

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

Meeting: Council
Place: Online Meeting
Date: Tuesday 23 February 2021
Time: 10.30 am

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 15 February 2021. 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

- 6 **Public Participation (Pages 3 - 16)**
- Public questions with responses
- 8 **Wiltshire Council's Financial Plan Update 2021/22, Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 and Capital Programme and Strategy (Pages 17 - 20)**
- Public Questions with responses
- 12 **Wiltshire Council's Response to the Climate Emergency- Update Report (Pages 21 - 24)**
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- 14 **Appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel for Wiltshire (Pages 25 - 26)**
- IRP supplementary recommendations

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 22 February 2021 and 1 March 2021

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Item 6 – Public Participation

From Chris Caswill

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

Question (P21-03)

In the Local Plan Site Selection Report for Chippenham, seven areas are identified on the map that follows p.45 of the Report. The Report appears not to record the acreage of these areas. This is important information, needed when considering the questions raised in the Report. Could you please provide the acreage of each of the seven areas in turn?

Response

Site 1: 294.54 Hectares (727.824 Acres)

Site 2: 347.35 Hectares (858.32 Acres)

Site 3: 36.477 Hectares (87.665 Acres)

Site 4: 4.5404 Hectares (11.244 Acres)

Site 5: 147.83 Hectares (365.295 Acres)

Site 6: 71.2924 Hectares (176.167 Acres)

Site 7: 44.1988 Hectares (109.2176 Acres)

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Item 6 – Public Participation

From Steve Bucknell

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing and Communities

Question (P21-05)

I understand from the Salisbury Journal that the Liberal Democrats and Labour have been delivering leaflets during lockdown which I find extremely concerning given the pressure that there has been on our hospitals recently. I do not see how the delivery of political literature this far out from an election could be seen as essential work. Can you please confirm the council's position with regard to party political leafleting during lockdown

Response

Guidance on leafleting during the lockdown is a matter for the Government. The government has recently published a delivery plan which addresses campaigning: [May 2021 polls delivery plan - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92422/may_2021_polls_delivery_plan.pdf)

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Item 6 – Public Participation

From Rich Rogers

To Councillor Simon Jacobs, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection

Question (P21-06)

How have learning disabilities services been supporting people if respite and day centres have been closed during the pandemic?

Response

The council operates 3 building based respite units for people with a learning disability and 5 day centres.

At the start of the pandemic these services had to close in accordance with government guidance. We did however, maintain one of the building based respite units in order to support people who were in crisis and for those who we supported to be discharged from the psychiatric hospital in Salisbury, Fountain Way's.

During this period the teams who would ordinarily work in the day centres and respite units worked in the community supporting individuals and their families.

As the initial lockdown eased and further public health guidance was received, we were able to reopen the day centres (although numbers of people who can attend at any one time is greatly reduced in accordance with infection control guidance and to ensure that we are able to support our service users to socially distance).

Our three respite units have also now reopened, again, we are following strict public health guideline and can only offer this service currently to a small number of people at anyone time.

It should be noted that the pandemic the teams have continued to work with people who would normally access our services in their own homes or in the local community when it is safe to do so. As a result of this change in practice across the teams we are building on this and are developing a new exciting programme of work, known as the 'Enablement and Outreach Service' which will be designed to support people to access their local community and develop their skills.

There are also approximately commissioned 22 day services operating although some are providing virtual support. The Council has provided funding to support

those services with infection prevention and control and is coordinating rapid flow testing so that day services can improve their operation.

Item 6 – Public Participation

From Jeremy Nettle

To Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills

Question (P21-07)

I am a Governor of a local Primary school in Salisbury and would like to ask the following question:

How is Wiltshire Council supporting families whose children do not have access to computers/digital devices whilst schools are closed? What about internet access – what happens if they don't have broadband in their home? Is there a low cost data option plan that this Council can recommend?

Response

Verbal Response

There are two schemes Wiltshire Council has supported in 2021 to support families who do not have access to computers/digital devices:

1. The DfE has rolled out an allocation of digital devices to every school based on a few factors including the number of children eligible for free school meals on roll. Wiltshire Council organised for schools to be able to order direct from the DfE and this was fully funded by the DfE. These devices have now arrived in schools and being distributed to children.
2. Wiltshire Council invested £1.1M across the County to reach the children most in need and being digitally disadvantaged in the current climate. The full details of the grant funding were published to all schools on 11 January on our Right Choice platform and appeared in the COVID-19 Schools Update from Helean on 11 January. Each school received a grant allocation as soon as they provided the necessary documentation to confirm the purchase. Here's the link for media release [Wiltshire Council to spend £1.1m on digital devices so struggling families can access remote education - Wiltshire Council](#).

With regards limited internet access and no home broadband. The DfE has linked up with 7 of the major mobile phone companies across the country. Schools can register the details of the families with the DfE, through the ordering portal, that are struggling with the cost of mobile data or home internet connections. The mobile phone companies will increase the data limits for a primary member of the family without charge. Full details are on this link. get-help-with-tech.education.gov.uk/internet-access.

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Item 6 – Public Participation

From Elizabeth Threlfall

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

Question (P21-09)

How has Wiltshire Council's library service adapted over the past year to covid and what has been done to support people who need to use the libraries to access computers to be able to apply for benefits?

Response

We quickly developed new ways of operating to ensure access to vital services. We implemented socially distanced browsing, order and collect from entrances during lockdowns, a non-contact home delivery service for the most vulnerable and bookable computers to support those without access to the internet.

We've worked with Citizen's Advice Wiltshire and Job Centre Plus, to promote public computer access to those most in need. We've supported over 6,500 computer sessions since August 2020; included residents wanting to print school meal vouchers.

We increased our digital offer, with over 2,000 new eBooks, eAudio and eMagazines. We launched a YouTube channel to complement our Facebook pages, ensuring those who were socially isolated, home schooling or struggling with mental health issues have access to activities and reading material. We are running online rhymetimes, author talks and reading groups. These have received over 170,000 views.

2,257 residents have become library members during the pandemic by joining online.

We are continuing to support our communities and innovate to ensure they can access vital services and information. We'll soon be launching support to help residents complete the census online.

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Item 6 – Public Participation

From Aaron Donovan

To Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Schools

Question (P21-10)

I understand that during the Christmas holidays Wiltshire Council organised a scheme to continue to provide Free School Meals for families who need it. Please can you explain how the scheme worked and confirm if it has continued during the lockdown? How many families have benefited from the scheme?

Response

During the school holidays (Winter break 2-weeks, February half term 1-week) Wiltshire Council provided £15 per child per week to schools to fund lunch provision. The children that were eligible for the funding were already in receipt of free school meal funding during term time, so we continued to provide this funding over the holidays to make sure they didn't miss out. There was a similar arrangement in place across Early Years settings as well. This would be in the form of either: supermarket vouchers, local community store vouchers, food parcels or bank transfers in some cases.

Schools have remained fully funded throughout the lockdown period, so have the finances to provide food provision during term time. There is a national voucher scheme that started during January for schools, provided and funded by the DfE, to provide lunches for Free School Meals eligible children whether they are attending school or not due to current lockdown restrictions. This is one of the solutions schools have used to continue providing for these children, as well as in-house catering teams providing hot lunches on site or as takeaways and weekly food parcels.

Wiltshire Council will provide funding to schools in a similar way for the Easter school holiday and there will be further support available over the summer for children eligible for free school meals.

Across our Early Years settings and Education sites over 10,000 children have benefited from these arrangements, representing over 6,500 families.

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Item 6 – Public Participation

From Caroline Thomas

**To Councillor Ian Blair-Pilling, Cabinet Member for ICT, Digitalisation,
Operational Assets, Leisure and Libraries**

Question (P21-11)

Across the UK and in Wiltshire the Coronavirus Pandemic has highlighted health inequalities and the importance of physical activity. What are Wiltshire's plans to help our residents be more active?

Response

I absolutely agree physical activity is a key part of our work to build stronger communities in Wiltshire. Shockingly over 60% of adults in Wiltshire are either overweight or obese. By providing the right services we can help our residents live active lives supporting them to be a healthy weight. That is why we continue to invest in our leisure facilities; Calne, Cricklade and Clarendon Sports Centre in Trowbridge were all refurbished in 2020. We can't wait to be able to open them when the government permits. Melksham Campus construction is underway and will offer state of the art new facilities. We are also bringing our 10 outsourced leisure sites in house from October 2021 giving us more flexibility in how we focus on reaching the most in need of our support to be active.

To ensure we know which of our services are having the greater impact on getting our residents physically active we will be undertaking an impact review of all our leisure and physical activity services. We hope the findings from this will enable us to target our resources and activities to have the biggest impact. I look forward to sharing with you our findings and our plans.

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Wiltshire Council

Full Council

23 February 2021

Item 8 – Wiltshire Council Financial Plan

From Andy Oliver

To Councillor Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment and Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council

Question (P21-04)

The ongoing challenges to our communities in a post COVID world are largely unknown even once the vaccination roll-out is complete. How can I be certain services can continue to be funded and operate and residents be properly supported?

Response

The Council have set a balanced budget for 2021/22 based on the known estimates and assumptions at this point in time.

The Council have a track record of managing its financial position during the year. Whilst we have acknowledged the challenges and demands are uncertain, we have also set aside funding in a latent demand reserve to meet the potential for increased demand in services over and above the budget estimates, should that need arise next financial year.

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Wiltshire Council

Full Council

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Item 8 – Wiltshire Council Financial Plan

From Ian James

To Councillor Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment and Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council

Question 1 (P21-12)

On 17th February the Prime Minister stated that "Protecting vulnerable children has to be a Conservative Government's priority during COVID."

In the Gazette & Herald it was stated that £5.9m had been withdrawn from the Social Care fund for vulnerable children, will the Cabinet member return that £5.9m to that budget head to allow vulnerable children to be cared for?

Response:

We do not recognise the £5.9m reduction in Social Care for vulnerable children, in fact the budget proposals for 2021/22 will see Children's Services receiving an increase in funding of £8.3m on the previous financial year; an uplift of 11%.

Question 2 (P21-13)

As I am sure you know that the City of Bristol sank £60m of Council funds into Bristol Energy, and Croydon Council purchased a property portfolio which has cost the Council in excess of £ Both these Councils are near to bankruptcy.

Future Chippenham has stated that costs for the road infrastructure for the distributor road around Chippenham have risen to £106m a rise in estimated costs of 25% in 12 months since the HIF bid was announced to the public. Failure to complete the road by 2026 will mean the Government will claw back money from the grant of £75m. As with any large infrastructure project these sums will keep rising. As the cabinet knows full well this is a high risk project, at what stage does the Council walk away. Is it when costs reach £150 or £175m?

Response

The road infrastructure will be a significant capital investment by the Council and, subject to consultation and the local plan, should work progress the timing and agreement with the Government will see the Council utilise the £75m in the early stages of the proposed works to part fund the cost of the road, with additional costs recovered from development as it proceeds.

Whilst the Council are cognisant of the risks involved with any large scale investment, the grant determination agreement that was agreed between

Government and the Council was constructed to mitigate the financial risks to the Council around various elements including the overall cost, the timing and factors that are outside of the Councils control in relation to the management of the project.

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

23 February 2021

Agenda Item 12 – Update on Council’s Response to the Climate Emergency

Questions from Sue Deedigan

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities

Question 1 (P21-01)

- a) Noting the recommendations from the Climate Change Committee Sixth Carbon report on Local Authorities please can you let me know how the Net Zero or Climate Change Action plan will align with key local strategies, for example, the Wiltshire Local Plan. I note from the WC Interim Sustainability Appraisal that there are **79** major and moderate (significant) adverse effects on sites in Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge which is very concerning and what are WC plans to address the results of this appraisal in order to make the transition to net zero by 2030 and "embed climate considerations in decision making". (Appendix 1, 4.1 Principles, 23)

Response

The Council’s emerging Local Plan and Climate Strategy are being prepared with the same objective, namely to reduce carbon and tackle climate change.

The process of preparing the Local Plan is governed by legislation and national planning policy. The policies and proposals within the emerging Plan will be guided by evidence and the outcome of an iterative process of detailed assessments including the Sustainability Appraisal. At the examination stage, the Local Plan will be tested for legal compliance and therein section 19 (1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 (as amended) will be critical. Section 19 (1A) states:

- *Development plan documents must (taken as a whole) include policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.*

It therefore follows that if the Local Plan is ultimately found to be legally compliant and sound the Council must have the evidence to demonstrate that it has met its legal obligation to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

- b) Homes currently make up 26% of carbon emissions (Appendix 1, 5.1 where are we now?)
Can WC advise how they planning on monitoring and reporting on progress on reducing emissions in regards to our current homes and retrofitting them so they are all net zero carbon. Also how will they ensure all new developments are built to a zero carbon standard?

Response:

The council will be tracking the county's annual emissions by sector using the local authority carbon emissions data and EPC ratings for homes which are published every year.

The council is investing £50m over the next 10 years to retrofit all council homes in the county, starting with 100 of our least efficient properties this year. This will stimulate the local retrofit supply chain and contribute to a green recovery. Owner-occupiers and landlords are able to access government support for improving their homes through the Green Homes Grant.

We are in the process for developing policies for the Local Plan Review, and as part of this will need to consider matters such as moving towards zero carbon homes. This will be informed by the outcome of the current consultation, which closes on 9 March 2021. One of the consultation documents, which can be viewed via this [link](#), includes questions about sustainable design and construction.

Question 2 (P21-02)

What are WC plans to conduct policy and service reviews to align policy, spending and functions with Net Zero? Please can WC share the timescale in relation to this.
(Appendix 1, 136 Governance page 36)

Response:

Council approved a Climate Emergency addendum to the Business Plan in July 2020 in recognition of the need to embed its work to tackle climate change in this key document. Progress updates are reported to Council every six months.

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

23 February 2021

Item 12 – Update on Council’s Response to Climate Emergency

From Mary Webb

**To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing and Communities
Question**

(P21-08)

As a resident of Salisbury please could you answer my question:

I understand from listening to BBC Wiltshire that Wiltshire Council has reduced its carbon emissions by 80% since 2014. How much taxpayer money has been involved in this? How will you look to cut the last 20% of your emissions and on what timescale?

Response

The measures that the council has taken to reduce its carbon footprint through energy efficiency and renewable energy installations have been carried out on an invest-to-save basis, meaning that they have saved money for taxpayers. The payback time for measures such as LED lighting replacements is often as little as two years. Where appropriate, we have accessed 0% loans from Salix finance, for example for the £12m LED streetlight replacement programme. The council’s decision to switch to a green electricity tariff has come at a premium of £23k, adding 0.5% to our typical annual electricity bill of £4.6m.

The council will be preparing a Carbon Management Plan during 2021 to develop a roadmap to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 for all scope 1 & 2 emissions, as set out in Appendix 1 of this agenda item.

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Wiltshire Council

Council

23 February 2021

Subject: Appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)

Cabinet Member: Cllr Richard Clewer- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts and Tourism, Housing and Communities.
Member

Key Decision: Non-Key

Executive Summary

This report supplements the [report](#) to Council published on 15 February which recommended two appointments to the IRP. The report had also included a delegation to the Director of Legal and Governance, in consultation with Group Leaders (or their nominated representative), to undertake a selection process for the final member of the Panel, as a previous candidate had to withdraw their application.

Since the date the report was published, representatives from the political groups and the Director of Legal and Governance have interviewed an additional applicant for the role and are now able recommend a final appointment (Mr Keith Broughton) to Council, as detailed below.

It is recommended a delegation to the Director remains to ensure that, should any vacancies arise during the course of the allowances review, and there is not a Council meeting within sufficient timescales, Panel appointments can be made to ensure the review can continue to make recommendations for the new council.

Keith Broughton

Keith lives in Dorset, close to the Wiltshire border and has retired from a career in Human Resources, specialising in remuneration and benefits. Throughout Keith's career he has held senior positions in a number of companies and international consultancies. Since his retirement, Keith has volunteered for Citizens Advice, the National Trust and has been involved in reviewing members allowances since 2014 when he joined as a panel member for various authorities in Dorset.

Proposal(s)

That Council:

a) Notes the process undertaken to recruit members to an Independent Remuneration Panel and approves the appointment of:

John Quinton – Panel Chairman
Bernadette Fitzmaurice – Panel Member
Keith Broughton – Panel Member

b) Delegates authority to the Director of Legal and Governance, in consultation with Group Leaders (or their nominated representative), to undertake the selection process and appointment of subsequent Panel members, should any vacancies arise during the course of a review.

c) Notes that Panel members are appointed for a 4-year term.

Reason for Proposal(s)

To ensure an Independent Remuneration Panel can be convened and undertake research in advance of the new council term.

Lead Director – Ian Gibbons – Director of Legal and Governance, and Monitoring Officer.

Report Author: Libby Johnstone (Democracy Manager)

18.02.21