

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

1 December 2020

From Chris Caswill

To Cllr Philip Whitehead – Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications

Item 5 – Public Participation

Statement

Copies of HIF documents published by Essex County Council and Somerset West & Taunton Council are attached. You will see that both Councils have publicly discussed the requirements and risks and nothing has been retained from public sight. This is welcome transparency for their residents and is a striking contrast with Wiltshire Council's shameful hiding behind a so-called Part II Cabinet paper and secret discussion, in October this year.

Question 1

Will you undertake to share these documents with your Cabinet colleagues?

Response

Cabinet colleagues had access to reports to enable them to make the decisions.

Question 2

Do you now regret – and even have some sense of shame – for the comparative lack of transparency being shown by this Council and your administration?

Response

The Council has been led by advice from Homes England concerning release of documents and in addition has not made documents public where it would provide commercial advantage to third parties.

Question 3

Will you now agree to release the Part II paper and the full Minutes of the October Cabinet discussion, minimally redacted as absolutely necessary, but only to protect commercial confidentiality?

Response

The Part 2 paper contained financial information which if released would provide significant commercial advantage to third parties. It will not be possible to release that paper without significant redaction.