

COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2012 AT THE WELLINGTON ACADEMY, TIDWORTH, WILTSHIRE, SP11 9RR.

Present:

Cllr Richard Beattie, Cllr Chuck Berry, Cllr John Brady, Cllr Richard Britton, Cllr Liz Bryant, Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Trevor Carbin, Cllr Nigel Carter, Cllr Chris Caswill, Cllr Ernie Clark, Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Christopher Cochrane, Cllr Peter Colmer, Cllr Linda Conley, Cllr Mark Connolly, Cllr Christine Crisp (Chairman), Cllr Brian Dalton, Cllr Paul Darby, Cllr Andrew Davis, Cllr Tony Deane, Cllr Christopher Devine, Cllr Mary Douglas, Cllr Peter Doyle, Cllr Rod Eaton, Cllr Nick Fogg, Cllr Peter Fuller, Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Howard Greenman, Cllr Mollie Groom, Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE, Cllr Brigadier Robert Hall, Cllr Russell Hawker, Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Alan Hill, Cllr Charles Howard, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Chris Humphries, Cllr Keith Humphries, Cllr Peter Hutton, Cllr George Jeans, Cllr David Jenkins, Cllr Julian Johnson, Cllr John Knight, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Alan MacRae, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr Jemima Milton, Cllr Francis Morland, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr Christopher Newbury, Cllr John Noeken, Cllr Helen Osborn, Cllr Jeff Osborn, Cllr Mark Packard, Cllr Graham Payne, Cllr Nina Phillips, Cllr Leo Randall, Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philipe, Cllr Bill Roberts, Cllr Ricky Rogers, Cllr Jane Scott OBE, Cllr Jonathon Seed, Cllr John Smale, Cllr Carole Soden, Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cllr Julie Swabey, Cllr Dick Tonge, Cllr Anthony Trotman, Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cllr Fred Westmoreland, Cllr Ian West, Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cllr Roy While (Vice Chairman), Cllr Christopher Williams and Cllr Graham Wright

55 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pip Ridout, Judy Rooke, Sheila Parker, Howard Marshall, Peggy Dow, Laura Mayes, Stephen Petty, Steve Oldrieve, Jane Burton, Mike Cutherbert-Murray, John Thomson, Tom James, Mark Griffiths, Richard Gamble, Jeffrey Ody and Bill Douglas

56 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the following Council meetings were presented:

- Annual Council 15 May 2012
- Extraordinary Council meeting 26 June 2012

Resolved:

- 1. That the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 15 May 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**
- 2. That the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 26 June 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:**
 - **minute no. 52 - amendment in respect of wind turbines to include Cllr Bridget Wayman's name in the list of those for the amendment.**
 - **Minute no. 53 – 6th paragraph, 2nd line – after 'were within his Division' add 'and that of the adjoining Minety Division represented by Cllr Carole Soden.'**

57 Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared pecuniary interests in the Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (minute no. 67 refers) for the under mentioned reasons:

- Cllr Richard Britton by virtue of his position as Chairman of the Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel.
- Cllr Julian Johnson by virtue of his position as Chairman of the Standards Committee.
- Cllr Jon Hubbard by virtue of his position as Chairman of a Scrutiny Select Committee.
- Cllr Nigel Carter by virtue of having benefitted from payments to overview and scrutiny members.

58 Announcements by the Chairman

a) Hidden Shakespeare

The Chairman informed Council that Councillor Nick Fogg had recently published a biography of William Shakespeare, 'Hidden Shakespeare' which looked at some of the unanswered questions about the bard's life.

b) Order of Agenda

At the request of the Chairman and with the consent of the Council, the order of the agenda was altered to take item 12 – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel immediately following item 9 – Returning Officer's Fees and Expenses.

59 **Petitions**

(a) **Petitions Received**

The Chairman explained that no petitions had been received for presentation to this meeting.

(b) **Petitions Update**

A report by the Head of Democratic Services was presented which gave details of three petitions received for the period since the last Council meeting.

Resolved:

That Council note the report, the petitions received and the actions being taken in relation to them, as set out in the Appendix to the report presented.

60 **Public Participation**

The Chairman reported that no requests for public participation had been received for this meeting.

61 **Electoral Arrangements - 2013 Elections**

Councillor John Noeken, Cabinet member for Resources presented a report appraising members of anomalies within the electoral arrangements for 2013, details of which were presented. The report recommended a number of measures to deal with such anomalies.

Cllr Noeken explained that the only practical solution would be for the Council to undertake a tightly defined governance review of the areas affected. It was noted that any review would be undertaken after the elections in 2013.

Council was also asked to express a view on whether to alter the electoral names of the unitary divisions and town wards in Royal Wootton Bassett to adopt the 'Royal' prefix, in which case a governance review would be started in respect of the naming only.

Resolved:

- 1. That Council undertake a governance review of Warminster, Corsham and Calne with no change proposed to electoral areas, but to consider proposals for the number of seats in each town ward,**

with the Councils preferred solution detailed in Appendices C and D of the report presented.

- 2. That no further action be taken for 2013 in respect of parish wards at Calne Without, Melksham Without and Roundway, but the anomalies be noted for a future review.**
- 3. That authority be given to consulting on an order to add the prefix 'Royal' to the unitary divisions and towns wards at Royal Wootton Bassett.**

62 Review of Polling Districts

Cllr John Noeken, Cabinet member for Resources presented a report concerning a review of polling districts in line with Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 which introduced a requirement for councils to review polling districts and polling places within their Parliamentary constituencies at least every four years.

Council had previously appointed a Working Party to oversee the review and report back to Council, the recommendations from which were presented.

The formal review of all the polling districts and polling stations had only identified a few areas where improvements could be made and a revised schedule of polling districts, polling places and polling stations was circulated and detailed the comments received during the review.

The Working Party had also looked at polling districts and stations where there were fewer than 150 electors registered and considered that this should be examined further after 2013 in association with the community affected.

In addition to the comments made in the revised schedule at Appendix B to the report, the following amendments were accepted by Council during debate:

1. 'no change to existing arrangements' for Barford St Martin
2. 'no change to existing arrangements' for Sutton Mandeville

Councillors expressed their thanks to officers and members involved in the Working Party and congratulated them on their efforts in overseeing the process and producing the proposals detailed at Appendix B to the report presented.

Resolved:

- 1. To adopt the scheme of polling districts, polling places and polling stations contained in the revised Appendix B as presented subject to there being no change to existing arrangements in respect of Barford St Martin and Sutton Mandeville, to take effect from the May 2013 elections, with authority delegated to the (Acting) Returning**

Officer to make any urgent and necessary changes should they be needed.

- 2. That polling districts and stations with fewer than 150 electors be further examined after 2013 in association with the community affected.**

63 Returning Officer's Fees and Expenses

Cllr John Noeken, Cabinet member for Resources presented a report on the scale of expenses which determine the Returning Officers expenditure for elections.

It was noted that the last review was undertaken in November 2008 in preparation for the new Council elections and traditionally the common scale used across Wiltshire was updated every two years. It was felt that generally the present scales were fair and workable, however there were a few areas where improvements could be made and these were detailed in the report and recognised in the recommendations as moved by Cllr Noeken and duly seconded.

A concern was expressed over who paid the full fee for the Deputy Returning Officers with full powers and whether this came out of the Returning Officer's fee as one charge or met by council tax payers. Assurances were given that there would only be one charge, however further guidance would be sought from the Ministry of Justice to ensure the Council was compliant.

As further reassurance to Council, the Leader proposed that the following amendment which was duly seconded:

To add an additional recommendation to read as follows:

- (7) That payment to the Deputy Returning Officer (Full Powers) be drawn from the Returning Officer's fees if this complied with guidance from the Ministry of Justice.**

Cllr Noeken confirmed he was happy to incorporate the amendment within his motion.

Resolved:

- 1. A new heading be included in the scale of fees and charges for the payment of Deputy Returning Officers with Full Powers, and the level be set at one third (33.3%) of the Returning Officer's fee according to the scale.**
- 2. Fees for counting assistants be raised from £15 per hour to £20 per hour.**

- 3. A new heading be introduced to enable count supervisors at casual vacancy counts, where appropriate, to be paid at a rate of £25 per hour.**
- 4. Mileage rates for all elections and polls be set at the HMRC rate in force at the time**
- 5. Headings B3, B4, B5, B10 and B11(subject to paragraph 6.1 of the report) relating to parish polls should be brought into line with the rates for parish elections**
- 6. Other than the amendments set out above, no change be made to the 2009 scale of fees and charges, with the new scheme to take effect from 1 April 2013**

- 7. That payment to the Deputy Returning Officer (Full Powers) be drawn from the Returning Officer's fees if this complied with guidance from the Ministry of Justice.**

64 **Appointment of Co-opted Members of the Standards Committee**

Cllr Julian Johnson, Chairman of the Standards Committee presented a report which asked Council to consider the number of co-opted members to be appointed to the Standards Committee within the terms of reference agreed by Council on 15 May 2012, to delegate to the Standards Committee the authority to make these appointments and to confirm the appointment of three Independent Persons.

Cllr Johnson reminded Council that it had previously authorised that steps be taken to secure the appointment of 3 Independent Persons. He advised Council that interviews for these posts had taken place that week and that the three candidates proposed for appointment were all very highly qualified. Council was therefore asked to ratify the appointment of the following as Independent Persons:

- Stuart Middleton
- Caroline Maddocks
- Colin Malcolm

Cllr Nigel Carter, a member of the Selection Panel, agreed that the three candidates were very highly qualified and that he was very satisfied with the outcome of the interviews.

A debate ensued on the number of co-opted members that would best serve the Standards Committee and a suggestion of 4 non-voting co-opted members was generally welcomed.

Councillor Jon Hubbard suggested that in the spirit of fairness he would prefer to have appointments from a geographical spread based on the old four districts. It was felt that this could be difficult to achieve as it was likely that two of the co-opted would be independent people and two would be from Parish Councils. It was felt that this suggestion would make the appointing process very challenging.

Resolved:

- 1. That four non-voting co-opted members be appointed to the Standards Committee within the maximum of 8 set under the terms of reference agreed by Council on 15 May 2012.**
- 2. Subject to (1) above, to delegate the appointment of the non-voting co-opted members to the Standards Committee.**
- 3. To ratify the appointment of the following as Independent Persons:**
 - **Stuart Middleton**
 - **Caroline Maddocks**
 - **Colin Malcolm**

65 Police and Crime Panel - Panel Arrangements

Cllr Richard Britton, Chairman of the Police and Crime Panel presented a report on the arrangements for the Panel.

Council at its meeting on 15 May 2012 was informed of the requirement placed on local authorities in each police force area by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, to establish and maintain a Police and Crime Panel for its police force area. Council had appointed its Councillors to the Panel which had now met for the first time.

The report detailed the Panel's meeting arrangements, the terms of reference and rules of procedure.

In moving the recommendations in the report presented, Councillor Richard Britton proposed the following additional recommendation:

- 4) Agrees that a submission be made to the Home Secretary for the approval of a fourth membership of the Panel for Swindon Borough Council.

Cllr Britton thanked John Quinton, Head of Democratic Services for all his hard work in supporting the Panel.

Resolved:

- 1. That the Panel arrangements as circulated at Appendix 1 of the report presented be agreed and endorsed.**
- 2. That the terms of reference and rules of procedure for the Panel circulated at Appendix 2 be noted.**
- 3. To give delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to make any appropriate consequential changes to the Council's constitution.**
- 4. To agree that a submission be made to the Home Secretary for the approval of a fourth membership of the Panel for Swindon Borough Council.**

66 Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel - Members' Allowances

For interests declared in this item, please refer to minute no. 57 above.

Cllr John Noeken, Cabinet Member for Resources presented the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel which reviewed and advised on Members' allowances.

The Panel had met to consider the level of allowances that would be appropriate for the following roles:

- Standards Committee Chairman, independent co-opted members and town and parish council members
- Scrutiny Committee allowances
- Police and Crime Panel members
- Health and Wellbeing Board members

The report detailed the issues discussed for each of the above areas and the conclusions reached. It was noted that there would be an opportunity to pick up any discrepancies in any subsequent review.

A discussion ensued on the fund of £10,000 for Overview and Scrutiny members and it was confirmed that the fund was intended to reward Councillors for performing additional specific scrutiny functions such as chairing task groups and rapid scrutiny exercises. It was agreed to better reflect the latter point in the recommendation before Council.

Cllr Noeken moved the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and an additional recommendation in respect of the Health and Wellbeing Board and this was duly seconded.

Resolved:

- 1. To set the Special Responsibility Allowance payable to the Chairman of the Standards Committee at £2,517 per annum (Band 9) to reflect the anticipated reduced workload and number of meetings.**
- 2. Set the co-optee's allowance payable to independent and town and parish members of the new Standards Committee at £1,120 per annum.**
- 3. Retain the current allowances for those engaged in the scrutiny process and in particular to note that:-**
 - a. The issue of paying an allowance to vice chairmen of scrutiny committees would be considered along with all other vice chairmen as part of the larger review later in the year; and**
 - b. The £10k pot for allocation to scrutiny members is to recognise significant additional responsibility, such as charring Task Groups and Rapid Scrutiny Exercises.**
- 4. Agree an SRA for the Chairman of the PCP of £7550 representing 30% of the Leaders SRA.**
- 5. Agree an allowance of £1926 for the independent co-opted members of the Police Crime Panel.**
- 6. Agree that no allowance be paid to the ordinary members of the Police Crime Panel at present as this was covered by the basic allowance and that the issue of an allowance for the vice-chairman be considered as part of the overall review of allowances along with all other vice-chairs.**
- 7. Agree that no allowances be payable for any members of the Health and Wellbeing Board.**
- 8. To ask the Independent Panel to reconsider the issue of a special responsibility allowance (SRA) payable to the chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board as part of its wider review on the basis that its current recommendation that no SRA be payable, is based on the current situation that the Leader chairs the Board and this may not always be the case – the SRA should be based on the position not the person who occupies it.**

67 **Licensing Committee - Change to Scheme of Delegation**

Cllr Jonathon Seed, Chairman of the Licensing Committee presented a report which sought approval of additions and amendments necessary to the scheme of delegation for Licensing in the Constitution due to changes in primary legislation.

The report informed that the current scheme of delegation for Licensing was last approved in December 2010. Since that time the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 amended the Licensing Act 2003 and gave a number of new powers to Licensing Authorities, details of which were highlighted in the report and Appendix.

Council noted that the Licensing Committee, at its meeting held on 6 June 2012 had approved the additions and amendments contained in the report and commended them to Council.

Resolved:

That the additions and amendments (highlighted in bold in the table) to the scheme of delegation of the Licensing Committee be approved.

68 **Annual Report on Treasury Management 2011/12**

Cllr John Brady, Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Risk, presented the Annual Report on Treasury Management 2011-12 which gave Members an opportunity to consider the performance of the Council against the parameters set out in the Treasury Management Strategy.

Councillor Brady reported that there were no breaches of the Treasury Strategy in 2011-12. He congratulated Keith Stephens, the Treasury and VAT Officer for the work undertaken to secure the best return on the Council's investments in very difficult times.

References were made to the recent LIBOR interest rate scandal involving Barclays Bank. Assurances were given that the LIBOR scandal had no affect on the Local Authority's finances and the interest rate offered by Barclays was a very good rate at the time of the investment.

The Council were informed that since the housing subsidy system being abolished and housing debt being reallocated nationally between housing authorities, the Council had made a capital payment to the Department of Communities and Local Government of £118.8m, resulting in an increase in the

Capital Finance Requirement. Assurances were given that this was a positive move in reducing long term debt and the Council would be in a better position financially.

Resolved:

- 1. That the actual cash position at the end of 2011-12 against the original forecast for the year be noted.**
- 2. That the Prudential Indicators, Treasury Indicators and other treasury management strategies set for 2011-12 against actual positions resulting from actions within the year as detailed in Appendix A to the report presented be noted.**
- 3. That investments during the year in the context of the Annual Investment Strategy, as detailed in Appendix B of the report be noted.**

69 **Membership of Committees**

No requests for changes to committee membership were made.

70 **Notice of Motion No. 28 - Land at Innox Hall, Trowbridge - From Councillors Jeff Osborn and Helen Osborn**

The Chairman reported receipt of the following notice of motion No. 28 from Cllrs Jeff Osborn and Helen Osborn:

‘That this Council instructs the relevant Cabinet members to drop all moves to place housing on the site of the old Innox Hall, Trowbridge and to speedily proceed with the construction of the changing facilities for sports players on this site.’

A report from Carlton Brand, Corporate Director was presented to assist Council in its consideration of the motion.

Having been moved and seconded, the Chairman invited Cllr Jeff Osborn to speak to his motion.

Cllr Jeff Osborn explained that planning permission had already been granted for changing facilities on the site of the Old Innox Hall, Trowbridge and arrangements were well advanced to secure necessary funding. He felt that to succeed with this sports related development would be one important step in tackling the shortage of recreational facilities in the Trowbridge area.

Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cabinet member for Transformation, Culture, Leisure and Libraries confirmed that in order to follow due process, a report detailing options

for the site including the changing facilities referred to in the above motion would be considered by the Cabinet (Capital Assets) Committee on 24 July 2012. He reassured Council that the provision of changing facilities on the site mentioned would be given favourable consideration.

The Chairman moved that the motion be referred to the Leader without debate to enable the Leader to progress through the Cabinet (Capital Assets) Committee.

However, Cllrs Jeff Osborn and Helen Osborn withdrew the motion in light of the assurances given.

Resolved:

That motion no 28 be withdrawn.

71 **Councillors' Questions**

The Chairman reported receipt of questions from Councillors Jon Hubbard, Brian Dalton and Chris Caswill, details of which were circulated and attached as Appendix A to these minutes together with the responses given.

Questioners agreed to take their questions as read and were given an opportunity to ask a relevant supplementary question to which the relevant Cabinet member responded. Supplementary questions are summarised as follows and should be read in conjunction with the questions and responses:

Cllr Jon Hubbard – the size of any backlog for Housing Benefit and comparisons with the last eight quarters – Cllr Hubbard asked what steps were being taken to reduce the processing times. Cllr John Brady gave details of improved performance in this area. He also referred to the universal credit system whereby rent would be paid direct to the tenant who would be responsible for paying their landlord on time. Arrangements could be made to pay a landlord direct in the case of vulnerable members of society.

Cllr Jon Hubbard – assurances that no residents would sign an agreement to reduce the number of visits by Housing Support Officers without a full understanding of the implications; and how the cost savings would be passed back to the Council – Cllr Jemima Milton responded on behalf of Cllr John Thomson. Cllr Milton explained that it was too soon to realise the cost savings to the Council at this time but once the numbers of residents signing the agreement was known then the savings to the Council would be known.

Cllr Brian Dalton – Highway maintenance issues for the roads in south Wiltshire – Cllr Dick Tonge spoke referred to the levels of investment for this service. He explained that a criteria was used for prioritising highway maintenance in the County and that the overriding aim was one of road safety. All requests for

highway maintenance were treated equally in accordance with the agreed priority criteria.

Cllr Jon Hubbard – the steps being taken to compensate for the loss of the Education Maintenance Allowance – Cllr Lionel Grundy agreed that it was very unfortunate that the Allowance had been withdrawn nationally but that he was not aware that this had affected the education of children in the County.

Cllr Chris Caswill – when would an agreement be reached in relation to the redevelopment of the Bath Road site in Chippenham and was there any risks associated with the delay – Cllr Toby Sturgis reassured that nothing was being put at risk.

Cllr Chris Caswill – the charge on the Council for this year’s carbons emissions – Cllr Toby Sturgis reported that for the current year it was anticipated that the charge would be £400,000. The reduction for this year was mainly due to energy efficiency savings and a reduction in the Council’s estate.

Cllr Chris Caswill – legal representation at the public examination of the core strategy – Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philippe confirmed that the Council would be making its own case.

Cllr Chris Caswill – If the findings of the Care Quality Commission’s latest national review of learning disability services report could also be reviewed by the Health Select Committee – on behalf of Cllr John Thomson, Cllr Jemima Milton agreed that it would be helpful for the Health Select Committee to also review the report’s findings, subject to the Committee being able to accommodate this within its work plan.

72 **Minutes of Cabinet and Committees**

The Chairman moved that Council receive and note the following minutes as listed in the separate Minutes Book and this was duly seconded by the Vice-Chairman.

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Date</u>
Cabinet	19 June 2012
Cabinet Capital Assets Committee	24 May 2012
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	30 May 2012
Children’s Select Committee	31 May 2012
Environment Select Committee	11 June 2012

Licensing Committee	6 June 2012
Northern Area Planning Committee	16 May, 6 June and 27 June 2012
Eastern Area Planning Committee	7 June 2012
Southern Area Planning Committee	10 May and 21 June 2012
Western Area Planning Committee	9 May, 30 May and 20 June 2012
Strategic Planning Committee	16 May 2012
Standards Committee (Old regime)	2 May 2012
Audit Committee	20 June 2012
Staffing Policy Committee	9 May 2012
Wiltshire Pension Fund Committee	23 May 2012

The Chairman then invited questions from councillors on points of information or clarification on the above minutes and gave the Chairmen of those meetings the opportunity to make any important announcements on the work of their respective Committees.

Cabinet – 19 June - resolution (ii) of minute 70 – Wiltshire Core Strategy

Cllr Caswill raised the following questions on the above mentioned minute. It was agreed to provide him with written responses:

1. Can the Leader confirm that the Cabinet's recommendation of the Core Strategy and the changes listed in Appendix 1 to the Cabinet paper was based on due consideration of the consultation views and recommended responses in Appendix 2 to the same paper?
2. Specifically, did the Cabinet's positive recommendation of Core Policy 42 and the changes listed in Appendix 1 on pages 37 and 38 of the Cabinet papers take account of the consultation views and recommended responses in Appendix 2, page 75?
3. Did the revised text for Core Policy 42, as recommended by the June 19 Cabinet, constitute a policy of unrestricted wind farm development in Wiltshire, or a set of criteria and previous policies on which case by case by judgements of local impact should be based?

Resolved:

That the above mentioned minutes be received and noted.

73 **Wiltshire Police Authority**

The report and minutes of the Wiltshire Police Authority meeting held on 19 April 2012 was received and noted. No questions from Councillors had been received on these documents.

74 **Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority**

The minutes of the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority meetings held on 30 May and 21 June 2012 were received and noted. No questions had been received from Councillors.

Appendix A - Questions and Answers

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 1.00 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic & Members' Services, direct line 01225 718024, e-mail
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Wiltshire Council

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Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Jon Hubbard, Melksham South Division

To

Cllr John Brady, Cabinet Member For Finance, Performance And Risk

Question 1

What is the current size of any backlog for Housing Benefit Claims and how does the size of that backlog compare with the last eight quarters?

Response

The council's revenue and benefits service undertook one of the largest migrations of data ever undertaken by a local authority completing the merger of data in December 2011. The merger did have an impact upon the performance of the service, whilst at the same time demand, in terms of benefit claims reached an all time high.

The figures below confirm the position in terms of the main types of work carried out. The spreadsheet attached indicates the rise in demand brought about by firstly the change in the system and secondly, in April, 2012, a further increase and subsequent slowing of performance as a result of year end billing and the annual up-ratings of all claims. It is encouraging to report that performance has improved in May 2012 and will do again in June, however the figures are not available yet.

The position, at the beginning of this week, , with work outstanding was :-

Claims currently being worked on = 26/6/2012 Total 636

Change of Address currently being worked on = 25/06/2012 Total 96

Change of circumstances currently being worked on 27/06/2012 Total = 208

Should you have any further query regarding this matter please do not hesitate to contact Ian P Brown for an explanation.

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Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Jon Hubbard, Melksham South Division

To

**Cllr John Thomson, Deputy Leader And Cabinet Member For Adult Care,
Communities And Housing**

Question 2

I note that Enara are asking some residents to sign an agreement that the resident will not receive a daily visit.

Could the cabinet member please:

- i) Assure me that no resident is being encouraged to sign an agreement without having a full understanding of the implications of such as change;
- ii) Inform me of how any cost savings from reducing the level of care is being passed back to this council.

Response

Enara, and the other 3 Help to Live at Home providers, are currently meeting every tenant in sheltered housing to talk to them about their future requirements for support. Some tenants do not wish to receive regular visits from housing support officers whilst others have indicated that they would like to receive more support.

Those tenants who do not want this service at this time can review this decision and choose to receive the service once more at anytime.

Once this work is completed and meetings held with every tenant in the county, the Council will have a complete picture of the services that sheltered housing tenants require and the funding required to deliver that service and will work with partners to deliver this.

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Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Jon Hubbard, Melksham South Division

To

**Cllr John Thomson, Deputy Leader And Cabinet Member For Adult Care,
Communities And Housing**

Question 3

The introduction of benefit changes by the Government is going to lead to a number of challenges for landlords. In particular are the changes which will stop Housing Benefit being paid directly to Landlords and instead directly to tenants.

This could lead to an increase in rental arrears and, as a consequence, an increase in tenants being evicted.

Could the cabinet member please:

- i) Inform me of what steps the council is taking to support their own tenants manage these changes when they are implemented;
- ii) Give me some understanding of the planning that is taking place to mitigate the impact of the changes on Wiltshire residents who find themselves in financial difficulty and how the potentially significant increase in families/people presenting themselves as homeless will be managed.

Response i)

Because some customers will be experiencing a number of changes to their benefits the council are preparing as a whole a communications campaign, extending into 2013, which aims to provide accessible information and deliver it in a number of ways. This includes the council's website, mail shots and interacting with the local radio and media to inform and share information. This work is being carried out in conjunction with the voluntary sector and specifically the CAB and also with the housing providers so that best practice / knowledge is shared.

For our own tenants we will also be providing information to them through our tenant magazine and_ are currently recruiting a dedicated financial inclusion officer. We already provide significant funding to the CAB, who also support our tenants. Training on the impact of welfare reform has begun for all our front line staff and we be able to target our resources to contact each individual tenant who will be impacted by these changes

We will also make best use of our ability to transfer applicants who would be in financial hardship to move into smaller accommodation that better suits their needs, which in turn will free up larger accommodation for other households.

Response ii)

The impact of these changes are varied and that is why a cross-departmental group has been put together working with other partners as above on a county wide action plan and communication strategy. Wiltshire Assembly members who also looked at this issue in detail at the June meeting and in addition we have done and will continue to provide presentations and briefings for members.

For people who may be in still then be in danger of homelessness we will continue to focus on prevention measures and have extra funding from government for rough sleepers and single homeless; extra funding to assist households at risk of losing their home; A mortgage rescue scheme and ongoing housing advice and support.

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Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Brian Dalton, Salisbury Harnham Division

To

Cllr Dick Tonge, Cabinet Member For Highways And Transport

Question 1

The massive roads maintenance backlog of £43.5 million, as reported in the Gazette & Herald, is rife across Wiltshire.

There seems to be a lack of maintenance on south Wiltshire's roads and many are in a dire need of repair. Here are just some of the roads in south Wiltshire that require immediate attention; but there are many more:

- A30 London Rd
- A338 London Rd to the Winterbournes and beyond

In the City:

- Catherine St
- Silver St
- Minster St
- Castle St
- Blue Boar Row
- Winchester St
- Endless St
- Brown St
- St Ann St

In my own ward:

- Harnham Gyrotory
- Folkestone Rd
- Essex Square
- Norfolk Rd
- Harnham Rd

I am aware that the gyrotory will be resurfaced in September and about time too; but not after filling potholes in two places, probably more than a dozen or so times each recently!

The roads through the City are a total disgrace and probably match that of third world countries.

Just when will south Wiltshire's Roads get attention? It's no good just adding them to an endless list, that is £43.5 million long and growing each year. A failing 'target' that the council needs to get a grip of.

Response

A verbal response will be given at the meeting.

Wiltshire Council

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Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Jon Hubbard, Melksham South Division

To

Cllr Lionel Grundy, Cabinet Member For Children's Services

Question 1

Department of Education figures show that in 2011 Wiltshire had the highest proportion of 16-18 year olds not in employment education and training amongst the counties of the South West. Wiltshire also has the highest percentage of young people between the ages of 16 and 18 for whom no activity is known (17% overall and 36% in the case of 18 year olds). Given that the Council retains a statutory duty "to enable, encourage and assist young people's participation in education and training", what steps are this administration taking:

- a. To help improve the situation in Wiltshire for school leavers?
- b. To help compensate for the loss of the Educational Maintenance Allowance and the disbanding of the Connexions advice service?
- c. To ensure better collection of NEET data under the new devolved arrangements?

Response

NEET Performance:

Wiltshire's annual NEET figure for 2011 was 6.3%.

The monthly NEET figure for Wiltshire in May 2012 was 5.4%. This is a reduction on the same period last year when the figure was 5.9%. In May 2012 there were 751 young people NEET.

It is important to note that 2011 data cannot be compared with that published in previous years because significant changes have been made to the information collected in preparation for the Government's commitment to raise the participation age. 2011 figures:

- i) Relate to young people resident in the local area. Data for previous years was related to the area in which the young person was attending school or college.
- ii) Relate to the young person's academic age; i.e. their age on 1st September 2011. Data for previous years was based on calendar age. This is in line with other statistical collections and has the effect of increasing the number and percentage of NEET.

A report on Youth Unemployment, NEET & Support for Young People to move into Employment and Training was presented to the Public Services Board on 26th April 2012. The report provides detail on the cross cutting and extensive work that is underway across the Council and its partners to support young people to move into employment and training.

Not Known Performance:

The not known figure refers to 16-18 year olds whose activity is not known. For example, whether they are on a full-time college course, in a job etc.

In 2011 Wiltshire's not known figure was 16.5%.

In May 2012 the not known figure was 10.8% Tracking involves internal and external partners including Integrated Youth, Jobcentre Plus, schools and post-16 learning providers.

A number of steps have been taken to support improvements to tracking and reducing our not known figure;

- A former member of Connexions staff has been seconded into a Tracking Coordinator role.
- A Tracking Coordination Plan has been developed and is being implemented.
- Information Sharing arrangements have been reviewed and strengthened with relevant internal and external partners.

a) **What steps are the administration taking to help improve the situation in Wiltshire for school leavers?**

Targeted Personal Advisors within the Integrated Youth Service are continuing to provide information, advice and guidance to school leavers. This will continue until September 2012 when the delivery of careers guidance to all pupils will become the responsibility of schools (for which schools have been funded by central Government).

The Local Authority continues to fulfil its duty to encourage, enable or assist young people's participation in education or training through work with partners, including:

- The Integrated Youth Service assisting the most vulnerable young people and those at risk of disengaging with education or work. This includes carrying out Learning Difficulty Assessments for young people with a learning difficulty and/or disability.
- Ensuring that eligible 16 and 17 year olds have received an offer of a suitable place in post-16 education or training, and that they are assisted to take up a place. This is called the September Guarantee which is coordinated by the Integrated Youth Service.
- The new Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is providing strategic leadership for the Employment & Skills agenda in the local area. One of its key priorities includes delivering Apprenticeship growth and maximising take-up.
- As part of the Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership (now Enterprise Wiltshire) the Employment & Skills Board (ESB) is the delivery arm for the employment & skills agenda in Wiltshire. Delivery of work for the ESB is undertaken by two sub groups, Wiltshire Works and the Apprenticeship sub group. The former involves a number of partners working together to address worklessness, whilst the latter is focused on driving up Apprenticeship growth in the county. Wiltshire Works is currently supporting the development of an employability and informal skills development programme for young people. This is being supported with funding from the Council. A Work and Skills Plan is also in place with a focus on reducing worklessness and promoting economic inclusion. It places an emphasis on support for key groups including young people who are NEET and Looked After Children.
- An Apprenticeship Action Plan is being implemented which has a key objective of increasing the proportion of 16-18 year olds participating in Apprenticeships.
- The Employment and Skills Board has supported the following initiatives for young people:

Delivered for Young People:

- 5,150 'Have a Go' workplace skills activities undertaken by young people during Apprenticeship Week (Feb 2012)
- 495 jobs created for out of work young people
- 300 Work Experience opportunities created for unemployed young people
- 169 people (aged 16+) across Wiltshire and Swindon supported with travel to work/training
- 136 EET outcomes for 13-17 year olds at risk of offending or NEET
- 100 new Apprenticeship enrolments including the creation of 52 new jobs through Wiltshire's first Apprenticeship Campaign
- In-Council Apprenticeship Programme launched
- Wiltshire Council awarded the 2010 JCP (South West) award for a major employer's contribution to supporting youth employment

Current Initiatives to Support Young People:

- 1000 Apprenticeships to be created through Wiltshire's second Apprenticeship Campaign
- 350 Work Experience opportunities to be created specifically for unemployed young people
- 150 further Work Experience opportunities and 30 new jobs to be created for JSA/ESA customers aged 18 years + who are not currently supported by other initiatives. Individuals will also receive support with overcoming personal and employment barriers and personal development mentoring and job coaching to support progression into employment
- 100+ unemployed young people supported into work through Sector Based Work Academies
- 62 further EET outcomes for 13-17 year olds at risk of offending or NEET
- Self-employment advice and support to start a new business through the Wiltshire Business Support Service linking in with relevant Government 'Get Britain Working' initiatives such as the Enterprise Allowance and Enterprise Clubs and the recently announced Enterprise Loans under the Youth Investment Fund
- Development of volunteering opportunities for young people to assist with the development of transferable skills, experience and increase employability
- Encouraging the establishment of more community led Work Clubs

Planned Initiatives to Support Young People:

- 350 disadvantaged 14 and 15 year olds across Wiltshire and Swindon supported to participate and succeed in education or training in order to achieve better future employment outcomes subject to a successful bid to the DWP Innovation Fund
 - 275 individuals (aged 16+) benefitting from in-work/self employed support services for a period of between 9 and 18 months for employees who have recently gained employment/entered self-employment following a period of unemployment to help them sustain that employment/achieve career advancement subject to a successful bid to Channel Programme (INTERREG)
 - 30 Work Placements created abroad subject to a successful bid to Leonardo Mobility 2012 for young unemployed people to gain vital experience of the work environment and enable them to broaden their life experience and confidence
 - Further development of the In-Council Apprenticeship Programme to provide opportunities for Looked After Children/NEET
- The 11-19 Commissioning Strategy and Implementation Plan includes a priority related to supporting young people to move into employment and training. A number of high level actions have recently been

identified in collaboration with partners to support delivery of the commissioning priority mentioned above.

- A Partnership NEET Reduction Action Plan has been developed and is being implemented.
- A Raising Participation Age Strategy and Plan has been developed which sets out the actions which are required in order to secure full participation for 17 year olds by 2013 and 18 year olds by 2015. As part of the plan a Risk of NEET Indicator Tool has been developed to help identify young people in schools who are at risk of NEET so that they can be supported much earlier.
- The Integrated Youth Service has recently funded a number of specific local based projects within community areas to support young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming so.

b) What steps are the local authority taking to help compensate for the loss of the Educational Maintenance Allowance and the disbanding of the Connexions advice service?

The Connexions Service has not been disbanded in Wiltshire. Instead the Service has been realigned in the light of changes to the delivery of careers advice in September 2012.

Remaining staff from the former Connexions Service continue to work with and support young people who are NEET and/or are at risk of becoming so. This involves supporting vulnerable school leavers to make a successful transition from pre to post-16 learning. Many of the initiatives mentioned earlier will help to compensate for the removal of the EMA. However in addition to these:

- A government Bursary Fund is available to support young people who are vulnerable in post-16 learning and colleges have use of a discretionary fund to support the most in need post-16 learners.
- The provision of careers guidance from schools and the National Careers Service will encourage young people to continue to participate in learning.
- The Raising of the Participation Age to 17 in 2013 and 18 by 2015 will mean that young people continue in learning for longer and this should help to increase participation rates and reduce NEET.
- Further development of the In-Council Apprenticeship Programme is being considered to provide opportunities for Looked After Children/NEET.
- The Integrated Youth Service is funding a range of small scale projects across Wiltshire focussed on targeting those young people who are NEET/at risk of NEET and supporting them into education, employment or training.

c) What steps are the local authority taking to ensure better collection of NEET data under the new devolved arrangements?

- The Council has set up new information sharing protocols with the following:
 - Schools, including academies
 - Post-16 learning providers, including colleges
 - Education Funding Agency
 - Jobcentre Plus
 - The Data Service (Apprenticeship data)
- Appointment of a tracking co-ordinator to oversee the collection and recording of the activity/destinations of young people aged 16-19.
- Working with relevant staff within the Integrated Youth Service so that they fully understand their responsibilities in relation to tracking work. Requirements in relation to tracking are being clarified through the development and implementation of a specification for the Integrated Youth Service.
- Exploring the option of taking on a young apprentice to work alongside the tracking coordinator to develop innovative approaches for tracking, including use of social networking and applications.
- Will have introduced by September 2012 a new electronic single case management system across the whole of the Integrated Youth Service

Mal Munday

Head of Service

Integrated Youth

James Fortune

Lead Commissioner 11-19

Commissioning Team

5th July 2012.

Wiltshire Council

Council

10 July 2012

Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To

**Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member For Waste, Property, Environment
And Development Control Services**

Question 1

Are you yet in a position to give a definitive answer to my question at the May meeting about the Council's agreement with ING for the redevelopment of the Bath Road site in Chippenham? Are ING being asked to provide alternative facilities for the services currently housed in the Bridge Centre (such as the youth cafe) or is the Council adopting the more sensible course of asking for cash payments in lieu?

Why has it taken so long to come to this decision?

Response

The Council has requested a cash payment for replacing YPSS, the skate barn and youth storage facility. The amount of such payment is currently the subject of discussions with ING.

The Council is keeping its options open in relation to the replacement youth cafe. Both parties would prefer the Council to take responsibility for securing the facility and in this respect the Youth Service are preparing a specification. This will mean that a cost estimate can then be prepared to enable either party to acquire such premises should a suitable opportunity present itself. Naturally, ING will only release such funds to the Council once the contract has gone unconditional (grant of planning consent, minimum number of pre-lets secured etc). Therefore Member approval would be needed for an acquisition in advance of receiving payment from ING.

Wiltshire Council

Council

10 July 2012

Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To

**Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member For Waste, Property, Environment
And Development Control Services**

Question 1

- (a) Has the Council now paid the £600,000 fine which it incurred last year for carbon emissions?
- (b) How much do you expect the Council to be charged for this year's performance?

Response

- (a) The Council has not paid a fine of £600,000, as the reporting deadline is not until 31 July 2012. The changes in the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme have been reported to The Environment Select Committee. This is not a fine but a mandatory payment for all organisations, both public sector and private companies, that consumed over £500k worth of electricity in 2008.
- (b) For the year 2011-12 the projected energy consumption figures and the current unit price of £12 per tonne announced by the Government in March equates to a payment of £524k. (this includes the schools estate). Schools will be taking on individual financial liability for their allowances from 2012-13.

Wiltshire Council

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10 July 2012

Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monktondivision

To

**Cllr Fleur De Rhé-Phillipe, Cabinet Member For Economic Development
And Strategic Planning**

Question 1

Given the legal challenges to the Core Strategy being threatened by at least one developer, is it the administration's intention that the Council retain external legal representation for the Inspector's Hearing?

Response

It is government policy to discourage legal representation at public examination of the core strategy. Because of the importance of the core strategy, each step will be monitored by the Legal Unit to ensure appropriate legal representation is present. If formal Court proceedings were to be instigated, the Head of Legal Services would ensure there were appropriate resources to enable the Council to protect the Council's interests.

Wiltshire Council

Council

10 July 2012

Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To

**Cllr John Thomson, Deputy Leader And Cabinet Member For Adult Care,
Communities And Housing**

Question 1

Given the distressing news that the Care Quality Commission's latest national review of learning disability services has found that more than half of those reviewed did not meet Government standards, what assurances can be given about the provision of learning disability support in Wiltshire?

What actions will this Council be taking in response to the CQC Report?

Response

This report focused on residential provision for people with learning disabilities, most of that provision is commissioned by the health services across the country. However as a council we do commission places within Wiltshire with 55 providers who are all compliant with CQC regulations.

The key messages highlighted in the report apply to a 'whole system approach' and within Wiltshire we already have joint commissioning and provision and will be reviewing the report's findings with the Learning Disability Partnership Board and the Health and wellbeing Board.

Wiltshire Council

Council

10 July 2012

Questions From Councillors

From Cllr Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To

**Cllr John Thomson, Deputy Leader And Cabinet Member For Adult Care,
Communities And Housing**

The Council will no doubt welcome the web based publication of the Care Quality Commission reviews of Care and Nursing Homes in Wiltshire and elsewhere.

Question 10

(a) What steps will the Council be taking to publicise this resource?

Response

a) The Council in partnership with Care Choices has recently published a directory of services that details all care homes and domiciliary care agencies operating in Wiltshire. There are references throughout the directory to the CQC website and the information contained therein. Any family or individual that contacts the Council for advice or information about care homes is forwarded a copy of this directory which is also available on line via the Council's website. Staff, when discussing care home options with members of the public, advise people to review the information about that care home on the CQC website.

Question

(b) What use will the Council itself be making of this information, particularly of the several care homes in Wiltshire where improvement is being required or in some cases enforced?

Response

b) We work closely with CQC not just by reviewing information on their website but through bi monthly meetings to review registered services in Wiltshire. In this way we can share informally information about

services of concern. This information then directs the work of the Quality Assurance officer whose role is to work with those providers to develop and implement an action plan to improve those services. Our aim is to work with providers to help them improve however, in some circumstances it is necessary to stop new placements or care packages with those organisations until improvements have been delivered. This has a financial impact on the provider. Whilst an action plan is being developed and improvements being implemented we monitor this closely with providers through regular meetings and progress reports.

Our priority is to ensure the safety of those receiving care and every effort is made to improve the service rather than moving residents. However, where a provider fails to comply and does not deliver the required improvements steps would be taken to move residents. However our primary aim is to work with providers to deliver improvements that will enable residents to remain in their home.