

**Full Council
14 October 2021
Questions from Councillors**

Question 1 submitted by Cllr Kate Wheller

In the general scheme of the matters you will be addressing this evening this question will seem trivial but I have received a number of messages from residents to whom it is a concern.

At the outset I want to make it clear that I am a great supporter of the Ironman Competition, and indeed regret that we are unable to host the full event.

The problem is the schedule of events. It was always the case that promoters would submit their plans and a schedule was agreed so that there were no undue clashes, as far as possible. Of course, this can be difficult, so many events and a finite number of weekends.

The Battle of Britain is remembered across the country on the first Sunday after the 15th of September. This year the service was unable to take place because the Iron Man was also taking place on that weekend and access for those wishing to attend was considered far too difficult. This was distressing for many people for whom this memorial is significant.

I don't know who or what department deals with event scheduling these days, or if anyone has oversight of such scheduling? My question is could we try a little harder to ensure that events that might be low key but still important are not eased out of our calendars because higher earner events are taking place. Thank you

Question 2 submitted by Cllr Maria Roe

One of the good news stories which came out of the Conservative Party conference was that the Prime Minister pledges no homes to be built on green fields. He also promised the same thing when he was the London Mayor to the people of London. These promises are like music to my ears and it is very re-assuring news.

Can people in my ward (where every single new house in the Local Plan is to be built on green belt), celebrate this wonderful news?

Question 3 submitted by Cllr K Clayton

A recent report from the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee concludes:

"The scale of the challenge to retrofit existing homes to tackle the climate crisis is enormous. Energy efficiency is a precursor to the transition to low carbon heat, so action must be taken in the 2020s to set homes on a decarbonisation trajectory to meet our net zero targets."¹ In Bridport, and other parts of Dorset, many of these existing homes have had requests to install energy efficiency measures, including the installation of double glazing, refused by our planning system because they are

¹ 'Energy Efficiency of Existing Homes', House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee (22 March 2021)

listed buildings. These listed buildings are nothing grand. Many are simple terraced houses that have been occupied by generations of working families, and the installation of double glazing would “lead to less than substantial harm” to their significance as a heritage asset. Could I have an assurance that the new Dorset Local Plan will take a different attitude to listed building consent and positively encourage the retrofitting of energy efficiency measures?

Question 4 submitted by Cllr K Clayton

I have been contacted by more than one professional involved in submitting planning applications expressing their concern with the planning process within Dorset since we became a unitary authority. Of particular concern are the timescales involved in simply acknowledging applications, let alone in processing them. I understand that the increase in people working from home has led to an increase in applications and that the amalgamation of various planning systems into one has been a challenge, but I need to be able to reassure people who are getting increasingly frustrated by the delays, and I need to be able to reassure those small business owners whose business development plans are being held up by the delays. When can residents and business owners expect acknowledging and processing times to return to normal?