

**Questions**

**Lance Allan – Trowbridge Town Council**

**Comments and Questions on Freehold of Assets**

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

**Agenda Item 8 – Freehold of Assets to be Sold**

**St Stephen's Place Multi-Storey Car-Park**

**Statement** - Trowbridge Town Council is concerned that; at a time when the town is about to lose its Crown Post Office, likely to lose its Birthing Centre, still waiting for development of Wiltshire Council's Local Plan allocation at Ashton Park to commence, still waiting for the promised Campus/Hub/new health and leisure facility at Bythesea Road; Wiltshire Council sees fit to consider the sale of the town's free to use multi-storey car-park to a commercial organisation. A proposal put to this cabinet meeting today without any consultation with the town council, with the people of the town or with the local Wiltshire Council member.

**Question 1**

Can the cabinet explain what is meant by the phrase *'save obligations in respect of parking charges in the future, should they be applied.'*?

**Response**

As part of any potential sale the Council will require parking charges to be comparable to overall charges in Trowbridge. Should the site be sold, it is for any future operator to determine parking charges but these charges should not exceed any currently charged in car parks retained by Wiltshire Council.

**Question 2**

What safeguards are in place to ensure that sufficient parking is provided for the safe and efficient operation of the St Stephen's Place Leisure facility including the cinema and hotel if the multi-storey car-park were to be redeveloped both during redevelopment and following redevelopment?

**Response**

At this stage there is no indication that the car park itself is subject to redevelopment and to operate a successful shopping centre car parking is a key consideration. Development of the multi-storey car park would be subject to a statutory planning

process, during which community consultation would take place, as set out in the Cabinet paper.

### **Question 3**

Has Wiltshire Council obtained a legal opinion on the legality of the removal of the covenant contained within the deed of agreement between West Wiltshire District Council and Ernest Ireland (Properties) Limited dated October 14<sup>th</sup> 1974?

### **Response**

The beneficiary of the covenant is the owners of the shopping centre, which would fall away should they purchase the site.

### **Question 4**

Has Wiltshire Council obtained a legal opinion on the legality of imposing a condition on the sale or on any future planning consent with regard to; '*a connection to Wiltshire Council's charging regime [being] . . . part of the sale*' ?

### **Response**

Should the site be sold, a covenant will be included in the transfer by way of a positive or restrictive covenant

## **Manvers House**

**Statement** - Manvers House is situated on the corner of Church Street and Manvers Street, the area of land between the red line shown on the plan and the junction, which currently comprises an area of grass, shrubs and a footway, which are all open to the public, is maintained at Wiltshire Council's expense. Trowbridge Town Council considers that the sale of Manvers House should also include the sale of the whole of the area between Manvers House and the highway, to be maintained by the owners as public open space and that this should be a condition of the sale.

### **Question**

Will Wiltshire Council consider the sale of the area of land to the north of Manvers House, between Manvers House and the highway as part of the sale of Manvers House and impose a condition on the sale that the area should continue to be maintained as public open space? If not, why not?

### **Response**

It is not prudent to burden commercial development sites with onerous conditions such as maintenance of open spaces, as it potentially impacts on the viability of a scheme. The area continues to be maintained as open space by Wiltshire Council.