

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 June 2021

Agenda Item 5 – Future Chippenham / HIF

Question from Adam Walton

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question – (21-103)

'Future Chippenham' development of 7,500 homes to the South and East of Chippenham.

The Future Chippenham development is unanimously opposed by Chippenham Town Council, by the Chippenham MP and by large numbers of local people. It was no doubt a factor in the May local election results for Chippenham and surrounding areas which saw a significant swing away from the Conservatives in affected wards. Will Cabinet now consider postponing any future decisions on the development until the Wiltshire Local Plan update (which currently includes the development) is fully consulted on and published? The updated Local Plan will review housing need and supply across the whole of Wiltshire in the context of updated central government targets and policies, so it surely makes sense to delay any further consideration of the Chippenham development until the Local Plan update is completed.

Response

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Question from Alina Wolfe Murray

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question – (21-104)

Prior to the Wiltshire Council Cabinet meeting on 29 June, I am writing to you about the controversial plans for a housing development of 7,500 houses in Chippenham and a new road to serve it.

The plans have raised many concerns in the community, and were expressed at various levels. These included Chippenham Town Council, who rejected the proposals several times. More recently, Chippenham's MP Michelle Donelan voiced criticism, saying that "It is important that the interests of Chippenham's current residents are prioritised - yes we do need more affordable homes for families and young people to stay in the town but we certainly do not need 7500." (Link to article: <https://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/19372607.michelle-donelan-fight-housing-numbers-chippenham/>)

Is the Cabinet aware of these objections? What is the Cabinet's view about this? Surely the concerns raised by the residents of Chippenham should count when Wiltshire Council takes decisions that will affect them?

I'd appreciate it if the Council can announce the new timetable to publish the results of the consultation on the proposed road. It will also be helpful to understand why the publication has been delayed.

Response

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Question from Bill Jarvis – Wiltshire Climate Alliance

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement and Question – (21-105)

We are writing to complain about the process you have adopted for your Cabinet meeting on 29th June 2021.

Firstly, you have issued an update on the Local Plan Review with no advance notice to the public. You may not see this as a necessary step as you are not obliged to do so. However, on a matter so important to the County and its citizens it would surely be only reasonable to expect that the public would have an opportunity to review and then have a suitable time to ask questions or make statements.

Secondly, you issued the Cabinet meeting notice yesterday and then, unusually, state that ALL questions and statements have to be submitted by noon today. You have not even made the normal provision regarding questions and statements being submitted later.

How do you expect the public to be able to review and respond in 24 hours to a report that has probably taken a month to prepare and contains proposals that will impact the County for the next 10 years?

We ask that more time is given for the public to review this report and that the Cabinet debate on this is postponed in order that a sensible time is given for the public to respond.

Response

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Question from Brian Walker

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

I would like to highlight to Wiltshire Council Chippenham Town Council's continued unanimous rejection of the HIF road scheme and 7500 houses.

The newly elected town council confirmed its opposition at its Annual Council meeting on 19th May. Further, at Full council on the 17th June it resolved to send a letter to Wiltshire Council, Homes England and Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government, wholly opposing the construction of such a road and the use of HIF funding with the proposal for 7500 houses in the Avon and Marden Valley area defined by the proposed road routes.

I personally oppose the HIF bid for many reasons including...

1. Carbon Budget

The UK government has pledged to meet net zero carbon by 2050. Wiltshire County council and Chippenham Town council have both declared a Climate Emergency and aim for Chippenham to reach net zero by 2030.

I have calculated the fair carbon budget for Chippenham to be 1.69 megatonnes of CO₂ to achieve our portion of staying within the safe 1.5 degrees C global temperature rise. Chippenham's current carbon baseline is 440,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year. At that rate we have less than five years to get to net zero!

Current housing construction standards emit typical 50-80** tonnes of CO₂ per house build so the build of 7500 attached to the HIF bid alone will generate 375,000 tonnes of CO₂ using approximately 22% of the total remaining budget. This is before disturbed carbon in the soil and road building is accounted for plus additional car usage.

So It remains impossible for Chippenham to meet its 1.5 degree climate goal. We are planning to fail at the start of the most important decade to tackle climate change.

It is the first responsibility of a Council to safeguard the welfare of their citizens, including by taking reasonable measures to mitigate substantial threats.

Climate change is a grave threat to people around the world, jeopardising health, security and prosperity.

2. Climate Adaption

The land being built on is shown by Cranfield University as excellent farmland. Under adaption pathways published by the UK Climate Committee last week by 2080 we will likely reach summer temperatures over 40 degrees C in Wiltshire as regularly as we currently exceed 32 degrees C. In this scenario global food supplies are likely to be disrupted and it will become too hot to grow food in some countries.

Thus having local farmland available for future generations of Chippenham residents to grow food on is vital.

It is the first responsibility of the local government in a democratic society to protect and safeguard the lives of its citizens. Where there is a foreseeable risk of substantial harm, a local government will be under a duty of care to take reasonable steps to safeguard its citizens against that harm, and failing to take such steps will constitute a breach of that duty.

I argue that the risk of Climate change is known by Wiltshire Council given their own declared Climate emergency. The building on local historic farmland fails to take an adequate risk assessment of the future need for this land to grow food for future generations.

Question 1 (21-106)

Why has Wiltshire council continued during the consultation process to seek a Joint Venture (JV) partner offering county owned farm land to development partners? It is even prepared to offer land outside of Chippenham to seal the deal!

Response

Question 2 (21-107)

What steps are being taken to avoid corrupt practice in engaging a joint developer given potential for insider dealing and trading with land that we the people own?

Response

Question 3 (21-108)

Why does the Joint Development agreement look for only financial gain and take no account of sustainable development?

Response

Question 4 (21-109)

Why have the Future Chippenham team broken its promise to report the results of the HIF bid (Road) consultation within 12 weeks of consultation closure?

Response

Question 5 (21-110)

Prior to the election Cllr Clewer and other Conservative councillors said that the additional 5,000 houses Wiltshire had voluntarily taken on, would be removed from Wiltshire housing target and the Local Plan would be adapted in line with the significant consultation response. If the 5,000 houses are removed the target for Chippenham is significantly reduced and there is no need for the HIF bid.

Will Cllr Clewer now confirm 5000 houses have been removed from the housing target?

Response

Question 6 (21-111)

Is the Cabinet aware of Chippenham's MP withdraw of her support for the HIF road bid?

Response

Question 7 (21-112)

Will Cllr Clewer now publish the agreement with Homes England, as promised by Cllr Whitehead. If not, why won't the document be published? How can the public of Chippenham engage if these agreements are hidden and apparently created behind closed doors?

Response

Question 8 (21-113)

Why can't the council based in Trowbridge use a system that will allow the people of Chippenham to genuinely engage in the consultation process and ask questions?

Response

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Question from Bryant Vincent

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question 1 – (21-114)

In view of Wiltshire Council's so called improvements recently completed in Chippenham being seen as a complete waste of money will Wiltshire Council have the professional expertise to plan and implement a much more costly project in the building of a distributor road around the town should their HIF bid be successful ?

Government may refuse this bid when considering how Wiltshire Council has failed to consider objections to their plans, refused to engage with those who would be most affected and did not carry out proper surveys to decide the best way to improve traffic and other problems in Chippenham.

Wiltshire Council now needs to concentrate on regaining the respect / support of ratepayers and others in Chippenham before embarking on any more grandiose schemes .

Response

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Question from Cllr David Poole – Chippenham Town Council

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

As a member of the Chippenham Town Council May I take this opportunity to put forward my deep concerns regarding the support given by Wiltshire Council for the Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) for the so called Eastern and Southern relief road around Chippenham, and the proposed plan by Wiltshire Council to grant permission for up to 7500 new houses in the Local Plan for Chippenham.

Question 1 – (21-115)

Is Cabinet aware that at a meeting of Chippenham Town Council on the 16th of June 2021 a 100% support by Town Councillors to send a letter to Wiltshire Council requesting, It as the local Planning authority to reject and decline its support for HIF funding for the proposed new Eastern and Southern relief road , and a copy of this letter to the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government (MHCLG) also the MP for Chippenham ?

Response

Question 2 – (21-116)

Is Cabinet aware that public opinion regarding HIF funding for the relief road and any large scale housing development on the Eastern and Southern side of Chippenham is rejected by the majority of local people including the Member of Parliament for Chippenham ?

Response

Question 3 – (21-117)

Is Cabinet aware that if any of the three road options put forward by Wiltshire Council gets approved and built it will have a huge detrimental impact on the local environment, also create pressure on local infrastructure throughout the area ?

Response

Question 4 – (21-118)

Is Cabinet aware that if up to 7500 new houses are built as a result of this new road proposal there will be a large shortfall of local employment for the new residents of Chippenham, and as a result turn Chippenham into a huge commuter town, resulting in thousands of fresh car movements every day which will have a negative impact on the environment ?

Response

Question 5 – (21-119)

Wiltshire Council put all three road options for the Eastern and Southern relief road out for public consultation earlier this year , when will the results of this consultation be made public ? And will Cabinet take notice of the findings of this public consultation ?

Response

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Question from Colin Lynes

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

Would Cllr Clewer please explain how the opposition of Chippenham Town Council and many people living in, and near, to the affected area has influenced the Cabinet's position on the proposed developments to the East and South of Chippenham. In particular, has the proposed housing number been reduced to a level in line with that predicted to be needed by the town.

There is much, and a growing level of, evidence of our reliance on nature and the planet's eco systems for our well-being on both an individual level and collectively. The evidence is that we cannot continue to take actions which cause unnecessary pollution and the destruction of the natural environment without risking our future. The climate is becoming much less stable, and no one can predict the point at which catastrophic breakdown of the system will inevitably occur if we continue 'Canute like' to believe that we are in total control of our destiny. Each development not driven by, and not considered on the basis of local need, may have a small effect individually, but the ecological load is cumulative and will add to the risk.

I wish to make it clear that I remain opposed to this development which bears no relationship to local needs.

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Statement from David Roberts

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

I understand that new houses and infrastructure needs to be built and in doing so compromises need to be made and Chippenham should shoulder its fair share of doing so but 7500 houses and the environmental destruction it and the road would cause to the town and the surrounding area is wholly disproportionate. I am certain all the attendees of the meeting are aware that our Local MP and Town Council (unanimously) have objected to the plan. I have been patiently waiting for the outcome of the consultation which was due after 12 weeks but nothing has come forward. It feels very much like Chippenham and its residents are being 'done to' and that local democracy counts for nothing. This is being compounded by the set up of a JV which appears to be very secretive as the council is refusing to share information about it.

Just because time has passed since the Council voted against the plan does not mean that people have lost interest or moved on from this topic, it is very clear that the town is against the proposals and Wiltshire Council have an absolute accountability to take on board and act on the views of the vast majority of the town.

The environmental impact has been called out loud and clear and I cannot see how the Council's stance on climate change and the proposals can co-exist, if the Council chooses to go ahead with their plans they cannot authentically claim to be doing the right thing in the ongoing climate emergency. Over and above the carbon impact from this scheme the destruction of the surrounding countryside and wildlife would be catastrophic.

The council need to be aware that plans that don't have community support will have consequences if pushed through. As has been seen recently in the Amersham by-election people do care about the destruction of their local environment, I would certainly ensure that in future elections I would not support any party or councillors that did not listen to its electorate and appears to operate in a way that keeps the local people and council in the dark.

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Statement from Declan Baseley – Chippenham Town Council

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

My name is Declan Baseley and I am the Green Party councillor for Chippenham Town Council. I wish to make a statement for the upcoming cabinet meeting that I am categorically against any new expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure during this time of climate and ecological emergency, and that the proposed HIF bid and developments are not wholly supported by residents of my ward, the town, or the county.

We live in a time of peril for the natural world, and we risk spoiling the few remaining green spaces around Chippenham for our descendants - not to mention that having resolved to declare a climate emergency, the council should be acting like it, and refuse to expand fossil fuel infrastructure when they have pledged to protect our planet from further damage.

You are losing the trust of the people by constantly brushing aside their views, pretending you are doing it in their interest. You only have to look at HS2 to see how unanimously unpopular developments of this nature are, and how they cause widespread unhappiness to locals as they watch habitats and ecosystems get destroyed for the sake of more cars on the road and more cookie-cutter houses their children can't afford to own.

I urge the council to reject the HIF bid proposal and ask for the money to be withdrawn, and in doing so, send a shockwave message to resonate across our nation, that local communities will not be bullied into accepting ecocide and pollution at the hands of climate criminals. I urge you to take into consideration that Chippenham Town Council unanimously voted to reject the HIF bid, and as we vote on behalf of the residents of our wards, that means that Chippenham unanimously resolved to reject the HIF bid. As Chippenham's MP - Michelle Donelan, said "Now more than ever we all appreciate the beautiful countryside around our town and we must preserve it for future generations."

Think upon the world your grandchildren will inherit.

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Statement from Graham Lacey

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

I wish to record my opposition to the Future Chippenham and HIF plans and my support of Chippenham Town Council who also oppose these plans.

I think the plans are completely out of proportion to the needs of Chippenham and will have serious and irreversible effects.

The planned building will destroy the beautiful countryside around Chippenham, where I regularly walk and watch wildlife. The environmental effects will be considerable.

Local people do not need this level of housebuilding and the new road. It will just bring in people from other parts of the country and encourage even more expansion

The plans promise all sorts of benefits that I doubt will be delivered. It would be good to see better provision of things such as safer cycling and better public transport for the town now. If that can't be delivered for the present population, massive expansion will just make things worse.

Please abandon these plans and work to make the area more environmentally friendly.

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Question from Ian James

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement and Questions

Firstly may I congratulate you on your appointment as Leader of Wiltshire Council.

Will you make a commitment whilst as leader of the Council that trust and honesty which are part of the underpinning morals of a Councillor will be up held during your term as leader?

Will you as leader ensure your cabinet members answer questions put by the public in an open and transparent manner and not be misleading or just fail to answer the question made to them?

Question 1 – (21-120)

The HIF bid made to Homes England was made by Wiltshire Council using support from Michelle Donelan, which by all accounts amounted to promises to the MP that could not be delivered by this Council which at best looks unprofessional and at worst deceitful. In recent meetings with Michelle Donelan “What has the Council now promised the MP for her continued support for the HIF bid? And are there minutes available of this meeting for the public to view?

Question 2 – (21-121)

Trust in how Wiltshire Council conducts it’s business has been shattered in the past 12 months. The consultation process was undertaken with two consultations running together the Local Plan and the HIF road route for Chippenham. Was this done purposely to confuse the public? It certainly achieved that aim.

Question 3 – (21-122)

The Consultation process for the Local Plan and the HIF was conducted on line and excluded many who did not have access to the internet, this was both undemocratic and disappointing for many of the public who could not respond. This was challenged by Bremhill Parish Council, but the previous leader brushed the matter under the carpet. Many in the County consider that this action was driven by the urgency to keep the HIF bid on track. Why did the Council not delay the

Consultation until the public could attend Council offices to see paper copies of the Local Plan and the Future Chippenham Consultation?

Question 4 – (21-123)

The Council promised the results of the Future Chippenham consultation within 12 weeks this has not been achieved. Has the delay been engineered so that the public cannot ask questions today on this Consultation?

Question 5 – (21-124)

As there is a delay will the council delay the next cabinet meeting so that due democratic process can be undertaken to allow the public to scrutinise the results and ask questions prior to any decision being made on the direction of Future Chippenham?

Question 6 – (21-125)

Chippenham Town Council has now sent a letter to Homes England stating that at no time was the Town Council consulted on the letter sent by the then leader of the Town council supporting the HIF bid. Did Wiltshire council bring pressure to bear on the Leader of Chippenham Town Council and the Chief Executive to send this letter in secrecy supporting the HIF bid? If the answer is “No” why would the Leader send such a letter in secrecy and behind closed doors?

Question 7 – (21-126)

Cabinet members some of whom are still in post today bear some responsibility for this dark time of Wiltshire Council, this is why honesty, openness, and transparency must be at the forefront of your term in office and those of your colleagues.

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Statement from Ged Doyle

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

I am opposed to the idea of 3 new roads bypassing Pewsham. Why build on green lush landscape? There are plenty of sites than should be redeveloped first: the old wiltshire college is one, the old bus station is another.

What was the point of permitting St Modwin to go ahead when there was no incumbent and remains empty to this day?

Fix and maintain the existing infrastructure first before building anything new and you will find you will have the solution for eternity.

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Statement from Jessica Auld

**To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet
Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and
Health & Wellbeing**

Statement

I am very concerned about the future Chippenham road plans and 7500 houses. I am most worried about the location of the housing which is clearly not optimum and ruins the green belt, causing untold issues for wildlife and habitats. The traffic congestion in Chippenham is already awful, and there are many pinch points and roads which are an accident waiting to happen, which will certainly be made worse due to the proposed housing development. For example, Malmesbury road is really struggling - I have twice been nearly hit by lorries that were speeding and nearly mounted the curb and the road to the new Birds Marsh housing estate is insufficient for the amount of traffic it is now facing. Whilst I can see that new housing may be required, the location of this needs to consider the needs of all existing residents and the impact on the environment too and the current plans are not doing this effectively. Therefore, I do not think the development or road should go ahead.

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Questions from Lisa Harrison

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Question 1 – (21-134)

Foresight Report makes clear, it is widely accepted that we must produce more food to feed a growing population in a sustainable way. The UK is committed to playing its part in this global challenge" Please explain how Wiltshire Council's decision to build on green belt and farmland furthers this objective?

Question 2 – (21-135)

Has the council adequately considered regeneration of brownfield sites in and around chippenham where residents would be more likely to walk/cycle or otherwise use public transport thereby reducing carbon emissions and increasing public health.

Question 3 – (21-136)

Why has the council decided to locate so many houses in and around Chippenham rather than disperse them around Wiltshire?

Question 4 – (21-137)

Is Wiltshire council adopting a regressive strategy intended to increase revenues rather than emissions? It does so by buying up and then selling greenfield sites to developers but also making any available land in the centre of the town into a car park thereby encouraging more car use.

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Statement and Question from Marilyn Mackay

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

As a local resident, in Calne Rural, I have been following the recent political Amersham bi-election objections to those being proposed by this government regarding Planning. Essentially I object strongly to the proposals stemming from the Chippenham HIF funding for a new road and subsequent over-development of housing on valuable greenfield agricultural land. It is government policy for new development to be on brownfield land. This is a plan which challenges biodiversity and essential farming land needed for environmental and economic purposes for UK to be more food sufficient, rather than importing in an unsustainable way from long distance global sites. It is valued community green space.

I support Chippenham Town Council's rejection of the Local Plan for Chippenham and the HIF bid proposals linked to excessive housing numbers. This was unanimously confirmed at its Annual Council meeting on 19th May, 2021. This is supported also by the local Chippenham MP, Michelle Donevan in her statement of 17th June, objecting to the need for 7,500 new houses. It is also strongly opposed by the north Wiltshire MP for the Calne Rural area, James Gray, arguing against environmental damage to a valued local rural agricultural landscape.

This damaging commuter planning proposal risks failing the Climate Change Committee carbon reduction targets.

The Future Chippenham team have been working undemocratically on consultation responses to the HIF bid and failed to prepare a transparent report. The entire process of the HIF bid has been conducted in this undemocratic manner.

There is no community need for additional 7,500 houses on greenfield land in the Chippenham and Calne Rural area. The HIF bid proposals are not sustainable.

Question 1 – (21-138)

Can Councillor Clewer confirm 5,000 houses have been taken from Wiltshire housing target? Lack of transparency is being repeated here.

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Statement and Questions from Cllr Matthew Short – Chippenham Town Council

**To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet
Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and
Health & Wellbeing**

Statement

As a newly elected Chippenham Town Councillor for Hardens and Central ward I would like to highlight to Wiltshire Council Chippenham Town Council's continued unanimous rejection of the HIF road scheme and 7500 houses.

The newly elected town council confirmed its opposition at its Annual Council meeting on 19th May. Further, at Full council on the 17th June it resolved to send a letter to Wiltshire Council, Homes England and Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government, wholly opposing the construction of such a road and the use of HIF funding with the proposal for 7500 houses in the Avon and Marden Valley area defined by the proposed road routes.

I personally oppose the HIF bid for many reasons including...

1. Carbon Budget

The UK government has pledged to meet net zero carbon by 2050. Wiltshire County council and Chippenham Town council have both declared a Climate Emergency and aim for Chippenham to reach net zero by 2030.

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So It remains impossible for Chippenham to meet its 1.5 degree climate goal. We are planning to fail at the start of the most important decade to tackle climate change.

It is the first responsibility of a Council to safeguard the welfare of their citizens, including by taking reasonable measures to mitigate substantial threats.

Climate change is a grave threat to people around the world, jeopardising health, security and prosperity.

2. Climate Adaption

The land being built on is shown by Cranfield University as excellent farmland. Under adaption pathways published by the UK Climate Committee last week by 2080 we will likely reach summer temperatures over 40 degrees C in Wiltshire as regularly as we currently exceed 32 degrees C. In this scenario global food supplies are likely to be disrupted and it will become too hot to grow food in some countries.

Thus having local farmland available for future generations of Chippenham residents to grow food on is vital.

It is the first responsibility of the local government in a democratic society to protect and safeguard the lives of its citizens. Where there is a foreseeable risk of substantial harm, a local government will be under a duty of care to take reasonable steps to safeguard its citizens against that harm, and failing to take such steps will constitute a breach of that duty.

I argue that the risk of Climate change is known by Wiltshire Council given their own declared Climate emergency. The building on local historic farmland fails to take an adequate risk assessment of the future need for this land to grow food for future generations.

Question 1 – (21-139)

Why has Wiltshire council continued during the consultation process to seek a Joint Venture (JV) partner offering county owned farm land to development partners? It is even prepared to offer land outside of Chippenham to seal the deal!

Question 2 – (21-140)

What steps are being taken to avoid corrupt practice in engaging a joint developer given potential for insider dealing and trading with land that we the people own?

Question 3 – (21-141)

Why does the Joint Development agreement look for only financial gain and take no account of sustainable development?

Question 4 – (21-142)

Why have the Future Chippenham team broken its promise to report the results of the HIF bid (Road) consultation within 12 weeks of consultation closure?

Question 5 – (21-143)

Prior to the election Cllr Clewer and other Conservative councillors said that the additional 5,000 houses Wiltshire had voluntarily taken on, would be removed from Wiltshire housing target and the Local Plan would be adapted in line with the significant consultation response. If the 5,000 houses are removed the target for Chippenham is significantly reduced and there is no need for the HIF bid. Will Cllr Clewer now confirm 5000 houses have been removed from the housing target?

Question 6 – (21-144)

Is the Cabinet aware of Chippenham's MP withdraw of her support for the HIF road bid?

Question 7 – (21-145)

Will Cllr Clewer now publish the agreement with Homes England, as promised by Cllr Whitehead. If not, why won't the document be published? How can the public of Chippenham engage if these agreements are hidden and apparently created behind closed doors?

Question 8 – (21-146)

Why can't the council based in Trowbridge use a system that will allow the people of Chippenham to genuinely engage in the consultation process and ask questions?

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Statement and Questions from Melanie Boyle

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement 1

If you are planning to vote in the Cabinet Meeting on 13th July 2021 on the road consultation for Chippenham, please can I ask you to consider this as if it is your town which has been allocated 7,500 houses and a 30mph distributor road with cars parked on it paid by the tax payer/cuts in services? Is this sustainable for a historic market town? How would you feel if Atkins said they hadn't been to the site as it wasn't their job to do so but they were planning to destroy a safe 7 mile off road cycle route with open farmland and a friendly community asset used by walkers, runners, cyclists, families and friends to enjoy the Countryside within walking distance of the town centre for lunch and shopping, the one remaining untouched place which hasn't been destroyed in your town? This area provides the 6 habitat areas described by the Wiltshire Council Tool Kit for the environment but will be bulldozed over destroying the irreplaceable bio-diversity of plants and wildlife and the valuable asset of a County Farm owned by Wiltshire Council/the residents of Wiltshire which could be used for the community and reducing food poverty.

Then consider you had attended an Area Board Meeting where SWLEP said they do not take into consideration the fact that 67% of workers commute out of the town for work and that allocating land for business use doesn't bring business wasn't their problem (even though they advice Wiltshire Council on these topics) Town and County Councillors raised the issue but didn't get a constructive answer.

Then consider that Chippenham Town Council has rejected the Local Plan for Chippenham and rejected the HIF bid proposals and housing numbers several times. It unanimously confirmed its opposition at its Annual Council meeting on 19th May. It resolved to send a letter opposing the HIF and asking the money be withdrawn, to Wiltshire Council, Homes England and MHCLG at its meeting on 17th June.

Then consider Chippenham's MP Michelle Donelan stated in the press on 15th June that "I have not been given the assurances I sought regarding infrastructure and investment in the town" and "It is important that the interests of Chippenham's

current residents are prioritised” and “we certainly do not need 7500 (houses)” and “Now more than ever we all appreciate the beautiful countryside around our town and we must preserve it for future generations.

Then consider the developers even say in the local plan consultation that the housing numbers for Chippenham may not be viable.

How angry and frustrated would you be if on the above evidence the very assets your town needs to thrive were destroyed by Wiltshire Council as land owner, Developers and Estate Agents?

Question 1 – (21-147)

Do you want to be remembered as the Councillor that destroyed Chippenham/your town or played your part in giving it a chance for sustainable growth for future generations?

Statement 2

Please vote to reject the HIF bid and let Chippenham thrive as it has never been allowed to do previously due to the consistent excessive growth over the last 40 years, but with the community spirit coming out of the pandemic we have such a good basis to grow on, we have all the elements, we just need to market and share them.

We have further opportunities if Corsham Train station is reopened, Go-op new train services are introduced through Chippenham, our roundabouts are returned rather than SWLEP/Atkins traffic lights at Station Hill and Hathaway Retail Park, Bus Back Better and an initiative to cut car journeys by combining tasks, working from home leading to less cars required by households and many other initiatives.

In the agenda pack Historic England advises that the form and character of a town, within its wider landscape and historic setting, and the availability of suitable sites should inform the proposed scale of growth. To this end, it is suggested that the Council prepares a Heritage Topic Paper for each settlement and ensures that Conservation Area

appraisals and management plans are kept up to date. I hope residents get the opportunity to get involved in this as many of us have researched our towns and can provide valuable input.

I have included photos of the wonderful Hardens County Farm owned by Wiltshire Council/the residents of Wiltshire and the quality of the milk supplied to Cadburys, look how healthy and cared for the cattle are. Look at the views, the farmhouse from 1781, the cycle path enjoyed by all ages, it is the openness of the landscape that makes it a safe place. How can you vote to destroy this for housing over Government figures? Sustainable food local to many housing estates that should be part of every town. It is as valuable as village land. Please do not vote to destroy this. I have heard comments like everywhere was once farmland which is now housing estates, but with the climate emergency the time has come to stop destroying farmland close to housing for excessive building.

My final photos are of the signs, no mention of the houses required to fund the road so people thought it was a bypass, is this ethical?

Question 2 – (21-148)

Please can we have a system where public questions are able to be verbally given online, especially due to the timing of the meetings when many people are working, these points are so important to us and it needs to be an inclusive meeting?

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 June 2021

Agenda Item 5 – Future Chippenham / HIF

Statement and Questions from Cllr Myla Watts – Deputy Leader Chippenham Town Council

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement 1

Wiltshire Council Cabinet members should be under no illusion that the issue of the HIF Bid plus 7500 houses has slipped from the minds of Chippenham residents. Those who live in the town overwhelmingly oppose this hugely damaging development. With no public support, the Town Council, again, unanimously rejected the HiF Bid and Full Council resolved to send a letter to Wiltshire Council, Homes England and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government opposing the HIF and asking that the money be withdrawn.

Chippenham's MP, Michelle Donelan, stated that "*I have not been given the assurances I sought regarding infrastructure and investment in the town.....It is important that the interests of Chippenham's current residents are prioritised.....*" "we certainly do not need 7500 (houses).....*Now more than ever we all appreciate the beautiful countryside around our town and we must preserve it for future generations.*"

Prior to the election, Cllr Clewer and other Conservative councillors stated that the additional 5000 houses (which Wiltshire had inexplicably taken on voluntarily), would be removed from Wiltshire's housing target, and the Local Plan would be adapted in line with the significant consultation response. It should be noted that taking 5000 houses off the target means a significant reduction for Chippenham and completely removes the need for the HIF bid.

Question 1 – (21-149)

Will Cllr Clewer confirm that the 5000 additional houses have been formally removed from Wiltshire's housing target?

Question 2 – (21-150)

Is the Cabinet aware of Chippenham Town Council's unanimous rejection of the HIF bid and proposed housing numbers for Chippenham?

Question 3 – (21-151)

Is the Cabinet aware of Chippenham Michelle Donelan MP's withdrawal of her support for the HIF bid?

Question 4 – (21-152)

Will Cllr Clewer publish the agreement with Homes England, as originally promised by Cllr Whitehead?

Question 5 – (21-153)

Why has the Council broken its promise to publish results of the HIF Bid Road Consultation within 12 weeks?

Question 6 – (21-154)

Has the Future Chippenham team now been dissolved?

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 June 2021

Agenda Item 5 – Future Chippenham / HIF

Statement from Nicola Austin

**To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet
Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and
Health & Wellbeing**

Statement

I am wholly against the "Future Chippenham" proposals. As a member of Chippenham Sailing and Canoeing Club I am very familiar with the beautiful and peaceful stretch of the river that will be destroyed by the scheme. It is totally unacceptable to me.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 June 2021

Agenda Item 5 – Future Chippenham / HIF

Statement from Rev David Gray

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

I understand that Wiltshire Council's cabinet is due to consider the HIF Road scheme and 7500 houses very soon. Therefore please can you bring this to their attention.

Selling off prime agricultural land for development is disastrous. Not only do we put even more pressure on food production but there is also an ecological impact.

A new road will also have an ecological impact of creating more pollution. And how does building more roads help reduce CO2 and meet CO2 reduction targets.

I have yet to meet anyone in Chippenham who is in favour of this.

There is a recognition that ,pre affordable housing is needed. But I doubt that many if any of the 7500 new homes will be affordable and help young people.

I am hoping Wiltshire Council will reject this.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 June 2021

Agenda Item 5 – Future Chippenham / HIF

Statement and Questions from Robert MacNaughton – Friends of the Marden Valley

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

The Friends of The Marden Valley object to the HIF bid proposals.

Calne Town Council, Chippenham Town Council and Bremhill Parish Council have all said they don't want the HIF bid with its houses and new road.

Local people do not want it.

Why does Wiltshire Council think it has the right to destroy the Lower Marden Valley, with its resplendent worlds of animals, fish, insects, birds and butterflies?

Where does this arrogance come from when there is no public support for these proposals?

Question 1 – (21-155)

Will Cllr Clewer confirm that the 5000 additional houses have been formally removed from Wiltshire's housing target?

Question 2 – (21-156)

Is the Cabinet aware of Chippenham Town Council's unanimous rejection of the HIF bid and proposed housing numbers for Chippenham?

Question 3 – (21-157)

Is the Cabinet aware of Chippenham Michelle Donelan MP's withdrawal of her support for the HIF bid?

Question 4 – (21-158)

Will Cllr Clewer publish the agreement with Homes England, as originally promised by Cllr Whitehead?

Question 5 – (21-159)

Why has the Council broken its promise to publish results of the HIF Bid Road Consultation within 12 weeks?

Question 6 – (21-160)

Has the Future Chippenham team now been dissolved?

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 June 2021

Agenda Item 5 – Future Chippenham / HIF

Statement from Sally Lynes

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

Has the Cabinet in its approach to the future of Chippenham ('Future Chippenham' and the HIF) taken into account the opposition of Chippenham Town Council, many local residents and its MPs Michelle Donelan and James Gray.

Looking over recent local election leaflets I don't see anywhere Conservative candidates saying that they intended to inflict major developments on communities, ignoring the views of their locally elected representatives.

What the Council has adopted is a totally undemocratic system of running its business. It has adopted a process of attrition, whereby local residents are worn down by having to respond at every stage of the process, thereby leaving Wiltshire Council to do exactly what it wants to do. Totally undemocratic!

I remain totally opposed to the excessive development of the area and its affect on the local environment.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

29 June 2021

Agenda Item 5 – Future Chippenham / HIF

Statement and Questions from Vanda McCann

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing

Statement

With regards to the Future Chippenham road plans and it's associated 7500 houses are Wiltshire Council aware that the newly elected town council confirmed its opposition at its Annual Council meeting on 19th May and at Full council on the 17th June it resolved to send a letter to Wiltshire Council, Homes England and Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government, wholly opposing the construction of such a road and the use of HIF funding with the proposal for 7500 houses in the Avon and Marden Valley area defined by the proposed road routes.

The UK government has pledged to meet net zero carbon by 2050. Wiltshire County council and Chippenham Town council have both declared a Climate Emergency and aim for Chippenham to reach net zero by 2030.

We are planning to fail at the start of the most important decade to tackle climate change.

It is the first responsibility of a Council to safeguard the welfare of their citizens, including by taking reasonable measures to mitigate substantial threats.

Climate change is a grave threat to people around the world, jeopardising health, security and prosperity.

The land being built on is shown by Cranfield University as excellent farmland.

It is the first responsibility of the local government in a democratic society to protect and safeguard the lives of its citizens. Where there is a foreseeable risk of substantial harm, a local government will be under a duty of care to take reasonable steps to safeguard its citizens against that harm, and that includes caring for their mental and physical health . In the aftermath of COVID it is more important than ever to ensure their is sufficient facilities and open land for exercise and mental well being , which the government are at pains to address and are giving incentives to encourage.

In addition, building on local historic farmland fails to take an adequate risk assessment of the future need for this land to grow food for future generations.

Question 1 – (21-161)

Why has Wiltshire council continued during the consultation process to seek a Joint Venture (JV) partner offering county owned farm land to development partners? Is it because the main priority is to make up for the inability of Wiltshire Councils inability to control their financial obligations at the expense of Chippenham ? (See attachment below, ref:Andrew Rait)

Question 2 – (21-162)

Why have the Future Chippenham team broken its promise to report the results of the HIF bid (Road) consultation within 12 weeks of consultation closure?

Question 3 – (21-163)

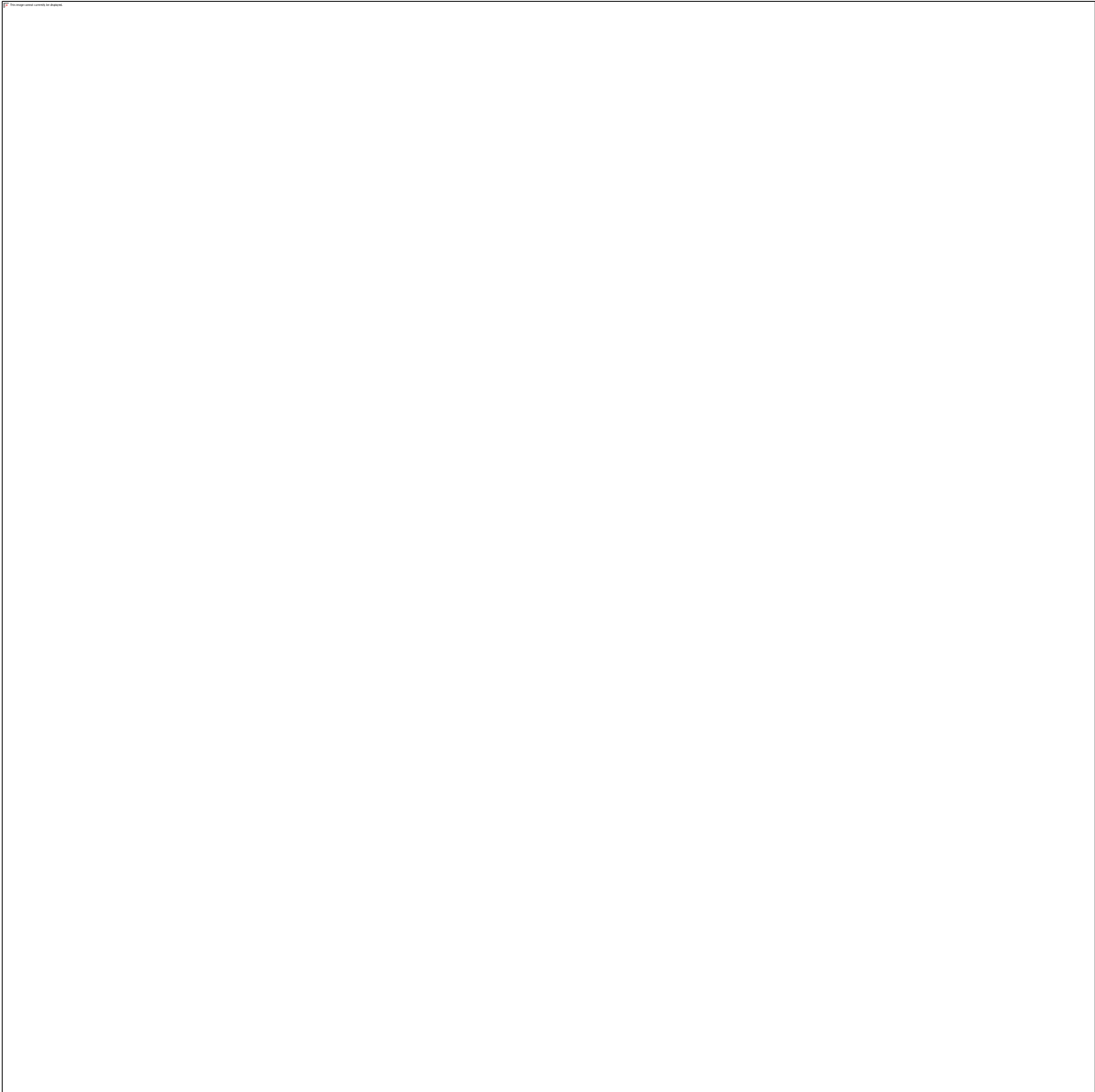
Prior to the election Cllr Clewer and other Conservative councillors said that the additional 5,000 houses Wiltshire had voluntarily taken on, would be removed from their target, so why is Chippenham still going ahead with a target of 7500 houses?

Question 4 – (21-164)

Will Cllr Clewer now publish the agreement with Homes England, as promised by Cllr Whitehead. If not, why won't the document be published? How can the public of Chippenham engage if these agreements are hidden and apparently created behind closed doors?

Question 5 – (21-165)

Why can't the council based in Trowbridge use a system that will allow the people of Chippenham to genuinely engage in the consultation process and ask questions? You might also be interested to know Wiltshire Council were in Private Eye under the title 'Rotten Boroughs' (ref: Andrew Rait, North Wilts and Chippenham for the EU, FB)



I am vehemently against these proposed plans.