

## **Council – 24 February 2025 – Questions Under Standing Order 22**

### **Question 1**

#### **From Cllr Barry Dunning to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability, Cllr Geoffrey Blunden**

Can the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability please update members on any impacts of the January 2025 storms to Hurst Spit and of any plans for NFDC to undertake any necessary maintenance works.

### **Question 2**

#### **From Cllr Hilary Brand to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Derek Tipp**

During the Planning Committee in January, it became apparent that building regulations visits and enforcement are not being carried out as effectively as they should. Please can you let us know how many Enforcement Officers and Building Reg Inspectors did we have six months ago, how many do we have now and is this enough for NFDC to be effective?

### **Question 3**

#### **From Cllr Jack Davies to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Cleary**

I hope the Leader was as shocked as I was when it was revealed that, despite being on the verge of bankruptcy, Hampshire County Council still pays for the King's official representative in Hampshire – the Lord Lieutenant – to the tune of £130,000 a year. Does the Leader agree with me that the King should pay for his own Lord-Lieutenant, not the hard-up taxpayers of Hampshire?

### **Question 4**

#### **From Cllr David Millar to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Derek Tipp**

With unitary authorities due to be established in the next couple of years, and with them the end of New Forest District Council as a legal entity, what reassurance can we give our residents that the funds this council has received under the Community Infrastructure Levy – totalling many millions of pounds – will be spent in the New Forest, for the benefit of New Forest residents, once the spending decision passes to another authority?

## **Question 5**

### **From Cllr Mark Clark to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Cleary**

The Leader of this Council has been an outspoken advocate for Freeports, championing their widely touted economic benefits. However, at the recent Waterside Vision event, the CEO of the Freeports acknowledged that any tangible gains may not materialize for another 25 years—another case of economic transformation forever on the horizon, yet to be realized.

Meanwhile, the gravitational pull of the Freeports threatens to accelerate the fragmentation of the New Forest's existing structure, drawing the Waterside ever closer to Southampton's economic and political sphere. Given that devolutionary shifts may see these assets siphoned away, can she outline the concrete mechanisms she has secured to ensure that any future prosperity remains within the New Forest?

## **Question 6**

### **From Cllr Alex Wade to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability, Cllr Geoffrey Blunden**

In the past couple of months I have had more queries on bin bag deliveries than almost any other issue. Can the Portfolio Holder reassure Residents living in Totton and the Waterside, who are in Phase 3 of the change over to Wheelie Bins, and therefore will be using bin bags for 12 months, that any remaining deliveries of black and recycling bags are delivered on time, any delays are communicated much clearer, and resilience plans are in place to reduce impact on our residents?

## **Question 7**

### **From Cllr Colm McCarthy to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Jill Cleary**

As this lame duck administration limps rapidly towards its own demise, by what criteria will assets be handed over to Town and Parish Councils for their continued management and what is the time scale?

## **Question 8**

### **From Cllr Stephanie Osborne to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Jill Cleary**

It's no secret the New Forest has one of the largest elderly populations of anywhere in the country. This puts us in a weak position during local

government reorganisation because nobody wants to fund the cost of providing social care in the New Forest.

The truth of the matter is that social care shouldn't be a postcode lottery. Instead of being funded through council tax, it should be funded by central taxation. Does the Leader agree? If so, will she write to Government calling for social care to be funded through central government taxation, not through local council tax?

### **Question 9**

#### **From Cllr Caroline Rackham to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Derek Tipp**

Some years ago in Totton we were given the assurance that there would be a structured plan of the development in North Totton, across the entire site. Those plans seem to have dissipated as development has taken place in a piecemeal way so I wonder what assurances there may be that plans for future developments will be enforced?

### **Question 10**

#### **From Cllr Patrick Mballa to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Jill Cleary**

Does the Leader agree with me that restrictions on disabled bus passes introduced by her fellow Conservatives on Hampshire County Council will have a disproportionate impact on people in the New Forest because of our rural nature?

### **Question 11**

#### **From Cllr Janet Richards to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability, Cllr Geoffrey Blunden**

In response to a motion originally put to this Council on 13th May last year, regarding measurement of the Council's carbon emissions, the Council agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group to consider this.

The Climate Change and Nature Emergency Annual Update report approved by Cabinet on 2nd October clarified that a Climate Change and Nature Emergency Strategy was currently being drafted and would be informed by the Task and Finish Group which would explore the issues over a 12-month period, starting in Autumn 2024.

Since the Task and Finish Group is yet to be set up, please could you tell me the reason for the delay and clarify the latest timescale for the

commencement of the Task and Finish Group and for the completion of the Climate Change and Nature Emergency Strategy?

## **Question 12**

**From Cllr Sean Cullen to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy, Cllr Derek Tipp**

Retrospective permission has been given to use the important Fawley site for storage and not for housing for approximately a year. Can NFDC guarantee that this is only a temporary measure and that the site will return to housing use as previously stated?