

# AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (3)

Meeting: Cabinet

Place: Online meeting available at the link below

Date: Tuesday 9 June 2020

Time: 10.00 am

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[Online meeting view here](#)

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 1 June 2020. Additional documents are now available and are attached to this Agenda Supplement.

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Stuart Figini, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718221 or email [stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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5 **Public participation and Questions from Councillors** *(Pages 3 - 18)*

Questions from the public and Councillors

6 **Covid-19 Update and Financial Position** *(Pages 19 - 34)*

Questions from the public and Councillors

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**9 June 2020**

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**Question from Bill Jarvis – Extinction Rebellion about Cycling and Pedestrian Network**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Statement**

The Covid19 pandemic has highlighted the impact that transport emissions have on the population. It is estimated that two million people in the UK with respiratory conditions such as asthma have experienced reduced symptoms during the coronavirus lockdown, according to the British Lung Foundation.

Additionally, as a part of the support to enable people to stay off public transport, the Government has been encouraging the development of dedicated cycle and footpaths networks, including closing some roads to traffic other than to cyclists and pedestrians.

To this end, as you know, grant funding is being made available, see below

“...Part of government plans is the creation of "low-traffic neighbourhoods" outside of London to double rates of cycling by the 2025.

The Secretary of State for Transport is likely to announce extra funding for local authorities to pay for alterations to the road network to facilitate this move to more active ways to get around.

He is also expected to announce plans to give local authorities new powers to change the road network and designate extra space for cyclists and pedestrians....”

### **Question 1**

Will Wiltshire Council commit to making temporary cycle/pedestrian routes permanent and has Wiltshire Council made any grant application for such funding as is available?

#### **Response**

On 27<sup>th</sup> May, Department for Transport wrote to all Local Transport Authorities advising that £45m was being allocated as part of an 'Emergency Active Travel Fund'. Authorities have been individually awarded an indicative sum – Wiltshire's allocation is £227k.

Use of that fund is narrow – defined as "...promoting cycling as a replacement for journeys previously made by public transport..."

Local Authorities were asked to submit proposals for assessment to DfT by 5<sup>th</sup> June.

A list of eligible schemes has been sent to DfT and we await their response.

A second Tranche of funding was confirmed on 29<sup>th</sup> May, however criteria for spend is not yet known.

Monitoring of schemes will be undertaken to help assess whether any emergency measures can become permanent.

### **Question 2**

The Council is committing significant resource and effort into obtaining highway grant funding that will, potentially, make it more unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists

Will the Council commit to ensuring that all highway improvement schemes, including those already underway, contain proper dedicated routes for cyclists and pedestrians?

#### **Response**

An assessment and appropriate response to the needs of walkers, cyclists and equestrians is an integral part of scheme development and design.

### **Question 3**

Will the Council commit to delivering a dedicated cycle/pedestrian network throughout the County, a budget to provide it and a timescale to do so.

#### **Response**

The Council is currently developing its 4<sup>th</sup> Local Transport Plan – LTP4 - (largely shadowing the Local Plan Review). LTP4 will comprise a core strategy document supported by a number of daughter documents including a review of walking and cycling strategies.

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**Question from Darren Hopkins about the Future Chippenham Project**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Question**

Does the Council intend to carry out public consultation on the contract with Homes England for the £75m for the distributor roads before it is signed and reflect the results of that consultation in the contract? If so, when and how? If not, why not?

**Response**

The Council will consult with the public on every matter for which consultation is required, and more broadly about aspects of the Future Chippenham overall when it appropriate and safe to do so. The first such consultation will be in connection with road route options which will take place, as mentioned at Cabinet in March, as soon as we are able to safely carry this out.

The contract negotiations with Homes England proceed as planned, albeit compromised by both parties' Covid impacts, and the final form when arrived at will be presented to and approved by Cabinet before signature.

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**Question from Ian James – Bremhill Parish Council about Chippenham Future Project**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Councillor Toby Sturgis Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Investment**

**Statement**

Cllr Sturgis you are very familiar with land to the East of Chippenham, which is part of Bremhill Parish.

**Question 1**

Why is the Council planning to give Council farmers notice to quit farms in September when no planning decision will have been made? Is this the Council being over confident in expecting the planning application to go the way of the Council?

**Response**

The Council has two separate, unconnected roles in relation to the Chippenham Future project. Firstly, the Council, in acting as landlord and landowner, has to make decisions that relate solely to tenancies and potential future development proposals, irrespective of the planning status of the land and property. Any future planning applications on this land will be dealt with separately by the Council as local planning authority, and any such planning considerations cannot include the Council's land ownership status.

**Question 2**

You are aware that there is a Bremhill Neighbourhood Plan in existence, and the Planning Inspector Ann Skippers recommended there should be no development to the east of the Cycle Track. In addition, Wiltshire Core policy 51 Landscape states "Development should protect, conserve, and where possible enhance the landscape character, and have an acceptable impact on the landscape character"

Please inform the public, how driving a road across farmland and building 7,500 is achieving any of the above?

### **Response**

There is no planning application that has been submitted for development east of the cycle track. If such an application is made then this will be assessed against the policies in the development plan, together with any other relevant material considerations. The development of a relief road (irrespective of government funding) would need to be the subject of a planning application.

### **Question 3**

How many brown field sites are there in Chippenham that could be used for development in the next 5 years, which may reduce the need to build so many houses on green field sites?

### **Response**

Brown field site availability in Chippenham will be determined by market factors over that period of time so it is uncertain what the number or the level of deliverability on those sites might be over the time period. The purpose in seeking Housing Infrastructure Funding to deliver a master planned scheme is to reduce the uncertainty of being able to fulfil our growth requirement over the next plan period and to ensure that the infrastructure to support that development is put in place up front.

### **Question 4**

Should Wiltshire Council now change the vision of the future?

### **Response**

The Council has a clear strategy and plan for the future and a thorough regular review process to ensure it is up to date.

### **Question 5**

40% of the work force is now working from home, if this continues do we need a substantial road infrastructure?

### **Response**

Following on from the answer to Q4 above factors such as this will be taken in to account as they develop and as long term trends become more certain, always in balance with other competing requirements affecting the County.

**Question 6**

Land to the east of Chippenham has a disused railway line, why not put electric trams into service for any future development to the east, this could use the railway line and feed the railway station.

**Response**

Ideas such as this will be taken in to serious consideration when consultation is able to take place and will be balanced against other initiatives and priorities at the appropriate time

**Question 7**

The argument put forward that a distributor road is required to relieve Chippenham of traffic, this is clearly incorrect. By building 7500 houses will bring significantly more traffic to Chippenham.

Is the distributor road to be paid for by the taxpayer to provide the Council with the opportunity to become a developer and build many thousands of homes on Council farmland.?

**Response**

Traffic modelling was a significant part of the HIF bid and will be repeated as part of the development process. It demonstrates the benefit that a distributor road will bring to Chippenham town centre as well as distributing traffic from any new development effectively.

Development on Council owned land is an opportunity to build socially inclusive communities in a manner different from commercial developers.

**Question 8**

Do you think the current vision being proposed is out dated since the COVID 19 virus, and we should be thinking fewer vehicles, more electrification, and less noise and pollution? Is it too late to change direction? There is a serious movement of opinion that dictates that this road is no longer needed.

**Response**

All factors, including Covid 19 are being assessed as part of the negotiations with Homes England and internally by the Council. Should they indicate that changes are appropriate they will be factored in at the appropriate time.



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**Question from Ian James – Bremhill Parish Council about Chippenham Future Project**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and  
Councillor Toby Sturgis Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Investment**

**Statement**

I note from the Wiltshire website how successful the council has been in registering 100 Neighbourhood Plans, more than any other Council in the country.

Bremhill parish council worked for 5 years creating a sustainable Neighbourhood Plan, it was adjudicated by the Council's choice of Planning Inspectors Anne Skippers.

She made recommendation that there should be no development to the east of the SusTrans cycle route in order to preserve the landscape, and prevent coalescence between Chippenham Town and the conservation village of Tytherton Lucas.

**Question 1**

Why has the Council proposed a planning application which drives a coach and horses through a Neighbourhood Plan which took 5 years to complete, and was agreed overwhelmingly by the 400 members of the parish?

**Response**

Neighbourhood Plans are part of the 'development plan' and are taken into account in any decision making about development proposals when they are submitted for planning permission. The 'development plan' will be a material consideration which guides the consideration of any planning applications that come forward. In applying for a HIF grant the Council has the opportunity to forward fund the main infrastructure for a scheme that will see controlled development over many years. Planning permission will need to be sought for the scheme in the usual way.

**Question 2**

I am afraid it appears that the Council is paying lip service to all the work people do to enhance and support our communities.

Are neighbourhood Plans not relevant in the eyes of Wiltshire Council. Will the Council oppose the Neighbourhood Plan at the planning application for this road and future development?

**Response**

The council has a strong track record in promoting the development and adoption of Neighbourhood Plans with its communities. Our communities' different views and visions are important as they inform plan making. Neighbourhood Plans are part of our 'Development Plan', and are updated to balance and reflect both local circumstances and the strategic policies set out in the Local Plan/Core Strategy.

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**Question from Isabel McCord – Bremhill Parish Council about Chippenham Futures Project**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Statement**

The Chippenham Housing Market Area paper presented to Cabinet in April 2019 showed 7 hectares of employment land in Chippenham in the period 2026 – 2036. With plans to develop 7500 houses during this same period this will result in even more out commuting and greater damage to the environment.

**Question 1**

Please confirm how many hectares of employment land are included in the Future Chippenham programme, where the land is located, is it on Council owned land and was it included in the HIF submission.

**Response**

The HIF bid proposed 1 million sq. ft. just short of 10 hectares, of new employment land. It is proposed that this will be a mixture of micro businesses in any new district or neighbourhood centre growing through SMEs to larger businesses at the edge of development in appropriate locations. Master planning has not yet got to the stage of identifying where any specific sites will be located and as we have said before the planning process will have to approve any application that comes forward.

**Question 2**

Who will be carrying out the transport analysis supporting the planning application for the Future Chippenham distributor roads, when will it be concluded and when will it be published?

**Response**

The Council has a Highways Framework contract with Atkins and it is likely that transport analysis will be conducted under that contract. Specialist firms may also be contracted if appropriate. Timescales are uncertain at the moment but further analysis, to enhance the detailed work already done for the bid, will be undertaken as close to development as possible to align with planning applications that must be made.

**Question 3**

How many hectares of council land have been included in the Future Chippenham programme for consideration for development, where is this land located and to what use is it being put at present?

**Response**

The precise nature and location of development has yet to be determined. Much of the land is currently agricultural and is on land owned by Wiltshire Council and several third parties.

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**Question from Steve Perry about the Future Chippenham Project**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Question**

You have stated that the Future Chippenham Program Director reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer, Alastair Cunningham.

Can you confirm that the Spatial Planning team also report to the same Chief Executive Officer, presumably through the Director for Economic Development and Planning?

If so, how can the independence of the Spatial Planning process, from Economic Development and Future Chippenham priorities, be publicly guaranteed?

**Response**

The Spatial Planning Team report to the Director of Economic Development and Planning, who is the responsible officer for planning decisions, not the Chief Executive Officer, and from the beginning of July the Future Chippenham scheme will be the responsibility of the Director of Housing and Commercial Development. The governance for Future Chippenham ensures that the correct independence between the Council's commercial operations and spatial planning responsibilities remains in place.

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**Question from Karen Stuckey about the Future Chippenham Project**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for  
Economic Development and  
Councillor Toby Sturgis Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development  
Management and Investment**

**Statement**

Neighbourhood Plans demonstrate powerful local democracy in action, put together and voted on by the people in the area who best know the housing requirements, sites suitable for development and the need for green spaces. These Neighbourhood Plans while being developed have rightly to take into account the existing strategic plans and housing requirements from the planning authority.

**Question**

Does the Cabinet believe that likewise, new strategic planning, site and housing allocations should take into account already existing Neighbourhood Plans and the wishes of local people?

**Response**

Our communities' different views and visions are important as they inform plan making. Neighbourhood Plans are part of our 'Development Plan', and are updated to balance and reflect both local circumstances and the strategic policies set out in the Local Plan/Core Strategy. The Local Plan is being reviewed, and will cover the period up to 2036. Consequently the strategic policies in the Local Plan will reflect new Neighbourhood Plans as they are updated during this period.

**Question from Chris Caswill about Chippenham Futures Project**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Question 1**

Has the Council now signed a contractual agreement with Homes England which provide it with access to the HIF Grant?

- If so, what are the conditions which have been agreed as part of that arrangement?
- if a contractual agreement has not yet been signed, when do you expect it to be? And will you then make it public?
- Please confirm how many hectares of employment land are included in the Future Chippenham programme, where the land is located, is it on Council owned land and was it included in the HIF submission.

**Response**

The Council is in negotiations with Homes England and has not yet completed a contract with them. With an allowance for Covid 19 impacts both Homes England and the Council would like to see the process concluded by the end of the year. The final form of contract when arrived at will be presented to and approved by Cabinet before signature.

The HIF bid proposed 1 million sq. ft. just short of 10 hectares, of new employment land. It is proposed that this will be a mixture of micro businesses in any new district or neighbourhood centre growing through SMEs to larger businesses at the edge of development in appropriate locations. Master planning has not yet got to the stage of identifying where any specific sites will be located and as we have said before the planning process will have to approve any application that comes forward.

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**Question from Councillor Nick Murry – about Future Chippenham Project**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Question 1**

It has been claimed that the benefits of an eastern distributor road in diverting traffic from the town centre of Chippenham would outweigh the disbenefits of the substantial additional traffic that will be generated by the development that the road caters for (including the impact on the town centre of nearby Calne). Can you please make public the evidence/ traffic modelling that underpins this claim, without which it cannot be taken seriously?

**Response**

The Council has promised that it will consult openly as soon as it is possible to do so and such consultation will include elements of traffic modelling that have been used to date. In due course further traffic modelling will be undertaken as the scheme develops and that too will be made public at the appropriate time.

**Question 2**

The countryside to the East of Chippenham, including land on Wiltshire Council's own farms, contains some of the most ecologically valuable habitat and species diversity anywhere in north Wiltshire, as evidenced by recent wildlife survey work. The Council therefore needs to plan very carefully for any development and take account of these valuable natural assets in advance of spending scarce public resources on advancing any scheme. Local knowledge and expertise could be very helpful in doing so. Would the Council therefore please make public information (including maps and current land use data) on the proposed areas earmarked for development (including its own farms) to the east of Chippenham, so that any proposed future plans can be properly informed at an early stage?



## **Response**

The first elements of the overall Future Chippenham scheme on which the Council will consult will be the road route options and we will fulfil our promise to do that as soon as we are able safely to do so. Essentially the Council agrees with the points you make and is conducting its own thorough detailed landscape and ecology surveys to ensure all national, local, statutory and other requirements are accounted for and met in planning and delivery. Plans for specific areas of land have yet to be developed. Once prepared the draft masterplan will be brought forward for consultation as soon as possible.

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## **Question from Chris Caswill about Schools Re-opening**

### **Agenda Item 6 – Covid-19 Update and Financial Position**

**To Councillor Pauline Church Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills**

#### **Statement**

Given the reservations expressed by UK Directors of Public Health and Government scientific advisers, there will have been many parents deeply anxious about their children going back to school last week, and many teachers equally anxious about the risks involved.

#### **Question 1**

In para 11 of the COVID paper, it states that "Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been procured for educational settings, in-line with government guidance". Was PPE provided to all local schools who requested it in time for the reopening on June 1st?

#### **Response**

Yes. Every Special School in Wiltshire had supplies ahead of the 1 June. All other Schools in Wiltshire were offered the opportunity to secure PPE supplies, and those that took up the offer all had deliveries made on or prior to 1 June.

#### **Question 2**

What steps has the Council taken to support and reassure Wiltshire parents who have opted *not* to send their children to school at the present time?

#### **Response**

Home learning resources and links have continued to be provided for parents and teachers via the council's online platform, Right Choice. The continued requirement to provide home learning for parents who have chosen for their children to remain at home has also been communicated through headteacher and governor briefings. A

programme called Happy Families, Happy Futures: Working together for stronger relationships, designed to support parents and carers who have heightened anxiety and tensions during this time, has also been offered free of charge for parents in Wiltshire.

### **Question 3**

There are national reports that some teachers who are recognised as vulnerable or have vulnerable relatives in their households have nevertheless been required by their schools to return to work. Is the Council making it clear to Wiltshire schools that this is not acceptable, and then monitoring the situation?

### **Response**

The Council provided a toolkit to schools to support with reopening. This toolkit included a section about staffing implications, which included clear advice about support for vulnerable staff. All advice was based on the national government guidance available at the time to toolkit was sent out.

It outlined that those considered extremely vulnerable (i.e. those who are shielding) should not return to work, and those living in a household with someone in this category should only attend work where stringent social distancing can be guaranteed. Despite some relaxation in the government guidance more recently we have maintained this advice for schools.

It also outlined that staff who are vulnerable (but not shielding) should, wherever possible, be provided with work enabling them to work from home but where this is not possible that adjustments must be made to their role to ensure social distancing can be adhered to and if this is not possible that they should not attend work.

However, in line with national guidance, the advice was that those living with vulnerable (but not extremely vulnerable) household members can attend work, and provided advice about different options open to the headteacher should staff in this category be anxious about returning to work.

The Council relies on head teachers to ensure that relevant risk assessments have been carried out, and for individual members of staff to raise any concerns with their Head Teacher. Where this does happen, and the school buys Wiltshire Council HR Advisory service, we would support the school to implement the guidance.

We are not currently aware of any incidents where an employee feels they have been required to return when they fall into a vulnerable group where this would not be in line with guidance.

**Question from Chris Caswill about Public Health**

**Agenda Item 6 – Covid-19 Update and Financial Position**

**To Councillor Laura Mayes Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection**

**Question 1**

Now that central government has finally recognised the important role that local authority Public Health can play in the containment of COVID, how much of the additional £25 million allocated to Wiltshire Council will come to Public Health to go with these vital new responsibilities?

**Response**

The emergency COVID-19 grant funding allocated to Wiltshire Council currently amounts to £25.5m. These funds have so far only been allocated to off-set the costs that have been incurred in the 2019/20 financial year which amounts to just under £0.5m. The funding will be used to address all areas of activity across the Council that have been impacted by the pandemic.

**Question 2**

Does the Council now regret the cuts that have been made in its public health resources since 2015?

**Response**

Since 2015/16 the ring-fencing of the Public Health grant has meant this has been protected by the Council. Just under £0.5m and £1m of savings from the Public Health Grant funded services were agreed as part of the budget setting approvals for 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively which are in line with the savings that have been proposed across other Council service areas for those years and also reflects the reduced funding received from Government.

Due to the emergency response to the coronavirus and the impact on the business of the Council all saving plans are currently being reviewed in terms of their ability to be delivered, particularly in light of the impact on the Councils finances.

### **Question 3**

The Council has now prepared a Care Home Support Plan and submitted it to government (para 8) which covers PPE but seemingly not testing and tracing.

- Will it now include a test and trace programme for Wiltshire Care Homes?
- When will test and trace action in Wiltshire Care Homes begin?
- What is being done in the meantime to ensure reliable testing arrangements for local care home staff and residents?

### **Response**

Wiltshire Council is already working with care homes to support testing of staff and residents. However, the logistics of arranging the delivery and collection of testing kits is via a national portal and not the responsibility of the Council. The Council identifies those homes on a weekly basis who should be a priority for the testing based on the number of outbreaks or care homes self-referring.

### **Question 4**

Has the Council been able to provide or ensure provision of testing to all those Wiltshire schools and teachers who have requested it?

### **Response**

Where a pupil or member of staff displays possible Covid-19 symptoms, the school is required to contact the Health Protection Unit at Public Health England where they will be provided with the relevant advice and support including information about getting tested.

Staff and the parents/guardians of pupils can arrange testing through the nhs.uk website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>

This advice has been communicated to all schools in Wiltshire

### **Question 5**

The Council's new role in tackling COVID 19 is complicated, expensive and extremely important. Will it be subject to regular monitoring and scrutiny by the Health Select Committee?

## Response

Temporary arrangements for scrutiny of the Council's response to and recovery from the COVID19 pandemic have been agreed by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee at its meeting on 3 June. A copy of the report setting out the approach and arrangements may be found at:

<https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/g13082/Public%20reports%20pack%20Wednesday%2003-Jun-2020%2010.00%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Management%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will lead any public scrutiny engagement on the council's response to and recovery from COVID19, supported by a dedicated Wiltshire COVID-19 Response Task Group established to provide more in-depth scrutiny.

Meetings of the Children's, Environment and Health Select Committees have been cancelled from May to July 2020.

These temporary arrangements for delivering the council's overview and scrutiny function will be reviewed after July 2020 with further proposals brought back to

The OS Management Committee in September 2020 as required.

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**Question from Chris Lange**

**Agenda Item 6 – Covid-19 Update and Financial Position**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Statement**

Please see Page 19 & 20 of the agenda documents for WC cabinet meeting 9<sup>th</sup> June

The Covid19 crisis is without doubt placing Wiltshire council and its partner agencies under significant stress and is an overwhelming challenge. I would like to thank Wiltshire Council Officers and Members for all their hard work in supporting the community over this extraordinarily difficult time. I understand that the recovery plan which is being formulated will focus on five major themes by all major partners these include the following:

- Community Resilience
- Health and Wellbeing
- Economic Sustainability
- Care, safeguarding and education
- Partner Organisations 'internal recovery plans'

Wiltshire council declared a climate emergency in February 2019 and some councillors had promised that climate change considerations would form a golden thread through the council's policies. In order to fully demonstrate the council's commitment to dealing with this issue, it would be very positive if climate change and environmental consideration could be added to the 5 themes listed above. Failing to do so, would be a lost opportunity and would give the impression that climate change is no longer an important issue for the council.

There are many interest groups in Wiltshire that may well be able to help to ensure that the recovery plan considers climate change issues.



## **Question**

Please could you confirm what plans are in place to consult with environmental interest groups in order to gather positive suggestions to ensure the recovery plan assists Wiltshire Council's aim to be carbon neutral by 2030.

## **Response**

Addressing the Climate Emergency continues to be a key priority for Wiltshire Council and that is why climate and the environment are a key thread that run through all the COVID19 emergency recovery themes. Recovery from COVID19 will be a complex and enduring process, which we are committed to achieve by working closely with and continuously listening to our communities and partners.

Environmental sustainability is a cross-cutting theme which will be taken forward as part of the council's place-shaping agenda. This will include integrating carbon reduction into health and wellbeing, economic sustainability and provision of strategic infrastructure. The Council's Economic Sustainability working group will be ensuring this work is progressed as part of the emerging recovery plan and I can assure you climate and the environment will be embedded as a priority and key objective.

The council will work with partners to develop recovery plans and consult with key groups as plans become more formalised in July. For example, a meeting is scheduled for 18 June 2020 between the Wiltshire Climate Alliance, the Director for Communities and Neighbourhoods and the Head of Carbon Reduction.

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**Question from Ian James – Bremhill Parish Council about Social Care**

**Agenda Item 6 – Covid-19 Update and Financial Position**

**To Councillor Laura Mayes Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection and  
Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Question 1**

As from the 1st February to the 31st May 2020 when the threat of the COVID 19 virus appeared in Wiltshire how many hospital beds at the Great Western Hospital did Wiltshire Council managed to empty and accommodate those patients who were fit to be looked after in their own homes, or in care homes?

**Response.**

This data is not currently available in time for the Cabinet meeting. However, the information will be provided shortly

**Question 2**

How many people in Wiltshire are looked after in their own homes funded by Wiltshire Council in April 2020? Has this been an increase in the last 3 months as opposed to the 2019 figures, and if so by how many?

**Response**

Please find below the figures for the number of people receiving care in their own homes for which the Council pays either in whole or in part:

	2019	2020
Feb	3492	3332
Mar	3510	3378
Apr	3480	3394

### **Question 3**

I note that you had a meeting with Danny Kruger recently. Please can you inform the public what was discussed?

### **Response**

The Cabinet member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection confirms that she did meet with Danny Kruger to discuss the future of adult social care with many colleagues from the voluntary sector.

### **Question 4**

The public is aware that the rewards paid to care staff are at the bottom of the food chain, some Carers' often take home only £10 an hour for their valuable work. Care Companies are cancelling contracts with Councils because over the years Councils have driven the hourly rate paid to the lowest levels in the history of Social Care.

I would ask that you state how much Wiltshire Council pays on an hourly rate for domiciliary care today? and is the Council going to pay Carers a proper living wage and reverse the continued drive to cut costs in this sector?. **And please don't state this confidential.**

### **Response**

The Council is committed to paying a fair cost of care. The average cost of a Tier 1 domiciliary care package on the Council's framework is £20.48 per hour. The average cost on Tier 2 is £23.55 per hour.

### **Question 5**

Noting the above, on 24th March 2020 you voted as a Cabinet member to finance a private company employing consultants to negotiate on behalf of the Council with Homes England for the HIF bid.

How many hours of Social Care for the most vulnerable could have been provided for £5m?

### **Response**

Firstly, the costs of consultants working on Chippenham Futures project are funded from capital finance not revenue which would be the form of finance for social care work and so it is not comparable. Secondly, if the Council is successful in entering into contract with Homes England to secure the HIF funding an element of those up-front consultancy costs will be reimbursed to the Council from the HIF funding.

### **Question 6**

You were no doubt fully aware or I would hope you were on the day rate these consultants are being paid to deliver a road, which is at risk of not being delivered.

How does this balance with the low wages paid by Wiltshire Council to Carers?

Consultants engaged on similar work will be paid up to £1000 a day.

On reflection now knowing the facts should have challenged the costs, or the cabinet member for Finance should have before voting for Council money to be spent on outside consultants.

### **Response**

In deciding whether to engage consultants the Council always reviews the skill set it enjoys in house compared to the expertise that can be procured in the market. As mentioned previously engaging consultants specialised in this field will improve the chances of entering into contract with Homes England and thus securing HIF funding which in turn will reimburse the costs incurred.

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**9 June 2020**

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**Question from Jessica Thimbleby**

**Agenda Item 6 – Covid-19 Update and Financial Position**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Statement**

With reference to the recent paper '[Will COVID-19 fiscal recovery packages accelerate or retard progress on climate change?](#)' from the Oxford Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment I'd like to ask the Wiltshire Council Cabinet in their recovery from Covid-19 and in light of the Climate Emergency declared in 2019

**Question 1**

Are they seeking to implement policies which capture co-benefits so that recovery policies deliver both economic and climate goals?

**Response**

Yes. Addressing the Climate Emergency continues to be a key priority for Wiltshire Council and that is why climate and the environment are a key thread that run through all the COVID19 emergency recovery themes.

**Question 2**

Policies which for example promote energy efficiency to bring down costs and carbon emissions, training and jobs to retrofit insulation in houses and reduce fuel poverty and promote active transport to improve health and reduce air pollution. Are steps being taken to avoid a 'brown' recovery - where links are reinforced between economic growth and fossil fuels?

**Response**

Yes. Wiltshire Council is committed to work with partners and our communities to enable and be a catalyst for a recovery that is environmentally and economically sustainable. All the policies outlined will be considered as part of the council's

emerging recovery plan. The council already runs the Warm and Safe scheme which provides energy efficiency advice to residents and supports fuel poor households. As set out in item 6 paragraph 73, the council will be receiving £1.135m from government through the emergency active travel fund to improve facilities for walking and cycling. The first tranche of £227k will be spent on schemes over the summer. The council's capacity for tackling the climate emergency has recently been bolstered by the appointment of a new Head of Carbon Reduction who joined us on 1 June and will be leading the development of a carbon reduction strategy for Wiltshire.

**Question from Mike d'Apice**

**Agenda Item 6 – Covid-19 Update and Financial Position**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Statement**

The global, national, local and individual response to COVID-19 has demonstrated our individual and collective capacity to respond once an emergency arises. The UK Parliament and Wiltshire Council have declared a Climate emergency of which the COVID-19 pandemic is but one of the many early symptoms. These normally have limited regional impacts, such as the recent extreme weather event, Cyclone Amphan impacting the Bay of Bengal, two weeks ago. Unusually COVID-19 has had a direct and serious impact on everyone, including us here in Wiltshire.

**Question 1**

Will the Council commit to ensuring that positive gains achieved under our collective response to COVID-19, if and when an effective treatment for or vaccine against COVID-19 is available, are not reversed? These gains include:

- a. Significant reductions in urban and road side air pollution.
- b. Reductions in requirements for individuals to 'travel to work' and to attend meetings, achieved by increased working from home and video conferencing: Both contribute to pollution reductions; reduce peak traffic congestion; reduce requirement for "office" space; Reduce wasted/lost hours in travelling and so enhance individuals' well-being and productivity; Increased 'family' / free time and no doubt much else.
- c. Promoting local small business' ability to distribute on-line customer purchases to their customers.

COVID-19 has, so far this year, enabled a marginally greater reduction in global CO2 emissions than the target 7.6% required by the UN Environment Programme 2019 Emissions Gap Report to stay below a 1.5°C average global temperature rise. This must be sustained for the remainder of 2020 and further 7.6% reductions achieved for each of the following 9 years of this decade. The Council if able to contribute

towards this target will mitigate far more serious 'symptoms' of Climate Change than COVID-19 in the years ahead.

### **Response**

Yes. The council is currently concluding its response to Covid-19 and as we move into recovery we will be ensuring that climate goals are fully integrated into our policies and programmes. The council's capacity for tackling the climate emergency has recently been bolstered by the appointment of a new Head of Carbon Reduction who joined us on 1 June and will be leading the development of a carbon reduction strategy for Wiltshire.



**Wiltshire Council**

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**Question from Councillor Murry**

**Agenda Item 6 – Covid-19 Update and Financial Position**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

**Statement**

Lord Nicholas Stern and colleagues at Oxford University's Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment recently pointed out that: "The climate emergency is like the COVID-19 emergency, just in slow motion and much graver." We must not lose sight of this fact. They also said that: "There are reasons to fear that we will leap from the Covid frying pan into the Climate fire," pointing out the unprecedented reduction in greenhouse gas (carbon) emissions as a result of Covid-19 needs to be repeated year on year if we are to reach net-zero by 2050.

To avoid carbon emissions simply rebounding, and to make the most of this opportunity for positive change, Covid recovery plans must deliver both economic and climate/ environmental goals. Measures that support economic regeneration must also embed cuts in carbon emissions, as well as build resilience to the inevitable impacts of climate change.

A green recovery, and 'building back better', will help speed the transition to a zero carbon future, accelerating investment in renewable energy, EV infrastructure and cycle networks, supporting green skills and new digital ways of working, and delivering growth that is more inclusive and sustainable.

Such measures have the potential to be more effective in supporting economic growth by creating jobs that support the future economy and attracting investment that will support rather than undermine Wiltshire Council's 2030 climate goals.

They will also deliver better outcomes in other key areas of public interest, such as public health and wellbeing, and support more resilient communities, who increasingly want to work with Wiltshire Council in creating a cleaner, greener and more secure future for themselves and their families.

The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and its proposed Recovery Plan could become a key part of its future Business Plan, yet Climate Change and the Environment is not even a key theme in what is being proposed. To simply claim that it would be a thread throughout is highly unlikely to deliver the outcomes we need - it needs to up-front, and be a visible key priority to ensure it is properly incentivised and embedded within the Recovery Plan.

### **Question**

Can Cllr Whitehead therefore give us a commitment that Wiltshire Council's Recovery Plan will include 'Climate and Environment' as a key theme, and that it will be climate positive, and help progress decarbonisation of our county, in all its aspects, supporting livelihoods recovery in the short term, whilst investing in the longer term by putting Wiltshire on a credible path to net zero emissions? And if not, can he explain why not?

### **Response**

Addressing the Climate Emergency continues to be a key priority for Wiltshire Council and that is why climate and the environment are a key thread that run through all the COVID19 emergency response themes.

We will be sharing our detailed recovery plans with you in July. Environmental sustainability is a cross-cutting theme which will be taken forward as part of the council's place-shaping agenda. This will include integrating carbon reduction into health and wellbeing, economic sustainability and provision of strategic infrastructure. The Economic Sustainability working group will be ensuring this work is progressed as part of the emerging recovery plan. Integration into the place-shaping agenda will put carbon reduction at the heart of the economic recovery.