

Council Meeting –23 October 2025

Questions from members of the public

Members of the public may ask questions subject to procedural rules. Members of the Public who have submitted a question and are present at the meeting may also ask one supplementary question arising from the original question or response. A maximum period of 15 minutes will be allowed for public questions with a maximum period of three minutes per questioner.

Question from Jackie Jackson to the Leader of the Council

In relation to Cllr Horner's Notice of motion on the agenda could the Leader explain if Teignbridge Council knows if there is specific evidence, that could justify the claim that illegal immigration is a relevant issue for Teignbridge, and whether any local data or service input could have been consulted before this motion was brought forward.

Response from the Leader

There is no evidence to suggest that illegal immigration is a relevant issue for Teignbridge, nor was any such evidence submitted alongside the Notice of Motion. The placement of asylum seekers in dispersal accommodation is managed by the Home Office in accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act. Individuals are only placed in such accommodation if they have made an asylum claim and are awaiting a decision.

Prior to the submission of the Notice of Motion, the Housing Solutions team provided Members with a briefing outlining the council's legal responsibilities under national legislation, as well as the procedures involved in the procurement process for accommodation.

Questions from Jane Haden to the Leader of the Council

In relation to Cllr Horner's Notice of Motion I would like clarification on the following point:

Q1. Demand safeguards: Refuse any placement where immigration status is unverified or safeguarding checks are incomplete.
Would this clause, if adopted, mean that asylum seekers are effectively excluded from seeking refuge in Teignbridge, because by their very nature their status is unverified?

Response from the Leader

The Council does not have the power to refuse placements. The Home Office (or its approved contractors) arranges and places individuals and families in accommodation. Local authorities are not consulted on the individuals placed in Asylum seeker accommodation. Such placements are made directly by the

Home Office or its approved contractor and therefore all placements are verified as being asylum seekers by the Home Office.

Q2, Would this further mean that this council, if voting for this motion, is increasing the impact on 'communities, services, and residents' in other council areas, rather than embracing the contribution a diverse community brings to our society?

Response from the Leader

There are a number of actions proposed in this motion that the Council is unable to affect. The Home Office has a dispersal scheme for asylum seekers across the Country and, regardless of this Notice of Motion, they will continue with this scheme Every council across the UK is expected to work with the Home Office to find accommodation for asylum seekers

The role of the local authority alongside Devon County Council and other public services is to support the integration, health and welfare of asylum seekers and refugees and have a legal mandate under the Asylum and Immigration Act.

Questions from Penny Albertella to the Leader of the Council

To the Leader of the Council: Re Motion on "Safeguarding local communities from unconsulted migrant placements"

Q1. In light of Teignbridge District Council's statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, and its safeguarding obligations, how does the Council intend to ensure that the language and proposals in the motion titled "*Safeguarding Local Communities from Unconsulted Migrant Placements*" do not result in unlawful discrimination, stigmatisation of vulnerable individuals, or a breach of its duty to promote good community relations?

Response from the Leader

Councillors can put forward motions on a range of topics and there is a criteria that is used to determine whether these can be debated in the Council Meetings Procedures of the Constitution. Within any debate, Councillors should always be mindful of respectful debate and civility, especially when debating emotive topics.

Q2 How will the Council reconcile this motion with its moral responsibility to support those fleeing war, persecution, or trafficking, and avoid contributing to misinformation or fear around migration?

Response from the Leader

The Council has legal responsibilities with regards to individuals granted refugee or asylum seeker status. This includes individuals granted asylum or refugee status who are fleeing war and persecution or those that enter the UK in relation to a specific legislative scheme such as the Afghan Resettlement

scheme. Council officers are available to add comment and fact check any statements made during the debate which are not factually correct.

Questions from Annie Mitchell to the Leader of the Council

Our children are being beautifully taught at school about how to be kind and welcoming to all people and all beings. What can the Council do to ensure, going forward, that values of compassion are built into our community as a whole, and that decisions and actions are made and taken that are evidence-based and counteract disinformation?

Response from the Leader

Thank you for the question.

That is a thoughtful and deeply valued question.

As a local authority, we can and should lead by example — ensuring that our policies, communications, and decisions are evidence-based, factually accurate, and legally compliant.

Through our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy and our Corporate Plan, Teignbridge promotes tolerance, understanding, and respect for all residents, regardless of nationality or background.

We will continue to work with schools, voluntary organisations, and community leaders to promote social cohesion and counter disinformation.

The principles your question highlights — kindness, truth, and compassion — are entirely consistent with the obligations placed upon public bodies under UK and international law.

They are also essential to building resilient and welcoming communities

Question from Jenny Dingsdale to the Leader of the Council

The One Teignbridge strategy plan refers to a refurbishment of Dawlish Leisure Centre, and future provision of leisure services. Can you please assure me that you will not introduce more mixed sex changing villages and will ensure appropriate single-sex spaces are provided across all council properties?

Response from the Leader

The Council will ensure the provision of toilets and changing facilities in our leisure facilities meets statutory requirements and codes of guidance.

Question from Bruce Mattock to the Chair of the Council

In relation to Cllr Horner's Notice of Motion:

Q1. Is this motion within the competence of a district authority? As a Windrush victim I have only just received interim compensation for the Windrush fiasco which was orchestrated by Central government. It frightens me that a similar disaster is about to unfold.

Response from the Chair of the Council

According to the Council's Meeting Procedural Rules, Notices of Motion must relate to one of a number of criteria determined by the Monitoring Officer. This Notice of Motion was deemed within scope because the issue it relates to affects the District.

Q2. Has legal advice been taken about whether this motion can be debated?

Response from the Chair of the Council

Yes, advice was taken from the Deputy Monitoring Officer, Legal Services, Housing and the Data Protection Officer on the content of the motion and if it was within the scope.