

Full Council – 16 April 2026

Questions submitted by Councillors

Question 1 – submitted by Cllr L Fry

How did the Council get this so wrong??

Over the past couple of weeks roadworks have been taking place at the Queens Ave / Maud Road junction in Dorchester. The work undertaken is to bury the electric cables and gas pipes deeper into the ground, ahead of the road improvements due in the school summer holidays. Queens Ave is a historic tree lined road, with mature lime trees close to the roads edge and junctions.

The Councils Policy is that any ground works undertaken near the base of mature trees must be dug by hand to prevent any damage, especially root damage to the tree. This is what is insisted of all developers

This work caused all the roots to be damaged, severed from the tree trunk. This has resulted in the tree becoming unsafe and will need to be taken down. The loss of this mature tree was totally preventable, had the work been undertaken in accordance with the agreed procedure.

Questions

How taking into account the Councils Policy of ground works around mature trees, was the ground at the base of a mature lime tree not dug by hand to protect the roots?

What can be done to prevent this happening again?

Question 2 – submitted by Cllr M Parkes & Cllr C Lugg

School crossing patrol

Whilst we are extremely pleased with the two new pedestrian crossings, we are very disappointed that the school crossing patrol will be withdrawn in Church Road, Ferndown at the end of the summer term.

The crossings remain extremely busy serving children from the first, middle and upper schools which is compounded by ongoing dangerous parking at the start and end of the school day.

Can the cabinet member explain the rationale for withdrawal of the crossing patrol and if it is a funding-based decision whether it would be possible to remain if funded by other sources such as the Town Council?

Question 3 – submitted by Cllr J Orrell

Does the Leader agree with me that the pension fund should make its investment decisions not just on money alone but also on moral, ethical and ecological grounds, investing positively in wind and solar and not choosing to invest in polluting fossil fuels and arms manufacturers that enable genocide in Gaza?

Question 4 submitted by Cllr R Legg

An Osborne resident has been in dispute with the highway authority about the cause of flooding to his home since before the formation of Dorset Council in 2019. The dispute has twice been considered by the Ombudsman and three successive Members of Parliament have made representations on his behalf. The flooding episodes have increased his household insurance premiums and blighted his ability to sell his house. If the authority is determined to maintain its original position as notified to Edward Morello MP in the last few weeks will, it now make all the files and correspondence relating to the dispute open for inspection, including electronic communications, internal memos, and communications with the Ombudsman and MPs?

Question 5 submitted by Cllr R Legg

At a time when the Climate Emergency is increasing the occurrence of devastating heathland fires and flooding incidents in our county the proposed closure of four fire stations appears profoundly ill judged. Will the authority's Emergency Planning Team explore in what way community resilience to emergency situations can be supported by retaining the experience and enthusiasm of volunteer firefighters in those communities whose fire stations are threatened by closure?

Question 6 submitted by Cllr C Monks

Will Dorset Council allocate dedicated funding to support Prout Bridge, recognising that it delivers many of the same preventative and family-support functions as Council Family Hubs, despite currently receiving no direct financial support?

Question 7 submitted by Cllr C Monks

Following the Council's recent announcement of additional funding for flood prevention, what future flood defence works are proposed for Beaminster ward, and what is the anticipated timeframe for their delivery?

Question 8 submitted by Cllr L O'Leary**Reporting of broken glass**

Smashed glass has been a growing problem in parts of my ward, with everything from broken bottles to smashed lights being the cause. While not as obviously serious as syringes and needles, it is far more serious than general litter. I have tried reporting smashed glass via normal litter reporting but often have had to deal with it myself due to the length of time it takes for a response. Will the council create a new self-report portal that makes this a greater priority for the sake of both residents and animals?

Question 9 submitted by Cllr L O'Leary**Weymouth Entrance improvements**

The council has made the regeneration of Weymouth and Portland a major issue for this administration. We have heard on several occasions big new ideas and plans for Weymouth, including leisure, energy, and high-tech ambitions. However, while these are no doubt exciting possibilities, there are less ambitious but important things that would make a major impact. The main route into Weymouth runs into my ward, the Weymouth relief road. This road is in major need of beautification and improvement. Graffiti, ugly boarding, dirty signs often obscured by overgrown scrub, and a lack of imagination plague the gateway to Weymouth. Will the council commit to a tidy-up and overall improvement to the main entrance to Weymouth.