

Wiltshire Council

Council

11 July 2017

Councillor Ernie Clark, Hilperton Division

**To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning,
Development Management and Property**

Question (17-46)

Why is the 'North & West' Housing Market Area not treated as two separate areas? 'South' is, as is 'East', so why the different treatment for 'North & West'?

Is this something that is likely to be reviewed and, if it is, what is the time scale?

Response

The three Housing Market Areas (HMAs) for Wiltshire were identified as part of the preparation of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted by Council on 15 January 2015. Figure 4.1 'Wiltshire Key Diagram' illustrates these on a map and Table 1 clarifies the Community Areas making up each HMA.

The Wiltshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), covering the period 2006 to 2026, utilised data on internal migration patterns, travel to work areas and other market signals to derive the extent of the HMAs. The results of analysis indicated that, whilst two of the HMAs in Wiltshire aligned to the former Kennet and Salisbury district boundaries, a third HMA encompassed both the former North and West Wiltshire districts. For further information on how the HMAs were defined, refer to paragraphs 4.18 - 4.44 of the Wiltshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment published December 2011 (<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/strategic-housing-market-assessment>).

A SHMA to inform the review of the Wiltshire Core Strategy covering the period 2016 to 2036 is under preparation and covers Wiltshire and Swindon.

This SHMA will form part of the evidence base for the review of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The timetable for the review will be set out in a paper to September's Cabinet on the Council's Local Development Scheme.

Wiltshire Council

Council

11 July 2017

Councillor Ian Thorn, Calne Central Division

To Councillor Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Question (17-47)

Would she agree that where a town or parish council wishes to do so it should be able to take on responsibility for the repair of potholes in its area?

Response

Wiltshire Council has the statutory responsibility of local highway authority. This legal responsibility cannot be delegated. However the council can potentially contract with other parties (such as town or parish councils) to provide the services of a highway authority but overall responsibility for provision of that service would still remain with the Council in the event of the service being inadequately provided.

The Council for health and safety and insurance reasons does not sub contract the highway authority function for the provision of these services (inspection and management of the repair function) to ensure countywide consistent standards. The highway repair provision is sub-contracted and repairs are undertaken to a standard specified by the highway authority in its current Highway Inspection Manual. The Council requires the contractor carrying out the repairs to comply with relevant legislation, ensure appropriate traffic management is in place to ensure the safety of their operatives and the public whilst the repair is being carried out and to carry the appropriate level of insurances in the event of failure to provide an adequate service. Notwithstanding the management and legal responsibility for undertaking repairs to the highway still sits with council.

Wiltshire Council

Council

11 July 2017

Councillor Nick Fogg MBE, Marlborough West Division

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement,
ICT and Operational Assets**

Question (17-49)

What steps, if any, is Wiltshire Council taking to anticipate the inevitable growth of Artificial Intelligence, both in its own operations and in the County as a whole?

Response

As an organisation we need to recognise the potential for Artificial Intelligence (AI) so that we can make best use of the ever-evolving technology. Within the Council's Digital Strategy reference is made in the long term corporate priorities to the development of Artificial Intelligence and technological solutions including robots to low value high volume transactions and high value client interaction.

For example, 'chatbots' offer an efficient and scalable service channel for customers. Chatbots are programmes with a conversational user interface, they are designed to simulate conversation with human users, especially over the internet. Apple's 'Siri' and Facebook's 'M' are all version of chatbots that Wiltshire Council customers may have already seen or used. Within the Council this technology could be used for simple customer transactions such as informing customers of their next bin collection or to aid customers in locating or getting information about their closest library, leisure centre or HRC.

We are currently undertaking some collaborative work with BANES looking to exploit the underlying technology behind AI chatbots and to identify where this technology might benefit the organisation and ultimately our customers.

The Council is also aware of development of AI in many fields relating to delivery of its services. In one case, we are taking part in piloting a new idea to replace conventional methods of inspecting and repairing our roads, with totally automated methods involving AI. The Council has received £330k funding from Department for Transport to trial a new idea known as the 'Pothole Spotter'. High resolution cameras mounted on waste collection lorries take still images of our roads which will record any small deterioration. Artificial Intelligence software is being developed to identify defects at a very early stage, which are currently undetectable by human eye or conventional road scanners. Therefore, repairs can be applied much earlier and at much lower costs. Once developed, the technology can be applied to many aspects of the built environment.

Wiltshire Council

Council

11 July 2017

Councillor Brian Mathew, Box and Colerne Division

To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property

Question (17-50)

In the next Core Strategy planning period, will Wiltshire Council look seriously at a new garden town at Hullavington?

With Dyson taking over the airfield, there will be exciting new employment opportunities. And with excellent transport links via the M4 and potentially via the main line railway which passes the site of the old railway station, an opportunity exists to plan and build an outstanding and visionary garden town which would not only be a pleasure to live in for its residents, but could take pressure off the market towns of Malmesbury, Royal Wootton Bassett, Chippenham and further afield, that are finding themselves swamped by inappropriate housing, which is lengthening waiting times to see the doctor, bringing roads to grid lock, shortages of school places, and generally making amenities insufficient for their growing populations.

Response

In the light of Dyson's interest in the airfield and associated buildings for employment use together with the site's heritage status (Conservation Area and Listed Buildings) it is not considered that there is potential for a garden town in this location.

In undertaking the review of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the first consideration would need to be given to the ability for the principal settlements and market towns to grow before other potential opportunities, such as new settlements would be considered - the need to plan for infrastructure necessary to support growth being a paramount consideration.

Wiltshire Council

Council

11 July 2017

Councillor Jon Hubbard, Melksham South Division

To Councillor Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Question (17-52)

Could the cabinet member please tell me who authorised the removal of the trees from the Market Place in Melksham on the eve of the judging of the Town in the South West in Bloom competition, despite assurances given to the organisers that the removal would not take place until after the judging has taken place?

Why was this work permitted to take place and why was it not stopped by the contractor when people told them it was being done in error?

Would the cabinet member like to take this opportunity to apologise to the team of dedicated volunteers who have worked so hard to promote our town and made it look so good, only to see that hard work destroyed by council contractors?

Response

In accordance with Part 4 of the Constitution, a verbal response will be provided at the meeting.

Wiltshire Council

Council

11 July 2017

Councillor Ian Thorn, Calne Central Division

To Councillor Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Question (17-48)

Given the deeply disappointing news that Hills Waste has been given permission by the Planning Inspectorate to retain and extend its materials recycling centre at Lower Compton. Will the council undertake a full review of road infrastructure, and in particular, through the centre of Calne in order to do everything possible to mitigate the impact of this announcement?

Response

The Inspector's decision letter responds in detail to traffic matters and remarks that:

"...The existing traffic along the A4 through Calne is up to the order to 18,000 vehicles per day annual average daily flow of which some 11 per cent or about 2,000 are HGVs. Even if the full 66 additional movements were generated by the development, this would make a trivial and insignificant difference to these figures in traffic terms, especially on the widely accepted assumption that 5 per cent fluctuations are usual in such analyses..." and

"With respect to traffic flow, road safety and sustainable transport, the proposed development avoids conflict with Waste DC Policy WDC11 and CP60, CP61, CP62 and CP65 of the WCS. There is no evidence of any severe residual transport impact, in terms of paragraph 32 of the NPPF"

The Inspector concludes:

"...that the proposed development would generate a very small percentage increase in HGV traffic, having no material adverse impact either on traffic flow, road safety, transport sustainability or, crucially, on air quality within the Calne AQMA. The development would meet all the relevant transport-related protective provisions of the Wiltshire and Swindon Waste DC Policies DPD as a further component of the development plan. More particularly, the proposal would comply with both Core Policy 55 and Core Policy 8 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy regarding air quality in the Calne AQMA.

On the basis that there are no significant traffic impacts forecast as a consequence of this permitted development, there will be no need for any corresponding mitigation.

That said, work on a local transport strategy for Calne is under way as part of developing the Neighbourhood Plan and associated Masterplan.

Wiltshire Council

Council

11 July 2017

Councillor Ernie Clark, Hilperton Division

**To Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning,
Development Management and Property**

Question (17-51)

Who authorised the contents of the letter to first tier authorities dated 29/6, and headed 'Introduction of Electronic Planning Consultations'?

Was it a coincidence that it was sent just two days after the latest date for Notice of Motions to be submitted for the July council meeting?

Response

In accordance with Part 4 of the Constitution, a verbal response will be provided at the meeting.