

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

21 February 2023

Item 18 – Members’ Questions

From Cllr Dr Brian Mathew – Box & Colerne Division

To Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council

Question (23-02)

- a) Whether there has been any attempt to link with ‘Visit Wiltshire.co.uk’?
- b) Given that Wiltshire already has a website for its Towns called Visitwiltshire.co.uk which is paid for by the various Town Council's Tourist information Centres can the Wiltshire Council version be described as an unneeded and unwarranted ‘vanity project’ that is actually damaging to Wiltshire’s market towns, because by the use of our scant funds raised from the residents of Wiltshire’s Council Tax, in this profligate way, it is discouraging residents and outsiders from visiting due to the parking charges which have seemingly been brought in to pay for it?

Response:

VisitWiltshire are aware of the development of the Towns Programme. In particular, we recognise that we are communicating with different audiences – VisitWiltshire seeks to support the tourism economy, while the Towns Programme targets a more local catchment area, in particular our own residents. Feedback from residents has been that they do not naturally check a tourism website, and they use a number of sources to find out what is happening, including community Facebook pages, town websites and event advertisers such as Eventbrite

We have discussed the outcomes of the Towns Programme with town councils and many of them have expressed a wish to increase their event marketing or enhance their branding to drive footfall. The programme is designed to respond to a shared understanding between Wiltshire Council and our town councils about what is required to support high streets.

The query around parking charges has been considered below.