

**Wiltshire Council**

**Full Council**

**16 May 2023**

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**Item 15 – Members’ Questions**

**From Cllr Edward Kirk – Trowbridge Adcroft**

**To Cllr Phil Alford, Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets and Asset Transfer**

**Question (23-05)**

Please can the Cabinet Member responsible confirm that Wiltshire Council will make an estimated net saving of £365,000 per annum from Trowbridge Town Council willingly agreeing to the Service Delegation and Asset Transfer Package (inc. The Down Cemetery) and that the Service Delegation and Asset Transfer was not forced upon Trowbridge Town Council and that it was therefore entirely their decision to forgo these Services previously provided by Wiltshire Council as part of Council Tax?

**Response:**

Trowbridge Town council approached us to discuss a service devolution and asset transfer package. We have a policy in place that allows for local councils to take on service provision at their own expense if they wish to do so. This enables local communities to have more influence over the standards of service in their local environment and we were delighted to work with Trowbridge Town council to enable them to take ownership of these responsibilities.

Throughout the discussions, Trowbridge Town Council were made fully aware of our current costs and the savings that would be made by us, they also fully understood the costs that they were taking on in this delegation, including with the cemetery. The estimated savings to Wiltshire Council include £270,000 in the street scene budget and £95,000 for the delegation and transfer of Down Cemetery, totalling £365,000. At no point were these services forced upon Trowbridge Town council, they were free to decide and were keen to take them on. We have made it explicitly clear that we will continue to provide a statutory level of service across all areas of our street scene responsibility, but should a local council wish to provide a more tailored service we will support them in doing so through the service delegation process.