

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

COUNCIL: 19 JULY 2023

QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER OR THE CHAIR OF A COMMITTEE SUBMITTED UNDER PART 4 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES, PARAGRAPH 10.4 OF THE CONSTITUTION

Question for the Leader from Councillor Bell

“Homelessness support in North Devon is some of the best in the country. If we consider the adage that a society is judged on how it treats the poorest (and not the richest) then North Devon should be proud of its achievement. However, funding for homelessness is based largely on a system of grants with the vagaries and unpredictability that this system brings. This has meant that there is little opportunity for essential longterm planning in this sector. A fairer system would be to have fixed, monitored, funding for homelessness, perhaps with the same "triple-locked" safeguards offered to elders. This is not a request for more money, simply a more sensible approach to funding. I have already written to our MP on this issue. Would the leader kindly agree that NDC should also request a government response to this matter and seek a sensible, longterm funding solution?”

Councillor Roome, Leader’s response

“Yes, I will send a letter to Government as Leader of the Council requesting a response to this matter.”

Question for the Leader from Councillor Walker

“In the light of recent reports about a refusal of planning consent for just one property in Barnstaple, can the leader tell us how many residential permissions, including flats above shops and conversion of offices to flats, have been given planning consent in the last 5 years?”

Councillor Roome, Leader’s response

“We have run a report seeking all Approved Planning Apps within the Local Plan Town Centre Designation. Between 2019 and 2023 we have granted planning permission for 35 units of residential accommodation. On top of this we have a resolution to grant planning permission for 14 more units. There may also be some units allowed under permitted development prior to the regulations changing. The application at the Oak Room (subject to recent media interest) was not refused, the agent withdrew the application in January 2023.”

Question for the Leader from Councillor Orange

“In the light of proposals to close Barnstaple station ticket office, are the council planning to respond to GWR on their proposals and the impact of closing the ticket office on residents and visitors to the town?”

Councillor Roome, Leader's response

“We have no plans at present to respond to the GWR on their proposals.”