

**North Somerset Council
Council Meeting, 12 July 2022
Question Time (Agenda Item 10)**

Question 1

From Councillor Ashton

To Councillor Hogg, Executive Member for Transport and Highways

Size, volume, and speed of traffic in Portbury

Councillor Ashton asked the following question of Councillor Hogg:

“At the end of June there was a public demonstration in Portbury, concerned at size, volume and speed of the traffic going through the village. This is a common complaint from many of our rural communities.

In Portbury, the size of some of the lorries coming off the motorway has resulted in the wing mirrors hitting the windows of one of the houses. The volume and speed of traffic is a very real danger to pedestrians, especially children on their way to catching the school bus.

Roads are deteriorating, roadside hedges and footpaths are overgrown and in places impassable. This is not re-wilding, this is just dangerous, these are not minor roads to be ignored, they are the only connection, vital to rural communities. To say that there is not enough funding is not good enough, the safety of residents of all ages has to be a priority on anyone’s list. Will the Executive member agree to come with me to see the gravity of the situation?”

Councillor Hogg thanked Councillor Ashton for his question and responded that he would be pleased to meet with Councillor Ashton to see the issues but expressed the view that diverting the traffic would not fix the problem as it could not be diverted via Tickenham. He stated that the accident statistics for the road were good but acknowledged that this did not address the amenity value for local residents. He noted that 5 complaints had been received about overgrown vegetation of which 4 had been addressed. He asked that residents use the online portal to report issues and that a second cut of rural verges was imminent but that hedges were the responsibility of landowners. He added that there was an agreed programme of road maintenance.

Question 2

From Councillor Payne

To Councillor Hogg, Executive Member for Transport and Highways

St James Street, Weston-s-Mare

Councillor Payne asked the Executive Member the following question:

“The northern end of St. James Street in Weston-super-Mare has become closed to traffic as a result of changes to the roads around the new bus interchange. However there have been no works done nor physical measures introduced to pedestrianise it properly, and there are currently no plans to do so. As a result, the street looks neglected and unwelcoming, and to visitors who might not be familiar with the town, it can appear fully closed off. The resultant loss of footfall is having a significant negative effect on some of the businesses in the street.

Would the executive member with relevant officers agree to meet with me and a few of the traders to seek to develop a plan for improvements to this street?”

Councillor Hogg thanked Councillor Payne for his question and agreed to look at the problem with him. He noted that there was insufficient budget to resurface St James Street after the recent changes, but he would pick the issue up as part of the town centre regeneration project.

Question 3

From Councillor Payne

To Councillor Hogg, Executive Member for Transport and Highways

Clevedon Road Railway Bridge

Councillor Payne asked the Executive Member the following question:

“The Clevedon Road railway bridge in Weston-super-Mare is a busy thoroughfare for traffic to and from the seafront. It is also an important walk-to-school route. However, the pavements over the bridge are 70cms wide on one side and 80cms wide on the other, making it feel very unsafe for pedestrians, particularly those using wheelchairs or pushchairs, with the railway barrier on one side of them and heavy traffic on the other. Would the executive member look to develop a scheme to improve pedestrian facilities over this bridge, in the interests of both road safety and the promotion of active travel?”

Councillor Hogg thanked Councillor Payne for his question but added that whilst he was aware of the difficulties, the bridge was owned and maintained by Network Rail. Whilst the council could ask Network Rail to look at the issue, it could only be widened by a signalling or reducing the flow which would lead to a pinch point along the busy route.

Question 4

From Councillor Charles

To Councillor Hogg, Executive Member for Transport and Highways

Portishead East Parking

Councillor Charles asked the Executive member the following question:

“One of the results of the pandemic has been the huge increase of tourists into the marina and village quarter areas of Portishead East. Coupled with existing parking issues that are causing chaos with missed bin collections and fears for emergency

service access. Will the executive member meet urgently with me to discuss urgent measures to rectify this problem?"

Councillor Hogg thanked Councillor Charles for his question and added that he would be happy to meet him. He noted that there was no easy solution to the issue even though double yellow lines had been put down in places as there were unadopted streets as part of the development. More parking restrictions could be implemented but this may lead to greater speed on the roads.

As Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Services, Councillor Solomon added that the council was short of officers to enforce parking restrictions, but recruitment was underway. He offered to speak to the enforcement team to see what could be arranged regarding ticketing cars.

Question 5

From Councillor Charles

To Councillor Solomon, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Service

Use of glyphosate pesticide

Councillor Charles queried the use of glyphosate pesticides by the council and its contractors as he had been made aware that members of Portishead Town Council have approached a council contractor who informed them that they had been asked to use the product by North Somerset Council. Councillor Charles and Portishead Town Council understood that North Somerset Council had introduced a moratorium on the use of the pesticide until it could be investigated.

Councillor Solomon thanked Councillor Charles for his question and agreed that the moratorium on its use was his understanding also but offered to investigate the matter further.

Question 6

From Councillor Aplin

To Councillor Solomon, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Service

Overgrown weeds – Coulson Drive, Worle

Councillor Aplin asked if the Executive Member would accompany him and other members to visit residents of Coulson Drive, Worle to consider what could be done regarding overgrown weeds, not re-wilding, near to Priory School and the River Banwell that were leading to a loss of light, views, and a safety issue.

The Executive Member agreed to meet Councillor Aplin and other members to discuss the matter.

Question 7

**From Councillor Richard Tucker
To Councillor Hogg, Executive Member for Transport and Highways**

20mph zone in Hughenden Road, Weston-s-Mare

Councillor Tucker asked if the Executive Member would meet him to discuss the matter of installing a 20mph zone in Hughenden Road, Weston-s-Mar.

The Executive Member agreed to meet with Councillor Tucker to discuss the difficulties faced by residents and noted that officers had introduced a new “front door” scheme to introduce some governance around highways schemes. He suggested that consideration to other solutions to the matter of speeding along the road may be more appropriate but could be decided upon after discussion.