

Formal Council Questions and Responses

Date of publication: 23 September 2019

1 **Question to the Cabinet Member for Licensing and Regulation: 2019/36 - Gating Order on Market Arcade**

Councillor C. Evans asked:

A motion was recently passed at full council for a gating order on Market Arcade. I was minded to abstain on the vote as I didn't feel these orders work and are difficult to police, I altered my position in light of a councillor stating the order would 'stop people sleeping in doorways'. It's a sad reflection of our times that the most needy in society are forced to live in tents, doorways, empty buildings etc.

Many homeless charities have raised concerns about 'hostile architecture' which involves the boarding up of shop fronts and placement of 'architecture' like spikes and balls/boulders to prevent the needy seeking refuge in doorways, shop fronts and the like. It is sadly ironic that an example can be found outside the job centre in Newport, where the needy once sheltered there are now concrete balls.

Will your administration publicly condone this type of architecture and publicly state that you will not install or support any organisation, group, association or business etc. that might seek to install such items to prevent those in need seeking shelter?

Councillor Truman responded:

The gating order was made to facilitate the refurbishment of the Market Arcade, because the walkway needs to be closed at night to meet the requirements of the HLF grant funding and to maintain the security of the individual units. It had nothing to do with the prevention of rough sleeping, which is not prohibited under the existing City Centre PSPO. This Administration is fully committed to addressing the social problems of homelessness.

As far as "hostile architecture" is concerned then, subject to compliance with any planning or safety regulations, owners are entitled to take whatever measures they consider appropriate to secure and protect their properties. The Council has no power to prevent this.