

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Question 1	Parish Councillor Duncan Wallace to ask Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth
<p>The constitution of the Development Management Committee specifically states at point 15.11.7 “Members should make sure that if they are proposing, seconding or supporting a decision contrary to Officer recommendations or the development plan that they clearly identify and understand the planning reasons (underlined) leading to this conclusion/decision. Be aware that Members may have to justify the resulting decision by giving evidence in the event of any challenge”.</p> <p>With this excerpt in mind, what is the role of DMC and its elected members and what direction is provided to officers to ensure they give their support to the elected members who wish to vote against officer recommendation, enabling them to represent the wishes of their constituents and seek to protect their communities by managing growth responsibly, with objective balanced considerations without bias?</p> <p>This would be more achievable if the District Council could demonstrate a five year housing land supply, which would enable development plans to carry the weight for which they were created thus removing obvious conflict between officers and elected members, which was very evident at DMC in November 2024 and January 2025, promoting the democratic process and role of DMC to one of respected importance and responsibility in which the public can have confidence, not one which appears submissive in totality to predetermined recommendations.</p>	
Response from Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward	
<i>Awaiting full response</i>	
Supplementary question from Parish Cllr Duncan Wallace	
Cllr Wallace asked what assurance he could take back to Buntingford with regards to the support they can receive from the District Council in supporting its elected Members in defending further speculative	

applications which are far in excess of allocation set in the District Plan.

Response from Cllr Glover-Ward

Cllr Glover-Ward said that while the District does not have a five-year land supply, it was on the titled balance. All planning applications would be fully considered in line with policies and the NPPF and recommendations would be made by officers. She said residents needed to trust in the integrity of the judgement of Members of DMC who will consider Officer recommendations and do not have to agree but do have to offer valid planning reasons why they are taking an alternative decision if contrary to officer recommendations.

Question 2

Town Councillor Susan Barber to ask Cllr Tim Hoskin, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability

Folly Island is described by the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal as "... a most delightful area ... worthy of careful protection."

Nevertheless, despite the well known concerns and objections of the residents, East Herts District Council is ploughing ahead with its plan to introduce wheelie bins throughout Folly Island.

Folly Island is not big enough to take multiple bins or the related garbage trucks. Their arrival will destroy the visual charm that makes Folly Island famous. This is not in the best interest of the residents, Hertford or East Hertfordshire.

Residents are still awaiting information on the garden waste bin situation which is due for renewal in March. There is much anxiety felt by many Folly Islanders at what will be coming next.

This Council claims to be a "listening council". Will it after all listen to residents and cancel the introduction of further wheelie bins into Folly Island?

Response from Cllr Hoskin

I thank Cllr Barber for the question.

The whole of East Herts is set to undergo a major transformation in the way that recycling and waste is collected. The first of those

changes is when the new contractor Veolia takes over the duties starting in May this year. Over recent years Central government have placed a series of legislative changes that demand that local authorities change their approach. I welcome these changes as it gives all residents the opportunity to recycle more and throw away less. Folly Island is indeed a fabulous part of Hertford and will be part of the total of 62,000 households undergoing these changes in East Herts and a similar number in North Herts. A communications strategy is planned and an explanatory leaflet will be included within every council rate statement to be sent out next month. A detailed operational assessment has been undertaken by the joint team including Folly Island and the way forward will follow the same approach that we are asking of all other East Herts residents. This is a balanced approach which supports those houses and flats with **no** off-street storage or houses with specialist waste needs, yet ensures residents are encouraged to recycle as much of their waste as possible and although a challenging change in behaviour for some we hope the scheme will be welcomed by many and that everyone will quickly use the full range of services we will be offering and manage their waste easily and effectively.

The team have already been busy on the Island working with residents who need assistance with ensuring their bins are out ready for collection and returned afterwards. We are of course aware of the issues raised and of the magnitude of the changes that for which we are seeking support. These changes are not peculiar to Folly Island but are being undertaken by all East Herts residents and the success of which will be dependent on the team doing their bit as well as they can and of course our residents support.

We will continue to listen and support residents who need assistance in managing their waste, but providing the extra recycling capacity and restricting residual waste is a well-documented solution to helping residents live more sustainably.