

## **West Wiltshire District Council**

### **Council**

**23 June 2004**

#### **Question from Cllr Chivers to Cllr Richard Wiltshire**

##### **Question 1**

The Conservatives have controlled this Council for over one year with the help of their Independent friends and the Labour Party.

Can we be told when they intend to honour their election promise of free car parking to the residents of West Wiltshire?

Would it also be possible to be told how much revenue would be lost in honouring this promise that would have been spent on services?

##### **Answer 1**

The assumption within the question is incorrect, the Conservatives have not promised free car parking within West Wiltshire, they have only called for a free period.

Cllr Chivers will be aware of the difficult financial situation left by his administration in May last year. That situation could have cost the council tax payers a 15% rise for three years, the new administration have been mindful of the tax payers and managed the increase to under 5%.

Due to the constraints of our financial objectives changes in parking charges will have to be cost neutral with the free period covered by stricter enforcement and increases in longer stay charges. These could have an adverse effect on employment in our town centres and residents so we need to adopt a balanced approach.

Subject to this constraint, officers are working on proposals for a change in the current structure of charges that are not in line with national and county policy, which is to encourage shoppers and discourage commuters. They are also considering, with other authorities, the opportunities that may arise from any adoption of Decriminalised Parking legislation in West Wiltshire.

Cabinet is agreed that it wishes to have a structure of charges that encourage the shopping motorist and maintain the vibrancy of our town centres. There will be no significant effect on other services.

##### **Question 2**

Many residents in Holt and the Bradford on Avon area are disappointed that they haven't been included in the recently introduced waste paper collection.



Can you tell me in full what areas have been excluded from the scheme and why?

## **Answer 2**

Holt Village has continued to be on the paper-recycling scheme and residents received information regarding the scheme during February including the scheduled collection days. Next collection day is Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June & every other week thereafter. They will be included in the expansion of the Black Box scheme as presented to council members this evening.

Parts of Bradford on Avon have not yet been included on the kerbside recycling schemes due to narrow access difficulties. This will be rectified once Hills Waste Ltd have taken delivery of the suitable vehicles during July to enable our residents in the district who live in areas with narrow streets to participate in the schemes.

## **Question 3**

At the last Full Council you stated that residents who wished not to take part in the twin bin scheme wouldn't be forced to do so, can you explain how this will work?

## **Answer 3**

The 'opt out scheme' whereby residents receive a container, in this case a 2nd wheeled bin, and are required to contact the council or distributors to return the bin. This approach, instead of 'opting in schemes' has been recognised as the most practicable process to ensure higher participation rates (50% or more) from other communities across the country where the twin bin scheme has been introduced.

Similar schemes are popping up all over the country, and they do work - and we know that nearly two thirds of our residents support the idea (following the general satisfaction survey from 2003 and the Best Value review of waste in 2000).

Where a resident wishes to opt out of the scheme, officers will gently encourage retention of the 2nd bin due to the new alternate weekly collection within the affected area. Officers will clearly explain the need to reduce the amount of rubbish put out for collection on non-recycling week and make use of both the green compost bin and black box scheme to help manage the amount of rubbish put out per week.

By encouraging our residents to support the council in achieving the statutory target and informing them of their success in achieving the 2003-04 target of 10% we are making it easier for our community to separate out their rubbish that goes to landfill.

## **Question 4**



The Twin bin scheme is set to be introduced in the Autumn yet local residents have received no information. Unlike South Gloucestershire who carried out an intensive education programme. When can we expect this process to begin if at all?

#### **Answer 4**

During July the rollout programme will include

- Information booklet to members and affected town/parish councils on new green waste collections, answering frequently asked questions
- Start media campaign with Wiltshire Times on new recycling initiatives
- Send news releases to other local media
- Presentation on green waste collections to Full Council
- Initial information leaflet to households affected by green waste collections - this will set out roadshow dates
- Recycling roadshow to visit key locations in Trowbridge and Melksham to publicise green waste collections
- Further publicity through local media
- Further internal communications with staff/members

Signage at Melksham and Trowbridge HWRCs to publicise green waste collections.

#### **Question 5**

The grass cutting in the District this year is a total disgrace. How many default notices have been issued?

#### **Answer 5**

No 'default notices' have been required this season as yet on areas we are responsible for. When officers have raised concerns on standards with the existing contract, the operational teams (In-House for the North & South of the district, English landscapes Central area) have complied with instruction and carried out the work to the required standard.

Some areas brought to our attention have been passed onto the relevant client management (WWHS and WCC) and we are unable to comment on what action has been raised by other parties.

#### **Question 6**



How much has been paid to local organisations across the district from recycling credits from the mini recycling banks? Can we have a breakdown of each site? Downside Park Trowbridge have complained they have received no payment can you explain why?

#### **Answer 6**

The council receives no detailed information as this arrangement is between Hills and the local organisations. A detailed copy of the funding will be made available to members by the end of the month.

#### **Question from Cllr Terry Chivers to Cllr Michael Mounde**

#### **Question 1**

When residents are offered accommodation in sheltered schemes are they visited to ensure that the accommodation is suitable to their needs?

#### **Answer 1**

This type of visit is not carried out by the Council but by the Housing Association. West Wiltshire Housing Society who are the main providers of sheltered housing in the area, have confirmed that they do visit tenants who are being offered sheltered housing in order to assess their suitability.

#### **Question 2**

Also are medical forms and home visit forms completed at the time of the visit?  
This practice was carried out by West Wiltshire Housing Society before the service was brought back in house.

#### **Answer 2**

Yes.

#### **Question 3**

Can you tell me what is to happen to the former Lifeline Centre Building in Melksham?

#### **Answer 3**



These premises have been jointly funded by West Wiltshire, North Wiltshire and Kennet District Councils. If the premises cease to have a joint use then we will need to reimburse our partners. The three Council's are currently considering if there is a future for a joint use or if there is any other more suitable purpose that the building can be put to.

#### **Question 4**

Would you agree this would make a first class building to be used alongside Kingsbury Square Hostel?

#### **Answer 4**

The answer would depend on the use that is being proposed. The future use of the building is currently being considered by Housing Services and the Asset Management Group with a view to hopefully securing a housing related future use.