

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

8 October 2019

Questions from Anne Henshaw (The Campaign to Protect Rural England)

Agenda Item 7 – Chippenham Housing Infrastructure Fund Bid

**To Councillor Peter Whitehead – Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member
for Economic Development**

Question 1:

Why has this come to Cabinet after the application has been submitted rather than before?

Response:

The ability to submit applications for funding is delegated to directors in the council's scheme of delegation. The application had to be made within a challenging timeframe. This is a competitive bid and disclosure of its detail prematurely risked prejudicing the council's position both with respect to the funding competition and delivery of the scheme.

Elected representatives have been updated throughout the process and invited to comment and feedback on the proposals.

Question 2:

The report refers to the Council being "in control". How does this sit with statutory consultation on the Local Plan Review? How much housing and what development options are proposed in the Local Plan Review?

Response:

The statement has no bearing on statutory consultation on the Local Plan Review, it refers to the council as a landowner, not the planning authority.

Question 3:

The February 2017 Inspector's report into the CSAP at point 86 makes references to such a road stating twice "if required".

Response:

It is not entirely clear what the question is, however there is a general recognition that if a further growth for Chippenham is planned, it will need to be underpinned by the necessary infrastructure including highways.

Question 4:

Is it the intention of the Council to present a fait accompli about funding for a distributor road to the east and south of Chippenham before there is any public consultation through the Local Plan Review?

Response:

In developing an option to be considered by the Local Planning Authority, viability and deliverability are factors the LPA (and subsequently a Planning Inspector) will consider. It is prudent therefore that the council maximises opportunities for enabling funding.

Question 5:

Will having funding in place for distributor roads means options for development to the east have an in-built advantage over other options?

Response:

The Council, as Local Planning Authority, will consider all options impartially against agreed criteria.

Question 6:

Point 37 at the end of the Report it states...if successful the council will engage fully with Citizens in a consultation exercise..... What good will that be when the decisions have all been taken and the CPO's deployed where necessary?

Response:

Decisions will not be taken prior to public consultation on the proposals.

Question 7:

By the time the development is needed, post 2026, will transport (now higher than energy as the highest source of CO2 emissions) planning have totally changed within the Council?

Response

It is problematic to predict what the council's future transport planning policy, since technology and economic conditions evolve rapidly. However, it is not considered that the principles of transport policy (as opposed to changes in fuelling) will have changed so dramatically that it undermines the principles of the proposed scheme.

Question 8:

This proposal needs to go to Scrutiny and Full Council.

Response:

Today's report to cabinet members is intended to prepare the ground so that in the event that the scheme can go forward that all scrutiny and governance requirements are fully in place.