

# AGENDA SUPPLEMENT (1)

**Meeting:** Cabinet

**Place:** Council Chamber - County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

**Date:** Tuesday 1 February 2022

**Time:** 10.00 am

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**The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 24 January 2022. Additional documents are now available and are attached to this Agenda Supplement.**

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Stuart Figini, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718221 or email [stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

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5 **Public participation and Questions from Councillors (Pages 3 - 30)**

Public questions with responses.

6 **Wiltshire Council's Budget 2022/23 (Pages 31 - 42)**

- See item 5 above for responses to public questions.
- Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee held on 25 January 2022

13 **Climate Strategy and update on council's response to the climate emergency**

See item 5 above for responses to public questions.

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| DATE OF PUBLICATION: 31 January 2022 |
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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**1 February 2022**

## **Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors**

**Question from: Dr Jimmy Walker**

**To Councillor :**

**Dr Mark McClelland, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding**

### **Statement**

#### **Park and Ride Salisbury**

In response to comments by Cllr Gavin Grant at the cabinet meeting in October 2021, Cllr McClelland discussed “making Park and Ride work better in Salisbury”.

In July 2018 the “Salisbury Transport Strategy, refresh” page 39, “issue 10: indicated that there is an oversupply of city centre car parking and underperforming Park and Ride.”

On page 40, para 2.47 there is further explanation in “The oversupply of city centre car parking could be a major factor for in-commuters’ reliance on the car, as parking is a convenient option to reach their employment in Salisbury. Related is the underutilisation of the city’s bus Park and Ride, as driving to a city centre car park with easy-to-find spaces is a more attractive and time effective proposition than driving to a Park and Ride site and waiting/paying for a bus. The cost of city centre car parks in relation to the cost of using the Park and Ride can also be a factor influencing the uptake of Park and Ride.”

As a consequence, the refreshed Salisbury Transport strategy included scheme H13 “P&R strategy – parking charges (differential between city centre and P&R), high quality interchange at P&R sites inc. public toilets and marketing to maximise use of P&R sites” and £500,000 has been allocated for this.

Therefore following Cllr Mark McClelland’s comments about “making P&R work better in Salisbury my questions related to this topic are as follows:

### **Question 1 (22- 021)**

What mechanisms will Cllr McClelland implement in Salisbury to improve the functionality of P&R and when will these be put in place?

#### **Response**

Through Wiltshire Councils recently produced Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) there are a number of locations identified in Salisbury for bus priority, that would contribute towards a quicker and more reliable P & R service. However, these ideas will require further work to scope out and assess, and the funding settlement and grant terms to enact the ambitions of the BSIP are yet to be released by government, which is expected before the end of February.

### **Question 2: (22-022)**

What progress has been made towards reducing traffic flows through Salisbury and improving air quality in the City Centre (as it still exceeds legal limits in parts of Salisbury - air quality will only become more of a public health problem as traffic congestion increases as lockdown eases and will be detrimental to the city as a tourist attraction)?

#### **Response**

The People Friendly Salisbury initiative was developed and implemented as part of the council's wider strategy to support Salisbury and as a way to help reduce traffic within the city, improve air quality and give pedestrians priority in the city centre. However, there was not widespread support for the initiative amid concerns about the impact of the scheme on congestion elsewhere in the city. Given this, the council took the decision to suspend the scheme indefinitely from the end of November 2020.

People Friendly Streets remains part of the Salisbury Central Area Framework and we will therefore look to implement appropriate measures as opportunities and funding arise.

Information on air quality, including air quality action plan progress reports, is provided on the Air Quality in Wiltshire website. It is important to note that there are significant air quality issues in areas outside the city centre including Wilton Road, Devizes Road and London Road (<https://www.wiltshireairquality.org.uk/>).

#### **Statement**

#### **Faded lines ASL**

ASLs (also referred to as bike boxes) are common at UK traffic lights and are put in place to give cyclists a safe place to stop at busy crossings and allow them to be positioned ahead of other traffic so they have more time to pull off as the lights change from red to green.

The highway code states: Motorists, including motorcyclists, **MUST stop at the first white line reached if the lights are amber or red** and should avoid blocking the way or encroaching on the marked area at other times, e.g. if the junction ahead is blocked.

A number of issues have been raised concerning the Advanced Stop Line in Milford Hill in Salisbury including:

- 1) The white lines of the lead in-lane have not been painted (image 1),
- 2) The cycle icon has not been painted (image 1 and 2)
- 3) The coloured shading has not been painted (image 1 and 2).
- 4) Cars are parking in the lead-in lane which raises the risks for cyclists as they have to swerve into the road (image 3).
- 5) Cars are occupying the cycle box which increases the risks for cyclists on the road.

Image 1. Advanced stop line - front view



Image 2 Example of an ASL with painted cycle lane and cycle icon.



Image 3. Car parked in the lead in land blocking safe access for cyclists.



Image 3. Advanced stop line - indicative of how the Advanced stop line should be painted.

Questions related to ASL issue:

**Question 3 (22-023)**

When will Wiltshire Council have this ASL painted properly?

**Response**

The form of and remarking of the ASL will be added to the next road marking order to be issued by the Local Highways team. It should be noted that there is no requirement for the cycle approach lane or the reservoir area to be a different colour.

**Question 4 (22-024)**

There are other ASL's in Salisbury where the paint work has faded that also need to be repainted – when does WC plan to repaint the ASL's in Salisbury?

Motorists can be awarded three penalty points and a £100 fine for stopping inside the Advanced Stop Lines (ASL) when pulling up to a red light as it increases the risks for cyclists.

**Response**

The Local Area Highways office will be asked to inspect the ASL's and if the criteria as set out in the Wiltshire Highways Safety Inspection Manual are met then remedial works will be undertaken.

**Question 5 (22-025)**

What is WC doing to enforce the legality of the ASL's?

**Response**

Contravention of ASL's by motorists is a moving vehicle offence and therefore the Police are the enforcement authority not the Council.

**Statement****Blocking of access for disabled**

The local authority (and others, including shops and employers) have a legal duty to make "reasonable adjustments" to improve accessibility for Disabled people, which includes removing impediments to equal access

In Vitoria Road in Salisbury a resident has been blocking the access along the pavement whilst charging their electric car. This cable housing, with its steep sides, is not appropriate for public pavements as it does not allow access for those in mobility scooters and will be an obstacle for those with visual impairments. With the increasing popularity of electric cars this type of obstruction on our pavements is going to increase in number.

The **Equality Act 2010** says changes or adjustments should be made to ensure you have access if you're disabled.

Image 4. Access blocked for the disabled and visually impaired by placement of in appropriate electric charging device.



### **Question 6 (22-026)**

What is WC doing to enforce the **Equality Act 2010** to prevent public access along our pavements being blocked?

### **Response**

The blocking of accesses, footways, and the like by vehicles where no parking contravention is taking place is deemed to be an obstruction offence for which the Police are the enforcement authority and will need to be reported at the time that the offence is occurring. In the case where other objects are placed and prevent passage then this can be dealt with by the Council's Highways Enforcement team. The Council's emerging Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Plan will seek to include guidance on what would be appropriate for on street charging activities and this should address the situation shown in the supplied photograph.



### Question 7 (22-027)

What advice is WC giving to local residents who wish to charge their vehicles on the street – i.e. what is legal and what is appropriate so that access for others is not obstructed and the **Equality Act 2010** not contravened and where can this advice be found?

### Response

The council's 'On-street vehicle charging policy - temporary provision' is available from: <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/green-economy/electric-vehicles>

### Statement

The underpass between Winchester Street and Rampart Road has a number of obstructions including barriers and bollards (Image 5). These are clearly an obstruction for the disabled and for those with visual impairments and are in contrary to the **Equality Act 2010**. WC (i.e. the local authority) must take positive steps to remove the barriers people face because of their disabilities. In addition local authorities (and others, including shops and employers) have a legal duty to make "reasonable adjustments" to improve accessibility for Disabled people, which includes removing impediments to equal access such as access controls (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/duty-to-make-reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-people/>). The **Equality Act 2010** calls this the **duty to make reasonable adjustments**.

### Question 8 (22-028)

Will WC please consider taking the positive step of removing these barriers and bollards to ensure that there is appropriate access for the disabled and those with visual impairments and to do so in a timely manner?

Image 5. Barriers and bollards in the underpass between Winchester St and Rampart Road that are causing access for the disabled and those with visual impairment.



### **Response**

The Salisbury Area Board, together with National Highways, have recently commissioned a review of the various underpasses in Salisbury. This review will look at the needs of all users. The Council is not aware of any reports having been submitted about the raised concerns and it has not been raised at the Salisbury Walking and Disabled Access Forum.

## Wiltshire Council

### Cabinet

1 February 2022

### Agenda Item 13 – Climate Strategy and update on council's response to the climate emergency

Question from: Andrew Nicolson

To Councillors :

**Nick Botterill, Cabinet Member for Development Management, Strategic Planning and Climate Change /**

**Dr Mark McClelland, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding**

#### Statement

The Climate Strategy says it will influence the emerging Local Plan and our Local Transport Plan, and help guide you. A key fact about the climate emergency is its very urgency, and you have set an ambitious milestone date of 2030.

#### Question 1 (22-029)

How **are** the Climate Emergency and Climate Strategy going to **be incorporated** into the Local Plan **Review**, so that it makes land development in Wiltshire very different from its **unsustainable** pattern **of** past decades?

#### Response

Climate change is already an integral part of the Local Plan Review as explained through the consultation undertaken in 2021, the outcome of which was reported to Cabinet on 29 June 2021 - and a specific commitment made to undertake further work on the potential for renewable energy in Wiltshire and zero carbon development. As page 9 of the Climate Strategy shows planning is only one of the Local Authority spheres of influence and so parts of the strategy will not be directly relevant and some will only be indirectly relevant. However, the themes within the proposed Climate Strategy - Transport, Homes and the Built Environment, Natural Environment and Energy - are particularly relevant and contain elements that the Local Plan Review can address. These will be considered alongside the

development of the evidence base informing the plan, and the national and legislative policy framework that governs local plan making.

A central part of the plan will be the spatial strategy and policies that enable the delivery of a sustainable distribution (or pattern) of new development that promotes self-containment and reduces the need to travel.

### **Question 2 (22-030)**

In the meantime, will you introduce addenda to existing plans to expedite action on emission reduction, and other ways of changing course right now, and what might some of these be?

### **Response**

No, we will not be producing any addenda to the existing local plan. We have a clear timetable for moving forward with our Local Plan Review and focusing on its delivery. However, steps are also being taken at national level that will have a positive impact, for example new homes standards through changes to Building Regulations - [New homes to produce nearly a third less carbon - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-homes-to-produce-nearly-a-third-less-carbon)

### **Statement**

The **C**limate Strategy says you will develop the new Wiltshire Local Transport Plan in line with your climate objectives. That must mean changes in policy direction, including addressing the **h**ard problem of reducing road traffic levels in the immediate future, before EVs have taken over.

### **Question 3 (22-031)**

What are the major challenges you face in terms of dealing with the largest sources of transport emissions?

### **Response**

The key challenges and priorities have been set-out by the Department for Transport (DfT) in its Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP). In particular, the 'Decarbonising Transport – Setting the Challenge' document states that:

*“We [the DfT]...do not underestimate the challenge of delivering what will be fundamental changes to the way people and goods move around. This will require changes to people’s behaviours, including encouraging more active travel and the use of public transport, alongside increasing the uptake of zero emission vehicles and new technologies”.*

The DfT’s TDP will be an important consideration in the development of the next Wiltshire Local Transport Plan (LTP). Wiltshire’s specific challenges and how they

are planned to be addressed will be considered as part of the development of the LTP which will be subject to public consultation.

**Question 4 (22-032)**

How might the next Local Transport Plan look distinctively different from previous ones, and give a signal to citizens and road users that Wiltshire Council is changing its approach, reviewing its past and present direction, and means business in seeking to make Wiltshire Carbon neutral by 2030?

**Response**

The next Wiltshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) will be developed in accordance with the Department for Transport's LTP Guidance (to be published in 2022) and in the context of relevant national and local plans and policies.

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**1 February 2022**

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors**

**Question from: Melanie Boyle**

**To Councillors :**

**Nick Botterill, Cabinet Member for Development Management, Strategic Planning and Climate Change /**

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

**Dr Mark McClelland, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding**

#### **Statement:**

Part of the Local Plan Consultation for Chippenham - Cp12 site 1 are there any uses that would be most suitable for Hardens farm and new leases farm?

Detailed information was provided for Hardens Farm as it is a County Farm owned by Wiltshire Council and the residents of Wiltshire about how it could become a community farm. Work was completed with the CPRE on how small farms can be profitable and adaptable. It was also raised how large industrial farms aren't working as they rely on overseas labour. Boroughlands Charity confirmed it was within their remit to supply benches for under the open air barns. Hardens Farm currently supplies milk to Cadbury's and could be adapted to supply milk to all the passing trade using a dispensing scheme removing packaging as other farms in the area are doing. With HF Stiles Abattoir and butchers in Bromham providing the services for local meat through the current beef cattle, sheep and pigs at Harden's Farm. Also community allotments could be provided with advice on hand. Harden's Farm previously did school tours so children learnt the value of food. Also the biodiversity cycle of the insects, wildflowers, birds such as Stone Chats that need farmland habitat and can be seen at the farm, small owls, birds of prey, rabbits, badgers and foxes all making up the ecosystem with the ancient hedges, trees, listed ditches and farmhouse. Now during the climate emergency these would be more relevant than ever.

As Harden's Farm was saved in July 2021 from being destroyed for excessive housing the above has a lot of interest from the residents of Chippenham.

In September I raised a question with Overview and Scrutiny as I felt Cabinet does not understand the value and vision by the people of Chippenham for the farms during a climate emergency. Also the value of having truly natural areas to exercise, walking, cycling and running joining up with the town centre and cycle path to Calne. The open views are amazing and much valued for wellbeing, combatting loneliness by the friendly chatter the area brings for walkers, that cannot be provided through an artificial contrived area.

I tried to follow this up with Overview and Scrutiny and have been referred back to cabinet. Overview and Scrutiny replied the below and I would like an update and the above to be considered along with the information from the Local Plan replies and information.

### **Question 1 (22-033)**

"The question will also be referred to the Executive in order that the council's policy position on county farms can be provided." Please can I have an update?

Two points I would like considered along side the above from the budget documents before a decision is made are:

Sustainable Environment The Council has committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and we now must take the lead and support the whole county as it strives for the same. Together, we must take responsibility for the environment and ensure it is well used, cherished, protected, conserved and enhanced.

129. The business plan and budget that funds it have been developed to support strong, resilient communities in Wiltshire.

### **Response**

**The Council's rural estate asset management plan covers provision of county farms. The objectives are :-**

1. To provide opportunities for persons to be farmers on their own account by encouraging existing tenants to advance their farming businesses and enhance their opportunity to either purchase their own farm or to move from the estate into the private sector. This mobility will provide opportunities for new entrants.
2. To maintain the rural fabric through the ownership and letting of farms together with the provision of strategic advice on rural matters.
3. To promote sustainability, biodiversity, climate change resilience and public access across the Estate by encouraging and supporting, as appropriate, a full range of innovative measures and activities.

There is no need to review the rural estate management policy at this time unless changes in legislation necessitate.

**Question 2 (22-034)**

What could be more strong and resilient than to have local food, just a walk from the town centre?

**Response**

It will be for farmers to decide whether they wish to offer their produce locally.

**Question 3 (22-035)**

Further to my question to Cabinet in January I wasn't given an answer to the question, will Wiltshire Council support the Empty Homes week at the end of February, many local authorities already are, even just putting it on weekly emails would help get conversations going with people tying up empty homes and maybe add a comment about making wills to stop family disputes as you did mention in your reply this was the main issue?

I was pleased you noted that the wrong homes are being built with the glut of retirement homes from 2020 available to purchase. Add to this the glut of executive homes available on RightMove and hopefully we can concentrate on getting grants and sustainable finance for affordable housing which is where the true housing crisis is in Wiltshire?

**Response**

We will be using Empty Homes week as an opportunity to find out the current numbers of empty homes we have across Wiltshire and write to the owners encouraging them to make contact with us if they would like to let them out or obtain a loan to assist with any repairs to help bring them up to a lettable standard

**Question 4 (22-036)**

Following another accident involving 2 cars at Hathaway Retail park, Chippenham on Monday, will Wiltshire Council take urgent action with those responsible for the traffic lights under their duty of care to residents for safe roads, which having 2 traffic lights on green with no warning they are crossing each other is not acceptable?

**Response**

The Little George signals have yet to be handed over to the Council and at the moment still remain the responsibility of the Developer. The Council is however aware of the concerns that the north and south bound movements run concurrently and will look to review this once full adoption has taken place.



## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**1 February 2022**

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors**

**Question from: Richard Curr**

**To Councillor :**

**Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing/**

#### **Statement**

Thank you for your response to my questions raised at the Cabinet Meeting on 30th November.

In respect of Question 1 I have looked back to the Minutes and the Report to Cabinet December 2020. The Resolution item 5 states:

“That subject to the Council providing loan finance to Wiltshire College to enable them to refinance their existing loans the Council make an offer to purchase land at the Lackham College site at existing use value.”

#### **Question 1 (22-037)**

I, in consultation with others, read that the purchase is conditional on Wiltshire College taking a loan from the Council. However, it is noted that the loan provision in the budget has been removed but the purchase provision still remains. In view of this can I assume that the purchase cannot proceed as the loan condition, under the Resolution and Delegated Authority, is not being met? Is it planned to bring to Cabinet a revised resolution to enable the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to proceed with the purchase without the conditional loan?

#### **Response**

The budget for the loan provision was originally included in the capital programme and was subsequently removed as the loan did not meet the criteria for the categorisation of capital expenditure. The loan transaction has been completed and loan condition therefore met. This transaction can be seen in the reporting of Treasury Management activity and is reflected in the loans to third parties.

**Question 2 (22-038)**

With regard to Questions 2 and 3 can I ask if the expenditure of £7.39m is payable under the original HIF Bid (£75m) signed GDA or if it speculative on the outcome of the revised bid GDA which is still under negotiation? Specifically, can I ask you to confirm that the revised HIF Bid is for the sum of £37.526m bearing in mind that the professional services have not been purchased to quantify the costs.

**Response**

The Council has been able to draw down HIF funding in line with the original Grant determination Agreement (GDA). Discussions are taking place with Homes England on a revised GDA reflecting different costs and HIF funding availability and as such HIF funding cannot be confirmed at this point in time.

**Question 3 (22-039)**

Following your response to Mr Parry (his question 2) Can I also ask you to confirm that the £0.999m costs are not recoverable from either GDA and will the total costs of £7.39m ultimately fall on the Council Taxpayers if the HIF Bid does not come to fruition. This leads me to ask if Future Chippenham costs for existing staff seconded to the project show equivalent savings in other departments budgeted costs?

**Response**

The GDA that the Council has entered into with Homes England allows HIF funding for spend confirmed in the agreement. Council staff who are working on the Future Chippenham programme charge their time to the project thus mitigating costs in Directorates salary budget.

**Question 4 (22-040)**

As members of the public are invited to ask questions to Cabinet or direct to Councillors can I ask that questions and letters/Emails are acknowledged, within say 7 days, in every instance?

It is not unusual to await in excess of a month and usually responses are only made when chase up reminders are sent. Without acknowledgements it is not known if the correspondence has been received which is frustrating and reflects badly on the Council.

**Response:**

Part 2 and Article 3 of the Council's Constitution details the right of members of the public. Included in this Article are the ways the public are able to contact the Council and when to expect a response, as follows:

'Members of the public have the right to:

- contact the Council by telephone, post, email, fax or in person. An acknowledgement will be sent within 2 working days, and a full response to all written correspondence within 15 working days from the day your correspondence is received. Where legislation dictates otherwise, e.g., Freedom of Information, different timescales may

apply. If that is not possible an explanation will be given as to the reason for the delay, what action is being taken, and when a response will be sent’.

Part 7 of the Council’s Constitution details how formal questions to Cabinet are received as detailed below, and these are dealt with separately to general communications:

‘The cabinet welcomes questions or statements from members of the public. However, the specific arrangements for public participation at cabinet meetings are a matter for determination by the Leader and will as such be kept under review.’

In general, questions and statements are received for Cabinet meetings, by email, once the agenda for a meeting has been published. On occasions, they are received in advance of the agenda publication, or after the meeting as a supplementary question. The email is acknowledged, and further information provided about the meeting and when a response should be expected.

Arrangements are then made for responses to be prepared and these are made available to those who submitted the questions in advance of the meeting and published in a Supplementary Agenda on the meeting webpage. In some cases, the responses can be technical and require slightly longer to prepare.

The time between the receipt of the questions and response being circulated is generally 4-5 working days. There are occasions where questions are received in between meetings and these are then ‘held over’ to the next meeting, which may mean that a member of the public would have to wait slightly longer than the timescales detailed above, for a response.

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**1 February 2022**

**Agenda Items 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors &  
Agenda Item 6 Wiltshire Council's Budget 2022/23**

**Question from: Mr N Parry**

**To Councillors :**

**Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing/**

**Nick Botterill, Cabinet Member for Development Management, Strategic Planning and Climate Change /**

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

**Statement:**

Appendix 2 – Capital Strategy 2022/23 Page 7 para 31 & 34

31. The Chippenham Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) scheme relates to the delivery of significant infrastructure works in and around Chippenham. The budget for this scheme over this capital programme is £66.203m and is funded by external grants from Central Government following a successful application to Central Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). This scheme will provide the infrastructure upfront to unlock housing supply to ensure people can live and work locally and play an active part in their community

**Question 1 (22-041)**

Could you please confirm that this grant is in place and approved for payment by HIF given that only a southern route scheme is now being proposed?

**Response**

The Council is working to the GDA entered into with Homes England and will continue to do so pending discussions on revising the GDA.

**Question 2 (22-042)**

Please confirm that this grant is dependent on Local Plan approval by the residents of Chippenham for development in the area being promoted?

34. The Council has a successful programme of asset disposal. Over the next three years the Council estimates that it may be able to offer to the market sites capable of residential development which subject to planning permission could deliver over 500 units of accommodation. The Council has established Stone Circle Development Company to enable the strategic housing needs across the County to be better met while increasing the potential return that could be generated from the developments.

**Response**

The Future Chippenham programme development proposals are subject to the outcome of the Local plan review plus any planning applications receiving planning permission following the statutory process.

**Question 3 (22-043)**

Please advise if any of these proposed sites include land around the Chippenham HIF bid area?

**Response**

The current asset disposal programme does not include sites which would fall within the Future Chippenham programme area.

**Question 4 (22-044)**

Please advise why letters, & emails correspondence are not replied to despite reminders?

**Response**

If we have not responded to emails and correspondence in a timely manner we apologise. The Council aims where possible to respond to enquiries within 10 working days. If that is not happening and a response is not provided please do not hesitate to escalate the request in the Council so that the relevant Directors can ensure a response is provided

**Question 5 (22-045)**

Why are Wiltshire Council ignoring the residents of Chippenhams overall rejection for an unnecessary road which will decimate biodiversity and destroy the landscape?

**Response**

Wiltshire Council is not ignoring the views of the residents of Chippenham. The concerns of residents to ensure that biodiversity is protected and landscape enhanced is clear. The Council believes the best way to achieve that is to masterplan development and ensure those issues are addressed. The Council doing nothing does not mean nothing will happen and development could still proceed without the proactive intervention of the Council.

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**1 February 2022**

### **Agenda Item 6 Wiltshire Council's Budget 2022/23 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 to 2025/26**

**Question from: Mr Colin Gale**

**To Councillor:**

**Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for MCI, Economic Development, Heritage, Arts, Tourism and Health & Wellbeing/**

#### **Statement**

I viewed the Wiltshire Council budget webinar on the 18<sup>th</sup> January and the Council Leader identified that the following increases/new charges would be included in the budget:

- New parking charge for disabled badge holders at all council car parks throughout the county.
- New charge for the disposal of some waste items at Council Household Recycle Centres.

The budget report states “Within this the report sets out the required increase in Council Tax for the year, the increase in fees and charges”. Then in the ‘Fees and Charges’ paragraph states “As part of budget setting, where the council has discretion on the setting of fees and charges and increases to these, it is recommended that the fees and charges to the public are increased by appropriate inflation rates to help support the delivery of a balanced budget. Other fees and charges will be based on statutory national levels (where set by statute) or individual agreements. Detail of the fees and charges where the council has discretion on the setting of the fees and charges and where they have been increased can be seen in appendix 1.”

I was unable to find any specifics within the report advising the new charges which I would have thought should be provided especially when they are new charges being

introduced. In Appendix 1, Annex 6 within the spreadsheet a one liner stating charges for Blue Badge Holders. It is acknowledged that some other counties have revised the concession to Blue Badge Holders but not removed the concession. There is a one line entry for charges at HRC's for non-household waste items but no specifics on costs.

At the Pewsey Community Area Partnership meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 our Wiltshire Councillor provided a round-up of the WC budget and identified that the Town/Parish Council election costs was going to be introduced as part of the budget. Again I cannot find any specific details or mention of the election costs within the budget report.

Please can you advise the following:

**Question 1 (22-046)**

Where in the budget report the specific details on the above new charges can be found and if the specific details are not in the report provide the information?

**Response**

The detail of Fees and Charges can be seen in appendix 1, annex 9 of the budget report.

**Question 2 (22-047)**

Where in the budget report the specific details on the Town/Parish Council election costs can be found and if not in the budget report provide the details?

**Response**

There is no reference in the Budget papers related to recovering the costs incurred by Wiltshire Council of administering parish elections from the City, town and parish councils.

The Cabinet does intend to consider a proposal to charge parishes for the cost to Wiltshire Council of managing such elections, when held at the same time as Wiltshire elections, currently scheduled for May 2025. The introduction of a new policy of that nature would include sufficient notice for the City, town and parish councils to make the necessary budgetary arrangements well in advance.



## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**1 February 2022**

### **Agenda Item 13 – Climate Strategy and update on council's response to the climate emergency**

**Question from: James Gladding (Member of Sustainable Calne)**

**To Councillor:**

**Nick Botterill, Cabinet Member for Development Management, Strategic Planning and Climate Change /**

#### **Question 1 (22-048)**

**Does Wiltshire Council remain committed to seeking to build a carbon neutral (net zero) county by 2030 and how and when will you set meaningful targets and timescales for countywide (not council) carbon emission reductions?** Wiltshire Council has made strong progress in its organisational carbon emissions (reducing by ~80% since 2014/15) however these only represents <1% of Wiltshire's total emissions. The county's carbon reduction plan, along with clear targets and timescales will therefore be critical to monitoring progress and identifying interventions.

#### **Response**

We remain committed to doing everything within our influence to bring down carbon emissions in Wiltshire as set out in our Climate Strategy, while being mindful that approximately two thirds of Wiltshire's emissions are outside the scope of local authority influence. We have commissioned independent research to set out a roadmap and interim targets and this will inform our Climate Strategy delivery plans.

#### **Question 2 (22-049)**

Noting the consultation feedback in section 3.1, p501 – “most responses in this category mentioned they would like to see targets, SMART objectives or clear timescales for action in the strategy”, **what initiatives will be implemented in 2022 and 2023 and what reductions in countywide (not council) carbon emissions will be achieved through these, that will accelerate progress and keep the county on track towards its 2030 commitment?**

## **Response**

Our progress report (Agenda item 13, main report) sets out a wide range of initiatives that are already in train to reduce countywide emissions and many of them will continue to be implemented during 2022 and 2023. The research referred to above will identify further projects and quantify emissions reductions from those projects.

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**1 February 2022**

### **Agenda Item 13 – Climate Strategy and update on council's response to the climate emergency**

**Question from: Bill Jarvis**

**To Councillor:**

**Nick Botterill, Cabinet Member for Development Management, Strategic Planning and Climate Change /**

#### **Statement**

In February 2019 this Council acknowledged that there is a climate emergency and committed to seek to make Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

In July 2019, as a part of your overall commitment, you also pledged to make Wiltshire Council carbon neutral by 2030.

The Council's Climate Team have now delivered a comprehensive high level strategy, in the process making significant effort to consult with the public, which demonstrated very high levels of support in all areas.

In addition, the Climate Task Group presented, in early 2021, some actions to address the challenges now set out in that strategy.

The conclusion in this report to Cabinet on the Strategy are clear, action across the Council is needed, and now.

The strategy identifies the work needed for a positive outcome on delivering the Council commitments made in 2019.

It is now in your hands, as the Cabinet, to take the necessary actions to make it happen.

#### **Question 1 (22-050)**

Will you confirm your full support and commitment to taking the steps necessary to ensure that the Strategy goals, and the proposals to achieve those goals made by the Climate Task Group, are fully and timely implemented?

## Response

By approving the Climate Strategy, Cabinet will be confirming its full support and commitment to the strategy's goals.

## Statement

The Council's six spheres of influence to achieve the goals in the Climate Strategy are clearly set out in the report and, in the detailed background, there is evidence of welcome progress in Council emissions reductions and plans for further work.

The first sphere of influence deals with the Council's own direct emissions, something clearly underway.

The second deals with the provision of all Council procured services and the third is defined as regulatory.

These spheres of influence, and the actions taken, will have significant impact on the county as a whole. They will demonstrate the ability to tackle the problems and deliver tools that others in the county can use to reduce their emissions

The remainder require the Council to lead by example and to coordinate action across the county. This reflects the 6<sup>th</sup> element of the motion passed in 2019 to "*Continue to work with partners in the private sector and civil society across the County and region to deliver this new goal **through all relevant strategies and plans***"

The examples of direct action you are taking at the first level are welcome, but by far the widest impact you can make is through climate aligned policies for procurement of all services and through licensing and regulation. These policies not only directly affect council business, but all the suppliers and contractors employed by the council, and the users of council services.

This needs policy change throughout, and it is in your gift to make these changes.

Some policies are in conflict with the Strategy goals and will need replacing, some reinforcing, and some new ones introduced.

All will need the full support of this cabinet to deliver.

## Question 2 (22-051)

Some extant policies are in direct conflict with the ambitions of the Climate strategy. Please advise when these will be withdrawn and replaced with new climate aligned policies?

## Response

Assuming that the Climate Strategy is approved at the Cabinet meeting on 1 February and then adopted at Full Council on 15 February, paragraph 100 of Agenda item 13 explains that it will form part of the Budget and Policy framework as

set out in Part 3 section B of the Council's constitution. All decisions made by Cabinet, Committees and Officers have to be made in accordance with the Budget and Policy framework including this policy. Where conflicts are identified with existing policies, these will need to be resolved on a case by case basis

**Question 3 (22-052)**

Please advise what policies and regulations have been climate aligned and adopted since 2019 and provide a schedule and planned timescales of climate alignment and adoption of the remaining policies.

**Response**

Our new business plan (Agenda item 10) includes the Climate Strategy's objectives as do the council's new service plans, so council activity going forward should be climate aligned within the budgetary and legislative constraints the council has to operate under.

We are currently developing an approach to decision-making using the 'Doughnut Economics' approach used by Cornwall Council which will enable climate considerations to be brought to the fore in key council decisions, alongside social and economic considerations.

The answers to questions 22-029 and 22-031 above explain how the Local Plan Review process and new Local Transport Plan will be incorporating climate considerations.

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## **APPENDIX to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Minutes of 25 January 2022 Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet 1 February 2022**

**Council 15 February 2022**

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### **Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on the Draft Budget 2022/23 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022/23-2024/25**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To report to Cabinet and Full Council a summary of the main issues discussed at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (“The Committee”) held on 25 January 2022.

#### **Background**

2. The meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee provides an opportunity for non-executive councillors to question the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, the Chief Executive, and the S151 Officer on the draft Budget 2022-23 and medium-term financial strategy before it is considered at Cabinet on 1 February 2022 and Full Council on 15 February 2022.
3. The Leader of the Council, as Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, supported by the Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer, Andy Brown, was in attendance along with the Chief Executive, Terence Herbert, to provide clarification and answers to issues and queries raised by the Committee. Other members of the Cabinet and Corporate Leadership Team were also in attendance to provide further detail and clarity.
4. In addition to the draft Budget update made available on the council’s website on 12 January 2022, a briefing from the Leader and the S151 Officer open to all elected Members was held on 18 January 2022. The Children’s, Health and Environment Select Committees met formally or informally ahead of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to discuss
5. Details published in the budget papers had included:
  - Council Tax to be increased by 1.99% and an Adult Social Care Levy of 1%;
  - A net general fund budget for 2021/22 of £417.703m, an increase from £412.561m in 2021/22, and including £24.825m of additional savings;
  - The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2021/22 to be set at £24.173m expenditure with social dwelling rents to increase by 4.1% except for rents currently over the formula rent which will be capped at formula rent as per national guidance;
  - For the medium-term financials strategy a forecast budget gap, after the utilisation of the budget equalisation reserve, of £10.705m for the 2024/25 financial year with regular updates to be received on delivery against strategy and addressing the forecast budget gap;
  - The Capital Strategy setting out a proposed capital programme for 2022/23 with future years projected to 2029/30.

## **APPENDIX to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Minutes of 25 January 2022**

6. The impact of Covid-19 on delaying usual efficiencies and savings within the budget, impact of inflation and increases and demand, and details of government support received, was set out by the Leader.

### **Main issues raised during questioning and debate**

7. This report is divided into sections relating to each of the Select Committee areas as budget proposals and impacts on service areas were discussed, as well as general comments.

#### Financial Planning Task Group

8. The report of the Task Group on the budget proposals was received and noted. The report and its comments are included as an annex to the Committee for attention at Cabinet and Full Council.

#### Children's Select Committee

9. The Committee held a meeting on 18 January 2022 at which the Draft Budget was discussed, with the details of the questions and discussion detailed in the minutes extract attached to this report.
10. It was commented that Children's Services had been relatively protected within the Draft Budget

#### Environment Select Committee

11. Details were sought in relation to linkage with the Business Plan priorities and the climate emergency, and estimates of the costs of achieving Net Zero carbon neutrality. It was stated that the Capital Programme set out costs which would take the council itself significantly further toward Net Zero with over £8m invested in its property, over £17m invested in the council's housing stock, and an element relating to decarbonising the council's fleet services which would be developed in further budgets. For the county as a whole this was not a cost borne by the council, but through government programmes and other workstreams, but not directly relevant to the council's efforts to decarbonise in relation to its budget and the Housing Revenue Account.
12. Queries were raised on priorities for Active Travel, in relation to £310m outlined toward road improvement. It was stated this was in part due to how government funding streams operated, with significant road schemes funded and bid for a long time in advance, with Active Travel scheme funding announced with shorter timescales making it harder to forecast in the short-term budgeting.
13. Questions were raised relating to the leisure budget with investment in equipment and a new leisure centre in Trowbridge. It was confirmed that £25m had been allocated across three years for a leisure centre in Trowbridge due to the limited remaining lifespan of the facility there needing replacement, but this was separate to the £1.25m investment in equipment for leisure centres across Wiltshire and £9.4m for improvements to those leisure centres.
14. Details were sought on the proposals to charge for collection of some waste items, how the system of charges would work and consideration of potential increase of fly



## **APPENDIX to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Minutes of 25 January 2022**

tipping. It was stated there were regular rates for items excluded from free collection, with many authorities setting charges which would be reviewed. Evidence from other areas had been assessed and it was not considered such charges would lead to an increase of fly tipping. It remained the intention to increase the level of recyclables within the sites.

15. Questions were raised the planned parking charges increase and the possibility of offsetting this by opening the Salisbury Park and Ride sites on Sundays. The use of funds raised from parking to subsidise rural bus services was highlighted, and there would be a cost to further opening, but it could be discussed with operators.
16. Details were also sought on costs set aside for tackling Ash Dieback, with funds set aside for only one year. It was stated that at this point it was not clear what the long-term impact would be and what would be required in the future, which would be assessed further. This was also raised at the Financial Planning Task Group.

### Health Select Committee

17. Queries were raised in relation to expected contractual inflation of £13.6m in 2022/23, with assurance sought on procurement processes to ensure the increase could not be lower without unacceptable loss of quality or breach of contracts that were fair to purchaser and supplier. Details were provided of contract processes and tender renewal, with potential scrutiny involvement and the Audit and Governance Committee looking at contracts and commissioning. A commercial board looked at procurements and asked questions around price vs quality specifications and ensuring legal and procurement regulation compliance.
18. A question was also raised regarding focusing on caring for people at home, with reference to the budget for Shared Lives and Wiltshire Support at Home. It was stated that support for people to live at home was a significant driver of ongoing adult social care transformation. Details on the performance could be provided in a report to the Health Select Committee.

### Other

19. A question was raised in relation to corporate costs, and the 50% reduction in legal costs of £0.250m, and whether this was indicative of a past trend of annual underspend, due to change in contracts or different decision making strategies with regard to action taken. It was stated this was part of standard service efficiencies. It was also stated money had been set aside for the Dawn Sturgess inquest, and government support was now coming in in relation to that which mean the same level did not need to be set aside.
20. Details were also sought on demographic data used to estimate anticipate demand, and direct comparisons of budget date to previous years within the main body of the report.

### **Conclusion**

21. To note the Draft Budget 2022-23 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022/23-24/25 and to refer the comments of the Committee and the report of the Financial Planning

**APPENDIX to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Minutes of 25 January 2022**  
Task Group to Cabinet and Full Council for consideration on 1 and 15 February 2022  
respectively.

22. To support ongoing scrutiny investigation of the budget, including the Financial Planning Task Group's continued focus on monitoring delivery of the budget and the development of the budget for 2023-24.

**Councillor Graham Wright**

**Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

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27 January 2022

Annex – Report of the Financial Planning Task Group for 18 and 21 January 2022

**APPENDIX to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Minutes of 25 January 2022  
Wiltshire Council**

**Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - Annex**

**25 January 2022**

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**Report of the Financial Planning Task Group:**

**Budget 2022/23 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25**

The Task Group met with the following guests, on 18 January 2022 and 21 January 2022, to discuss the reports:

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Cllr Richard Clewer | Leader of the Council  |
| Andy Brown          | Corporate Director Resources & Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer) |
| Lizzie Watkin       | Assistant Director Finance   |

**Observing:**

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Cllr Graham Wright  | Chairman, OS Management Committee           |
| Cllr Chris Williams | Vice-Chairman, OS Management Committee      |
| Cllr Jon Hubbard    | Chairman, Children’s Select Committee       |
| Cllr Johnny Kidney  | Chairman, Health Select Committee           |
| Cllr Jerry Kunkler  | Chairman, Environment Select Committee      |
| Cllr Bob Jones MBE  | Vice-Chairman, Environment Select Committee |

| <b>Issue</b><br>(page and paragraphs numbers refer to the <a href="#">Budget Reports</a> ) | <b>Further information / Comments</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>Adult Social Care Reform – Self Funders</b><br>(Paras 26-29)                            | <p>The Government has announced adult social care reform funding – which will not come through until 2023/24. The council still lacks the detail of these reforms but once they come into effect any reform needs to consider the budgetary impact of self-funders. Wiltshire is exposed to risk because of its demographics and the high proportion of people who self-fund their care.</p> <p>Some initial modelling has been done to look at the potential costs. Current modelling is very high level as not all the information required is available from the Government.</p> <p>Risk remains but the Government is aware of this and has indicated it is prepared to give the necessary assistance.</p> |

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| <p><b>Adult Social Care - Infection Control Measures</b><br/>(Para 29)</p> | <p>The Government have announced that it will fund PPE requirements until March 2023, and this has been factored into the budget.</p> <p>The guidance around infection control will change but the assumptions in the budget have been factored into tendering and prices. There are risks that these costs may be higher for tendered services. There is £1.9m pressure built in regarding hospital discharge, where there are significant additional costs.</p>   |
| <p><b>Consumer Price Index (CPI)</b><br/>(Paras 42-43, 105)</p>            | <p>The council must use an inflation index like CPI but recognises that in certain circumstances there will be significant variation in inflation levels. The CPI forecast is taken from the Bank of England and was released in November 2021. It is predicted that the inflation rate over 2022/23 would be 4%.</p> <p>There are risks that tender inflation could be over 4%. There will be pressures in some areas e.g., SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) school transport and in highways costs for services and materials that are likely to exceed CPI.</p> <p>The budget allows for price increases e.g., Highways and Streetscene revenue budget 2022/23 is £25.6m an overall increase of £1.4m from 2021/22. The market will determine whether costs rise above CPI.</p> <p>The budget is based upon the best assumptions at the time. Any inaccuracies in these assumptions will need to be managed. The council can also draw upon the general reserve fund. The assumptions are robust enough to allow management of the budget before drawing on reserves.</p> |
| <p><b>Wiltshire Online</b><br/>(Para 71)</p>                               | <p>The council has a commercial arrangement with BT. Part of the contract has shared benefits, which has generated one-off income of £3.3m (2022/23). It will be set aside in the budget equalisation fund.</p> <p>This funding will not be used to improve broadband in the county as the Government has developed a new programme to tackle connectivity. The council may want to invest in that programme in future – but will await further details.</p>  |

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| <p><b>CATG (Community Area Transport Groups) / Local Highways Improvement Group</b><br/>(Para 85)</p> | <p>This funding (£0.8m) is made up of £0.4m from a Highways integrated transport grant and £0.4m from borrowing. This funding provides greater flexibility.</p>   |
| <p><b>Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)</b><br/>(Paras 110-119)</p>                                       | <p>It was confirmed that this fund is for pupils at schools in Wiltshire and is distributed to the schools on a per pupil basis.</p>  |
| <p><b>Savings</b><br/>(Para 140; Appendix 1, Annex 8)</p>   | <p>The budget proposes delivering £25m of savings, subject to approval by Council. Previous saving plans have been side-lined by COVID and the council has not delivered a significant savings programme since 2019/20.</p> <p>This potential £25m saving has a risk likelihood assessment of 25%. This is based upon the previous record of accomplishment when delivery of savings ranged from 60-80%. The risk will decrease as more savings are achieved.</p> <p>The step change suggested will be a performance management framework. Senior management will ensure that this cultural change becomes integrated into delivering services and managing finances. Savings targets will be transparent with a greater focus on these in budget monitoring reports. If savings are not on track action will be taken.</p> |
| <p><b>Non-Domestic Rates</b><br/>(Appendix 1, page 3)</p>   | <p>Business rates are payable upon council run leisure centres. A new temporary <a href="#">relief</a> was announced in the Budget 2021, which is on top of existing grants. The government is moving toward returning the Non Domestic Ratepayers (NDR) regime to pre-pandemic levels.</p>   |
| <p><b>Savings – Staff Saving Proposals</b><br/>(Appendix 1, page 8-9)</p>                             | <p>The Children’s Select Committee has looked for reassurance that reductions in staff would not reduce service levels at its meeting on 19 January 2022. There was some member concern that reductions in back-office support might impact on frontline capacity. Many of the staffing reductions proposed are about removing vacant posts – often vacant for some time. These proposals for 2022/23 have been rated as having minimal risk upon service delivery. There will be some impact 2023/24, though probably minimal.</p>   |

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| <p><b>General Fund Reserve</b><br/>(Appendix 1, page 11)</p>                             | <p>The general fund reserve currently stands at £18.256m increasing to £19.656m 2023/24. This is not enough to cover all the identified risk (£27.615m). However, other reserves are also set aside to mitigate financial risk the council faces, such as latent demand.</p>   |
| <p><b>Drawing Down Reserves</b><br/>(Appendix 1, page 11)</p>                            | <p>In 2022/23 the budget equalisation fund will be £16.5m and will be held at the same level 2022/23; In 2023/24 part of the reserve (£9m) will be used to balance the budget.</p> <p>The use of the collection fund volatility reserve is quite technical due to the timing of announcements regarding Government business rate reliefs. In each of the next three years the reserve will be reduced by £1.25m as agreed previously. The timing of relief announcements has meant deficits, for which the council has received section 31 grant compensation from the Government. Council tax collection rates have held up during the pandemic, but forecasting is difficult, with particular risk associated with business rates. The fund will be kept at around £4m (£3.9m 2024/25) due to the size of the collection fund and the potential risks around forecasting.</p> <p>Latent demand reserve is £7m (2022/23). Demand has been estimated at £3m 2022/23 and £4m 2023/24. Funds will only be used if a need is identified. There is no evidence currently that reserves will be needed in future. Any reserve remaining in 2024/25 could be transferred to the budget equalisation reserve or the general fund reserve.</p> |
| <p><b>Revenue Costs of Capital Expenditure on Highways</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 1)</p> | <p>There is a revenue cost element to capital projects. This is set out at a high level in Annex 1. The maintenance budget for highways will be kept at same level as in 2020/21.</p>  |
| <p><b>Ash Die Back</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 5)</p>                                     | <p>£0.50m has been set aside for ash die back; an uplift on the 2021/22 budget (£0.25m). The council is taking a managed approach, as the total scale of the issue is more than can be addressed in the budget. There are areas that need to be addressed first where health and safety is affected. The budget will cover the issues that need to be addressed 2022/23.</p>   |

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| <p><b>Details of Service Demand Changes</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 5)</p>          | <p>The POPPI and PANSI population projections are an improvement on the data used previously as they can provide more localised information. Many organisations across social care are using these indices. There is always risk in projections, but the new data is more accurate than the current Office for National Statistics (ONS).</p>  |
| <p><b>Living &amp; Ageing Well - Spot Prices</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 6)</p>     | <p>In 2022/23 £0.2m in savings are proposed converting spot contracts to block contracts – rising to £0.5m in 2023/24. These savings were put forward by officers. Overall, there is growth in this budget but there are also savings to be made.</p>  |
| <p><b>Better Care Fund</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 6)</p>                           | <p>This £2.9m is built into the base budget and appears every year. This fund is used at the council's discretion and is allocated to support social care, reduce pressure on the NHS and support the care market.</p>   |
| <p><b>Car Parking Charges</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 6)</p>                        | <p>Reduced demand has been factored into the calculations. The effect of any changes on the market towns has been considered – though this is hard to predict. When charges were increased previously it had a negligible effect. The costs of maintaining and running car parks are increasing.</p>   |
| <p><b>Savings – Fostering Excellence</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 6)</p>             | <p>It is proposed to save £0.525m of £26m (2022/23) in the Fostering Excellence programme. This target looks ambitious but is more about managing cost and demand. Officers are comfortable with this saving though this does not mean that there are not challenges and risks. The Cabinet has challenged the savings identified and undertaken a process to ensure that savings are deliverable.</p> |
| <p><b>Capital Programme – Education &amp; Skills</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 7)</p> | <p>Capital cost are increasing, for example, Stonehenge School will need an extra £1.5m. CPI has been applied to projects and averaged out at 4%. In revenue contracts, the budget has accounted for an inflationary rise of 4%. In capital programmes, this may mean that due to higher inflation the funding will not go as far, therefore further funding will need to be found.</p>                |
| <p><b>Capital Programme – Borrowing Risk</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 7)</p>         | <p>Borrowing is forecast to increase to fund the capital programme. Historically, debt interest repayment has been 3.74%; the current rate is around 2%. The Treasury Management Strategy will set out in further detail the cost of borrowing. This has not been flagged as a risk because both borrowing and</p>   |

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|  | <p>interest rates would need to increase significantly to affect the budget.</p> <p><a href="#">Public Works Lending Board (PWLB)</a> sets out interest rates daily and is monitored to assess any movements. The council's Treasury Advisors also provide reports. Using this analysis, the council will decide when best to borrow looking to secure borrowing at 2% or under.</p>                      |
| <p><b>Adult Social Care Contractual Costs &amp; Care Provider Market</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 8)</p> | <p>The potential risk is £13m. An internal commercial board looks at tender compliance and a report goes to the board which highlights emerging tender prices. Going to market will give actual details of any inflationary increases.</p>  |
| <p><b>Risk Assessed Balances</b><br/>(Appendix 1, Annex 8)</p>   | <p>The risk identified are significant e.g., the delivery of savings (£25m). The assessment of risk was undertaken by the S151 Officer. The % likelihood is an assessment based on previous performance.</p> <p>Levels of performance on savings will be monitored by the Financial Planning Task Group. Any potential risks will be flagged, when required, at Cabinet as part of budget monitoring.</p> |

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**Cllr Pip Ridout - Chairman of the Financial Planning Task Group**

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## **APPENDIX to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Minutes of 25 January 2022**

### **Wiltshire Council**

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - Annex**

**25 January 2022**

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#### **Minutes Extract – Children’s Select Committee 19 January 2022 - Wiltshire Council’s Financial Plan Update 2022-2023 and Medium Term Financial Strategy**

The Chairman invited the Committee to consider the areas of the proposed budget that related to Children’s Services. He explained that he would pass the Committee’s comments on to the relevant meetings, including the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 25 January and Cabinet on 1 February 2022.

Councillor Laura Mayes, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Skills, stated that, despite a challenging financial environment, investment was increasing by £3.9 million in the Education and Skills and Families and Children’s budgets. The Cabinet Member was pleased to announce that spending of £23 million on Education and Skills and £62 million on Families and Children were proposed in 2022/23.

The Cabinet Member then went on to highlight specific areas of investment such as Fostering Excellence and Traded Services. She explained that, given the need to make savings in the Council’s overall budget, it was important to review areas, such as commissioning, in order make the most of the available resources and to maintain services. The Cabinet Member then offered to answer questions from the Committee.

During the discussion points included:

1. Members thanked the Cabinet Member for the update and welcomed the investment in Children’s Services, especially given the challenging financial situation.
2. The replacement of mobile classrooms was praised by Members and they asked how many schools were expecting to have temporary units replaced. Helean Hughes, Director of Education and Skills, explained that £3 million had been allocated to replace six mobile units. There were a total of 53 units identified in maintained schools as requiring replacement but these would be reviewed as part of the School’s Place Planning Strategy.
3. In response to questions about the impact of staffing savings, Lucy Townsend, Corporate Director People, explained that the focus for savings in 2022/23 would be pausing recruitment to longstanding vacant positions, where possible, to avoid redundancies in front line roles. The situation for 2023/24 would be reviewed after Council had approved the budget.
4. When asked about the possibility of redundancies to administrative staff, the Director confirmed that the Council greatly valued staff supporting frontline practitioners. She was unable to guarantee that there would be no redundancies across the Council but reassured Members that they were not currently looking at redundancies within Children’s Services.

## **APPENDIX to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Minutes of 25 January 2022**

5. Members noted that they would be interested in receiving information about changes in the number of full-time equivalent positions to achieve the planned savings.
6. Jen Salter, Head of Service for Children's Support and Safeguarding, confirmed that most of the savings identified within Children's Services had come from her department. She explained that pay had been reviewed to better reflect the level of experience of staff. As they had a good understanding of the relative balance of experienced and newly qualified staff, they were able to realign the budget without a reduction in staff numbers.
7. When questions were raised about the long-term viability of the savings as the workforce gained experience, the Corporate Director of People explained that historic recruitment patterns had been analysed and taken into consideration when modelling costs for future years; it was anticipated that the balance of experienced and newly-qualified staff would remain.
8. The Director confirmed that Wiltshire had its lowest number of agency staff and fewer than comparable Local Authorities (LAs). She clarified that only experienced agency workers were recruited and that they helped to support newly qualified staff.
9. In response to a question about £525,000 in savings in the Fostering budget, the Director confirmed that the Fostering Excellence budget would be receiving investment. She explained that the savings had been identified from the External Placement budget and that they planned to increase the percentage of internal placements. She confirmed that the total placement budget for the financial year was just over £21 million and that in the region of £13 million went towards external providers.

The Chairman then invited Members to contact him in advance of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee should they wish him to ask further questions at that meeting.