
**Please find attached the Open Questions in respect of
Item 15 on the agenda for the above meeting**

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OPEN QUESTIONS FOR SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL 28 JANUARY 2021

Questions from Councillor H. Scott

1. To Executive Member for Infrastructure, Travel & Transport

Councillors receive many complaints about wheelie bins and bags of household and commercial waste being parked permanently on footways, causing obstruction and danger to pedestrians, wheelchair users, and parents pushing children's buggies and prams, by forcing them to move onto the roadway and into the path of vehicular traffic to avoid the obstruction.

Is it within the competence of Scottish Borders Council to introduce a bye-law prohibiting the placing of wheelie bins and other forms of household and commercial waste on footways, other than on the evening before, and on the day of collection, and if so, who/which organisation would be responsible for enforcement of that regulation?

2. To the Leader

A January 2021 Accounts Commission report entitled "Digital progress in local government", highlights that among some local authorities, there has been a lack of citizen involvement in digital service design, and not enough focus on outcomes in monitoring progress of digital programmes, and that to better understand the needs of citizens, councils should have a citizen and community engagement plan.

What steps does Scottish Borders Council take now, and intend to take in the future, to ensure that there is full and meaningful citizen involvement in the implementation of its IT strategy, and what measures will be implemented to ensure that those who are unable to use, afford, or access IT equipment are not left at a disadvantage as it seeks to modernise its procedures?

Question from Councillor Paterson

To the Executive Member for Community Development And Localities

Are there any plans to change the format of the Area Committees to allow Community Councillors and all that attend the Area Committees or whatever they are changed into the right to vote on any matters that are to be discussed even financial matters at these Committee Meetings.

Question from Councillor Ramage

To the Executive Member for Children and Young People

In line with the Scottish Government announcement that early years settings/nurseries and schools will be open for invited children and for the children of key workers where no alternative childcare is available, SBC announced in January that in-school provision will take the form of activity hubs, not formal learning, supported by appropriate staff.

- This will be for vulnerable ("invited") children and those of key workers with no alternative childcare.

Indeed we were told recently that 900 children had attended these education hubs across the Borders.

My concern is that we have a duty of care for ALL vulnerable (including additional needs) or at risk pupils, who may not be attending these education hubs, for whatever reason, as their mental health and wellbeing is being severely impacted. Are these young folk being recognised and supported, and if they are how?

Question from Councillor Laing

To the Executive Member for Economic Regeneration & Finance

At the November 2020 Council meeting, I asked the Executive Member to comment on the likelihood of disruptions to fish exports following the end of the Brexit transition period and the impact of this on the fishing community of Eyemouth.

He said he “did not see that there would be any reduction in demand or a significant risk to this important industry, as processes were in place.”

In light of the recent catastrophic delays due to a sea of red tape, and the resultant serious risk to the survival of many businesses, would the Executive Member like to revise his response?

Question from Councillor Robson

To the Executive Member for Children and Young People

Can the Executive Member advise whether the Council intends to adopt or use a guide to strategies to support children and young people with Extreme (or Pathological) Demand Avoidance as a profile of the Autism Spectrum such as that recently published by South Lanarkshire Council ?

Link for ease of reference

https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/14113/extreme_demand_avoidance.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0CBc4F9688ue9gFMdF8soZ9g5dhqJ4_wTz_7XXQ9wlnh0ZPMvqGZL2ObE