

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**10 December 2019**

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**Statement and Question from Lou Barry**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Richard Clewer – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing, Climate Change and Military-Civilian Integration**

**Statement**

The most recent research (for example this newly updated Zero Carbon Britain report from the long established and highly respected Centre for Alternative Technology): <https://www.cat.org.uk/info-resources/zero-carbon-britain/research-reports/zero-carbon-britain-rising-to-the-climate-emergency/> states that the UK needs to reduce Carbon emissions from transport by at least 60% by 2035.

Wiltshire Councillors stated at Council Nov 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019 that the solution was to switch to electric or hybrid vehicles. However, this approach to reducing emissions is grossly inadequate, as shown by provisional work carried out by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research. Even if all new cars/buses/taxis were \*ULEVs by 2035 (80% battery electric, 20% plug-in hybrids), a 58% reduction in car mileage between 2016 and 2035 would be needed for car CO2 emissions to be in line with a 'well below 2°C' pathway (i.e. in line with the Paris agreement).

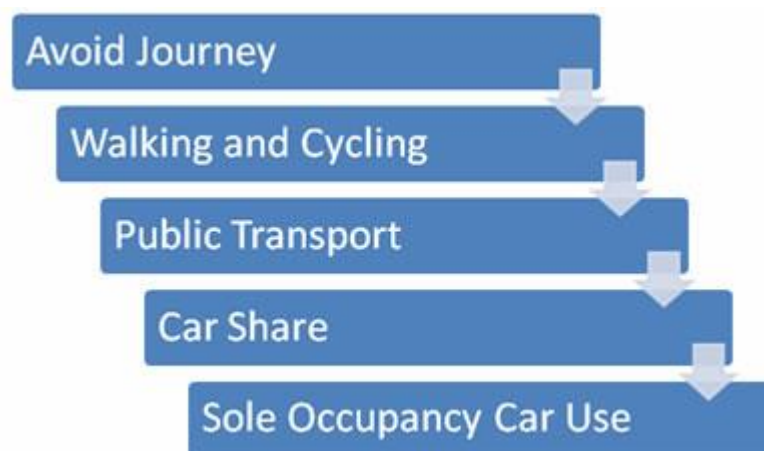
**Question**

How will Wiltshire Council seek to reduce car mileage in Wiltshire by 2035 in line with the Paris agreement, and promote truly sustainable transport options in the county?

**Response**

Sustainable development and sustainable transport have been at the heart of the council's core strategy and local transport plan for more than ten years. Over this time:

- a plethora of improvements have been made to footpath and cycle networks as a result of development funded works;
- in contrast to most other shire local authority areas, the vast majority of supported bus services have been retained by funding from revenue income from parking charges;
- working with partners, improvements have been made to a number of rail stations and a significantly enhanced Trans Wilts train service was introduced;
- to mitigate the impact of housing growth, transport strategies have been developed in Chippenham, Devizes, Salisbury and Trowbridge; and
- Wiltshire Council staff are advised to follow a hierarchy when planning trips (see below) including working from home and using Skype.



The above and other transport-related measures have contributed to Wiltshire being identified by Friends of the Earth as the top performing local authority in England and Wales on climate change (see <https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/download/league-table-local-authority-performance-climate-change>).

To support Salisbury, the SWLEP has allocated funding a Salisbury Transforming Accessibility project. This will aim to take forward the Salisbury Central Area Framework’s objective to deliver ‘people friendly streets’. It is likely that the Transforming Accessibility project will provide the framework for developing and delivering similar projects in other market towns in Wiltshire (subject to available funding).

The Council is currently progressing a Local Plan 2036 review and allied to this will shortly be developing its fourth Local Transport Plan also to 2036 (LTP4). As part of the LTP4, an evidence base document will be produced which will set-out relevant economic, environmental and social information. This and other relevant information will be used to inform an Issues and Options paper which will be used to consult with

key stakeholders next year. Feeding into this process will be the findings of the Environment Select Committee which has been set-up to develop recommendations and a plan to achieve the ambition to 'Seek to make the County of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030' included in the motion agreed by full council at its meeting on 26 February 2019.

The above motion also included a 'Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible'. Associated with this is the reality of Wiltshire as a predominately rural area. This rurality is reflected in key Government documents and processes. For example, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that "...opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making" and the Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy document includes that "...[the Government] will explore the specific challenges and opportunities for rural transport with a Future of Mobility: Rural Strategy" [yet to be published]. This context is likely to mean that, while the council will work with relevant partners to achieve modal shift to sustainable transport modes in Wiltshire's market towns, in the rural areas the approach is likely to be focused on encouraging the increased take up of zero/low emission vehicles.