

Full Council – 21 November 2019

Questions submitted for the Public Participation Period

Question 1 Submitted by Cllr David Harris (Weymouth Town Council)

“Will the council please reconsider its policy of charging residents for having disabled parking bays close to their accommodation which is both discriminatory, against the council policy of encouraging people to remain in their homes for as long as possible, and is asking residents to pay for something which they have no ownership of afterwards?”

Question 2 Submitted by Luke Wakeling

“A recent report published in BioScience magazine, warns that humanity is facing a catastrophic threat from climate change including rising sea levels. The report is signed by 11,224 scientists from 153 countries.

I recently measured height of the spring tide. Near Weymouth Lifeboat Station, the sea was just 12 inches from overtopping.

There are over 2,300 properties in Weymouth at Risk of Flooding from Rivers and Seas. **What is Dorset Council planning to do and when, to defend our town from rising sea levels?**

After the general election, I shall also be writing to our MP to ask how the government will be funding sea defences to protect our communities.

Regarding the current works underway to replace Wall D. I understand this is phase one of a £1.9M project to repair existing defences. The new shuttering is being installed at the same height as the old wall, and on the spring tide the top of new shuttering is less than 1m above the water level.

I am concerned that these works are insufficient, and there will be a need increase the height of Wall D in the near future. **Why aren't we raising the wall height by at least a couple of feet, as part of the current works? “**

Question 3 Submitted by Laura Baldwin

“Members from Extinction Rebellion in Dorset were invited to attend a meeting on 10th June with Cllr Ray Bryan and Officers from Dorset Council

The main thrust of the meeting included; sharing views on the climate emergency, exploring ways of working together and discussing existing and future plans and actions to address the climate and ecological crisis.

During this meeting XR requested the Council to amend the declaration made on 16th May to reflect the wider environmental crisis, (not just a focus on climate), adjusting it to a Climate and Ecological Emergency. There was commitment from Councillor Ray Bryan, supported by the Dorset Council team present, that this would be addressed through the required processes. The process was described as follows:

1. Check with the legal team if it was possible to make the amendment without consulting the Full Council of members, if this was not possible then
2. Ask members at the next Full Council Meeting for a vote on changing the declaration to a Climate and Ecological Emergency.

At a further meeting with Councillor Ray Bryan and a Dorset Council team on 5th August, members of XR asked Cllr Bryan for an update on the amendment. We were informed that as there had not been a Full Council meeting between the original request and this reminder there had been no opportunity to seek agreement from members on the amendment.

There was a Full Council Meeting on Thursday 18th July, but the item was not raised at this meeting.

Question: Is there any reason why the Council have not made this change, and any reason why this change cannot be agreed upon here this evening?”

Question 4 Submitted by Caz Dennett

“At the Full Council meeting in July 2019, Cllr Clayton expressed his concern for the way in which considerable Council business and decisions are being pushed into Executive Advisory Panels. Panels which have no decision making power and which can effectively block the opportunity for Full Council to discuss, debate, review and make decisions. Adding to the potential

reduction in democracy is the Panels' lack of transparency and openness. The Climate Emergency Executive Advisory Panel appears to be operating "behind closed doors". Meeting dates are hard to find, minutes are not published and meetings are not open to public viewing or to the press. This lack of transparency is a genuinely serious concern. Surely there is no need for Dorset Council's Climate Change Panel to be so covert. Is there any good reason why the Panel's meetings cannot be viewed by the public either in person (preferred) or as the very minimum through a video live stream or video recording in order to improve transparency and public trust?"

Question 5 Submitted by Amy Smith

"267 Councils in the UK have declared a climate emergency; of these 74% have stated a target date to reach zero carbon emissions, 26% are currently undecided including Dorset. The majority, 62% have stated a target of 2030 or sooner. Will the Leader of the Climate Emergency Executive Advisory Panel Councillor Ray Bryan inform the Council and Dorset residents the target date that is being set by Dorset Council? Will he please confirm that Dorset will join the 62% rather than setting our goals to only achieve the lowest-level performance, thus reflecting his confidence in Dorset's ability to "change the way we deliver services, and take action decisively and with real impact"?