



Oversight and Governance

Chief Executive's Department
Plymouth City Council
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Plymouth PL1 3BJ

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MEMBERS' WRITTEN QUESTIONS

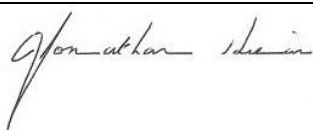
Members' Written Questions

This document is updated on the last Friday of every month

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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION



Member submitting the question Mark Coker	
Date received by Chief Exec's Business Support: ChiefExecutiveBusinessSupportUnit@plymouth.gov.uk	
To the Cabinet Member for transport	
<p>Question</p> <p>In light of huge increases to electricity prices, what impact will this have on the departments budgets especially around street lighting costs? What plans are in place to fund this growing cost pressure?</p>	
<p>Answer:</p> <p>Electricity prices have risen considerably over the last few months – by as much as 40%. Whilst we are modelling future costs, we expect the increases to place pressure on the budget, This especially impacts on Highways due to the costs of lighting over 40,000 street columns. We are therefore looking at ways in which we can mitigate some of those increases through a range of cost saving measures across the whole of Street Services – and these are currently under review. One option under consideration in Highways is to invest in a Computer Management System that allows us to be 'smarter' in the way we light our streets, whilst maintaining safe streets for our residents.</p>	
Signed: 	Date: 27 July 2022


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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION



Member submitting the question: Cllr Mark Coker
Date received by Chief Exec's Business Support: ChiefExecutiveBusinessSupportUnit@plymouth.gov.uk
To the Cabinet Member for: Cllr Mark Shayer
Question: What is the policy of the council for putting advertising on council owned land and where is it located so it treats all organisations charities and business in a fair and equal way.
Answer: The Policy can be found at the following link: Advertising policy PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK It provides details on : General Principles Specific Restrictions Prohibited Organisation, products and structures. It specifically states that advertising should comply with our Council's Aims, Priorities and Values, which can be found at: Corporate Plan PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK In response to the specific question, particular note should be given to our Values.
Signed:  Date: 08/06/2022

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QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR

Question submitted by: Cllr Mrs Terri Beer

To Cabinet Member: Cllr Bill Wakeham

Question:

“Whilst we are encouraging wild flower meadows in our City what are YOUR thoughts on the dreadful state of all major routes into the City and will YOU be encouraging these areas to be cut and yet remain attractive for visitors?”

Response:

Thank you for the question Cllr Beer. I agree that some roads/routes into our City are not quite where we want them to be, but are working with our colleagues in Highways and National Highways to ensure they are brought up to an acceptable standard. A recent report into Street Services commended the Council on having very clean and tidy streets and a good balance of wild flowers and cut grass. There will always be times when the flowers die off that will look unkempt, but that is part of the rewilding process. We now have an agreed grass-cutting schedule and the teams are making the most of the good weather to keep on top of a busy spring and summer of maintenance. You can find the details here.

[How we manage our grass | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/transport/roads/roadworks/roadworks)

We are also working with national Highways to ensure the A38 – running through the city - will be cutback and cleaned before the end of April.

Signed:

Dated:14/04/2022

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QUESTION BY COUNCILLOR**Question submitted by: Cllr Terri Beer****To Cabinet Member: Cllr Jonathan Drear**

Question: How are YOU going to encourage greater use of buses when fares are set to raise? Although currently there is a hold on bus shelters being removed until after the election can you tell me if YOU think it's a good idea to remove bus shelters?

Response:

Decisions to increase fares are commercial decisions made by the bus operators. Fares have not increased across the city since 2019 but with suppressed patronage and reductions in Government funding as we start to come out of the pandemic, bus operators are left with little choice but to impose these increases. That said a weekly adult ticket will still cost only £20 for unlimited travel anywhere within the city and slightly beyond, which still represents excellent value for money for the regular traveller. Whilst it is disappointing that we were not successful with our BSIP submission whereby the top priority would have seen a significant reduction in fares, the Council will continue to work with our bus operators to provide a comprehensive, reliable and sustainable network, to ensure that buses once again become the mode of choice.

The decision to remove bus shelters in March 2020 was not taken lightly and those shelters, which are being removed, have been selected following a rigorous data led process, to minimise the impact on bus passengers. Engagement with the market has indicated that bus shelter providers would not be prepared to tender with our current number of shelters since market conditions have changed considerably in the last 20 years since the current contract was established. By reducing the number of shelters, this will reduce the burden on the new contractor in terms of cleaning and maintenance. In turn, this will ensure the Council has the best opportunity possible from the new contract to see high quality, well maintained, infrastructure, including environmental features such as living roofs and energy efficient lighting and power, and a financial net gain to the Council, all of which will benefit service users in the longer term. At the same time, this also recognises our ambitions to support bus patronage growth and reduce carbon emissions.

Signed:**Dated: 13/04/2022**

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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION



Member submitting the question Mark Coker
Date received by Chief Exec's Business Support: ChiefExecutiveBusinessSupportUnit@plymouth.gov.uk
To the Cabinet Member for: Sport and Leisure
Question: How are the council going to engage with the local community in Devonport to promote the use of the Brickfields Sports Hub?
<p>Answer:</p> <p>Now that Plymouth Active Leisure Ltd (a Plymouth City Council owned company) have taken over the delivery of leisure services, we are keen to further the strategic aims of the Council to increase physical activity levels, for the physical and mental health benefits that can bring.</p> <p>Our immediate focus over the last few months has had to be on the take over and delivery of the services. Through this, Plymouth Active Leisure now has a website and app up and running and we have also increased our social media presence. They have also spent a lot of time ensuring that all the transferring staff received an appropriate induction and training programme and embedding all the operating systems and procedures.</p> <p>There have been a number of possibilities raised over the last few years around Brickfields, and how it could be developed to deliver more of the health and wellbeing benefits to the local community that we would all like to see. This has included opening up access to the site itself, linking with adjoining green spaces and walkways, as well as increased utilisation of the site. We recently held a meeting with stakeholders to consider some of the possibilities for improving wellbeing through the site. This included a range of VCSE working in the area, POP, and providers of our wellbeing services, and officers are pulling together the opportunities that came to light.</p> <p>We aim to widen that engagement shortly to include community representatives such as local Councillors as well as communities.</p> <p>For your information, the Sports Development Unit will be working closely with Plymouth Active Leisure to support community programmes. As a result, they have already developed an inclusive cycling hub with adapted bikes on the Brickfields site and are working in partnership with Argyle Community Trust to deliver some youth inspiring programmes on site.</p>

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. L.', written over a horizontal line.


Date: 14 June 2022

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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION



Member submitting the question: Cllr Mark Coker	
Date received by Chief Exec's Business Support: ChiefExecutiveBusinessSupportUnit@plymouth.gov.uk	
To the Cabinet Member for: Libraries – Cllr Pat Patel	
Question: now the pandemic is over can you please confirm when Devonport library will reopen to normal hours instead of just two days a week.	
Answer: The Library Service has recently extended opening hours at Devonport. The library now opens from 9am to 5pm on Mondays and Wednesdays, rather than from 11am to 5pm, thus increasing total hours open each week from 12 to 16. This adjustment enables local churches to run the social café from the library meeting room on Wednesday mornings. The Library Service reviews its opening schedule on a regular basis, and will continue to open the maximum days and hours according to staffing resources available.	
Signed: 	Date: 30/05/2022


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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION



Member submitting the question: Cllr Mark Coker	
Date received by Chief Exec's Business Support: ChiefExecutiveBusinessSupportUnit@plymouth.gov.uk	
To the Cabinet Member for Transport, Cllr Jonathan Drea	
Question:	
<p>When reporting pot holes and an acceptance from highways that it is indeed a pot hole that meets intervention levels has the 28 day rule for non urgent ones changed and how long is the wait for repairs</p>	
Answer:	
<p>The repair time scale for non-urgent potholes, potholes that meet defined intervention levels (such as size, depth and safety), has not changed and remains at 28 days. Whilst we aspire to undertake such repairs within this timeframe, there can be some occasions where this is not possible. Such occasions include where parked vehicles may obstruct access, and where road closures and/or prohibition of parking orders may be required to undertake such repairs.</p>	
Signed:	Date: 07/06/202
	

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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION



Member submitting the question Terri Beer

To the Councillor Mark Shayer

Question

Please can you tell me when hard working families are going to get their Council Tax rebate as promised. Other councils have delivered accept Plymouth. We have families making choices feed the children or feed the Utilities metres. Is this what we can expect from the new council leader?

Answered:

We have paid the £150 Council Tax rebate to over 80,000 Plymouth households living in Council Tax bands A to D. They include 68,000 households on Direct Debit who automatically received the rebate, and 12,000 households who have applied for the rebate using the Council's website since the portal went live at the end of May.

Around 30,000 eligible households have still to claim the rebate, which is available through the [Council's website](#) in one of three ways:

- Provide the Council with your bank details and receive the £150 through a BACS credit to your account
- Request a £150 credit to your Council Tax account
- Request a Post Office voucher to obtain £150 cash from any Post Office branch.

We are writing to those households over the coming weeks inviting them to apply. For those households who do not apply before 1st September, then we will automatically credit their Council Tax account with £150 credit.

We are in the process of developing our discretionary rebate scheme and will announce details later in the summer.

Signed:

Date: 28 July 2022

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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION




Member submitting the question Terri Beer	
To Councillor James Stoneman	
Question	
Do you share your leaders view that Climate change isn't happening and we can all live in barron sandy landscapes?	
Answered:	
<p>Cllr Richard Bingley responded to the comments from the programme in the following press statement: In the programme I clearly state that climate change is a fundamentally major issue. Since joining the council I have systematically talked on the increased severe weather events and impacts of climate change. On becoming leader, I appointed Plymouth's first dedicated cabinet member for overseeing our climate change agenda."</p> <p>I am very aware of the issue of climate change and I feel it poses one of the greatest threats to us. This is why I am delighted to be the first Cabinet Member appointed to the post to give climate change the priority and recognition it deserves.</p>	
Signed:	Date: 27 July 2022

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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION




Member submitting the question Terri Beer	
Date received by Chief Exec's Business Support: ChiefExecutiveBusinessSupportUnit@plymouth.gov.uk	
To the Leader	
<p>Question</p> <p>On a visit to Plymouth Hoe on Wednesdays 4th May I had need to visit the new public toilets in West Hoe Park. They were so dirty I was not able to change the baby. As it was I am I would have expected them to have been cleaned early for visitors to use but sadly not the case. Will you please ensure this is dealt with by who ever portfolio it comes under? Is this something we can expect from a Conservative administration. Toilet's not fit for humans to use. PS I always carry my own disinfectant spray and wipes but it would have taken me a while to clean the toilet's to my standard</p>	
<p>Answer:</p> <p>We are sorry to hear of your experience when you visited the toilets at West Hoe Park on 4 May 2022. Our sites are cleaned regularly and inspected to ensure that they meet the standard expected of our customers and visitors. The toilets at West Hoe Park are cleaned and replenished 3 times per day, 7 days per week and periodic checks are undertaken by the team leader.</p> <p>We hope this will offer reassurance that the maintenance of standards is taken seriously by Plymouth City Council.</p>	
Signed:	Date: 29 July 2022
	

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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION



Member submitting the question Terri Beer
To the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Children and Young People
<p>Question</p> <p>Can you tell me how you are going to support families who are not entitled to free school meals given that the cost of school meals are set to rise?</p>
<p>Answer:</p> <p>Plymouth City Council have already been supporting families that are not in receipt of free school meals via the Household Grant that the local authority has been awarded. We have been able to provide food vouchers to cover the holiday periods for families who are experiencing hardship.</p> <p>In the meantime, we work closely with CaterEd to try to drive down the cost of school meals.</p>
<p>Signed:  Date: 29 July 2022</p>

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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION

Chief Executive's Department



Name of Member submitting the question

Councillor Holloway

To the Cabinet Member

Councillor Smith

Question

How many HMOs (Houses of Multiple Occupation) are currently registered in Drake ward? What % of residential properties are classified as HMOs in Drake ward?

Answer

There are 504 residential properties in the Drake Ward which are licensed as HMO's. However, this is the number of licensed HMOs that are occupied by 5 or more persons – it excludes HMOs that have 3-4 occupants as such properties do not require a licence so are not recorded on our system.

There are 5,571 residential properties in the Drake Ward, which would indicate a figure of around 9% of those properties are licensed HMOs.

Signed: Cllr Smith (Via Email)

Date: 16/08/2022

Note

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