



Oversight and Governance

Chief Executive's Department
Plymouth City Council
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Published 22 February 2019

MEMBERS' WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND COUNCIL ACTIONS

Members written questions and actions following Motions on Notice at Council Meetings are published on the last working Friday of every month.

For further information on attending Council meetings and how to engage in the democratic process please follow this link - [Get Involved](#)

Tracey Lee
Chief Executive

Members' Written Questions and Council Actions

This document is updated on the last Friday of every month

- 1. Council Actions following Motions on Notice: (Pages 3 - 28)**

Members Questions

- 2. Councillor Ian Bowyer: Question - Fly Tipping: (Pages 29 - 30)**
- 3. Councillor Mrs Terri Beer - Harewood House: (Pages 31 - 32)**

COUNCIL ACTIONS

2018 / 19



Items which are greyed out have been completed. Hyperlinks to the original motions and letters already published are included below.

| Action No. | Meeting Date | COUNCIL MOTIONS | LEAD OFFICER | PROGRESS |
|------------|--------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | 17/09/18 | <u>ADOPTION OF MOTOR NEURONE DISEASE CHARTER</u> | Strategic Director for People | Complete Charter adopted on 17 September 2018 |
| 2. | 17/09/18 | <u>MODERN DAY SLAVERY</u> | All Strategic and Service Directors | Partially Complete Modern Slavery Charter adopted on 9 October 2018 |
| 3. | 17/09/18 | <u>DEVON & CORNWALL AND DORSET POLICE MERGER</u> | Assistant Chief Executive | Complete Letter sent to Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner 10.09.2018 Letter sent to Chief Constable Devon and Cornwall 10.09.2018 Letter sent to Chief Constable Dorset Police 10.09.2018 Letter sent to Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner 10.09.2018 |
| 4. | 17/09/18 | <u>CUTS TO YOUTH SERVICES</u> | Director of Children's Services | Complete Letter sent 14.11.2018 |
| 5. | 17/09/18 | <u>SUPPORT FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF SAFE STANDING IN FOOTBALL GROUNDS</u> | Strategic Director for Place | Complete Letter sent to Secretary of state for Department of Culture, Media and Sport 28.09.2018 Letter sent to Chief Executive of Plymouth Argyle 28.09.2018 |
| 6. | 17/09/18 | <u>CONSERVATIVE ATTEMPTS TO STOP PEOPLE VOTING</u> | Assistant Chief Executive | Complete Discussed at Audit and |

| | | | | |
|-----|----------|---|--|--|
| | | | | Governance Committee on 10 December 2018 |
| 7. | 19/11/18 | <u>POLICING FOR PLYMOUTH</u> | Assistant Chief Executive | Complete Letter sent to Secretary of State 05.12.2018 Letter sent to Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Panel Chair 30.11.2018 |
| 8. | 19/11/18 | <u>COMMIT TO THE ACCELERATED REDUCTION IN SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BY 2020</u> | Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure | Partially Complete Actions progressing internally to take forward the commitments by September 2019 |
| 9. | 19/11/18 | <u>SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) FUNDING CUTS</u> | Service Director for Education and Skills | Complete Letter sent to Secretary of State for Education 04.01.2019 Response received 24.01.2019 Letter sent to Gary Streeter MP 28.11.2018 Letter sent to Luke Pollard MP 28.11.2018 Letter sent to Jonny Mercer MP 28.11.2018 |
| 10. | 19/11/18 | <u>PUBLIC HEALTH FUNDING</u> | Director of Public Health | Complete Letter sent to Parliamentary Under Secretary DoH 30.11.2018 Response received 09.01.2019 |
| 11. | 19/11/18 | <u>REDUCING ACCIDENTS INVOLVING IMMOVABLE OBJECTS ON OUR ROADS</u> | Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure | Complete Letter to Secretary of State for Transport 08.01.2019 Response received 23.01.2019 |
| 12. | 28/01/19 | <u>POLICE FORENSIC SERVICES</u> | Assistant Chief Executive | Complete |



The Rt Hon Jeremy Wright MP
Secretary of State for Department of
Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1a 2BQ

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader of Plymouth City Council
Labour Councillor for Ham Ward

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28 September 2018

Dear Secretary of State

Safe standing at Football Grounds

I am writing with regard to a matter that has been raised by the supporters' trust of Plymouth's local Football League club, Plymouth Argyle FC. Plymouth Argyle is currently undertaking major improvement works to its ground to improve the facilities it offers for the comfort of its wide fan base and to increase its ground capacity. In parallel with these works some representatives of the supporters at the club have aspirations to introduce safe standing in parts of its ground.

The club and the Council are very aware of the very important safety requirements under the Safety at Sports Grounds legislation and both organisations take their responsibilities very seriously being guided by the Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA) and through the Safety Advisory Group.

I would like to relay the Council's support for a legislative review to consider the feasibility of re-introducing safe standing at football league clubs. I am aware that fans at a number of Football League and Premier League clubs have similar ambitions for safe standing and all wish to do this through the proper legislative framework and guidance so that safe standing is undertaken with the minimum possible safety risk to spectators.

I hope this matter is something that you can give due consideration to and it would be extremely helpful if I can relay to the supporters a commitment by yourself to give proper consideration to this matter in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader, Plymouth City Council

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Mr. M Dunford
Chief Executive
Plymouth Argyle Board
Plymouth Argyle Home Park
Plymouth
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28 September 2018

Dear Michael

Safe standing at Plymouth Argyle FC

I am writing regarding the recent attention that has been given nationally to the provision of safe standing within Football League grounds. As you know as a Council we work very closely in partnership with yourselves to ensure that Plymouth Argyle meets its requirements under the Safety at Sports Ground legislation through the review of your safety certificate and liaison through the Safety Advisory Group.

I have asked my officers to discuss this matter with the Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA) who in turn have committed to raising it with your safety representatives. As a Council we would be pleased to support in principle any aspiration Plymouth Argyle may have in introducing safe standing as long as it is under the guidance of the SGSA and is supported through legislative changes regarding safety at sports grounds. I have also committed to the following:

1. To write to the Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, highlighting this Council's support for a legislative review of safe standing at football grounds (attached)
2. To ensure that the Chair of the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) raises this matter at the next scheduled SAG meeting so that the Council's position is understood and debated with the relevant emergency services as well as the SGSA and Plymouth Argyle.

I hope you find this commitment helpful and will be keeping a close eye on progress that is made on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader, Plymouth City Council

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The Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP
Secretary of State for the Home
Department
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

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5 December 2018

Dear Home Secretary

Policing in Plymouth

The Chancellor's Budget on 29 October 2018 disappointed many in failing to deliver any additional funding for Policing except for national level counter-terrorism. Reference was made to a provisional funding settlement in December, but there is no timetable for a comprehensive update to the funding formula that has been deferred since 2015 and now looks set for 2020/21.

A public backlash protesting at the lack of Police resources is backed by authoritative statements about the unsustainability of police funding by the National Audit Office and comments by the Police Federation for Devon and Cornwall highlighting significant increases in recorded crime (up 31% in the past 2 years), alongside the loss of 975 personnel overall including 510 Police Officers (down 15%) and Police Community Support Officer reductions continuing until 2021/22 (down 41%).

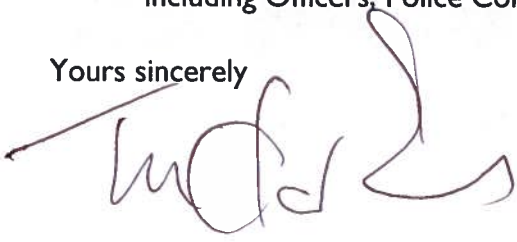
The Police and Crime Commissioner has stated that she is unwilling to ask the Council Tax payers to foot the local bill for a police pensions deficit of £4.4m next year rising to £10m in 2020/21. Meanwhile the Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall was interviewed on the BBC on 1 November calling for more government funding and stating that "...the Thin Blue Line is broken" across Devon and Cornwall, and admitted that lives are being put at risk as a direct result of Police cutbacks.

The safety of Plymouth residents is increasingly being put at risk by a critically over-stretched Police Force. I would therefore ask you to:

1. Ensure that government funding is available to cover increased organisational costs to the Devon and Cornwall Police from pension and contractual pay award pressures, both of which should not fall on local Council tax payers.

2. Ensure an uplift in funding for Devon and Cornwall to fully address the crisis in its Policing. The December provisional funding settlement for Devon and Cornwall Police to be at least adequate to ensure an immediate stabilisation of Police Force numbers at current strength, including Officers, Police Community Support Officers and staff.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Tudor Evans', written over a horizontal line.

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader, Plymouth City Council



2019-0002115NZPO

Nadhim Zahawi MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader of Plymouth City Council
Plymouth City Council
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24th January 2019

Dear Tudor,

Thank you for your letter of 4 January, addressed to the Secretary of State, about high needs funding. I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area.

Our ambition for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is exactly the same as for every other child and young person – to achieve well in school and college, find employment and go on to live happy and fulfilled lives. That is why we introduced changes to the SEND system under the Children and Families Act 2014, and have provided more high needs funding for children and young people with the most complex SEND, an increase from £5 billion in 2013 to £6 billion this year.

As you have acknowledged, we have announced that we will provide £250 million additional funding for high needs over this financial year and the next. This brings the total allocated for high needs £6.1 billion in 2018-19 and £6.3 billion in 2019-20. We recognise that the high needs budget faces significant pressures and this additional investment will help to manage those pressures.

Of course, the response to pressures on local authorities' and schools' SEND budgets is not just about additional funding. We also need to use the funding we have in the most effective way possible. From this financial year, a new national funding formula for high needs will start to make the allocation of high needs funding to local authorities fairer, and to direct money where it is most needed.

We will continue engaging with local authorities, health providers, families, schools and colleges to build a shared understanding of what is driving cost pressures on high needs budgets, and to work with the sector to help manage them.

Thank you for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

Nadhim Zahawi MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

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The Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
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4 January 2019

Dear Secretary of State

The demand for high needs funding is out-stripping the budgets available to local authorities across the country, resulting in serious deficits in the high needs block in over half of all local authorities. Many are finding it extremely difficult to recover these deficits and cuts to existing high needs services and pupil top-up funding makes what provision that is available simply unsustainable. It is no different in Plymouth and the consequence is that needs are not being met in schools and we are seeing a rise in the number of SEND Support pupils being 'off-rolled' in one form or another.

It is clear that there is a crisis in high needs funding, created in part by the continued use of historic funding levels, and we urge the government to address before permanent damage is done to very many vulnerable pupils. Plymouth welcome the Secretary of State for Education's announcement of additional High Needs Block funding as an indication that the problem is acknowledged. However, this does not fix the problem we face. The complexity of the high needs services demanded by more and more children (and their parents) is far greater than was the case just a few years ago, more accurate medical assessment and improved methods of treatment increase demand still further. Such increasing needs requires recognition through the national high needs formula.

We are demanding a permanent injection of new funding, in line with increased costs and demand since 2015 and the introduction of an annual review for this block. A review of SEND policy and guidance is also required to help manage down demand more effectively. In Plymouth for example we have seen the introduction of the extended age range for young people with SEND leading to a cumulative increase in demand for support with no commensurate funding to support educational placements or transport. Doing the right thing for families is simply not affordable within existing budgets.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader, Plymouth City Council

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Jago, Ross

From: Dyer, Debra
Sent: 28 November 2018 17:13
To: Gary Streeter
Cc: Evans, Tudor; Tuffin, Ian; Jago, Ross; Bowyer, Ian
Subject: OFFICIAL:SENSITIVE: Plymouth Public Health Grant - MP briefing Dec 2018
Attachments: Plymouth PH grant - MP briefing Dec 2018.docx; Motion on Notice - Public Health Grant Nov 2018.docx

Dear Gary

Sent on behalf of Ruth Harrell, Director of Public Health

As a result of a recent Motion on Notice approved by Plymouth City Council, I am writing to raise your awareness of the reductions in the public health grant in Plymouth, along with the significant underfunding that Plymouth has, when the needs of the population are considered, as well as ask for your support in continuing to raise this issue to government.

The enclosed briefing note provides some key facts and figures which you may find helpful; we would be very happy to meet with you to provide a face to face briefing on this or other issues if that would be useful.

With best wishes

Ruth

Ruth Harrell

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Mr Steve Brine MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
Department of Health & Social Care
39 Victoria Street
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30 November 2018

Dear Mr Brine

We are writing as the Leader for Plymouth City Council and Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care for Plymouth City Council.

On 19 November 2018 Plymouth City Council passed a Motion on Notice, which we have enclosed.

This highlights the extent of the reductions to the ring-fenced Public Health Grant, which funds vital services and functions that prevent ill health, tackle inequalities in health outcomes, and contribute to the future sustainability of the N.H.S.

In 2014/15 the Government set out the five year forward view for the N.H.S. in England, which called for a 'radical upgrade in prevention'. However, in every subsequent year the public health grant has fallen in real terms, and in cash terms, between 2015/16 and 2019/20. The total fall in spend per person between 2014/15 and 2019/20 is expected to reach 23.5% - almost a quarter. It is incomprehensible that these sorts of reductions are justified to vital services such as sexual health treatment, contraception, substance misuse, health visitors and smoking cessation services. These services are evidence-based, and are cost-effective in improving people's health, reducing the risk of developing many long term conditions and relieving pressure on all elements of the N.H.S. There has been no satisfactory rationale provided for these reductions; and indeed, no explanation of the blatant disregard of your own strategy when allocating spending.

What is even more shocking is that the distribution of this funding is inequitable and is not adequately targeted to areas of need; Plymouth receives 22% less than the needs-based formula, recommended by the Government's own advisory board (A.C.R.A.), has shown that it requires. This gap (in excess of £3 million) could be put to good use in Plymouth, working to improve those many public health indicators that are worse than England, and ensuring that those which have shown excellent progress over the last few years (e.g. teenage pregnancy, children's obesity at Year 6) are maintained.

Plymouth is rightly proud of the innovative approach we have taken to integration, particularly having integrated commissioning budgets across health (with the Western locality of the NEW Devon CCG), adult social care, public health and other LA functions such as education and housing, developing shared strategies for health and wellbeing, and investing resources in the best way for the population. Through this, transformation of services is delivering on our intent to deliver services in a way that supports individuals, families and communities. Our programme of Wellbeing Hubs, linking services together with community and voluntary sector, in locations that work for key communities is one example of the radical approach we are taking. This has been driven by our commitment to prevention and to tackling health inequalities, doing the very best that we can with the limited funding that we have.

However, the cuts are taking their toll and we are increasingly concerned that the reductions in funding, combined with the inequity in distribution, will soon have a very real impact on the health and wellbeing of Plymouth's population.

It is clear that this lack of strategic approach at government level, coupled with real-terms cuts, has started to show with recent analysis showing a widening of health inequalities, particularly for women. It is time for the Government to take note of its own advisors and to back up rhetoric with action, and we urgently recommend that you;

- recognise the importance of the services that the L.A. Public Health Grant provides.
- apply a similar uplift to the P.H. grant to that received by the N.H.S.; rather than a reduction of 3.9% in real terms per year.
- implement the A.C.R.A. funding formula to redistribute the Public Health Grant based on the needs of the population

Yours sincerely



Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader of Plymouth City Council



Councillor Ian Tuffin
Cabinet Member for Health & Adult Social Care



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From Steve Brine MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health and Primary Care*

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Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader
Plymouth City Council
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09 JAN 2019

Dear Councillor Evans,

Thank you for your correspondence of 30 November, co-signed by Councillor Ian Tuffin, about early intervention and prevention in public health.

I note your concerns.

The Government fully appreciates the importance of protecting and improving public health. We also believe that reducing the deficit and promoting economic growth is vital to the long-term health of our economy and to all of the public services that it supports. We recognise that the funding position for local government is extremely challenging, and understand the huge efforts that local government has made to focus on securing best value from every pound spent.

The 2015 Spending Review made available £16 billion of funding for local authorities (LAs) in England over the five-year period. This is in addition to what the NHS spends on prevention, including over £1 billion on immunisation, vaccination and screening and £340 million on vaccine stocks in 2016/17, and the world's first national diabetes prevention programme.

The transfer to LAs provided the opportunity to join public health with decisions on other local services, such as housing and economic regeneration, to improve the overall health of the local population.

Whilst working within the conditions and regulations of the grant, it is for LAs to determine how best to invest these resources. We expect LAs to focus on securing value for money and to challenge the way services have historically been delivered.

Many councils have redesigned services, taking a holistic approach, and are demonstrating real innovation, and we welcome this. LAs will decide their own

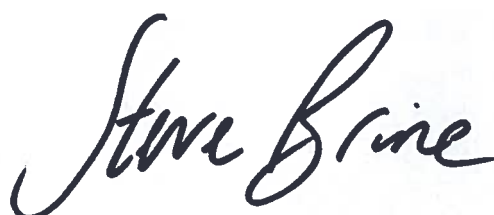
spending, based on assessment of local need, and many local councils are re-tendering contracts and achieving better value for money than in the past.

We believe that LAs are best placed to make decisions about services that best meet the needs of their populations. We see LAs commissioning different kinds of public health services that better fit local circumstances and priorities, and that deliver improved value.

As you are aware, a new public health formula was developed by the Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation. This formula was the subject of formal consultation in 2015. The new public health formula has a number of significant advantages in analytical robustness, the use of contemporary data, and objectivity. The Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health England are continuing work to ensure that the public health formula is up-to-date, and are assessing the suitability of the new formula for use under any new funding arrangements.

I hope this reply is helpful, and I would be grateful if you would share it with your co-signatory.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Steve Brine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'S'.

STEVE BRINE

Jago, Ross

From: Dyer, Debra
Sent: 28 November 2018 16:56
To: Johnny Mercer
Cc: Evans, Tudor; Bowyer, Ian; Tuffin, Ian; Jago, Ross
Subject: OFFICIAL:SENSITIVE: Plymouth Public Health Grant - MP briefing Dec 2018
Attachments: Plymouth PH grant - MP briefing Dec 2018.docx; Motion on Notice - Public Health Grant Nov 2018.docx

Dear Johnny

Sent on behalf of Ruth Harrell, Director of Public Health

As a result of a recent Motion on Notice approved by Plymouth City Council, I am writing to raise your awareness of the reductions in the public health grant in Plymouth, along with the significant underfunding that Plymouth has, when the needs of the population are considered, as well as ask for your support in continuing to raise this issue to government.

The enclosed briefing note provides some key facts and figures which you may find helpful; we would be very happy to meet with you to provide a face to face briefing on this or other issues if that would be useful.

With best wishes

Ruth

Ruth Harrell

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Jago, Ross

From: Dyer, Debra
Sent: 28 November 2018 17:12
To: 'luke.pollard.mp@parliament.uk'
Cc: Evans, Tudor; Bowyer, Ian; Jago, Ross; Tuffin, Ian
Subject: OFFICIAL:SENSITIVE: Plymouth Public Health Grant - MP briefing Dec 2018
Attachments: Plymouth PH grant - MP briefing Dec 2018.docx; Motion on Notice - Public Health Grant Nov 2018.docx

Dear Luke

Sent on behalf of Ruth Harrell, Director of Public Health

As a result of a recent Motion on Notice approved by Plymouth City Council, I am writing to raise your awareness of the reductions in the public health grant in Plymouth, along with the significant underfunding that Plymouth has, when the needs of the population are considered, as well as ask for your support in continuing to raise this issue to government.

The enclosed briefing note provides some key facts and figures which you may find helpful; we would be very happy to meet with you to provide a face to face briefing on this or other issues if that would be useful.

With best wishes

Ruth

Ruth Harrell

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The Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
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8 January 2019

Dear Secretary of State

Passive safety – kerbside poles

We are writing on behalf of Plymouth City Council to press for a more robust application of 'passive safety' guidelines published in 2010. While we commend efforts made to increase awareness and use of passive poles for kerbside signage we are concerned about the time it could take for existing solid infrastructure to be replaced with safer alternatives. Every life lost on our roads is one too many and the sooner we take practical steps to reduce the risks to all road users the better, which is why we would welcome a more immediate and proactive approach towards raising the profile of this important issue and implementing changes.

In November Plymouth City Council unanimously carried a motion to consider repositioning immovable objects away from the road in all future city developments and to call for a national policy covering all roads with a speed limit of 40mph or higher and all major strategic routes. A copy is attached. Our hope is that such measures will help prevent tragic deaths such as those of three young Plymouth men involved in a recent fatal collision with a sign on the A38 approaching the city. Their loss will forever impact the lives of their families, loved ones and friends.

We have already been actively engaged in improving design policies locally; seeking to remove the potential issue at source through planning design and reviewing sites that could be seen as high risk on our road network. Your support would provide considerable comfort and reassurance that learning has been taken from tragic incidents like this to help improve the safety of other road users.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader of Plymouth City Council
Enc.

Tracey Lee
Chief Executive of Plymouth City Council

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Department
for Transport

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE
Leader of Plymouth City Council
Plymouth City Council
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From the Secretary of State
The Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
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Tel: 0300 330 3000
E-Mail: chris.grayling@dft.gov.uk

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

Our Ref: MC/247493

23 January 2019

D Tudor Evans

Thank you for your letter of 8 January 2019 about robust application of Passive Safety UK's 'Guidelines for Specification and Use of Passively Safe Street Furniture on the UK Road Network'.

I am sorry to hear about the tragic deaths which occurred in a recent collision with a sign on the A38.

The Department for Transport (DfT) is responsible for the Regulations that prescribe traffic signs and road markings for use by traffic authorities but we cannot stipulate the type of posts to be used for the installation of traffic signs or force an authority to apply a particular set of guidelines. It is therefore for each authority to decide what guidelines to adopt for their roads.

Will be used

Chris Grayling

Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT

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MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION



Member submitting the question: Ian Bowyer

Date received by Democratic Support: 4 February 2019

To the Cabinet Member for Public Protection Service

Question:

Please state the number of fly tipping cases reported, the number of FPN's issued, the number of successful prosecutions undertaken, and the total income received by the Council (split between FPN and court fines) from 5 May 2018 to date

Answer:

Fly tipping cases reported to Plymouth City Council

Between 5th May 2018 to 3rd February 2019: 3,033 cases were reported to the council.

Evidence sufficient to issue FPN's was found in 62 cases.

Number of Fixed penalty notices issued and income between 5th May and 3rd February 2019

| Number of Fines issues | Income |
|------------------------|--------|
| 62 | £9520 |

Income from court fines-

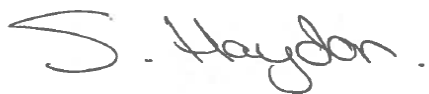
The Council are not awarded fines; these are paid to the Courts. Costs are awarded to the Council by the Courts on a case by case basis.

Successful prosecutions taken between 5th May and 3rd February 2019

| 5/5/18 to 03/02/19 | Level of fine payable to Court | Costs awarded to council |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 11 | £2550 (1 case awaiting sentencing) | £3966 (1 case awaiting sentencing) |

Signed:

Date: 7 February 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Haydon'.

Written questions:

- must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer via the Democratic Support Team
- will be replied to within 10 working days
- will be published on the last Friday of each month

MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION

Chief Executive's Department



| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Name of Member submitting the question: | Councillor Mrs Terri Beer |
| Date received by Democratic Support Team: | 22 January 2019 |
| To the Cabinet Member for: | Councillor Mark Lowry |

Question: Please can the Cabinet Member tell me why there was difficulty in residents getting through to the out of hours number at Harewood House when 120 people were outside expecting to see a performance that they had paid for and no one turned up to open the building.

On not being able to get in, the organisers rang the out of hour's numbers and not one phone was answered.

Can you also confirm the caretaker arrangements at Harewood House and the use of agency staff who have little knowledge of the building or even their duties?

Answer

An event was booked by Sandy's Songbirds for 1st December 2018 for 7.30pm at Harewood House. Facilities Management had made arrangements for the site to be open and ready for the event organiser; this was being covered by agency staff. The member of staff did not attend. The organisers on site contacted PCC by using the contact numbers supplied on the door and spoke to the out of hour's service. This officer was not able to make contact with a key holder and therefore the organiser cancelled the event

As soon as this was brought to our attention the organiser was contacted, both to apologise and to offer some solutions to reschedule if Sandy's Songbirds wanted too. Alternative dates were offered and the rescheduled event went ahead.

This matter was investigated and it was clarified that the temporary member of staff allocated the work did not attend. The Agency have confirmed that this was a misunderstanding during the work allocation process and could not have been pre-empted. All staff including agency staff attending sites will be made aware of the specific duties required and relevant information about the location they are working. It is usual

Signed

Date 23/0/2019

Note

- Written questions must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer via the Democratic Support Team.
- Written questions will be replied to within 10 working days.
- Written questions and answers will be published on the last Friday of each month.

that any agency staff will be allocated work for sites that they have previously worked to enable consistency of service delivery.

The customer did make contact with PCC's out of hour's service whose contact details were available on the door at Harewood House. This service tried to contact a PCC officer however they were attending an alternative event and were not aware of the call. Our key holders did have access to the site but without authorisation were not able to attend to open the site. For health and safety reasons without an appropriate member of staff on site for the duration of the event it would not have been able to be run.

All matters have been investigated and this situation has highlighted areas where improvements are needed. Management of the service are currently reviewing and implementing new procedures to ensure that this does not happen again and improvements are made.

The event was rebooked and held in January at no charge. An apology has been made and published on the BBC Devon website. In addition a £200 payment has been paid to the organisers to cover the fee and as a good will gesture for the disruption to their event.