

Full Council 17 December Public Questions and Answers

Name of person submitting	Questions
Paul Elstone	<p>Question 1: At the last full Council meeting, I asked how many Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) officers have been dismissed for gross misconduct over the last four years. The answer given was 19. I found that number shocking. I asked the other Devon District Councils the exact same question, their answers.</p> <p>East Devon- three (3) Teignbridge- one (1) Torridge- Four (4) West Devon and South Ham's (combined)- eight (8) North Devon- one (1)</p> <p>A two year period 21 to 23. The latest data is being obtained</p> <p>The combined total of the six other Devon districts is less than the number of firings by this Council. This suggests that either this Council is an extremely poor recruitment process, or it has draconian employee management culture.</p> <p>Recent events would suggest the latter. A committee which it would not be appropriate to elaborate on in this forum or at this moment in time.</p> <p>The benchmarking data proves this Council is very much out of step with the other districts and given the far reaching consequences, especially for those families affected. Members should be asking the real reasons why.</p> <p>Will the Council leader implement a comprehensive external review into the extremely high number of employee dismissals at this Council?</p> <p>Response from the Chair of Council:</p>

No. Performance management across the council is robust, as the public would rightly expect. However, the types of situations that lead to a gross misconduct dismissal are by their nature serious and/or severe and will typically only come at the end of a lengthy process that seeks earlier improvement with increasing strengths of help, advice, warnings and, ultimately, interventions as appropriate.

Question 2:

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services in answer to a previous question said there was, and I quote “a mis-mapped utility” This at the ZED PODS Beech Road development. A mismapped utility used to justify the extremely long delay in completing the development build out.

Can the Cabinet Member be very precise. What was the mis-mapped utility? was it water or something else and if a pipe what was the line size?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services:

South West Water (SWW)

Question 3:

Will the Cabinet Member provide a drawing showing the exact routing and location of this mis-mapped utility, a drawing that surely must be available to allow re-routing to take place?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services:

As an unmapped utility it was not shown on a map. South West Water (SWW) had now resolved this with a diverted supply and would update their mapping in due course.

Question 4:

If I read this Councils Statement of Accounts for year ending 31st March 2025 correctly. Section 50 Cash Flow shows impairment amounts have increased by over £13 million.

Can your Cabinet Member for Governance, Finance and Risk please provide a precise breakdown as to what the £13 million impairment value relates and how much, if anything, of the impairment amount is related to 3 Rivers?

Response from the Chair of the Council:

£12.9m related to the Council’s housing stock where the District Valuer had assigned a reduced level of value across a broad cross section of the stock and in addition all of the new properties built by the Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) had to be valued at Existing Use for Social Housing. No impairment figures directly related to 3

Rivers as they ceased trading before the 2024/25 financial year. For everyone's information, these accounts had now been formally reviewed and signed off by the Council's external auditors who had issued an unqualified opinion at a recent meeting of the Audit Committee.

Supplementary question:

The Cabinet Member for Housing in her response to me has not provided details on the line size as requested. Is it 3 or 4 inches?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services:

We presume reference to line size to be the actual pipe diameter or width. If so, the pipe was identified as a water pipe of over 4 inches but not accurately measured in situ. Once exposed it was quickly re-covered and SWW notified. SWW themselves ultimately arranged to divert the supply and undertook the works, therefore may be able to confirm further details.

Additionally, the Cabinet Member for Housing in her response has not said that she will provide a drawing showing the exact details of the mis-mapped utility. A drawing which must be available to this Council.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Property Services:

As per the original response, the Council cannot provide a drawing showing exact details of an unmapped utility which did not appear on SWW own mapping. As an unmapped pipe it is not shown on plans provided at the time be SWW covering the development site. SWW have ownership and copyright of their utility mapping which is provided via a paid for development service. More information may be available from SWW on the historic main and current, diverted supply via [Building & development | South West Water](#).