

Full Council – 14 December 2023
Questions submitted by Councillors

Question 1 – submitted by Cllr P Kimber

"Why is Portland hospital on DC's Asset Register as a future suitable site for 51 homes when we have been told many times by Health Authorities that it is not to close or be developed?"

Question 2 submitted by Cllr L O'Leary

The central Littlemoor estate that is based off the main Louviers road is home a busy route to access hundreds, play facilities, a school, and a very busy shopping centre. Louviers road leads both ends onto Littlemoor road at two major junctions. With the construction of 500 homes to Littlemoors north, and approval granted to additional hundred homes on the south side of Littlemoor extra strain is going to be put onto the these wo junctions that already struggling. I know the cabinet member is aware and we have discussed it in the past but as building is underway will the council commit to action on these congested junctions in the form of mini roundabouts at both ends or other possible measures?

Question 3 – submitted by Cllr B Bawden

In spite of a stunning Christmas Tree and elegant, cool blue and silver lights adding to the wonder and delight created by imaginative and enticing window displays in our many independent shops and cafes, Lyme Regis seems like a ghost town at what should be one of our busiest times of the year.

A disappointing trading year thanks to a wet August and successive road closures from early September is now exacerbated by the emergency road closure on 8 November at the bottom of Broad Street. I'd like to thank the Building Control Surveyor and Senior Conservation Officer for their very quick responses and clear communications, as well as the Highways team for reacting to my requests by creating road signage to show all the businesses and car parks are open as usual.

However, as the weeks have rolled on and the large red 'Road Closed' signs have clearly deterred day visitors and Christmas shoppers alike, our businesses throughout the town are genuinely worried. Already students have been told there is no Christmas work for them, some owners fear they may need to make staff redundant and others fear closure altogether.

Anecdotally the businesses are being told that the 'Road Closed' signs as far away as Beer on the coast road are encouraging shoppers to go to Sidmouth. I can attest to the usual heavy traffic on the A35 going west from Bridport but most of it is not going into Lyme, reacting instead to the 'Road Closed' sign before drivers have time to read 'Businesses open as usual'.

I would be interested, if this is possible, to see the weekly statistics from the four Dorset Council car parks in Lyme and to discuss whether there is anything better Dorset Council Highways were able to do, along with Devon Highways, to enable drivers to see the yellow information signs showing the town centre businesses and car parks were open as usual before the 'Road Closed' and 'Diversion' signs put them off continuing into Lyme.

If it isn't possible for Dorset Council to reconsider my request for an additional two days of free parking this weekend to boost attendance at the Christmas Tree Festival, Santa's Grotto, the Christmas Craft and Vintage Markets and Santa's workshop in our restored Town Mill, could we perhaps discuss developing a longer term vision of fewer vehicle movements through Lyme's town centre so residents, visitors and businesses could enjoy a safer and healthier public realm and learn to appreciate the benefits of a 'people first' town centre?