

**Wiltshire Council**

**Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

**29 September 2020**

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**Questions about Item 7 - Report of the Global Warming & Climate Emergency  
Task Group – Part 1**

**From Bill Jarvis**

**Statement**

This report, although long in the making, is an excellent reflection of the need for the Council to act and act now.

The depth of the review and the many references to work going on elsewhere in the country is real food for thought for the wider community in Wiltshire.

The final report should be shared as widely as possible.

**Policy, People and Plan**

The report needs clarity on “policy, people and plan”

**First**, to make anything happen, all the recommendations need adopting as Council policy.

Cabinet Members should be urged to take ownership.

**Second**, the work needed to deliver these is immense, and this is only 2 of 6 areas.

The Head of Carbon Reduction now has a team, but without the whole Council signed up to them, it will not happen.

**And...** delivery needs to be measurable over time.

Setting a 2030 goal without stages will not work. A detailed plan needs to be developed with measurable targets set. Each element of delivery owned by Members and Officers.

**Transport**

Can I suggest, an integrated **travel and transport(goods)plan** is needed, rather than a piecemeal approach to each mode of transport. **ALL** modes can then be part of a whole, not isolated pieces in a jigsaw.

Para 90 speaks of reducing car use and replanning investment in travel infrastructure to move away from the obsession with roads.

An integrated travel and transport plan would refocus the infrastructure need and investment to deliver the best for everyone.

## **Energy**

Council owned land for energy generation is an excellent plan, but please make it wider, also supporting communities in creating “Energy Farms” to include storage and hydrogen generation/supply.

### **Question 1**

Will the Committee agree to:

- a) change the request to the Cabinet Members from “considers implementing” to “implements”, “adopts” or similar words?
- b) Include a specific section on Integrated Travel and Transport and the infrastructure driven by this?

### **Response:**

The task group makes recommendations which the Executive will then consider. The task group will consider the suggestion of including a section regarding integrated transport. The task group’s recommendations on transport planning (including road building) will be covered in a subsequent report.

### **Question 2**

#### **Will the Committee:**

- a) Include the use of Council land to create “EnergyFarms” for generation and storage including hydrogen generation, and a commitment to support communities with the same aims?
- b) confirm that they will request of Cabinet that these recommendations are made policy in all Council operations.

### **Response**

The task groups recommendations regarding revising the assessment of Wiltshire’s renewable energy options and the comparative economic analysis of return on investment should encompass future possibilities such as ‘energy farms’.

The task group is aware that the recommendations present difficult choices around priorities and implementation. Executive will need to assess whether recommendations become policy.

## From Brig Oubridge

### Question 1

Noting item 46 on page 11 of the report, and the recommendation 16 on page 23, under the Electric & Hydrogen Vehicles sub-section of the Transport & Air Quality section of the report, “[that the Council] Investigates the merits/ feasibility of introducing a workplace car parking levy (with safeguards that ensure viable alternative travel options and mitigate impact on lower paid employees)”, and further noting that

a) such Workplace Parking Levies are not restricted solely to employee parking places, but are also applicable to customer parking;

b) such levies can apply differentially according to the number of parking places each business possesses (so that, for example, the Nottingham levy applies only to those with more than ten parking places);

c) the growth of out-of-town retail has been damaging to town centres, and is a major generator of additional car use for shopping trips, and thus of carbon emissions and other forms of air pollution;

d) the traffic generated by out-of-town superstores is frequently the cause of major congestion (such as that on the Salisbury ringroad and Southampton Road), which further exacerbates the problem of emissions and can lead to increasing use of surrounding residential roads as “rat runs”;

e) in the case of Salisbury's Southampton Road retail area, this is served by a frequent but under-used bus service operated by new electric buses, so that the funds generated could be used to finance making those services free to users as a further incentive to increase take-up, and any necessary consequential further improvements to the frequency of buses serving the affected retail areas; and

f) exemptions to the levy could be used to incentivise business owners to provide EV charging points in their customer carparks, powered by solar PV panels on carpark walkways, as envisaged for Council carparks in recommendation 15 on page 23 of the report;

will the Council give serious and urgent consideration to, and carry out a detailed feasibility study of, implementing such a levy scheme for Southampton Road, Salisbury, and any other similarly suitable locations elsewhere in the county, incorporating the additional benefits listed above?

### Response:

This is a question that would need to be put to Cabinet in the light of the task group recommendations.

## **Question 2**

Whilst the report observes at para 35 on page 10 that “Improved fuel efficiency of road vehicles has been more than offset by growth in traffic and road building schemes which perpetuate the situation, as evidenced by reports showing how traffic increases in the vicinity of new road schemes”, Wiltshire Council continues to support new road schemes, particularly through its involvement in the Western Gateway Alliance, and the report contains no recommendations for addressing this.

Will Wiltshire Council therefore review its current support for major road building plans with a view to discontinuing such support and replacing it by support for measures to reduce the need and demand for road transport in all its forms?

### **Response:**

This question will be referred to the Executive for response.

## From Shirley McCarthy

### Question 1

The major emphasis on retrofitting of residential property is in sharp contrast to the brevity of the reference to new-build housing, where the focus (pg 18 recommendations 1 - 3) is on achieving net zero carbon [nzc] by 2030 in council housing. In fact there are savings to be had, in terms of not needing to retrofit almost immediately, if from now onwards homes are built nzc?

### Response

The task group's further recommendations on spatial planning (including planning policies and new-build housing) will be covered in a subsequent report.

### Question 2

Pg 19 recommendations 1 and 5 on private housing; why not use data that must already be to hand from the Centre for Sustainable Energy's operation of the fuel poverty alleviation scheme in Wilts plus the known number of off-gas households? WC help with a facilitation scheme for private householders in off-gas areas to use the Renewable Heat Incentive would pull in national resources and target funding and effort. Perhaps this could be combined with a Green Homes initiative?

### Response

This question will be referred to the Executive for response.

### Question 3

Pg 20 recommendation 10; how does WC intend to "Actively participate in Government consultations on the proposed changes to legislation and regulation in relation to energy efficiency and renewable energy generation in buildings..... for decarbonisation?

### Response

This question will be referred to the Executive for response.

### Question 4

Pg 26: Does WC regard the current level of air quality monitoring as adequate?

### Response

This question will be referred to the Executive for response.