

The following questions on notice have been submitted for Full Council on 16 October 2024 in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

In accordance with the Constitution the response may take the form of:

- (a) a direct oral answer;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

Question	Question from	Question	Response
1	Cllr Stuart Hughes	<p>Having recently been contacted by local residents in my ward about a bench that had been placed against their wishes following a representation from a Town Councillor.</p> <p>Would the Cabinet member advise why District ward members weren't consulted and will they agree that in future ALL requests on the placing of Memorial benches and other similar memorials on East Devon land affecting residents in their wards that they will be consulted?</p>	<p>Cllr Jung</p> <p>We have a long established memorial bench process, with information on our website <a href="https://eastdevon.gov.uk/parks-gardens-and-recreation/memorial-tree-bench-or-plaque/donate-a-memorial-bench-and-plaque/">https://eastdevon.gov.uk/parks-gardens-and-recreation/memorial-tree-bench-or-plaque/donate-a-memorial-bench-and-plaque/</a>. Officers followed the normal documented process, and because this is seen as regular operational work in line with managing our green spaces, Members were not consulted. Ordinarily bench installations are straightforward and do not result in this type of representation. Many bench installations are made without such issues. It is not feasible to consult Members on all operational aspects of managing our spaces and we don't believe it should be necessary for a memorial bench, the installation of which is in line with normal protocol. When we were made aware of the disagreement on its location, Officers provided a response to Ward Members, including a reasoning</p>

			for its installation, which was supported by other local residents and a Town Councillor. In this way we have reviewed the installation and am satisfied the process is appropriate.
2	Cllr Peter Faithfull	At the last General Election you stood as the Liberal Democrat candidate for Exmouth and Exeter East. In your promotional information you stated you wanted the national housing targets to be 380,000 houses per year. Can you please explain to this council how many houses you (not our officers) consider we should be building across our district per year?	<p>Leader</p> <p>I thank Cllr Faithfull for this question. I hope he will have seen from the recent correspondence from Devon District Leaders co-signed by me last week that I believe that planning policy dictated by central government by number of homes built is unhelpful in every respect.</p> <p>The number identified for East Devon by the Conservative government was too high, and recent Labour government announcements risked driving it even higher. This administration and the councillors cross-party who have devoted many hours of extra time in delivering the Local Plan to its next phase by the end of this year have done well by their timely action to keep to the lower target, still too high most councillors believe.</p> <p>I am deeply concerned that the country, and East Devon, should instead be focussing on enlarging the base of affordable, attainable and social homes as a priority, but because of government</p>

			<p>policy are being driven by headline number announcements and land-banking by developers. I also believe, as I do most councillors, that the government must legislate to demand that developers and public agencies deliver infrastructure before any home can be occupied. Finally, none of the election literature published in my name commended a target number.</p>
3	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p>How many complaints have the service received regarding the condition of houses owned by EDDC since January 1st 2024, and how many have been investigated by the Ombudsman? Can the service include separate figures regarding mould complaints?</p>	<p>Cllr Ledger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since January 2024, 174 stage 1 complaints have been received relating to EDDC housing repairs and property maintenance. Of these, 50 complaints specifically referenced damp and mould.</li> <li>• Stage one complaints: 97 were upheld, 37 were partially upheld, 14 were not upheld and 25 are open awaiting review. Since April 2024, of those complaints upheld, 13 were damp and mould related.</li> <li>• During the same time period, 5 complaints were referred to us by the Housing Ombudsman relating to property repairs and maintenance, of which 3 specifically referenced damp and mould. Of these, one was upheld and the remaining 4 are still currently open.</li> </ul>

4	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p>Social Housing is an important element in providing housing to residents, particularly the young and those that need help. Can the service confirm over the last ten years by year what are the net new social houses delivered in East Devon?</p>	<p>Cllr Ledger</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1429 268 1975 730"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>No. Prop's added to EDDC Social Housing Stock</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>2014/15</td><td>355</td></tr> <tr><td>2015/16</td><td>212</td></tr> <tr><td>2016/17</td><td>72</td></tr> <tr><td>2017/18</td><td>120</td></tr> <tr><td>2018/19</td><td>237</td></tr> <tr><td>2019/20</td><td>320</td></tr> <tr><td>2020/21</td><td>202</td></tr> <tr><td>2021/22</td><td>241</td></tr> <tr><td>2022/23</td><td>121</td></tr> <tr><td>2023/24</td><td>94</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	No. Prop's added to EDDC Social Housing Stock	2014/15	355	2015/16	212	2016/17	72	2017/18	120	2018/19	237	2019/20	320	2020/21	202	2021/22	241	2022/23	121	2023/24	94
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5	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p>In June 2024 cabinet endorsed a paper regarding the Household support fund, which said 'one of the key elements was the fact that 59% of residents who are approaching us for help are those residents who have a member of the household who is disabled or is a carer. Given that this group of residents are potentially vulnerable they may be less likely to know that they can access support from the Household Support Fund, therefore we are proposing that we target support at those households'.</p> <p>Could the service update council on the progress being made in this key area?</p>	<p>Cllr Hawkins</p> <p>Targeted payments were made from the Household Support Fund for the period 01 April 2024 to 30 September 2024 to those residents who met the below criteria. Letters were sent out to households in June 2024 inviting them to claim their payment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In receipt of full Housing Benefit or full Council Tax Reduction and</li> <li>2. Have under £3,000 in capital and</li> <li>3. Have someone living in the household who is disabled or a carer or</li> <li>4. Care leavers who are in receipt of a Council Tax relief and other district benefits such as Discretionary Housing Payment.</li> </ol> <p>1105 residents received a payment of £230.</p>																						

			<p>1032 residents were marked as disabled. 340 residents were marked as carers.</p> <p>Please note that some residents are carers as well as being disabled themselves, therefore have chosen both indicators.</p> <p>We are currently considering households in these cohorts to receive a targeted award from Household Support Fund for the period 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025.</p>
6	Cllr Mike Goodman	<p>In October 2022 the Council agreed a leisure strategy and action plan. This included 19 specific actions. Seven were timetabled to be completed in 2022/3 and nine in 2023/4 and others between 2025/7.</p> <p>I note that two actions have been completed for 2022/3 and two for 2023/4. With some not even started. Can the portfolio explain why these actions have not been delivered to time?</p>	<p>Cllr Hookway</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Charlie Plowden, Assistant Director – Countryside &amp; Leisure provided Cllr Goodman with the updated Leisure Strategy Delivery Plan performance tracking spreadsheet that is presented to every Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum meeting. This provides a continual narrative on the progress being made against each of the priority 1,2 &amp; 3 actions within the Strategy’s 10 year Delivery Plan.</li> <li>2. In response to those actions which have not met their indicative timelines the mitigating factors for this are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been up until now a lack of dedicated resource and capacity within various teams (Estates and the Leisure lead) to progress a number of the</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

priority actions within the timeframe indicated within the Delivery Plan. However, this has now been resolved with the appointment of a Senior Leisure Officer who is due to start in November and this post will be able to progress actions around playing pitch needs, liaison with community sports clubs and schools where there has been very limited progress so far.

- The areas around undertaking stock condition survey work on our leisure centres is in hand with the Estates team and though not completed as timetabled it is a considerable amount of work and is now on track for completion;
- Liaising with schools and dual use sites to renegotiate lease agreements has proved difficult to progress. Schools have significant budgetary challenges and are consequently reluctant to renegotiate a capital maintenance arrangement whereby they make a 40% financial contribution to the capital costs of maintaining their sports buildings and EDDC provides the 60% contribution. We have approached the majority of the dual use site schools with this arrangement to seek to renegotiate the lease arrangement whereby EDDC pays

			<p>40% and the school pays 60%. This accurately reflects the current situation due to safeguarding issues the amount of community use has been significantly reduced. However there has been no appetite to take this up and as the lease arrangements are complex legal agreements our Legal team have been reviewing each one to establish our position going forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finally, the recent round of 6 Leisure Review Workshops over the last 3 -4 months has enabled us to “deep dive” into many areas of the Leisure Strategy and better understand our position and a way forward. Critically this has helped to undertake a thorough and detailed review of our contract with our leisure provider LED in response to the Peer Review challenge to better understand the “affordability of the contract”. This process is almost complete now. Many of the actions in the Leisure Strategy are linked to this work and when this process is reviewed and presented to Cabinet the Council will have a clearer road map to enabling the delivery of the actions not already started in the Strategy.</li> </ul>
7	Cllr Mike Goodman	It has been agreed that all Councillors will have a DBS check can the service confirm that all Councillors have complied with this?	Cllr Loudoun A small number of members are yet to undertake their DBS checks. Those members

			are being followed up by the HR team, Monitoring Officer and their relevant Group Leader and we will be working with them to try and ensure that their application has been submitted by the end of October. We will be looking to include details on the Councils website from November as to which members have and have not submitted a DBS application.
8	Cllr Goodman	Work started last year on the constitution could Council be updated on progress made and when this will be completed?	<p>Cllr Jackson</p> <p>An updated Constitution was submitted and approved at Annual Council in May 2024, including updates to reflect the new Council Plan priorities, key decision amount, Audit &amp; Governance Committee Terms of Reference and the Member Safeguarding Protocol. The CWG have been reviewing the Member/Officer protocol which has also been considered by the Standards Committee and the working group will submit the protocol to Council in December for adoption. The Monitoring Officer will also hold a training session for members on the protocol and also a separate one for officers.</p> <p>The working group will be holding monthly meetings to continue their work and are currently reviewing Part 4 (Council Procedure Rules) with a view to revisions coming forward to Council for approval.</p>



			The working group will continue to meet to review the constitution and given the task of the work involved it is unlikely that work to review the entire document will be completed until summer 2025.
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