

Questions for Cllr Jane Scott – 8 February, Marlborough Area Board Meeting

Question

Elimination of landfill in this Area.

“As you know in the West the new plant at Westbury and in the South the Grundon plant at Colnbrook are designed to eliminate landfill. In this area there was a joint exercise with SBC which has come to nought. My question is, what technology is now being adopted by Wiltshire Council”

Answer

The Council has a goal in the corporate plan of reducing landfill to 25% or less of all municipal solid waste (MSW) by 2014. (MSW is all the waste collected by the council.)

In 2002/03 about 80% of Wiltshire’s waste was sent to landfill. Since then we have made much progress. During 209/10 the proportion of waste sent to landfill was less than 50% for the first time. In 2010/11 we expect our landfilled tonnage to be about 37%.

The main components of this improvement to date are as follows :-

- *Waste reduction – our MSW tonnage peaked in 2004/05 at about 265,000 tonnes. This year we expect a total tonnage of about 240,000.*
- *Increase in recycling - about 40% of Wiltshire’s household waste is recycled, compared with about 20% in 2002/03*
- *Other diversion projects – this year we will send about 8000 tonnes of wood waste to energy production and 50,000 tonnes to the Colnebrook energy from waste incinerator.*

Two further projects are close to implementation. The Westbury MBT plant is likely to be fully operational by 2012/13 and the council’s cabinet has approved further changes to waste and recycling collections, which should lead to a 50% recycling rate for household waste.

With these measures in place, we should achieve a landfill rate of well below 25%.

Since the termination of the Swindon project, the Council has been reviewing the need for a further project to divert waste from landfill. However, the decision to go ahead with the above projects, coupled with progress to date and the fact that waste tonnage has not grown as feared about 10 years ago,

mean that Wiltshire should achieve a very low landfill rate without the need for a further project, at least in the foreseeable future.

Due to falling tonnages elsewhere, waste from East Wiltshire is being sent to the Colnebrook plant and some will probably be sent to the Westbury plant.

The Council is intending to review its longer term waste strategy shortly.

Question

"There has been a significant fall in demand/price paid for recycled materials and this has undoubtedly led to the appalling mess generated at the recycling centre in George Lane due to insufficient collections and management.

At present we have some recycled materials collected whilst other materials have to be transported to recycling centres.

With the increased pollution generated by people having to travel (by car) regularly to the recycling centre, is it not time to abandon this process and introduce a scheme whereby all recycled materials can be collected from households in line with existing weekly/bi-weekly collections undertaken"

Answer

Our contractors report that recycle prices are fairly steady at the moment, apart from glass, which is low.

Recycling sites such as George lane, Marlborough, which have bins for plastic bottles and card, are subject to big fluctuations in use, with an enormous peak during the period after Christmas. The bins are emptied daily, but fill up very quickly. Whilst every effort is made to keep up during peak periods, this is not always possible. Residents are asked to delay visiting these sites at peak times if at all possible.

Two service improvements are likely to help with the situation at George Lane car park.

The first is the council's decision last October to introduce a fortnightly kerbside collection of plastic bottles and card, a component of the changes to waste and recycling collections in Wiltshire which were consulted upon during Summer 2010.

The second is the proposal by the council to open a household recycling centre at Salisbury Road Business Park, Marlborough. This will have larger

bins for plastic bottles and card, plus compression equipment. The site has a crew who will monitor demand and arrange collection of filled bins. This will replace the facility at George Lane car park. Site works at the household recycling centre are nearing completion.

The household recycling centres collect a very wide range of material, from car oil and batteries to wood. It would not be possible to collect all of these at

kerbside, but the council is proposing to collect the material most commonly available for recycling.

Question

"Will the Localism Bill have any impact at the small Parish Council level?"

"In the run up to the June 2009 unitary council election - Cllr Scott called for Councillors to act as "local champions". It is clear that the Localism Bill means that the role of mentor to Parish and Town Councils is now key to the success of the process. What steps are the Cabinet taking to provide both training and encouragement to Wiltshire Councillors to support and motivate PCs and TCs to look beyond getting the grass cut".

Answer

Since Cabinets approval in February 2010 to progress with Service Delegation Pilots, officers have worked with and continue to work with Town and Parish Councils on a range of potential delegations both large and small.

Many have combined an asset transfer or lease of an asset with the delegation of the service associated with its maintenance. The first of these to come to fruition was the transfer of the Castlefields Country Park (Calne) and its maintenance to Calne Town Council, approved by the Calne Area Board in October 2010.

On a smaller scale the South Western Area Board approved the transfer of allotments in Tisbury to the Town Council also in October 2010.

The Melksham Area Board approved the transfer of a sports field and pavilion to Melksham Without Parish Council who will assume full maintenance of the pitches, administer the bookings and receive the income.

Currently there are two major projects in progress: the potential transfer of Monkton Park, Chippenham to Chippenham Town Council, and the potential delegation of City cleaning services to Salisbury City Council.

Work also continues with other Town and Parish Councils involving the transfer of allotments, maintenance of highway verges and cleaning of public conveniences.

Providing financial support to Town and Parish Councils that have taken on delegated service has always been a key concern and in October 2010 Cabinet approved arrangements for the funding of delegated services.

The process is ongoing and Councils interested in taking on delegated services should contact Bob Chequer the project manager.

Following discussions at the Market Towns Meetings, a joint working group has been formed to examine the potential for the forward planning of service delegations and the development of capacity and infrastructure within local councils to deliver delegated services.

Question

These questions are asked on behalf of Home-Start Kennet:

"Services such as ours were previously funded at County level because they were considered to support statutory services. Our grant is now being cut. Will area boards be encouraged to fund local groups, such as ours, to ensure local families in need are not further disadvantaged? Are we eligible to apply for funding support? How might area boards help us convert the goodwill we know exists in the local community we have served (Kennet District) into sustainable financial support?"

Answer

The grants criteria adopted by the Council does not allow Boards to fund the running costs of local organisations – so we cannot replace core funding that has been withdrawn. However, Area Boards can and will consider specific

projects that benefit the community area but this must be a new, separate, time-limited project that relates solely to the community area concerned and not existing countywide services presented as a local project.

Question

What is the current remuneration for Wiltshire Council's CEO, deputy and chief officers?

Answers

Name	Post Title	Current Salary	Salary Range
<i>Mr A Kerr</i>	<i>Chief Executive</i>	<i>£183,000.00</i>	<i>£171,000 - £189,000</i>
<i>Ms MM Rae</i>	<i>Director – Public Health & Well Being</i>	<i>£118,433.00</i>	<i>£118,433 - £130,556</i>
<i>Dr C Brand</i>	<i>Director - Resources</i>	<i>£130,556.00</i>	<i>£118,433 - £130,556</i>
<i>Mrs C Godfrey</i>	<i>Director – Children & Education</i>	<i>£130,556.00</i>	<i>£118,433 - £130,556</i>
<i>Mr M Boden</i>	<i>Director – Neighbourhood & Planning</i>	<i>£122,477.00</i>	<i>£118,433 - £130,556</i>
<i>Mrs S Redmond</i>	<i>Director - Community Services</i>	<i>£130,556.00</i>	<i>£118,433 - £130,556</i>

How many of the 240 managers have been made redundant to date by Wiltshire Council?

221 posts are being deleted overall – to date 100 managers have left Wiltshire Council on voluntary redundancy and 41 posts are vacancies.

Have there been any voluntary redundancies from this group?

All redundancies so far are on a voluntary basis.

When is it anticipated that the 240 will have left the Council?

End of March.

Question

Some months ago Niki Lewis announced need for £500K cut in library funding. Question: Why was there no consultation with the PCs affected by the reduction of library services to a volunteer basis. I understand that Aldbourne will have RFID technology imposed but this should have been discussed beforehand as there are better and cheaper solutions more beneficial to the residents. As it is Wiltshire Council appears to have spent £500K to save £500K.

Answer

The Library Review started just over a year ago and focussed on creating a strong vision for the future of the service but at the same time taking account of the need to make £500,000 saving. As part of that process members of the Senior Library Management Team visited every Area Board to talk about what people wanted from their Libraries in the future. There was also other extensive consultation including over 20 focus groups, simple cards available to fill in in libraries and information on the website. Extensive consultation was undertaken to users and non-users of the service.

Unfortunately, just before the Libraries Review concluded we were faced with a very fast changing budget situation. The Comprehensive Spending Review has required the Council to make much more significant cost-saving and the Library Service had to be included in that. The Service has seen some management reduction like the rest of the council and had to increase its cost savings to 12% of its budget.

Our proposal is to run the 10 smaller libraries, which do around 3% of the total business of the Library Service, in partnership with volunteers. It does not mean handing the Libraries over to be run by the community but means maintaining professional librarian input, maintaining the book stock and ensuring all of the back office running of the Service is undertaken by a paid member of staff. In order to maintain the opening hours of our libraries we will be looking for volunteers to help with running the front of house and keeping the Library opening hours as they currently are.

RFID technology (self service machines as you may well know them) are widely used across the country and enable staff to use their time helping people in libraries rather than scanning and stamping books. They are now much more sophisticated machines and may well be used for a range of Council payments to be made in the future, again enabling libraries to offer other services to the community. Finally, we are trying to ensure that no libraries in Wiltshire have to close – we feel this is the best way forward.

