

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

Meeting: Council
Place: Council Chamber - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN
Date: Tuesday 23 February 2016
Time: 10.30 am

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on Monday 15th February 2016
Additional documents are now available and are attached to this Agenda Supplement.

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718024 or email Yamina.Rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

- 6 **Public Participation (Pages 3 - 10)**
Details of public questions together with responses are attached.
- 7 **Budget 2016/17 (Pages 11 - 12)**
Details of the budget process to be followed at the meeting are attached.
- 7c) **The report of the Special Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee held on 12 February 2016 (Pages 13 - 16)**
- 7e) **Financial Plan - Report by Michael Hudson, Associate Director Finance and S.151 officer (Pages 17 - 30)**
Details of the public consultation meetings on the budget (appendix 3vi) are attached.
- 11c) **Notice of motion No. 30 - Fracking - Councillors Jeff Osborn and Helen Osborn (Pages 31 - 32)**
An updated version of Motion no.30 has been provided by Cllr Jeff Osborn, details as attached.

- 16 **Councillors' Questions (Pages 33 - 52)**
Details of councillor questions together with responses are attached.

This supplement was published on 19 February 2016.

Wiltshire Council

Council

23 February 2015

Public Questions

From Mrs Anne Henshaw

To Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Leader of the Council

At the Cabinet meeting of 15 December 2015 CPRE asked the following question:

In the light of comments made in the letter of 16 November 2015 from the Inspector of the Chippenham Site Allocations Plan what is the current position of the Cabinet Member for Planning (strategic and development management) property, waste and strategic housing?

The Minutes of that Cabinet meeting state:

“In response to a supplementary question considering as to whether the Cabinet Member’s responsibility for both Property and Strategic Planning represented a conflict of interest, the Council’s Monitoring Officer stated that he continued to take the view there is no conflict, as both roles are separate. In addition, the Leader asked that the Monitoring Officer write to Mrs. Henshaw to further explain his advice on this matter. Cllr Sturgis added that the decision to adopt a plan was not his to take alone and the final decision rested with Full Council”

Despite emails dated 3rd January and 17th January requesting the response asked by the Leader, no explanation of the view of the Monitoring Officer has been received.

Response

I can confirm that the Monitoring Officer has now sent a response explaining his view on the issue with an apology for the delay, which has been due to pressing work commitments.

My questions to you today are:

Question (P16/01)

1. Were all Council members made aware that considerable amounts of land in Council ownership were part of the negotiations relating to the developments on the eastern side of Chippenham when they took the final decision and

agreed the flawed Plan which went before the Inspector, and are all Council members aware of the implicit closeness of the positions between Property and Strategic Planning in the above case and others, and comfortable with the situation where one member holds the key portfolios for Planning (strategic and development management) property, waste and strategic housing?

Do you not realise just how tendentious this can be seen in the eyes of the public, your voters?

Response

Land ownership was not a consideration in the decision to submit the Chippenham DPD for Examination. However, the issue of the Council's land ownership was raised in questions to the Council at the meeting on 14 July 2015.

Question (P16/02)

2. Do you accept that the Cabinet system develops and protects the development of these powerful portfolios with the result that when questioned by members of the public the reaction is to ignore the question as it dares to challenge decisions of an inner political circle.

If there is no conflict of interest in the portfolios then mine is a straightforward question to answer. Why have I had to wait two months to hear nothing. This is discourteous at the least and smacks of an attitude which I and other members of the public find undemocratic and exclusionary. I urge members to seriously consider the issue I have raised and consider its implications with the public and their own futures.

Response

As stated above the Monitoring Officer has now written to Mrs Henshaw setting out the basis of his consideration of the issue raised regarding the Cabinet Member's responsibilities and has apologised for the delay which has resulted from work pressures in his office.

The role of the individual Cabinet Member responsible for strategic planning within the decision making process is to submit the report and draft plan for consideration by Cabinet, who then collectively make their recommendations to full Council. Full council then collectively makes its decision on referral of the plan for examination based on all the relevant factors before it. The plan is then considered by an independent inspector through the examination process. The fact that the Cabinet Member has dual responsibilities therefore has no material bearing on the decision making process.

Supplementary statement

I have been made aware of the changes made at the Cabinet meeting on 9th February with regard to portfolio responsibilities. No doubt you are all aware of the wording. If Cllr. Sturgis's areas of responsibility were not viewed as a conflict, why was I not informed accordingly in writing by the Monitoring Office giving reasons for that answer immediately following the December Cabinet meeting?

May I have clarification, set out in writing, as to the precise difference in the relationship between Strategic Property and Strategic Planning portfolio holders roles within the spatial planning team.

Response

Notwithstanding the above position the Leader has made a change to cabinet portfolio responsibilities under which the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Skills and Strategic Transport takes on responsibility for strategic property to provide greater clarity and focus in the exercise of the Council's function as landowner.

The strategic property responsibility involves oversight of the service which deals with all strategic property on behalf of the Council in accordance with the Constitution, reporting to the Cabinet Capital Assets Committee or Cabinet as required. For these purposes strategic property includes any land of strategic significance to the council, normally having a value in excess of £ 250,000. Operational use of property remains with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Waste.

Strategic planning includes oversight of the service that considers issues related to the development and implementation of planning policy matters. Decisions in this regard are reserved either to the Strategic Planning Committee (which is a non-executive committee) or to full Council as part of the policy framework.

Wiltshire Council

Council

23 February 2015

Public Questions

From Ms Krystyne Freeman

To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Operational Property and Waste

Question (P16/04)

With regard to the recent granting of PEDL(Petroleum Exploration and Development Licence) licences in Wiltshire

As residents of Wiltshire, we are all aware that unusually our county contains over 300 square miles of MOD training grounds which are active for an average of 340 days per annum.

MOD training activity involves many heavy impacts from mortars, rockets, mines and heavy artillery. Consequently, the chalklands and surrounding areas are already subject to primary and secondary seismic waves and geological disturbances that are traceable both above and below ground. These surface and underground waves generally possess robust spatial coherence and travel vast distances. Chalkland is particularly easy for seismic waves to travel through. Maintenance & repairs to water supply pipes & couplings feeding farms & homes across the Plains are already a constant & expensive activity.

The consequences of existing military activity and new drilling/explosive fracking activity acting together are unknown. The MOD act within strict safety parameters but even they are subject to miscalculations. (Patney, Devizes. 2014).

Given that potential PEDL sites (and their chemical and drilling tools) fall within this area and will therefore be affected by these regular seismic disturbances, **what monitoring guarantees can WC give to its residents regarding seismic security given that there is no precedent in such a scenario globally, let alone nationally?**

Response

The award is for a Petroleum Exploration and Development License (PEDLs) that covers any hydrocarbon. The licenses for these blocks will contain conditions that prohibits all or specific activities in parts of the block to protect ecological sites. The award of a PEDL does not of itself give permission for operations to begin. The necessary planning and regulatory consents will be required before development can take place. All proposals will be scrutinised by the Environment Agency, and by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The licenses do not grant planning permission which is the role of Wiltshire Council, as Mineral Planning Authority, or Government should an application be called in. Wiltshire Council has not received a planning application to date.

Wiltshire Council cannot comment on the potential impact of hypothesised seismic effects on a site, since no planning application has yet been received.

In the event that a planning application is received, Wiltshire Council will ensure all statutory authorities are consulted including the MoD if appropriate and if there is a requirement that the developer undertakes any form of monitoring, any planning permission granted would contain a condition to cover this.

Further information and guidance on PEDL licensing can be found here- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/about-shale-gas-and-hydraulic-fracturing-fracking/developing-shale-oil-and-gas-in-the-uk>.

Wiltshire Council

Council

23 February 2015

Public Questions

From Mrs Philippa Clarke

To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Operational Property and Waste

Question (P16/05)

I would like to ask the following question please, in respect of the licences granted for exploration of coal bed methane in this area:

The evidence, coming from existing explorations in America and Australia, indicates serious dangers to health. Known carcinogens are used in the process, which can enter the drinking water causing sensory, respiratory and neurological damage. Under the Council's Duty of Care, how can the Council protect the health of the population of Wiltshire if the proposed exploration and subsequent mining for coal bed methane is allowed to proceed?

Response

In regard to the award for a Petroleum Exploration and Development License (PEDLs), licenses for these blocks will contain conditions that prohibits all or specific activities in parts of the block to protect ecological sites. The award of a PEDL does not of itself give permission for operations to begin. The necessary planning and regulatory consents will be required before development can take place. All proposals will be scrutinised by the Environment Agency, and by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The licenses do not grant planning permission which is the role of Wiltshire Council, as Mineral Planning Authority, or Government should an application be called in. Wiltshire Council has not received a planning application to date.

During drilling, well operators have a legal duty to manage and control the risks to people. The HSE monitors well operations to check these legal duties are carried out. Its specialists will check construction matches the design by reviewing the weekly operations reports it receives from the well operator. HSE intends to jointly inspect drilling and fracking operations with the Environment Agency during the exploratory phase. HSE inspectors can visit any site at any time if there is a matter of concern.

The Environment Agency will monitor the environmental impacts and inspect the operator's reports. The greater the potential risk, the greater the scrutiny. Conditions attached to permits will set out the minimum level of site-based monitoring and reporting.

The Council, as the Local Planning Authority would be responsible for enforcing any conditions attached to a planning permission. For example, this may include monitoring of noise or dust levels.

Further information and guidance on PEDL licensing can be found here- [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/about-shale-gas-and-hydraulic-fracturing-
fracking/developing-shale-oil-and-gas-in-the-uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/about-shale-gas-and-hydraulic-fracturing-fracking/developing-shale-oil-and-gas-in-the-uk).

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COUNCIL – 23 FEBRUARY 2016

BUDGET DEBATE PROCESS

1. Introduction by Chairman

- Remind councillors about circulated paperwork
- To clarify process to be followed

2. Councillor Jane Scott - Leader of the Council

- to deliver the budget speech
- No time limit on speech

3. Councillor Dick Tonge - Cabinet member for Finance

- To present and move the budget
- No time limit on speech

4. Councillor Simon Killane - Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

- To present the report of the Committee on the consideration of the Financial Plan – 3 February
- To highlight particular areas of discussion
- No time limit on speech

5. Councillor Glenis Ansell – Chair of Financial Planning Task Group

- To report on the work of the Financial Planning Task Group
- No time limit on speech

6. Group Leaders – Response to Budget

- Group Leaders to respond to the recommendations of Cabinet and Councillor Tonge's motion
- No time limit on speeches

7. Group Leaders – Opportunity for amendments

- Group Leaders' opportunity to move amendments to the motion – each amendment needs to be seconded and the seconder may reserve their speech until later in the debate

- Debate on each amendment to budget – Group Leaders to be asked to speak first on any amendments followed by Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee then widen debate to other Councillors.

8. Councillor Simon Killane - Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

- Report of the Special meeting of the Committee on 12 February
- To respond to opposition budgets

9. Other Councillors – Amendment

- each councillor to speak once only
- the mover of the original motion (Councillor Tonge) has the right of reply
- Vote on amendment – if agreed this amends the original or substantive motion (or incorporated in the motion by agreement) – if not it falls
- Recorded votes on any amendments
- Proceed to next amendment and repeat process

10. The Substantive Motion

(This could be the original motion or the motion as amended in 9 above)

- Debate on the substantive motion
 - Councillors to speak only once
 - Cllr Tonge has right of reply
 - Substantive motion put to the vote
 - Budget set
 - All votes on budget will be by way of recorded vote
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Wiltshire Council

Council

23 February 2016

Special Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Report on Proposed Amendments for the 2016-17 Budget

Purpose of report

1. To report to Full Council a summary of the main issues discussed at the special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee held on 12 February 2016. This was convened to consider proposed amendments from Opposition Groups to the budget recommended by Cabinet on 9 February 2016.

Background

2. This special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee provided an opportunity for non-executive councillors to question Councillor Glenis Ansell, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, as the only group to submit proposals to the Committee, on her group's proposed amendments before the budget is considered by Full Council on 23 February 2016.
3. The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group gave a presentation covering the proposed amendments to the Executive's budget. She made the following comments:
 - The proposals had been accepted as legal and financially deliverable by the council's Corporate Leadership Team in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer.
 - The group had aimed to add value to the work already undertaken by the Executive and officers in a challenging financial environment, setting out areas of further potential savings and priorities for further investment the group had identified.
 - These included reductions in catering and the council's fleet of vehicles, and additional funding through the rural services grant.

Main issues raised during questioning and debate

4. The Chairman invited the Leader of the Council and other Executive Members to respond to the amendments to lead off discussion, before opening up to general queries from the Committee and other Members in attendance.

Leader's response

5. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, commented upon the proposals, detailed fully below, stating they would be looked at closely ahead of Full Council, although at this stage the potential savings and investment had not

raised significant policy concerns, and been cleared by the officers. The Cabinet Member for Finance confirmed that view.

Consideration of amendments (investments)

Investment in 'Pause'

6. Pause is a national initiative to reduce the demand/cost placed on Children's Services by working with families who have experienced or are at risk of repeated removal of children from their care in an attempt to break that cycle. A national pilot scheme is currently running.
7. The Liberal Democrat group's proposal was to invest £0.125m into the initiative, funded with savings as detailed at paragraphs 12-17.
8. The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Councillor Laura Mayes, stated the initiative appeared worthwhile subject to further consideration.
9. The Committee discussed the amendment, including the current impact on families and particular children as well as the cost to the council of repeatedly taking the children of certain families into care, and the accompanying financial as well as societal benefits if this could be addressed with such an initiative. Members were informed the investment was a cost to get the initiative running in Wiltshire, and that feasibility studies with other local authorities had shown significant savings in following years as a result of successful implementation.

Adaptations and Equipment for Adults with Learning Disabilities

10. The Liberal Democrat group's amendment was to provide play and leisure equipment for adults with learning disabilities to reflect the growing population and enable greater development through play and work alongside care and leisure services. This would require a revenue investment of £0.100m to fund capital borrowing which would result in a capital investment of £0.469m.
11. The Committee discussed the proposals including the type of specialist sensory equipment this would provide, with details sought on the interest repayments required on any borrowing.

Consideration of amendments (savings)

Catering

12. The Liberal Democrat group's proposal was for Officers to review the current net cost of catering across all services (£0.289m) to look at pricing, controls, procurement etc. in order to reduce the spend and introduce commercial pricing in areas from the County Hall and Monkton Park facilities, as well as frontline services such as Leisure or activity centres such as Braeside in Devizes. This would seek to identify savings of £0.050m.
13. The Executive responded by stating there were no objections to reducing the budget if council approved.

14. The Committee discussed the proposed review and identification of savings, requesting details of any impacts particular in centres servicing external customers. It was clarified that beyond the Monkton Park and County Hall facilities little of the catering at other locations was under contract, and it was suggest many units might benefit from tighter controls on spend.

Vehicle Fleet

15. The Liberal Democrat group's proposal was to reduce the council's vehicle fleet by at least one further vehicle, saving an additional £0.025m on top of the the administration's proposed savings of £0.200m
16. The Committee discussed the proposal, seeking details of the current fleet and impact of existing Executive proposals and the additional proposal, as well as how much staff travel was undertaken using the vehicle fleet and if a reduction was viable.
17. It was reported that the majority of fleet costs related to vehicle maintenance rather than staff travel, but confirmed the further level of saving was achievable if supported by Council.

Rural Services Grant

18. The Liberal Democrat group's proposal was to utilise £0.150m of the rural services grant uplift as detailed by the Cabinet Member at the beginning of the meeting as a contribution towards funding the above investment proposals. The details of the final settlement figure from central Government would be included in a revised financial plan report to Council.

Consideration of amendments (policy)

Good Neighbour Scheme

19. The Good Neighbour Scheme consists of individuals who advise residents in rural areas and signpost them to relevant support services, and is operated by Community First.
20. In December it was decided to devolve responsibility for the scheme to Area Boards from April 2016, as detailed in [Councillors Briefing Note No.272](#).
21. The Liberal Democrat group's proposal is to reverse that devolution, claiming that valuable funding streams would be lost as a result.
22. The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Public Health responded stating that the contract for this service with Community First was ending on 31 March 2016 following appropriate consultation and did not accept that the amendment was cost neutral. However the arrangements for implementing the decision to delegate responsibility for the scheme to Area Boards could be reviewed by Scrutiny.

23. The Committee discussed the proposal including whether there were specific budget implications, potential loss of operating knowledge and the alignment to the principle of increasing delegation for local provision to Area Boards. The Committee felt that the offer for scrutiny engagement was a positive one.

Conclusion

24. That Council take into account the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee in considering the proposed amendments to the financial plan 2016-17.

Councillor Simon Killane

Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

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The Budget 2016/17

Public meetings summary

Context for the meetings

The council held four public open meetings to discuss the budget and outline how it intended to balance the pressures in the context of a reducing Government grant and increasing demands on key services.

The discussions, questions and answers were well received by the audience and there was a clear sense of realism reflected by those who attended. There was an understanding that the council was facing tough financial challenges and that it was being honest and open in its dialogue with the public on the plans and proposals to meet the challenges.

The presentation set out that to balance the budget for 2016-17 the council would increase council tax by 2% this year as well as instigating a 2% levy to cover the rise in social care costs.

The council has not raised its council tax rate for 6 years but given the decrease in grants from the Government combined with the pressures and demands on key services; this was no longer an option.

The increase in council tax next year will equate to an increase of £48 a year on a band D property.

The detailed questions and responses from each meeting are shown below.

The summary of questions – focus on the following subject matters;

Finance

- Business rates and collections
- Allocation of capital budget
- Level of council reserves
- Money saved through becoming a unitary council
- What about implementing a flood levy
- Income generation – raise charges for services such as leisure

Highways and transport

- Transport issues and what about innovative solutions
- Highways concerns – impact of A303, army basing road networks around the Plain
- Road sweeping, litter picking and leaves clearance – number of issues
- Will Ringway be better than Balfour Beatty

Economy and planning

- Army basing – who pays for the infrastructure required?
- Future development and plans to deliver housing
- Local searches and the time it takes
- Implementation of broadband

Communities

- Sharing services with other local authorities
- The ageing population and demand for services
- Increasing the number of volunteers

Devizes budget meeting

1st February 2016

Q. The chancellor gave us money from business rates, what happened to that? And won't we get more now we are putting rates up?

DT The money is distributed around the country and we don't get what we collect. As Wiltshire has a relatively well-off economy – and, our businesses are doing well –for every pound we collect in business rates we only get to keep 32 pence. If there is a move to devolution where we are allowed to retain our business rates we won't actually get more money, but will we have more control.

JSc This devolution could come in 2020, but we don't know what this means yet. We haven't been told how much we will actually get. We only get 32% and the rest goes to weaker economies. If we got 80% of our business rates, we wouldn't need a penny from the government. But we will have to wait for the detail.

MH There will be a national working group set up to look at this. The DCLG figures actually show us getting less. We could be self-financing, and we are looking into it with the Government.

Q. Surely business rates could go up by 2% then?

JSc Unfortunately, that's not how it works. We don't set business rates, the Government does. We won't accept a decrease in our business rate under any circumstances so we will have to see.

Q. Many of the lower value services really do have an impact especially on the young and elderly - transport for example. Is any effort being made to look at innovative solutions?

PW We are looking at it. We are out to consultation. We've already had 5,000 responses. We want a sustainable transport service for the future. This solution needs to be fit for purpose for 5 or 10 years at least. Option 24/7 is one such example, and if that is working anywhere else with a similar situation to ours, I would love to see it. We will be working hard to do what we need to do.

JSc We are not reducing the budget or service in the coming budget year.

PW We need to be realistic, but we do want to make this work for everyone so they can get to school, jobs and services.

DT Our Link service is one of the best in the country - volunteer drivers and the TransWilts train service is fantastic. The increase in that service has really added some resilience to the way people can travel around Wiltshire. It's now a 2 hour service whereas before we negotiated it was only twice a day and at times that made it difficult for example to get to and from work.

- Q. We don't live in west Wiltshire, we don't have the railway, we haven't had the road investment, Devizes and Pewsey will be one of the hardest hit. We need investment. We need an innovative transport solution.**
- JSc That's why we are doing this over such a long period. The A350 is getting funding as it's seen as a key corridor from the Midlands to the coast. Also, we need to know exactly how any changes will impact on people. And we currently fund more buses than any other county in the country.
- Q. The Link scheme is fantastic, but it is not the whole solution. What are the advantages of devolution for Wiltshire?**
- DT We will see. We are at the forefront and we are taking it seriously.
JSc Our devolution bid is about the joining up of public services to save money so we can use it in a better way. The government drive is about more houses, more jobs and better skills. We need to hit those targets to satisfy the government. If it's not right for Wiltshire, we will not do it. But it's a little way off as the government is looking at the cities first. Much better joined up health and social care is what we can really get out of this, but it's not at the forefront of the government's current agenda.
- PW If we are successful on the A350 corridor, it will stop traffic coming through the east of the county. It's one of our key developments the north south route from the midlands to the south coast ports and it will help reduce the HGV traffic that currently goes through Marlborough – Pewsey etc.
- Q. I know it's a hard task. Has the council bid to the government to change the council tax system? Many very well off people aren't paying as much as they should.**
- DT Yes. We want to change the council tax to the higher bands. It's a national issue and we are lobbying hard.
- Q. Kennet had huge reserves. What does Wiltshire Council have?**
- JSc Our reserves are £12 million, which is the 4th lowest in the country.
- Q. There was a lot of concern about the rising cost of council pensions. What's the situation?**
- DT There is less money to invest as we have less staff. We manage a £1.8 billion scheme. It's a national scheme.
- Q. Where will the Stonehenge Tunnel money come from? You are happy with the broadband success, but that isn't the case in Potterne. There is no chance of that until 2017.**
- DT We are involved in the public consultation, but we are not putting any money in. Highways England will be paying for the Stonehenge tunnel.
JT 70,000 homes have high speed broadband which wouldn't have been the case without the investment from the council. We can also help through grants with other schemes. In the rural areas we are looking at wireless solutions as copper cable slows the speed down.
We have been lobbying the government hard. We have told them we need

that, it's very important in a rural county. More people are signing up for broadband in the areas we have helped fund than in the commercially provided areas. This means we are able to reinvest more than £2million locally. It's also an open network, so people can use any service provider. We have a good reputation for delivering this programme. And the money we are now getting back will pay for the harder to reach areas. The problem in some rural areas is the length of run from the cabinets – often these are too long to guarantee a good broadband speed so we have in some areas to look at innovative 4G wireless solutions which will take time.

Q. What is the future of community area partnerships funding?

DT We no longer fund them, but the area boards can allocate funding for capital initiatives that the partnerships are leading on.

Q. What inflation rate have we used for 16/17?

MH Various - construction industry, pay, fuel etc. Appendix 1d of our budget papers shows this.

Q. What services are we sharing with other councils?

DT We are talking to Swindon and BANES.
JT South Gloucestershire and Swindon worked with us for broadband
JSc Internal audit and children's services are shared across the south west. Working with the police and fire to deliver big savings in IT and asset management.

Q. I think we should continue to support the voluntary sector.

JSc We have had to work with them to reduce their grant by 10% last year and this year. We are working with them to help them reduce their running costs. We would not be the same county without volunteers.

JT The CAB is moving into our health and wellbeing centre in Salisbury. We are helping them become more efficient and they are an example to other charities across the county.

Q. How much can we tease out about the costs for care?

DT We keep a very close eye on all of our costs. And they are all in our budget book.

JSc It's important to reiterate that we don't do short visits. We put time and effort in to help people back on their feet and become more independent. I think we do this really well, but it does put a pressure on the budget. We are very clear with our home care providers that the employees get paid for the time they travel and there are no zero hour contracts. They are very important and really do such a valuable job. We don't keep people in hospital. The numbers are extremely low in Wiltshire. In Wiltshire we call it "help to live at home" and we work across all agencies to make sure that once a person comes back from hospital everything is in place to help them stay in their home.

Q. Is the council considering amalgamating councillors?

- DT We used to have 252 councillors, now we are down to 98. We have really reduced the number.
- SW It is not our decision to make. It will probably be reviewed after 2017. The government wants each councillor to represent roughly the same number of people. So it isn't simple. Everyone's vote should be equal. We will be reviewing certain areas, especially in the military areas. We are also reviewing the town and parish council boundaries.
- Q. When setting council tax bands, not everyone who lives in a big house has lots of money. Can we be assured Ringway will sort the backlog of road repairs?**
- PW The council is resurfacing more roads than ever. The small patching work will transfer to Ringway. We are looking forward to an improvement, especially in customer response times.
- JSc The asset rich/revenue poor issue is big in Wiltshire and we are keeping an eye on it.
- Q. The A342/A345 corridor will take the brunt of the military basing. What are we doing about the council tax inside the wire?**
- MH We get around 81% back at the moment - so they do pay council tax.
- JSc There are around 4,000 army personnel coming to Wiltshire – around 2,500 will live behind the wire.

Chippenham budget meeting

3 February 2016

- Q. You mentioned the number of retired residents...what percentage of people who are retired continue to pay the council? Also, devolution...is this being done to save you money or the taxpayer?**
- A. We estimate that the number of self-funders is around 33% of the population. We are seeking to do deals on devolution, and these deals will be different and unique to each area. We have to find a deal that is acceptable to each town or parish council and also acceptable to Wiltshire Council.
- Q. Sharing of public buildings....why do staff still use the Angel Hotel for meetings when you still have a lease on Bewley House, which is expensive?**
- A. We do have a long term lease on Bewley House but this is very restrictive and there is very little we can use it for. We will look into use of rooms at the Angel Hotel as this should not be happening.

Following some background research it is confirmed that no Wiltshire Council staff have been using the Angel Hotel for meetings.

- Q. You say that being unitary has saved money, but how much of that money would have been saved anyway?**

A. We have closed many buildings and this has saved money. £20m in revenue has been saved each year in recurring charges and £30m+ in capital receipts. £85m of property has been released and we have gone from more than 90 offices to three main hubs. We are also saving money on the maintenance of these buildings.

Q. The Range is not the first time that a developer has decided not to go ahead with a development in Wiltshire and this seems to be down to the planning department. I understand there needs to be efficiencies but the planning department does not seem to be working effectively and so developers are going elsewhere.

A. The performance of the planning department has improved. We have a target to deliver affordable housing and we are achieving this target. Our core strategy looked at employment sites which have been very successful. We have got employers wishing to come to Wiltshire but sometimes we find that we do not have the skills they need. We need the skills to attract the employers to the sites that are allocated. Sometimes developers do not want to move forward too quickly for many reasons and this is very restrictive for us.

Q. What are your reserves like?

A. Our reserves are £12 million, which is the 4th lowest in the country.

Q. Cutting down levels of street lighting – is that going to be a policy for the future?

A. We have not taken out street lighting at any dangerous junctions or anywhere like that. There has been phenomenal acceptance from the people of Wiltshire on this, and we commend the people of Wiltshire for this. A lot of people have said that they want lights turned off, as they like the darker nights. Clearly it can't be done everywhere but we are looking into where it would be appropriate to do so. We are speaking to some of the larger villages about doing this there.

Trowbridge budget meeting

4 February 2016

Q. Military rebasing plans – who contributes towards local services – the council or the MOD?

JSc The majority of money for infrastructure comes from the MOD – there are nearly 1,200 houses being built and there will be a further 2,500 servicemen within the wire – this represents an enormous investment. Where it costs Wiltshire Council is the time of a team to ensure that all the right facilities are in place. We do this by working through the Military Civilian Partnership programme – it's a big piece of work but remember that almost 7,000 extra people coming to Wiltshire will be a big boost to the local economy.

We will benefit from increased Council Tax although we only receive about 81% for married quarters. We will have a large reservoir of people wanting jobs. We already know that Wiltshire is the second most popular place for army veterans to settle

which brings with it a real boost to the economy, they are staying longer and putting down roots which is a good thing.

Q. Capital projects – are they all necessary at this time – such as the traffic light scheme in Melksham which is costing £1 million?

DT Yes capital investment is important but we will be reducing the programme.

PW It's not £1 million for just traffic lights – it's to resolve the pinch point on the A350 after the new Asda was opened – we are going to sequence the lights all the way to the motorway to make sure traffic flows much better as part of our long term plans to upgrade the A350 which is a major road connecting the midlands with the channel ports. This is such an important corridor that our businesses want and need.

JSc The Highways agency won't let us upgrade anymore of the A350 until they have undertaken improvements to junction 17 on the M4.

Q. Planning process – is there any way to force developers to bring forward their plans?

TS Unfortunately, there are developers who have no intention of developing their land – they are basically speculators who are waiting to sell and parcel up their holdings when they feel the time is ripe. There is little we can do to stop this – however, we have for the last 10 years hit all our targets on developing land and encouraging house building and affordable housing provision – our core strategy is adopted but there have been issues in the building industry over a lack of skilled tradesmen and in some areas a lack or shortage of key building materials such as concrete blocks many of which have had to be brought in from Ashford in Kent. There are other reasons as well – we know in Chippenham of a number of developments where the owner gets more money if he builds after 2017 so not surprisingly he isn't going to start this year.

JSc It's upsetting for communities to have to wait – there is all this anxiety around development which in the case say of Paxcroft Mead was before things happened but now people are used to the new environment – so delaying development once it's agreed causes unnecessary anxiety.

Q. Persimmon homes – Hilperton Gap – understand they have now pulled out – what are your thoughts on this?

TS House builders have targets – they all look for areas with best margins and they don't like often to develop all their land with the same house builder so it's possible they are looking to parcel up their land and sell off to other house builders – I don't know this but it could be the case.

Q. In your opinion would this slow up development in this area?

TS Not necessarily- it could actually speed things up.

Q. This isn't a question but could I compliment you on unitary status – and the area boards set up – it works really well.

DT Thank you – I recently attended a County Councils Network event and my view is that most of the time it's the counties blaming the districts and the districts blaming the counties – so much wasted energy – the Government should force unitary. The money to be saved would be enormous.

Q. Local searches – they seem to take too long – has this been addressed?

JSc We are aware of the problems and we are taking appropriate action.

TS We are moving digitalising the records and we need to be clearer about our charging policy. We always prioritise those who have a mortgage offer waiting.

Q. Developing more volunteers?

DT We have a large project in Salisbury to delegate lots of amenity type services to the City Council. We have a similar project in Calne. If there is anything in particular you are thinking of taking on then please contact us and we will listen. We have for example got global insurance for volunteers which might help you.

JSc We have one of the highest percentage of volunteers in Wiltshire doing fantastic jobs keeping services going that we on our own could not - the library service is an example of this – we have some 760 volunteers helping us running libraries that frankly would have closed without this support. We also have volunteers helping in communities with Broadband training – IT literate helpers who are engaging with their community to help people become more confident using IT – we also have a large number of Rights of Way volunteers. All services need them – we are just looking at how best we can support them.

JT We have volunteers litter picking – we provide litter picking kits – we take care of the insurance etc – we also have volunteer flood watch as well as in Bradford on Avon there is volunteer lorry watch. In our smaller libraries we have reading clubs, homework clubs, toddler groups – these are all staffed by volunteers.

PW There is a voluntary group in Chippenham called the Off the Ground group which has collected over 7 tons of rubbish from around the area. We also have our Wiltshire App for reporting potholes etc. These reporters are our eyes and ears – means we don't have to spend resources looking for these things – the public report them.

JSc There are really two types of council – one that just says we need to slash and cut services because they have no money and the other type which looks for innovative solutions that says we will keep services although we might have to do them differently – we are always looking at how to do services differently not just reduce or close them.

Q. Broadband – when is it coming to Upper Westwood?

JT There is an excellent on line website where you can put in your postcode and it tells you when superfast broadband is going to be available. Wiltshire is part of a national programme we have put in £16 million – it's allowed us to connect up 70,000 homes which otherwise wouldn't have got superfast connection. Take up rates are also higher than the average so we have managed to plough back an extra £2 million into

the programme. Around 94% of Wiltshire homes are covered. The rest are more difficult often because houses are so far away from the BT cabinets that a wireless solution might be needed. Did you know you can apply for a £350 voucher towards a wireless solution if you are in those areas struggling and you have a speed below 2mbs.

Q Preventative maintenance on our roads?

PW Last year we resurfaced more miles than we have ever done and we are increasing this again this year – however the wet weather has caused problems particularly the water run-off from farmers’ fields. We have a new contractor starting in April and we are moving to new systems of operating to be more intelligent with what we do – so for example gully emptying – there are 80,000 gullies in Wiltshire which we empty once a year. However, we know that 60% don’t need doing at all. It’s using GPS to apply the money in a more effective means.

JSc As you know I come from a farming background – farming methods and equipment have changed radically over the last 20 years – ditches are no longer cleared by hand but by machine and this isn’t as good. We can charge farmers if ditches become blocked and they are not kept clean, but we prefer to persuade rather than threaten them to cooperate.

Q Are farmers liable for road damage due to their large machinery digging up the verges?

JSc Unfortunately, the farmers are not liable in law so we have to rely on talking to them. We also suffer from the trend for ever bigger farm tractors and machinery which does damage road verges – if this happens than we rely on local knowledge and parish councillors to have a word.

Salisbury budget meeting

10th February 2016

Q. I want to ask a question about income generation and whether you might be able to raise more money this way from things like leisure charges or parking?

DT The fees and charges income has been included in the figures shown on the slides – in some services such as planning the fees are set by government so we don’t have any lee way.

JT In leisure services we have substantially improved our offer and closed the gap between expenditure and income – the gap used to be £2.5 million now it’s closer to £0.5 million. New state of art fitness centres are being implemented. We have re-designated our leisure centres as Health and Wellbeing centres which may allow us to draw on Public Health funding and a reduction in the NNDR (business rates) we pay. However, we all know that swimming pools always need a subsidy -we try to overcome this by generating income elsewhere in leisure.

Q. Why isn’t the council raising money by applying a flood levy for protection works for those communities affected?

JS You are probably comparing us with Somerset where they have introduced a separate flood levy – however, this was allowed in Somerset because the flooding affected a large geographical area which actually saw about 140 properties flooded, whereas in Wiltshire we had close to 500 but spread out in small pockets across the whole county.

We have invested a further £250k in making sure gully and drainage ditches are cleared. In Salisbury we know there is a potential problem – the last huge flood was 1915 and they say these are a 1 in 100 year events so we are due one – so we are working closely with the Environment Agency to be ready.

MH Just to clarify – Somerset could raise a levy because the Secretary of State agreed this – wasn't offered to us in Wiltshire.

Q. What happens when ground water flows from one parish upstream as a result of flood alleviation but affects a Parish downstream?

JS We are acutely aware of this – every £1 we invest in flood prevention draws down £3 from the Environment Agency. But you do raise a valid point – allowing the water to flow downstream to protect one area sometimes means that another area is flooded – so we need to closely monitor schemes like this – one we put in Malmesbury has taken a year of data to work out that it's going to be a success.

Q. I am under the impression that regular road sweeping has now stopped and you have to complain before anything is done. If you aren't going to do it who will?

DT Some things unfortunately we can't do as often as we would like to – we have to work within our budget.

PW We sweep 21 town centres every morning but in outlying areas we now operate a reactive service – please use the APP when contacting us as a phone call costs us £5.10 to process where as the APP costs £0.37p.

You are right we have reduced road sweeping to save money. In my own village I do my own area outside my property that gets heavily covered in leaves – we appreciate all the volunteers and local people who assist with this.

Q. So I sweep up the leaves but what do I do with it?

PW I put it in my compost bin or green bin. It's about the community having to look after themselves more – if the road is dangerous then of course that is a different matter.

JT I live in Sherston and the parish have decided to put up their precept to pay for 2 people to act as village wardens to pick litter and keep the place tidy. Contact your parish to see if they might be interested in something similar.

DT We are currently finalising a deal with Salisbury City Council to take over a number of assets and services which should give control back to local people.

Q. Why do you continue to keep the Park and Ride open when it plainly can't make any money?

DT The park and ride was built with the help of Government money which means we can't stop operating it or the money has to go back. It also means we are only allowed to charge a certain amount for the service rather than try and compete directly with commercial services. Without it though, the city centre would grind to a halt with traffic.

JT There are a lot of myths about the Park and Ride - originally it was designed so that car parking charges in the centre would increase to push commuters etc on to the Park and Rides – however, when this was mooted it was thrown out. The Park and Ride does help cut pollution in the city – there are certain roundabouts close to capacity now that without the Park and Ride would be grid locked. If you want to see the data come and see us and sit down with us – we are a car loving society and have a very high car ownership in the county although it is lowest in the City – so we must be having an effect.

Q. A303 litter along the lay-by at long barrow it's a disgrace – what can you do about it?

PW I agree 100% it is a disgrace – the A350, A36, A303 they are all a disgrace but they are not our responsibility – as main roads they are controlled by the Highways Agency now Highways England and they seem to have withdrawn this service. We did do an extra litter pick last year but it cost us £120k – we are lobbying government to try and get them to insist that all take away cartoons and containers are branded with the business owner so we can trace where the litter comes from – we already do this with the likes of McDonalds who have been very helpful and if the litter is within a certain radius of their outlet they are asked to remove it – which they do. Really what we need to do is education our young people in particular not to throw it way on the first place.

Q. What are our reserves and could we use some of this and have you recovered all your investments in the Iceland Bank?

DT Yes we have now recovered all but 2% of the money we invested.

MH Our reserves are around £12 million – 4th lowest level in the country.

Q. What about our business rates – just heard the chancellor say we can use 100% of what we collect?

DT NNDR we collect and only get back 32% as the rest is used by Government to fund those poorer areas where the economy isn't so strong. If we had it all back then we wouldn't need any Government grant at all – each area would be self financing.

MH I am on a working group reporting back to Government on how to overcome the problem of areas that cannot raise enough money from their NNDR – it's a very complex system that despite what the chancellor says won't get fixed - an example was Scunthorpe who raise £50 million in NNDR but get back £90 million from the Government – this has to come from other areas.

DT Think if the council was like Aberdeen – great NNDR when the oil industry booming but now? So be careful what you wish for.

Q. What provision is there for remote rural communities where they are being asked to take on more but they don't really have any assets?

JT It's all about a two way conversation with parish councils – some are considering running their leisure centre, car park, toilets etc. We aren't talking about communities running services for older or vulnerable people – we concentrate on these but if residents want more local services they can ask their parish council to raise its precept to pay for this. Or, if it's appropriate you could go to your local area board to request funding.

Q. Some of our local roads haven't been repaired for 35 years – what are you doing about this?

PW Yes you could be right – we prioritise repairs based on need – that doesn't mean we treat rural roads differently – we treat them all the same but based on their condition, safety, grip level etc. We have been dealing with a large backlog and have put in a lot of extra resources to the highway network – will take us another 6 years to remove the backlog entirely.

JT We have to concentrate on higher speed roads where an accident because of the road condition would be more serious

Q. You have just resurfaced a section of road in Alderbury but the contractor has left a large manhole empty with just a cone around it – when are you going to get this fixed – I have reported it?

PW Please give me your email address I will make sure someone contacts you and gets it sorted.

Q. Your figures you quoted of £1700 per week for looked after children seem excessive – can you justify this?

CG We try and ensure that we look after as many children who need foster care or complex support within Wiltshire but sometimes because of highly complex needs we have to send them to a specialist unit whose costs are as you say very substantial.

Some children require a number of carers 24/7. The number of children that we look after is relatively low compared to other Local Authorities and we do invest in preventative services.

Q. We all know we are using volunteers more and more – what are you doing to engage with volunteers?

JT We are doing several things – we have a data base that allows volunteers to choose areas they want to work in, we support and train our volunteers in libraries for example as well as our permanent staff – we treat them no differently – we are encouraging Link schemes as we look at bus services. In Wiltshire nearly 50% of all bus services are subsidised in some way – much more than in other rural counties – but this is just not sustainable – we need more volunteers. We have an ageing population but they are a huge resource we should be tapping in to.

Q. Can you assure us that Ringway will provide a better job of the roads than the Balfour Beatty experience – that wasn't one of your best decisions?

PW In answer to your question – yes we are confident we will get a better service.

Code:

JSc	Jane Scott
JS	Jonathon Seed
DT	Dick Tonge
JT	John Thomson
TS	Toby Sturgis
PW	Philip Whitehead
LM	Laura Mayes
SW	Stuart Wheeler
CG	Carolyn Godfrey
MH	Michael Hudson

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Wiltshire Council

Council

23 February 2016

Notice of Motion No. 30 – Fracking – From Councillors Jeff and Helen Osborn

To consider the following motion – as amended:

“This Council is concerned that the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) has recently decided to offer licences for four blocks of land in Wiltshire.

Council notes that the OGA states that the licences for these blocks will contain conditions prohibiting activities in order to protect ecological sites.

Nonetheless, in its response to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), Council made a cogent case against the “water hungry” nature of this mode of exploration and ~~exploitation~~ extraction because of the serious impact it will have on Wiltshire aquifers. This in consequence will constrain future housing development in the county.

For these and related reasons, Council has major reservations regarding fracking in the county. and its default position should be one of opposition. This is compounded by central government’s recent extension of permitted development rights to cover exploratory drilling and investigation.

Consequently Council requests that Environment Select Committee establish a task group to better understand the general implications of possible hydrocarbon exploration and extraction in the county. This will enable members on relevant planning committees to be better briefed on such matters.

Furthermore it should be noted that such activities these applications covering as they do hydrocarbon exploitation are contrary to the recent international moves in Paris to limit such forms of energy in order to counter climate change.”

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Wiltshire Council

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23 February 2016

Councillor Questions Update

Questions Received

1. A total of 16 questions from Councillors have been received since the last meeting of Full Council on 24 November 2015.
2. In accordance with Paragraph 58 of Part 4 of the Constitution, one of these questions was determined to relate to operational matters and was referred to the appropriate Associate Director for a response.
3. One question submitted was subsequently withdrawn. Details of questions submitted excluding the withdrawn question, and the order they will be received at the meeting are shown at Appendix 1. Responses are included at Appendix 2.
4. A total of 14 remaining non-operational questions were therefore received by the first deadline of 9 February 2016, with written responses prepared as attached to this report.
5. No further questions then were received by the final deadline of 16 February 2016. Had any been received they would have received at least verbal responses with written responses to follow within five working days of the meeting.
6. In accordance with Paragraph 64 of Part 4 of the Constitution, no more than 20 supplementary questions may be asked at any one meeting, with no more than 1 supplementary per question submitted. As the number of questions received for this meeting are fewer than 20, there will be no need to restrict the number of supplementary questions to 20.
7. The Chairman will go through the questions and responses and as is customary, take them as read and giving the questioner an opportunity to ask one relevant supplementary question for each question submitted.

Yamina Rhouati, Democratic Governance Manager, 01225 718024,
yamina.rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1 - Councillor Questions Summary

Appendix 2 - Questions and Responses

Appendix 1 - Councillor Submitted Questions Summary

Questions will be received in the order listed below.

Questions for Council (attached at Appendix 2)

Ref	Questioner	Date Received	Written or Verbal Response	Subject	Cabinet Member/Committee Chairman
16/01	Cllr Jeff Osborn	26/10/2015	Written	Electoral Registration	Cllr Stuart Wheeler
16/02	Cllr Terry Chivers	07/01/2016	Written	Public Consultations(Budget)	Cllr Dick Tonge
16/05	Cllr Jon Hubbard	09/02/2016	Written	Small Schools Grant	Cllr Laura Mayes
16/06	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	Air Quality Chippenham/Calne	Cllr Keith Humphries
16/03	Cllr Terry Chivers	16/01/2016	Written	A350-A3105 Roundabout	Cllr Philip Whitehead
16/07	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	Vehicle Movements	Cllr Toby Sturgis/Cllr Keith Humphries
16/08	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	Rawlings Green/Riverside	Cllr Toby Sturgis
16/09	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	Cllr Sturgis' whereabouts	Cllr Toby Sturgis
16/10	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	HWB - financial viability of hospitals	Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE
16/11	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	Virgin Care Contract	Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE
16/12	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	Chippenham Skate Park	Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE
16/13	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	On street parking consultation	Cllr Philip Whitehead
16/14	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	White lines	Cllr Philip Whitehead
16/15	Cllr Chris Caswill	09/02/2016	Written	NAPC timing	Cllr Tony Trotman

Operational Questions (not attached)

Ref	Questioner	Date Received	Response Provided	Subject
15/13	Cllr Chris Hurst	9/11/15	10/12/15 and 20/01/16)	Parking Meters (Royal Wootton Bassett)

Wiltshire Council

Council

23 February 2015

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Jeff Osborn, Trowbridge Grove Division

To Councillor Stuart Wheeler, Cabinet Member for Hubs, Governance, Support Services, Heritage, Arts and Customer Care

Question (16/01)

The transition to individual electoral registration was intended to run until December 2016. Instead the Government has now brought this date forward by a year. It will now run until only December 2015.

According to projections from the Electoral Commission, this rushed process could result in nearly two million persons being removed from the electoral register.

Please could Council be informed of the progress of individual registration in Wiltshire?

Do we have any estimate of the numbers being removed from our register?

Response

Wiltshire Council were one of the first councils to start the transition to Individual Elector Registration (IER) in July 2014.

We have 350,732 local government electors on the new register published on 1 December 2015, an increase of 4,003 from the 1 December 2014 register total of 346,729 local government electors.

Figures for the last three published registers are as follows:

Electors	1 February 2014	1 December 2014	1 December 2015
Local Government	358,017	346,729	350,732
Parliamentary	352,934	342,180	346,725

Wiltshire Council

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23 February 2016

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Terry Chivers, Melksham Without North Division

To Councillor Richard Tonge, Cabinet Member for Finance

Question (16/02)

I'm sure most local residents of Wiltshire appreciate Wiltshire Council hosting the Rising to the challenge meeting 2016 and beyond.

However like so many of the Councils consultation meetings the 1730 start date means that most local residents that work for a living would find it almost impossible to attend. Would you agree that a later start date would have been more appropriate?

Response

We have tried to be as open as possible with the public about our budget, the scale of the savings we are making, and the need to work differently while continuing to deliver on our main priorities.

The public meetings are an important part of the budget setting process. To ensure as many people as possible were able to attend, we felt it was best to avoid daytime and late evening meetings.

We chose 5.30pm as the best time for these meetings as it meant those in employment may be able to come straight after their working day, particularly those working in the town centres where the meetings were held. The meetings were widely publicised as far in advance as possible to enable people to make arrangements to attend.

There will never be a time that suits everybody for the budget meetings, so we have made our public presentation available on our website and we do, of course, also welcome comments at any time.

Councillors' Questions

**Question from Councillor Jon Hubbard, Melksham South Division,
To Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services**

Question (16/05)

The Government has confirmed it is ceasing the grants paid to 3,000 small schools to help cover the increased costs of providing free school meals.

Could the cabinet member please tell me how many Wiltshire schools are affected by this cut and what the total value of this cut is to schools across the county.

Response

The Universal Infant Free School Meal legislation (UIFSM) came into force from September 2014, placing a requirement on all primary schools to provide infant pupils with a free hot lunch.

Many schools were required to make conversions and adaptations in order to create a catering and dining facility large enough to accommodate the provision of additional school meals.

In order to assist with the transition costs, all small schools (150 pupils or below) were awarded a transitional grant of a flat rate of £3,000 per school plus additional funding on a sliding scale for the 'newly eligible' FSM pupils. The Small Schools Transitional Funding was initially awarded on a one-off basis for the 2014-15 financial year.

In 2014-15, a total of 87 Wiltshire Primary Schools received the small schools transitional funding, totalling £478,320. The individual payments ranged from £3,000 to £14,850.

In 2015-16, the small schools transitional funding was unexpectedly awarded again to small schools, at the reduced flat rate of £2,300 per school. The provisional amount to be awarded to Wiltshire schools for 2015-16 was £200,100. (The final amount is still to be confirmed, based upon the census data).

We are not expecting that there will be any significant impact on Wiltshire's small schools as a result of the central government decision to end the transitional

funding. The LA has emphasised to schools over the past couple of years that the funding would not be recurrent.

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To Councillor Keith Humphries, Cabinet Member for Health (including Public Health) and Adult Social Care

Question (16/06)

What steps are being taken to provide an accurate calculations of the cumulative impact on air quality and NOX levels in Chippenham and Calne of the 6 current large scale development applications (Barrow Farm, Rawlings Green, East Chippenham, Patterdown / South West Chippenham, and Forest Farm) and the two already granted outline permission (Hunters Moon and Hill Corner / North Chippenham? And to provide that information in time for it to be taken into account in any decisions on the 6 outstanding proposals, and in the Examination in Public?

One applicant has apparently taken recent readings on the A350 / Malmesbury Road roundabout, producing a reading 50% in excess of EU limits. Given that traffic on an Eastern Link Road would exit north and west via that roundabout, why has the Council not yet established a baseline reading for it, so as to enable air quality calculations to be made for developments in Rawlings Green and east Chippenham?

Response

The Core Strategy requires that housing growth at Chippenham should be for at least 4,510 homes over the period 2006 to 2026. However, the proposals currently before the Council cumulatively are substantially in excess of this and would be considered contrary to the Plan. Therefore it is not necessary to look at the cumulative impact of this level of growth.

The traffic modelling informing the submitted Chippenham Site Allocations Plan showed reduced queuing and congestion across the local network and therefore no concerns were raised relating to air quality.

In terms of decision making prior to the conclusion of the examination, as with any planning applications the Council, as Local Planning Authority, has a statutory duty to process applications within a specified time frame. Any failure could result in an appeal against the Council for non-determination. As such, each application will be considered on its merits through Strategic Planning Committee at the appropriate

time. Applicants for significant planning applications at Chippenham are expected to provide information on air quality. This information will form part of the consideration of any application.

In respect to the provision of accurate calculations of cumulative impact it is the responsibility of developers to provide accurate data and modelling in their air quality assessments. The issue of cumulative impact is referred to in the emerging Wiltshire Council Supplementary Planning Document on air quality which gives further guidance to developers on this issue.

With regard to the applicant's monitoring at the Malmesbury Road roundabout on the A350, the Council is now establishing a monitoring site in order to identify a baseline in that location.

Wiltshire Council

Council

23 February 2016

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Terry Chivers, Melksham Without North Division

To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Question (16/03)

Wiltshire Council are spending £1 million pounds installing traffic lights on the Wiltshire Farmers Roundabout on Western Way, Melksham.

A scheme that has very little support locally, the cost of one million pounds, does this include drawing up the plans for the un-wanted scheme, if not how much extra will this add to total cost?

Response

The scheme to reduce peak hour delays and improve safety between A350 Farmer's roundabout and A365 Bath Road by installing a series of linked and co-ordinated traffic signals was due to commence in Spring 2016

The scheme has not yet been out to competitive tender, therefore a fixed cost of the works is not yet known.

Detailed plans have already been prepared, and therefore no additional design costs will be incurred

We do not now expect work on the scheme to take place until the latter part of the 16/17 financial year.

That deferral will offer an opportunity for the benefits of the scheme to be better communicated and understood.

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

**To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning,
Development Management, Strategic Housing, Operational Property and Waste**

And

**Councillor Keith Humphries, Cabinet Member for Health (including Public
Health) and Adult Social Care**

Question (16/07)

Council officers have been supplied with an estimate of an additional 36000 vehicle movements a day from the proposed developments, including over 1300 additional HGV movements a day (email from Mr Toogood to Alistair Cunningham, 29 January). Do you accept these calculations as broadly correct, or if not, what are your own calculations? How is the cumulative traffic and air quality effect of these numbers to be taken into account in planning future development around Chippenham?

Response

This question draws from Mr Toogood's email dated 29th January in which he refers to 9 development proposals at Chippenham relating to employment and housing that collectively would deliver 5,350 homes and 36.5ha of employment land if approved.

Mr Toogood then forecasts the cumulative impact of all these proposals in terms of the traffic likely to be generated.

The first part of Cllr Caswill's question looks for acceptance or otherwise of Mr Toogood's forecast traffic flows. If one worked on the basis that all the proposals were delivered and based on a very rough calculation using standard trip rates (but only at the point of access for each individual site) the numbers could be considered to be broadly reasonable, However, in reality, most car journeys are multi-purpose, and therefore it should not be assumed that there will be that number of additional movements on the network. For example, in his calculations residential trips have been calculated separate to employment trips, although many will involve leaving one to go to the other, and therefore Mr Toogood's estimate includes double counting. However, as stated in the previous answer, this level of growth would be considered contrary to the Plan.

Establishing cumulative transport impacts is of course important for the Council, and we have shown in evidence and in public the detailed modelling techniques that we use to model new trips across the network, taking into account the linked trips referred to above.

Consultants have been appointed to assess cumulative air quality impacts as part of the traffic modelling work being undertaken to address the concerns of the Inspector on the Chippenham Site Allocations Plan.

Wiltshire Council

Council

23 February 2016

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

**To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning,
Development Management, Strategic Housing, Operational Property and Waste**

Question (16/08)

When and by whom will decisions be taken as to whether the Council will determine the development applications for Rawlings Green and East Chippenham / Chippenham Riverside in advance of the conclusion of the Chippenham Examination in Public?

Response

In terms of decision making prior to the conclusion of the examination, as with any planning applications, if valid applications are submitted then the Council, as Local Planning Authority, has a statutory duty to process those applications within a specified time frame. Any failure could result in an appeal against the Council for non-determination. Once the consultation period on planning applications have concluded the Council can proceed to determine a planning application. All the applications referred to will be considered by the Strategic Planning Committee when they are ready for determination.

Wiltshire Council

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23 February 2016

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Operational Property and Waste

Question (16/09)

At a recent Cabinet meeting, you undertook to provide information about your diary commitments for Tuesday 10 and the morning of Wednesday 11th November, which prevented you from attending the opening three sessions of the Chippenham Examination in Public. Could you now please do so?

Response

On the 10 November, there was a Cabinet Meeting at County Hall which required my attendance.

On the 11 November it was unfortunate that this clashed with an important personal engagement. As the Cabinet member responsible, I had intended to attend sessions of the Examination whenever my diary allowed.

As explained at Cabinet, the Examination in Public is led by expert officers. Cabinet Members can have no active role in the proceedings, and therefore we must prioritise our attendance at the Examination in Public against other duties. As the other diary commitments on the 10 and 11 required my active involvement and given the nature of the business discussed, it was decided to prioritise these alternate meetings on the dates in question.

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Leader of the Council

Question (16/10)

As Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), please advise what steps have been taken within the HWB to assess and promote the financial viability of the three hospitals on which most Wiltshire residents depend, the RUH, the GWH and Salisbury Hospital?

Response

The merger of Monitor and the Trust Development Authority into NHS Improvement means that there will be a new national organisation responsible for ensuring that foundation trusts are well led, in terms of quality and finances. Health and Wellbeing Boards are tasked with encouraging joined up working locally across health and social care.

As Chair of Wiltshire's Health and Wellbeing Board I meet regularly with the Chairmen and Chief Executives of each of the Foundation Trusts to consider a range of issues, including financial viability.

It is worth noting that unlike many Health and Wellbeing Boards, Wiltshire includes key NHS providers as non-voting members on the board. The presence of providers on the HWB has given partners a better and more direct understanding of the whole system and the role of providers in delivering change, and in turn, providers are very positive about the opportunity the HWB gives them to engage with a 'single commissioning role'. This direct involvement enables them to exert influence and align their own strategies.

Wiltshire's HWB has received regular updates on the delivery of Wiltshire's Systems Resilience and Operational Capacity Plan, which considers risks across the local health and social care system. Wiltshire's System Resilience Group (SRG) has allocated funds to providers to support their operational performance and process changes in service delivery.

Locally, a significant piece of work is also now beginning, with our partners in Bath and NE Somerset and in Swindon, to develop a [Sustainability and Transformation Plan](#) (STP) to cover the next five years. The STP is a requirement of recently issued

NHS Shared Planning Guidance and will become the single application and approval process for being accepted onto programmes with transformational funding for 2017/18 onwards. This plan will clearly set out how our local area will meet the finance and efficiency challenges that the local health and social care system faces and ensure financial sustainability.

Allied to the STP, the CCG's and providers' Operational Plans for 2016/17 will demonstrate how they intend to reconcile finance with activity (and where a deficit exists, set out clear plans to return this to balance). These will be published in March. Also currently under development is the Better Care Plan for 2016/17, which oversees £30m of funding under the aegis of the HWB, with the aim of delivering significant savings across the health and social care system through improvements to intermediate care.

NHS Wiltshire CCG's recent letting of the Adult Community Health Services contract has also been considered at the Health and Wellbeing Board (see [update](#) at the last meeting). The preferred bidder has now been identified as Wiltshire Health and Care (WHC). This new provider was selected by a procurement panel involving colleagues from Wiltshire CCG and Wiltshire Council. WHC is a joint venture organisation focused solely on community services in Wiltshire. The organisation is a partnership between Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust and Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust. Delivered through integrated community teams across the county, Wiltshire Health and Care will help us to meet the challenges of an ageing population and enhance partner working across the health economy to provide a health service fit for tomorrow.

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Councillors' Questions

Questions from Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Leader of the Council

Question (16/11)

In the same capacity, what was the value and length of the recently awarded contract to Virgin Care? When the contract was awarded to Virgin Care, was it understood that Virgin Care have a publicly stated policy of achieving an 8% profit margin?

Response

The value of the contract awarded to Virgin Care is £12.8 million per year for 5 years with the potential to extend the contract for a further 2 years. The decision to award a contract for children's community health services to Virgin Care is the result of a joint commissioning project between the Council, NHS Wiltshire CCG and NHS England. During the procurement process, commissioners checked the financial modelling put forward by Virgin Care for the duration of the contract. This does not include any profit margin.

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Leader of the Council

Question (16/12)

The Chippenham Area Board regrettably took the decision in early 2014 to proceed with a planning application for a skate facility in Monkton Park. Two years later, (a) how much has been spent on external consultancy for that planning application and (b) what is the value of the officer time that has also been committed to the preparation of the application?

Which members and substitute members of the Northern Area Planning Committee have been consulted and / or informed as part of the preparation of the application and / or in any pre-application discussions?

Response

- A)** In February 2015 the Council appointed the contractor Wheelscape to design the Chippenham Skate Park and submit the planning application. To date £5,000 has been spent on the planning application.
- B)** Officer time has not been quantified in respect of this as the onus, through contract, has been on the contractor to prepare the application. Officer time has been spent facilitating meeting e.g. with Skate Park users via the Local youth Network.
- C)** No formal consultation has been undertaken with the Members of the Northern Area Planning Committee. Updates have been provided via the Area Board. Cllr Peter Hutton, who has been involved in the original Skate Park task group, attended the 2 meetings held with skate park users. This was in his capacity as chair of the Local Youth Network.

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Question (16/13)

In June last year, the Council carried out a formal consultation on additional on-street parking restrictions in Chippenham, many of which are very important to residents in the area I represent. Apparently it has not been possible for you to take any decisions on the consulted proposals because the relevant Council officer has been redeployed on other work, and there is no one to take his place. Did you approve this redeployment, and if not who did? Will you take this opportunity (a) to apologise to the people of Chippenham for the delay and (b) to provide the timelines in which decisions will be taken and will be implemented?

Response

Staff shortages and retention problems have affected the Highways Network Management Team and it has been necessary to reprioritise work. The team deals with 90,000 streetworks notices annually, of which about 16,000 have excavations and reinstatements, and the team has recently been busy with the additional carriageway resurfacing and repair work being undertaken by the Council in connection with the Local Highways Investment Fund 2014 – 2020. It has been important to deal with these works in order to reduce traffic delays and ensure these vital works are carried out safely.

The reviews of parking restrictions have consequently had to be delayed. The staff shortage is being addressed by recruitment and the Council's proposed budget for next year includes additional funding for further streetworks posts. This will release staff to progress the parking reviews. Some progress has already been made with the West Wiltshire area, and the Chippenham review should be considered shortly. The timescale for implementation will depend on consideration of the response to the proposals.

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Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Question (16/14)

I have been recently informed by a Council officer that *"At present we are in a position, both financially and with the impending change of highway contractor, that we are not submitting any requests for refreshing or installing of white lines."* Is this a decision which applies publicly across the whole of the County? Was it taken with your approval, and what consideration has been given to the road safety implications?

Response

If there are serious safety issues requiring lining work these are dealt with as priorities. The highways teams are busy making arrangements with the contractor for the new highways contract which starts in April. The winter is not a good time of year for doing lining and road marking works as the weather can be wet, and salt on the road can cause problems. It is therefore usual for the majority of lining works to be carried out when the weather is better.

Councillors' Questions

From Councillor Chris Caswill, Chippenham Monkton Division

To Councillor Tony Trotman, Chairman of the Northern Area Planning Committee

Question (16/15)

When it was decided to move meetings of the Northern Area Planning Committee to afternoons from early evenings, I recall that you promised a review of the decision in response to concerns expressed by myself and other Councillors. Has this review been undertaken or started? Or if not, when will you get it underway?

Response

No formal review has been undertaken but officers were asked to inform the Chairman & Vice Chairman of any complaints received from local residents. Whilst a few complaints were received (and responded to) when the change to the timing of the meeting was first made, no further complaints have since been received. Though there have been a few occasions when a member of the public and ward members have been unable to attend, the ability to submit a written late item or ask for a statement to be read out on their behalf by another local residents or the Chair of the Committee allows for them to present their points to members of the committee.

Officers and the Chairman have been informally monitoring attendance by local residents at committee and though there has been no significant change, the number of people attending the meetings has marginally increased.

As the new arrangements for the Northern Area Planning Committee are working well, there is no reason for the start time to be altered.