

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 25 MAY 2021

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR R JOHNSON TO COUNCILLOR R ASHMAN

“1. What forward plans has this council have, in putting in place support and training of the Council's Planning Enforcement team in the next financial year?

2. What is the view of the Portfolio holder for Planning and Regeneration where a developer has placed on them conditions to retain trees, then breaks that condition and fells 5 healthy ones, that this council's planning enforcement does not enforce the conditions set when planning permission was accepted by the developer, with no sanction nor implements a fine?

This sends out in my humble opinion the wrong message to our communities that developers can do what they want, when they want.

3. What is the view of the Planning Portfolio holder for Planning and Regeneration on the destruction of our countryside's wildlife habitats by uncaring developers where unknown persons are setting snares, where domestic animals get caught in them, fencing off Badger's setts destroying our wild animals' habitats, the destruction of our hedgerows and trees where our wild birds are nesting?

Is this progress that we as countryside communities must swallow and take a blind eye too.”

RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR R ASHMAN TO COUNCILLOR R JOHNSON

“1. Training for all staff including planning enforcement officer's is discussed and agreed at the 6 monthly reflection meetings. This includes new and refresher training to ensure continual personal development is kept up to date.

2. Where conditions are placed upon developers for the retention of trees, it would be expected that these conditions are adhered too. However, there are instances where, on further investigation, the tree(s) are rotten or diseased and need to be felled for safety reasons. This should be dealt with through discussion between developers and officers about the need to vary the planning permission The Planning Enforcement team will investigate any complaints of trees being felled without this process being followed, and may suggest a retrospective application be made, which could include mitigation measures such as replacement trees. If agreed mitigation is not forthcoming, the Planning Enforcement team would follow the enforcement policy to determine the next steps.

I do not know the site that Cllr Johnson is concerned about and it would not be appropriate to discuss a specific complaint or enforcement case at Council. However, if Cllr Johnson would like to provide me with details outside this meeting, I will work with officers to provide a specific response.

3. The Council's Planning team ensure that relevant conditions are attached to approved planning permissions to ensure protection of the countryside and wildlife habitats and that any removal of trees and hedgerows outside of the approved permission will be investigated by the Planning Enforcement Team

The fencing off of badger setts, destruction of wildlife habitats and setting of snares is a criminal matter under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which is enforceable by the

Police as the Council do not have the powers in which to deal with any offence under this act.”