

FULL COUNCIL – 11 APRIL 2022 – QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 22A

First Questions

Question 1

From Cllr Andrew Gossage to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Edward Heron

In light of the invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces, some entering Ukraine from Belarus, can the Portfolio Holder advise if this Council has any financial arrangement with any Russian or Belarusian company?

Question 2

From Cllr Hilary Brand to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Jill Cleary

The Government is reforming the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme (EVHS) to speed up the provision of charge points in flats and rental accommodation.

From the 1 April 2022, local authorities that own social housing will be able to apply to the EV charge point grant for landlords. This will provide grants of up to £350 towards the cost of purchasing and installing a charge point, with up to 200 grants a year available for each local authority.

Can the Portfolio Holder outline their progress with this so far and the ongoing strategy especially for residents in flats and social housing with limited access to private parking?

Question 3

From Cllr Stephanie Osborne to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Jill Cleary

In the corporate plan the priority for your portfolio is, and I quote “Putting residents at the centre of what we do and how we do it “. Therefore, taking that point following the huge numbers of complaints in 2020 to 2021 in Housing, tenant relations and other areas please describe what review process you have taken and what change actions came out of that process is to address this increase?

Question 4

From Cllr Caroline Rackham to the Portfolio Holder for People and Places, Cllr David Russell

There is an increasing reliance by NFDC on voluntary and community organisations to take on vital services for residents such as food banks and debt advice. As these become increasingly important services because of the rising cost of living crisis mounts, I wonder what reassurance we have that the wages and support costs of these organisations will be met, to ensure that they can continue to function as they become even more vital service providers.

Question 5

From Cllr Mark Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure, Cllr Diane Andrews

I refer to the “Special, Planning Committee Meeting” held on Monday 27 July 2020.

Members were considering a proposed outline major re-development application, submitted by Fawley Waterside Ltd number: 19/10581 for 1,380 new homes on the site of former Fawley Power Station.

The decision was taken (as stated in the confirmed minutes) to: “Delegated Authority be given to the Chief Planning Officer to grant permission subject to:” 4 separate matters to be agreed and completed. Currently, this Local Planning Authority no longer has an appointed “Chief Planning Officer”.

Will the Portfolio Holder please explain to me in detail, the reasons why after 21 months, this Council has not agreed and completed with the applicant, the “Section 106 Agreement”, referred to by the Case Officer in the latest “Extension of Time Agreement” dated 28 March 2022. Therefore, the status of this application still indicates “Awaiting decision” and NO DECISION NOTICE has been issued. Why the delay? Is this our version of Jarndyce vs Jarndyce?

Question 6

From Cllr Jack Davies to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Infrastructure, Cllr Diane Andrews

The New Forest is ancient and beautiful, and, for as long as we've had a council, it has been New Forest Councillors who have decided planning matters. Can the Portfolio Holder please reassure me that the establishment of any combined authority as part of a wider pan-Hampshire deal will keep planning decisions within the New Forest?

Question 7

From Cllr Mahmoud Kangarani to the Portfolio Holder for People and Places, Cllr David Russell

What is the NFDC current litter bin and street sweeping strategy? In Totton, two centre bins have gone missing since around middle of last year and not been replaced. Does this mean Totton residents have become the best in the Forest for not leaving litter?

Question 8

From Cllr Malcolm Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Business, Tourism and High Streets, Cllr Michael Harris

Given the extensive promised job creation in the proposed Freeport, 20,000 and rising according to Conservative members of this administration, which will in effect create local wage inflation, staff retention issues and competitive disadvantage for existing industries and businesses in the New Forest. What mitigation strategy might the NFDC be considering putting in place to assist our local existing businesses overcome these issues?

Second Questions

Question 9

From Cllr Stephanie Osborne to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness Services, Cllr Jill Cleary

We desperately need more affordable homes and social housing for young people. Whilst we appreciate the proposed housing on the Hythe hospital site what other actions are being taken to utilise other sites such as the Hythe police station site for this?