

Appendix 1

Council Meeting, 21 September 2021 Question Time (agenda item 15)

1. Questions from Cllr Haverson to Cllr Bell, Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing

Cllr Haverson asked the following questions of Cllr Bell:

“(1) Please can we have an update on whether or how NSC is conducting the Test and Trace? With the ongoing high case numbers, is it actually possible to carry this out in any meaningful way? and

(2) In relation to the messaging we give to our North Somerset residents about COVID symptoms, it is very clear that they have changed. Vaccinated or younger people have different symptoms when catching COVID compared to elderly people in the earlier waves. So the message needs updating. The most frequent symptoms of an infection in the current delta variant wave are a headache, a runny nose and sneezing, in other words symptoms very similar to a heavy cold. Loss of smell and a persistent cough are rarer now and occur in fewer than 50% of symptomatic cases. Even if central government has not updated this message, I feel that we need to do this and was shocked when our Director of Public Health was quoting the outdated symptoms.”

Cllr Bell responded that this council had started local support to the NHS Test and Trace in January and since June had been part of the Local Zero approach and was continuing to follow up every local contact. There was an agency assisting the council with this and it was possible to be flexible according to demands. Overall performance was good with the percentage of cases successfully contacted in North Somerset in the high 80s.

In response to the messaging around Covid symptoms he advised that the council was following the government line on this as it was important to ensure consistent messaging to minimise confusion and frustration. He confirmed the list of symptoms was in line with national guidance but that the council was ready to respond if this changed.

2. Question from Cllr Keating to Cllr Solomon, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services

Cllr Keating asked the following question of Cllr Solomon:

“Can Cllr Solomon provide an update on the process to find a new future for Churchill sports centre. Can residents still have hope that this vital resource will reopen soon?”

Cllr Solomon responded this was still ongoing and there was no magic solution. He would ask for an update from officers and would pass this on to Cllr Keating.

3. Question from Cllr Aplin to Cllr Solomon, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services

Cllr Aplin referred to the email sent earlier in the week offering a discount on next years' green bin collection to cover missed collections. He asked Cllr Solomon what the council would offer to those residents who didn't wish to sign up again next year, and how he would ensure any discount reflected the number of missed collections.

Cllr Solomon responded that consideration was being given to a compensation scheme but he was unable to provide full details at this stage. A formula would be used to determine the appropriate level of discount/compensation.

4. Question from Cllr Tucker to Cllr Solomon, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services

Cllr Tucker asked the following question of Cllr Solomon:

"Further to our correspondence two to three months ago, could the Executive Member advise on progress please on the installation of litter bins for the two bus stops in the vicinity of Locking Road shops"

On behalf of Cllr Solomon, Cllr Bell reported that these bins had been installed the previous day.

5. Question from Cllr Pepperall to Cllr Solomon, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services

Cllr Pepperall referred to a previous planning meeting seeking support for the airport link road, and an undertaking given that whilst a dual carriageway was not required, any bus-stops would have inlets to prevent hold ups on the road. She asked Cllr Solomon for an update on this.

Cllr Solomon undertook to raise this matter with officers and to respond to Cllr Pepperall in writing.

6. Question from Cllr McQuillan to Cllr Solomon, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services

Cllr McQuillan welcomed the resumption of the green waste contract but asked Cllr Solomon how robust the date of 27 September was for the restart of waste collections, adding he would hate to see the service suspended again.

Cllr Solomon responded that the HGV driver shortage remained a serious concern and while everyone was trying their hardest he was unable to give any guarantees. The priority was to keep recycling and black bin waste collections running and he reminded members that composting or taking green waste to local recycling centres remained an option.