

South Ayrshire Council (Special) – 19 August 2024

Formal Questions

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| Received from: | Councillor Duncan Townson |
| Response to be provided by: | Jane Bradley, Director of Communities and Transformation |

| | <i>Question</i> | <i>Response</i> |
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| 1. | Why did the council not follow its own rules in informing people in the local area about what is going on for large events, the council rightly insists that organisers go through a formal process, with correspondence and notices – with regards to the anti-terror defences being put in place? | <p>In recent years, hostile vehicle attacks have increased and, unfortunately, hostile vehicle mitigation (HVM) needs to be considered as part of an event management plan when there are large amounts of pedestrians in an area which could be subject to an attack. For this reason, temporary installations were put in place for events at the Low Green in the last few years including the air show. Having these measures in place is a requirement of the police and fire service who form part of the command structure for the delivery of large scale events and who have to sign off our safety and security plans. It is a condition imposed on the Council as organisers of an event, and not one the public are consulted on as part of any event application. Temporary measures are very expensive to hire and install therefore the installation of these fixed barriers will save a significant amount of public money. The only cost to the Council was the transportation and installation of these.</p> <p>Operation Rosette is a counter terrorism operation whose aim is to support Councils who hold large scale events by providing free of charge, a series of barges and barrier arms for a period of up to 5 years. We were advised in February 2024 that we had been selected as a potential candidate for this operation. Site visits took place in April 2024 and discussions with Officers in Building Standards, Ayrshire Roads Alliance, Planning and Estates confirmed that there were no implications around the erection of the barriers. A meeting took place with Counter Terrorism Police and the Chief Executive, Director of Housing Operations and Development, Director of Communities and Transformation and Officers in May and it was agreed that we would proceed with the barrier</p> |

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| | | <p>installation. Portfolio Holders, Councillors Connolly and Clark were advised of the proposals at a routine update meeting in June as was the Leader of the Council.</p> <p>Counter Terrorism Policing advised that they could expedite the installation and also reduce the cost of installation if they were able to install the barriers at the same time as they were installing other measures in Troon for the British Open Golf Championship on 10 July 2024.</p> <p>A briefing was subsequently sent out to all Members on 28 June to advise them that the installation was taking place.</p> <p>These security measures will allow the Council to make additional use of the protected space to attract additional events to the Low Green and provide a boost to the local economy.</p> <p>The Labour Government have committed in their manifesto to introduce the 'Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, known as Martyn's Law. This was also included in the King's Speech. The Bill will impose requirements in relation to certain premises and events to increase their preparedness for, and protection from, a terrorist attack by requiring them to take proportionate steps, depending on the size and nature of the activities that take place. The Legislation which is proceeding through Parliament imposes requirements for events which attract more than 800 people to implement this type of physical mitigation to protect against terrorist attacks.</p> <p>Event security is an operational matter and Officers are guided by Counter Terrorism Police on any appropriate measures. The locations of the new installations were identified on a multi-agency site visit, which involved Police Scotland, Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism Unit, Ayrshire Roads Alliance, South Ayrshire Council and Counter Terrorism Policing. The locations were identified as they protected the Low Green and surrounding areas from hostile vehicles and had the lowest impact on residential properties. The locations of the barriers have a smaller protected footprint than the temporary measures have had, which means that local residents will be able to park and access their</p> |

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| | | <p>properties as they normally would. Previously, during events residents had their parking displaced to surrounding car parks.</p> <p>It was highlighted that there is also a requirement to have measures in place at Blackburn Road and Blackburn Drive, however the decision was made to only use temporary measures in these locations as they are residential areas.</p> <p>We have arranged for the barriers to be freshly painted and we are also arranging to have them covered to reduce the need for ongoing maintenance. We are exploring opportunities to add additional planters and floral displays to make them more aesthetically pleasing. Once we have used the barriers at events Officers will review their effectiveness and will consider what mitigations we may want to put in place in future.</p> |
| 2. | Why were Councillors not briefed on this, particularly the Ward Councillors? | As above, briefing was issued on 28 June. |
| 3. | Who decided where they were to be located and what was the rationale behind those decisions? | As above - Police Scotland, Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism Unit, Ayrshire Roads Alliance, Counter Terrorism Policing and Officers from South Ayrshire Council were involved in the on site visit to determine where the barriers should be located. Officers are guided by Counter Terrorism Police on appropriate measures. |

South Ayrshire Council (Special) – 19 August 2024

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| Received from: | Councillor Craig Mackay |
| Response to be provided by: | Kevin Braidwood, Director of Housing, Operations and Development; and Councillor Martin Dowe, Leader of the Council |

| | <i>Question</i> | <i>Response</i> |
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| 1. | Reflecting on the almost continuous problems reliably keeping the Barassie Public Conveniences open - at the time of writing all five toilets have "out of order" or "technical issues" notices stuck on the doors, including the only disabled one - can I please have an indication of what proportion of days over the last year the toilets have all been fully open; an explanation of why these toilets remain consistently unreliable (accepting there has also been some utterly shocking vandalism); and whether any of the problems can be attributed to the original design or construction of these facilities? | <p>From the information and knowledge available the toilets have been fully open less than 50% over the past year. This is due to a number of factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly high levels of vandalism • Contract failure in relation to the contractors responsibility for service and maintenance of the door entry and payment mechanisms. Despite numerous attempts to resolve the situation the contract was terminated by mutual agreement. A procurement process is currently underway for a new supplier which is expected to be completed in the coming weeks. • Due to service failure FM have exhausted all other means of remedial action until this new contract is in place. • Contract failure and significant high levels of vandalism has affected public conveniences across South Ayrshire during this period. |
| 2. | To ask the Leader of the Council the extent to which the current Administration have adhered to the convention of as far as possible not scheduling Panels and Council meetings during school holidays and in-service days - a principle which recognises the additional challenges for many members who | All efforts are made to try to ensure that Council and Panel meetings do not have to be arranged on in-service days. However, there may be occasions when, due to urgency of business and/or lack of other capacity in the Schedule of Meetings, this cannot be achieved. This is the case for the Special Council on 19 th August, which was arranged following the change of date of June Council to accommodate items of business which, as a result, had to be delayed. Members asked that a date be found as early as possible after recess, in order that the items of business could be progressed, and there are formal meetings and Panels |

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| | are parents and grandparents for childcare when schools are closed. | on every other day that week. There was one previous occasion when a date for Cabinet had to be changed and was initially arranged for an in-service day, but this was subsequently amended to the following day, which was free of formal meetings. |