

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 June 2021

Agenda Item 9 – Re Procurement of Electricity and Gas Contract

Question from Karen Crawford

To Councillor Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Finance & Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation

Question 1 - (21-231)

As part of their commitment to net zero will the Council be purchasing it's electric and energy from renewable sources?

Response:

The electricity being purchased in the new contract comes from hydro, wind and solar power, backed by REGOs which are in contract with the supplier who buys them (so they are not just purchased through the open market, there is a relationship between the supplier and the generation).

Question 2 - (21-232)

As a local business has Green Energy UK been approached to supply the energy?

Response:

Yes, we approached Green Energy UK and also Good Energy as part of the scoping phase of the procurement. The services required by the council include management services, ancillary services, and specific purchasing strategies. These ensure a cost effective and efficient energy contract. A direct contract with a supplier was found to be unable to provide the level of services required compared to those offered by contracting through a framework and as such a framework is the recommended route to market in this case.

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Question from Andrew Nicolson

To Councillor Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Finance & Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation

Statement

I am pleased that the Council is taking its Climate Emergency 2030 Carbon Neutral target and its Carbon Reduction team's advice into account, and seeking to quickly reduce its energy carbon footprint. Early reductions have more effect on global warming than later ones, and of course set a better example to the Wiltshire economy as a whole, which the Council's resolution crucially also targets for carbon neutrality by 2030. I still have some concerns and queries:

2. (i) In the gas and electricity procurement process, what specific relative weights have been given to the carbon neutral targets, via 'Access to green tariffs'; and to the other factors of: 'Quality of service'; 'Cost'; and 'Accuracy and verification of billing', and what evidence base was used?

(ii) What energy-based carbon reduction profile over time does the Council envisage, across the proposed 3 years + 2 procurement timescale and up to or after 2030 - e.g. a steady linear reduction, an early big reduction, or a later big reduction, and will the Council have full control over this?

Question 1 - (21-233)

- a) When are the earliest dates that the Council could possibly switch over to near-100% green gas, or reduce gas consumption to near-zero?

Response:

The council has an aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2030 and as such is developing projects in various areas of the council that will reduce gas consumption for heating buildings. The alternative heating solutions that are currently available rely on electrical grid services being reinforced and updated

which is outside of the council control. E.g. to de-gas a heating system you can install a heat pump which runs on electricity, but this requires the amount of electricity to site to increase which the grid infrastructure has to be able to cope with.

Green Gas is currently available but the cost uplift is 10x that of green electricity at current market rates. This will be reviewed as part of ongoing contract management and planning.

- b) (ii) in considering green tariffs, has the Council taken into account the problem that electricity generation biofuels such as pelletised timber, often imported, are not carbon neutral on a timescale from now to 2030, 2040 or 2050, since it is derived from northern forest clearances that cannot be regrown to maturity within those timescales (with consequent biodiversity impacts), and will the proposed contract enable the council to exclude that class of energy sources from its electricity supplies?

Response:

The green tariff for electricity that the council is appointing is derived solely from hydro, wind and solar renewables, not biomass related.

Question 2 - (21-234)

- a) In the gas and electricity procurement process, what specific relative weights have been given to the carbon neutral targets, via 'Access to green tariffs'; and to the other factors of: 'Quality of service'; 'Cost'; and 'Accuracy and verification of billing', and what evidence base was used?

Response:

The council specified a list of 20+ minimum requirements for the new contract and any provider that could not meet all of these requirements was discounted.

The two providers that remained were invited to submit a Request for Information response via procurement which contained 8 weighted questions in the four areas identified. The responses to those questions were evaluated and moderated to select the winning contractor.

The weightings for each question are given below:

Number	Question	Numerical Weighting	Percentage Weighting
7.1	Access to green tariffs	2	10%
7.2	Implementation plan	2	10%
7.3	Bill validation	3	15%
7.4	Purchasing flexibly within a set budget	3	15%
7.5	Assistance for site works	3	15%
7.6	Costs of managed contracts	2	10%
7.7	Monthly performance against market average over the last 5 years	3	15%

7.8	Alignment to Wiltshire Council's carbon neutral commitment	2	10%
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- b) (ii) What energy-based carbon reduction profile over time does the Council envisage, across the proposed 3 years + 2 procurement timescale and up to or after 2030 - e.g. a steady linear reduction, an early big reduction, or a later big reduction, and will the Council have full control over this?

Response:

The council is currently undertaking a 3 year programme of energy efficiency and carbon reduction projects in our operational buildings which has a target to reduce building emissions by 25%. As with all energy and carbon management the influence of the weather, building usage and building disposals will have a year on year effect on emissions.

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Agenda Item 13 – Porton Science Park – Further Fit Out

Question from Karen Crawford

**To Councillor Richard Clewer – Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing; and
Cllr Pauline Church - Cabinet Member for Finance & Procurement, Commissioning, IT, Digital and Commercialisation**

Question 1 - (21-235)

What are the plans for public engagement in science through the new science park? Will the companies there, for example, be taking work experience students and school visits. Will they have apprenticeship schemes in place. Are there any plans for a Wiltshire science museum?

Response:

Wiltshire Council continue to disseminate news published on PSP's website where PSP and current tenant's innovation updates are published. It would not be practical to "open PSP's doors" to the public - for example for tours; the site is located at Porton Down and we have an obligation to maintain a safe and secure (access controlled) premises for all tenants and staff.

We have been working with Dstl, PHE and PBL to explore hosting STEMM school careers fairs (for Year 11, 12 and 13 pupils in schools in the south Wiltshire area) at PSP. So far this was put on hold because of lockdown. PSP's current H&S guidance document precludes work experience opportunities for pupils aged 16 and under.

Currently, several tenants are availing a year's industrial placement/internship (or 2 to 6 weeks' work experience) to second year undergraduate students for practical experience as well as to support their continued learning to then hire former interns upon the successful completion of their respective degrees in Life Sciences or Engineering (typically, Computer Science).

We are not aware of any plans for a Wiltshire science museum.