

Meeting of the Council, Thursday, 6 February 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.

<p>Question (1) by Councillor O'Dwyer to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture (Councillor Morey)</p>	<p>Could I please have an update on the interactions, outcome and improvements to the Grade 2 listed property located at the bottom of Meadfoot Road. Previously known as the Rainbow Fun House. This has been empty and derelict for a considerable period of time leading to multiple antisocial incidents and a fire.</p>
<p>Councillor Morey</p>	<p>The building remains in private ownership and as such the responsibility for its maintenance rests with the current owner. However, the Council have been proactive in seeking to secure the site and reduce the risks associated with the empty building. The Council are currently liaising with potential purchasers of the building and Historic England with a view to finding a viable future use which will allow for the building to be restored. Further investigations as to the structural condition of the building will also be carried out.</p>
<p>Question (2) by Councillor Brown to the Chairman of the Harbour Committee (Councillor Amil)</p>	<p>I understand that post Brexit there is the potential to significantly increase fishing opportunities for the UK's fishermen. As the Chairman of the Harbour Committee can you please advise me how Torbay Council and the Tor Bay Harbour Authority are influencing the fishing industry in order to ensure full maximisation of the opportunities that arise?</p>
<p>Councillor Amil</p>	<p>The Outcome of future fishing (and wider) trading agreements with EU are yet to be negotiated, however the Harbour Authority have considered a number of potential outcomes and drafted appropriate action plans in order to be best placed to respond. There are broadly two outcomes; (1) remaining generally aligned/ status quo (ie some form of Common Fisheries Policy, quota and access rights including access to EU markets) <u>or</u> (2) a more divergent outcome.</p> <p>The aligned outcome will likely not require too much change, although there will almost certainly be an increased requirement for the Council's Environmental Health Officers to issue more export licences, this additional workload, will inevitably have an impact on other areas of work covered by Environmental Health colleagues.</p> <p>The divergent outcome, in extreme circumstances, could be similar to the 'hard brexit' contingencies that were tested last year ie more fish landed to the UK but with commensurate reduction in access to EU market via both tariff and non-tariff</p>

barriers. In short, any advantage provided to fishers is likely to result in a disadvantage to the processors and exporters and vice versa.

- **Any additional volume of product would in the short term be accommodated in rented containers which could be configured for storage/market hall purposes. In the longer term this would become the basis for a business case for infrastructure expansion based on the additional fish toll revenues, this could be a good opportunity.**
- **Any additional regulatory requirements are more problematic: while capacity to issue increased numbers of export licences could be met from existing (or augmented) staff capacity, the lack of accredited Border Inspection Point in the South West would make timely export of product more difficult. Such bottlenecks are out of the Council's control.**

It is noteworthy that the larger fishing companies both ashore and afloat are expanding capacity, so whatever the outcome of the negotiations the industry are expecting more fish landings at Brixham and this could be beneficial all those involved. Consequently the Council is working at a local regional and national level to influence the potential flow of external grant funding to invest in the growth of port facilities, including operational land, cold storage and deeper alongside berthing. The Harbour Authority are liaising with the local MP and fishing industry leaders to present clear requests for funding support. National influence is being applied by the Director Place via the British Ports Association and the Council have a leading role within the LEP on fishing matters. I trust that Members will find this statement reassuring.