

Council – 30 March 2022

Councillors' Questions:

1. From Councillor J Martin to Councillor Monk, Leader of the Council

According to KCC, Folkestone and Hythe have the highest Council Tax in the County of Kent, we are currently running a financial deficient and we have a great deal of newly acquired debt, against this backdrop we have runaway international inflation, with the prospect of worse to come, can Councillor Monk tell me how section C13 in the Corporate Risk Register works to manage the rampant inflation we now have to deal with in, a practical sense, for example what percentage increase in cost will invoke cancellation?

2. From Councillor Meade to Councillor Peall, Cabinet Member for Enforcement, Regulatory Services, Waste & Building Control

Last year I asked whether our residents would receive a refund for Veolia's weeks of inability to pick up our household waste. We have never received a clear answer on this and so I ask again, considering so many residents were adversely affected by Veolia's lack of service in picking up household waste resulting in an increase in vermin, fly tipping, smells and general anxiety, can the council please confirm how much refund has been reflected in our council tax now that the new yearly bills per household have been sent out?

3. From Councillor Meade to Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities

With the dreadful situation in Ukraine continuing and so many citizens having to flee from violence and war, can the council please inform us of how many households locally have offered a place in their household for refugees, how the council can assist in matching families and put pressure on Government to fast track the process especially around visas, allowing these war torn people to enter and find safety.

4. From Councillor Meade to Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities

Following on from my previous question, I also believe that the Government are making £10,000 per person coming to stay available, can the council please confirm how this money is going to be spent locally to ensure that these refugees receive schooling, language lessons, housing, health care and general assistance in settling into our communities quickly and happily.

5. From Councillor Davison to Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities

Please could we have an update on the numbers and progress of settlement for Afghan refugees including whether the district is participating in the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme which formally opened in January?

6. From Councillor Keen to Councillor Peall, Cabinet Member for Enforcement, Regulatory Services, Waste & Building Control

With our first Bank Holiday just weeks away and summer just around the corner can we please be assured that the streets of Folkestone will not become full of litter and weeds and that appropriate street cleaners are deployed in the area of most footfall, and that weeds are dealt with when they are actively growing and not at the end of the season?

7. From Councillor Keen to Councillor Godfrey, Cabinet Member for Housing and Special projects

Under current legislation Landlords, both public and private, must give to any prospective tenant who takes a tenancy the following documents

- 1 - Assured Shorthold Tenancy
- 2 - Energy Performance Certificate
- 3 - Valid Gas Safety Certificate
- 4 - A copy of the Government's 'How to Rent' Guide.
- 5 - *For all new tenancies after 1st July 2020 and for all existing tenancies after 1st April 2021*): have had the property's electrical installations inspected and tested by a qualified and competent person, completed any necessary remedial work and supplied a copy of the report from the person conducting the inspection and test to the new tenant before they occupied the premises, or the existing tenant within 28 days.

Without fulfilling these statutory obligations, except number 3, no tenant as the law and legislation currently stands can be evicted under a s21 notice. Would it be possible for the Council to request these documents as part of any claimant making a Housing Benefit Claim via the council? Doing so would allow the council to build up a database on property owners who were compliant [most are], but it would also allow the Housing Enforcement Team to at first nudge any non-compliant property owner and landlords to fulfil their obligations and if they don't then take any necessary steps to penalise them in the most appropriate manner. Furthermore, over time it would allow the Council to build up a good picture of the state of housing across the district in both the public and private sectors, which would be a useful tool and database.

8. From Councillor McConville to Councillor Godfrey, Cabinet Member for Housing and Special projects

Please could you outline what community plans, projects or improvements are to be funded from this years allowance from the New Homes Bonus funding?