Letter to 6000 households</td> <td>£</td> <td>3,019.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Postage of survey on request</td> <td>£</td> <td>4.32</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Ask Us... About town councils (Question time event)</b></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>    Hire of Riviera Centre</td> <td>£</td> <td>278.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>    Audio Visual services</td> <td>£</td> <td>390.10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>    Question cards</td> <td>£</td> <td>35.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>    Facebook boost to advertise event</td> <td>£</td> <td>40.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>£</td> <td><b>4,804.42</b></td> </tr> </table>	Printed copies of surveys	£	464.00	Roadshow postcards	£	208.00	Posters	£	122.00	Banners	£	144.00	Delivery costs	£	100.00	Letter to 6000 households	£	3,019.00	Postage of survey on request	£	4.32	<b>Ask Us... About town councils (Question time event)</b>			Hire of Riviera Centre	£	278.00	Audio Visual services	£	390.10	Question cards	£	35.00	Facebook boost to advertise event	£	40.00		£	<b>4,804.42</b>
Printed copies of surveys	£	464.00																																						
Roadshow postcards	£	208.00																																						
Posters	£	122.00																																						
Banners	£	144.00																																						
Delivery costs	£	100.00																																						
Letter to 6000 households	£	3,019.00																																						
Postage of survey on request	£	4.32																																						
<b>Ask Us... About town councils (Question time event)</b>																																								
Hire of Riviera Centre	£	278.00																																						
Audio Visual services	£	390.10																																						
Question cards	£	35.00																																						
Facebook boost to advertise event	£	40.00																																						
	£	<b>4,804.42</b>																																						

<p>Question (3) by Councillor O'Dwyer to the to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Is the Council in breach of the Equalities Act, given there are some unpassable and inaccessible public pavements for elderly or disabled residents across the bay, when it is reasonable and reasonably easy to provide alternative options of widening said pavements or for example removing offending obstacles. What are the requirements of the Acts in this respect regarding public spaces and highways?</p>
<p><b>Councillor Morey</b></p>	<p><b>Under the Equality Act public authorities, including highways authorities, are required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, and to achieve equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people in the exercise of a public function. As a consequence there is a duty to make reasonable adjustments including changing practices, policies and procedures which have a discriminating effect. At present that authority has a specific budget for disabled access, however, this is generally used for drop curb crossings that assist the mobility impaired or those with mobility scooters, and people with pushchairs/ prams, etc.</b></p> <p><b>The current budgetary situation restricts the wholesale widening of all footways and in some cases there is insufficient road space to allow this, especially in the older areas of the bay. However capital and Section 106 funding does allow some improvement works where appropriate. We also take advantage of any scheme to provide better facilities and to reduce the amount of on-street clutter, i.e. remove unwanted signs and sign poles, or relocate signs on to street lighting columns, removing associated poles to widen the available width of footway areas.</b></p> <p><b>I would be happy to discuss specific examples where access is considered to be restricted and then explore with the relevant officers the scope to improve the situation, in addition to the ongoing activities highlighted above.</b></p>

## Second Round

<p>Question (4) by Councillor O'Dwyer to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Who are our independent sector specific advisors on the New Company that has recently been incorporated that will be taking over responsibility for the services currently delivered by Tor2 next July who are supporting both our creation and the implementation of that new business, and can you also provide the names of the legal and financial specialists supporting the authority on this project?</p>
<p><b>Councillor Morey</b></p>	<p><b>The independent sector specific advisors on the New Company are:</b></p> <p><b>WYG Environment Planning Transport Limited</b></p> <p><b>The legal and financial specialists supporting the authority on this project are:</b></p> <p><b>Ashfords LLP</b></p>

	<p><b>PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP</b></p> <p><b>DFP Wealth Management Ltd.</b></p>
<p>Question (5) by Councillor Chris Lewis to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>The proposed Torquay Road zebra crossing opposite Preston Conservative Club and Pembroke Surgery is important to residents and vital for safety reasons. At Council on 18 July 2019 the Interim Director of Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture were requested to consider a relevant business case for a pedestrian crossing on Torquay Road, Preston within 3 months. Can the Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture please provide an update on the proposed pedestrian crossing?</p>
<p><b>Councillor Morey</b></p>	<p><b>I am very pleased to announce that the capital funding has now been approved for this new signalised pedestrian crossing, the implementation of which was requested by the community and supported by the local ward members.</b></p> <p><b>It is envisaged that the new crossing will be in place before next summer.</b></p>

### Third Round

<p>Question (6) by Councillor O'Dwyer to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Councillor Long)</p>	<p>The wholly owned housing companies were agreed in principle to be transferred in December 2018 to the TDA and building progressed at speed with the grant of funding, can you provide an urgent response on their progress and the current status of the new registered housing provider?</p> <p>What planning permissions have now been granted, what land has been transferred to them so far and for what consideration.</p> <p>A Chief Executive decision titled 'Allocation of Affordable Housing Budget' published on 7 December 2017, provides up to £100,000 from the Council's Affordable Housing budget to the Housing Company to fund the necessary works to obtain planning permissions on sites at Totnes Road and Redwell Lane, I believe only one of these sites was progressed to a full planning application and according to Companies House the Housing Companies themselves never spent any money. Could you advise the Council as to the current position with regards to this £100,000 allocation?</p>
<p><b>Councillor Long</b></p>	<p><b>Further to the report on housing presented to Council in July 2019, TDA are currently working on a submission to achieve Registered Provider status. In line with the July report TDA will bring forward detailed business cases to enable the loans for housing developments to be drawn down. The operating agreement has been agreed between the parties and the loan agreement is currently being finalised. These documents will be presented to the TDA Board for consideration at its meeting on 6 November 2019</b></p>

	<p><b>With regards to the second element of your question. Council has previously approved the transfer of three sites to the TDA at nil consideration apart from nomination rights (on basis that it is no longer proposed to transfer Redwell Lane). Totnes Road has a planning permission. St Kildas has had a pre application submission and further design work is currently being carried out. Torre Marine has a permission from the previous owner but a new permission is required. Following consideration of the Operating Agreement and the Loan Agreement by the TDA Board, this will allow the Operating Agreement to be signed, and the Working Capital Loan to be drawn down in order to fund the required works to progress all three sites.</b></p> <p><b>In answer to the final element of your question. The £100,000 approved by Council is part of the Council's capital plan. To date less than £5,000 has been spent but this funding was allocated to the Councils Housing Company, <u>not</u> TDA. However £102,000 has been spent or committed by TDA on these sites. The signing of the operating agreement and the draw down of the Working Capital Loan will allow the further work required to deliver the sites to be undertaken.</b></p>
<p>Urgent Question by Councillor Barrand to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Councillor Long)</p>	<p>Earlier this week I met with Kath Friedrich at PATH – Central Church to hear her concerns on their future accommodation as their stay at Central Church is due to end on 23rd November.</p> <p>PATH is at the heart of our support network for homeless and most vulnerable and have been for nearly 4 years. If no accommodation is found for them to continue their amazing work after 23 November they will be forced to close and the people they are helping will be forced to fend for themselves without the support of PATH.</p> <p>Please can the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Tourism and Housing please confirm whether he met with Kath Friedrich to discuss their plight.</p>
<p><b>Councillor Long</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>