

Questions submitted on Notice for the Ordinary Meeting of the Council – Thursday, 15 May 2025

Question No.	Question received from	Respondent	Question
1.	Michael WALKER	Councillor McCOLLOM	<p><i>'On the 25th October 2023 I emailed Crown Street library and asked them if they could explain who is allowed to use the "Ladies" and "Gents" toilets? I received this reply "with regards to toilet facilities we have ladies for those identifying as female, gents for those identifying as male".</i></p> <p><i>In light of the Supreme Court ruling, which confirmed what we all knew – that “sex”, “woman” and “man” in the Equality Act 2010 refer to biological sex. Moreover, the judgement made clear that a male cannot, under any circumstances, eg holding the Protected Characteristic of Gender Reassignment or a Gender Recognition Certificate ('certified sex'), claim to be the opposite sex to access single-sex provisions for the female sex. May I ask if these quotes from the Crown Street library "we would expect and encourage people to use the facility aligned with their legal sex." and this "with regards to toilet facilities we have ladies for those identifying as female, gents for those identifying as male" are still the policy used at Crown Street library? If not, what is the policy at the library and council-run businesses that offer single-sex spaces regarding who can use the facilities?'</i></p>
2.	Leigh TAYLOR	Councillor HARKER	<p><i>'It's been almost a month since the Supreme Court clarified sex is biological, a woman is a biological woman, and a man is a biological man. It was not a surprise for those of us who had read and understood the relevant legislation. Unfortunately, what hasn't received so much publicity is that 'transpeople' have not had any rights taken away. MPs, councillors, organisations, lobby groups etc are still promoting the myth that 'trans women are women' and have the right to access designated women's spaces, services and sports, and vice versa.</i></p> <p><i>When I informed the council its 2018 – 2022 Equality Policy's definition of sex was incorrect:</i></p> <p><i>'This section of the Equality Act also covers discrimination towards a transgender person on the grounds of the sex they most associate with.'</i> ,</p> <p><i>the next version (December 2023) was still factually inaccurate:</i></p> <p><i>'This section of the Equality Act also covers discrimination towards a transgender person on the grounds of their legal</i></p>

			<p><i>sex.'</i></p> <p><i>Disappointingly, the correct definition,</i></p> <p><i>'A man or a woman', didn't appear until December 2024.</i></p> <p><i>A person of the opposite sex, however they identify or 'legal sex' certificate they hold, was never lawfully permitted to access a single-sex designated space, service or sports category. The clue is in the name. Any service demarcated by sex must be restricted to biological sex.</i></p> <p><i>Women like me have been accused of transphobia for stating the obvious. Lesbians have been accused of bigotry. Many transsexuals have expressed concern, and, as they are still being lied to, some are becoming increasingly frustrated and threatening to disregard the law. As Thomas Sowell said, 'When people get used to preferential treatment, equal treatment seems like discrimination.'</i></p> <p><i>Cllr Harker, as the council leader will you</i></p> <p><i>apologise to Darlington residents for the council's Equality Policy errors and the delays in correcting them which means we still have incoherent provision</i></p> <p><i>issue a public statement to update all residents of the action the council's taking to rapidly review all it of its currently unlawful policies and provision and ideologically framed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training so instead, we will all be able to access our single-sex designated services and be assured of privacy, dignity, and safety?'</i></p>
<b>3.</b>	Mr. Kevin GRAINGER	Councillor McCOLLOM	<p><i>'Has the Councillor conducted a review of services and if so, what was found?'</i></p>
<b>4.</b>	Ms. Suzanne WOOD	Councillor HARKER	<p><i>'Councils, for example Bishop Auckland, are removing immigrants from hotels into their local council houses or HMO (houses of multiple occupation).</i></p> <p><i>Will immigrants in Darlington area be treated likewise'</i></p>

<b>5.</b>	Mr. David CLARK	Councillor McEWAN	<p><i>'Regarding item 10: Nature Restoration Motion, which I fully support,</i></p> <p><i>How does Darlington Borough Council plan to address the loss of biodiversity resulting from the Skerningham Garden Village development?</i></p> <p><i>Specifically, how does the council intend to monitor and protect against the loss of habitats for amber and red-listed species on this site? This includes the proposed new road through Skerningham Plantation, which was designated as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) in 2015 and is still listed by DEFRA as a Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat.'</i></p>
<b>6.</b>	David JAMES	Councillor HARKER	<p><i>Do you agree with the Supreme Court ruling which quite clearly states that a woman is a biological female and do you also agree that only biological females should be present in woman only spaces?</i></p>
<b>7.</b>	Jack JAMES	Councillor HARKER	<p><i>Given the persistent and rising levels of child poverty both nationally and here in Darlington, can you outline what targeted measures the Labour administration has introduced locally to tackle this issue, and whether you believe national Labour policy proposals go far enough to address the structural causes of child poverty?</i></p> <p><i>Because if we, as a society, can find the money and political will for everything and everyone else — why is it that when it comes to ending child poverty in towns like Darlington, it's always 'too difficult', 'too expensive', or 'someone else's problem'?</i></p>