

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

Meeting: Council

Place: Council Chamber, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

Date: Tuesday 25 February 2020

Time: 10.30 am

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 17 February 2020. Additional documents are now available and are attached to this Agenda Supplement.

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Kieran Elliott, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718504 or email kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Public Participation (Pages 3 - 20)

Council Tax Setting 2020/21 (Pages 21 - 28)

An updated report is attached to correct numbers referenced incorrectly in paragraph 13 of the original report. Please note this change does not affect the recommendations.

Notice of Motion- EU Citizens are welcome here (Pages 29-30)

Councillors' Questions (Pages 31 - 52)

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 21 February 2020

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Wiltshire Council

Council

25 February 2020

Item 14 – Senior Leadership Structure

From Chris Caswill

To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council

Question (20-01)

Given that the Council has recognised the Climate Emergency, and the seriousness of the crisis we face, why do none of the officers listed in the Senior Leadership Structure have any identified responsibilities for prioritising and addressing the climate emergency in Wiltshire?

Response

The structure chart circulated outlines roles with designated statutory responsibilities and Council are being asked to approve where changes to the designation are now proposed. The responsibility for the Climate Emergency is not a statutory responsibility but is one the Council are committed to. We are currently taking steps to recruit a Head of Carbon Reduction and this role will report to the Director of Economic Development & Planning. The Head of Carbon Reduction will lead the Council's approach to meeting the challenges of transitioning to carbon neutrality.

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Wiltshire Council

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Item 8 – Wiltshire Council Financial Plan Update 2020/21

From Harriet James (Wiltshire Gasification Action Group)

To Councillors Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing, Climate Change and Military-Civilian Integration and Toby Sturgis, Spatial Planning, Development Management and Investment

Question (20-02)

The question relates to para. 86 (climate change implications) of Wiltshire Council's Financial Plan Update 2020/21 which is on the agenda

In 2018 Wiltshire Council granted planning permission for a waste gasification plant in Westbury. Northacre Renewable Energy's planning application states that the facility would emit 31.79 tonnes of gross carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) an hour. This would amount to more than 4.5 million tonnes of gross CO₂e over the 20-year life of the plant.

- 1) How has the potential climate change impact of these carbon emissions been assessed as part of Wiltshire Council's Carbon Reduction Plan and have the Council independently verified Northacre Renewable Energy's figures?
- 2) What percentage of Wiltshire county's total annual gross CO₂e emissions would be emitted by the gasification plant?

The Westbury Gasification Action Group ask that Wiltshire Council redetermine the viability of outsourcing Wiltshire's waste to the gasification plant in light of its climate change implications.

A verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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Wiltshire Council

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From Vicky Moore

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing, Climate Change and Military-Civilian Integration.

Question (20-03)

A year ago today Wiltshire Council declared a Climate Emergency and committed to an ambitious target of reaching carbon neutrality by 2030. This was welcome news to many environmental groups and individuals but to date there has been little in the way of published progress reports to show the Councils action on this urgent matter.

Other councils such as Bristol City Council have now completed a gap analysis to meet their target. A gap analysis looks at the baseline carbon emissions of an area, considering them by sector, such as energy, transport and so on. Then it looks at the predicted level of carbon emissions in 2030 if no action is taken other than what is already planned. It calculates the gap between the existing trajectory and what is required in order to reach carbon neutrality.

This information is used to work out what action needs to be taken, looking again at each sector in turn. It looks at tangible, practical elements, for example in the case of energy, how many new renewable energy systems will be required, how many people will need to be employed to install them. This then allows you to consider questions such as how much of the workforce will need to be re-trained, how long will this take, etc. When you start thinking about all these elements, ten years is a very short time frame so huge steps need to be taken immediately for us to get anywhere close to the 2030 requirement! Failure to do this does not bear thinking about.

Bristol City Council have used their gap analysis to create a Climate Emergency Action Plan and are now putting it into place.

Has Wiltshire Council completed a gap analysis to meet their target of zero carbon by 2030? If this has been completed, when will the report be published? If not, can you confirm when this essential work will be undertaken? Because not doing this will almost certainly lead to insufficient action

A verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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Wiltshire Council

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From Russell Hughes

To Councillor Bridget Wayman- Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste.

Question (20-04)

How much recycled plastic (from Wiltshire) is being put into landfill, and what are the environmental and monetary costs of this?

A verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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Wiltshire Council

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25 February 2020

From Russell Hughes

**To Councillor Ian Blair-Pilling- Cabinet Member for IT, Digitalisation and
Operational Assets**

Question (20-05)

What energy supplier is the council using, and has it considered using green energy suppliers?

A verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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Wiltshire Council

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25 February 2020

From Jo Ripley

To Councillor Ian Blair-Pilling- Cabinet Member for IT, Digitalisation and Operational Assets

Question (20-06)

Will Wiltshire Council ensure that, when they make the change to a green energy provider, that it is truly green? I.e. not such as Haven Power, whose energy comes from Drax Power Station, the world's biggest burner of wood for electricity (with much of the wood coming from clear-felling of biodiverse wetland forests in the US) and the UK's single largest carbon emitter.

A verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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Wiltshire Council

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Item 8 – Medium Term Financial Strategy

From Bill Jarvis

To Councillor Simon Jacobs- Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement

Question (20-07)

Your Medium Term Finance Strategy is required to look forward 4 years prudently at likely income and expenditure. At present in your MTFs, Section 6, you've made a £350k allowance for the "Climate Change Team" in 2020-21. Apparently, this is for staff.

As it's only for one year, I assume that this staff allowance is for consultancy. The average rate for this type of consultancy is probably between £500 and £750 per day. This equates to a team of, at maximum, 2 people, completely inadequate to develop the solutions needed. Other Councils have made significantly more and bigger teams available, up to £1m and 10 staff in some instances.

Also, you've only budgeted for one year. Are you assuming that all work on climate change will cease at the end of this financial year? I'm impressed with your optimism.

Surely your Section 151 Officer has to take a different view?

A prudent approach, building up expenditure over the next 4 years to a reasonable estimate of requirements, would avoid the need for a sudden jump. This could be part funded from, say, removing commitments to new highway schemes which only add to our carbon problems.

The estimate could be adjusted as plans develop to align with the likely costs of delivering the many elements for a carbon neutral and environmentally positive county.

Underspend in the early years could be added to reserves, drawn when needed. Again, following other Councils lead.

Carbon and environmental mitigation will reduce costs and create income. Receipts from such could be ongoing well past the need for capital expenditure. A short term investment with long term income, perfectly in line with local government accounting needs.

Please can you therefore:

- i) Confirm that you will increase the Climate Team staff allowance to at least 10 people and that this staff commitment will carry forward for at least the next 5 years?
- ii) Confirm that you will reconsider the capital allowances and make prudent provision in your MTFS to deliver the carbon mitigation measures that will properly address your 2019 commitment?

A verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

Wiltshire Council

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25 February 2020

Item 8 – Medium Term Financial Strategy

From Bill Jarvis

To Councillor Simon Jacobs- Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement

Question (20-08)

Are you able to confirm that your Section 151 officer will review the forward forecast, taking into account the need for significant investment in the carbon mitigation measures needed for the county in the coming 4 years?

A verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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Item 12 – Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations

From Andrew Nicolson

**To Councillor Toby Sturgis- Cabinet Member Spatial Planning, Development
Management and Investment**

Question (20-09)

As the Housing Allocations do not include the land that would be unlocked for development by the proposed Chippenham North-East-South Relief Road, why has the Council asked for £75Million from Homes England to build the road?

A verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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Wiltshire Council

Council

25 February 2020

Subject: Council Tax Setting 2020/2021

Cabinet member: Councillor Simon Jacobs Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement

Key Decision: Key

Executive Summary

This report sets out, in the complex format prescribed by law, the resolutions required from the Council to set the Council Tax for the year 2020/2021.

Using the tax base, approved by Cabinet on 10 December 2019 of 187,935.69 band D equivalent households, and the draft net budget requirement of £344.023 million (which in order to fund requires a council tax requirement of £284.723 million) gives a band D council tax, inclusive of the 2% Adult Social Care Levy for 2020/2021 of £1,515.00.

Fire, Police and Town/Parish precepts are in addition to the Wiltshire Council basic Council Tax.

The main body of the report sets out the statutory calculations, and shows the Fire, Police and Town/Parish precepts for every parish in the Wiltshire Council Tax Area along with the total Council Tax figures.

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 10 December are available [here](#).

Proposal

That the Council approves the resolutions as set out within the report.

Reason for Proposal

To meet the statutory requirement to set the Council Tax. The calculations are as defined by law, and the figures will change only if the budget proposal is amended.

Alistair Cunningham OBE
Chief Executive Officer – Place

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive Officer - People

Wiltshire Council

Council

25 February 2020

Subject: Council Tax Setting 2020/2021

Cabinet member: Councillor Simon Jacobs Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement

Key Decision: Key

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to enable the Council to calculate and approve the Council Tax requirement for 2020/2021.

Background

2. The Localism Act 2011 requires the billing authority to calculate the council tax requirement for the year.
3. Cabinet approved the 2020/2021 Wiltshire Council tax base of 187,935.69 on 10 December 2019.

Wiltshire Council

4. The 2020/2021 Local Government Finance Settlement set out central government's decision in respect of the core principle and package of flexibilities in respect of Council Tax for 2020/2021. The principles and flexibilities that apply to Wiltshire Council are:
 - (a) Unitary authorities may increase the basic element (core principle) of the council tax by up to 2.00% without triggering a local referendum.
 - (b) Local authorities with the responsibility for adult social care have an additional flexibility on their council tax referendum threshold to be used entirely for adult social care. These local authorities will be able to increase the adult social care precept by a further 2% on top of the basic element (core principle).
5. At the Cabinet meeting on 4 February 2020 it was recommended that Wiltshire Council increase its basic element of the band D Council Tax by 1.99% for 2020/2021 (2.99% for 2019/2020).
6. It was also recommended at the same meeting that Wiltshire Council take up the additional 2.00% flexibility in respect of adult social care for 2020/2021.

7. The total recommended increase to the average band D Council Tax for 2020/2021 is therefore 3.99% (2.99% for 2019/2020). This results in an average band D Council Tax of £1,515.00 for 2020/2021 (£1,456.87 for 2019/2020).
8. Since the Cabinet meeting on 4 February 2020, the precept levels of other precepting authorities have been received. These are detailed below:

Town & Parish Councils

9. The 2020/2021 Local Government Finance Settlement confirmed that no referendum principles would apply for Town & Parish Councils for 2020/2021.
10. The Town & Parish Council Precepts for 2020/2021 are detailed in Appendix B and total £23,899,895.13. The increase in the average band D Council Tax for Town & Parish Councils is 9% and results in an average band D Council Tax figure of £127.17 for 2020/2021 (£116.67 for 2019/2020).

Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire & Swindon

11. The Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire & Swindon met on 6 February 2020 and set their precept in respect of the Wiltshire area at £40,644,852 exclusive of a Council Tax Collection Fund contribution of £154,286.00. This results in a band D Council Tax of £216.27 for 2020/2021. This represents an increase of £10.00 (4.85%) compared to £206.27 for 2019/2020.

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

12. The 2020/2021 Local Government Finance Settlement confirmed that Fire & Rescue Authorities may increase the basic element of the council tax by up to 2.00% without triggering a local referendum.
13. Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority met on 12 February 2020 and set their precept in respect of the Wiltshire area at £14,350,769.29 exclusive of a Council Tax Collection Fund contribution of £56,001.00 This results in a band D Council Tax of £76.36 for 2020/2021. This represents an increase of £1.49 (1.99%) compared to £74.87 for 2019/2020.

Conclusions

14. The recommendations are set out in the formal Council Tax Resolution in Appendix A.

15. The Wiltshire Council element of the Council Tax is recommended to be increased as follows:

	2019/2020 %	2020/2021 %
Wiltshire Council (Basic Amount)	2.99	1.99
Wiltshire Council (Adult Social Care)	0.00	2.00
Total	2.99	3.99

16. If the formal Council Tax Resolution in Appendix A is approved, the total band D Council Tax will be as follows:

	2019/2020 £	2020/2021 £	Increase £	Increase
Wiltshire Council	1,456.87	1,515.00	58.13	3.99%
Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Wiltshire & Swindon	206.27	216.27	10.00	4.85%
Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority	74.87	76.36	1.49	1.99%
Sub – Total	1,738.01	1,807.63	69.62	4.01%
Town & Parish Council (average)	116.67	127.17	10.50	9%
Total	1,854.68	1,934.80	80.12	4.32%

17. The Adult Social Care Precept will account for £131.76 of the 2020/2021 Wiltshire Council Band D figure above (£102.61 for 2019/2020).
18. These increases do not require a referendum.

Risks Assessment

19. A full risk assessment of the budget proposals has been provided to Cabinet on 4 February 2020 in Wiltshire Council's Financial Plan Update 2020/2021.

Equality and Diversity Impacts of the Proposal

20. None have been identified as directly arising from this report, although equality and diversity impacts have been considered by officers and portfolio holders when preparing budget proposals.

Financial Implications

21. The financial implications are outlined in the report.

Workforce Implications

22. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Legal Implications

23. The legal implications are outlined in the report.

Public Health Implications

24. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Environmental Implications

25. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Safeguarding Implications

26. None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Options Considered

27. The calculations are as defined by law, and the figures will change only if the budget proposal is amended.

Reasons for Proposals

28. To meet the statutory requirement to set the Council Tax. The calculations are as defined by law, and the figures will change only if the budget proposal is amended.

Proposal

29. That the Council approves the resolutions as set out within the report.

Deborah Hindson
Interim Director Finance and Procurement

Alistair Cunningham OBE
Chief Executive Officer – Place

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive Officer – People

Report Author:

Stuart Donnelly
Head of Finance (Corporate)
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Tel: 01225 71858

Background Papers

The following published documents set out the statutory requirements and powers relevant to the subject of this report:

Local Government Finance Act 1992

Localism Act 2011

Local Government Finance Settlement 2020 to 2021: technical consultation

Local Government Finance Settlement 2020 to 2021: response

The following published documents have been referred to during the preparation of this report:

Wiltshire Council's Financial Plan Update 2020/2021

Council Tax Base 2020/2021 Cabinet Report 10 December 2019

Appendices:

Appendix A Wiltshire Council - Council Tax Resolution 2020/2021

Appendix B Wiltshire Council - Council Tax Banding Schedule by Authority 2020/2021

Appendix C Wiltshire Council - Town & Parish Precepts 2020/2021

The Council is recommended to resolve as follows:

1. It be noted that on 10 December 2019 the Council calculated:
 - (a) the Council Tax Base 2020/2021 for the whole Wiltshire Council area as 187,935.69 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")] and,
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in the attached Appendix.
2. Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2020/2021 (excluding parish precepts) is £284,722,570.
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2020/2021 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) 872,749,230 **(Gross Revenue Expenditure including transfers to reserves, parish precepts and any collection fund deficit)** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils).
 - (b) 564,126,764 **(Gross Revenue Income including transfers from reserves, General Government Grants and any collection fund surplus)** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - (c) £308,622,465 **(Net Revenue Expenditure including parish precepts)** being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31A(4) of the Act).
 - (d) £1642.17 **(Wiltshire Council band D tax plus average Town & Parish Councils Band D Council Tax)** being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts), as shown below:

Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
1,094.78	1,277.24	1,459.71	1,642.17	2,007.10	2,372.02	2,736.95	3,282.34

- (e) £23,899,895.13 **(Aggregate of Town & Parish Council Precepts)** being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix C).
- (f) £1,515.00 **(band D Council Tax for Wiltshire Council purposes only)** being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates, as shown below:

Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
1,010.00	1,178.33	1,346.67	1,515.00	1,851.67	2,188.33	2,525.00	3,030.00

Motion - EU Citizens Resident in Wiltshire are welcome here From Councillors Brian Mathew and Ian Thorn

EU citizens resident in Wiltshire of whom there are in excess of 7,500 registered to vote, make an invaluable contribution to the life of our County and Country including our businesses, the delivery of our public services, and to wider public life, estimated in purely financial Terms at £17.25 Million per year. They are very welcome here and should be encouraged to stay*

*[*https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741926/Final_EEA_report.PDF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741926/Final_EEA_report.PDF)*

We request that Wiltshire Council investigates and initiates further and enhanced communication with EU residents living in Wiltshire stating that they are welcome, acknowledging and congratulating the 8,590 that have already signed up and encouraging those who have not yet done so to stay, by applying for settlement or pre-settlement status and setting out how they can do that by going to www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families.

Briefing Note- Motion- EU Citizens Resident in Wiltshire are welcome here

Whilst the Home Office is responsible for the successful implementation of the EU Settlement Scheme, Wiltshire Council has been playing a role in promoting [awareness](#) of the scheme in a number of ways, including:

- publishing a notice on the frontpage of its website in October 2019 (available [here](#)), encouraging residents to visit a dedicated [Are you ready for Brexit?](#) webpage. The webpage encourages individuals to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme and provides details of how to do this.
- Putting in place posters for the scheme across the council's hubs.
- Using social media to promote events supporting businesses with Brexit.
- Encouraging Wiltshire Council suppliers to apply to and promote the EUSS.
- Including information for staff in the internal newsletter 'Electric Wire' and payroll.
- Convening voluntary and community sector organisations and business representative groups to consider appropriate actions and share government messaging
- Signposting clients to organisations that are legally accredited to provide immigration advice by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner, such as Wiltshire Citizens Advice
- Community Engagement Managers sharing information with single nationality groups in local areas.

Wiltshire Council has also ensured that Looked After Children have applications made to the EUSS on their behalf where appropriate. Further guidance on support for vulnerable adults is expected from government shortly, while initial work has taken place to scope potential applicants in this area.

Aside from that, the council is not provided with a list of who has and hasn't signed up to the EU Settlement Scheme, so more targeted communications are not possible. The electoral register can only be used for electoral purposes but does give an indication of numbers of our settled residents that are EU citizens. The open register does not permit extraction on the basis of nationality and is much smaller. Other ONS statistics have wide confidence intervals and a timelag; the demography of EU citizens can also vary widely from area to area, with rural areas tending to have a higher

proportion of Eastern Europeans than elsewhere in the country and a greater sensitivity to lower exchange rates.

	UK	Wiltshire	B&NES
ONS Estimated EU citizen pop. July 18 to Jun 19	~3.72m +/- 93k CI	17k +/- 7k CI	7 +/- 3k CI
Number of EU citizens on electoral register	tbc (Dec 19) 1.9m (Dec 18). This will have increased due to Euro elections.	7995 (Dec 19) 7122 (Dec 18)	5088 (Dec 19) 4085 (Dec 18)
Total concluded adult applications to EUSS Dec 19	2.36m	7550	4830
Total concluded applications to EUSS Dec 19	2.75m	8590	5290

Future communications activity already planned includes promotional material in the e-newsletter 'Wiltshire News' that currently reaches 22,000 directly, and reaching additional readers via digital screens and social media.

Wiltshire Council

Council

25 February 2020

Councillor Questions Update

Questions Received

1. A total of 15 questions from Councillors have been received since the last meeting of Full Council on 26 November 2019.
2. Details of questions submitted and the order they will be received at the meeting are shown at Appendix 1. Responses are included at Appendix 2.
3. Of the 15 questions received, 6 were deemed to be operational a response from the appropriate Director has been organised. Details of these questions are also shown at Appendix 1.
4. A total of 9 non-operational questions were received before the first deadline of 11 February 2020, and were therefore guaranteed written responses as attached to this report.
5. The Chairman will go through the questions and responses, as is customary, take them as read and giving the questioner an opportunity to ask one relevant supplementary question for each question submitted. In accordance with Part 4 of the Constitution members were requested to submit their questions in priority order.

Proposal

6. To receive the questions as detailed.

Stuart Figini, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Appendix 1 - Councillor Questions Summary

Appendix 2 - Questions received

Appendix 1 - Councillor Submitted Questions Summary

Questions will be received in the order listed below as specified in the Constitution - so that every member who submitted a question has the opportunity to ask a supplementary prior to another member having the opportunity to ask a second supplementary.

Questions for Council (attached at Appendix 2)

Ref	Questioner	Date Received	Written or Verbal	Subject	Cabinet Member
20-1	Cllr Ian Thorn	12/1/20	Written	Press Releases/Social Media communication featuring an opposition member	Cllr Allison Bucknell
20-7	Cllr Jon Hubbard	10/2/20	Written	Cleveland Bridge – Bath – Monitoring of Air Pollution and Making the ban on heavy vehicles permanent	Cllr Bridget Wayman
20-10	Cllr Edward Kirk	10/2/20	Written	Combined Trowbridge & District Precept	Cllr Richard Clewer
20-2	Cllr Ian Thorn	12/1/20	Written	General Election – inaccurate infographic – why and how corrected	Cllr Allison Bucknell
20-8	Cllr Jon Hubbard	10/2/20	Written	D3 Bus Service Melksham Area	Cllr Bridget Wayman
20-3	Cllr Ian Thorn	12/1/20	Written	Propaganda posters on Council buildings – will it be replicated leading up to the 2021 local elections	Cllr Allison Bucknell
20-4	Cllr Ian Thorn	31/1/20	Written	Business Plan reflecting the Climate Emergency	Cllr Philip Whitehead
20-9	Cllr Ian Thorn	10/2/20	Written	Funding to support rural transport	Cllr Bridget Wayman
20-13	Cllrs Brian Mathew / Pat Aves	19/2/20	Verbal	Ash Die Back - timeline for the production of both the initial draft and policy on Ash-die back	Cllr Toby Sturgis/Cllr Bridget Wayman

Operational Questions – officer response

20-5a	Cllr Brian Mathew	5/2/20	Written	Ash Die Back	Cllr Toby Sturgis/Cllr Bridget Wayman
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20-6a	Cllr Pat Aves	5/2/20	Written	Ash Die Back	Cllr Toby Sturgis/Cllr Bridget Wayman
20-5b	Cllr Brian Mathew	5/2/20	Written	Ash Die Back	Cllr Toby Sturgis/Cllr Bridget Wayman
20-6b	Cllr Pat Aves	5/2/20	Written	Ash Die Back	Cllr Toby Sturgis/Cllr Bridget Wayman
20-11	Cllr Steve Oldrieve	18/2/20	Verbal	Plant trees on Council land.	Cllr Richard Clewer
20-12	Cllr Steve Oldrieve	18/2/20	Verbal	Trowbridge swimming pool.	Cllr Allison Bucknell

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Wiltshire Council

Council

25 February 2020

From Councillor Ian Thorn, Calne Central

**To Councillor Allison Bucknell - Cabinet Member for Communications,
Communities, Leisure and Libraries**

Question (20-1)

When was the last time an opposition member featured in a Wiltshire Council press release or social media communication?

Response

The following press releases feature members of the Council who are not part of the current administration:

9 October 2019 – Cllr John Walsh – New parkour facility in Salisbury

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/articles/parkour-fans-jump-for-joy-as-exciting-new-sports-facility-opens-in-salisbury> -

26 July 2019 – Cllr Graham Wright – Wiltshire Council to be carbon neutral by 2030

http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/articles/council-pledge-to-be-carbon-neutral?fbclid=IwAR1fPlx2TA70eBkQ8TE-TJMbd0ui4yL_bj8d2iMY9Dds0-41TI_TbqgZ7PgJ

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24 June 2019 – Cllr John Walsh – AFD flag raising

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/articles/armed-forces-day-flag-raised-across-the-uk-as-salisbury-prepares-for-weekend-of-national-event-celebrations> -

25 June 2018 – Cllr George Jeans – New homes in Mere

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/articles/home-sweet-home-for-new-residents> -

5 June 2018 – Cllr Graham Wright – New homes in Durrington

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/articles/new-rural-homes-for-older-residents-officially-opened> -

Press releases are sent out in accordance with the framework set out in the Media Relations Protocol in Protocol 7 of the Council's Constitution:

<https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/s94451/CURRENTProtocol07MediaRelations.docx.pdf>

All press releases give contact details for the spokesperson from the political parties. It is up to the press whether or not they speak to other elected members of the Council.

Wiltshire Council

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25 February 2020

From Councillor Ian Thorn, Calne Central

**To Councillor Allison Bucknell - Cabinet Member for Communications,
Communities, Leisure and Libraries**

Question (20-2)

Wiltshire Council produced an inaccurate bar in an infographic (showing Labour with more votes across Wiltshire than the Lib Dems) following the General Election that appeared on social media. Why did this happen and what was done to correct it?

Response

The infographic was produced to demonstrate the success of the council's communications campaign to promote the General Election. The information included related to social media statistics and support given to the media. The colours were added to support the colourful nature of the infographic not to represent votes cast during the General Election. Therefore, as the infographic was not incorrect it was not deemed necessary to amend it.

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Wiltshire Council

Council

25 February 2020

From Councillor Ian Thorn, Calne Central

**To Councillor Allison Bucknell - Cabinet Member for Communications,
Communities, Leisure and Libraries**

Question (20-3)

During the six month period leading to the 2017 local elections Wiltshire Council produced a series of propaganda posters which appeared on Wiltshire Council property and cost Wiltshire tax payers £10,000. Is Wiltshire Council proposing a similar advertising campaign in the lead in to the 2021 local elections?

Response

Wiltshire Council regularly runs campaigns to promote council services and to highlight that Wiltshire is a great place to live and work.

To refer to this as “propaganda” does the work of our Council and our Communications team a disservice.

Specifically, the posters referred to were produced as part of the Get Involved campaign, which began in December 2016. This campaign was intended to encourage residents to engage with our services, whether that be volunteering, taking the Big Pledge, reporting a pothole or applying for a community grant. The campaign covered a wide range of service areas and was targeted to promote stronger communities, as part of the council’s business plan.

All campaigns in the lead up to the 2021 elections will, as always, be consistent with guidance on publicity in the pre-election period.

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25 February 2020

From Councillor Ian Thorn, Calne Central

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead – Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member
for Economic Development**

Question (20-4)

At the last full council meeting a motion was presented amending the opening paragraphs of Wiltshire Council's business plan to reflect our commitment to a climate emergency. It was agreed that you would receive the amended document and pass it through the overview and scrutiny process. Any news?

Response

At the last full council, I proposed that we would update the introduction to the business plan but more importantly we would include both a section on Climate change and a section on our Stone Circle companies within the plan. As I said at the time, I expect these to come through to Overview and Scrutiny and any other relevant committees at the start of the new financial year for the authority.

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Wiltshire Council

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25 February 2020

From Councillor Jon Hubbard – Melksham South

To Councillor Bridget Wayman – Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Question 20-07

Question i)

With the closure of Cleveland Bridge in Bath to vehicles weighing in excess of 18 tonnes and the subsequent diversion of this traffic onto the A350 what steps have been taken to measure and monitor the levels of air pollution in the communities affected by the significant increase in heavy vehicles, specifically in and around the Melksham Community Area?

Response

Levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) are being monitored using passive diffusion tubes in a number of locations along the A350 both in the Melksham and Westbury areas. This ongoing monitoring will assist the council to assess any impact from the introduction of the 18 tonne weight restriction on the Cleveland Bridge in Bath.

Question ii)

Is the Cabinet Member aware that members of the administration in Bath and North East Somerset council are campaigning for the closure to heavy traffic of the Cleveland Bridge to be made permanent? Does she support this campaign?

Response

Yes, I am aware of the campaign by some members of the Liberal Democrat administration in Bath for the permanent closure of Cleveland Bridge to heavy traffic. Of course, I do not support this campaign. It would mean that the banned vehicles would be diverted through Wiltshire. Wiltshire Council has not been consulted about this and I have written to the Leader of BaNES seeking a written assurance that it is not her intention to use the bridge reconstruction as a stepping stone towards a permanent weight restriction, and confirmation that the petition is a rogue exercise that does not have her Council's support. I know our Leader is meeting the Leader of BaNES to discuss this further.

As you know, Wiltshire Council has received funding to develop the business case for the Melksham bypass which will help alleviate congestion and pollution through Melksham, but the construction of the bypass is some years away. There is also the issue of Westbury and the A350 through the centre and I do not want to see any increase in HGVs through Westbury that might be due to a permanent closure of Cleveland Bridge. BaNES has a duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities on highway matters, hence our desire to open discussions rather than be dictated to by a petition organised by a BaNES councillor looking at an issue from their narrow perspective.

Wiltshire Council

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25 February 2020

From Councillor Jon Hubbard – Melksham South

To Councillor Bridget Wayman – Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Question (20-8)

I'm sure that the Cabinet Member will share the disappointment of all residents in the Melksham area at the decision by First Group to cease the important D3 bus service providing a vital link between Melksham and Bath.

I note that Council has been reminded on numerous occasions that the proceeds received by the council from its car parking income are used to subsidise the provision of busses for the local community.

Could the Cabinet Member reassure me that the subsidised evening and Sunday service on the D3 route will be continued and a new tender issued?

Response

Tenders are currently with suppliers and we will determine what we can afford to support when they are returned and evaluated. The daytime services will be picked up by Faresaver on a commercial basis, so there should be little disruption to the travelling public. Any changes to the bus timetable will be communicated in good time to the passengers in partnership with the provider.

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Wiltshire Council

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25 February 2020

From Councillor Ian Thorn – Calne Central

To Councillor Bridget Wayman – Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Question (20-9)

Wiltshire Council has received £600k to support rural transport. Can you inform me of how this funding will be spent and that £600k won't be taken from the budget and spent elsewhere?

Response

As part of the governments recognition that the bus plays a pivotal role in reducing commuter traffic, reducing social isolation and supports the climate change agenda, it has, as part of a suite of funding, made available £671k for Wiltshire Council to enhance elements of its existing bus service network. We will be submitting our statement of intent, before the 13th March deadline, which will also be available on the website from the same date, but I can confirm this money will be spent on public transport. Town and Parish Councils will be consulted asking for suggestions that can be considered for enhancements to bus services in their area.

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Wiltshire Council

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25 February 2020

From Councillor Edward Kirk – Trowbridge Adcroft

To Councillor Richard Clewer – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing, Climate Change and Military-Civilian Integration

Question (20-10)

Trowbridge Town Council has both a substantial debt with the Public Works Loan Board of £5.6 million (more than any other Town or Parish in the Country), and an annual cost for staff salaries, pension and NI of £1.7 million. The Trowbridge Town Council Precept in 2019/20 was set at £153.98 for a band D property, while neighbouring villages, like Hilperton have a Precept of only £14.28.

The new approved housing developments in Trowbridge will regrettably remove much of the green space between our Town and Villages (Hilperton, Southwick, North Bradley and West Ashton). Therefore, as we are now all joining together and sharing services in becoming part of a larger district of Trowbridge, we should also share the cost and have a combined Trowbridge & District Precept of £124.49 (Band D). Please can the Cabinet Member confirm how this fairer funding principle can be achieved?

Response

Parish and Town Councils have responsibility for setting their own precept and would need to consider the level of precept annually. This would then come into effect from 1 April each year.

If Parish and Town Councils wished to share the cost of services and a combined Trowbridge and District Precept they would have to consider a community governance review, the terms of reference which should include consideration of boundaries of existing parishes.

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25 February 2020

**From Councillor Brian Mathew – Box and Colerne and Councillor Pat Aves –
Melksham North**

**To Councillor Bridget Wayman – Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and
Waste and Councillor Toby Sturgis**

Question (20-13)

Given that Wiltshire Council has responded to the four parts of our question on Ash-dieback with four identical responses referring to

Officers “working on a Policy for dealing with ash-dieback and an initial draft is under discussion. The issues raised in the above questions are all under consideration, we will provide an update once this is finalised”.

Will Wiltshire Council produce a firm timeline for the production of both the initial draft and policy on Ash-dieback, and that complete, direct and relevant answers on the four specific points raised in our original written question form part of the finalised policy, and that we are kept informed throughout the process?

A verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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