

Meeting of the Council

Thursday, 5 December 2013

Questions Under Standing Order A13

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| <p>Question (1) by Councillor Doggett to the Executive Lead for Strategic Planning, Housing and Energy (Councillor Thomas D)</p> | <p>A local residents has been in touch to advise that the lights are on in the public toilets at Corbyn Head, Preston Beach, Paignton Beach and Goodrington Beach at night when the toilets are closed.</p> <p>At a time when the Council has turned off the lights in a number of streets as part of budget cuts, why are the lights burning in closed toilets?</p> |
| <p>Question (2) by Councillor Darling to the Mayor and Executive Lead for Employment and Regeneration, Finance and Audit (Mayor Oliver)</p> | <p>On 18 July 2013 the following Notice of Motion was put.</p> <p>Notice of Motion – Supermarket Levy</p> <p>This Council submits the following proposition under the Sustainable Communities Act:</p> <p>‘That the Secretary of State gives Local Authorities the power to introduce a local levy of 8.5% of the rate on large retail outlets in their area with a rateable annual value not less that £500,000 and requires that the revenue from this levy be retained by the Local Authority in order to be used to improve local communities in their areas by promoting local economic activity, local services and facilities, social and community wellbeing and environmental protection.’</p> <p>The Council notes that if this power was acquired it would present the opportunity to raise further revenue, and if such a levy was provided in Torbay it would result in the impact set out in the table below.</p> <p>The Council resolves to submit the proposal to the government under the Sustainable Communities Act and to work together with Local Works in order to gain support for the proposal from other councils in the region and across the country.</p> <p>Proposed by Councillor Darling Seconded by Councillor Pountney</p> <p>The Mayor appeared to be positive about this proposal. Can he give an update on this matter to Full Council?</p> |

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| <p>Question (3) by Councillor Pentney to the Mayor and Executive Lead for Employment and Regeneration, Finance and Audit (Mayor Oliver)</p> | <p>The youth unemployment review by Overview and Scrutiny stated that the Torbay Council should lead by example it light of this does the Mayor consider that only three apprenticeships created by Torbay Council is good enough? Torbay Hospital has eighty.</p> |
| <p>Question (4) by Councillor Darling to the Executive Lead for Business Planning and Governance (Councillor Mills)</p> | <p>Can you please provide a breakdown, by department, of the number of redundancy notices that have been issued to Council employees in the past two months?</p> |
| <p>Question (5) by Councillor James to the Executive Lead for Children, Schools and Families (Councillor Pritchard)</p> | <p>Would the Mayor or yourself consider writing to government ministers to ask them to investigate linking school success outcomes to the number of young people they get into work after leaving full time education, in order to incentivise schools to focus more on preparing young people for the world of work and ensuring they have the skills employers require so they can find a job easier.</p> |
| <p>Question (6) by Councillor Darling to the Executive Lead for Business Planning and Governance (Councillor Mills)</p> | <p>Can you please advise in the last 12 months how many work experience placements were facilitated by Torbay Council and how many of these places were for looked after children?</p> |
| <p>Question (7) by Councillor James to the Executive Lead for Business Planning and Governance (Councillor Mills)</p> | <p>How much time is being spent wasted on a slow IT system leading to lost productivity? How much would it cost to upgrade the systems to the latest operating systems e.g. windows 7 or 8, or to purchase new computers and would this lead to cost savings for the next financial year from time no longer spent waiting for slow computers to work?</p> |
| <p>Question (8) by Councillor Darling to the Mayor and Executive Lead for Employment and Regeneration, Finance and Audit (Mayor Oliver)</p> | <p>At the Council meeting on 18 July 2013 I submitted the following question:</p> <p>‘On 17 April 2013 Torbay Council hosted the Local Government Association officers to conduct a work shop in which Councillors and Senior officers considered what financial pressures would be facing Torbay Council beyond 2015 and how cross party solutions could be developed in the interests of protecting our community from Government cuts. At the meeting there was an assurance that there would be a follow</p> |

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| | <p>up meeting to develop such a way forward. At the time of submitting this question three months have passed and no meeting has been arranged. I would welcome an explanation?’</p> <p>In response the Mayor stated that he planned the follow up meeting to take place in October. Can he please advise which October?</p> |
| <p>Question (9) by Councillor James to the Mayor and Executive Lead for Employment and Regeneration, Finance and Audit (Mayor Oliver)</p> | <p>When the new Tesco is built in Brixham, it is planned to give 1.5 hours free parking to shoppers. However this would not give people enough time to go around the local shops too which could undermine the sustainability of our high street. Would you consider extending it to two hours free parking so that the town is not disadvantaged by this development?</p> |
| <p>Question (10) by Councillor James to the Mayor and Executive Lead for Employment and Regeneration, Finance and Audit (Mayor Oliver)</p> | <p>Does the council have any funds e.g. pensions, invested or saved in any company that might be considered ethically dubious, for example companies involved in the arms trade, tobacco, gambling or alcohol? If so, how much is this, which companies, and have you investigated the opportunities for moving these investments to more ethical funding opportunities?</p> |
| <p>Question (11) by Councillor James to the Mayor and Executive Lead for Employment and Regeneration, Finance and Audit (Mayor Oliver)</p> | <p>In run up to Christmas, this council is taking 1100 of our poorest residents to court over non payment of council tax, some of these are people who won't even be able to afford to get their kids a Christmas present this year. What would you like to say to them and will you be doing anything to help them?</p> |
| <p>Question (12) by Councillor James to the Executive Lead for Highways, Transport and Environment (Councillor Hill)</p> | <p>Alongside bullying and youth unemployment, Young people consistently raise the issue of Transport costs as something that needs sorting out in Torbay. Stagecoach made almost £3 billion in revenue last year and it is my understanding that the number 12 bus route is the most profitable route in the country, yet we are one of the most deprived areas. What will the Mayor or yourself be doing to address this concern that young people have about the costs of buses in Torbay?</p> |
| <p>Question (13) by Councillor Faulkner (J) to the Mayor and Executive Lead for Employment and Regeneration, Finance and Audit</p> | <p>Is it appropriate that Torbay Council are taking Torquay shop mobility to court for not paying £75 Business Improvement District contribution? This is a charitable organisation and funders would expect contributions would assist in helping those with mobility problems accessing Torquay shops.</p> |

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| (Mayor Oliver) | |
| Question (14) by Councillor Cowell to the Mayor and Executive Lead for Employment and Regeneration, Finance and Audit (Mayor Oliver) | Can the Mayor explain how holding one general budget meeting (in Torquay – what about Paignton and Brixham?) counts as consultation? Does he not agree with me that it is right and proper to explain the impact of the £22m budget cuts with as many members of the community, residential and business, as possible? Can he also confirm who will be answerable for his budget during his absence in December? |