Full Council – 22 October 2026

Questions submitted by Councillors

Question 1 – submitted by Cllr C Jones

The last few months have been beset in the North of Dorset with missed bin collections. Some households, and indeed blocks of flats were left without a collection for a number of weeks.

I understand problems have been around sickness & lorry breakdowns.
Could the cabinet member please tell us how sick days there have been at the Shaftesbury depot over the past 6 months and as a comparison, the number of sick days at our other depots please.

Thank you.

Question 2 – submitted by Cllr V Pothecary

Background

For many weeks I have been inundated with complaints from residents regarding our refuse collection service – particularly with regard to food waste. Whilst collection has been inconsistent across the Ward, recently some Villages have had **four missed food waste collections in a row!** No formal apology has been given and no pertinent information has been received. I, and others, have been left to pick up the pieces.

Given the average temperatures we are experiencing, it seems to me that we are failing in our legal responsibility and commitment to adhere to basic health and safety standards. A compostable bin liner is only structurally sound for up to 5 days. After that a food bin left outside is at risk from magots and rats.

Dorset Council has the highest council tax in the Country. This particular issue is at the very heart of what many consider to be a contractual commitment. There are also many villagers in the North who feel they receive little enough for their tax contribution as it is.

I am sure that every member of this Council would agree that the situation is totally unacceptable and must not be allowed to continue.

Question

Please can I be given the reason for this widespread failure to meet this Councils' commitment to a weekly food waste collection and an assurance that the food waste collection, in particular, will return to its hitherto exemplary service in the Gillingham area, without delay.

Queston 3 – submitted by Cllr S Murcer

Members will be aware that one of the key roles of the A&G Committee is to highlight risk as well as an oversight on governance.

The ongoing Transformation Programme is an important part of continuing to create a strong and sustainable Council without the need to reduce front-line services. My question relates to the Transformation Update tabled at the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 12 October.

Questions were asked and answers given regarding the declared savings expected from Transformation by the end of this financial year of £9.4m.

Progress to Date – July 2026

22.3 Expectations of the savings delivery are shown in the table below

Savings area	Budget	Forecast at P4	P4 confidence	Remainder to deliver	Remainder confidence
Workforce redesign	£2.5m	£1.1m	High	£1.4m	Medium
Third-party spend	£4.0m	£2.0m	Medium	£2.0m	Low
ICT rationalisation	£0.3m	£0m	Low	£0.3m	Low
Full-year effect delivered in 2025/26	£2.6m	£2.0m	High	£0.6m	High
Total	**£9.4m**	**£5.1m**	**High**	**£4.3m**	**Mixed**

The Council's own confidence in its ability to deliver these savings is mixed and there is a high probability that there will be a short fall close on £4m.

Moreover, the Council's current year end overspend is forecast to be £8.136m. With 60% of the contingency already spent, these two factors are seen as significant risks to the Council.

Given the challenging nature of local government finances my concern therefore is how a balanced budget can be achieved.

The need for pace and hard-edged outcomes has never been more important to prevent, or at least mitigate the collateral damage to other vital services provided by this Council, particularly in the Economy and Environment Directorate (Place) by not achieving planned savings and overspends

So, my question is what actions are being taken to ensure the Council achieves a year-end balanced outturn without the need to cut front-line services.

Question 4 – submitted by Cllr P Brown

How many fly-tipping fixed penalty notices has Dorset Council issued in the last 12-month reporting period and how much has it raised?