

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**15 July 2024**

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**Agenda Item 5 - Public Participation**

**Question from Cllr Allison Bucknell – Lyneham Division**

**To**

**Cllr Nick Holder – Cabinet Member for Highways, Street Scene and Flooding**

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**Statement**

**FLOODING INFRASTRUCTURE**

A number of properties in my Lyneham Division experienced flooding for the first time in October 2023.

The residents of those properties have had a dreadful time and whilst the Government has provided some access to grant funding for “betterment” of protection of the properties from future flooding, there is naturally great concern every time heavy rainfall is predicted.

I am grateful for the £1 million of additional funding that Wiltshire Council has invested into flood prevention work, which should help to keep our existing infrastructure in good order.

**Question (24-37Q)**

With the prediction of changing weather patterns in the future, and the increased likelihood of a re-occurrence of storms such as Babet and Henk, what is government doing at both national and local level to ensure that the highways and associated infrastructure in Wiltshire is better able to cope with more intense rainfall, thus reducing the risk of properties flooding?

**Response**

The National Flood Risk Authority is the Environment Agency (EA). Wiltshire Council as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) is currently investigating numerous locations across the County with a view to identifying flood risk and possible mitigation measures. The Council’s Drainage Team are looking at local initiatives with Town & Parish Councils to address local flood risk issues. Work is undertaken in close cooperation with other statutory bodies. We are awaiting the new governments intentions on the long-awaited introduction of SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) Approval Boards under Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water management act 2010 that will bring about a significant change in how new developments deal with flood risk.

SuDS are drainage solutions that provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses. Examples are attenuation ponds, swales, infiltration basins, and permeable paving.

**Agenda Item 5 - Public Participation**

**Question from Margaret Willmot**

**To**

**Clr Tamara Reay – Cabinet Member for Transport and Assets**

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**Statement**

A Freedom of Information Request<sup>[i]</sup> earlier this year asked Wiltshire Council [WC] whether the authorities LTP contained targets for “Reductions in the volume, or rate of growth, of car or motor-vehicle traffic in your area (or any part of it)?”, to which WC responded ‘No’.

However this response does not tally with the commitments made in respect of the adopted Core Strategy:

1. The Salisbury Transport Strategy forms part of LTP3 (see LTP3 Strategy<sup>[ii]</sup>, page vi), so the Freedom of Information request covers this document also.
2. At the request of the Inspector (see Main Modification 49) the Wiltshire Core Strategy adopted on 20 January 2015<sup>[iii]</sup> contains the following under Salisbury Area Strategy, para 5.112 *“transport solutions will be delivered in accordance with the evolving Salisbury Transport Strategy, and will support growth, as concluded through the Options Assessment Report, based on the radical option identified which would best enable Salisbury to meet the challenges of addressing future growth in travel demand in a sustainable manner.”*
3. The Options Assessment Report dated January 2010, which appears to be the one referred to by the Inspector, contains the statement that *“The Radical Option, when compared against the Do-Nothing Scenario results in a 6% decrease in daily car trips but a 29% increase in daily public transport trips. This is a result of increase parking charges, increased public transport provision and, the Smarter Choices initiatives, that will lead to more walking and cycling to the city centre. The overall affect of the Radical Option results in 2% more trips to the city centre.”* [OAR, para 6.6]
4. Monitoring of the Core Strategy was considered particularly important to the Inspector *“To be sound, the CS must be effective. The effectiveness of any plan is partly dependent upon the means by which its implementation is managed. The effective use of monitoring against suitable benchmarks is a key means by which the success of a plan may be gauged. I view such matters of particular importance”*<sup>[iv]</sup> [para 421]

5. Core Policy 63 identifies how Transport Strategies will facilitate sustainable development growth. The Inspector referred to the indicators which would be used to measure the effectiveness of these strategies and it was understood that the Monitoring Framework would contain these indicators and that “*the stated indicators may need to be updated and reviewed in partnership with interested bodies to ensure the efficacy of the policy;*” [See Inspectors report, ref Endnote 4, para 427.]
  
6. There is no Monitoring Framework or Annual Monitoring Report available on Wiltshire Council’s website<sup>[iv]</sup>. However, the conclusions drawn from the statements and documents presented to the Inspector into the current Core Strategy, and summarised in his report, are that:
  - The expectation was that targets and indicators relevant to each Core Strategy policy would be stated in the Monitoring Framework and reported on in the Annual Monitoring Report.
  - The Salisbury Transport Strategy documents presented to the Inspector contained targets - e.g. reduction in car use, increase in public transport use – and that these would be monitored.

<sup>[ii]</sup> [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/local\\_transport\\_plan\\_status\\_targ\\_73#incoming-2612591](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/local_transport_plan_status_targ_73#incoming-2612591)

<sup>[iii]</sup> <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/localtransportplan3>

<sup>[iii]</sup> <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-core-strategy>

<sup>[iv]</sup> Inspector’s report available in Council papers for meeting on 20/1/2015, see <https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=9300>, item 8

<sup>[v]</sup> <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-monitoring-evidence>

### **Question (24-38Q)**

Have Wiltshire Council now abandoned the targets for switching to sustainable transport modes in Salisbury which were promised in the Salisbury Transport Strategy and which they committed to when the current Core Strategy went to public examination?

### **Response**

The Council has not abandoned the targets for switching to sustainable transport modes in Salisbury. The council are currently in the process of reviewing and updating the Local Transport Plan to take into consideration not only the proposals put forward through the Local Plan Review but also to ensure that the Transport Policies and Strategies are relevant. Stakeholder engagement took place in July 2023 to identify the challenges, objectives and Vision and will be used to inform the development of LTP4 which will set-up the new Policy direction up to 2038. The plan is currently scheduled to be formally consulted on towards the end of 2024.

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**Agenda Item 5 - Public Participation**

**Question from Dr Jimmy Walker – Salisbury Active Travel**

**To**

**Cllr Tamara Reay – Cabinet Member for Transport and Assets**

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**Statement 1**

Dear Cllr Reay, I have provided some background and some questions, and I thank you and your colleagues in advance for taking time to provide answers and information.

LCWIPS

I note from your response to my questions submitted for the WC Cabinet meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> May that you stated that “A Cabinet Member report is being prepared for the Salisbury LCWIP to approve the amendments to the LCWIP following the previous public consultation. This will be produced in May 2024 with the publication of the LCWIP following shortly after”

Salisbury residents have been waiting over two years for the publication of this document and we feel completely let down by the inability of Wiltshire council to produce an LCWIP for Salisbury. During the 2022 consultation COGS were very critical of the LCWIP for Salisbury as it was not fit for purpose and did not reflect those LCWIPS that were prepared by WS Atkins elsewhere in Wiltshire that identified critical and key routes to improve safety for those walking and wheeling.

As a council you claim that you are prioritising active travel and you were recently quoted in the Salisbury Journal on the 7<sup>th</sup> May stating that “We are committed to promoting more walking and cycling in our Business Plan and making travel by foot or bike easier, in order to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and cut carbon emissions.”

**Question (24-39Q)**

Are you in a position to update on when the Salisbury LCWIP will be published as we are very keen to work with you and your colleagues to improve the walking and cycling infrastructure in Salisbury.

**Response**

Yes. The aim is to publish the Salisbury LCWIP by September 2024.

**Question (24-40Q)**

What monitoring are Wiltshire Council using to measure demonstrative improvements in active travel in terms of the number of pedestrians and those wheeling in an around Salisbury in response to changes in infrastructure.

### **Response**

The Council is using state of the art camera monitoring technology which allows active travel modes, as well as motorised traffic modes, to be monitored.

### **Question (24-41Q)**

In relation to your statement in the Salisbury Journal on the 7 July what measures are you using indicate improvements in air quality, reductions in road congestion and cutting carbon emissions?

### **Response**

The Council uses a range of techniques to monitor changes on the network and this includes specific equipment for air quality and traffic counts. The monitoring we undertake informs policy revision and development and ensures value for money when delivering transport improvements in line with our Business Plan priorities.

### **Question (24-42Q)**

What air quality measurements are being undertaken in Salisbury and how do you intend that the measure you are introducing will improve air quality in the city.

### **Response**

With regard to the first part of the question, air quality monitoring currently centres on nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates.

Exceedances of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide led to the declaration of an air quality management area.

Nitrogen dioxide is measured at number sites across the city where:

- Experience has shown that the objective is likely to be breached or is being breached i.e. canyon like streets that are heavily trafficked, with accommodation opening directly onto the street or with very small front amenity spaces between the residence and public highway.
- There is relevant exposure e.g. residential accommodation.

Where possible the Council monitor at the façade of a property in accordance with detailed guidance issued by DEFRA on use of diffusion tubes. There is also a real time monitoring station located in Exeter Street which measures oxides of nitrogen and fine particulates

Data is published on the Air Quality England website.

With regard to the second part of the question about the impact of measures, modelling was carried out of selected measures in the development of the [Wiltshire Air Quality Action Plan](#) .

## Statement 2

Salisbury city centre

At a previous WC Cabinet meeting I enquired when will Wiltshire Council start to implement long term and sustainable active travel strategies in Salisbury city centre to manage the excessive traffic flow and gridlock that is currently blighting active travel and economic commerce in the city centre.

The response I received was that “The main emphasis of the Salisbury LCWIP is to identify, prioritise and deliver schemes that have the most potential to increase active travel, particularly via modal shift from car trips. Wider traffic management proposals to control movements across the city will be considered where there is clear evidence of local support.”

Control of traffic in the city centre is part of the Salisbury Transportation Plan of which the LCWIP is only component. By your very own admission WC will not be delivering the Salisbury LCWIP until the end of the 2025/26 financial year and therefore we can discount the LCWIP process as having any impact on improving active travel in the short term.

You replied that “Wider traffic management proposals to control movements across the city will be considered where there is clear evidence of local support.”

WC has previously generated significant evidence on this matter.

To recap, the key points from the Salisbury Central Area Framework Public Consultation Report (Jan - Feb 2020) ([Salisbury Central Area Framework - Wiltshire Council](#)) were as follows:

- Wiltshire Council carried out a 6-week period public consultation from 16th January to 28th February 2020.
- Two extensive public exhibitions were held during the first two weeks of the consultation period. Both were very well attended.
- Over the consultation period 312 consultation responses were received from a range of residents/stakeholders.
- There was a considerable level of support for the CAF and the projects and initiatives being consulted on:

84% in support of developing a 'street hierarchy' to prioritise streets and spaces for pedestrians and cyclists over cars.	63% in support of consolidating city centre car parking and improving Park & Ride facilities.	84% in support of improving the urban environment of Fisherton Street.
91% in support of delivering a River Park.	91% in support of exploring opportunities to repurpose empty or underused buildings deliver workspaces and residences.	91% in support of improving opportunities for engagement with and enjoyment of Salisbury's rivers and meadows.
90% in support of enabling temporary/pop-up uses in vacant buildings and supporting activity in the Market Place.	88% in support of enhancing the railway station area.	85% in support of exploring ways to improve the appearance and quality of Salisbury's historic shop frontages.
86% in support of delivering improved pedestrian and cycling wayfinding infrastructure.	70% in support of delivering new public art in the city.	63% in support of defining character areas in Salisbury's central area.

In the WC Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on the 26 August 2020 the following recommendations were agreed.

#### Recommendation

24. It is recommended that the Salisbury Central Area Framework, as attached at Appendix A, and subject to any other minor alterations required to improve its clarity, is:
- Recognised as an evidence-based document to inform the Local Plan Review, emerging Salisbury Neighbourhood Plan and future planning guidance; and
  - Endorsed as a material consideration in the making of planning decisions.

**Simon Hendey**

**Director of Housing & Commercial Development**

**Sam Fox**

**Director of Economic Development and Planning**

There is unequivocal and demonstrative statistically significant data from the results of the WC previous consultation process that the majority of residents want a street hierarchy that prioritises a hierarchy for those and wheeling.

#### Question (24-43Q)

Based on the facts that WC have unambiguous support of the majority of Salisbury residents to prioritise walking and wheeling in the city centre why is WC not implementing measures to alleviate the constant gridlock in the city that is impacting on public health.

#### Response

Significant investment has and continues to be made in projects across the City that align within the supported CAF priorities. Specific traffic management proposals to control movements across the city will be considered where there is clear evidence of local support.

### **Statement 3**

Avon Valley Path – Salisbury:

The current walking and wheeling route along Avon Valley Path is currently closed after Nelson Road towards to the city centre. A clear theme that emerged from the LCWIP consultation process was the concern over existing shared use paths and the strong desire for segregated walking and cycling infrastructure along with improving maintenance of existing facilities.

As I highlighted in my questions at the Cabinet meeting of 7th May the current route along the Avon Valley Path is too narrow to support walking and wheeling under the arch – it is important that an alternative route is identified as soon as possible to ensure that a high quality walking and wheeling can be implemented for pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchair users.

Your response was as follows “The proposed alternative route is via Kivel Court and then along the access road into the Central Car Park through the third railway arch that is currently leased to a third party. The scheme is subject to the council taking over the lease and discussions with the third party are taking place.”

It is likely that your discussions with the third party will be protracted

#### **Question (24-44Q)**

When do WC anticipate that discussion with the third party will finish, and you will take over the lease for the third railway arch that is currently leased to a third party?

#### **Response**

Engagement with the lease holder has taken place. Indications are that terms proposed by the lease holder would be unacceptable to the Council. Consequently, it is likely that there will be a need to consider alternative options.

#### **Question (24-45Q)**

What position is WC going to take if the discussions fail and the route of the third railway arch is not viable?

#### **Response**

If an agreement cannot be reached with the leaseholder the Council may seek to consider alternative options for providing a route and this would likely require a detailed feasibility study to be undertaken. Funding will need to be identified and secured to allow such a study to be taken forward.

The study of options available could include consideration of using the third arch subject to acceptable terms being agreed with the leaseholder; purchasing the land at the third arch; cantilevering over the river at the existing “low arch”; and developing options for the use and layout of the existing Central Car Park vehicular access through the railway arches.



#### **Statement 4**

Using google maps there is an area beside the road carriageway where cars currently park that could be used to provide cycling infrastructure for those wheeling to enter the city.

#### **Question (24-46Q)**

Have you considered this route to enable cycling infrastructure to be implemented in a reasonable time scale rather than waiting an indefinite period for discussions and consultation with third parties over the third railway arch?



#### **Response**

To allow this option to come forward, and as part of Traffic Regulation Order changes being developed in support of the River Park project, changes are anticipated regarding vehicle parking in this area. How cyclists could be safely and formally accommodated within the railway arches would need to be determined, and that option would likely be considered as part of any feasibility study into route options.

#### **Statement 5**

Bishopdown (Salisbury) has a 20mph zone that ends 50m prior to St Marks primary school.

**Question (24-47Q)**

What changes are WC going to implement to make travel by foot or bike easier, in order to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and cut carbon emissions in and around St Marks school and other schools in Salisbury?

**Response**

There are plans to introduce ANPR enforcement of the existing school keep clear markings in the vicinity of the Somerset Road school campus. There is an active Salisbury LHFIG scheme looking at this and a cost estimate was provided to the group for this work to be undertaken. Unfortunately, the group declined to support funding for this project and placed the project on hold pending the outcome of the wider discussion around funding priorities. One option for the delivery of this requested improvement would be for the Salisbury LHFIG to commit its available funding.

More generally St. Mark's School have recently submitted an application to the Council's Taking Action On School Journey's process looking at improvements that could be considered to address some of the issues mentioned in the statement. Investigation work in response to that application has recently commenced and will, in due course, identify potential measures that could be taken forward.

**Statement 6**

There is a very popular route from Old Sarum to St Marks School, however over the years this route has narrowed from 1.5m to less than 0.5m. This issue was raised with local councillors in Jan 2023 and issue was raised with LHFIG (Issue No: 12-23-05). This is one of a number of schemes that have been put forward to the Director of Highways as part of a bid for funding from the Salisbury Transport Strategy to deliver them and is supported by Cllr Bayliss and Cllr Wells in Salisbury.

We were informed at the Salisbury Highways Decision on whether funding will be allocated by the end of the current financial year.

**Question (24-48Q)**

Are WC in a position to make a decision to fund the widening of the Old Sarum to St Marks School path such that it is fit for purpose for those choosing to walk or wheel to school. We would value your input and opinion on the funding of these routes in Salisbury.



## Response

There is a Salisbury LHFIF scheme looking at widening the section of path in question. A cost estimate was provided to the group for this work to be undertaken. However, the group declined to support funding this project because it would require the vast majority of its annual budget allocation to be committed. The project is on hold pending wider discussion about funding priorities. One option for the delivery of this requested improvement would be for the Salisbury LHFIF to commit its available funding.

**Agenda Item 5 - Public Participation**

**Question from Alex Montegriffo – Devizes and District Foodbank**

**To**

**Cllr Phil Alford – Cabinet Member for Housing**

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**Question (24-49Q)**

What can Wiltshire Council do to address furniture poverty in their properties, specifically where tenants move into properties without carpets, other flooring, underlay, curtains or blinds (usually, flooring is only provided in kitchens and bathrooms), e.g. would the council consider changing fittings policies or providing furnished tenancies, which other local authorities provide? Furniture poverty is particularly pronounced in social housing, as 98% of properties are believed to be unfurnished in the UK (End Furniture Poverty).

**Response**

In its role as a Social Landlord, Wiltshire Council offers permanent accommodation and lifetime tenancies for unfurnished properties, this is normal practice across the social housing sector. When we prepare properties for re-let an assessment is made of the fixtures and fittings and wherever possible items that may be of use to the incoming tenant are left in situ. Offering furnished properties across our 5,300 housing stock would result in significant increased direct and indirect costs, and these would need to be recovered from tenants through increased rents.

Our approach is to target support where it is most needed. When we sign up a new tenant, we meet them face to face in the new property and our Housing Officers have the opportunity to assess and understand the tenants' circumstances. Where we are aware of tenants who are in challenging financial circumstances there is range of support offered by the Housing Team to assist those tenants with furnishing and moving into their new property. This includes accessing grants to buy essential floor coverings, furniture and white goods, and signposting them to charities and community groups who will also donate those items. We engage regularly throughout the initial tenancy period in order to ensure that the measures we have taken to support the tenant are effective.

Wiltshire Council also offers temporary accommodation. A large proportion of households who require temporary accommodation are moving from settled accommodation therefore already have furniture to utilise in temporary accommodation. We have a number of hostel units and houses of multiple occupancy that are furnished with white goods and/or basic furniture. For those households who do not have furniture, including flooring, our Tenancy Sustainment Officers support households to access local charities and grants for furniture and flooring at the earliest opportunity.

As part of Wiltshire Council's Rough Sleeper Initiative, we have secured grant funding from Central Government to help support our former rough sleepers to furnish offers of specific rough sleeper accommodation.

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**15 July 2024**

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## **Agenda Item 5 - Public Participation**

### **Question from Andrew Nicolson – Wiltshire Climate Alliance**

#### **To Cllr Tamara Reay – Cabinet Member for Transport and Assets**

#### **Question (24-50Q)**

##### **LTP4**

- a) What are your plans as to the method and timing of the council's new transport plan, LTP4, in terms of the use of consultants and synchronisation of an emerging plan with the Local Plan Review process?

##### **Response**

Stakeholder engagement on the Issues, Objectives and challenges for Wiltshire's emerging LTP4 was undertaken with Key Stakeholders in July 2023. Following on from this, the Council has been developing the details of the Plan with support from Consultants and the wider Highways and Transport service. An update will be given to stakeholders over the Summer and we plan to formally consult on the draft plan towards the end 2024, with adoption in Spring 2025.

- b) How will you be ensuring a high level of stakeholder engagement in LTP4 at the formative and subsequent stages, in particular with NGOs and neighbouring transport and highway authorities

##### **Response**

An update will be given to Stakeholders over the Summer informing them on progress made to date and plans for the Consultation as well as future opportunities to engage on the plan. We continue to engage regularly with the NGO's and Neighbouring Authorities on cross boundary issues through the Western Gateway Strategic Transport Body and other existing arrangements already in place

#### **Question (24-51Q)**

##### **LCWIPS**

- a) What is the current state of play with Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, LCWIPs, including the ones already drafted and the schedule for future rounds of LCWIPs?

##### **Response**

Status of LCWIPs can be found at <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1723/Local-Cycling-and-Walking-Infrastructure-Plans-LCWIPs>

- b) Do you accept that there are challenges and there is scope for improving stakeholder engagement in LCWIPs at the formative and subsequent stages, for community stakeholders including active travel interest groups?

##### **Response**

Stakeholder engagement is an essential element of LCWIP development and delivery – the Council is happy to consider where improvements might be made.

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**15 July 2024**

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**Agenda Item 5 - Public Participation**

**Question from Bill Jarvis**

**To**

**Cllr Nic Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning**

**Tamara Reay – Cabinet Member for Transport and Assets**

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**Statement**

**Wind Turbines**

The new government is proposing to remove the ban on onshore wind turbines, providing an opportunity for provision of turbines in Wiltshire.

The draft Local Plan, consulted on in 2023, did not include any areas suitable for these, although the consultant's (LUC) report issued with the plan gave excellent guidance to the council on where it would be appropriate to place turbines. (document reference below)

**Wiltshire Council Renewable Energy Study**

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

**Wiltshire Council**

**Final report** Prepared by LUC March 2023

**Question (24-52Q)**

Can you confirm that this guidance will be incorporated into the Local Plan, to enable plans for turbines to be developed in line with Government strategy.

**Response**

The response to the consultation and submission of the Local Plan will be considered by Cabinet and Council in October. The emerging Local Plan 'Policy 86 Renewable energy' has been informed by the LUC Renewable Energy Study and prepared in line with the national planning policy framework. It applies to all forms of renewable energy. The implications of any changes to national policy introduced by the new government will be considered in due course.

**Question (24-53Q)**

**LTP4**

As LTP4 is referenced in the Local Plan, can you confirm that LTP4 will be completed prior to the Local Plan Inspection.

**Response**

We plan to formally consult on the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP4) towards the end 2024, with adoption in Spring 2025.



