

Council 25th April 2018

Item 3 (a) Questions submitted by the Public pursuant to Rule 8 of the Council Procedure Rules.

i) Question submitted to Cllr Ann Syrett, Leader of the Council by Graham Heasman

I note that this council has representation on the East Midlands Councils HS2 Strategic Board, a body which lists amongst its stated purposes *'To bring economic benefits to the region whilst seeking to remove or mitigate any adverse impacts'*.

As the weeks pass towards the Hybrid Bill being presented in Parliament, residents and homeowners, some of whom are threatened by compulsory purchase due to the HS2 'spur' dissecting Newton Village and Old Blackwell, are anxious to know what removal or mitigation of adverse impacts are being pursued on their behalf.

Can our council representative(s) on the EM Councils HS2 Strategic Board give examples of how they have or intend to ensure that this board is actively *'seeking to remove and mitigate any adverse impacts'* on their homeowners and residents affected by the HS2b route?

ii) Question submitted to Cllr Ann Syrett, Leader of the Council by Tony Mellors

On 27th March our MP Dennis Skinner has asked the Secretary of State during a Parliamentary debate on Rail, that serious consideration be given to Tunnelling to avoid demolition of homes at Newton. He also asked for the minister to meet with Newton residents to discuss this option. Dennis received a positive reply from the Minister, though we have no further news yet.

We have today made a formal request to the HS2 Engagement Team that this alternative of Tunnelling from Pinxton to Morton be assessed during the current Environmental Impact Assessment a draft of which will be published in September 2018, rather than be dealt with later through petitioning for mitigation.

Will BDC support these requests from Mr Skinner and ourselves, with similar letters to HS2, the DfT, and/ or the Minister?

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Extract from the Council's Constitution

**PART 4
RULES OF PROCEDURE**

Council Procedure Rules

8. Questions by the Public

8.1 General.

- (a) Members of the public may ask questions of members of the Cabinet at ordinary meetings of the Council.
- (b) Time allowed for questions and answers shall not, without the consent of the Council, exceed 15 minutes, or in the case of one questioner, 5 minutes.
- (c) Questions and responses shall not be a matter of debate.

8.2 Notice of Questions.

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Monitoring Officer no later than midday seven clear working days before the day of the meeting. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner and must name the Member of the Council to whom it is to be put.

8.3 Number of Questions.

At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question and no more than one question may be asked on behalf of any one organisation.

8.4 Scope of Questions.

The Monitoring Officer may reject a question if:

- (a) it is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the District;
- (b) it is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- (c) it is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months;
- (d) it requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information;
- (e) it breaches any procedure rule;
- (f) it relates to an item on the agenda for that Council meeting; or
- (g) it relates to a District Council planning application that is in the process of being determined.

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If a question is rejected the person who submitted it will be notified in writing before the meeting and given the reasons for the rejection.

8.5 Record of Questions.

The Monitoring Officer will enter each question in a book open to public inspection and will immediately send a copy of the question to the member to whom it is to be put. Rejected questions will include reasons for rejection. Copies of all questions will be circulated to all members and will be made available to the public attending the meeting.

8.6 Order of Questions.

Questions will be asked in the order of which notice of them was received, except that the Chairman of the Council may group together similar questions.

8.7 Asking the Question at the Meeting.

The Chairman of the Council will invite the questioner to put the question to the member named in the notice. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, the question will not be dealt with.

8.8 Supplementary Question.

A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one brief supplementary question without notice to the member who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original request or reply. The Chairman of the Council may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in rule 8.5 above or if the question takes the form of a speech.

8.9 Response

An answer may take the form of:

- (a) a direct oral answer
- (b) where the desired information is in a council publication or another published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

8.10 Reference of Question to the Executive or a Committee.

Unless the Chair of the Council decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question, but any Councillor may move that the matter raised by a question be referred to the Executive or the appropriate board or Committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.