



## **MEETING OF FIFE COUNCIL**

**THURSDAY, 25TH FEBRUARY, 2021**

### **AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 - QUESTION TIME**

#### **QUESTION 1 FROM COUNCILLOR DAVE DEMPSEY**

What use was made in Fife schools of Education Scotland's publication "The Road to the Scottish Parliament" before it was withdrawn and how much use was made after that?

#### **QUESTION 2 FROM COUNCILLOR JONNY TEPP**

What actions are the administration taking to tackle contamination in domestic recycling bins and at recycling points?

#### **QUESTION 3 FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES CALDER**

What percentage of primary and what percentage of secondary school pupils have been engaging with online learning in the current lockdown?

#### **QUESTION 4 FROM COUNCILLOR JONNY TEPP**

Following the recent bad weather our thanks go to the workers who helped keep our communities safe. In our Tay Bridgehead Ward there are many steep, hilly roads and many elderly residents. Some of these particularly on steep side-roads think they were let down by Fife Council because their roads were inaccessible for several days. What reassurance can the administration offer to Fifiers that adequate resources will always be made available to deliver the winter services policy; and what would they say to those residents who live on steep hills that are not gritted as a priority and who see the policy itself as not meeting their needs?

#### **QUESTION 5 FROM COUNCILLOR BILL PORTEOUS**

Will Fife Council be appointing an Older Peoples Champion following the recommendation made by Age Scotland and the Scottish Older Peoples Assembly. An Older Peoples Champion is an ambassadorial role held by an Elected Councillor whose job is to be a link between the Council and older people in the local area. Nine older people's champions have been appointed across Scotland to date. What plans does Fife Council have for appointing a champion?

#### **QUESTION 6 FROM COUNCILLOR TIM BRETT**

What input will Elected Members from North East Fife have in the development of the regional spatial strategy for the whole of Fife. Previously North East Fife Members

contributed to Tayplan but the regional spatial strategy for Tayside Local Authorities does not include North East Fife. North East Fife will come under the Edinburgh City Deal. There are no Elected Members on the SESPLAN Committee from North East Fife.

#### **QUESTION 7 FROM COUNCILLOR TIM BRETT**

Will Fife Council Administration support a request to the Scottish Government for an increase in the minimum price of alcohol? Scotland has a significantly greater number of deaths linked to alcohol and, whilst the introduction of minimum pricing has been welcomed, this has not kept pace with inflation and the number of deaths continues to be a concern.

#### **QUESTION 8 FROM COUNCILLOR DONALD LOTHIAN**

Will the Administration support a call to the UK Government to review the criteria for cold weather payments? Payments can amount to £25 for each seven-day period of very cold weather but, in the cold weather between November and March each year. Large parts of central Fife are currently missing out on payments because the temperatures are based on a weather station in Leuchars which is 20 miles away from Glenrothes and other parts of central Fife. There is therefore a need for the present arrangements to be reviewed.

#### **QUESTION 9 FROM COUNCILLOR JANE ANN LISTON**

I would like to congratulate all staff who helped to deal with the snow and ice conditions over the last two weeks. These, however, will have further exacerbated problems on our roads. What is the current position in relation to the number of potholes on roads in Fife? How many of these have not been filled within the target five-day timetable. What steps does the Council have for catching up on the backlog.

#### **QUESTION 10 FROM COUNCILLOR DONALD LOTHIAN**

What has been the average number of applications for Primary School head teacher posts over the last 2 years. Is there any difference in the number of applications for joint headships ie where the head is covering 2 schools?

#### **QUESTION 11 FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA HOLT**

How many children and young people did not engage with online learning last week (or the most recent week you have figures for) in Fife? Please give an absolute number and a percentage.

#### **QUESTION 12 FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA HOLT**

How many children and young people in Fife are not regularly receiving live interactive video contact with their teachers? Please give an absolute number and a percentage.

### **QUESTION 13 FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA HOLT**

How many children and young people in Fife are still without a laptop or tablet with a browser that can access Glow and Teams, or without an internet connection? Please give an absolute number and a percentage.

### **QUESTION 14 FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA HOLT**

The Courier recently reported concerns that S4 leavers have become so disengaged from education that they may never return to school and are doomed to leave with no qualifications. How many S4s in Fife are not participating in online learning?

### **QUESTION 15 FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA HOLT**

In his letter of 15 January 2021 to Kate Forbes, Steve Barclay of HM Treasury named two funds, which will shortly become available: the Levelling Up Fund which "will invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities and will support economic recovery", and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which "will help to level up and create opportunity across the UK in places most in need".

What shovel-ready projects does Fife Council have in its purview for applying to these funds?

### **QUESTION 16 FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA HOLT**

The Westminster government allocated £200 million to Holyrood for Brexit preparedness under the Barnett formula. How much money did Fife Council receive from the Scottish Government to prepare for Brexit, how much has it spent and on what?

### **QUESTION 17 FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA HOLT**

The East Neuk has the highest proportion of over-85s in Scotland and we know that older people are more likely to suffer from digital exclusion than younger age-groups. Has Fife Council checked that it is not in breach of the Equality Act by insisting on an exclusively online booking system for its recycling sites?

### **QUESTION 18 FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA HOLT**

How many requests for deferral with consequent funding of a nursery place for an extra year did Fife Council grant last year? How many of these funded places were at a nursery run by a private or third sector provider?

**QUESTION 19 FROM COUNCILLOR LINDA HOLT**

How many times have potholes in St Monans been reported to Fife Council since December 1st (a) via the website and (b) via other means (eg. phone, email)? How many potholes have been filled in St Monans since then, and how many potholes remain outstanding?