

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

9 February 2016

Public Participation

Question from Mr Ian James, Bremhill Parish Councillor

Question to Councillor John Thomson, Cabinet member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards and Broadband

Please can the Cabinet member inform Council when those in the rural areas of Wiltshire will receive an acceptable broadband speed.

At the present time there are those in rural areas receiving just .2mbps when BT Open Reach has suggested that the minimum of 4 - 6 mgbps should be available.

It appears that those within 700 metres of a cabinet can have 30mgps, but the further you are away from the cabinet the performance drops off as the connection is still copper.

This poor performance is hampering those businesses working from home, as many as 50% of households in the rural community work from home, and farmers are especially disadvantaged, many are having to deal with DEFRA after midnight to get their work done.

This is of particular concern to those living in the rural parts of Bremhill parish, I am sure this is also of concern to many others living in other rural parishes.

Please will the cabinet member assure Council that every effort is being made to support the rural economy, and what timeframe can users expect 4-6mgbps across all of the county?

Question to Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property and Waste

On 15th December 2015 in response to question 13 his response was wrong. Please will he clarify the exact content of paragraph 3.4 of the Scott Wilson Report on Ground Water Flooding of November 2011 for land to the east of Chippenham, known as Area C1 & 2.

I refer to the last paragraph of his answer which uses the word "prior" to the consideration of development proposals.

The correct statement from para 3.4 reads "It is not sufficient to rely on the work undertaken by developers through the planning application process, unless long term monitoring (several years) is one of the conditions when granting planning permission"

Does he agree that this is the correct statement from para 3.4?

Note: question 13 to Cabinet on 15 December 2015 as referred to above for ease of reference as follows:

Is it true that the Scott Wilson ground water flooding report for the River Avon and Marden stated that the Council should not rely on a developer's report, but should undertake several years of hydrological testing during any planning stage?

Response:

As part of work commissioned for a Surface Water Management Plan, Scott Wilson prepared an intermediate assessment of ground water flood susceptibility. It states that a developer's survey of groundwater levels could usefully be supplemented by longer term monitoring. It says:

"It would be advisable for the Council, in combination with the Environment Agency, to begin long term monitoring of the Cornbrash Formation, Kellaways Sand Member and superficial aquifer groundwater levels. This data would also be useful for understanding groundwater / surface water interactions, which is important when considering the design of fluvial flood defences." (para 3.4 An Intermediate assessment of ground water flood susceptibility, Scott Wilson, November 2011)

Scott Wilson's finalised advice does not suggest a requirement for several years hydrological study being required prior to the consideration of development proposals. (See question 5). The Environment Agency do not consider there is an enhanced risk in Chippenham due to ground water flooding."