

In line with the Council's temporary suspension of direct public participation the following questions were submitted in writing:

From Mrs Vicky Dewhurst, speaking as a Second Home owner in Bakewell on the re-opening of Bakewell market (Item 5 on the Agenda)

I read on Facebook that the Council is inviting comments from the public prior to its discussion of the possibility of reopening Bakewell market.

I would like to raise the point that Bakewell market is a popular attraction for local residents and visitors from outside the national park and attracts a large number of people. I would expect this to bring in much needed revenue to the locality.

If the market were to be reopened it would cause the mingling of people from near and far enabling the transmission of Coronavirus. Visitors from outside the national park could bring it in and pass it on to residents as they are doing right now by using the car parks which have been reopened in the park.

I am originally from Sheffield, but now live in London. I have a second home in a village close to Bakewell. I am unable to use my cottage as I am unable to travel to it and stay overnight (despite the example shown by the Prime Minister's aid Dominic Cummings). If I were able to stay in my cottage I could isolate myself from the other villagers by staying inside or in my garden (I would be 2 metres from anyone who walked past my garden on the adjacent road). I would be able to bring my own food with me and therefore would not need to go into local shops nor Bakewell market. I could also visit my 92 year old mother who suffers from COPD, has limited eyesight (glaucoma) is hard of hearing (wears a hearing aid) and is unable to walk without a stick as she broke her hip some years ago, who lives in Sheffield and who has been living on her own since lockdown started.

However under the current rules, I could drive from London and spend the day at Bakewell market wandering around and spending my money in the Peak District. And then drive home again the same day.

My village neighbours would be able to visit the market too.

Why would I be any more likely to spread the virus to friends and neighbours whilst staying inside my cottage than I would walking around Bakewell market?

Do you have any plans to enable second home owners to put in a request to the Council or the local Constabulary to stay in their own homes overnight?

Yours faithfully
Mrs Vicky Dewhurst

RESPONSE

Since 1st June, the restriction on daily travel was eased and Bakewell, like many other tourist areas, has been attracting day visitors. The Council cannot prevent members of the public from visiting Bakewell, as has been witnessed in the past two weeks. Social distancing is something that we all, as individuals, must adopt. The proposals

set out in the report which would allow for the limited reopening of the market support the principles of social distancing, but I would stress again that compliance rests with those who wish to avail themselves of the services on offer.

In respect of the question asked, concerning the use of second homes, the current Government guidance states that 'you must not stay away from your home or your support bubble household overnight - including holidays - except for in a limited set of circumstances, such as for work purposes'. It would be inappropriate for this Council to offer any advice other than that which has been issued by Central Government.

From Ms Wendy Waite, speaking as a Bakewell resident on the re-opening of the market and public toilets in Bakewell (Items 4 & 5 on the Agenda)

Since the Government's partial relaxation of the lockdown measures, Bakewell has been inundated with visitors, many of whom are not maintaining social distancing, which is of great concern to local residents. Should the toilets and market reopen at this time, this will inevitably exacerbate the situation further by bringing many more people into the town, which in turn could effectively impose a secondary lock-down on older residents, who would be unwilling to visit the town shops for fear of possibly exposing themselves to Covid 19.

I would urge the Council to consider carefully their decision at Thursday's meeting, with a view to extending the closure until such time as it is deemed safe to do so by the Government relaxing lockdown measures completely.

Thank you.
Wendy Waite

RESPONSE

This is a statement, not a question.

From Dr Lida Ellsworth, speaking as a Bakewell resident on the re-opening of the market and public toilets in Bakewell (Items 4 & 5 on the Agenda)

I write to urge you to decide against reopening Bakewell Market and toilets until Covid 19 is under greater control and the Government removes the lock down altogether. And I urge this for these reasons ~

An influx of people with a re-opened market would effectively impose a second lock down on older townsfolk — of whom we have a high proportion — who not only will avoid the town on a Monday, but will do so for at least a few days thereafter; Too many people are coming into the town now and not social distancing. To bring many more in for a market day would be unwise and close to criminal.

Lastly, my understanding (albeit from hearsay) is that people coming to the market do not spend a lot of money in the shops (other than coffee shops and pubs), and

therefore to discourage those of us who do shop locally from going into town will in fact hurt the local economy.

Yours faithfully,
(Dr) Lida Ellsworth

RESPONSE

This is a statement, not a question.

From Mrs Margaret Elsworth, speaking as a Matlock resident on the funding for social distancing measures (Item 6 on the Agenda)

I have two questions to put to the Emergency Committee to be held on 11th June.

1. After reading the report on Agenda Item 6 I think that the amount of work that will be required to be done by any Town/Parish Council will be far too demanding for such a small amount as £10,000. So my question is - Can a Town/Parish Council refuse the task?
2. Does the District Council consider it to be best practice to put an item on tonight's agenda which will result in Town/Parish Councils being overwhelmed by bureaucracy without the courtesy of any prior warning or consultation?

Thank You,
Mrs Margaret Elsworth

RESPONSE

The County Council sent the District Council a list of potential social distancing interventions on 13 May. The District Council sent this list to Matlock Town Council on 14 May, for their suggestions. Since the town councillors have detailed knowledge of their locality, we felt that consulting the Town Council was the right course of action for the District Council to take. Matlock Town Council sent their suggestions back to the District Council on 18 May, and we forwarded them to the County Council the same day. It is for Matlock Town Council to determine whether they wish to participate in this initiative or not.

From Councillor Clare Gamble:

Members were presented with a report on 21st May that ruled out using the authority's staff in waste and recycling collection under options one and two of the report, then it transpired in the report presented to the next meeting, 4th June, that a staff member had, in fact, already been allocated a driving task, in the collection of waste and recycling who was to be replaced by an agency driver hired by Serco, because of the authority's health and safety concerns. Can the chair provide an update to Committee if any other authority staff members are currently working on collection of waste and recycling, and if so who is responsible for their health and safety and provision of PPE?

Kind Regards
Clare Gamble
Cllr Litton and Longstone

RESPONSE

I can confirm that no District Council staff are working for Serco collecting waste, nor have they been throughout the pandemic. The Clean & Green Team have been and still are delivering new containers to residents but they are our staff using our vehicles. Serco supplied copies of their risk assessments for this procedure that our Clean & Green team used as a basis for their own risk assessments. The teams are not touching old bins that are full of waste; these bin removals are being redirected back to Serco.

From John Green, speaking as a Matlock resident on the re-opening of public toilets (Item 4 on the Agenda)

I noticed that the Emergency Committee at the District Council was to decide, or discuss, the matter of reopening the public toilets this Thursday.

I also noticed that the officers had recommended they remain closed "until the safety of the public and cleaning staff can be guaranteed".

Could you please ask the officers making this recommendation to quantify exactly what this means? That is, that they lay down, and make public, specific and reasonable conditions that need to be met before opening can be permitted.

Workplaces, hospitals and many other facilities have continued to have shared toilets in operation and on June 1st the government issued guidelines for the reopening of outdoor sports facilities which included the use of indoor toilets.

Many other councils, especially in tourist areas, have reopened their public conveniences.

This council had already closed a lot of the district's public conveniences (a move which I strongly object to) and would, I have no doubt, close them all were it allowed to.

Public conveniences are most used and required by the elderly, vulnerable, those with young children and others with specific medical conditions.

So could you please ask the officers to define, and make public, reasonable criteria which need to be met for reopening. A vague "to ensure safety" is inadequate.

Yours sincerely,
John Green

RESPONSE

A number of options have been put forward for consideration this evening and Officers have provided Members of the Emergency Committee with the necessary information to make a decision on this issue. The report outlines the measures that the Council will put in place should the Members decide to reopen the toilets. The key risks have been identified in the attached Risk Assessments and we aim to mitigate these risks by introducing new measures such as increased cleaning schedules, Personal Protective Equipment, signs and limited access, to name a few. We will address the

relevant criteria within the meeting in order to conclude whether or not the toilets can reopen.

From Peter Dobbs, speaking as a Ashbourne resident on the Black's Head sign Incident Ashbourne 8th June 2020

Black's Head sign Incident Ashbourne 8th June 2020

Having read the statement issued by DDDC on Tuesday 9th June I would be grateful if you could clarify the timeline of events following the publication of the Council's intention to 'remove the head from the sign with immediate effect' made on Monday 8th June.

In particular could you confirm that permission to remove the head was granted as is reported in the local press - I am assuming that 'granting permission' means the same as 'we did not object' (statement by DDDC 9th June).

If so, which council officer gave this 'permission' for these works to be carried out and at what time?

Alternatively which officer communicated the message that the Council 'did not object' and at what time was this?

To whom was this permission / message communicated?

What risk assessments were carried out and by whom, and does a written record exist? The photographs in the press suggest an absence of PPE e.g. hard hat for at least one person.

Were the police consulted about the volatility of the crowd and was any attempt made to encourage social distancing?

Thank you.

Peter Dobbs

RESPONSE

The Council's media statement issued on Tuesday 9 June clearly explains the events leading up to the removal of the 'head from the sign' on Monday evening.

In response to the specific questions asked, the Leader of the Council was made aware of a situation developing in Ashbourne on Monday evening by local Ashbourne Councillors.

Confronted with a dynamic situation which required an immediate response, the Leader of the Council consulted with the Chief Executive at 9.15pm on Monday evening, and it was jointly agreed that in the interests of public safety and to safeguard the long-term future of the sign itself, no objection would be raised to its removal. This message was communicated to an elected councillor on the ground in Ashbourne. As indicated in an earlier press release on Monday 8 June, the Council had already announced its intention to remove the sign and appropriate arrangements had been made to do so on Tuesday 9 June.

In responding to this developing situation, the Council was not engaged in any discussions regarding the methods of removal or assessment of risk. No Council officers were on the ground at the time.

The District Council did not request police attendance.

From Councillor Claire Raw

Will the object that has been recognised as causing offence to our communities remain removed, or put in a place where it's relevance in history in the context of the experience of black British people can be explained?

Councillor Claire Raw
Eyam resident

RESPONSE

No decision has been taken on the future of the 'head' that has been removed from the sign in Ashbourne. In due course, that is a matter upon which Council will consider following a process of public consultation.

From Councillor Claire Raw

I would like to ask the council to consider providing financial support to the <https://www.peak-district.gov.uk/donate/fire-fund>.

This is an urgent appeal to support the need to effectively respond to wild fires of our moorlands. The fund will help our beautiful countryside and protect wildlife habitats. Could the consideration of a £5000 donation to the fund be put on the agenda of the next Emergency Committee meeting? I would suggest that a paper is drawn up for this money to be taken out of capital reserves to support the current crisis situation.

Councillor Claire Raw

RESPONSE

The introduction of new business whilst we are dealing with the current emergency situation needs to be carefully balanced and whilst this appears a worthy cause, care needs to be taken when making decisions on un-budgeted obligations. We need to consider the interests of the whole authority and demands on its resources which have been severely disrupted. The most appropriate timescale would be when normal business resumes with our policy committees, so that we can take stock on demands on our finances from a District wide perspective.

A donation of this nature would be revenue expenditure and would therefore be financed from the General Reserve, rather than capital reserves.
