

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

4 February 2020

Statement and Question from Adrian Temple Brown

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation

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

Statement

I attended a public meeting in Calne last Monday which outlined the sound business objectives behind the successful HiF bid led by this cabinet. I learnt from Alan Rochelle that there is now a detailed model of a likely build-out which has been used to professionally estimate traffic flow, resident and worker demographics, house types, business areas and community support services.

The Cabinet as a whole accepts the science that man-made carbon dioxide emissions have driven global average temperatures upwards to the point that there is now a worsening Climate Crisis. Cabinet members are intelligent professionals and have hopefully all now taken time to learn in detail about carbon sources and carbon sinks.

Each of you will already know that using a tonne of cement costs roughly a tonne of carbon dioxide. You have a model, so you can estimate the carbon dioxide costs associated with construction of the houses *and* the road network associated with the HiF bid.

Each of you will already know that a cubic meter of organic soil can contain over 30% carbon molecules by volume and that one carbon molecule combines with two oxygen molecules to form carbon dioxide when soil. For each cubic meter of Wiltshire countryside soil that is moved for clearance or foundations may release around a tonne of carbon dioxide. You have a model, so you can estimate the carbon dioxide costs associated with construction of the houses and roads associated with the HiF bid.

Each of you will already know that a litre of fuel releases around 2Kg of carbon dioxide when burned. You have a model, so you can estimate the total amount of fuel used during construction of the roads and the estates and also the fuel used per annum by the residents driving along the spine road network for working and living on the development associated with the HiF bid.

This Cabinet has declared a Climate Crisis but is actively promoting business as usual. This cabinet has committed to making Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030 but has not estimated the Capital carbon cost of creating the Chippenham Eastern expansion, nor the annual ongoing Carbon cost of new residents living and driving on estates and roads where there are currently woods and fields.

The road and house building strategy being actively pursued by this cabinet is incompatible with your own declaration of a climate and ecological crisis and your strategy of growth is the opposite of your stated objective of achieving a carbon neutral Wiltshire by 2030.

Question 1

Could the Cabinet please commit to pausing the entire housing and road building programme in Wiltshire until the Carbon and Environmental costs of executing the Governments GDP growth policies have been estimated and published, using your model of the Chippenham Eastern expansion?

Response

Question 2

I understand that the Cabinet does not want to challenge the Government's legal policy of UK GDP growth at this time on environmental grounds and I understand the possible dire consequences of doing so. However, it is clear that you are proceeding with significant Road and House building on fields and woods in Wiltshire, without having any idea at all of the absolute Carbon Cost of construction, nor the absolute Carbon Cost of new residents & businesses 'living life' in the proposed development.

Will the Cabinet therefore move Urgently to force a line item to added to the programme's Project Plan (I understand this is overseen by Christine Lamb) that

requires the Carbon Costs associated with building out the full Chippenham Eastern Expansion (as a mature example of a Wiltshire countryside development) using your detailed development model to be reasonably estimated ?

As Shakespeare said and in relation to treating Wildlife and Countryside as a business resource “you know what you do”

Response