

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.