

Meeting of the Council, Thursday, 16 July 2020

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.

First Round

Question (1) by Councillor Barnby to the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services (Councillor Carter)	What is the Council doing to prevent further traveller encampments at Clennon Valley and what progress has been made to designate a site that the Police can legally direct travellers to?
Councillor Carter	<p>Planning permission is being sought for some adjustments to the green link access to Clennon Valley playing fields, which will increase visibility and CCTV range of view. This may mitigate some issues. It is not possible to prevent or restrict access to the car park as it is open for public use and required for this purpose. The velo park being open to public use again will typically mitigate use of that land as it will be utilised on a regular basis.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to identify a suitable site as a temporary stopping location and this work will be furthered within the Local Plan review alongside Officer attempts to find a site. The steer Officers have been given is to identify somewhere along the Torquay end of the ring road, which is an area that the Council does not own much land and the small pockets it does are not suitable, the main one being a public right of way, cycle path, access lane to farmland, poor condition and mostly not level. The task of finding a site that is both suitable and acceptable to councillors and residents is an extremely difficult one which will require compromise and strong will to bring to reality. A reality that 18 years of Conservative rule failed to deliver. To succeed we will have to look at areas beyond the narrow strip of the ring road and possibly procuring land for this purpose. In any event there will be additional costs to providing a temporary site by way of the facilities that would need to be provided and any additional costs potentially associated with making it fit for purpose.</p>
Question (2) by Councillor Chris Lewis to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)	Can the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture please provide an update on the proposed Zebra Crossing outside Pembroke Surgery, Torquay Road, Preston. It was agreed some months ago that the construction of the crossing would take place as a matter of urgency!

<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The implementation of the proposed pedestrian crossing at Torquay Road, Preston is now programmed to commence during the week commencing 7th September 2020 and should be operational by November 2020. The works were originally scheduled for April 2020, however this was not possible due to the availability of contractors and signal equipment during the COVID19 Lockdown period. I confirm that the crossing will be a signalised ‘Puffin’ crossing and not a zebra crossing as stated in the question.</p>
<p>Question (3) by Councillor Sykes to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Will the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture encourage the Police to do mobile speed checks on Preston Down Road, Preston. Over the past few months with less traffic on the road it has been noted that motorists are now travelling at great speed down the road.</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>Thank you for highlighting this issue, I will raise the matter with Devon and Cornwall Police.</p>
<p>Question (4) by Councillor David Thomas to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Steve Darling)</p>	<p>Why are the Lib Dem and Independent Councillors abusing this question time by asking the Lib Dem and Independent administration questions about central government policy which this council has no jurisdiction over, and thereby deliberately timing out the questions which can be asked by Conservative opposition councillors to hold this administration to proper account?</p>
<p>Councillor Steve Darling</p>	<p>The Council’s Constitution at Standing Order A12.3 sets out the right for <u>all</u> Members to be able to pose questions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the Civic Mayor; (ii) the Leader of the Council; (iii) a member of the Cabinet; (iv) the Chairman/woman of any committee (including the Overview and Scrutiny Board); or (v) a Council representative on an outside organization. <p>Whilst the constitution does limit the amount of time that is spent during a meeting on responding to questions, since this was introduced it is not believed that the allotted time has ever been used.</p> <p>Therefore it is reasonable to ask how the council are coping with incompetent national government management of the pandemic. I have included an article from the “The Economist” magazine that highlights how the “British Government played a bad hand badly” for ease of reference I will reference a couple of quotes from this article</p>

	<p>“Britain has been slow to increase testing, identify a contact-tracing app, stop visits to care homes, ban big public events, provide its health workers with personal protective equipment (ppe), and require people to wear face coverings on public transport.”</p> <p>“Neil Ferguson, an epidemiologist at Imperial College London, estimates that had Britain locked down a week earlier, at least half of the 50,000-or-so lives that have been lost would have been saved. This is more Britons than have died in any event since the second world war.”</p> <p>A full copy of the article is attached at Appendix 1 for your reference.</p>
<p>Question (5) by Councillor Kennedy to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Steve Darling)</p>	<p>The published 5 year land supply contains a letter from the leader of our council to the Secretary of State which has been widely circulated throughout the Bay. Our area is properly represented by two MPs, one of whom is a Minister, from the same political party as the Secretary of State. Does the leader not consider it would have been preferable and perhaps correct protocol to ask our MPs to contact the Secretary of State? I believe the question was not asked sincerely but was an example of political grandstanding. Would the leader please reassure me by highlighting the positive benefits he secured for our area through asking his question?</p>
<p>Councillor Steve Darling</p>	<p>It is important that as Leader of the Council I have a direct dialogue with Government, and I most certainly do not accept that all communication has to go through our MPs. The MPs were copied in on the correspondence, so that they were aware, and could support my efforts as they considered appropriate.</p> <p>However the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick MP, replied at the time to this letter, which I supplied you a copy of and in recent weeks he has allowed an element of greater flexibility around the interpretation of the 5 year land supply.</p>
<p>Question (6) by Councillor John Thomas to Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>What is the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture doing to dramatically ease the time and effort that it takes for the Constituents that we represent to get rid of their recycling and non-recycling domestic waste under the new “Ticket” system.</p> <p>I would also ask what is being done to come down hard on Fly Tippers. I am receiving regular complaints about these two intrinsically linked matters.</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The current booking system no longer needs a ticket and entry to the recycling centre can be booked online. Of the over 7000 residents who have used the system so far most have been very happy to use this format as it has dramatically reduced the queuing time at the recycling centre and compliments have far outweighed complaints thus far.</p> <p>Going forward and once the shielding staff that have done a wonderful job taking bookings can return to work, the authority is</p>

	<p>currently arranging for an online booking system which will improve this experience even further. This will give better strategic intelligence of who is using this facility. It is hoped that this new system will be in place within the coming months.</p> <p>Regarding fly tipping, the authority has not seen an increase in fly tipping reported on its website, and unless the intelligence supplied shows a person actively undertaking the fly tipping with evidence that can identify that person like a registration number of a vehicle next to the person who can be proved to be the owner of that vehicle, then prosecution is almost impossible.</p>
<p>Question (7) by Councillor Jackie Thomas to the Chairman of the Planning Committee (Councillor Pentney)</p>	<p>Planning Committees can take an extra-ordinary amount of time to fully understand the various issues involved with an individual application. Now the planning meetings have become virtual, the site visits have been discontinued. Any councillor who has sat on planning will appreciate that a scheme can look cramped on a piece of paper, however on the site visit and seeing the levels, it becomes obvious that the development fits neatly in the location. Site visits are an integral part of decision making and in my view the process is undermined without them. I fully understand they need to look different in this new 'normal', however I ask will an effort be made to re-introduce site visits now to help members make more informed decisions at the planning committee.</p>
<p>Councillor Pentney</p>	<p>The point made by Councillor Jackie Thomas is accepted and understood and these very different times have made it hard to conduct site visits. However, following the Planning Committee Site visit this week to Collaton St Mary, the Development Management Manager is looking at items scheduled for the next two Planning Committees to see if there are any, where a site visit may be appropriate and practicable. We will inform Members in advance.</p>
<p>Question (8) by Councillor Foster to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>The Government has asked councils to bid for part of £250m Emergency Active Travel Funding. Can you tell me how much Torbay Council's bid was for, and a brief outline of what Torbay's plans are, and what measures are in place to implement these improvements for cyclist's and pedestrians safety in Torbay, within the eight week's timescale of receiving the money.</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>Torbay Council have been awarded £41,000 of new funding from the Government's Emergency Active Travel Fund to help with the creation of pop up and temporary interventions, to create an environment that is safe for both walking and cycling in Torbay area. The funding has been awarded following a bidding process. The DfT allocated an initial indicative sum of £55,000 and the bid was submitted for a figure slightly in excess of this at approximately £58,000. We were therefore not awarded the full allocation on this occasion, which was disappointing.</p> <p>The Emergency Active Travel funding is designated for temporary or experimental schemes which can be aimed at improving facilities for</p>

walking and cycling, and for maintaining social distancing. The funding is part of a national total of £225 million, which will be allocated to local authorities and will be released in two Tranches. This funding allocation is part of the first tranche of a total of £45 million for release during the summer 2020 to immediately commence the implementation of temporary or trial measures for walking and cycling.

The main purpose of the funding is to promote active travel methods such as cycling and walking as a replacement for journeys previously made by public transport. The initial funding will be for temporary or experimental measures only and will need to take into consideration social distancing guidelines. These measures are essentially in response to the current situation with respect to COVID19, however they form part of a larger government backed directive to improve facilities for walking and cycling.

A further announcement from government on the bidding process for the remainder of the funding, is likely to be published later in the year.

Initially six 'pop-up' and experimental schemes were identified within the bid to the DfT, to temporarily relocate some road space to pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposed schemes are as follows:

1. Marine Drive, Paignton – Temporary widening of narrow high footfall footway between Paignton Sea Front and Preston Sea Front to aid social distancing.
2. Torbay Road, Torquay – Temporary widening of narrow high footfall footway which runs beneath the footbridge to aid social distancing.
3. Station Square, Paignton – Closure of one traffic lane to provide extended footway to aid social distancing. This will also serve to act as an experimental layout to test a proposed planned future public realm improvement for this area.
4. Torbay Road, Torquay, footways adjacent to Torre Abbey Sea Front and Meadows – Conversion of existing wide footways to shared footway / cycle ways to link into existing cycle provision.
5. Dartmouth Road, Paignton (Adjacent to Waterside precinct) – Temporary arrangement to provide shared footway/cycleway to link to existing cycle provision. This will be temporary until a permanent scheme is implemented.
6. Temporary road closures outside two primary schools – Curledge Street, Paignton and Furzeham, Brixham, operational at school times to allow social distancing and as an experimental scheme.

In addition the proposals include for continued monitoring of Town Centre locations, and an allowance for further minor targeted actions if social distancing issues are identified as the economy starts to reopen.

As Torbay did not receive the full allocation, it will be necessary to re-evaluate whether all of these temporary schemes can be delivered. It is anticipated that the schemes at Marine Drive, Paignton and Torbay Road, Torquay will be implemented by the end of July

	<p>2020. The shared cycle routes for Dartmouth Road, Paignton and Torbay Road, Torquay are expected to be in place by the end of August 2020 and the Road School time road closures are expected to be operational in September 2020. The experimental scheme for Station Lane Paignton is expected to be operational in September 2020, subject to a review of the scheme budget.</p> <p>The proposed temporary measures will be operational for a period of up to 18 months duration. During this time traffic will be monitored, and, in consultation with local residents, measures may be amended or removed if deemed ineffective or proposed to be made permanent where considered successful. Feedback is welcomed on these schemes once they are operational and details will be published on the feedback process shortly.</p>
<p>Question (9) by Councillor Bye to the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services (Councillor Carter)</p>	<p>Whilst welcoming recent action to clean up the mess at Hopes Nose Torquay and help prevent anti-social behavior, could you please advise if the Public Space Protection Order is being enforced and what other steps will be taken to ensure residents can enjoy this delightful green space without feeling intimidated by what appears to be commercial fishing activity?</p>
<p>Councillor Carter</p>	<p>The Council has just received short term funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to facilitate 10 weeks enforcement activity specifically at Hopes Nose. The main responsibility for enforcement has rested with the Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust (TCCT) as managers of the land and with delegated powers under the PSPO. The task of resourcing such enforcement has been beyond the resource of Council Officers, as was made clear during the process of enacting the PSPO and has become understandably resource-heavy for TCCT. The 10 weeks of targeted enforcement will help alleviate the current issues but not serve as a longer term resolution. A meeting has been requested with TCCT and interested parties to discuss precisely this issue and how to mitigate the issues going forward, but we have yet to receive a response. It would seem that more restrictive measures to address the fishing and all that goes with it is now justified, however, it must strike a balance to enable those who wish to utilise the site reasonably to continue to do so. In terms of patterns of use, monitoring for recent years identifies that most of the issues appear to be from visiting fishermen. The next step remains to engage TCCT in meaningful discussion around the future management of the site.</p>
<p>Question (10) by Councillor Hill to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>The Government has recently awarded Torbay Council in excess of £120,000 to support the re-opening of our town centres & encourage footfall. Could the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture please advise how and where the money has been spent, furthermore will some of this money be used to power wash the filthy pavements in Torquay Town Centre and around the Harbour.</p>

	<p>Can any surplus monies be used for enforcement action against the owners of dilapidated properties such as the Old Town Hall & other prominent/empty premises?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The Reopening the High Streets safely fund allows local authorities in England to put in place additional measures to establish a safe trading environment for businesses and customers. The monies will fund both business and public facing activity until the end of March 2021.</p> <p>The Fund will support 4 main strands of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support to develop an action plan for how the local authority may begin to safely reopen their local economies. - Communications and public information activity to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely. - Business-facing awareness raising activities to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely. - Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely. <p>Thus far, the majority of our current spend to date has been expended on a joint business facing / public facing marketing campaign encouraging businesses to take appropriate health and safety measures when opening, as outlined in Public health guidance, and to encourage customers to enjoy shopping again in a safe and responsible way. This marketing included Social media advertising, radio advertising and print advertising in the local press. Banners are due to be erected imminently around Torbay high streets too. As per ERDF guidelines, we were required to procure an external agency for this work.</p> <p>Money has also been spent on signage, including floor vinyls, across Torbay High Streets and Neighbourhood shopping areas encouraging social distancing and good hygiene practices, as well as the resource for affixing said signage. As part of the action plan we will be developing support to ensure businesses are equipped with the knowledge and therefore, confidence, to reopen premises safely and encourage customers back. Going forward we will focus on working with independent businesses on their adaptability and resilience for post-Covid life on the high street.</p> <p>We are exploring allocating spend towards temporary traffic calming measures around key high street sites around Torbay, as well as commissioning vital research into footfall, vitality and vibrancy monitoring, to help ascertain the success of key campaigns.</p>

	<p>Further budget has been allocated towards at least two further public facing marketing campaigns; One during August and September 2020, to encourage local shopping during Torbay’s traditional tourism season, and one other behavior around shopping locally for Christmas.</p> <p>We also want to ensure there is sufficient flexibility in the budget to provide us with scope to be able to react effectively to any further challenges brought about by Covid-19.</p> <p>As per the ERDF guidance, we are not permitted to allocate spend to any measures to increase the attractiveness of an area, or additional cleaning. We are also unable to use monies to make temporary or permanent changes to dilapidated premises. This funding is intended to help local authorities address the short-term issue of re-opening their local economies. It can support some temporary changes to the physical environment, but those changes should directly address challenges arising from Covid-19.</p> <p>We welcome suggestions for how we could further make best use of this budget. However, the ERDF guidelines are rigid and prescriptive, and as such, we need to ensure we only spend money on activity that strictly adheres to these guidelines, and that we can be sure we can claim back for.</p>
<p>Question (11) by Councillor Mills to the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services (Councillor Carter)</p>	<p>Central government provided councils with a list of local residents who are being shielded in order that they can be helped and protected locally but no list was provided to councillors informing them as to who was being shielded in their wards apparently for GDPR reasons. As councillors ARE the council I am finding it difficult to understand this position, particularly as the lists were shared with other groups such as supermarkets without the specific consent of those shielded, and that government’s response to GDPR and this issue was, ‘It is far more important to help those who are having difficulties during these dark days than to get ‘bogged down’ with GDPR issues’. Has this administration deliberately withheld information from councilors to the detriment of our shielded residents?</p>
<p>Councillor Carter</p>	<p>It is important to note that unlike many other statutory changes which were implemented to assist organisations respond to the pandemic, no changes were made to Data Protection Law (the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018). Therefore all the requirements of Data Protection Law have to be applied to the list of shielded residents.</p> <p>It is also important to recognize that Elected Representatives do not fall under the local authority’s registration as a data controller and Councillors are data controllers in their own right (although they are exempt from formal registration). This means that Councillors do not have an automatic right to any / all personal data the local authority processes, and each request for personal data needs to be considered on its own merits.</p> <p>Information can be shared with Councillors where they are representing a resident in dealing with an enquiry / complaint as it is</p>

clear there is consent from the resident because they want their Councillor to do something for them, this type of disclosure is covered under an exemption within the Data Protection Act 2018.

As a member of the Council, information can also be shared to assist Councillors carrying out their official duties e.g. as a member of a committee where a decision about an individual may need to be made, such as licensing committee, however the authority would not be justified in giving a Councillor general access to the licensing database.

The advice of the Council's Data Protection Officer in respect of this issue was clear; that to share details of residents on the shielding list without their fully informed and explicit consent would be a breach of data protection law, as the authority does not have this consent. Residents were also not informed that their personal data would be shared with Councillors, this transparency requirement being a key component of data protection law. As the authority are not able to meet the requirements of the first data protection principle 'that personal data shall be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner', the information could not lawfully be shared.

The list of residents shielding has been provided by central government to local authorities to ensure the well-being of those residents. This task was carried out by an officer team who have been regularly keeping in contact with these residents and advising them of the support available. Therefore the purpose for which this information was provided to the authority has been fulfilled.

It is important that those shielding are offered standardised and consistent levels of support. As such it is appropriate that the officer team provided this support rather than Members undertaking the same.

The recommendation from the Chief Executive early in the pandemic, was that Members identify individuals in their wards in need of support who may not be known or who may be choosing to shield rather than being told to shield. There are many examples of Members referring individuals both into Council services, and to the Coronavirus Helpline, to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Indeed that is what Members of the Liberal Democrats and the Independents did, reaching out to vulnerable residents during the heights of the pandemic some of which was reported in the Daily Mail.

To conclude, this was not a deliberate attempt to withhold information from Councillors, this is officers ensuring that the council processes information about those shielding lawfully and in compliance with data protection law which had not been set aside for the purpose of the pandemic. It is important to re-emphasise that those on the Shielding list have been provided with a wide range of support from the Shielding Hub, and therefore it is not correct to say that residents have been impacted.

<p>Question (12) by Councillor Kavanagh to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>I have been having difficulties for the past 5 weeks trying to get an assisted collection resolved in Kings Ash, despite my various requests and telephone calls – the resident is still having missed collections – although they are registered for an assisted service. When I try to call the TOR2 line, I am just left with an answerphone and nobody responds to me or resolves the issue. What assurances and systems will the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture be putting in place at the end of the month when Swisco take over the service? How can we be guaranteed a better service and system than we are currently having to deal with?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>This has been an ongoing problem while TOR2 have managed this operation, now that SWISCo has been formed there is an updated computer system called ECHO that will be fully operational soon, once all updates and data have been synchronized. This will show what should be collected from each household and the crew should not be able to pass by a household until the required collection is complete. Any missed collections like this can then be electronically loaded including photo's to stop repeated occurrences and the crews round will not be completed until all collections have been made. Please bear with us, but this should be a rare occurrence soon as part of many improvements under SWISCo.</p>
<p>Question (13) by Councillor Barbara Lewis to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Councillor Law)</p>	<p>How many children are now in care or deemed vulnerable by the authority in Torbay?</p>
<p>Councillor Law</p>	<p>The number of children who are deemed as vulnerable can fluctuate dependent on the referrals to children's social care. At the present time Children's services are supporting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 435 children who are subject to a child in need plan. A further 278 are having an initial holistic assessment to determine what ongoing support they may need, if any, from a statutory service. • 213 children who are subject to child protection plans • 338 children who are looked after by the council • 107 children who have left care but need continuing support as part of their care leavers status.
<p>Question (14) by Councillor Barrant to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Why is there a different purchasing system for the different parking permits ie on street/off street weekly monthly and annual? What consideration has been undertaken to allow for the delays Residents are having to wait – this leads to potential additional fines and charging?</p>

<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The Council offer three different methods for the purchase of off street permits, via the online virtual system, pay by mobile for three day and weekly or via the machines across the bay which can take card payments.</p> <p>The purchase of the monthly and yearly on street permit is soon to be transferred to the online virtual system.</p> <p>For residential permits this is an application process on line where supporting evidence is required to meet the qualifying criteria for a residential permit. The customer should receive an email a month before the expiry date to remind them to renew the permit and the information on the website advises that 10 days should be allowed to ensure the permit arrives in time provided the evidence sent is correct and in date. There is a small grace period after the expiry date. We are unaware at the present time of any delays being experienced by the customer if they have applied for their permits within the suggested timescale unless the evidence provided has been insufficient.</p>
<p>Question (15) by Councillor Brooks to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Steve Darling)</p>	<p>There have been reports from residents that a business in the St.Marychurch Ward is selling alcoholic drinks to the public, in plastic pint containers, who are then gathering in groups and drinking on the Downs, nearby, with associated anti-social behavior. I drove past, myself, several times and witnessed gatherings of people, on average, between two and six, but in total 20-30 persons. The larger groupings, in all likely-hood, comprising of people from more than two households and in contravention of the recommended 2m social distancing guidelines. This was on a dry, but dull day, when the sun is out I'm assured that the situation is more problematic.</p> <p>I, obviously, want to support local businesses, coming out of lockdown and understand that people want to meet friends after a long period of separation. However, I am concerned about the 'over spill' on to public spaces; especially, in areas that many young families and elderly residents frequent.</p> <p>The relaxation of guidelines requires some management strategies to be in place. What is the Leader of the Council doing to promote the aims of social distancing and trying to discourage groups of more than six to congregate, particularly on Council owned and managed public open spaces?</p>
<p>Councillor Steve Darling</p>	<p>I am aware of the matter and this had previously been raised with the licensing team at the point it was occurring. In response appropriate visits were undertaken by the licensing team and the Police visited the areas on several occasions to encourage social distancing. In extreme circumstances the Police do have powers to issue a Dispersal Order, this however relates to activities related to anti-social behavior rather than covid related legislation.</p> <p>Since the reopening of licenced trade on the 4 July social behavior has changed and people are starting to use beer gardens and the situation has improved on the Down. Information has been disseminated to premises to assist with their reopening and</p>

	<p>webinars held to provide support and guidance to help ensure that social distancing and appropriate measures are being undertaken. Regular joint licensing visits with the Police and Torbay Council are undertaken out of hours including the weekend to check on compliance. Funding has also been obtained through the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner which will facilitate the use of Street Marshalls to help support our Police colleagues in managing any anti-social behavior that may occur and reminding people in an appropriate way to social distance. The Street Wardens will also have a presence on Babbacombe Down to provide that community reassurance and promote positive behavior.</p> <p>In my conversations with the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall, it would appear that during that particular period of the lockdown Torbay did not suffer from the aggravated levels of anti-social behavior experienced elsewhere across the constabulary.</p> <p>On a wider perspective we are in regular communication with the Police and our CCTV network acts as our eyes and ears along with operational staff to highlight any concerns and hotspots, which is then directly fed into the Police 7 days a week. Public Health also continue to actively promote messaging so that everyone can play their part in containing the spread of the virus.</p>
<p>Question (16) by Councillor O'Dwyer to the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing (Councillor Long)</p>	<p>Please could the relevant Cabinet Member provide details of any reduced rental agreement with the Debenhams Store in Torquay. Can the Cabinet Member also advise to the numbers of staff subsequently made redundant from this site with the closure of the catering area.</p>
<p>Councillor Long</p>	<p>The majority of the response to this question contains exempt information and has been circulated separately. I can share in the public domain that we are not able to advise on the number of staff made redundant as the Council are not involved in the day to day running of the Debenhams business.</p>
<p>Question (17) by Councillor Dart to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Councillor Law)</p>	<p>Torbay Council has been running a campaign to recruit more Foster Carers. Has this campaign borne fruit? How does this latest recruitment campaign compare to the last 5 years of recruitment in Torbay?</p>

Councillor Law

This latest recruitment campaign has seen a very positive response. The below table highlights the enquiries over the last 5 years and how many of the enquiries converted to approval of a mainstream fostering household.

Years	Number of enquiries	Approvals	Conversion %
2014- 2015	118	29	24
2015- 2016	65	10	15
2016- 2017	42	3	7
2017 - 2018	86	10	12
2018 - 2019	45	4	9
2019 - 2020	51	2	4
2020 -	35	3	On going

Since the new campaign in Torbay we initially received 29 enquiries. We have subsequently received 6 more making the total enquires to date 35 in this financial year. Of these 29 are presently going through the assessment process, three are due to be presented in panel in July 2020. With the other households due to go to panel as detailed below:

- 3 in August (inclusive of 1 reliance carer)
- 3 in September
- 10 in October
- 3 in November
- 1 in December (resilience foster carer)
- 6 in January 2021

6 of the households making enquiries wish to be contacted later in the year following their initial enquiries.

Question (18) by Councillor Loxton to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)

Has Torbay been successful in the revalidation of its UNESCO Geopark status? If successful, what are the benefits to Torbay of this status?

Councillor Morey

On 20th March 2020 the UNESCO Global Geopark Council decided to renew our status as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four more years.

The benefits of the UNESCO Geopark designation for Torbay are as follows :

- **UNESCO Global Geopark is the highest level international designation the bay has.**
- **Torbay is the only seaside resort in the England to hold this sought after international designation**
- **The UNESCO Global Geopark model is a driver for education, community benefits, expansion of the tourism offer, and sympathetic regeneration.**
- **The UNESCO label is a designation of quality that provides the opportunity to promote the area at an international level.**
- **Through the work of the UK National Commission for UNESCO the profile of the English Riviera is raised within DCMS and other relevant government departments and national level organisations**
- **The UNESCO designation is a tool that can be used to attract inward investment**
- **The UNESCO Global Geopark designation is the ultimate recognition of Torbay's Naturally Inspiring strapline**
- **The holistic nature of the designation supports and enhances multi-disciplinary partnership working and as such the Geopark umbrella brings together key partner organisations covering the largest surface area of the unitary authority for a common goal (For membership of the Geopark Management Group see Appendix 1)**
- **In addition to the core partners the Geopark now has 18 local Associate Partners supporting the designation**
- **The UNESCO designation is a hook for external funders that makes local projects stand out**
- **Partner capital projects linked to the Geopark since designation in 2007 total £14,856,200**
- **The entire ethos of UNESCO Global Geoparks is to support their communities and the sustainable economic development of the territory. As such all of the Geoparks work and achievements, alongside all of the collective related work of the core, associate and artist partners (see Appendix 2) contribute to 'A Prosperous Torbay' and 'A Healthy Torbay'.**
- **The designation, awarded in 2007 and covers the entire administrative area of Torbay.**

The Geopark is a platform to engage Torbay with the Sustainable Development such as climate change, clean seas, environment, responsible consumption and health and wellbeing initiatives.

<p>Question (19) by Councillor Mandy Darling to the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services (Councillor Carter)</p>	<p>Can you please compare and contrast the number of agency workers that we have in Torbay now compared to 12 months ago?</p>																																										
<p>Councillor Carter</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Joint Commissioning Team</th> <th>Joint Operations Team</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>July 2019</td> <td>40</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aug 2019</td> <td>38</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sept 2019</td> <td>40</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 2019</td> <td>48</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nov 2019</td> <td>48</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec 2019</td> <td>48</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jan 2020</td> <td>46</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feb 2020</td> <td>48</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mar 2020</td> <td>47</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apr 2020</td> <td>47</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 2020</td> <td>42</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 2020</td> <td>44</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July 2020</td> <td>39</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Month	Joint Commissioning Team	Joint Operations Team	July 2019	40	2	Aug 2019	38	2	Sept 2019	40	3	Oct 2019	48	3	Nov 2019	48	8	Dec 2019	48	5	Jan 2020	46	5	Feb 2020	48	6	Mar 2020	47	6	Apr 2020	47	5	May 2020	42	5	June 2020	44	4	July 2020	39	3
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<p>Question (20) by Councillor Doggett to the Cabinet Member for Adults and Public Health (Councillor Stockman)</p>	<p>Before the Pandemic, the ICO administered grants to grassroots organisations across Torbay to improve health outcomes? Now we are past the first stage of the virus how are these organisations being helped to achieve the improved health outcomes of the grant?</p>																																										
<p>Councillor Stockman</p>	<p>The council has now given £435k to organisations before and during the pandemic. The Council has worked in partnership with Torbay Community Development Trust, Brixham Does Care and other key Community and Voluntary Sector Groups to support them – including supporting Torbay Food Alliance. Example of how organisations used this funding are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Genesis Trust have been using the funding to create 'Empower Packs' to distribute to young people aged 11-17years living in Torbay. The Empower Packs include resources to help young people generate ideas of things to do and ways to improve emotional well-being during Covid-19. The packs include worksheets, mindfulness colouring in, a stress ball, notebook and colouring pens. They distributed these to young people via – safe social distancing delivery, through local schools and organisations who are supporting the community during this time. They have also been offering young people across Torbay online digital youth support as 																																										

	<p>well as a daily 'Text-a-Youth-Worker' service for those needing extra support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordin8 staff, who have been working, and our volunteers, have been busy supporting their students and their families and carers whilst in lock down. They have been collecting meds and doing shopping, ringing people on a regular basis, planning and preparing activities to be mailed out or posted on their website and going with individuals for their permitted exercise whilst maintaining social distance. • Citizens Advice have said the Community Action Fund helped them move the whole of their operations to remote/home working without any service delay. Their volunteers have provided around 400 hours of time working from home each month. The grant has enabled them to provide IT equipment, cover additional expenses and set up remote supervision and support for their volunteers. <p>We are now discussing the next stages of the pandemic recovery process with these organisations, offering support in key areas such as people who are anxious about the end of shielding. Also resources on maintaining mental health and wellbeing have been developed and shared by the Public Health team.</p>
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Second Round

<p>Question (21) by Councillor Kennedy to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>At the time of the referendum, under the previous administration, we had an adequate land supply which gave full weight to the Neighbourhood Plans. Under this administration the land supply has been allowed to falter thus undermining the Neighbourhood Plans. In part, this situation has been caused by this administration failing to bring forward its own sites, which are not included in the land supply despite having government funding. What specific measures are being done today, at this very moment in time, by this administration, to rectify this situation?</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The confirmed and final published 5yr supply position from April 2019 to March 2024, covering the period in which the referendum took place, was 2.5 years. We have consulted this year on a position of 2.76 years, and following that consultation expect to issue a decision shortly showing an increase to that figure. Therefore it is the case there has been an increase in supply since the beginning of this administration. The final published position is expected to include each of the sites for which this Council has received Land Release Funding. This Council have put in post a Senior Planning Officer for delivery and are focused on delivery the housing that Torbay needs. Sites at Torre Marine and St Kilda's were included which are promoted by Tor Vista. The Council will also be consulting this summer on housing need as part of the review of the Local Plan.</p>

<p>Question (22) by Councillor O'Dwyer to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Cowell)</p>	<p>Please could the relevant Cabinet member please provide details as to the projected cost this financial year for the temporary morgue facilities put in place for Covid-19 against the expected cost of £1.4m? Can they advise how we have ensured value for money in this contract and whether we are providing the facilities for across Devon?</p>
<p>Councillor Cowell</p>	<p>The temporary morgue facilities were put in place in late March as an “emergency” response to the pandemic. Linked to the number of COVID cases in Devon the level of the facility has been recently reviewed leading to a partial, but significant demobilisation, resulting in a lower monthly cost and a revised forecast annual cost of approx. £0.9m which is below the initial forecast value (which was based on 12 months of cost at the same level as April 2020). Following discussions with other authorities, this provision is not being provided more widely.</p> <p>Due to the emergency response the contract was put in place at pace but with the involvement of the council’s procurement, legal and finance teams.</p>

Third Round

<p>Question (23) by Councillor O'Dwyer to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>In respect of Meadfoot, can the relevant Cabinet Member please advise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) How much has been spent on the Meadfoot Sea Road sea wall so far in repairing the recent storm damage and what are the current expected costs for additional wall repair works this year, assuming no further cavities or collapses are discovered. ii) What percentage of Beach Chalets are currently rented out too.
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>To date the repair costs to the Meadfoot Sea Road sea wall, are approximately £92,000 and an additional £45,000 of spend is expected.</p> <p>In response to question in respect of Beach Chalets, at this moment in time, 63% of the units are rented for 2020/21.</p>

Appendix 1

Article from the Economist Magazine

Not Britain's Finest Hour

June 18th 2020

There was a lot going on in Britain in early March. London staged an England-Wales rugby match on March 7th, which the prime minister attended along with a crowd of 81,000; on March 11th Liverpool played Atletico Madrid, in front of a crowd of 52,000 fans, including 3,000 from Spain; 252,000 punters went to the Cheltenham Festival, one of the country's poshest steeplechase meetings, which ended on March 13th.

As Britons were getting together to amuse themselves and infect each other, Europe was shutting down. Borders were closing, public gatherings being banned. Italy went into full lockdown on March 9th, Denmark on March 11th, Spain on March 14th and France on March 17th. Britain followed only on March 23rd.

Putting in place sweeping restrictions on everyday life was a difficult decision, fraught with uncertainty. Yet the delay is just one example of the government's tardiness. Britain has been slow to increase testing, identify a contact-tracing app, stop visits to care homes, ban big public events, provide its health workers with personal protective equipment (ppe), and require people to wear face coverings on public transport. As this wave of the disease ebbs, Britons are wondering how they came to have the highest overall death rate of any country in the rich world, and why leaving lockdown is proving so difficult.

The evidence so far suggests that the British government played a bad hand badly. The country was always going to struggle. The virus took off in London, an international hub. Britain has a high proportion of ethnic-minority people, who are especially vulnerable to the disease. And Britons are somewhat overweight, which exacerbates the impact of the infection.

Britain has got some things right. Its researchers have been in the forefront of the race to find drugs and create vaccines against the disease. On June 16th a trial by Oxford University, the first to identify a life-saving medicine, showed that a cheap steroid can reduce mortality among the sickest patients by a third. A swift reorganisation of the National Health Service put paid to fears that it would be overwhelmed. But the government has wasted the most precious commodity in a crisis: time. In a federal system, like America's, the central government's failings can be mitigated by state and local authorities. In a centralised system, they cannot.

Hindsight is a fine thing, and offers a clarity that is absent in the blizzard of events. Yet it is now plain that Britain's scientists initially argued for the wrong approach: accepting that the disease would spread through the population, while protecting the vulnerable and the health service. Neil Ferguson, an epidemiologist at Imperial College London, estimates that had Britain locked down a week earlier, at least half of the 50,000-or-so lives that have been lost would have been saved.

This is more Britons than have died in any event since the second world war.

In retrospect, the government should have probed the scientists' advice more deeply. Some of it was questionable. The received wisdom that people would tire of social distancing, and that shutting down early would mean loosening early too, was just a hunch. Even after the evidence changed, and it became clear the country was heading for catastrophe, the government was slow to impose the sort of lockdown seen across Europe.

Yet you do not need hindsight to identify other mistakes. Delays in fixing ppe supply chains, promoting face coverings and increasing testing capacity were clearly errors at the time. Despite the urging of the country's scientists and the World Health Organisation, by the middle of April Britain was still carrying out just 12,000 tests a day, compared with 44,000 in Italy and 51,000 in Germany. Because most testing was reserved for hospitals, care homes struggled to find out which of their residents and staff were infected. Competition for ppe was fierce, so they also struggled to get the kit they needed to protect their workers.

The government is not solely to blame. The pandemic made new demands on the system. Some crucial bits of machinery did not work. The publicly owned company which supplies the health

service with ppe failed. Public Health England, which was responsible for testing and tracing, failed. But there was a failure of leadership, too. When systems break it is the government's job to mend them; when the evidence argues for drastic measures ministers need to take them. Britain is still living with the consequences. The spread of the virus and the devastation it has wrought have made leaving lockdown difficult, as shown by the halting return of pupils to school. Only five year-groups have gone back, many parents are choosing to keep their children at home, and the government has abandoned an earlier ambition to get more in. The "world-beating" contact-tracing system still lacks its app, which is not due to arrive until winter. Slow progress at suppressing the virus will have grave economic consequences, too.

These shortcomings have claimed many victims. Among them is public trust. Britain went into this crisis with a powerful sense of unity and goodwill towards the government. Now Britons think worse of their government's performance during the crisis than do the citizens of any of 22 countries polled by YouGov, aside from Mexico. That reflects the government's mistakes and its hypocrisy, after the prime minister's main adviser broke its own rules about when to travel—and kept his job. While the world waits for a vaccine this lack of trust will make managing the disease a lot harder.

The painful conclusion is that Britain has the wrong sort of government for a pandemic—and, in Boris Johnson, the wrong sort of prime minister. Elected in December with the slogan of "Get Brexit Done", he did not pay covid-19 enough attention. Ministers were chosen on ideological grounds; talented candidates with the wrong views were left out in the cold. Mr Johnson got the top job because he is a brilliant campaigner and a charismatic entertainer with whom the Conservative Party fell in love. Beating the coronavirus calls for attention to detail, consistency and implementation, but they are not his forte.

The pandemic has many lessons for the government, which the inevitable public inquiry will surely clarify. Here is one for voters: when choosing a person or party to vote for, do not underestimate the importance of ordinary, decent competence.