

# MEMBER'S WRITTEN QUESTION



Member submitting the question: Councillor Wheeler

Date received by Democratic Support: 12 March 2019

To the Cabinet Member for Environment and Streetscene, Councillor Dann

Question:

Dear Sue

You recently gave permission for a number of streets in St Budeaux to be closed for a time on the morning of Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March to allow a road race to take place. This was an event organised by a private organisation for commercial purposes, not an event organised by and for the local community.

There was little prior notice given to ward councillors. We were told on 20<sup>th</sup> February about the event including the planned road closure programme. We were asked to respond by 6<sup>th</sup> March so there was no time to consult the large number of residents who would be affected.

I asked a number of questions and objected when they were not satisfactorily answered. The decision taken was to allow the closures anyway. One of my questions was why the local community was not consulted in advance of the application to close their roads.

The local community was not consulted at all. They were told after the decision had been taken and were given less than three week's notice of the event. This has caused significant concern and distress, not least to members of the community who are regularly attend church on Sunday mornings and thought they would have to miss them.

What criteria do you use when assessing a request from an organisation to close roads for a commercial purpose unrelated to the needs or desires of the people affected by the closure, please?

In particular, do you ask whether the local community and their representatives have been consulted in advance and if not, should you?

Thank you.      George Wheeler      12<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Answer:

Dear Cllr Wheeler

To explain the current process, from a PCC network management perspective, Ward Councillors are currently given a months' notice of the event.

However, we do expect the organiser of the event to satisfactorily consult with local members and stakeholder to ensure they are fully informed and appraised of the event and its constraints. According to our application package, the event organiser sent out letters in advance to residents and businesses advising of the closures, informing them of the of the duration and extent of closures, in this case for a maximum of 1 hour 45 minutes. In addition, advance warning boards were also set out at least a week before advising all motorists of the closures. The letters and warning boards gave contact details if there were any questions or concerns.

Plymouth Highways met with the emergency services and bus operators with the event organisers and went over any issues that they had. As part of the application the organiser must produce evidence of the information that has been sent to anyone affected by the event or closures.

However, following any event we do have a wash up with the event organiser and shall relay your comments in order for them to improve future communications, in order for any future/repeat events to be improved. Looking forward we shall consider changes to our application process around how we can ensure Members and Stakeholders have been satisfactorily informed and consulted by applicants for larger 3<sup>rd</sup> party organised events.

Signed:

Date: 29 March 2019



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