

**Wiltshire Council**

**Council**

**26 November 2019**

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**From Councillor Ian Thorn, Calne Central Division**

**To Councillor Allison Bucknell, Cabinet Member for Communications,  
Communities, Leisure and Libraries**

**Question (19-36)**

Why did Wiltshire Council fail to make any public statement about the council's decision to vote for the climate emergency motion? Given that this council issues a press release at the opening of an envelope why was such a significant decision by members ignored?

**Response**

February Full Council meeting included the budget setting for Wiltshire Council as well as an extremely high profile item on the council's SEND special schools consultation.

The communications, marketing and events team had recently seen a number of changes in staff and not issuing a press release on the climate change motion was an oversight. There was no malicious intent and the team has since issued a press release on the council's pledge to become a carbon neutral council by 2030 with cross-party support and quotes.

The team is also working to produce a communications plan for this project as it is a key priority for Wiltshire Council moving forwards.

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**From Councillor Ernie Clark, Hilperton Division**

**To Councillor Allison Bucknell, Cabinet Member for Communications,  
Communities, Leisure and Libraries**

**Question (19-37)**

Did Wiltshire Council employ any external body to suggest the new non-strapline Wiltshire Council letterhead? If so, how much did the idea cost? If the idea was from an 'internal' source, roughly what was the cost of this change in officer time?

**Response**

It's been over ten years since Wiltshire Council's logo first launched and the current font does not meet accessibility requirements for our new website. We have used this opportunity to make further changes and refresh the existing Wiltshire Council logo.

Our in-house graphic designer carried out this as part of their business as usual work and only approximately eight hours of officer time were invested in the redesign – a total of cost of just over £100. The refreshed logo is being phased in and changes will be made to branded items as and when required as part of the council's day-to-day business.

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**From Councillor Chris Hurst, Royal Wootton Bassett South**

**To Councillor Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills**

**Question (19-38)**

- i. Does the council take into consideration the quality of school transport, particularly regarding the emissions to which school children are exposed, when they go out to tender on school bus routes?
- ii. I am aware of school children who are exposed to diesel fumes due to the poor quality and old age of the buses provided. This has been raised by local residents and not addressed by the Council.

If this is not a consideration in the tender process, why not?

**Response**

When tendering home to school transport, bus suppliers are asked to provide bids against a robust specification and terms and conditions, which stipulate that buses cannot be older than 15 years of age. In ensuring buses of no more than 15 years of age are contracted, Wiltshire Council is minimising the level of pollutants. Most local authorities do not have this clause included and would accept buses of any age.

Vehicle emissions are not specifically mentioned as part of the tendering process and even if they were, most of our suppliers' fleets contain a range of vehicles of different ages which makes it difficult to specify a specific vehicle to operate the same contract every single day. It would also cause operational difficulties should a specific bus not be available on any one day.

We also insist that bus drivers do not idle their engines unnecessarily whilst on school premises.

Public Service Vehicles (PSV) vehicles are subject to rigorous MOT testing once a year by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and are periodically spot checked at Schools and at their depots by the DVSA and Wiltshire Councils fleet team.

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**From Councillor Chris Hurst, Royal Wootton Bassett South**

**To Councillor Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection and Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills**

Drug trafficking in rural communities is on the rise.

**Question (19-39)**

What action has Wiltshire Council taken to safeguard potentially vulnerable young adults and children from exploitation by County Lines gangs and is the Cabinet member in discussion with Wiltshire's Police and Crime Commissioner and the National County Lines Coordination Centre (NCLCC) about potential abuse in Wiltshire? What resources are the Council deploying in order to tackle the risk of drug exploitation in Wiltshire?

**Response:**

Serious organised violence, which includes links to drugs trafficking, county lines, violence (incl. knife crime) and exploitation remains an agenda of significant concern.

It is a cross-cutting issue thus requires a multi-agency approach.

Wiltshire continues to work to develop its partnership arrangements via the Safeguarding Vulnerable People's Partnership, to enable us to work effectively across the vulnerability agenda for children and adults with the three statutory safeguarding partners; Clinical Commissioning Group, Police and Wiltshire Council. This work supports the ethos that:

*"Children, young people and adults live in families and local communities; these can be sources of support and safety or of danger and risk. Our approach to safeguarding and protecting our community is focused around where people live and with whom – it's an approach which has 'Think Family, Think Community' at its heart".*

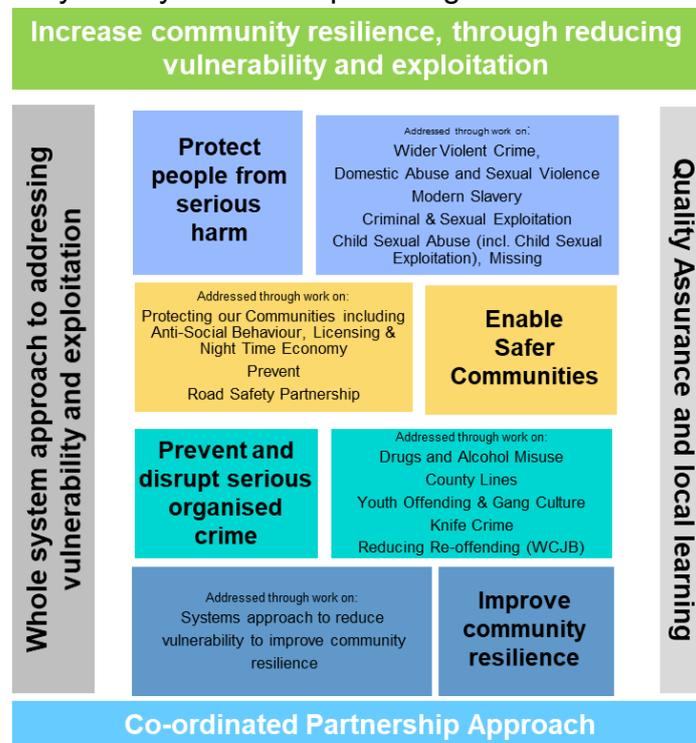
Under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act Community Safety Partnerships are statutorily responsible for reducing crime and disorder, substance misuse and re-offending in each local authority area.

The Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership (WCSP) is responsible for compliance with the statutory duties and responsibilities set out in this Act as well as those set out in the Police and Justice Act 2006, and in subsequent Home Office regulations and Acts.

The WCSP, as a partnership group, co-ordinates community safety activity in Wiltshire at a strategic level. The WCSP is responsible for delivering against the priorities set out in the Wiltshire Police Control Strategy, and for delivering outcomes which relate to the prevention and reduction of crime and reoffending, fear of crime, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, and harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse.

Delivery is co-ordinated against the WCSP strategy (attached at Appendix 3) and the framework.

Wiltshire's Community Safety Partnership Strategic Framework:



The strategic framework represented above identifies the thematic priorities for the Community Safety Partnership. The work governed and delivered through the partnership is underpinned by the adoption of the 'vulnerability framework'. This approach focuses on 'prevention' and tackling root causes, reducing the risks and exposure to negative experiences from happening in the first place. Acknowledging there will be occasions where 'it will happen', work will seek to improve resilience, to enable both individuals and communities to be better equipped and skilled to deal with adversity and make healthier life choices.

The effective partnership arrangements have enabled Wiltshire to deliver on its commitment to developing a 'systems approach to addressing serious violence'. Wiltshire has established a Violent Crime Executive, a sub group of the Community

Safety Partnership. This brings together colleagues from education, policing, health, criminal justice and emergency justice to deliver pan-Wiltshire, multi-agency strategies to tackle violent crime and Serious and Organised Crime (SOC). (Powerpoint slides are attached at Appendix 3)

To further support this area of work, there is a drugs and alcohol board, a sub group of the WCSP. The group aims to work collaboratively to prevent the risks and impact caused by substance misuse. They will promote harm reduction in relation to substance misuse within Wiltshire. It aims to raise awareness of harm reduction and recovery procedures within the county.

The draft drugs and alcohol strategy below (also available at Appendix 3), has been developed following the completion of a comprehensive health needs assessment for the lifecourse of drugs and alcohol.

Specifically, criminal exploitation of young people in Wiltshire is an increasing concern. Nationally, there has been a shift towards younger victims and younger perpetrators of serious violence and it is often inferred that county lines/ exploitation are a driving force responsible for the national change. Police data identifies between Nov 2018 and June 2019, 88 young people in Wiltshire were considered as being exploited or at risk of being involved in the supply of crack cocaine and heroin. We are aware of dangerous drug networks targeting our young people, staged 'robberies' to get young people entrenched in drug supply and cannabis being supplied as a means to develop 'debt bondage' forcing young people into exploitation.

In response to the identified concerns, we launched our Vulnerable Adolescent Contextual Safeguarding panel (VACS) in February 2019. The panel is multi-agency and adopts a strategic focus around young people being sexually or criminally exploited (CSE or CCE), missing or at risk of going missing, or displaying significantly risky or concerning behaviours. The aim for the panel is to build county-wide intelligence and assist in informing our contextual safeguarding interventions for individual and groups of young people aged 10-17. Key priorities for the panel include utilising information from individual referrals to inform intelligence, planning and information sharing; analysis from the Criminal Exploitation Analyst to identify emerging concerns across our county; exploration of relationships and associations of groups of young people coming to attention, and identification of options for interventions from a contextual safeguarding perspective. It also provides oversight and scrutiny of all cases of identified CCE/ CSE, trafficked, or missing adolescents – including mapping concerning associations and/ or locations.

This work is informed by our partnership with the University of Bedfordshire, having been successful in our application to be part of their contextual safeguarding 'scale up project'. The Contextual Safeguarding Scale-Up Project (CSSU) will:

- Create an operational Contextual Safeguarding system in Wiltshire
- Utilise learning from Wiltshire and other participating sites to identify recommendations for practice, policy, regulation and legislation in England and Wales

- Identify and disseminate the shared components of Contextual Safeguarding systems in different geographical areas
- Ensure young people, parents and practitioners contribute to the design and development of Contextual Safeguarding

The project is a three-year project, running from May 2019 – April 2022, with delivery split into three annual milestones:

*Year 1 Create:* The University of Bedfordshire (UoB) team will assess the existing response to extra-familial risks in participating sites against the approach developed in Hackney. The UoB team will work with a group of local professionals in each site to create their own 'on paper' version of a Contextual Safeguarding system noting many differences between each new test site and Hackney as well as any similarities. Young people, parents and strategic decision-makers will also be engaged in the design and proposal.

*Year 2 Test:* The University of Bedfordshire team will support a site implementation team to test the 'on-paper' version of Contextual Safeguarding created for the site in Year 1. Approximately three formal pilots will be run to test the assessment of, and intervention with, an extra-familial contexts (Tier 2 CS) – in addition to gradual testing of approaches that draw context into work with children and families (Tier 1 CS). Learning from the pilots will be used to revise/adapt the design of the Contextual Safeguarding system for the site

*Year 3 Embed:* The University of Bedfordshire team will support a site implementation team to embed the Contextual Safeguarding system that has been created – throughout children's services and amongst multi-agency partners. They will embed a self-monitoring and evaluation framework for ongoing learning. The version created will be published as an online toolkit to facilitate national learning and take-up.

### **Response in relation to discussion with the PCC and National County Lines Coordination Centre:**

The action above is being developed across the partnership which includes Wiltshire Police and the Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner; both of which are members of the Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership. The Police are also one of the safeguarding partners on the SVPP. Both Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner are represented on the Families and Children's Transformation Programme which is leading our Contextual Safeguarding response in Wiltshire.

Furthermore we were recently involved in the Wiltshire Police Peer Review with the National County Lines Coordination Centre.

We are delivering an innovative and proactive response to the increasing concerns of exploited young people.

## **Response in relation to resources:**

Working with the University of Bedfordshire 4 practitioners are trained to be contextual safeguarding trainers and training is now being rolled out across the local authority and partnership.

Working under the umbrella of the Safeguarding Vulnerable People's Partnership and offer training on adolescents at risk, child sexual and child criminal exploitation. This is available across the partnership and is designed to improve understanding of and early identification young people at risk of exploitation and/or county lines, as well as provide advice, support and practical guidance on appropriate interventions. Sessions on county lines and exploitation have also been delivered to GP's, schools and magistrates, aimed to assist identification and promote positive interventions for young people and their families.

We are developing our Young People Service – this is a specialist service targeted at working with and engaging those adolescents and young people most at risk of exploitation – it incorporates the Youth Offending Team and the Emerald service and ensures that our service is targeted at working with those young people most at risk of exploitation. The Emerald team and Youth Offending Team are now positioned within the same service to ensure there is a cohesive and consistent approach. Social workers will shortly be joining the team. Social workers within the Support and Safeguarding Service are case holding young people at risk or victims of exploitation.

Staff have been trained in the use of the national referral mechanism and briefings given to managers across Families and Children's Services on the risks of and evidence of exploitation and county lines in Wiltshire

Mapping hotspots has commenced across the county and we are engaged with schools, youth engagement officers and community groups to identify areas/ young people most at risk and proactively target these. Working in collaboration with Police, particularly the dedicated crime team we have helped inform criminal investigations to proactively target dangerous drug networks, whilst providing support to the young people involved.

As part of our work and through VACS between February and August 19, we recorded 55 young people on the National County Lines Criminal Exploitation and Vulnerability Tracker and implemented a contextual partnership approach to safeguarding and protecting our young people. The tracking work also enabled disruption via Closure Orders, Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWN's) to be issued and proactive targeting of the perpetrators exploiting the young people of Wiltshire, as well as those trafficked into the area. We have been working very closely with police colleagues targeting specific locations and areas of concern as well as focussing upon perpetrators and dangerous drug networks.

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**From Councillor Chris Hurst, Royal Wootton Bassett South**

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

The recent increase in season ticket parking costs has caused considerable concern in a number of our market towns. Some residents will have to find up to £100 a year extra to pay to park their car in Royal Wootton Bassett.

This staggering increase (between 34 and 44% for a year in Royal Wootton Bassett) takes no account of household incomes, residents ability to pay or the value of their property. This cost increase is not progressive or fair.

I presented a petition of local residents opposing the increases in 2018 to the cabinet member via the Area Board.

**Question (19-40)**

How can the Cabinet member now justify the increases in season ticket costs?

**Response**

In order to address ongoing operational and financial pressures, and to fund a number of parking technology and operational improvements as well as public transport, seven possible charging options for car parking were included in a public consultation that was approved by Cabinet on 12 September 2017.

The petition received in off-street residents permits parking scheme at Wood Street and Borough Fields Car Parks was responded to in February 2018 and it was explained the scheme would be phased out due to it being a historic arrangement put in place by the former district councils and resulted in unfairness in charges elsewhere as the scheme was not available to the vast majority of residents in a similar position.

The price increase of the season ticket was consulted on extensively in 2017 and following this consultation it was decided to implement a two-step increase, the first being in November 2018 and the second in November 2019 rather than one larger increase in 2018.

Whilst the Council fully understands the price increase for season tickets in this area is considerable, it ensures all residents across the county are treated fairly and the scheme is self-funding.

