

Annual Meeting of Council

16th May 2024

Public Participation – Questions from Members of the Public

Question 1: - Submitted by Martine Sommers

How can the MAF consider itself fit for purpose when it supplies a one sided almost utopian view of the barge, without considering the balanced and grown-up concerns of the people of Portland whose views are not met or being ignored. Example being costs of coaches and safety of personnel - i.e. CCTV. We are not interested in almost puerile and childish reports of 'hello's' whilst litter picking, which is a case in point.

Question 2: - Submitted by Kate Robson

Portland Port's & the Home Offices covert, non-consultive, under the table business transition to moor the Bibby Stockholm at Portland Port has probably been the most divisive decision ever made within Weymouth & Portland.

It serves no purpose and has failed to hit any of its objectives. It is NOT more cost effective nor is it a deterrent.

So disgusted with the lack of consultation, imposition and escalating costs. I have submitted my own FOIs to the HO.

- End Date of initial contract.
- Numbers on board
- Cost to date.

I was provided with the following information on the 7th May.

The contract is due to end on the 8th Jan 25'.

As of the end of January were 321 migrants on board.

The running cost paid to only CTM on 3rd April came to an extraordinary 12,900,000. This does not include grants for ancillary / authority service, police, voluntary grant or costs of HO staff.

The CTM contractual value alone equates to over £40K per migrant. Further insight into despicable rising costs is noted in the NAO investigation published 30/3 which determines; at a maximum capacity of 430 over 18 months cost to tax payer is 34.8M. Broken down this is near on 4.5K per month per head. Enough to go on an all-inclusive month-long cruise or rent a flat in Chelsea, or 3 bed house each in Sandbanks.

Hence and with relevance, my questions are around the motion put forward last year on the at DC full meeting on 13th July 'that the barge must be removed at 'the earliest opportunity' as every commentator agrees. I also request that allocation of spend of grants received by Dorset Council from the HO be made public.

1. On the 30th April within the last MAF update, it is stated that:
'No decision has yet been made on the future use of the Bibby Stockholm. The Home Office will continue to engage and work collaboratively with Dorset Council, Portland Port and Dorset Police to look at options for lease extension after January 2025'
Please provide insight into these engagements and collaborations. And explain that if no decision has been made on the future use of Bibby Stockholm - why is DC currently recruiting for two full time social workers signposted to work primarily with asylum seekers located on Portland for the next 18 months? In addition, how can a possible extension be substantiated given the cost and failures?

Question 3 – submitted by Edward Lock

In view of the considerable time and resources invested in the last Draft Local Plan by both the Council and the public, will the new Council consider resurrecting that Draft Plan, possibly omitting any of the controversial strategic allocations.

Question 4 – submitted by Pat Rider

What's DCC thoughts on this way of animal slaughter... I didn't realise that such thing is happening in the UK until recently... Is Dorset halal slaughter free? .. have the people of Dorset been asked about their thoughts on this? Or is this decision made for the people of Dorset without asking?

Question 5 – submitted by Mr & Mrs Carol

Can members of the New Dorset Council reassure us, the Taxpaying residents of Dorset that, permission will never be granted here for a HALAL SLAUGHTER house within the UNITARY area.

It is believed that some exist, although breaking the Law, in the North of England. This barbaric NON-STUN Islamic method of throat slitting whilst the animal is fully conscious simply cannot and will not be tolerated here in the farming areas of Dorset.