

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

12 July 2022

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors

Question from: Cllr Ian Thorn

To: Cllr Richard Clewer - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question 1 (22-085)

What measures are being taken to ensure full council meetings aren't cancelled due to lack of business?

Response

It is very rare for a Full Council meeting to be cancelled and decisions of this nature are never taken lightly. The decision was taken in line with the procedure set out in the Constitution at Paragraph 9.2 of Part 4 – Rules of Procedure: Council, which states:

9.2 With the exception of an extraordinary meeting requisitioned by Members in accordance with paragraph 6, the Proper Officer may cancel a meeting in the event of the below circumstances following consultation with the Chairman and giving reasonable notice of its cancellation:

9.2.1 Inclement weather;

9.2.2 Where there is reason to believe the meeting would not be quorate;

9.2.3 Insufficient business for the meeting to be viable;

9.2.4 Other reasonable unforeseen circumstances.

I can confirm that a full agenda is anticipated for the next meeting of Council in October 2022, as detailed in the [Council Forward Plan](#) and items for future meetings will be arranged so as to avoid cancellations where possible.

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Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors

Question from: Cllr Ian Thorn

To: Cllr Dr Mark McClelland - Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding

Question 2 (22-086)

What measures are being taken to ensure a consistent and regular collection of waste is provided to the residents of Wiltshire?

Response

The council's waste collection contractor, Hills Municipal Collections, has been experiencing significant staffing shortages for a number of weeks which have resulted in some disruption to waste and recycling collection services. Officers have been working closely with the council's contractors to understand the root causes and encourage the contractor to respond robustly to the challenges that they are facing in providing this essential frontline service. The staffing issues are primarily the result of a recent and substantial decline in 3rd party agency resource, which Hills have historically been heavily reliant upon. Hills operate from three depots and their north depot (at Sands Farm in Calne) is the most severely affected. The product of this lack of labour is that some collection rounds have needed to be collected late, as not all rounds could be deployed as scheduled.

In closely monitoring the levels of service disruption being caused by these ongoing staff shortages and noting a decline over recent weeks, formal actions have been taken under the contract, requiring Hills to provide a substantial Remediation Plan with their proposals to recover the service. This plan has been accepted by the council, and includes the following commitments from the contractor:

- Temporary changes to the Hills management structure for the Lot 5 collection contract, to ensure close focus of a Divisional Director to oversee the recovery and support local management. Some extension of local management capacity.
- Prioritise collections of residual waste and chargeable garden waste during the week, collections of mixed dry recycling (MDR) from Sands Farm to be

collected as scheduled where resource allows, all “dropped” rounds to be rescheduled no later than the next 3 days.

- Deploy significantly more “recovery rounds” on Saturdays and Sundays on voluntary overtime at Hills’ cost, to speed up the recovery of the MDR service.
- Temporarily enhance their overtime rates over this recovery period to attract more staff to work voluntary overtime.
- Actively promote the recruitment opportunities that exist with Hills, working with their recruitment partner and provider, and provide management capacity to undertake the necessary recruitment.
- Actively recruit to all permanent vacant positions, and also recruit to an additional pool of labour resource to reduce their dependency on 3rd party agency labour.
- Hills to continue to actively provide inhouse upskilling opportunities, for loaders to train as drivers (some individuals have progressed through this route so far).
- Hills to continue to promote their internal “refer a friend” recruitment scheme, which provides financial rewards for successful referrals, where a recruit successfully completes a period of employment. This scheme to be extended to council staff to also have the opportunity to make referrals.

In addition to the above, the waste service has worked with colleagues in other services to encourage their staff to provide extra capacity where possible. As well as some council staff working on a voluntary overtime basis to assist, primarily over weekends, drivers from other council contracts have also taken up this opportunity (drivers from the Ringway contract have already deployed over the past two weekends).

The plan is anticipated to recover the service by 21 August, such that collections from Monday 22 August should be collected on their scheduled day. These arrangements continue to be closely monitored with Hills providing daily progress updates, and a formal weekly review meeting is held between the council and Hills, including their Divisional Director responsible for that service, to discuss progress and respond to what is a dynamic situation.

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Question from: Cllr Ian Thorn

To: Cllr Richard Clewer - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question 3 (22-087)

What is the current situation regarding negotiations between Wiltshire Council and the GMB?

Response

[Background: The council recognises 3 trade unions – Unison, Unite and the GMB - and there are ongoing discussions with all 3 recognised trade unions as part of a working group to agree policies that are standardised, fit for purpose, financially viable and support delivery of the council's Business Plan, while ensuring our staff are fairly and appropriately rewarded. The discussions relate to our unsocial, standby and callout policies. Whilst GMB are part of these working group discussions they balloted some of their members – Civil Enforcement Officers – who voted to strike in dispute of proposed changes to the unsocial hours policy]

Following a discussion between the Council, GMB and ACAS the planned Civil Enforcement Officers strike planned for 30 June until 6 July was suspended. This was brought about by the council reaffirming its approach to continue to move discussions forward in good faith.

It should be noted that nothing was agreed at this meeting that had not already been confirmed by the Council in working group meetings with all 3 unions other than the commitment to look at ongoing pay protection as a potential mitigation (if needed the agreed commitments are set out below in italics). However, one of the aims of the working group was always to look at mitigations which would include the one discussed with GMB and the relevant shop stewards in the ACAS meeting. We would have hoped that GMB would have brought it to the working group meeting rather than seek the need for a facilitated conversation with ACAS.

The working group (HR, Service reps and Union reps) met on 6 July to review proposed changes to the policy and potential mitigations. It was agreed with all 3 unions and service reps at this meeting that following further work by the council to develop the proposals discussed in more detail, we may be in a position to reconvene the Terms and Conditions sub-committee and ballot staff.

Agreed commitments

Wiltshire Council acknowledge the concerns of the CEOs over unsocial hours and commit to bring back to the working group consideration of paying an ongoing protected amount to staff to reflect any difference in pay caused by the introduction of the new policy.

Wiltshire Council confirms they have not and are not contemplating fire and rehire and remain committed to working through the working group and formal negotiation process to find a resolution. The next phase of formal consultation with the three unions concerning unsocial hours will not begin with giving notice to the unions of the intention to dismiss.

Wiltshire Council states that a works council has never been contemplated to supplement negotiations with recognised trade unions.

We remain committed to good industrial relations with all of our recognised unions, supported by ACAS where appropriate.

GMB will suspend the 7 days of industrial action scheduled to begin on 30 June 2022.

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Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors

Question from: Cllr Rich Rogers

To: Cllr Dr Mark McClelland - Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding

Statement

Residents of Porton and Idmiston have, for a number of years, been highlighting the poor state of repair of Porton High Street. The High Street is long overdue for major maintenance works, suffering from poor surface conditions, undermined in places by roots from a large tree situated on an adjacent private property. The High Street also suffers from inadequate drainage, causing a build up of surface water on the roads and also caused flooding in neighbouring properties. Wiltshire Council are fully aware of these issues.

Matters came to a head in 2021, when an elderly resident tripped and fell whilst walking down the road, directly caused by the poor state. She sustained significant injury, and with the absence of any pedestrian footpaths on the High Street, she was stranded in the middle of the road, and was lucky to escape further injury from any passing motorists. Understandably this was an extremely traumatic experience that no one should have to endure.

Major maintenance works were scheduled for this FY, and I have had site meetings with the Highways engineer to discuss all aspects of the works required, including surface repair and drainage, and to ensure the problematic tree roots are dealt with. During the site inspection, the Highways engineer confirmed that major works were necessary and they would be carried out this FY.

However, following subsequent survey works, it has been found that the road has deteriorated to such a state, that preliminary works must first take place, before the road can be fully repaired. This introduces further delays as works will not be completed until FY23/24, meaning that Porton and Idmiston residents must ensure further safety and flood risks as a consequence.

Question 1 (22-088)

Can you confirm why this lengthy delay to a known major problem has endured, allowing further deterioration of the road which will now demand additional works incurring further delays with increased costs?

Response

This site was originally identified as being suitable for a veneer surface treatment. Between the site being identified from the surface condition survey and the detailed site measurement survey it became apparent that further deterioration had occurred, making it unsuitable for that treatment. In addition, there is a large mature tree that is affecting the road structure. Currently we are looking at solutions that would avoid felling the tree, whilst enabling us to repair the surface and prevent further damage being caused by the tree.

Question 2 (22-089)

When can the residents of Porton and Idmiston expect High Street to be fully repaired?

Response

The intention is to undertake these works in next year's programme of works.

Question 3 (22-090)

Can you confirm that the repair works will resolve the issue of the tree roots which are undermining the road condition and that adequate draining will be installed as part of the works to mitigate against flood risk for all impacted residents on Porton High Street and the adjacent side lanes?

Response

We are looking to provide a full resolution to the issues that we have at this location, including drainage and the damage caused by the tree.

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Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors

Question from: Dr Jimmy Walker

To: Cllr Dr Mark McClelland - Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding

Statement

In relation to the previous Wiltshire Cabinet meeting on 26th April 2022, the following was recorded:

Resolved:

- i. Approves the updating of the Infrastructure List to include: “Infrastructure projects identified through the Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Groups (LHFIG) that provide for pedestrian and cycle improvements”.
- ii. Approves the allocation of: a) Subject to the approval of (i), up to £400,000 to the LHFIG programme for projects that relate to pedestrian and cycle improvements.

Question 1 (22-091)

May we seek clarification as to whether these monies for pedestrian and cycle improvements were actually approved, how much is available for Salisbury and when will it be spent?

Response

I can confirm that the the additional monies made available for the Local Highway and Footway Improvement Groups (LHFIGs) are now being allocated.

The 2022/23 allocation for the Salisbury Area is £28,360.

The intention is that the funding will be allocated by the end of the financial year.

Question 2 (22-092)

Such monies, whilst limited may aid the implementation of active travel measure for benefit of Wiltshire Residents.

If approved, will Cllr McClelland advise that additional monies are now available and

explain to residents how they can work with Wiltshire Council to identify measures to create a more positive environment for vulnerable road users?

Response

Further to my answer to the previous question, the additional monies made available to the Local Highway and Footway Improvement Groups are now being allocated.

The funding is now being prioritised by these groups, and residents can access this by discussing their concerns and suggestions with their relevant Parish, Town or City Council. If they are supportive of the issue, they can raise these with the group for their area and its members consider and make a recommendation to the Area Board who have final ratification.

The process is outlined on the council's website and can be found here:

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1268/Local-highway-and-footway-improvement-groups>

Statement

The wiggly line that was painted on the shared use Avon Valley Path in Stratford sub Castle in May, may have been fun for the local and national media however, this again demonstrates the lack of support for active travel. The wiggly line on the shared use footway was not due the lack of care and attention by the contractor as pointed out by Cllr McClelland in the Salisbury Journal "Admitting that the line was "painted in error", Cllr Dr Mark McClelland, cabinet member for transport, addressed the line, which has now been traced with black paint."

In fact, to produce a continuous line the only choice for the contractor was to follow the parts of the tarmac that were level. The reason for this is that areas of the shared use path have sunk over the over the years such that it is now an uncomfortable journey for users. These problems have been reported at the Salisbury cycle liaison panel over a number of years by then Cllr John Walsh and other cyclists but repairs were never undertaken.

Question 3 (22-093)

Will Wiltshire Council review the section of the Avon Valley path with the sunken holes in Stratford sub Castle and consider repairs as the lack of a definitive central line is creating conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.

Response

The section of cycleway referred to in this question was designed not to have a line delineating between pedestrian and cyclists. The line that was installed recently was done so in error. This line has now been removed and there is no intention, at this time to replace it.

On other sections of the Avon Valley Cycleway, where a delineating line was designed and installed, the line has recently been refreshed.

While there are some surface undulations present on the cycleway, they are not to a degree that removal and replacement of the surface is a priority at present.

Statement

Amesbury centre cycleway

The shared use cycle way and pedestrian facility that was built in Amesbury centre currently has engineering poles and lamp posts in the cycleway.

Such facilities are not up to the engineering standards as set out in the [Cycle infrastructure design \(LTN 1/20\) guidance](#) and will create dangers for cyclists as they try to avoid the pole, lamp post and pedestrians. In addition such a dated design using a shared use facility will create conflict between vulnerable road users and will do little to encourage active travel.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

Question 4 (22-094)

Why was this facility not built to standards in the Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20) guidance?

What groups were consulted at the design stage of this cycle way – there are a number of cycle groups in the area who could have provided valuable input and support for the council during these early stages of design and implementation?

Response

The guidance contained in LTN1/20 was followed where practicable. Unfortunately when retro-fitting into existing environments sometimes compromises have to be made. The issues regarding the lighting columns are being addressed by the contractor.

Unfortunately, at present there is not a dedicated cycling group in Amesbury for the Council to consult with. Consultation did take place with the locally elected councillors, Town Council and the public through the statutory processes in connection with those elements of the scheme such as the crossing provision and raised junction at the car park entrance.

Statement

The current cycle facilities in Salisbury are becoming dated. For example the cycle lane signage on Castle Road has now faded to such an extent that the paintwork is difficult for drivers and cyclists to see. If Wiltshire Council are to encourage active travel then remarking this stretch of cycle way may assist in encouraging safe routes. However, local residents are too scared to cycle on this facility due to the dangers of the volumes of traffic, congestion and pollution. To make a real difference Wiltshire Council could consider providing segregated facilities as identified in the Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20) guidance to encourage active travel.

Question 5 (22-095)

Will Wiltshire Council consider having the cycle lanes on Castle Road repainted?

Will Wiltshire Council consider having the cycle lanes on Castle Road updated to modern day standards and implement safer segregated routes for vulnerable road users for those that wish to cycle.

Response

The council is undertaking an extensive programme of relining works in the county, this programme includes lining of cycle lanes.

Modernizing cycle provision within the existing highway is something that can be considered. However, it is important that a balance is struck that accommodates the wide range of highway users.

Statement

Advance Stop Lines – Milford Hill and Milford Street

In January 2022 I raised the issues of i) faded lines of the approach lane, ii) faded stop lines on the reservoir, iii) lack of cycle icon in the approach lane and in the reservoir on Milford Hill. I would like to thank Cllr McClelland and the Wiltshire Council staff involved for enabling their lining teams to paint the approach lane and white lines either side of the reservoir.

However, the initial attempt at relining was not very successful as the lead in line was only painted for approximately 2m.

A number of residents raised this incomplete painting on social media and we would like to thank Cllr Atiquil Hoque for writing to Cllr McClelland and since then the mandatory cycle lane line has now been extended. Such mandatory approach lanes provide facilities to safeguard the entry of cyclists to the reservoir which also has an important role in the provision of a safe buffer zone for pedestrians crossing in front of motor vehicles. In effect providing those who wish to use active travel modes with safer infrastructure.

When I raised this issue in January, I also enquired about having a cycle icon painted in the safety box on the advanced stop line and if there was a possibility that the lead in lane and cycle box could be painted in a different colour on Milford Hill to improve safety for those taking part in active travel.

The response from Cllr McClelland in January was “It should be noted that there is no requirement for the cycle approach lane or the reservoir area to be a different colour”.

However, on the opposite junction on Milford St there is another approach lane and reservoir area. As indicated in the image below that approach lane and reservoir has obviously been repainted recently with visible white lines and cycle icon but it is clear

that the tarmac of the approach lane and reservoir box were originally a different colour of tarmac.

Thank you for informing me back in January that is no requirement for the approach lane or the reservoir area to be painted a different colour.

However, I would very like much like to know what the Wiltshire council policy is on advance stop lines at junctions and whether you are following the [Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance](#). Both of the advance stop lines on Milford St and Milford Hill are opposite each other but have been painted very differently

Question 6 (22-096)

6a. Will the cycle symbols be painted on the advance stop line junction box on Milford Hill to improve safety for those undertaking active travel as the [Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance](#)?

6b. Are you able to clarify on your policy for advanced stop lines?

6c. As per the above [Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance](#) the approach lanes should now be at least 2.0 m wide to accommodate the cycle design vehicle – can Wiltshire Council please clarify if they will be altering the current approach lanes to provide a sufficient space of 2.0m wide to accommodate the cycle design vehicle.

Response

The council is undertaking an extensive program of relining works in the county, this program includes lining of cycle lane symbols.

The use of Advanced Stop Lines for cyclist are not mandatory. The guidance on the layout of road markings is provided by the Department for Transport in the Traffic Signs Manual and it is not necessary to have a specific policy on their use. Where possible, and considered appropriate, their use at Traffic Signals within Wiltshire is facilitated.

Where the existing facilities are provided these will be maintained within the scope of their current arrangement. Whilst the revised guidance has outlined changes to that previously provided, undertaking alterations without consideration of the implications on all road users is not possible.

If there are specific locations where improvements to the width of the facility is deemed beneficial, these locations should be raised with the Local Footway Highway Improvement Group to prioritise.

Statement

Active Travel Funding

Following the recent active travel fund: final allocations, it appears that Wiltshire council were awarded no monies.

Local Authority	Final allocation phase 1	Final Allocation phase 2 (£)	Final 2021 to 2022 Allocation (£)
Wiltshire UA	227,000	681,000	-

This is an extremely disappointing and dire situation for the residents of many of the towns in Wiltshire who wish to pursue active travel. This is at a time when our residents are facing increased cost for heating, food and travelling. Many motorists are now finding it increasingly difficult to afford to run their motor vehicles and what money they spend on driving could be put to better use for their families. In addition there are major issues with public health in Wiltshire that could be addressed through these active travel measure including obesity, cardiac and mental health.

Yet many families feel they have little choice in how they travel. Many residents feel that buses are too expensive, are infrequent and not reliable.

In terms of cycling it is clear that most residents are too scared to cycle in Wiltshire towns due to the lack of safe segregated cycle ways.

The recent consultation on improvement to the Gyrotory – Exeter Street roundabout area in Salisbury would have brought major benefits for active travel. However, this plan appears to have been shelved and no active benefits will be delivered for those seeking active travel across the city and in particular to the hospital.

Thus far Wiltshire Council has provided very few sustainable active travel choices for residents. The implementation of the “People Friendly Streets” was a major boost for long term active travel in the city. In addition, there was a financial investment in the Brown St and Exeter St Cycle way that again provided a safe segregated route through the city, providing a choice for those wishing to engage in active travel.

However, Wiltshire Council took the decision to remove both “People Friendly Streets” and the Brown St and Exeter St Cycle way (funded by Tranche 1 of the Emergency active travel fund) at additional expense to the taxpayer and to the detriment of the Salisbury residents and commerce. The High Street is a successful example of a long-term sustainable plan to improve active travel and increased income for the commercial sector.

It is ironic that Wiltshire Council’s key aims of their active travel funding were to:

- Implement measures to create an environment safer for both walking and cycling
- Replace public transport journeys with cycling
- Deliver health, environmental and congestion benefits

It is feasible that the previous actions of Wiltshire council in removing People Friendly Streets and the Brown St and Exeter St Cycle way have resulted in the council not receiving funding for Tranche 3 and as such placed themselves in a position of having no delivery plan for active travel.

Question 7 (22-097)

7a. Is Cllr McClelland able to clarify how Wiltshire Council will fund an active travel strategy?

7b. What will be the basis of this active travel strategy and when will it be delivered?

7c. Is Cllr McClelland working with Kate Blackburn the Director of Public Health the head to incorporate active travel into public health policies?

Response

Wiltshire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) will set out the programme of infrastructure improvements and potential funding sources including the Active Travel Fund.

The Trowbridge, Chippenham and Devizes LCWIPs are in the early stages of preparation with stakeholders being consulted about desire lines. A further consultation will take place when draft plans have been prepared, and this is expected to be in the winter.

The Framework Wiltshire LCWIP sets out a timetable for the expected publication of LCWIPs in Wiltshire's other market towns.

The Active Travel Infrastructure Standards and Active Travel Parking Standards will be published alongside the Framework Wiltshire LCWIP.

The role of Active Travel is acknowledged as a cross cutting enabler across many service areas including Public Health.

The Active Travel Strategy covering policies such as behaviour change, travel planning and other proposals to increase cycling and walking will be published as part of the Council fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4). (work is under way – adoption of LTP4 anticipated prior to DfT deadline of March 24).

Statement

Wiltshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

The Wiltshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan(LCWIP) has been discussed on a number of occasions at the Salisbury Cycling Liaison panel and been promised over the last 18 months. However, the cycling liaison meetings have not taken place for some time. As a consequence, due to a lack of communication, we have no idea what is happening with the consultation or publication of the Salisbury Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Question 8 (22-098)

Can Cllr McClelland please clarify when the draft Salisbury Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Salisbury will be available for residents and those who are involved in active travel in the city to comment on?

Response

The Salisbury Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and Framework Wiltshire LCWIP have been approved for public consultation which will

go live shortly. At present the press release is being prepared, the documents are being formatted and final details are being added to the interactive map.

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Agenda Item 11 – Future Chippenham

Question from: Maurice Evans

To: Cllr Richard Clewer - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question 1 (22-099)

You state that the Southern road route is now to cost more than the £75m budgeted for both the North and South Chippenham road development - what is the new estimated total cost?

Response

It is not appropriate to release the Council's estimated cost of the southern road route into public due to the Council's commercial interests.

Question 2 (22-100)

What is the total cost expended by the council so far and therefore at risk?

Response

The total costs incurred to date is circa £11.8m. A significant portion of this has been incurred under the existing GDA. What will be at risk should a revised GDA not be agreed will be subject to negotiations with Homes England.

Question 3 (22-101)

Does the £6m+ monies provided from the HIF need to be repaid if the GDA is aborted?

Response

If the Council is required to repay any HIF claimed funding it will be subject to negotiation with Homes England.

Question 4 (22-102)

What is the estimated value of the public land - mostly farmland - that WC propose to put into the Future Chippenham development?

Response

The value of land is linked to a number of factors which can alter particularly having regard to the nature of authorised planning use for land owned by the Council. At present the land has an agricultural value. Future value will be determined via planning achieved and the infrastructure costs that will be required to bring the land forward for development.

Question 5 (22-103)

What is the legal ownership status of the public 'county farms' and where can I find the title deeds?

Response

Owned by the Council land registry Title Number WT 97164

Question 6 (22-104)

What is the perceived public opinion on your proposed disposal/selling-off of the publicly owned land and will this be subject to proper advertising and prior consultation?

Response

Throughout the project there will be a regular ability for the public to have input into the proposal to ensure that any decision taken is fully informed and based on the best interests of the residents of Wiltshire. If the Council disposes of assets it is also required to achieve best value consideration. This is achieved via appropriate procurement or competitive processes.

Question 7 (22-105)

If the revised GDA is not allocated the originally budgeted £75m - or significantly less, as there is now half the original road and housing proposed - do you intend to proceed with a reduced development?

Response

The Cabinet decision of July 2021 proposed a reduced level of development. The availability of HIF funding via a revised GDA has and is the subject of discussion with Homes England.

Question 8 (22-106)

If the revised GDA and/or the Local Plan Review is unsuccessful will you proceed with so-called cookie-cutter developments on the individual sites in order to try and recoup your financial losses?

Response

The nature and type of development is dependent upon the Local Plan review and statutory planning process. If a revised GDA cannot be agreed this does not mean that a certain type of development would be pursued by the Council and any decisions would be taken as to what is in the best interests of the residents having regard to the various competing needs. The Council cannot comment on the intentions of other landowners in and around Chippenham.

Question 9 (22-107)

Item 9 of your agenda notes that the proposed road development costs exceed the HIF funding and that WC losses will be reduced by other development as it proceeds so as to have no net cost to the council. But will there be an overall public gain and what is the estimated value of CIL funds as a result?

Response

Any financial benefits, including CIL, will depend upon the outcome of the Local Plan review and the extent and nature of development allocated. Having developments which are holistically masterplanned are a core part of the public benefit of the proposal.

Question 10 (22-108)

How in detail have you calculated the requirement for the 4050 houses in your proposals and does this figure take into account the number of houses currently with planning consent but not yet built?

Response

The developable potential of land is calculated based on an evidence led approach to assessing the opportunities and constraints affecting any given piece of land. For example, areas of land which are assessed to be sensitive in ecological, landscape, flooding or archaeology will be excluded from the areas of the overall site that can be developed. This assessment is widely based on the national best practice of employing Environmental Impact Assessment criteria. Once the constrained areas have been excluded, the calculation of how many homes can be accommodated on the remainder is based on a raft of national and local planning policies, design criteria and industry standard densities for the delivery of new homes.

In this case the assessments have concluded that up to 4050 could be accommodated on Council and privately owned land on sites to the south of Chippenham across two Local Plan periods

Question 11 (22-109)

In the Local Plan there appears to be a specific need for affordable and special needs housing in the Chippenham area but there is no clear calculation that has been provided to the public for the substantial amount of speculative housing. Is the speculative housing the only way to fund the affordable numbers? Would you consider proposals to directly fund only the affordable and special housing as an alternative to the Future Chippenham development?

Response

The viability modelling of Future Chippenham programme was based on delivering 40% affordable housing. If a landowner intended to provide more than the planning policy requirement that would be up to them and not something the Council would require.

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Agenda Item 11 – Future Chippenham

Question from: Nick Parry

To: Cllr Richard Clewer - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question 1 (22-110)

Could you please confirm what the current spend has been with your highways consultancy contractor Atkins on the Future Chippenham project to date. Including all work prior to the July 2021 Cabinet meeting where you decided to progress the Southern route only and post this date?

Response

Since 2018/19 circa £9m has been spent on developing the Future Chippenham programme by our contractor Atkins.

Question 2 (22-111)

Please confirm what has been approved and spent on all the surveys and consultation since the July 2021 decision and to whom these payments have been made, this should include counsels fees, all environmental, archaeological, groundwater and of course highways work

Response

As stated above in response to questions 22- 101 the total spend to date is circa £11.8m and that covers items included in the question.

Question 3 (22-112)

Please confirm if these costs involved since the July 2021 decision can be recovered from the HIF grant given that the GDA was signed up to on the plan to provide infrastructure for 7000+ homes and a Northern link road?

Response

The costs that will be met by HIF funding will be dependent upon whether a revised GDA can be agreed with Homes England or negotiations with Homes England if negotiating an exit.

Question 4 (22-113)

Please advise why letters, & email correspondence are still not replied to despite your answers given at the Cabinet meeting of 1st Feb 2022?

Response

If we have not responded to emails and correspondence in a timely manner we apologise. The Council aims where possible to respond to enquiries within 10 working days. If that is not happening and a response is not provided please do not hesitate to escalate the request in the Council so that the relevant Directors can ensure a response is provided. The Future Chippenham team do not have any outstanding correspondence.

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Agenda Item 11 – Future Chippenham

Question from: Clive Blackman

To: Cllr Richard Clewer - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

The report (ref. 1) states that *“the estimated costs of the southern distributor road now exceed the £75 million HIF funding contained in the original GDA”*.

The conclusion of the report states *“The availability period for HIF funding to be defrayed by March 2025 means that procurement of road and associated design and investigatory work needs to be commissioned now so that subject to the Local plan review the Council can proceed with the scheme.”*

Question 1 (22-114)

How can this be, given that the original plan was for both a southern and eastern element to the road, yet now the proposal is only for the southern element?

Response

The lead in for procurement of the road contractor would need to start in July 2022 so that design and construction of the road and therefore spending of the HIF funding is completed within the availability period. The costs of the road exceed the HIF funding but the requirement was to spend the HIF funding within the availability period.

Question 2 (22-115)

What is the current estimated cost?

Response

It is not appropriate to release the estimated costs of the road into the public domain due to the commercial interests of the Council.

Question 3 (22-116)

If a revised GDA cannot be agreed by the end of July 2022, the Council will be exposed to significant abortive work and financial risk. What is the estimated cost of this risk today? Would the Council be required to repay the £6.375 million to Homes England?

Response

The costs that will be met by HIF funding will be dependent upon whether a revised GDA can be agreed with Homes England or negotiations with Homes England if negotiating an exit.

Question 4 (22-117)

If the financial risk were mitigated by reduced development and the disposal of publicly owned assets, what would this mean for Future Chippenham? Would CIL funding be redirected, and otherwise planned benefits suffer?

Response

A commitment has been made that CIL generated from development enabled by Future Chippenham would be reinvested back into Chippenham. Reduced development inevitably means less CIL.

Question 5 (22-118)

Given that progress is “subject to the Local plan review”, what happens if the Local plan review fails? Who determines the Local Plan review? Is this the same parties championing this development?

Response

The Local Plan review is led by the Local Planning Authority.

Future Chippenham is promoting development representing the Council as landowners and is treated the same as any other landowner wishing to promote their site for development.

If the Local Plan does not allocate development on Council owned land promoted by Future Chippenham the programme will not proceed.

The role of the Council as Local Planning Authority and the quite legitimate considerations of the council as landowners and prospective planning applicant should not be conflated. The Master-planning of the Future Chippenham project has been progressed in its role as landowner in a scrupulously fair way and follows the nationally accepted best practice. No decisions have been taken on whether the site will be chosen as part of the Local Plan Review and certainly no planning applications have been submitted

The Local Plan review is carried out in public, with full opportunities for all parties to submit representations and attend hearing sessions. It is chaired by one or more

independent planning inspectors who are appointed and work for the Secretary of State.

Question 6 (22-119)

The report (ref. 1) identifies a requirement for up to 4,050 homes. How has this number been calculated? Does this number include the houses which have already received consent, but have not yet been built?

Response

The developable potential of land is calculated based on an evidence led approach to assessing the opportunities and constraints affecting any given piece of land. For example, areas of land which are assessed to be sensitive in ecological, landscape, flooding or archaeology will be excluded from the areas of the overall site that can be developed. This assessment is widely based on the national best practice of employing Environmental Impact Assessment criteria. Once the constrained areas have been excluded, the calculation of how many homes can be accommodated on the remainder is based on a raft of national and local planning policies, design criteria and industry standard densities for the delivery of new homes.

In this case the assessments have concluded that up to 4050 could be accommodated on Council and privately owned land on sites to the south of Chippenham across two Local Plan periods

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

12 July 2022

Agenda Item 11 – Future Chippenham

Question from: Brian Miller

To: Cllr Richard Clewer - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question 1 (22-120)

As concerned local residents we would like clarity on the total amount of money spent so far on surveys, presentations (some prepared by Atkins) and consultations funded by Wiltshire council on the proposed development to the south of Chippenham.

Response

The total spend to date on Future Chippenham programme is circa £11.8m as stated in response to question 22 – 101.

Question 2 (22-121)

Also how much has been spent in anticipation of the development of 4200 houses and a new distributor road by Wiltshire council on land, water, geology and eco systems in 2022.

Response

£1.3m has been spent on land acquisition of which £750k can be recoverable and nothing has been spent on the other systems listed.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

12 July 2022

Agenda Item 11 – Future Chippenham

Question from: Richard Curr

To: Cllr Richard Clewer - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question 1 (22-122)

In view of the facts:

- a. Over 6000 objections against the overall scheme.
- b. An additional 4,050 homes are not required in the Chippenham HMA.
- c. The cost of the southern road would appear to be greater than the original HIF bid for the original scheme and is unaffordable (adding £18,500 to the cost of each property).
- d. Two council farms would be lost when the need for local food production is required. Additionally at least part of a private owned farm would be lost.
- e. The original scheme devised on the perceived need in Jane Scott's time has been superseded but the Council have persisted in pursuing it regardless of cost.
- f. The southern distributor road will not solve any of the existing traffic problems.

Response

Not a question

Statement

Should Wiltshire Council now exit the existing GDA and revisit the overall plan for the Town in line with current requirements and costs to utilise the existing road infrastructure (A350) where major developments are already built or in progress.

Question 2 (22-123)

Why is the Council's Advice not being made public.

Response

The Counsel's advice provides advice to the Council as to the prospects and grounds for negotiation should the Council decide that it is obliged to negotiate an exit from the GDA.

Legal advice is subject to legal professional privilege whereby a client can seek legal advice to be able to be informed as to options. The Courts have recognised the importance of this privilege to ensure smooth administration of business. This important principle is reflected in our constitution as a basis for information to be exempt from publication.

It would be inappropriate for such advice to be published because it is likely to weaken the Council's negotiating position.

Question 3 (22-124)

What is the amount of the "significant cost to the Council" mentioned in the report by Mr Hendy (para 9 and para 3).

Response

The costs of the next stage of the programme will be several million pounds depending on the confirmed costs from consultants. Such costs would have been met under the GDA if a revised GDA could be agreed.

Question 4 (22-125)

Who forms the "Partnership" that made the additional holding submission in May 2022 when the Future Chippenham Project Team made the previous submission? Does this mean that the Future Chippenham Project Team has now ceased to exist as the responsible body for the Future Chippenham Programme?

Response

The partnership is Future Chippenham and the landowners in the southern section where agreement had been reached. It is not a formal legal partnership

Future Chippenham Team has had positive discussions with all relevant landowners and agreement reached to pursue a partnership working approach to submission of representations to the local plan review process underscored by a signed Statement of Common Ground. This is necessary and required by national planning policy in order for the Future Chippenham Team to be able to demonstrate to the Local Planning Authority that a strategic master plan approach delivering sustainable development to Chippenham is possible and that the risk of piecemeal development has been overcome.

Question 5 (22-126)

Will the result of the negotiations be publicised on the Council Website News Page as soon as they are completed by the end of July 2022?

Response

The result of negotiations will be reported back to Cabinet as soon as possible.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

12 July 2022

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors

Question from: Dr Tony Wright

To: Cllr Richard Clewer - Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Change, MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question 1 (22-127)

Your records show that the proposed road development costs exceed the HIF funding and that WC losses will be reduced by other development as it proceeds, so as to have no net cost to the council. But as a consequence, will there be any overall public gain?

Response

This statement refers to the recovery strategy which is part of the HIF agreement. If the proposed Future Chippenham programme does not proceed as HIF funding is withdrawn then there will be different model to mitigate the Council's costs.

Question 2 (22-128)

What is the estimated value of CIL funds as a result?

Response

The value of CIL will be determined by the Local plan review allocating potential development and the development that subsequently comes forward and as such it is difficult to quantify the CIL that will be generated at this time.

Question 3 (22-129)

How have you calculated the requirement for 4050 additional houses in your proposal?

Response

The developable potential of land is calculated based on an evidence led approach to assessing the opportunities and constraints affecting any given piece of land. For example, areas of land which are assessed to be sensitive in ecological, landscape, flooding or archaeology will be excluded from the areas of the overall site that can be developed. This assessment is widely based on the national best practice of

employing Environmental Impact Assessment criteria. Once the constrained areas have been excluded, the calculation of how many homes can be accommodated on the remainder is based on a raft of national and local planning policies, design criteria and industry standard densities for the delivery of new homes.

In this case the assessments have concluded that up to 4050 could be accommodated on Council and privately owned land on sites to the south of Chippenham across two Local Plan periods