Item 14:

Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 2 July 2026.

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 Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Governance,Commercialisation and Disabled Community Liaison:**

"Can Cllr Poole explain her statement to the Executive meeting on 11 June that the missing Executive Summary of the Procurement Strategy was "the Executive Summary from the political statement once the policy has been agreed and so it would always be vacant when it came through"?"

B. **Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Children and Family Services:**

"Item 9. The report shows that the proportion of eligible two-year-olds taking up their free early education entitlement remained below target throughout the year, with a year-end outturn of 61.4% against a target of 75%. What additional action will the Council take during 2026/27 to increase take-up amongst eligible families and by when do you expect that performance to improve?"

C. **Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Governance, Commercialisation and Disabled Community Liaison:**

"How many reports or strategies presented to Executive or Council meetings in the last 12 months have been created with the use of generative AI tools?"

D. **Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Children and Family Services:**

"Ite 9. The report shows that performance on repeat Child Protection Plans remains below target but also states that the target itself may need to be reviewed because it is lower than the Southeast average. How will the Executive ensure that the focus remains on improving outcomes for children rather than simply reviewing the performance target?"

E. **Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement, Economic Development and Regeneration and Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation:**

"The 2023 Liberal Democrat manifesto committed to developing masterplans for Theale and Lambourn to help shape the future of the villages and guide investment and development.

Can the Executive Member confirm:

1. *The date on which the masterplans were commissioned;*
2. *The budget allocated to their preparation;*
3. *The dates of public consultation;*
4. *The date on which the final masterplans were adopted;*

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5. The projects identified for delivery;

6. The projects completed to date."

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

"Will the Executive publish a year-by-year DSG reconciliation statement from 2019/20 onwards showing the opening balance, in-year movement and closing balance as recorded in:

(a) Section 251 returns;

(b) the DSG note in the Statement of Accounts;

(c) Revenue Outturn returns; and

(d) S151 assurance returns, and confirm whether all figures agree?"

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

"Has the S151 Officer updated the assessment that the DSG deficit could threaten the council's solvency?"

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

"Has Exceptional Financial Support become a structural feature of the council's finances?"

I. **Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health:**

"The Liberal Democrat manifesto promised to ensure care packages are put in place as early as possible through earlier initial care assessments.

Can the Executive Member confirm:

1. The average waiting time for an initial adult social care assessment in May 2023;

2. The average waiting time today;

3. The number of residents awaiting assessment in May 2023 and today;

4. The number of residents waiting more than 28 days for assessment in May 2023 and today; and

5. The average time between assessment and commencement of a care package."

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

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"The Liberal Democrat manifesto promised to "phase out the Green Bin Tax" (inaccurately referencing the Garden Waste Charge).

Can the Executive Member confirm:

1.The number of residents paying the Garden Waste Charge in May 2023;

2. The annual revenue raised by the charge in financial year 2022-23;

3. The number of residents paying the Garden Waste Charge as at 31 March 2026; and

4. The annual revenue raised by the charge in financial year 2025-26"

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

"This question relates directly to the 2025/26 Revenue and Capital Financing Performance Outturn report, which asks Executive to consider the year-end position while noting that the final EFS requirement will only be confirmed through the closure of accounts. Why is the Executive being asked to consider the 2025/26 outturn before Members know the final amount of Exceptional Financial Support required to close the year, and will the final EFS figure be brought back to Executive once known?"

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

"This question relates directly to the outturn report's presentation of the revenue, capital and financing position, including capital expenditure, reprofiling and financial flexibilities. Why does the outturn report not include the Capital Financing Requirement, liability benchmark and borrowing implications, when those are essential to understanding the full debt consequences of the capital programme and Exceptional Financial Support?"

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

"This question relates directly to the capital section of the outturn report, which proposes reprofiling £14.3m of capital expenditure into future years. Can the Portfolio Holder provide a scheme-by-scheme explanation for the £14.3m of capital expenditure being reprofiled into future years, including the reason for each delay, the impact on residents or service users, and whether any delay creates additional cost, lost income or reduced benefits?"

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

"This question relates directly to the outturn report's account of 2025/26 expenditure, transformation activity, spend controls and reliance on Exceptional Financial Support. Given the 2025/26 outturn position, the use of transformation funding, the reliance on Exceptional Financial Support and the introduction of

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Spend Panel controls during the year, can the Portfolio Holder confirm the total amount spent in 2025/26 on consultancy, interim management, agency staff, professional advice and external delivery support across revenue, capital and transformation activity; and, for that spend, how much was supported by a business case setting out the expected saving, benefit, and delivery date?"

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

"This question relates directly to the 2025/26 outturn report as the culmination of the Council's budget assumptions, quarterly forecasts, mitigations and financial risk reporting during the year. Given the Council's movement in recent years from reports referring to historic strong financial stewardship and expected mitigation, to later reports warning of depleted reserves, Exceptional Financial Support, Spend Panel controls and section 114 risk, does the Portfolio Holder accept that the 2025/26 outturn demonstrates a need for clearer financial risk reporting which separates the unmitigated forecast position from hoped-for mitigations, so members can see the true risk position earlier?"

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

"This question relates directly to the Council Strategy Refresh report, which proposes changes to the strategic framework three years into the electoral term. In refreshing the Council Strategy, will the Executive continue to report publicly against the original 2023 commitments and baselines, so residents can judge delivery against the promises on which the administration was elected, rather than only against a revised framework introduced three years into the term?"

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

"This question relates directly to the 2025/26 Performance Report Q4, which reports year-end performance against the Council's agreed performance framework. Where performance measures have missed target, deteriorated during the year, or remained off track across more than one quarter, will the Portfolio Holder confirm whether each one has a named accountable owner, a recovery plan, a delivery date, and an assessment of whether financial constraints, staffing pressures or savings decisions contributed to the underperformance?"

R. **Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health:**

"This question relates directly to the Prevention report, which proposes a whole-system approach while stating that there are no financial implications. The Prevention report states that there are no financial implications.

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How can a whole-system prevention approach be delivered without new investment, additional staffing, consultancy support or a reallocation of existing resources — and if none of those are required, what exactly is changing as a result of the report?"