

Meeting on 21st February 2022

Agenda Item No 8

Questions by Members to Full Council under Procedure rule 9.2

Question 1: Procedure Rule 9.2 to the Portfolio Holder for Finance from Councillor Bruce De Saram

In view of the potential increases in car parking charges put forward to the Cabinet. Can I enquire if you can share with me how much potential revenue has been lost to the Council so far from the Queens Drive Fitness space area which as you are aware was the site of the previous Temporary car Park and how much income has been received so far to off-set the costs involved in making it into the fitness space? Finally, do you feel that more should be and can be done to give value for money for this site as can be seen from the regeneration activity undertaken in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole as I have mentioned to Cllr Hookway in a previous email?

Answer:

We are unable to determine the car park income lost by converting the temporary car park into fitness space. Car park income from this site was reported as between £20k to £30k. It is likely however the majority of cars displaced from this site would use Foxholes or Maer Road car parks, thereby the income still being retained by the Council. Some income would have been lost to on street parking but this figure is not known.

The income for 2021/22 was £162.50 for the fitness space, this was below estimated income as it reflects low demand in the site and issues in the ground condition. This was however the first year and the site is currently being marketed for the new season.

To answer the final part of Cllr De Saram's question, he will now be aware, having attended the Queens drive delivery group meeting last Thursday 17th that we now have a new officer in post, Gerry Mills, whose responsibility is for Place and Prosperity (Exmouth) with special reference to the Queens drive open space.

There was a wide-ranging discussion at Thursday's meeting concerning the tenants for the coming season as well as the potential for the site. Specific reference was made concerning the fitness area and how this area could be improved and/or developed. One particular thread of discussion was that the fitness area might be included in an enlarged area devoted to play equipment for children and young people.

The delivery group will meet again on the 8th of March and further discussion by Exmouth ward members will be undertaken with Officers as to the long term vision for the site. Later on, this year a consultation exercise will be undertaken with Exmouth residents and visitors to seek their views.

Question 2: Procedure Rule 9.2 to the Leader of the Council from Councillor Jess Bailey

At its meeting on 2nd December the Scrutiny Committee agreed with my proposal to invite South West Water to attend a meeting to enable the Committee to investigate sewage contamination of East Devon's waterways. I was subsequently advised that SWW had agreed to attend, at a date to be confirmed. Please could the Leader advise what date SWW

will be attending so that this very important issue can be considered by the Scrutiny committee?

Answer:

I'd like to thank Cllr Bailey for the question about this critical matter, and working with officers I am able to compile this narrative. At its meeting on 2nd December, the Scrutiny Committee considered the proposal submitted by Cllr Jess Bailey concerning scrutiny of the performance of South West Water by reference to (a) its sewage discharges into rivers in our district and the sea (b) processing of domestic sewage in our district. Cllr Bailey's aim in proposing the review is to provide an opportunity to understand: (a) Why such large volumes of sewage are being discharged into the waterways of the district, and (b) Explore what commitments SWW will make to update and improve infrastructure to reduce sewage discharges, and (c) Why it is not publishing real time data of its sewage discharges and what it will do to rectify this

In his comments on Cllr Bailey's proposal, the Monitoring Officer advised that this is within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee to consider, and that while SWW may be invited to attend committee meetings to answer any questions there may be, they cannot be compelled to do so.

The outcome of the debate was that South West Water would be invited to attend an Extraordinary meeting of the Committee to investigate the sewage contamination of East Devon's waterways.

Following publication of the Scrutiny Committee minutes, the Head of Media Relations for SWW contacted Democratic Services to say that they would be happy to attend a meeting and it was agreed to find suitable dates in the New Year. Several emails and a phone call have taken place which has resulted in South West Water proposing three dates for the Director of Environmental Liaison and Culture to attend a one hour meeting in March.

Democratic Services are following this up to finalise a date and to agree the most appropriate way to structure the meeting so that Members are able to raise their concerns and have their questions answered.

Question 3: Procedure Rule 9.2 to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes & Communities from Councillor Paul Millar

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes & Communities, does the Council have a stated policy on the fast tracking of home adaptations for tenants with motor neurone disease and other terminal conditions, and if so what is it?

Answer:

Our policy for disabled adaptations to our housing stock can be found on the Council's website:

[Landlord Disabled Adaptation Policy \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](http://eastdevon.gov.uk)

We do not make specific reference to motor neurone disease nor the many other medical conditions that may give rise to a request for adaptation to a tenant's home.

The policy does make reference to our responsibility to 'Fast Track' any cases where there is an urgent need to carry out adaptation works. In practice we have regard to the information that we receive on the medical condition giving rise to the adaptation request and the prognosis. This will inform the urgency of the adaptation request and we would prioritise these requests.