

Meeting of the Council, Thursday, 22 February 2024

Members' 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

Councillor George Darling to the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities (Councillor Tranter)

Following Operation Loki, an increase in petty theft and antisocial behaviour was reported in St Marychurch and Babbacombe. Crime was dispersed from the town centre into our more peripheral shopping areas; what action is the council taking to prevent this from happening again with the proposed PSPOs?

Answer: to Question 1 provided by Councillor Tranter

Question 2

Councillor Harvey to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance (Councillor Tyerman)

The Household Support Fund wasn't included in the Autumn Statement, and the Government have since announced they do not intend to fund it going forward. This decision has been made as the cost-of-living crisis continues and families in Torbay continue to struggle. In light of, the Government's announcement, how is Torbay Council tackling this gap in funding?

Answer to Question 2 provided by Councillor Tyerman

Question 3

Councillor Long to the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities (Councillor Tranter)

A recent report stated that modern slavery is reportedly surging in social care since ministers relaxed immigration rules to fill thousands of vacancies, with a growing wave of exploitation leading to workers being ripped off or living in squalor. How is Torbay Council taking account of this worrying trend?

Answer to Question 3 provided by Councillor Tranter

Question 4

Councillor Mandy Darling to the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities (Councillor Tranter)

According to the Department for Transport, more than one in 22 people in England have a disabled parking badge, a higher proportion than before the pandemic. Has there been a similar rise in Torbay?

Answer to Question 4 provided by Councillor Tranter

Question 5

Councillor Steve Darling the Cabinet Member for Pride in Place, Transport and Parking (Councillor Billings)

Why did it take until 15 January 2024 for Torbay to hold its first Bus Forum Meeting and what message does it send out to partners when the 3 Conservative members of the minority administration failed to attend this meeting?

Answer to Question 5 provided by Councillor Billings

Question 6

Councillor Johns to the Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth (Councillor Chris Lewis)

In 2020 the Council was awarded Future High Streets Funding for Paignton to regeneration Victoria Square, Station Square and Torbay Road

As a Paignton Councillor, I have regularly asked about the changes to Torbay Road and following the news of Lidl moving out from Victoria square can the Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth advise whether the Future High Street Funding has been spent or has the funding been returned to the Government?

Answers to Question 6 provided by Councillor Chris Lewis

Question 7

Councillor Penny to the Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth (Councillor Chris Lewis)

Residents, Traders, and even Visitors increasingly question the vibrancy of Paignton Town Centre. Our seafront and harbourside continue to perform overall and adapt to current expectations with private and public sector input.

Without vibrant hinterland support from outlets in e.g. Torbay and Torquay Roads, Victoria Street, Hyde Road, Palace Avenue and Winner Street, this can erode inexorably to a nothing.

Time-limited government funding is available for certain projects. Crossways has been knocked down without new growth, Torbay Road traffic flow is still unresolved, Station Square progress is stagnant, and now the loss of Lidl supermarket in Victoria Square.

Whilst Torquay gradually moves into the Twenty First Century, Paignton languishes in talk about plans and action, not in plans and action themselves. I realise the 'cost of living' crisis has had an impact and we cannot do everything at once. It takes time. However, could the Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth:

- publicly share the timescales for all the larger Paignton projects to make the most of time-limited government funds so the people are truly placed first? and
- take into account that improvements to the street scene a repaint, judicious road resurfacing, a tidying of a bin area and improved lighting, not only look good; they can encourage people to contribute to Paignton's vibrant future in partnership with the Council and local Organisations?

Answer to Question 7 provide by Councillor Lewis

Question 8

Councillor Virdee to the Cabinet Member for Pride in Place, Transport and Parking (Councillor Billings)

A zebra crossing was due to be installed at Teignmouth Road by St.Cuthbert Mayne school, not a day goes past that a resident or student is risking serious injury crossing this road. I have seen it myself as my children attend Cuthbert Mayne school, the difficulty faced especially at peak times in crossing the road. We receive much correspondence from residents, one elderly resident finds it impossible to cross and requires assistance each time they venture out.

Can you give me a firm date when this zebra crossing will be installed?

Answer to Question 8 provided by Councillor Billings

Second Round

Question 9

Councillor Long to the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities (Councillor Tranter)

An analysis of census data by charity Independent Age, has revealed that high rental prices are forcing older tenants to move to deprived communities with already overstretched public services. The analysis shows that ten of the top 20 local authorities seeing the largest increase in older private rented households are coastal areas, which includes Torbay. Older people – many of whom live with long term conditions and disabilities - can find it harder to access necessary services such as health facilities in coastal areas, particularly those which are deprived. How is Torbay Council dealing with the increase in older tenants?

Answer to Question 9 provided by Councillor Tranter

Question 10

Councillor Harvey to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Councillor Bye)

In October 2022, Mark Riddell, the National Implementation Advisor for care leavers shared some ideas on how Torbay Council and our community could enhance its support for cared for and care experienced youngsters and developed the following action:

“Hold a business, community event which would further develop EET opportunities for care experienced young people.”

Since the Conservatives have taken control of the council, what progress has been made in the 9 months since?

Answer to Question 10 provided by Councillor David Thomas

Question 11

Councillor Mandy Darling the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Councillor Bye)

In October 2022, Mark Riddell, the National Implementation Advisor for care leavers helped Torbay Council shared some ideas on how Torbay Council and our community could enhance its support for cared for and care experienced youngsters and the following action was developed:

“To set a clear target for ringfenced opportunities in the ‘family business’ and to maximise the local authority vacancies for care experienced young people.”

Since the Conservatives have taken control of the council, what progress has been made in the 9 months since?

Answer to Question 11 provided by Councillor Bye

Question 12

Councillor Johns to the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities (Councillor Tranter)

I have received an increase in the number of complaints regarding dog fouling in the Clifton with Maidenway ward. Can we have a dog warden reinstated for Torbay Council or find funding for more dog poo bins?

Answer to Question 12 provided by Councillor Tranter

Third Round

Question 13

Councillor Harvey to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Councillor Bye)

In October 2022, Mark Riddell, the National Implementation Advisor for care leavers helped Torbay Council shared some ideas on how Torbay Council and our community could enhance its support for cared for and care experienced youngsters and the following action was developed:

“Develop a Whole Council Approach and to consider holding a key partner event where each partner agency makes explicit their offer to care experienced young people, based on what operational staff and care experienced young people have said is important to them when services are being delivered. These offers should then be presented to the Corporate Parenting Board on the basis that this is good enough for our own children.”

Since the Conservatives have taken control of the council, what progress has been made in the 9 months since?

Answer to Question 13 provided by Councillor Bye
