

**Full Council
14 October 2021**

Questions submitted for the Public Participation Period

Question 1 – submitted by Holt Parish Council

Holt Parish Council has seen in recent months a significant increase in breaches of planning law. The criteria on the Dorset Council website are vague and undefined to anyone looking for guidance.

This vagueness means that as a Parish Council we are unsupported when making reports to the Enforcement Team for investigation and in fulfilling our own duty to represent our electors.

We want Dorset Council to explain why it has set its own very vague criteria by which to investigate breaches making it unclear it is fulfilling its obligations for enforcement?

Question 2 – submitted by Hannah Kearns

I am writing to you as the head of the Public Committee for next Thursday 14th October 2021 public committee to ask if this question could be raised and discussed. Last week Wessex water was granted an emergency licence to dig up Portland Beach Road to attend a water leak. Traffic lights were put up causing considerable delays to traffic both on and off the island. Complaints were made and then Wessex Water manned the lights to improve traffic flow. One week later Wessex water start more works this time on Portland Road near the convenience store with 4 way traffic lights. The traffic lights this morning have yet again not been manned. I have spoken to Dorset county highways and my reference with them is 1179723 and have spoken in length the Wessex water to try and understand why we have had these issues again.

Wessex waters response:

“we did ask our subcontractors sun traffic signals ltd to man the lights between 7am and 7pm they have not fulfilled their side of the contract and they are looking into the situation. “I asked why Wessex water were not more proactive in dealing with this earlier as the same problem happened only one week ago. “Wessex water couldn’t answer that”

My question to Dorset Council is:

What protocols are placed on the utility companies when granted a licence to do dig up major roads, with limited access. What they need to do to mitigate traffic flow issues, and if protocols are in place what actions are taken by Dorset council if the utility companies do not comply? Do the utility companies get fined, and if they do how is the money distributed afterwards.

It has taken my daughter 3 hours to get to school this morning. Due to last week we knew there would be disruption's caused and allowed extra time for it, but 3 hours is ridiculous. We also run a local restaurant on the island and this traffic issues has caused staff to be late getting home and to work. The other side it has majorly impacted our business, which with the pandemic already has suffered. Will business be compensated for the failures of Wessex water?

Question 3 – submitted by Sandra Reeve

I noticed that last week (Oct 27) there were only 2 days between the posting of the Agenda for the Cabinet Committee and the cut-off time for public questions. This seemed very short. Please could you clarify whether at Dorset Council there is an agreed minimum time between the posting of a committee's agenda online and the deadline given for questions from the public? If so, how many days is it? Thank you.

Question 4 – submitted by Sandra Reeve

In Somerset all garden waste is composted within the county and turned into Revive – a high quality recycled compost through a contractor called BIFFA. They produce two grades of high-quality organic compost /soil conditioner (0-15mm & 0-30mm) that are suitable for commercial and domestic use. Does Dorset Council plan to initiate a similar scheme in Dorset, so that local people can have access to bags of organic compost at their local recycling centres or bulk quantities directly from the contractor?

Question 5 – submitted by Rosemary Lunt

Dorset's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan were adopted on 15 July 2021 at a meeting of the full council. Three months after having been adopted, the up to date Ecological and Emergency Strategy and Action Plan are still not available on the Dorset Council website. As I write, on 8 October, the website still has the original draft Strategy which is dated 15 July 2020 and the accompanying Action Plan. When will the updated and official versions of the Strategy and Action Plans be made available and, given that they are supposed to be living documents, what is the forward schedule for further updates?

Question 6 – submitted by Helen Sumbler

Referencing Agenda item 8, the Dorset Council Plan, the Economic Growth priority section states Dorset Council will "Improve rail services, public transport and reliability of journey times by working with providers, lobbying Government and focussing on schemes to ease congestion ". In light of this, and bearing in mind the lack of a current Implementation Plan for LTP3, could I ask what the progress is with the development of the revised, joint with BCP, Local Transport Plan? At the Cabinet Meeting on 2nd March 2021, the draft timetable showed this Plan would be consulted on in Autumn 2021, ahead of formal adoption in Winter 21/22.

Question 7 – submitted by Joe Doak

The Draft Local Plan is currently missing a number of important reports and studies which are necessary for the proper planning of the Council area. These are listed on the Local Plan Web page, although the Dorchester Civic Society is of the view that the Plan also lacks an effective transport strategy and up-to-date Strategic Market Housing Assessment and (strategic) Sustainability Appraisal. Without these documents it can be argued that the current draft is unsound and that the Local Plan process should be restarted. The hurry to proceed with the draft local plan before an adequate and up-to-date evidence base has been established undermines the credibility of the whole Plan.

The Dorchester Civic Society would like to know the detailed timings for the publication of these missing reports (and any other Local Plan research reports currently underway) bearing in mind that their findings will require sufficient time to be properly evaluated.