

## Item 15:

### Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 12 December 2024.

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 Martha Vickers to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration:**

*"What is the Peace Garden on Newbury Wharf costing this Council and do you consider this value for money?"*

**B. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Leader of the Council:**

*"Does the Leader agree that Opposition members represent their residents, and as such, questions that they ask at Council and Executive meetings should be answered clearly and directly, regardless of how politically uncomfortable that may make members of the Executive?"*

**C. Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:**

*"What is the annual cost to the Council of maintaining the grass pitch at Faraday Road?"*

**D. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:**

*"Does the 'Newbury Community Football Group' have, or at any time had, a say in who can use the pitch at Faraday Road?"*

**E. Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:**

*"Since the Faraday Road pitch opened in November 2023, how many bookings have been made by members of the public?"*

**F. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:**

*"Manchester City FC moved from Maine Road in 2003. Arsenal FC moved from Highbury in 2006. Hamilton Academical FC moved from Douglas Park in 1994. Does spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on keeping Newbury FC 'at its spiritual home', as the administration told us was its objective at Scrutiny Commission on 26th November, represent a good use of council-taxpayers' money?"*

**G. Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:**

*"Burghfield FC, Mortimer FC, AFC Aldermaston, and Hungerford Town FC currently occupy higher places in the FA Football Pyramid than Newbury FC, yet have not benefitted from the council-taxpayer spending hundreds of thousands of pounds to provide them with a 'spiritual home', let alone keep them at one. Why has the Council decided to commit taxpayers' money to provide Newbury FC with such preferential treatment?"*

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**H. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:**

*"Burghfield FC's website states: "The club remain intent on establishing a dedicated home location, and work will continue as we look to secure suitable land that can be developed to match our requirements. Our long-term intention is to develop a site that will not only be our home - housing a clubhouse that can be used for events such as our presentation day - but also a place that can be used by schools and the local community offering state of the art facilities and all-weather 4G pitches." Will the Council commit financial and operational resources to assist Burghfield FC with their mission?"*

**I. Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:**

*"The Liberal Democrats made a manifesto commitment in May 2023 to make parking cheaper across the district. What is the average charge today in Council-owned car parks for one hour's parking on a weekday lunchtime, and how does that compare with May 2023?"*

**J. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing:**

*"What would be the immediate consequences for development in West Berkshire if the Local Plan were to be withdrawn or otherwise struck down?"*

**K. Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:**

*"With so much money being poured into a football pitch in Newbury which, according to the administration, can only be used for 2 matches per week, and will, we are told, eventually be replaced by a brand new facility, can you explain to residents who use Downland Leisure Centre 4,500 times annually why their facility is threatened with closure to save just £30k per year and cost 5 jobs?"*

**L. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Leader of the Council:**

*"Does the administration support the efforts of at least one Liberal Democrat councillor to rally support for, and solicit donations to, a campaign to have the Local Plan set aside by a Judicial Review?"*

**M. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:**

*"Why have the administration refused to add comments from Thames Valley Police to the consultation website for the proposal to switch off street lights in West Berkshire, despite recognising that the information presented to residents is unbalanced?"*

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**N. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Leader of the Council:**

*"When the last boundary review reduced the number of West Berkshire Councillors from 52 to 43 in 2019, the Conservative administration cut the number of Executive portfolio holders from 10 to 9. On taking control of the Council in 2023 the Liberal Democrats immediately increased the size of the Executive back to 10 members. We are told that the Executive must consider "difficult decisions" like closing leisure centres and cutting the mobile library. Will the Leader revert to 9 Executive members, contributing over £10k per year to the required savings?"*

**O. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:**

*"Item 6 of the Agenda– Paragraph 2.2 (d) states £0.76m of external funding relating to street lighting improvements, essential maintenance budgets, drainage & flood risk projects and car park improvements is allocated to cover in year expenditure. Is any of this funding earmarked for drainage improvements or flood prevention around Burghfield Bridge?"*

**P. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:**

*"Item 7 of the Agenda– Appendix A table 1.1 shows £3.9m of transformation funding being allocated to the revenue budget to partly plug the £11m overspend. After this allocation how much is left in the Transformation budget?"*

**Q. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:**

*"Item 12 of the Agenda: Could the proceeds from the sale of commercial property be used to top up the Transformation budget?"*

**R. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:**

*"Item 14 of the Agenda – paragraph 5.6 - One of the KPIs on the Performance Portal noted as Green is "Agree plans for sports at Faraday Road through working with the local sporting community (31/12/24)". Which sporting groups did the Council work with to agree its plans for sports at Faraday Road?"*