

Full Council 28 November 2023

Members Questions

Questions from Cllr Macgregor

Much has been debated on car parking, particularly in Newton Abbot. Much has also been debated about achieving net zero for the District, by 2025. As part of the latter point, the current administration had stated a commitment to increase the number of electric vehicle parking / charging points across the district. Bearing in mind that an EV charging/parking bay takes up more than one standard general parking bay and with that in mind;

1)How many EV charging/parking bays are planned across the district over the next 3 & 1/2 years?

Response from the Executive Member for Estates, Assets & Parking

There is currently one project ongoing, DELETTI 2 in partnership with Devon County Council which will deliver eleven new charging points across the district. Ten sites are on Teignbridge land and one site on parish land. There are other EV charging units being installed across the district by private companies and the County Council.

2)How many are planned in Newton Abbot - TDC installation - over the next 3 & 1/2 years?

Response from the Executive Member for Estates, Assets & Parking

The installations to cover the Lib Dem manifesto commitments over the next 3.5 years are yet to be planned in detail. 3)How many general car parking spaces will be lost as a result?

Response from the Executive Member for Estates, Assets & Parking

At present the design for the location has not been finalised. There is nothing in law or government guidance which states the spacing requirements for EV Charging points. The type of charger does impact on the space required as the higher capacity charging usually has a bigger charging unit. However, with technology improving we believe that in the future additional spaces won't be lost.

4)How many general car parking spaces will be lost as a result in Newton Abbot?

Response from the Executive Member for Estates, Assets & Parking

See above response.

5) Will fees and charges have to increase to address any loss of income from general parking bays no longer available as a result?

Response from the Executive Member for Estates, Assets & Parking

See above response

6) In September's full council meeting, questions regarding the early closure of the Lido, were raised and answered.

Since then, there has been no further word regarding the Lido and the reason for its early closure. With that in mind;

Has the leak (which was the reason for early closure) at the Lido been identified along with the cause?

Response from the Executive Member for Open Spaces, Leisure, Sport, Resorts and Tourism

The suspected leak was confirmed following an inspection of the suction pipe. We are planning to carry out some further testing to the flow pipes to be assured there are no wider issues. Once that inspection work is completed, we will propose a works programme to complete the appropriate repairs.

7) What arrangements are in place to get this leak resolved quickly so that the Lido is ready for the season opener in May 2024?

Response from the Executive Member for Open Spaces, Leisure, Sport, Resorts and Tourism

The work will be planned ready for the May 2024 opening.

8) Can assurances be provided that the Lido repair will not be left until the last minute meaning a delayed opening or another missed season?

Response from the Executive Member for Open Spaces, Leisure, Sport, Resorts and Tourism

As above see Q6 and Q7.

9) EV charging points across the district are clearly part of the Council strategy and its drive towards reducing emissions. In previous questions I focussed on the

potential reduction in general parking as a result of the installation of EV charging points.

I note that on street EV charging points have been planned for around Courtenay Park in Newton Abbot. These installations will clearly have an impact.

Why have the charging points been installed onto the green space at Courtenay Park within the boundary of the park, rather than on the street?

Response from the Executive Member for Climate Change, Coastal Protection, Flooding & Trees?

This project is led by Devon County Council as it is an on-street provision, and the question should be directed to the project lead with the Highways team

Green Spaces were consulted on the proposed locations of the EV charging points but the project was led by DCC Highways . The locations proposed were advised as the most appropriate to provide the most accessible and even spread of chargers across the district. For Courtenay Park the first suggested location was refused as this would have involved removing a section of hedge near the community garden which we felt was not acceptable as it impacted this area of the park too severely, other locations within the park were proposed and the area below the play area was agreed as the best location for access to the charging point as adjacent to the Highway.

10) What process of approval was carried out to arrange this and why were members - Town and Ward in Newton Abbot not notified that this was likely to happen?

Response from the Executive Member for Climate Change, Coastal Protection, Flooding & Trees?

The Rapid Charging Teignbridge project led by Devon County Council sought approval from Teignbridge Highways and Traffic Orders Committee on the 29th July 2021. The details of the meeting can be found at

[sg190721teih Rapid Charging Teignbridge StreetHUBZ On-street Electric Vehicle Charging Bays .pdf \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s36415/sg190721teih%20Rapid%20Charging%20Teignbridge%20StreetHUBZ%20On-street%20Electric%20Vehicle%20Charging%20Bays_.pdf)

Consultation was undertaken by DCC. There was a letter drop to adjacent residents etc , no comments were received regarding the Courtenay Park location, the proposal was Implemented as advertised

[https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s36415/sg190721teih%20Rapid%20Charging%20Teignbridge%20StreetHUBZ%20On-street%20Electric%20Vehicle%20Charging%20Bays .pdf](https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s36415/sg190721teih%20Rapid%20Charging%20Teignbridge%20StreetHUBZ%20On-street%20Electric%20Vehicle%20Charging%20Bays_.pdf)

11) Is Courtenay Park subject to restrictions on development as it is within the Conservation area applicable in Newton Abbot?

Response from the Executive Member for Climate Change, Coastal Protection, Flooding & Trees

Courtenay Park is in the conservation area and any necessary permissions would have had to have been sought by DCC Highways.

12) Last Full Council meeting, questions were raised over the potential for covenants for Bakers Park and Forde Park. The answers delivered verbally, seemed to indicate that there weren't any, but difficult to clarify entirely. There is another issue in respect of Forde Park. It is claimed that the work to install the path access to the tennis courts was permitted development, however this was not brought to committee despite this being Teignbridge owned land. Forde Park lies within the conservation zone so why was this not brought to elected members attention?

Response from Executive Member for Climate Change, Coastal Protection, Flooding & Trees and Executive Member for Sport, Recreation & Resorts

We considered the LTA refurbishment of tennis courts at Executive on April 4th. All members would have been notified of and had access to the Executive report. From memory no other members attended to speak on that item.

<https://democracy.teignbridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=3102&Ver=4>

I asked officers separately to the Executive meeting about the need for planning permission but it was explained that there was no requirement to apply for planning permission. I am not the local member, but asked officers to keep the local members informed of the project.

No additional requirement for planning permission results from the Park being in a Conservation Area, according to Part 12 of the GDPO, which I checked at the time. The GDPO grants planning permission directly and therefore as no application was required, there was nothing to bring before committee.

It is worth noting, whilst not directly relevant, that the constitution does not require all applications for planning permission on Teignbridge owned land to be automatically referred to Planning Committee for determination.

Planning have said it is permitted development under Part 12 of the General Permitted Development Order. This allows Local Authorities to carry out necessary works to its assets under these statutory powers. The danger of not putting in an accessible path will obviously limit who can use what will be a fabulous new facility for the whole community to use.

With regards to a small tree to be removed and given that a TPO doesn't exist, it can be removed as part of our maintenance regime for the park. We are going to be replanting three new trees, and therefore this will contribute towards the Liberal Democrats policy of planting as many new trees as possible.

13) Last year, an application for a new Health Centre was approved for the land owned by Teignbridge District Council on Brunswick Street. That land had originally been planned for a hotel. The land was then offered for sale to the NHS for the new Health Centre.

Has the sale been agreed and finalised and have the NHS provided TDC with the agreed sum in full?

Response from the Executive Member for Estates, Assets and Parking

The sale has sufficient Council authority / mandate to proceed on the terms proposed, therefore in that capacity it has been agreed.

No it has not been finalised.

No we would not expect full sum until completion of a sale.

14) Bearing in mind the planning application was passed last year, when is the expected commencement of works?

Response from the Executive Member for Estates, Assets and Parking/Planning

Works would not commence until the sale of the land has completed and would be a matter for the NHS.

15) The original allocated site for the NHS remains in the possession of TDC. It was indicated that this site would be used to replace some of the parking lost when the NHS construct the new health centre on the current Brunswick Street Car Park. Why has this not been made available earlier this year for car parking?

Response from the Executive Member for Estates, Assets and Parking

The lost parking has already been re-provided within the town by a re-marking exercise.

A project plan is being put together to deliver the adjacent site for use as a car park. There are complications on the 1800's stone culvert replacement design and South West Water approval. Current programme is anticipating construction commencing Spring 2024.

16) Much discussion has taken place over the last few years regarding retention or loss of car parking as a variety of Town Centre developments have been proposed or rejected. The recent loss of up to 80% of general parking on Queen Street, the loss of parking with the approval to construct a hotel on Halcyon Road Car Park, loss of parking spaces (3 needed for 2) due to EV charging spots and the recent push to develop the Sherborne House car park. The current administration is keen to push commuters towards using EVs and this also brings further issues in the multi-storey

At present, the usage of the Multi-storey (monstrosity) is 38%, and the expectation is that the loss of parking elsewhere will improve the usage of this car park. There are some issues however that potentially arise from this. For instance, drivers of larger cars find it increasingly difficult to park in the multi-storey. Displaced drivers with permits for Sherborne will be expected to use these in the Multi-Storey.

will other options be available for users of Sherborne House parking, if they do not wish to use the Multi-Storey car park for any reason - personal safety worries, size of vehicle etc?

Response from Executive Member for Estates, Assets & Parking

Nothing is confirmed or agreed yet and it will not be until there is planning certainty on the proposal

17) has the multi storey been tested recently regarding its structural integrity?

Response from Executive Member for Estates, Assets & Parking

No it has not.

18) with the hoped for increase in EV usage amongst commuters, is the Multi-Storey robust enough to deal with the weight increase that accompanies an increase in EVs?

Response from Executive Member for Estates, Assets & Parking

Unknown. A specific survey would have to be commissioned to answer this specific query.

19) with the discontinuation of the cinema, will any of the FHSF money be available to make the multi-storey less of an eyesore?

Response from The Leader

The cinema project has not yet been formally discontinued by Full Council. On the assumption that the cinema is not progressed, FHS funding cannot realistically be used for the multi-storey in the absence of supporting business case, viability assessment, green book (BCR) valuation and approval of DLUHC and Full Council for a material deviation from the mandated project.

Questions from Cllr Farrand-Rogers

20) I was under the impression that councils have to meet in public to take decisions, so that all the information is open to public scrutiny.. The exception to this is, of course, when price sensitive information is being disclosed. But in such cases, the Council moves into Part 2, and the wider public is at least aware of what is happening, if not of the details.

How often has it been the practice here for council officers to give special briefings on policy proposals to councillors in private sessions?

Response from The Leader

Members are given informal briefings by officers to ensure that they have all the relevant information in advance of Committee meetings. No debate takes place, and no decisions are made at informal briefings. Such briefings help Councillors to go over the details and ask more technical questions raised by the report. This enables the relevant details and issues to be succinctly and accurately raised in the council debate.

There have been briefings on no policy proposals since May 2023.

21) Recently the Chairman of the Council tabled a motion for the next meeting of the Council (this one). However, it transpired that it was excluded by the officers from the draft agenda.

What powers do the officers have to exclude from the agenda a motion which has been signed by 26 councillors?

Response from the Chair of Council

Following a positive meeting with the Monitoring Officer and the Group Leaders this led me to withdraw my Notice of Motion. The constitution sets out the details as to the acceptance on Notices of Motion.

Question from Cllr Daws

22) There has been a great deal of talk of devolution for local authorities in Devon which includes Devon County Council, Torbay, East Devon, Mid Devon and Teignbridge. Can you inform the members and residents of any position that TDC has taken and made representations on this matter?

Response from the Leader

The Devon Devolution deal is still lacking significant detail and the impact on District Councils is yet to be fully clarified. Teignbridge is working with the other District Councils on a unified response. At this time the leaders of the councils have expressed a desire to understand the detail before committing to support the deal.

It is anticipated that any new Government next year will still continue to seek devolution deals, so it is important that we seek a deal that is good for the residents of Teignbridge.