

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL
Wednesday, 12 July 2017

1. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR CONNETT
Re: Longhouse Community

What steps is Devon County Council taking to protect publicly owned land at Exminster occupied by a group calling itself 'The Longhouse Community'? What evidence exists that the group has permission from the county council to occupy the land? When did 'The Longhouse Community' occupy the land? When did Devon County Council become aware that the land was occupied by 'The Longhouse Community'? What meetings or discussions has the County Council held with 'the Longhouse Community' to 'regularise' the occupation of publicly owned land through, for example, a formal licence or lease agreement? Since becoming aware of the occupation how many times has the County Council visited or inspected the site occupied by 'The Longhouse Community' to ensure the use is lawful, complies with health and safety requirements and presents no risk or danger to either the users or any other member of the public, given the land occupied is at the base of a long-closed quarry? Is the County Council aware of and/or approved any arrangements for sanitation at the site? To date, how much has been paid by Devon County Council to its land agents for managing this increasingly long-drawn out saga.

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CLATWORTHY

I am aware that Councillor Connett has been in correspondence with Officers over a number of issues relating to this matter and I have offered to meet with him this week to discuss his concerns and will address the specific issues raised here at that meeting a number of which might not be appropriate for me to respond to in the public domain at this time.

2. QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR DEWHIRST
Re: Brown Signs

On the subject of Brown Signs for the Hare & Hounds Inn in Kingskerswell, can the Leader say what steps he has taken to contact the Mayor of Torbay, since the Mayor returned from his cruise? Will the Leader publicly stand up for this business, unfairly picked on by Torbay Council, and insist that unless Torbay Council allows these signs on our mutual border, Devon County Council will take retaliatory action? In the light of Torbay Council's 'dog-in-a-manger attitude what actions can the Leader suggest that Devon County Council might take to resolve this issue to the satisfaction of this business and to the residents of Kingskerswell? Has Devon County Council refunded the money paid by the Hare & Hounds for these Brown signs? Has Torbay Council paid Devon for the Brown signs erected on Devon's land advertising businesses in Torbay?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR HART

I met the Mayor of Torbay and the Chief Executive on 21 June 2017 to discuss this issue.

At the meeting it was explained that the installation of brown tourist signs for businesses was contrary to the policy of Torbay Council. They did however offer a generic directional sign pointing to food and drinks premises and they have again offered this compromise.

We have no control over Torbay Council policies. This policy was agreed by their Council and implemented due to the area having over 400 eating establishments and therefore making it impossible to sign each one.

This Council has done everything possible to support the community and business within our own boundary. It does appear discussions have been exhausted with Torbay on this point.

A refund has been offered and we await a response from the business.

Torbay Council have funded signage for businesses in Torbay on Devon's land.