

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

1 December 2020

From Steve Perry – Chair of CAUSE

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

Item 5 – Public Participation

Statement

The time allowed for reading the published documents for this Cabinet Meeting – amounting to over 1,100 pages of those required, complicated, documents just for the Agenda, Public Documents and Chippenham section - and the requirement for questions to be submitted less than 48 hours later is absolutely unacceptable, and totally undemocratic. Not even super-efficient Cabinet Members can possibly read, understand, digest, and respond to the documents in that time, so why is it expected that the public should?

From what we have been able to understand in the very limited time available to us, it is apparent that the Council has *not* taken into consideration the changing patterns of travel caused by the COVID-19 emergency, and which will almost certainly remain after the end of the current emergency? Less wasteful business travel, less travel of distances to workplaces, more working from home offices or local premises, less business investment in huge office buildings, and heightened public awareness of the Climate emergency that the Council has already apparently embraced

It appears that the Council is deeply entrenched in its massive, and long-planned, county-wide road expansion program, designed for the mid-20th century - instead of reviewing and revising those plans to meet the requirements of the current 21st century and beyond, and the Council's adopted climate obligations.

We ask the Council to review its position on their claimed (and misleading) statements that the proposed road 'distributor road' will 'relieve traffic congestion in the centre of Chippenham', because they have provided no evidence - at all - that their claims are true; indeed, a recent report by CPRE, "The end of the road? Challenging the road-building consensus - Learning from previous road schemes for a better future" suggests, using other reports, and studies conducted from existing data, *that the exact opposite* is true?