

Member Questions to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Andrew Jefferies

1. From Councillor Fraser Massey

Training for members who serve on the planning committee has, over a lengthy period of time, been woefully inept with comparative regard for the responsibilities placed on members. What additional help is going to be made available at planning meets (for instance access to a legal officer at the meeting, which has not always been available) and what is the council doing to mitigate this issue in the long term?

2. From Councillor Gary Byrne

Members of the council have not been briefed on the recent decision to dismiss the Assistant Director – Planning, Transport and Public Protection. He was removed from office immediately, suggesting something untoward. Members get asked questions about these things from our residents, and it is embarrassing when we have to say, “I don’t know”, it’s a secret, we haven’t been told”. Can the Leader give any details of the reasons behind the decision to dispense with this long-serving officer’s services?

3. From Councillor Neil Speight

Resources are at an all-time low in the planning department, putting extreme pressure on the current staff, with the appointment of a new interim chief planner. What is the Chief Planner’s brief with regard to resources over the next three months?

4. From Councillor John Kent

What is the remit of the Planning Development Agency Peer Review (we have seen nothing yet!) and when does it commence?

5. From Councillor Lee Watson

Planning meetings are more contentious, especially in the last few months, with the residents and some councillors calling for the resignation of the Chair and Vice Chair, what is the Leader’s response?