

**Wiltshire Council****Full Council****21 February 2017**

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**Councillors' Questions****From Councillor Terry Chivers, Melksham Without North Division****To Councillor Stuart Wheeler, Cabinet Member for Hubs, Heritage and Arts,  
Governance and Support Service****Question Ref 16-48**

It is alleged that 61 major Councils have no policy for prosecuting the small number of fraudsters who abuse the disabled blue badge scheme.

Is Wiltshire Council one of the 61 Councils, and if not how many people have been prosecuting in the last 12 months for blue badge fraud.

**Response**

Yes. As part of the Blue Badge application process, all customers are advised of the responsibilities of the Badge holder and the consequences of misuse or fraud. Customers are also required to confirm a declaration that any information they have provided as part of the application is true and accurate

The Corporate Investigation Team works collaboratively with the Blue Badge Team to deal with referrals for cases of possible misuse or fraud.

26 cases of Blue Badge misuse were referred to the Investigation team in 2014/15, 46 in 2015/16 and a further 20 from April to December in this financial year. The majority were referred by members of the public. Of the cases referred over 62% of the cases resulted in further action being taken following investigation, either by way of advice about the correct use of the scheme by letter or a discussion by interview. Latterly the team has also used an educational video produced by Brighton and Hove to deliver the important message about the correct use of Blue Badges. Wiltshire Council successfully prosecuted a Salisbury man in 2014/15 who had altered and used a Blue Badge belonging to his deceased father in law.

The Corporate Investigation Team, Parking Services and Customer Services have been working corroboratively to improve processes and procedures to prevent, detect and deter Blue Badge fraud. Since the commencement of the Disabled Persons' Parking Badges Act 2013, Enforcement Officers are able to inspect and retain a badge without police presence if they have reasonable grounds for believing that the badge:

- (a) Is a fake
- (b) Has already been cancelled e.g. because it was reported lost or stolen
- (c) Should have been returned to the issuing authority (e.g. because it has expired, the holder has died, the holder is no longer disabled, a replacement has been issued, the badge has become damaged/faded, the authority has written to the holder requesting return of the badge either following a relevant conviction for misuse or because it was obtained by false representation), or
- (d) Was being misused (including by someone other than the holder when the genuine holder is not involved in the journey).

### **Using the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) to counter Blue Badge Fraud**

In the 2014/15 NFI exercise there were 694 matches in total which were all sifted and completed by the Blue badge (BB) team. They found **334 errors** 61% of the recommended matches or 48% of all the matches. It's an exercise worth doing. The annual value of a Blue Badge could be conservatively be estimated to be worth between £1.80 and £12.60 week (average £7.20 over 40 weeks = £288 pa) to a customer. The badges which have been cancelled / withdrawn represent a possible additional income of £96,192.

In this year's NFI, BB data has been uploaded for the NFI directly by the BB software providers BBIS. A meeting took place with the BB administration managers and the Head of Customer Services to discuss the Fraud Review and NFI plan specific to their team. Following on from this meeting, Focus on Fraud training sessions have been provided to the BB team.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**Question from Councillor Bridget Wayman, Nadder and East Knoyle Division**

**To Councillor Jonathon Seed, Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding**

**Question Ref 17-07**

Would the Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding explain to Council whether there has been any increase in usage of the library and leisure services in the South West Community area since the Nadder Centre for Health & Wellbeing opened in Tisbury

**Response**

Tisbury Leisure Centre started the financial year with 114 fitness members. The Nadder Centre now has 376 fitness leisure members.

The new sports hall has doubled the activities usage compared to this time last year and is used by Tisbury Primary School and Chilmark Primary School in addition to a range of badminton, indoor football and other sports and activities. The Friday Roller Disco session has seen a major increase in participation since the beginning of January, this session currently averages 70-80 participants whereas at the end of last year the average was sitting between 30-40 participants.

Additionally the Nadder Centre has already leased out 2 of the The Enterprise Network's business start up units along with 2 business that have taken up the Co Working Option within the Enterprise Centre. Community Area Board meetings have been held there, and on 10th November it was the venue for the Wiltshire Assembly which focussed on delivering housing provision in Wiltshire. The Nadder Centre is also home to the Tisbury Pre-school, Spurgeons Childrens Centre and the Tisbury Arts Group that in January presented their pantomime Robin Hood & the Babes in the Wood. Further to this, Moviola is now operating the monthly film night at the Nadder Centre, the first showing was completed in January where the event had approximately 35 people attend, with second film night on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February.

There are three libraries in the South West Community Area, Wilton, Mere and new Tisbury library, located in the Nadder Health and Well Being Centre. The combined figures for the Community Area show that overall

- Library issues are up 8.%

- Visitors are up 30.0%
- Computer use is up 8.0%
- New members are up 158%

This is largely due to the impact of the new Tisbury library in the Nadder Centre which is proving very successful and for which

- Issues are up 64%
- Visitors are up 249%
- Computer use is up 72%
- New members are up 2266%

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Anna Cuthbert, Bromham, Rowde and Potterne Division**

**To Councillor Jonathon Seed, Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding**

**Question Ref 17-08**

Could the Cabinet Member for Housing explain to Council whether any improvements have been made in arrangements for the homeless people of Wiltshire in recent months and in particular during the long spell of very cold weather in mid to late January

**Response**

As cabinet member with responsibilities for Housing, I have this year taken a significant interest in Rough Sleeping across Wiltshire and have ensured that we have focused our attentions on providing increased support and prioritised this area of work in Housing. I have been working very closely with the Housing Options Team who are leading on the work associated with rough sleepers but to make any solutions sustainable and effective, they have established strong partnership working with third sector agencies and volunteers. Over the last year, I have attended a number of operational rough sleeping group meetings, attended homeless drop in sessions and spent a few evenings walking about the streets, which has enabled me to talk to many of our rough sleepers to really understand their needs and concerns. Because of this work the team have:

- Cemented the joint working partnership with regular operational meetings of those involved in supporting this client group. Multi agency meetings take place every 6-8 weeks to share intelligence and strategies to ensure a consistent approach is applied to the issue of rough sleepers. These meetings are attended by the Council's Options Team, Turning Point substance Misuse Service, representatives of the main 4 drop in services operated in the voluntary sector, Probation, the Police, Combat Stress and mental health support workers amongst others and chaired independently by Roanne Wootton from Julian House in Bath. This provides a forum to share best practice and develop holistic plans to meet the needs of those identified.
- Recruited 2 Assertive Outreach Workers to be able to respond to reports of rough sleepers across the County. We recognise that this client group is often wary of officials and are hard to reach. By going out on to the streets to engage directly with them, we are building trust and greater networking. This

has proved very effective to date, helping 4 rough sleepers into sustainable housing solutions since they took up posts in November 2016.

- Established a Reconnection Procedure that seeks to identify those rough sleepers who have no local connection to Wiltshire and facilitate a planned pathway for them back to an area where they can access services. We have achieved that in 3 cases since late Autumn. Again, this policy was formulated through consultation and support from partner agencies to ensure a joined up and consistent message is given to those seeking help in Wiltshire.
- Triggered the Council's Severe Weather Provisions on 2 occasions in 2017 to offer accommodation and support during the coldest periods of the winter months. Working in partnership with Alabare in Salisbury and Unity House in Chippenham, we have ensured that those without accommodation during these periods have the opportunity to take up shelter and use that time to engage with other services to look at longer term solutions. Not all rough sleepers take up the offer but it is available to all.
- Following talks with the rough sleepers and staff from the drop in sessions I was asked if drop in sessions could be organised for rough sleepers where they can see a number of agencies in one place to assist them in addressing their issues. Along with Cllr Wickham we have introduced a rotating drop in service run by professionals across the 4 main drop in centres (Doorway in Chippenham, Breakthrough in Trowbridge, Open Door in Devizes and Alabare in Salisbury) to engage with individuals attending the drop ins to help them address some of the issues that they face. These drop ins are supported by Housing Options, Adult Social Care, Housing Benefit, Turning Point, Probation and Combat Stress and allow direct discussions to take place where individuals feel more open to engaging.
- Offered extensions to Supporting People Funding in exceptional circumstances to those individuals who are prepared to engage with a package of measures that will get them off the streets and addresses the issues that led to them being homeless. This allows them to enter supported housing and gives them an opportunity to get back on their feet. There are tough person centred requirements to engage as part of this extension but those genuinely looking to change their lives are able to have a hand up. We have offered this to 3 individuals in the last few months.
- In November, we undertook an estimate of the numbers of those sleeping rough in the County. This was working in partnership with other agencies to get as realistic a picture of the extend of rough sleeping. In addition to working with the estimated figures provided by partners, teams from Housing Options also did a hot spot count to support the final figure which I assisted with and covered the Devizes area. Independently verified by Homeless Link, we are pleased that the figure reported back to DCLG in November was an improving picture, down from 23 last year to 18 this year. This bucks the national trend which has seen a 16% increase of rough sleeping across England.

- In December, working with Swindon, BANES and Julian House, Wiltshire Council with my support submitted a joint bid for additional funding to again support rough sleeper initiatives through the DCLG's Homeless Prevention Programme. We were very proud to confirm that the bid was successful and we have been awarded £259,000 over the next 3 years between the Authorities. The aim of the new initiatives is to work with those who attend the drop ins who are not currently sleeping rough – to ensure that they do not return to a street based culture and to support them to sustain their existing tenancies by understanding why they still attend the drop ins. The aim will be to promote and support these clients into local employment and education opportunities and support and sustain their attendance at these. Moving these clients away from drop ins also means that the centre staff can focus very much on those who are the most vulnerable and target their resources effectively. The funding will also be used to deliver a "homelessness aware" programme in 21 schools across the 3 areas to young people to explain the importance of sustaining housing and being proactive at dealing with issues.
- Four members of the Housing Options Team, including myself are taking part in the National Big Sleep Out which takes place across the Country to raise money for Rough Sleeper initiatives. They will be sleeping out at Salisbury Cathedral on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 and are currently raising sponsorship money to support Alabare Place, a partner agency in the work that they do to support the Council. Anyone able to sponsor the team should contact Sam Brand, the Homelessness Advice & Prevention Manager, and no contribution can be too small. It will all go to support the initiatives and the team wanted to show their commitment and support to the work that they do and raise awareness of the issues that the street homeless face.

We all recognise that dealing with the issue of rough sleepers requires a process rather than a single conversation but are confident that we have taken a very joined up and multi agency approach to the issue of rough sleeping across Wiltshire. With rough sleeping nationally on the increase, we have put in place measures that give real opportunities for those willing to engage to turn their life around. We are aware, however, that some are not yet ready for this but will continue to work to build communications with them until they are.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Sheila Parker, Box and Colerne Division**

**To Councillor Jerry Wickham, Cabinet Member for Health (including Public Health) and Adult Social Care**

**Question Ref 17-09**

I am aware that a Local Government Association Peer Review of Adult Social Services took place between 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and this focussed on the Council's approach to commissioning of services. I understand that this review was a well balanced assessment with very many positive findings.

- a) Could you advise on the main findings of this review?
- b) What will be the Council's approach to addressing these findings?

**Response**

a) Although the final report is yet to be received, the initial feedback from the Peer Review Team at the end of the week was extremely positive. The team highlighted a number of key strengths about our approach to commissioning services with better outcomes for individuals these included:

- Strong political and corporate leadership.
- An openness to innovate and improve.
- A motivated workforce eager to implement new ways of working which result in improved outcomes for individuals.
- Improving relationships with all partners including colleagues in the CCG, third sector and provider community .
- The potential of the Council's community focussed approach through area boards and an asset based model that promotes independence.

The team also recorded a number of observations that the management team might wish to considered for further action, these included:

- Further promotion of the corporate vision and defining the social care ambition with it.
- Explain to staff the integration intentions that are being discussed with health colleagues.
- Continue to improve the sharing of data across health and social care for the benefit of individuals

- Consider refreshing the adult social care strategies, in particular the development of customer access and digital communications.
- Work with all organisations in the health and care sector to develop a workforce strategy and training plan.

b) When the final report is received the details behind the above headlines will be considered and where appropriate, a plan produced which will detail actions that need to be taken to address the observations made by the review team. This plan will be monitored by me at my regular meeting with the management team.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Peter Hutton, Chippenham Cepen Park and Derriads Division  
To Councillor Jerry Wickham, Cabinet Member for Health (including Public  
Health) and Adult Social Care**

**Question Ref 17-10**

I am aware that Wiltshire Council has exercised its powers under Section 59 of Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and has made a Public Spaces Protection Order ("PSPO") in relation to the parts of the Trowbridge.

I understand that Wiltshire Council, as the authorising authority, was responding to a request from Trowbridge Town Council and Wiltshire Police, each of whom had received significant complaints from the public. I am advised that the new order commenced on 23 January 2017, but there was an existing order known as a Designated Public Places Order had been in place for a number of years.

- a) Could the differences between the two orders be explained and clarity provided as to why the new order was required?
- b) Are there any plans to extend this new legislation to other towns in Wiltshire?

**Response**

- a) The Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) legislation has been replaced and all current orders will expire in October 2017, unless they are replaced with a Public Space Protection Order. The DPPO requires the enforcing officer to have grounds to believe that the consumption of alcohol will lead to crime or disorder; the offence occurs when a person is asked to stop drinking and they do not. The PSPO makes it an offence to consume alcohol at any time within the area.

A PSPO also allows for behaviours aside from the consumption of alcohol to be tackled. For example the Trowbridge PSPO also covers defecating and urinating in public. The PSPO power aims to be flexible and responsive to local need.

A PSPO order lasts for 3 years and must be renewed to continue after this period. A DPPO previously ran until revoked.

The Trowbridge PSPO replaced the former DPPO and went live on 23rd January 2017, following 91 complaints over a 3 month period to Wiltshire

Police. It was developed in partnership with Trowbridge Town Council, Wiltshire Police and Wiltshire Council. The process included evidenced based decision making on the order contents and boundaries and, consultation with the public/Area Board which led to changes to both boundaries and conditions.

b) Wiltshire currently has eight DPPOs in place; the current position in relation to potential extension of the legislation is captured below:

- **Trowbridge** – now been replaced by a PSPO and went live on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017.
- **Salisbury** – City Council and Area Board mandated a working group to work towards the enactment of a PSPO (to be delivered - autumn 2017).
- **Chippenham** – initial meeting group held and decision made to await the Joint Strategic Assessment meeting (evening of 6/2/17).

We have received alcohol related crime and ASB data for the DPPO areas below. A meeting is planned (24<sup>th</sup> February) with the Police to agree timetable to review;

- Warminster
- Devizes
- Malmesbury
- Calne
- Durrington

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Alan MacRae, Corsham Pickwick Division**

**To Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet member for Children's services**

**Question Ref 17-11**

At last year's budget meeting a great deal was heard about how the removal of Wiltshire Council grant to the Wiltshire Music Service was going to cause the facility to falter and for music lessons to be adversely affected. In light of the Wiltshire Music Connect's recent annual report, could an update be provided to Council on what has occurred with the numbers of students receiving tuition since these funding changes were instigated?

**Response**

Changes were made to the Council's Music Service for schools at the end of the 2014/15 academic year. The 2015 – 16 Annual Report of Wiltshire's Music Education Hub (covering the 2015/16 academic year) sets out that there has been:

A 1% increase in children taking part in First Access activities – (ensuring every child aged 5 – 18 has the opportunity to learn a musical instrument through whole-class teaching programmes);

- A 6% increase in the number of pupils who have continued with their music making following First Access
- A 12% increase in children and young people receiving instrumental/vocal tuition

A 7% increase in children and young people taking part in ensembles, groups and bands and a 3.5% increase in the number of ensembles being provided

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Horace Prickett, Southwick Division**

**To Councillor Stuart Wheeler, Cabinet Member for Hubs, Heritage and Arts,  
Governance and Support Services**

**Question Ref 17-12**

Wiltshire Council, over the last year or so has been engaged in The Community Governance Review process and has made a number of decisions in respect of this affecting Towns and Parishes across Wiltshire.

- a) Would the Cabinet Member confirm that in the case of any new applications, these cannot be considered until the new Council has been elected and only after careful consideration, by a working group, any decision over adopting any changes would only occur after a majority of Wiltshire Councillors, at a full Council meeting, agreed the changes?
- b) Could the Cabinet Member also comment on the manner in which discussions have taken place between Towns and Parish councils and whether 'hostile' advances are ever successful?

**Response**

- a) Under the relevant legislation, Wiltshire Council normally has an obligation to carry out a community governance review of an area, if it receives a petition signed by the requisite number of local electors for that area.

However, the Council can decline to carry out such a review if it has already undertaken a community governance review covering the area concerned within the last two years. Therefore, the Council would not be obliged to carry out any further governance reviews affecting any of the areas addressed in the recent comprehensive review, until 2018.

If the Council chose to undertake a new community governance review, either of its own volition or at the request of a town or parish council, then, under the Constitution, it would be for full Council to determine how that review was to be conducted and for full Council to give final approval for any changes to governance arrangements.

- b) I am not aware of any discussions regarding any new reviews being proposed. As regards those areas covered by the recent reviews, I know that there have been constructive discussions between some of the parish council

affected, for example Redlynch and Landford, where a significant area was transferred and also between Devizes and Roundway.

In terms of any 'hostile' advances, as members will be aware, in considering any proposals for changes to community governance arrangements, the Council is obliged to have regard to the appropriate statutory criteria and guidance. The motive for any proposal would not, therefore, generally be a relevant consideration.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Jose Green, Fovant and Chalk Valley Division**

**To Councillor Jonathon Seed, Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding**

**Question Ref 17-13**

The Prime Minister has recently made it clear that the Government wants to see local councils building affordable local homes. I understand that this Council is building affordable houses across the County and I have visited one of these projects in the south of Wiltshire. Could the Cabinet member for housing tell Council how the Council House Building Project is progressing?

**Response**

The Council is delivering a programme of new affordable homes across the County. The total programme consists of 226 new homes with a budget of £42.5m.

To date, six schemes have started on site. These are:

**Two extra care housing schemes**

Devizes (Needham House) – a 47 apartment extra care housing scheme for older people with a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom apartments and communal facilities such as a lounge, restaurant and activity rooms and with 24 hour 7 day a week care on offer for all residents as required. Due to complete in May 2017.

Amesbury – a 60 apartment extra care housing scheme for older people also with communal facilities and 24/7 care and support on site. Due to complete in March 2018.

**Bungalows**

East Knoyle – two 2 bedroom bungalows for older people to enable them to downsize and release family housing in the village. Due to complete in May 2017.

Rowde – six 2 bedroom bungalows also for older people. Due to complete April 2017.

Durrington – four 2 bedroom bungalows. Due to complete November 2017

### **General needs housing**

Southview, Trowbridge – 28 homes, a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes to meet the needs of single people, couples and families in Trowbridge. Due to complete in March 2018

### **Other**

In addition, a bungalow scheme delivering 2 new affordable homes in Mere has just secured planning permission and is currently out to tender, a 5 unit bungalow scheme in Corsley is in planning and a 4 unit rural scheme in Coombe Bissett has been tendered and is due to start on site shortly.

Interest in all these schemes has been high and the show flat at Needham House is now open through a local estate agent for viewings. We anticipate a great deal of activity during 2017 and early 2018 to ensure that all these buildings are successfully completed and allocated in the most effective manner. This has been an exciting programme which is now well on the way to being delivered and will see much needed affordable homes being completed across the County to meet the needs of older people, families and those in rural villages.

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**Councillors' Question**

**From Councillor Trevor Carbin, Holt and Staverton Division**

**To Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services**

**Question Ref 17-14**

What action has been taken by Wiltshire Council resulting from the resolution of Notice of Motion No.19 (12/5/15)?

[link to above reference](#) (item 41 b)

**Response**

A member of the Children's Services Commissioning Team made telephone contact with both Group 5 and The Burnbake Trust to offer support to the organisations in accessing grant funding from charitable trusts and other sources. This was followed up with a meeting with The Burnbake Trust. Group 5 were offered a meeting but the organisation stated that it did not wish to meet with representatives of the Council unless the grant of £5,000 would be re-instated. A letter was sent to Group 5 on 22 May 2015 confirming the verbal offer of a meeting and offering a letter of support from the Council to assist with applications for funding. A letter of support for The Burnbake Trust (that the organisation could use in applying for funding) was sent on 12 June 2015.

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**Councillors' Question**

**From Councillor Mike Hewitt, Bourne and Woodford Valley Division**

**To Councillor John Thomson, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for  
Communities, Campuses, Area Boards and Broadband**

**Question Ref 17-15**

I note that the government is championing a direct fibre to the premises technology as a way forward for broadband. Why has Wiltshire Council not been investing in this technology?

**Response**

The simple answer is that we have and will be.

When we embarked on the programme in 2012 we had to engage with commercial providers and we were made aware that their plans involved connecting only approx. 60% of premises in Wiltshire. That meant that 40% of businesses, families with children needing the internet for homework, home workers and those in isolated communities were not in any future plans to get an improved service without our intervention.

The size of the unserved or 'hardest to reach' was so considerable the most cost effective solution to reach as many premises as possible with the funds we had available (which amounted to a total contractual investment with BT of over £30m ) was to invest and upgrade the existing infrastructure namely the green CABS and therefore the premises that are served off each CAB. Using this approach, we have upgraded over 490 cabinets which has provided a fibre service to over 83,000 premises to date and counting.

This approach has been successful and the huge demand from the take up of the new fibre service proves as much. The current contracts have a gain share clause within. This means that when residents take up the service with an ISP over the infrastructure we have funded it generates income that will be re-invested back into delivering more fibre broadband. To date the take up of the service has more than exceeded expectations and we recently announced over £2m to be reinvested back into the contract, this translate into another 5000 premises we can now bring fibre to. On this note I urge all councillors to support the message going out to residents we have upgraded. Whilst we certainly hear from those residents we have yet to

reach if we all focus on the progress we have made it will help to drive up take up and this in turn will generate income we can reinvest to reach more and more premises.

The work we have done upgrading the green cabinets has not only provided a fantastic and reliable service to many residents desperate for it, it has also brought fibre into our most rural areas. A fibre network that can now be utilised in the future, a fibre network that would not be there without our investment.

The size of the 'hardest to reach' is now significantly less than before but is increasingly more challenging. As we start delivering the build for the second contract plus planning for the 5000 additional premises we start to reach areas with complex existing infrastructure footprints. When modelling the build on a best value for money basis, and now having the fibre in our rural communities, fibre direct to the premises is proving to be one of the most economical solutions in many cases and we have already started the on the ground work to deploy this type of upgrade.

We continue to successfully manage the contract, bringing in additional funds to reinvest and extending our footprint further.

Aside from the commitment to provide a superfast service delivered through the existing contracts with BT, Wiltshire Council recently secured £2m from BDUK's South West Ultrafast Fund and £1m match funding has been secured from the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP). The Invitation to Tender (ITT) has been launched inviting broadband suppliers to bid. We expect the procurement to be completed in spring 2017.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Christopher Williams, Ludgershall and Perham Down Division**

**To Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Leader of the Council**

**Question Ref 17-16**

Army Rebasing – On the back of a very positive peer review on Army Rebasing what is Wiltshire Council doing to ensure that best practice is shared across all local authorities?

**Response**

Between 26th and 29th September 2016, the Local Government Association reviewed how Wiltshire Council has managed the impact of the ABP in its planning for new infrastructure and service delivery for the addition 7,200 military community settling in Wiltshire by 2020. It also examined its stakeholder engagement.

The peer review was extremely positive and the team felt Wiltshire Council's management of the programme should be regarded as an example of best practice and shared with other local authorities in due course. To this end Wiltshire Council is working with the Local Government Association to organise a national event for later this year.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor John Smale, Bulford, Fighealden and Allington Division**

**To Councillor Fleur de Rhé-Phillipe, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Skills, Strategic Transport and Strategic Property**

**Question Ref 17-18**

Would the Cabinet member for Economic Development, Skills, Strategic Transport and Strategic Property please update me on the current position in respect of the proposed A303 Stonehenge development?

**Response**

Highways England is currently consulting on a route option to build a dual carriageway between Amesbury and Berwick Down involving a 2.9km tunnel and a bypass for Winterbourne Stoke, with a variation to the north or south of the village. This is a non-statutory consultation which will inform Highways England of the views of stakeholders, before it announces the preferred route later in 2017. A further statutory consultation will be undertaken, possibly in 2018, as part of the process for the Development Consent Order.

As a statutory consultee, the Council is studying the consultation documents and a report with the draft response to the consultation will be presented to cabinet for approval on 14 March.

Wiltshire Council welcomes the initiative by Highways England to search for a solution to this long standing problem on A303, which has a detrimental effect on local communities, tourism, local economy and the heritage value of the area. It will continue to work in collaboration with Highways England, National Trust, Historic England and other interested parties to find the best solution.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Jacqui Lay, Purton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-19**

I recognise that we began the winter period with enough salt stock to ensure sufficient gritting of our roads was possible, but the recent cold spell has meant that our gritting lorries have been out a considerable number of times. Hopefully the worst of the winter weather is over however do we still have sufficient salt to ensure our roads are treated as required during the remaining period?

**Response**

We have no current concerns on salt stocks. Currently 7,800 tonnes is held in the County.

Based on historical records salt is procured into the depots during the summer months, at the most advantageous price, to ensure that 14,000 tonnes is available for the start of the winter season.

Weekly stock use is prepared throughout the season. Salt assessments are made based on long range forecast provided by the MetOffice and of likely remaining demands. During the higher use months of December, January and February additional salt can be purchased but usually after January stock is managed down to ensure good stock rotation in readiness for the next season. A strategic stock pile is held centrally in the County at Semington which can be moved into the outlying depots if those stock piles deplete through usage.

The early months of November and December were unusually mild and did not requiring many nights of salting. The real demands of the winter season did not start until early in January with the recent cold spell resulting in some high salt use. Notably, in one week alone 1,000 tonnes of salt was spread on the road network.

We have spread less salt than in previous years but as the season begins to balance we expect to use around 9000 tonnes. This is typical during an average season.

Through careful salt management and a good relationship with our salt suppliers, we are proud in Wiltshire that we have never run out of salt even through the most severe of winters.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Atiqul Hoque, Salisbury St Edmund and Milford Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-23**

Can you please advice me on an article in the salisbury journal recently to the effect that wiltshire Council only fill 1 in 5 potholes according to figures obtained from the Fill the hole website?

**Response**

The figures used by the Salisbury Journal were from an independent website. The website does compile a league table but only on reports sent to it from members of the public and relies on members of the public to update it once their issue has been fixed. So, this is no reflection of the true number of reports being received by the council nor its performance in managing these reports.

There are several websites around that allow the public to report issues to their local council. Some are pressure groups others are commercial entities trying to get a foot in the door to sell the back-office functions to councils. All will make the report public but not all send them through to the respective council. As a council, we couldn't be expected to monitor every website, forum, blog etc for reports of highways issues what we do have is a robust, accessible, easy to use system – My Wiltshire.

Wiltshire Council encourages residents to use the My Wiltshire system which is widely advertised and available to members of the public to report all highways, street scene and several other service issues.

The My Wiltshire system is specifically tailored to Wiltshire Councils services. This allows residents to send photos and plot GPS locations allowing the services responsible to be as efficient as possible. If a resident registers then they will be kept up to date on the progress of their report.

In the last six months of 2016, 2,000 road defects were reported to us, of which more than 75% have been repaired, or did not need a repair, and around 250 were duplicate reports. We investigate every single report we get, and have also repaired an additional 800 potholes following inspections by our own staff.

We fix thousands of potholes each year and we have increased highways funding, investing in resurfacing programmes which lead to better maintenance and fewer

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potholes. We have a rolling programme of work which is ongoing and where there are road issues we'd encourage people to contact us using the My Wiltshire system.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Alan Hill, Calne South and Cherhill Division**

**To Councillor John Thomson, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards and Broadband**

**Question Ref 17-25**

The incorporation of Calne Community Hub into the Calne library building has been a great success, following the investment in summer 2016. The installation of movable shelving has enabled larger meetings and events to be held in the library area, an Open+ state of the art, automated swipe access system allows access outside of library opening hours, and a new bookable meeting room, for up to 16 people has seen 39 community groups and organisations now use the building with 282 bookings being made in the first 5 months.

Library membership has increased by 5.1% since its opening (5 month period) - set against a national trend of a decline in library visitor numbers, and 2,932 visitors on Wednesdays – a day when the library would have previously been closed.

Can the Cabinet Member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards and Broadband tell me if he plans to extend community hubs – based on the Calne model - as part of the overall campus program?

**Response**

I can confirm that the Calne Community Hub has been an overwhelming success. In summer 2016 the library building was refurbished to make better use of space and to create a new Community Hub. The refurbishment focused on creating improved space and facilities for the entire community - of all ages - to provide a focal point and vibrant place for the town and surrounding area. It also became home to the Calne Community Hub which relocated from its premises in Phelps Parade (funded by the area board).

The refurbishment included a new colour scheme, carpets and flexible, movable shelving to enable larger meetings and events to be held in the library area. Open+ - a state of the art automated swipe access system - was also installed to allow access to the new hub and its facilities outside of library opening hours.

A new bookable meeting room, for up to 16 people, and a smaller breakout room for 1 to 1 meetings, was also provided.

In August 2016, the Community Hub relocated vacating the retail unit it leased in Phelps Parade. In October 2016, Citizens Advice Wiltshire also relocated into the hub, providing its services and advice on Monday and Friday mornings.

Visitor figures show an increase of 5.1% since its opening (5 month period). This is set against a national trend of a decline in library visitor numbers.

The relocation of the Community Hub, combined with the implementation of the Open+ swipe access scheme, has resulted in library customers, community groups and visitors to the hub being able to access the building and all its services and facilities on Wednesdays - a day the library was previously closed and outside the opening hours of the library.

The Community Hub volunteers offer services on Wednesdays and a total of 2,932 visitors to the library on Wednesdays in the first 5 months - an average of 139 people per Wednesday. The building is also accessible from 8am on weekdays and 9am on Saturdays and available for evenings as bookable space by almost 40 community groups. This has resulted in a 37.5% increase in the opening hours.

160 individuals have registered for Open+ access since mid-September 2016. This is steadily increasing each week. There have been 63 evening group bookings in the first 5 months. Library membership has increased by 5.6% (5 month period) compared to the same period last year.

39 diverse community groups and organisations now use the building - 282 room/space bookings were made by these groups in the first 5 months. Demand for the meeting rooms and space continues to grow and the new hub has received a huge amount of positive feedback.

Having access and flexible shelving in the library area has enabled the space to be used for larger meetings and events. The community area board meetings are now held in the building, the Our Community Matters JSA event and a theatre performance of Romeo and Juliet also took place in this space.

The hub is now an exciting, unifying, community space. This investment shows the positive impact that can be achieved with a modest budget. It also highlights what we all know – that each community has its own needs – and that one size does not fit all. We now recognise that a campus such as Springfield's in Corsham, is not suitable or viable for all community areas and that the provision of a hub model, such as Calne, can be just as effective, if not more so.

On this basis, it is my intention to roll the hub model out elsewhere and target investment to ensure that the campus programme reaches more local communities. In Royal Wotton Bassett we are working in partnership with the local town council to deliver a joint investment based on the Calne Community Hub model at the library site.

Improvements will include a new entrance, the installation of a large, flexible, meeting room, the fitting of audio visual equipment, flexible shelving to allow larger meetings for 120+ or events, improved ancillary facilities, redecoration and the installation of the Open + system to increase accessibility.

We are also advancing plans to transform Devizes Library into a Community Hub. Customer services currently offered in Snuff Street will be relocated into the new hub. Snuff Street has provided council services since the closure of the Browfort offices. Relocating these services to the library delivers significant revenue savings and brings the services in the town together so they are more accessible. The library space will also be refurbished to provide flexible community meeting space.

In Tidworth discussions with the MoD are underway to improve the community space and offer at Tidworth Leisure Centre and library. Given the Army Basing programme and the need to create an integrated community, it is proposed to refurbish the library to create a flexible community space for events, activities and meetings.

A feasibility study into maximising the space at Westbury Library is also underway. The study is considering the best and most cost effective use of the two upper floors of the listed building to enable the refurbishment and possible extension of the ground floor of the library to deliver flexible community space and an offer that meets the needs of the community.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-26**

The implementation of time limited waiting restrictions in Chippenham has been carried out in such a way that the lining was painted on the road several weeks ago, but the two-hour limit signs have still not been installed at the time of writing this question. Additionally there have been errors in the yellow lining. The effect has been public disillusion with the process and the Council. I understand that officers have actively tried to manage the situation without success. Why does the Council contract for this work not allow enforcement of getting this kind of job done properly?

**Response**

There was a delay between the delivery of the road markings and the full installation of the supporting signs advising motorists of the time restrictions on the parking bays. Discussion with the contractor has identified that the incorrect number of signs were initially ordered by them, and as a consequence not all the required signs were available to complete the works when the road marking works took place.

Further discussion over the contractor's working arrangements are taking place in order to prevent a re-occurrence, including measures to ensure that all materials needed to complete the works are available when required. Under the term contract the programming and delivery of works is the full responsibility of the Contractor, and the Council staff will continue to work with them to improve performance.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**Councillor Roy While, Melksham Without South Division**

**To Councillor Jonathon Seed, Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding**

**Question Ref 17-43**

Could the Cabinet member for libraries please advise on the level of usage given that nationally the number of people visiting libraries is declining, and the number of volunteers that are currently helping to deliver this service

**Response**

In accordance with the constitution a verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Terry Chivers, Melksham Without North Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-01**

Later in the year the Royal Mint, has decided to re- design the pound coin. As most machines will have a be adapted, would you agree that this would be a golden opportunity to update machines to issue change.

If not why not?

**Response**

The council will be updating all their machines to accept the new £1 coin this year

In the south of the county the council is replacing a number of machines which are at the end of their life.

The current machines cannot be adapted to give change. Ticket machines that give change cost three times the amount of the current type specified. Cashless systems, such as pay by phone or automatic number plate recognition systems, offer many more opportunities for improving the parking experience within the council's car parks and this would be the preferred future direction if funding is available.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Jacqui Lay, Purton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-20**

Do we still have a full fleet of gritting vehicles, sufficient to ensure that our roads are all treated when necessary?

**Response**

We do not and have never routinely treated all roads for the precautionary salting of ice, but we clearly promote the roads we do treat when cold weather is forecast. In line with the National Code of Practice and other Highway Authorities, all A and B class roads amounting to approximately 25% of the County's road network, are routinely treated.

We have a full complement of front line gritting vehicles sufficient to deliver the winter service which are used each and every time a salt run is called. In addition to this, we have spare vehicles in each depot which can be called upon in the event of breakdowns or other incidents. This is further supported by smaller mini spreading vehicles provided by our contractor.

During events of severe weather the treated road network is extended to treat approximately 50% and the services of local farmers using county snow blades and blowers can be deployed. In recent years parish communities are being encouraged to develop their own local snow plans to supplement the County's strategic network with local resources often with support from their Area Boards.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Atiqul Hoque, Salisbury St Edmund and Milford Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-24**

What are the advantages in Wiltshire Residents using the myWilts System to report potholes in Wiltshire rather than some of the third party system that operates across the U.K?

**Response**

My Wiltshire is the Wiltshire Council branded version of My Council Services supplied by Abavus and so is a direct competitor to the likes of Love Clean Streets, Fix My Street and FillThatHole.Org. These are third party provided solutions and are available nationwide.

The model these providers use is one of providing a portal for the public to report issues which are then emailed to a council's customer services; it is not until a council purchases the licences to use the system as a council that you get the advantages as explained below.

Wiltshire Council has purchased the ability to use the My Wiltshire solution as a line of business application which provides the advantages of:

1. Self-service - customers can input text, photos and GPS location.
2. Automation - the information goes to the right person, first time, automatically saving back office resource.
3. Prioritisation - services can prioritise reports as per their policies.
4. Mobile worker - the person who is going to fix the issue has all the information to hand and can be tasked whilst in the field.
5. Feedback to the customer – the customer is kept informed of the progress of their reports.
6. Reporting – there are several reporting functions available.
7. The system can be integrated with others for example Mayrise for reporting street lighting faults.
8. The ability to brand the solution. We have branded it My Wiltshire so it is easily identified, remembered and used by our customers.

So, to answer the question the advantages to Wiltshire Residents are as follows:

1. They get a branded and recognisable solution for self-reporting issues via a mobile app, via the council's website or over the phone – free.
2. The solution is tailored for Wiltshire Council by Wiltshire Council so all forms are appropriate for the services that are provided and not generic. This gives the resident access to all report categories.
3. There is a direct feedback loop from the service to the customer not via a third party (either the provider or CSU agent). So, the customer is kept up to date in real time. Using some of the other providers the original report will not necessarily come through to Wiltshire Council.
4. At the time of purchase the most cost effective solution available.
5. Via the automation and self-service functions the system enables services to meet efficiency targets and stay within budget.
6. In the same place (account) customers can report highways, street scene, trading standards and weather emergencies. With more services being added in the future.
7. Of course a resident can report issues anonymously if they like.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-27**

When will the work in Monkton ward be completed properly, including the removal of two (not just one) parking bays at the pinchpoint on Monkton Hill?

**Response**

The lining work was completed on 8 February. The parking bay reduction at the top of Station Hill was carried out according to our original instruction to the contractor and in accordance with the advertised proposal.

Three signs are still to be erected: two in Sadlers Mead and the third in College Close. The contractor is awaiting delivery of special fittings to facilitate attachment to lighting columns.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Terry Chivers, Melksham Without North Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-02**

I have tried to walk from 5 ways Box into the village but the footway was so overgrown I was forced to walk in the A class Road.

Is this a isolated case are there there other overgrown footways in the County.

**Response**

The council will ensure the safety of the highway. The council's MyWiltshire system allows for any defect to be reported by phone, web or mobile app. Where overgrown vegetation or encroachments are reported, the council will inspect to ensure the area is safe and if not it will take the appropriate action.

The council would ask that everyone reports any highway defect through the MyWiltshire system for it to assess the situation.

Town and parish councils also have the opportunity to identify local proprieties through the Parish Steward Scheme. The Parish Steward will clear encroachments or trim highway vegetation if the town or parish council feel this is appropriate. Wiltshire Council recognise that discretionary footway encroachment work for the Parish Steward is challenging for town or parish councils as this can tie up the Parish Steward for many visits, which will affect other discretionary works within the area. This can mean that other works are given the priority. However, it is important that Wiltshire Council leaves the priority setting with the local councils.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Jacqui Lay, Purton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-21**

Locally in my Division we have a large number of roads which are untreated routes. These roads are used by the wider public as their preferred route to Swindon. Recently on the C70 a number of drivers found, to their detriment, that this was an unsalted route and two cars ended up in the ditch and one car on its roof. The police put in a request for the road to be salted urgently. Bearing in mind my question 1, if we are to salt routes at the request of others, which are not shown on the gritting maps -

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/parkingtransportandstreets/roadshighwaysstreetcare/gritting/grittingroutesmap.htm> , will this impact on the remaining salt stocks we might have?

On the same theme we also have a number of water leaks which it appears are not seen as priorities for the water authority, which are causing build ups of ice alongside the side of gritted routes. These areas are having to have more grit and salt put on them. Is this only a problem in the north of the county or is it happening across the county in which case are these leaks also impacting on salt stocks?

**Response**

In advance of cold weather forecasts we treat are both Primary and Secondary designated road networks and will continue to treat them during prolonged periods of sub-zero road temperature.

The team that monitor the weather and make the decisions on when we treat the road network are very experienced and consider many factors before deciding on appropriate action.

However, despite our best efforts we must not forget that as highway users we all have our own duty of care before driving on the roads. Advice when setting off on a journey is to look for often obvious signs like frost cars windscreens and on the verges. These are usually a good indicator of the prevailing conditions to be expected and drivers need to adjust their driving habits accordingly.

The Council follows national guidelines as laid down by the Department of Transport and our policies fall well within the criteria on the precautionary salting of our highway network.

We will only treat additional roads in extended ice conditions or in the event of an Road Traffic Collision (RTC). In accordance with our Winter Service Policy we will not respond to ad-hoc request for additional salting.

We have clear guidance and follow the National Code of Practice; we only treat a designated network and do not salt roads on request. The Police are aware and requests from them to salt roads are only considered when an RTC has occurred and we only treat the area where the RTC happened. Weekly requests from members of the public for additional roads to be added to the salted network are where possible are replied to, but it is not possible with finite resources of drivers and vehicles and treatment/response times to include.

The County acting as the Highway Authority has a duty to keep the public highway clear from ice and snow "so far as is reasonably practicable" which it does in compliance with the Code of Practice, and our Policy.

Currently, 25% of our network is treated within a two hour time frame prior to sub-zero road temperatures being forecast with the fleet we have available. This is further increased to 50% taking another two hours in prolonged cold weather periods to complete when we treat both Primary and Secondary networks.

Water leaks are a problem nationally either through failed infrastructure or natural springs. Our area highway officers monitor the known water leaks or springs and these are treated accordingly. It is usual for this treatment is fairly ineffective as any salt is washed away as is the nature of the leak or spring so, once again as highway users we all have our own duty of care when driving and be mindful of the conditions, dealing with water leaks does not have an effect on our overall salt stock and water companies are expected to treat any leaks they are responsible for again this is following national set guidelines.

We do provide over 1600 bins on the un-treated network to enable users of the highway to self-help and spread salt.

We should never expect all roads treated or not to be ice free and users should be encouraged to adjust their driving on cold days and plan their journeys to travel along the roads we do treat.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-28**

When did the Council agree a policy whereby worn non-statutory disabled bays outside private dwellings are no longer to be repainted? Who made this decision? How much money is being saved across the County as a result of this cut? What consideration was given to the needs of residents with disabilities, and to the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty?

**Response**

No decision has been made to cease the maintenance of lining of residential disabled bays. The council reviews its highway spending annually to ensure appropriately allocated and acknowledges that discretionary work is challenging. The council's lining and signing provision is focusing on the statutory services and the resultant safety issues that would result if this was not prioritised. Disabled bays are a discretionary service, along with many other discretionary lines and signs. To seek a solution the council is currently investigating additional funding from outside of the Highway Service for disabled bay maintenance and trusts that this will resolve the issue.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Terry Chivers, Melksham Without North Division**

**To Councillor Stuart Wheeler, Cabinet Member for  
for Hubs, Heritage and Arts, Governance and Support Services**

**Question Ref 17-03**

Casting my mind back to just under four years, the first thing that the ruling Conservative Group done was to award eye water increases in allowances to the Conservative Cabinet.

In the event of the Conservatives retaining control of the Council can you give a cast iron guarantee that members of the Cabinet, and members of the Council will not award themselves increases in allowances above inflation.

**Response**

I would like to remind Councillor Chivers of the actual procedure which governs the basic allowance paid to all members of Wiltshire Council and the various additional allowances paid to those members undertaking extra duties, including sitting on Cabinet.

The amount of the basic and additional allowances is recommended by an Independent Remuneration Panel who then present their findings to the Council. The Council decides whether to accept, amend or reject such recommendations.

The last such review took place following the May 2013 election and the recommendations were agreed by Council in the following November. That meeting was actually the fourth full Council meeting following the election so this was hardly the first item of business for this Council.

It is interesting to note that following the adoption of the increased rates of allowance only a few Members have not taken the full amount of allowances to which they are entitled. For the current year 16/17 three members are not taking the increases to which they are entitled.

This procedure will be followed again following the election in May. I cannot speak for any recommendation the Panel might make or any action the new Council might

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take on receiving such recommendation.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Jacqui Lay, Purton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-22**

I have been asked by my residents to ask about 'virtual pavements'. Although this relates to a local planning application which was refused, there is still concern should the applicant appeal on the decision, hence the question is still all the more important to ask to ensure that if the application is granted at appeal we have the right infrastructure in to safeguard the wider population. The 'virtual pavement' is it seems when there is no space on the highway to create a separate pavement for use by pedestrians only. It is a solid line down one side of the road which pedestrians can walk in, often with their back to the traffic, but also cars can use the space to pass each other on a narrow road. The 'virtual' pavement is 'shared' space with traffic.

The question my residents have asked is in several parts:

- a) how many recent 'virtual' pavements have been put in on the wider road network as part of conditions relating to nearby new development?
- b) what is the safety record of the existing 'virtual' pavements we might have across the county?
- c) what sightlines, signage and safety refuge are needed for such a scheme?

In the case of Purton the proposal was to be put in just after a blind bend, on a very narrow road, with houses and walls up to the edge of the highway. The concern is that pedestrians will be at risk as there is nowhere on much of the route to escape from traffic that does not stop for them, other than over low garden walls!

**Response**

'Virtual' pavements are occasionally used in circumstances where a pedestrian need has been identified, but where there is insufficient room to construct a segregated path.

They are only used on minor roads, where prior consideration is given to traffic flow, parking and visibility. Accompanying signs/refuges are determined on a case by case basis.

Ref 17-22

They are selectively used by many rural authorities – their use in Wiltshire is not recorded to the extent that an exact number can be reported, however it is fair to say that their use is careful and infrequent.

There are no recorded adverse safety issues in Wiltshire attributed to their use.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-29**

Does the Council have a budget for the installation of additional street lighting where public safety is judged to be at risk?

**Response**

The Council does not have a separate budget for additional street lighting, but lighting may be provided as part of a safety scheme where appropriate. If there is a particular local concern it is possible for the Community Area Transport Group to allocate funding for the provision of additional street lighting.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Terry Chivers, Melksham Without North Division**

**To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Operational Property and Waste**

**Question Ref 17-17**

**Q. 1**

It's alleged that there are serious breaches in the planning application for the Norrington Solar Farm, at Broughton Gifford Melksham. Yet Wiltshire Council have failed its alleged to take any kind of enforcement action.

**Q2.**

Can you explain why this is the case if the allegations are true.

**Q3.**

When this application was first submitted the applicant made many promises that if approved there would be endless gains to the local community, yet its alleged that all letters and emails to the applicant have gone un-answered are you aware of this

**Response**

**Q.1-2.** The solar farm at Common Farm, Broughton Gifford has been constructed on the site on which planning permission was granted. As with many developments of this scale, there may be some differences between the approved plans and the construction on the ground. The Council is investigating these and will follow the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework by acting proportionately in response and taking action where it is appropriate to do so.

**Q3.** Any agreement between the landowners/developers and the local parish council is a matter between the parties concerned and is not one that Wiltshire Council has any jurisdiction over as there is no connection with the planning permission and it is not a planning matter.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-30**

The introduction of parking restrictions in the immediate vicinity of Chippenham train station is helpful to those streets immediately affected but parking is inevitably pushed further into neighbouring areas. This is certain to get worse as passenger numbers at Chippenham Station increase with electrification. Will you agree the need for a holistic review of the wider onstreet parking situation, and possible solutions?

**Response**

In order to be able manage the backlog of requests to review waiting and parking restrictions with the limited resources the Council currently has, a Cabinet Member Report (see link below) was agreed to set out the current programme, the outstanding areas for review, outline the proposed way forward and identify the priority list for the next few years.

A full review of Chippenham was carried out 2015-16 and implementation is currently being completed on the ground.

Corsham, Malmesbury, Warminster, Bradford on Avon and the North Wilts Parishes were agreed for priority progression in 2016-17

Initially it was proposed to progress Tisbury, Tidworth, Melksham , Cricklade and the Kennet Parishes the following year 2017-18 and Devizes and Chippenham the year after 2018-19. However we currently have an acute staffing resources issue and are recruiting to posts to enable some progression of the existing commitments.

Therefore even if we are successful in securing staff resources , it would be unlikely that Chippenham would be considered until 2018-19 at the earliest.

We will, however continue to record new requests for parking reviews with a view to prioritising delivery, however we can not at this stage confirm a timetable for a further review of Chippenham.

<http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=1132>

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Terry Chivers, Melksham Without North Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-40**

At present Council policy is that local town and parish councils pick up a third of the cost of minor highway improvements.

I support this policy in most cases, but often smaller Parish Councils have little or no chance of raising funds without raising Council Tax through the roof, in my own ward Broughton Gifford springs to mind, and I'm sure that most rural members can name at least one Parish that will be affected.

Would you agree that we should look at a fairer funding scheme.

**Response**

In accordance with the constitution a verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-31**

Station Hill in Chippenham is already congested. Under Council plans it seems destined to have to cope with additional traffic from hundreds of houses on 'Rawlings Green', all the construction traffic from 200 houses, additional commuter traffic on an electrified line, and additional car parking at the station. Why is there no transport plan to address this?

**Response**

The Council has prepared and presented a Transport Strategy for Chippenham that considers the impacts of growth, and proposes a number of measures including capacity enhancements, public transport improvements and additions/alterations to cycling and pedestrian links.

In order to ensure that capacity is maintained on the local highway network, the Chippenham Site Allocation Plan complements the strategy by identifying points at which development cannot progress unless essential infrastructure is provided.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-32**

What are the proposals for monitoring air quality on Station Hill?

**Response**

Following the annual review of the Wiltshire Council diffusion tube network a site was located in Station Hill, Chippenham with the first diffusion tube deployed there in January this year. It is usual to monitor in any given location for at least 12 months.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

**Question Ref 17-33**

Congratulations on your part in the successful local take over of the Bath Road toilet block in Chippenham. Will you now ensure that the planning application for demolitions on the site is adapted to support this outcome?

**Response**

An amendment containing conditions for the Planning Application is being drafted and will be submitted. Cllr Caswill has drafted these conditions along with council officers in SA&FM, and guided by Planning, and therefore by association if Cllr Caswill is assumed to be in full support of the amendment, I will assume that the amendment will support the outcome. Those conditions will be applied as and when the demolition works are undertaken.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Richard Tonge, Cabinet Member for Finance**

**Question Ref 17-34**

So that Wiltshire residents can understand, what is the difference between 'efficiency savings' and 'cuts'?

**Response**

The Council report does not refer to Cuts, there is terminology of 'savings' and 'efficiencies'. An accounting view of the definitions requested would be as follows:

An efficiency is one of the three 'E's typically associated with Value For Money – Economy, Effectiveness and Efficiency. Economy is reducing the amount of resource put in; Effectiveness is the output achieved is increased. Efficiency is the process in between input and output to produce the product, unit or service. By making a process more efficient you are able to both use less and produce / process more. The Council uses several tools to improve efficiency, most notably Systems Thinking to assess, calculate and re-engineer a process to design out unnecessary steps and thus reduce costs.

A cut may simply be seen as a reduction of the level of input or output without any consideration of efficiency. As a result a service, unit or product is stopped.

An example of a cut would be to close a Library. An efficiency would be to use automation to renew or reserve books, thus freeing up resources.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division  
To Councillor Jerry Wickham, Cabinet Member for Health (including Public  
Health) and Adult Social Care**

**Question Ref 17-36**

The Care Quality Commission has rated The Haven at Littleton Pannell as Inadequate on all counts, citing unsafe electrics, inadequate food standards, inadequate staff numbers and inadequate training, lack of care plans, absence of a Registered Manager, lack of staff supervision, and a lack of safety monitoring. What steps were taken to protect Wiltshire residents at The Haven (including the six placed there by the Council) in Littleton Pannell, before the CQC visit in November last year? Why did the Council's prior checks fail those residents so badly?

**Response**

The Care homes was inspected by CQC in May 2015 and received a " good " rating

Council monitors the care that residents receive on in two ways:

1. Care management reviews which normally take place annually
2. Quality assurance reviews which can either take place as part of a planned programme of reviews or on request.

Care management reviews which took place in the months preceding the CQC inspection found that resident's needs were being met appropriately. Nothing was raised in these reviews which indicated the issues highlighted by the CQC inspection.

Concerns were raised about 1 resident in relation to pressure care and this was dealt with appropriately by the home with support.

The relative of 1 resident requested a move due to concerns that standards at the home were slipping but this was not until mid Nov 2016.

The Council in partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Group monitor the quality of care in Wiltshire through a joint meeting called the Quality Surveillance Group. This provides an opportunity for all partners in the commissioning of care, including CQC to share any concerns about care.

The home manager left recently and this seems to have been a factor in the drop in standards of care. There is evidence that when a care homes lose their leadership it can lead to a drop in standards

From the point at which CQC notified the Council of its concerns following its inspection in Nov/Dec the Council has responded swiftly to assess residents and support their health and well-being.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division  
To Councillor Jerry Wickham, Cabinet Member for Health (including Public  
Health) and Adult Social Care**

**Question Ref 17-37**

When did you become aware of the situation at The Haven? Who in your view carries the responsibility for it?

**Response**

CQC raised a safeguarding alert for the home on 8<sup>th</sup> December and the Council has subsequently worked closely with the home to ensure that residents are safe and appropriately cared for.

Where it has been identified that people need to move, the Council is working with families to support this. It should be noted that whilst professionals may identify that a person's needs are not being adequately met by a care home, a move can often be detrimental to their health and well-being and it is sometimes in the person's best interests to remain in the home and for professionals to work with the home to ensure that the care they receive improves.

The well-being of individuals who are vulnerable and in need of care will always be a shared responsibility. The Care Quality Commission had previously rated this home as Good however standards of care can change quickly in a home

The Council complies with its statutory requirements in relation to care management reviews and acts swiftly when issues arise.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division  
To Councillor Jerry Wickham, Cabinet Member for Health (including Public  
Health) and Adult Social Care**

**Question Ref 17-38**

What progress has been made with the improvement of access for the public to licensing procedures and processes that you promised at the last Council meeting?

**Response**

The Licensing Service has been migrated to form part of the new and improved Council web site.

The Licensing pages now offer easier identification of the licences available and associated paperwork; the number of clicks required to access desired pages has also been reduced.

In addition, it is now easier for members of the public to access information on new applications received by the Council, under the Licensing Act, 2003. For anyone wishing to make a representation in relation to an application; guidance and an electronic (representation) form have been made available on the same screen beneath the application list.

Following these improvements, the Licensing team are currently working to further enhance the Gambling and Animal licensing pages.

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**Councillors' Questions**

**From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division**

**To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Operational Property and Waste**

**Question Ref 17-39**

What progress has been made with the improvement of access for the public to planning applications and the planning process that you promised at the last Council meeting?

**Response**

A new website is in the process of being developed which will make it easier for people to access the information that they need. We have specifically set out an area for how people can comment on an application, and how they can access further help and advice if they need it. There will also be a step by step guide and a frequently asked questions section.

It is anticipated that the new pages will be available to the public by the end of February 2017. The enhancements have been part of the wider website project plan and timescale.

We are also planning to run sessions with Town and Parish Councils on the planning process to help them understand each element fully to enable them to help their local communities. These sessions will be arranged after the elections in May 2017.