General Question to Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment

Could the Cabinet advise of the number of traveller incursions that have occurred in the borough this year and the total cost to the tax payer through legal and site clear-up costs?

Councillor Andy Jones

Reply from Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment, Councillor David Smith:

I would like to thank both Councillor Fear and Councillor Jones for their questions re travellers.

As they are in effect the same question I trust this answer will be acceptable to both.

Since the 12/2/16 we have had 18 unauthorised encampments to date.

We have had:

- 7 within Car Parks
- 8 within Parks
- 1 within Seafront
- 2 on private land. (Holdenhurst and Staples Car Park)

The predicted costs to date are in the region of £80K, of which:

- £45K security
- £18K is for re-enforcement or addition of defences
- £10K on legal/Bailiff costs
- £2.5K on clear up costs
- £6K additional seasonal staffing

This of course does not include officer time in dealing with encampments, this has been costed out in excess of £20K per annum for the last two years.

I am sure the Council would like to join both me and Cllr Fear in thanking all officers for the work that has been put in dealing with these unauthorised sites this year so far.

I would like to reassure the Council that this administration will do all it can to move on illegal encampments as soon as possible.

13 September 2016
General Question to Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment

What were the financial costs of this summer’s unauthorised encampments. I would also like to thank staff & officers for their work & professional handling of the situation over the summer?

Councillor Laurence Fear

Reply from Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment, Councillor David Smith:

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As they are in effect the same question I trust this answer will be acceptable to both.

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I would like to reassure the Council that this administration will do all it can to move on illegal encampments as soon as possible.

13 September 2016
General Question to Cabinet Member for Cleansing and Waste, Councillor Michael Filer:

According to the Keep Britain Tidy Campaign Group Fly Tipping is on the increase in this Country. Mindless Fly Tipping can devastate a local areas. Can the Cabinet Member tell me how we are addressing the problem?

Councillor Philip Stanley-Watts

Reply from Cllr Mike Greene in Cllr Filer’s absence:

Fly tipping is unacceptable and is an offence which the Council takes very seriously. Reports of fly-tipping are investigated and an attempt is made to ascertain the origin of the waste. If there is sufficient evidence found such as a business address or letter, the Council will make contact with the possible offender to discuss the matter and explain the options open to the Council. In severe cases, or if the offender is identified and refuses to cooperate, the Council will seek to prosecute. I would urge the public to report any fly tipped waste to our customer services team on 01202 451199.

Hot spots are monitored on a daily basis, at different times to enhance the likelihood of witnessing any occurrence. The Compliance Team also works closely with CCTV operators, who report any suspicious actions picked up on camera, which aids their investigations.

Fly-tipping is cleared from Council land as soon as possible to minimise the impact on the local area. If the fly-tipping is on private land the Council will inform the land owner or agent as soon as the information is received.

Our Compliance Officers also proactively visit local businesses to ensure appropriate and legally-compliant commercial waste disposal arrangements are in place.

13 September 2016
COUNCIL MEETING – 13 SEPTEMBER 2016

General Question to the Leader of the Council

A true consultation on the future of local government in our region is underway. (My ward colleagues and I are doing our best to engage with our communities on this.) Can the Leader guide us on predetermination and the misinterpretation of this process in the media?

Councillor Michael Weinhonig

Reply from the Leader of the Council, Cllr John Beesley:

All Councillors have received an email setting out the Monitoring Officer’s advice on the issue of predetermination, particularly as it relates to the consultation process. This advice has been provided to all Members of all Councils in Dorset so that everyone has received consistent advice. This advice states that Members are required to be prepared to consider any new information, including responses to the public consultation, or advice that is relevant to the decision, up to the point when the decision is made. It is perfectly acceptable for Members to say publicly that they have certain views or concerns about the issues (predisposition), so long as they do not indicate that their mind is made up and that they will not change their opinion, no matter what information or advice may be forthcoming in the future (pre-determination).

I am not directly aware of any misrepresentation of the issues in the media, although I am concerned that some views may be expressed that could be interpreted as pre-determination rather than predisposition.

Should there have been statements made in the media which are a misrepresentation of the process, they should, both now or in the future, be brought to the urgent attention of the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Executive so that the appropriate action may be taken.

13 September 2016