

Item 14:

Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 21 September 2023.

Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by Councillors in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution.

A. Question submitted by Councillor Vicky Poole to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"I would greatly value an update on the Burghfield Skatepark redevelopment. Burghfield Parish has been awarded 100k CIL money for the project and from speaking with the residents who are most interested in the project. Can you as the portfolio holder advise of a timeline for the procurement and redevelopment of the skatepark please?"

B. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Housing and Sustainable Travel:

"The roads and pavements in the Three Firs Way area of Burghfield Common are in a state of disrepair, with widespread degradation of surfaces and unkempt weeds along many kerbs. After raising the issue with officers before the election, I was told that individually there are no potholes deep enough to tick the box for repair – which may be true, but the cumulative effect across the development makes residents feel neglected by the council. Before I could follow up, the voters inexplicably decided that I should no longer be part of the Executive – so will the portfolio holder agree to meet with me on site so I can show her the situation, and push for officers to prioritise remedial works?"

C. Question submitted by Councillor Jo Stewart to the Leader of the Council:

"On World Suicide Prevention Awareness Day – Sunday 10th September – there appeared to be nothing on the council's website or on social media pages regarding this important awareness day. Wouldn't it have been an ideal opportunity to share with residents vital and practical information about how to speak to friends and loved ones who may be having suicidal thoughts?"

D. Question submitted by Councillor Richard Somner to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Community Engagement:

"In your 100-day plan, the Liberal Democrat administration said you would re-introduce neighbour notification letters for planning applications. It has now been 139 days. Have you done so and accepted the increased cost to the council?"

E. Question submitted by Councillor Howard Woollaston to the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Housing and Sustainable Travel:

"Will the portfolio holder honour the commitment she gave to me at the Council Meeting on 20 July, and consult local residents and businesses before implementing any scheme to extend pedestrianisation in Newbury town centre?"

F. Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Young People's Services:

"Under the Children Act 2004, local authorities have a duty to promote cooperation between 'relevant partners', including the police, the NHS and education providers, while those partners have a duty to cooperate with the local

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authority in turn. Looking after and protecting children and young people is one of the most important jobs that councils do and when a child, for whatever reason, can't safely stay at home, it is up to us as the local authority to step in and give them the care, support and stability that they deserve. We use the Corporate Parenting Panel to hear the voices of children and young people in our care and to explore, with our partners, how we are doing the best for them. Will the Lead Member for Children and Young People, explain how postponing the Corporate Parenting Panel scheduled for 19 September at short notice, for reasons of "member availability", puts our children and young people first?"

G. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Services:

"In their period of opposition during the last Conservative administration, the Liberal Democrats proposed budget amendments in 2020, 2021 and 2022 which cumulatively, if they had been accepted, would have reduced council reserves by a total of £5.5million by 2023. Given the challenging financial environment being faced by councils all over the country because of high inflation and demand, does the new administration agree that the then Conservative-controlled Council was correct to reject these Liberal Democrat amendments?"

H. Question submitted by Councillor Richard Somner to the Portfolio Holder for Governance and Transformation:

"In your 100-day plan, the Liberal Democrat administration said you would cancel Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) demands made to homeowners who made a mistake in their planning application process. It has now been 139 days. Have you done so or were you simply overpromising to win an election?"

I. Question submitted by Councillor Howard Woollaston to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"In your 100-day plan, the Liberal Democrat administration said you would cancel the plans to deliver the clubhouse and stands at the Monks Lane Sports Hub. It has now been 139 days. Have you done so?"

J. Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Housing and Sustainable Travel:

"Aldermaston Wharf is a community represented by three Parish Councils, all of which have raised concerns about inconsiderate parking there. A particular problem is caused by users of the Kennet and Avon canal parking in Mallard Way and Heron Way. Will the Lead Member for Highways meet me on site so I can show her the extent of the problem and explain the impact on residents?"

K. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Climate Action, Recycling and Biodiversity:

"If the administration decides to move to 3 or even 4 weekly black bin collections, how much money will be saved from the revenue budget?"

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L. Question submitted by Councillor Howard Woollaston to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"In your 100-day plan, the Liberal Democrat administration said you would immediately return the grass pitch at Faraday Road to bookable football space. Has the pitch been opened within your 100-day target?"

M. Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Housing and Sustainable Travel:

"I have had many questions from residents and Parish Councils about the redevelopment of the Four Houses Corner site for the benefit of WBC's tenants. The Executive of the previous Conservative administration accepted fully our duty of care to provide safe and appropriate accommodation for our tenants. We made it clear to officers, though, that we expected the redevelopment to be carried out at costs the Council could afford. How should I reply when I am asked how Council is managing the cost of the Four Houses Corner redevelopment?"

N. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Climate Action, Recycling and Biodiversity:

"If the administration decides to move to 3 or even 4 weekly black bin collections, what help will be available to families like mine who despite recycling all the waste that they can, still have a full black bin every 2 weeks?"

O. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Services:

"Despite usable reserves being £3.5m higher in the 2023-24 Budget at the end of the previous Conservative administration's term than at its start in the 2019-20 Budget, the Liberal Democrats have announced that they cannot implement many of their election promises due to budgetary pressures. When will the administration present the emergency budget explicitly promised by Cllr Abbs at the budget meeting in March 2023?"

P. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Young People's Services:

"A Burghfield Common resident in my ward lives in a house which backs onto the playing field of the Willink School. In 2021, storms caused damage to the school's wire fence separating the playing field from the back alley of their and their neighbours' properties. The mangled remains of the fence still protrude as an eyesore from their back garden, and the resultant gap in the fence and easy access to the playing field attracts antisocial behaviour. I reported the issue to Education officers last summer, but to date the school have been unwilling to remove the fence and repair the gap. Will the portfolio holder please urge officers and the school to remedy what is now a long-running nuisance to my resident?"