

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

21 July 2020

Public Participation

From Andrew Nicolson

To Councillor Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste, and Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Investment

"Context:

The new Transport for Quality of Life report, "*The carbon impact of the national roads programme*", released on 10 July 2020 ([attached](#)) highlights what we already knew:

- Of all transport policies, new road building is the worst for carbon reduction.
- The future mass switch to electric cars is not soon enough or green enough: there will not be enough green energy to go round,
- Road construction itself will add too much to the carbon budget,
- New roads generate induced traffic, lead to more CO₂, travel-intensive development and a car-dependent lifestyle.
- New roads use up countryside - in the case of Future Chippenham, Wiltshire's own "family silver" of County Farms - and harm biodiversity.

A green transport policy compatible with Wiltshire's Climate Emergency declarations means rail, bus, cycling, walking, instead of new or 'improved' major roads.

The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Economic Partnership (SWLEP's) *Rail Strategy Report*, published a year ago ([attached](#)) had many positive recommendations including Ashton Park Railway Station to service the Ashton Park residential development, the White Horse Business Park and to absorb the outer catchment of Trowbridge station, with a deliverability of 5 out of 5.

Question (P20-11)

Relevant to the Yarnbrook-West Ashton Relief Road or alternatives,

(a) Will Wiltshire Council now declare a moratorium on further A350 etc. road schemes and instead bring forward the SWLEP Rail Strategy, including the Ashton Park Railway Station, and

(b) What recommendations of the SWLEP Rail Strategy, including "exploring the case for a station at Ashton Park in more detail and undertaking early stage development work on it" has Wiltshire Council taken up or further investigated, since it was published in July 2019?

Response

(a) No. Major road schemes, including those proposed on the A350, are subject to a business case process prescribed by the Department for Transport (DfT) which

includes consideration of environmental and social factors. The SWLEP Rail Strategy, together with the emerging Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body's Rail Strategy and other relevant information, will feed into the development of a forthcoming Local Transport Plan Wiltshire Rail Strategy.

(b) The council has submitted four proposals to the DfT's Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund: Devizes Parkway; Melksham Single Track Improvement; Westbury Station Hub; and Restoring Secondary Services on the GWML. The Devizes Parkway application was one of only 10 successful submissions to round one of the Ideas Fund. Subject to available resources, an application for an Ashton Park Railway Station could be considered for submission to the third round of the Ideas Fund.

With regard to the planning application for the development at Ashton Park, there is nothing in the Wiltshire core strategy Ashton Park template that requires a railway station to be provided.

The planning application for the development of this site was considered by the Strategic Planning Committee in 2018, who resolved to grant the scheme subject to a Section 106 agreement. This proposal does not include reference to a rail station (The site is only a mile from the existing station at Trowbridge and no more than 3 from the railhead at Westbury).

Question (P20-12)

Relevant to the Chippenham Urban Expansion distributor road and traffic forecasting,

(a) Does the fact that it intends the development to be along Garden Town or Village principles, where employment is to be local and driving the least chosen transport mode, mean that Wiltshire Council has forecast lower car use per household than in the standard model for trip generation, and

(b) Will Wiltshire Council still use Gov't WebTag guidelines, the National Trip-End Model, existing regional and local traffic models, etc., or will it instead monitor emerging post-Pandemic and post-Brexit traffic patterns, and base or revise its traffic and value-for-money projections on these?"

Response

(a) The following reflects the proposed Homes England Part Funded Chippenham Futures Scheme, rather than previously approved Urban Extension at Hill Corner Road (12/00560/OUT) providing the Northern Distributor Road (18/01102/REM)].

Trip rates per dwelling for the Chippenham Urban Extension and indeed those development sites to be considered in the Local Plan Review, will need to be robust to ensure the full potential unfettered impact of development is considered at sensitive areas of the highway network, such as M4 Junction 17. This assessment is important to ensure that Wiltshire Council receive the support of our delivery partners, Highways England, for works that affect the SRN and for capacity enhancements along the A350. However, following the assessment of likely worst

case traffic generation, measures will need to be assessed to support reduced driver mode share and out-commuting. Such measures will include the delivery and implementation of local employment, retail, education, health and community infrastructure opportunities, enhanced infrastructure to support active travel, new and improved public transport interchanges and service provision and communications technology. These measures will aim to capture and retain trips within the local area, provide active travel infrastructure for short length trips to enhance health benefits and provide a realistic alternative to the car for medium to long length commuting trips.

The trip generations used will therefore consider the likely strategic capacity enhancements which may be necessary to accommodate development with limited traffic generation mitigation, but further consider those on-site deliverables required to reduce driver mode share and capture trips locally.

(b) The business case to secure Homes England funding for the Eastern Distributor Road was predicated by WebTag as a requirement of Homes England. However, as part of the Local Plan Review assessment Wiltshire Council's term contractor Atkins is considering a series of scenarios, that whilst yet to be fully defined will include a return to normal traffic environmental conditions post Covid and a series of 'new norms' capturing Covid patterns of increased active travel, working from home patterns and increased home delivery. These scenarios will be used to define value-for-money parameters for highway and sustainable transport measures to support the Local Plan Review and will be used thereafter to define policy direction. The impact of Brexit may also be added to the scenario testing.

With specific regard to the Chippenham Urban Expansion, the Homes England Business Case will not be re-tested and WebTag will not form a critical element in the planning determination of the scheme. Wiltshire Transport Planning and Development Control officers will however be very mindful of potential 'new norms' and will seek to address and capture these through design of the urban fabric of the scheme.

Item 6 - Public Participation

From Ros Edwards

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing and Communities

Question (P20-13)

How do local food suppliers fit in to Wiltshire Council's recovery plan? Could a local food map/website be considered?

Local producers and independent food outlets have been very important for food security during this crisis, often being able to continue to source products that the supermarkets seem to have had difficulty obtaining. They have shown themselves able to adapt and innovate quickly and make provision for the most vulnerable in our society with new ordering and collection/ delivery systems. Most food in the world is eaten locally, although about 20% is now traded globally. However, in the UK we now import almost 50% of our food.

Increasing local food availability:

- enables fresh, seasonal, flavoursome and nutritious food to become more readily accessible
- keeps money in the local economy and supports the green economy
- increases employment and self-employment locally.....providing inspiration and creating opportunities for young people
- enhances food security in an unpredictable world
- facilitates traceability and accountability
- helps reduce the trade deficit and a short supply chain increases the vitality of local communities

Although the issue of food miles is very complex (made much more complex/ misleading by all the dimensions which are omitted from the carbon footprinting tools), most major reports on environmentally sustainable food advocate sourcing food as close to home as possible. The strengthening of local food distribution networks that we have seen over recent months is something which will hopefully continue.

Proposals:

- 1. A WC Local Food Map/ Website could help support the local economy - as a resource for local people and visitors to the area, who are often really interested in finding local food. It would also be a useful resource for those in the hospitality and retail sector who would like to source more local food and drink.**

Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon (CFBoA) developed a map and website for the BoA area with a local magazine in 2014. We had about 100 producers and outlets on it. However, unfortunately we had to discontinue about three years ago as we did not have anyone with the time and necessary skills to continue to monitor and develop the website. **It was felt that it would be much better if councils could develop such a resource. (Perhaps now is the time?)**

Accessibility and organic produce symbols were included. There are a range of ideas from our experience that I could share, if wished. CFBoA has circulated a list of local food availability, updated every couple of weeks, during the Covid crisis, which people have fed back has been helpful. This and other sources could be drawn on initially to start up a new directory/ website.

1. **Provenance logo** - in the New Forest last year I bought a food product which had a very attractive New Forest logo, which seemed a really good idea, enhancing the sense of provenance and 'character of place'. Not aware that Wiltshire has one. What about a white horse?

Response

The Council has limited influence on the proportion of food imported versus grown locally.

During the early stages of the COVID-19 response, Wiltshire Council identified farming and food production as a critical sector for support. This support included:

- Establishing clear lines of communication with key farming organisations - CLA, NFU, TFA (Tenant Farmers Association)
- Helping eligible farming businesses gain grant funding
- Ongoing contact with farmers looking to diversify, providing business support

Following the initial response, the Covid-19 Recovery Plan sets Wiltshire Council's strategic recovery objectives, which are to:

- ensure appropriate interventions to address inequalities and build social mobility
- ensure the effects of deprivation are considered and interventions developed
- enable appropriate interventions to support carbon reduction

The plan seeks to build a solid foundation so that Wiltshire emerges as a healthier, equitable and more sustainable place to live and work based on the experience of COVID-19 lockdown.

In addition, the Recovery Plan sets out a plan for economic recovery which is both place led and sector led, with farming one of the sectors identified for support. Both the NFU and CLA have standing invitations to the Economic Partnership Cell which informs the wider economic recovery.

The Economic Recovery Board will be producing an economic recovery plan for Wiltshire which will be adopted by the sRCG in late Summer/early Autumn.

Our work with suppliers currently demonstrates significant interest in sourcing more of our food from the UK going forward, particularly from food processors. We will continue to work with our supply chains to try and identify potential local links, however these are decisions for individual businesses.

Wiltshire Council would be pleased to consider the learning from Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon on food mapping. We will be encouraging a focus on shopping locally as shoppers return to the high street. We had previously developed initial consideration around a provenance scheme for Salisbury's Economic Recovery as part of the Salisbury Brand Positioning work, and will continue to develop our work in this area. It will be critical to ensure that any provenance scheme can respond to individual place identity as well as building on our Wiltshire links. However this work is one strand of many we will be looking at as we map out how our resources will be best deployed to assist Wiltshire in its economic recovery.

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Item 7 – Wiltshire Council’s Response to the Climate Emergency (Carbon Reduction) and Business Plan Update

From Katharine Wales

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing and Communities

Question (P20-14)

Tree and hedge planting for carbon capture and nature recovery

It has been widely reported that the Covid 19 Lockdown has demonstrated to the wider public the importance of nature to the environment, food production and human well-being. In the 12 March 2020 budget the Government announced £640M for 30,000 hectares of tree planting between 2020 and 2025; an announcement somewhat diluted by widely reported continuous failure to meet earlier tree planting targets in Britain and offset by substantial mature tree destruction activity for road building and development.

In the face of the lack of interest and initiative from landowners that frequently confronts community groups trying to secure planting sites on clearly marginal farmland, what is Wiltshire Council doing to:

- a. Lead the way and set an example by vigorous protection of ALL existing trees and woodlands (regardless of ownership)?
- b. Lead the way and set an example by planting new trees and hedges on its own land?
- c. Apply leverage to farmers and other landowners to provide marginal land (including field edges) for carbon capture, especially by the restitution of hedges and trees?

Response

The Council is preparing a Woodland Strategy to support the retention, management and planting of trees to improve coverage across Wiltshire. Vigorous protection of all trees is not always practical or desirable from an environmental perspective, for example diseased trees will need to be removed and the practice of coppicing can assist with biodiversity enhancement.

A partnership approach will be needed to deliver the Woodland Strategy and involve collaboration between, for example: farmers, landowners, the development industry, agencies (Environment Agency, Natural England, Forestry England) and the third sector (Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, National Trust and Woodland Trust).

It is anticipated that the Council as part of the implementation of the Woodland Strategy will sign post farmers and landowners to guidance and funding to support planting of field margins.

On its own land, the Council carries out maintenance of trees in order to keep them safe, and replants trees as required. The generally narrow verge widths on most roads, the visibility requirements for drivers and the presence of underground services usually limits the potential for additional tree planting within the highway.

Requests from local community groups to plant trees on Council land outside the highway are looked at on their individual merits with a “right tree in the right place” approach being taken. The Council intends to develop a tree planting strategy for council owned land in due course, which will take the lead from the overarching Woodland Strategy.

Item 7 – Wiltshire Council’s Response to the Climate Emergency (Carbon Reduction) and Business Plan Update

From Katharine Wale

To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Investment

Question (P20-15)

Sustainable communities

There are 261 Parish and Town Councils and meetings in Wiltshire. Each one, on behalf of their community and their environment has a stake in the actions that Wiltshire Council takes in the Post Covid 19 recovery and in the carbon reduction programme.

Many councils, but by no means all, regardless of, or because of, Covid 19 are trying to improve their sustainability, be more climate friendly, care for nature and be resilient in the face of colossal change. In doing so they will contribute to the Wiltshire Council aspiration to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Some communities will have their ambition thwarted by reluctant councillors and ambitious councillors thwarted by the lack of appropriate funding. Either way, there appears to be no clear leadership from Wiltshire Council, and no cohesion across the various town and parish councils. Collaboration and communication is ad-hoc, based on happy accident and who knows who; the wheel may be re-invented many times over, wasting resources and missing opportunities.

When should town and parish councils expect to see leadership from Wiltshire Council Cabinet, forging an intrinsic link between the Covid 19 and climate and environmental recoveries, driving collaboration with (and between) smaller councils to make communities resilient and sustainable, to reduce carbon emissions and allow nature to recover? In particular, what level of collaboration and partnership can communities and specialist groups expect from the Wiltshire Council Cabinet via the new Wiltshire Council Climate Change Team?

Response

The Council will be developing a Climate Strategy over the coming year in order to meet its commitment to seek to become carbon neutral by 2030. A key part of the strategy will be to engage with parish and town councils and local environmental groups on this agenda. The Council is already supporting many town and parish councils with their neighbourhood plans and there is considerable interest from local communities in how these plans can be developed to help contribute towards the climate agenda.

It is anticipated that the Green Infrastructure and Woodland Strategies that are in preparation will provide a framework for local communities to better understand how they can target their activities. This includes where trees should be planted to

reinforce existing Green Infrastructure and rebuild links between isolated areas to support wildlife corridors; as well as supporting carbon capture, reducing surface water run-off and assist with flooding, and improving access to woodland and green spaces for people. Implementation of the strategies will involve a collaborative approach between all partners.

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Public Participation

From Lily Nicolson

To Councillor Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste, and Councillor Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Investment

Dear Councillors,

New roads and greenfield development increase greenhouse gas emissions, harm the natural environment and use up the countryside . The relief road and major new development East and South of Chippenham would use up Wiltshire's own 'family silver', the County Farms. Please read the CPRE report I have [attached](#), which says, "*All councils should promote the value of their county farms, their potential to help address the climate and ecological emergencies and enable them to deliver wider public benefits to meet the needs of their community*".

Also, after the COVID-19 pandemic and the Brexit transition we do not know everything about future travel patterns, but there will be:

- Less commuting and more home-working
- More of the fast rise of e-bikes
- Less traffic via channel ports including Poole, on the A350.

Reliable new traffic forecasts and the business cases for new roads are impossible. The Government's housing, planning and transport policies, modelling and guidance will be out of date, and anyway they already push councils into plans that can't help us meet our Global Warming aims. My questions are:

Question (P20-16)

Will you review and adopt a policy of preserving and enhancing your County Farms in the area, or are you set on giving the tenants notice to quit and using the land for roads and profitable housing and commercial development?

Response

Cabinet on 24 March 2020 delegated authority to the Head of Estates and Development to negotiate and agree surrender terms with tenants of Council owned farms affected by the Future Chippenham project having given appropriate notice to terminate to all tenants at the earliest possible opportunity, notably in September 2020 and March 2021. This decision was taken prior to the full impact of the Covid-19 outbreak being known. There are currently no plans to serve any notices to quit in September 2020 and the service of any future notices will follow a review of the

timing, circumstances and risks of such an action to both the Future Chippenham project and the management of the Council's County Farms portfolio. The County Farms portfolio continues to be managed in accordance with the Rural Estate Asset Management Framework which was effective from 1st September 2019.

Question (P20-17)

Are you going to push back urgently on the Government to revise its planning and transport policies, modelling and guidance and to urgently promote and fund transport policies and programmes that contribute to Climate Emergency goals instead of standing in their way?

Response

The council regularly engages with Government through a variety of channels to highlight and discuss issues and concerns.

Earlier this year, the Department for Transport (DfT) published the first stage of its Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP). The council will engage with the DfT as this process progresses and ultimately the final TDP will provide a key steer in the development of Wiltshire's fourth local transport plan.

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Public Participation

From Louise Weissell

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council

Question (P20-18)

Will you give at least the same level of human resources to the Climate Emergency as you have to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown emergency, and if not why not?

Response

The Council has allocated a range of dedicated budgets for carbon reduction as detailed in the report for this agenda item. A Climate Strategy will be developed over the coming year which will embed the Council's response to the climate emergency in the delivery of Council services.

Question (P20-19)

Do you intend to join with other Councils and push back on central government to urgently revise its planning and transport policies and guidance and to urgently promote and fund land use and transport policies and programmes that contribute to Climate Emergency goals?

Response

The council regularly engages with other councils and Government through a variety of channels to highlight and discuss issues and concerns.

Earlier this year, the Department for Transport (DfT) published the first stage of its Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP). The council will engage with the DfT as this process progresses and ultimately the final TDP will provide a key steer in the development of Wiltshire's fourth local transport plan.

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Item 6 - Public Participation

From Cate Watson – Royal Wootton Bassett Environment Group

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

Question (P20-20)

The UK has lost about 97% of its wildflower meadows. Bees, pollinators and other invertebrates that we rely upon to produce our food are becoming increasingly endangered. Road verges offer a simple and effective solution to counter these losses if they are managed as habitats for wildflowers and invertebrates. The environmental charity Plantlife works with councils all over the UK to advise and help them manage their road verges to benefit wildlife. They have published an extensive management guide for councils (please see summary of guidelines below).

Would the council adopt Plantlife's road verge management guidelines for all rural verges in Wiltshire? Would they be open to working with Plantlife to create a management plan for all residential verges that the council is currently responsible for?

Response

The council has a multitude of conservation and shelterbelt areas, Protected Roadside Verges, Wildflower Protected Roadside Verges and County Wildlife Sites all providing for their flora and fauna benefit.

The council this year is undertaking a number of wildflower trials to the Plantlife guidance.

The council currently cuts rural areas once per annum, moving to the Plantlife guidance will require additional traffic movements and greater carbon production in rural areas. However, the rural grass cutting service is reviewed annually to see how environmental improvements can be made. There is a careful balance between encouraging wildlife and increased carbon with the management that the Plantlife guidance details.

New arrangements are being considered for the main rural cut for the 2021/ 22 season to reduce the cutting during the flowering season, with the outcome being subject to the review findings.

(From Questioner) Summary of main points from Plantlife's road verge guidelines

- Health and safety comes first with verges maintained as necessary to preserve sight-lines for drivers or other road-safety purposes.
- Annual mowing is essential on verges to create a wildflower habitat and increase biodiversity. If the grass is left uncut for a single year, it will start to turn into scrub and woodland.
- If it's possible do only one cut of the road verge. Mow between mid-July and the end of September, when seeds have been shed. Plants need to complete their full life cycle each year – i.e. be allowed to grow, flower and set seed – in order to thrive and produce nectar and pollen for insects.
- If it's necessary to do two cuts, then either cut the width of the verge between mid-July and the end of September. Then cut once more before Christmas. This is the ideal option to conserve and enhance wild flowers, as it mimics the pattern of traditional meadow management. Or cut the full width of the verge as early as possible, during February and March. This is before most verge plants flower and it won't disturb ground-nesting birds. Cut the full verge again during September and October. This slightly later date for the second cut allows plants that were cut earlier in the year sufficient time to flower and
- Gather and remove cuttings wherever possible to reduce nutrients from the soil. Wildflowers need impoverished soil to grow. It also removes the 'thatch' of dead vegetation, exposing underlying soil and giving seeds room to germinate.
- If possible on wide verges, mix up the levels of plants. Different plants, insects and animals require different conditions. If there is enough space, a mixture of long and short grass will benefit invertebrates and support more species and can be cut on a rotation of every 2/3 years. Even if the whole width of the verge is cut, some long grass left standing at the back of the verge can provide essential habitat.
- Plantlife only encourages seeding and planting as a last resort. It's better to leave verges alone and let species colonise them naturally. In this way, they will retain the local character of our flora which makes our countryside so special and these species are often better suited to the local climate and soil conditions, which might not be the case with the flowers in a seed mix. If sowing is essential, then try to establish the type of grassland that would be natural for your area; if possible, use seed collected from a nearby natural grassland. A small quantity of introduced seeds may be all that is needed to allow wild flowers to increase and prosper.

For more information, please read the guidelines here <https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign/management-guidelines>

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Public Participation – Item 7 – Climate Emergency

From Bill Jarvis

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council

Question (P20-21)

The latest report to Cabinet on addressing the Climate Emergency proposed that you will invest in 1,000 Council houses over the next 10 years, all of which will be passivhaus or better.

You are planning a pilot of 2 houses.

You give no idea of when the remainder will be built.

1. The number proposed may only deliver 10 Council houses per year. This number of Council houses appears to be completely inadequate for the demand in the County. How do you propose that the shortfall is made up?
2. Can you give a timescale when the pilot houses will be built and the delivery schedule for the remainder?

Response

The Council intend to deliver 1000 homes over the next ten years, through a mix of direct construction and purchase of affordable housing, including via s106 developer contributions. We are working to an average of circa 100 homes per annum, but due to development time lag will see the first homes delivered towards the end of 2021/22 financial year.

The pilot scheme will be started this financial year and available for occupation early in financial year 2021/22. Delivery schedule for the remainder is subject to change due to development factors influencing the delivery times, but we are aiming to deliver the full 1000 homes by the end of 2030/31.

Question (P20-22)

I understand that Council houses can be bought from the Council under certain conditions

Can you confirm that, if these houses are sold on under right to buy or similar scheme, the receipts from the sales will be ring fenced to provide more Council housing of the same type or better in the future?

Response

I can confirm that any receipts received from the sale of a council property through right to buy will be recycled into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This is a ring fenced budget for housing which can only be used for the benefit of council tenants. The capital receipts will be recycled into the HRA account and how the capital money is best utilised is discussed on a regular basis with the housing board and where appropriate Cabinet. It is a priority for us to maximise all available opportunities to build as many council homes as possible and all new builds will be developed to the highest environmental standards possible (this may be Zero Carbon or Passivhaus, but can be impacted by the orientation limitations).

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Item 7 - Wiltshire Council's Response to the Climate Emergency (Carbon Reduction) and Business Plan Update

From Eva McHugh

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing and Communities and Councillor Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Question (P20-23)

How do you plan on incentivising green transport options to encourage Wiltshire residents to make the swap from using their cars in order to meet your target of being Carbon neutral by 2030?

Response

Earlier this year, the Department for Transport (DfT) published the first stage of its Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP). This set out the following strategic priorities:

- Accelerating modal shift to public and active transport
- Decarbonisation of road vehicles
- Decarbonising how we get our goods
- Place-based solutions for emissions reduction
- UK as a hub for green transport technology and innovation
- Reducing carbon in a global economy

The council will engage with the DfT as the TDP process progresses and ultimately the final TDP will provide a key steer in the development of Wiltshire's fourth local transport plan.

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Public Participation

From Mike d'Apice

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council

Question (P20-24)

Yesterday the USA's National Atmospheric and Oceanographic Agency published the monthly global Surface Temperature for June 2020:

June 2020 was the third warmest June, after 2019 and 2016, in the 141 year record at + 0.92°C (1.66°F) above the 20th Century average for June. (The Land only temperature was 1.29°C (2.32°F) above 20th Century average.).

The year 2020 to Jun is the 2nd warmest, after 2016: The January–June 2020 global land and ocean surface temperature was 1.07°C (1.93°F) above the 20th century average of 13.5°C (56.3°F). However much of central and eastern Europe and northern Asia experienced temperatures that were 2.0°C (3.6°F) above average or higher.

Not surprisingly given the increased capacity of a warmer atmosphere to hold more water evaporated from the warming oceans and then transport it over the continents, precipitation anomalies are also increasingly significant as exemplified:

- a. In January SE Brazil experienced floods displacing over 30,000 and killing 70.
- b. Last week across southern and central Japan some 3.6 million people were advised to evacuate to safe areas but the death toll already exceeds 57.
- c. Yesterday world media reported that 33 rivers in China are now at record levels, 2.25 million people have already been evacuated and 141 have been killed or remain missingand it is still raining.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/13/china-floods-wartime-measures-brought-in-to-tackle-worst-deluge-in-decades>

The rise in surface temperature is directly caused by the rise in the concentration of Green House Gases (GHG), mainly CO₂, in the atmosphere. The NOAA's ESRL report the CO₂ level at Mauna Loa for June was 416.39 parts per million (ppm) compared to 413.93ppm in Jun 2019, this despite the reduction of some CO₂ emissions attributable to CV-19. The Global average for Apr (The latest month available from consolidation of worldwide records.) was 413.95ppm compared to 411.09ppm in April 2019 a rise of 2.86 ppm.

The NOAA's 'Estimated CO₂ Daily Global Seasonal Cycle and Trend (ppm)', which evens out the seasonal fluctuation between the Northern Hemisphere's summer growing season and the winter, has now reached 412.88ppm. This compares to

410.17 on 13th Jul 2019, a rise of 2.71ppm. Were this increase solely attributable to burning crude oil, just under 2,500,000,000 tonnes, 2.5 Giga tonnes (Gt) or about 2.75 cubic kilometres, of crude oil would have been needed (Assuming none of the resulting CO2 dissolves in the oceans -it does!). However the other GHGs contribute over 30% to the total warming effect responsible for the increase in temperature, so if their contribution to the observed rise in the global temperature was also provided by burning crude oil, an additional cubic kilometre would be needed.

The IPCC advised in the “2018 Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C” that only 420Gt of CO2 remained in the Carbon Budget to give a 66% chance of limiting temperature increase to 1.5°C. Annual emissions in 2017 were 42Gt CO2 and have continued to rise until CV19. The remaining budget will be consumed within this decade without emission reductions of >7% every year. 2020 emissions are forecast to equal 2019s, not fall, requiring faster reductions in the remaining years.

NOAA's Jun Report is at: <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/sotc/global/202006> and the IPCC's 2018 Special report is at: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/spm/>

Given that Wiltshire is subject to the effects of exactly the same trends and while they may not yet be resulting in catastrophic flooding, it is now increasingly likely that insufficient action has, is or will be taken by national Governments including our own to avert a temperature rise well in excess of 2 degrees C in the next decade. This will result in precipitation rates well in excess of Environment Agency's current plans, accompanied by storms of increased frequency and intensity leading to brief but damaging weather events.

While the Council is addressing the immediate consequences of the ongoing CV-19 pandemic and presumably preparing for any impacts anticipated under BREXIT, what if any longterm planning assumptions is the Council explicitly making in preparation for the now seemingly inevitable consequences of Climate Change that will impact Wiltshire residents from 2030 if not sooner?

Response

The Council will be developing a Climate Strategy over the coming year in order to meet its commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030. The Climate Strategy will also consider the steps the Council needs to take to be prepared for climate change impacts in Wiltshire. Modelling previously carried out by the council with UKCIP showed that Wiltshire will experience hotter drier summers and milder wetter winters due to climate change, therefore we welcome the Government's very recent [announcement](#) that it will invest £5.2bn nationally to tackle flooding.

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Item 6 - Public Participation

From Jeremy Wire

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

Question (P20-25)

In light of the devastation Covid-19 has brought to the capacity of the bus network, do you plan to rethink the conveyance of the public at an acceptable expense to you and them, with due consideration to their amenity; and if so, what factors will you bring under consideration?

Response

The public transport network across Wiltshire was operating with only 5% of its usual passenger numbers in the early part of the crisis. Levels have begun to creep back up in the past 4 weeks and I am pleased to say that those passengers who have used the bus network in Wiltshire have been key workers, supporting the crisis and members of the public who have no other alternative but to use public transport.

The public bus industry is almost completely reliant currently on government grants which are being paid in lieu of fares.

Wiltshire has been successful in securing £671k of government grant, which we plan to use to further support the local bus network and consider where we can use it to improve services in some areas. We are also waiting on a further grant to improve our demand responsive transport offer operating in the vale of Pewsey.

Staff have also been working hard to deliver active travel around the county, which has helped to support the reduced capacity on public transport by providing a walking and cycling alternative to the bus for those who are able to.

We are in continued dialogue with our bus suppliers and we will work with them to understand passengers future travel habits, once restrictions have been lifted and review how public transport is provided in line with our business plan.

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

21 July 2020

Public Participation – Item 7 – Climate Emergency

From Mel Moden

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council

Question (P20-26)

I hope that it is becoming clear to the council that the Climate Emergency can't be tucked away in a convenient box with a tick next to it, and forgotten about. It is in fact, an integral part of all council business, and needs to be treated as such.

Consequently, I am following up on questions from the February meeting, to which I have received no response. I'll be charitable and assume that the council did not recognise that the questions required answers.

Mitigating Climate Breakdown means much more than appointing a Leader of Carbon Reduction.

- 1) What plans do the council have for appointing other appropriate senior leader, in areas such as Waste Management, Risk Management, and making provisions for future risk?
- 2) What plans to the council have for ensuring that statutory responsibilities can be met in the future?

When answering, please bear in mind that the Climate Emergency will impact those who are disadvantaged in our society the most and soonest.

Response

The Council will be developing a Climate Strategy over the coming year in order to meet its commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030. The strategy will be developed jointly by officers across the council and address issues such as waste management and risk.

The Climate Strategy will consider the steps the Council needs to take to be prepared for climate change impacts in Wiltshire. Modelling previously carried out by the council with UKCIP showed that Wiltshire will experience hotter drier summers and milder wetter winters due to climate change, therefore we welcome the

Government's very recent [announcement](#) that it will invest £5.2bn nationally to tackle flooding.

Question (P20-27)

Further, I reminded the council of the Core Policy Section 2.11, adopted in January 2015, which states;

The climate in Wiltshire is changing and the challenge is to plan ahead to both mitigate the future consequences and play a meaningful part in trying to reverse the trends. For example, the latest projections indicate that annual mean temperature in the county will rise by between 1.2oC and 1.7oC by the 2020s (2010 to 2039) and by between 3.1oC and 4.1oC by the 2080s (2070 to 2099). Five years ago, that was in your Core Policy. You identified particular vulnerabilities to extreme weather in Wiltshire have been identified and these include high temperatures/heat waves, wind, and excessive rainfall/flooding. Wiltshire's per capita carbon emissions are greater than for either the South West or for the UK. In 2010, Wiltshire made the second lowest contribution to renewable electricity of all areas in 19 the South West and the lowest contribution for renewable heat.

Bearing in mind that every elected official and officer of the council has a duty under the Nolan principles to act in the public interest,

- 1) I ask exactly what meaningful part each councillor, and cabinet member has played in planning ahead to mitigate future consequences, and reverse the trends of climate change in observation of Core Policy?
- 2) And I ask these councillors; are you failing in your duty to act in the public interest?

Response

Full Council, which is made up of every Wiltshire councillor, voted in February 2019 to acknowledge the climate emergency and to seek to make Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030. As a result of this, dedicated budgets have been allocated as set out in the report for this agenda item, and a Climate Strategy will be developed over the coming year.

The Council has made decisions in line with its planning policies and national planning policy. The Local Plan and Local Transport Plan are currently being reviewed and climate change is a key issue that will be addressed and policies strengthened.

Wiltshire Council

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21 July 2020

Public Participation – Item 7 – Climate Emergency

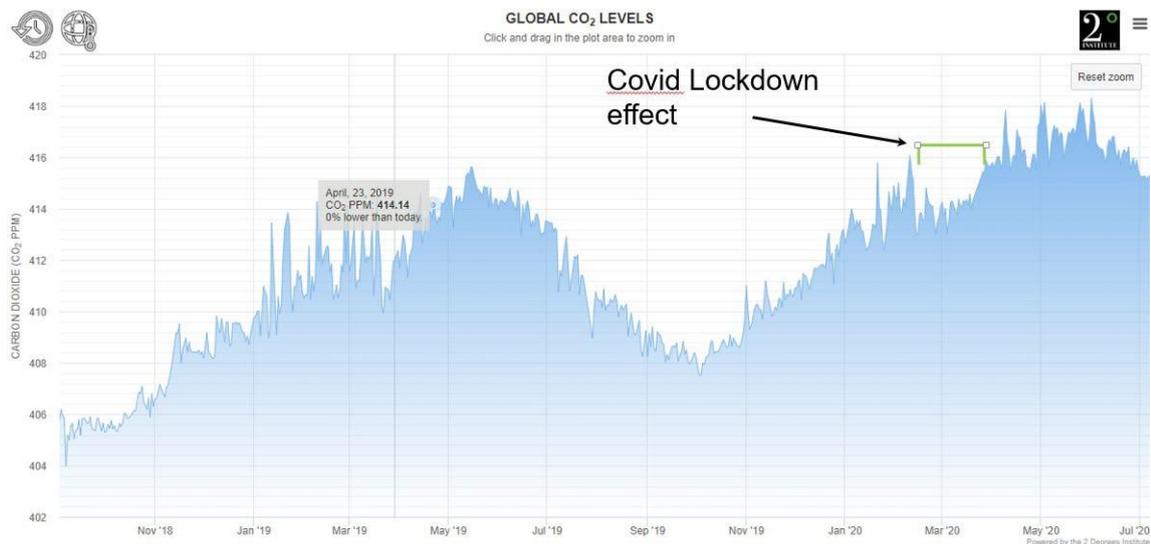
From Adrian Temple-Brown – XR Chippenham

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council

Question (P20-28)

Dear Councillors

For the Councillors here who don't believe in anthropogenic Climate Change, this [uTube Video](#) explains why a dip in the [Global CO₂ Emissions](#) occurred during lockdown.



Most people are not aware that the soil beneath ancient woodland, wetland and grassland can contain over 30% sequestered carbon by volume. When excavated and exposed to the atmosphere the carbon locked in soil over millennia can naturally convert to Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). A cubic meter of excavated soil may release more than a tonne of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂).

The redacted document “Wiltshire Council Housing Infrastructure Fund Business Case – HIF/FF/000456/BC/01 – Chippenham Urban Expansion” details how this council intends to make every single Unit on a 657 Hectare housing/industrial estate into a profitable revenue stream for a tight group of Developers. [Google says](#) there are 10,000 square meters in a hectare, so the 657 Hectares of countryside earmarked for the developers’ profit may release 6,570,000 tonnes of CO₂ from soil excavation *alone*. This cabinet does not intend to take any Action at all over the possible release of **six and a half million tonnes of CO₂** . The focus of its cash and effort is ‘[Get Development Done](#)’.

On 24-Mar-2020, the WC Cabinet stated that it would **not** add a line item to the Chippenham Eastern Expansion Project Plan (aka HIF Bid) to estimate the carbon emissions from the site clearance and soil excavation associated with building the proposed housing estate, industrial estate and road network over what is currently Wiltshire countryside.

On 13-Jul-2020, the WC Cabinet confirmed that it will **not** estimate the true extent of CO₂ emissions from its flagship development project before it spends more of the £5 million allocated this year to further its developer aspirations. The polite but evasive words which confirm the continued **In-Action** with the usual slick, spectral verbiage are worthy of a Government Covid briefing, not of any councillor that cares for the future of our community.

On 24-Feb-2020, using the familiar language of avoidance - which nearly all Public questions attract - this Cabinet refused to confirm that it even accepts the science behind climate change!

The HiF Business Case waxes lyrical about sustainable growth, repeated time and time again. There is not a single mention of the Carbon cost, the Emissions cost or the primary CO₂ emissions sources – it's just about money. If this cabinet had a Grandmother, she'd have been sold long ago, but make no mistake, this cabinet has no compunction at all in selling the family silver instead – our Wiltshire County Farms. The only natural way Wiltshire can fix some of the damage we've done to our atmosphere is by growing trees in soil. Instead, by monetising our county farms for Development, this cabinet is selling a part of our Grandchildren's future. And for what? For money.

Obviously, trees and plants release Oxygen as they grow. It's not often mentioned, but the Oxygen level in the atmosphere is going down twice as fast as the CO₂ level in the atmosphere is going up. That's what CO₂ means – one Carbon, two Oxygen. Dominic is allowing this government to plant a measly 12.5 million trees each year, even though last year alone, around 19 Billion trees were cut down to fuel economic growth. This clearly demonstrates that UK Government Climate Action Policy is 1/1000th of what it needs to be right now but our children need Wiltshire Farm Land to grow Natural Trees for Oxygen, not to grow Money Trees for Developers.

So, Councillors, please will you read the HiF business case and recognise what your Cabinet are *actually* doing. Take some time to think about the cost to your Grandchildren of allowing the Leaders of this Local Government to continue to execute the Core Policy of Economic Growth. What our offspring need NOW is not Economic Returns for the self-aggrandizing few, it's a Core Policy of Climate *Action* for everybody's future.

My question to each councillor is this:

Now you know about falling Oxygen levels, which side are you on? Will you call your IFA and go long on BOC shares? Or will you Act Now to change Wiltshire Core Policy away from making money, to focus instead on creating the chance of a future were our young can breathe through to a ripe old age?

You guys need to wake up to what's happening in front of your eyes, and Act.

One way or another, your children will remember the choice you made in your time as Councillor.

Have a chat with them about Climate Change.

Response

I refer back to the answer provided at cabinet on 23/3/2020 and 14/7/2020.

The Council has declared a climate emergency and set an ambitious target of seeking to become a carbon neutral county by 2030. To achieve carbon neutrality the council will, among other things, need to account for carbon in its development plans. The council will also look at ways of delivering new development with reduced carbon emissions and will investigate offsetting any residual carbon emissions, so that the net input into the atmosphere is as close to zero carbon emissions as possible.

A programme such as Future Chippenham is a long term enterprise in which the Council can develop initiatives that demonstrate our commitment to these aspects of sustainable development.

The Council's ambition is to address such matters comprehensively as the programme proceeds, and is making good progress with its plans for actively managing the environmental impact of the Future Chippenham scheme. Taken together with the answer above, such matters already feature as core elements of the Programme. A specific example might be a biodiversity study to understand how the scheme can achieve a 10% net gain. This would be followed by a Strategy and Investment Plan for natural capital attributed to the scheme. In turn this would allow us to plan the optimisation of different natural and societal assets and maximise the contribution of those assets in to the ecosystems they support. The Wiltshire Core Strategy seeks to protect natural capital, for example soils, water resources and habitats such as Ancient Woodlands.

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

21 July 2020

Public Participation

From Adrian Temple-Brown

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

Question (P20-29)

Considering the waste generated by the Wiltshire population and collected by the WC refuse vehicle fleet:

Does Wiltshire Council pay a private company to deal with this waste, or does a private company pay Wiltshire Council to access the value stream in this waste?

Either way,

How many tonnes of waste did Wiltshire create in 2019 and what total sum of money changed hands with private companies last year to get it dealt with?

Response:

Data provided reflects the financial year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

Waste and recycling services provided by Wiltshire Council are delivered under contracts with two contractors, Hills Waste Solutions Ltd and FCC Environment Ltd.

The contracts include a gainshare mechanism whereby the council shares the risks related to the sale of recyclable materials and which are subject to some market volatility. Where these materials have a market value, the council receives the majority share of the net income received from the sale of recyclables. In 2019/20 total income from the sale of recycle received by the council was £1.84m.

Not all materials collected for recycling or non-landfill treatment have a market value. These materials incur a net cost for recycling or treatment and this forms part of the contract costs. In addition, the council pays for the treatment and disposal of residual waste not suitable for recycling.

Total waste and recycling collected on behalf of Wiltshire Council in 2019/20 = 229,998 tonnes.

For 2019/20, the total value of contract payments made by the council in respect of the collection and management of waste and recycling = £40.44m (including the sale of recycle and the income received).

The services that contributed to these contract payments are as follows:

Waste and recycling services provided to Wiltshire Council by contractors:

- Kerbside collections of household recycling, garden waste and residual waste;
- Bulky household waste collections;
- Clinical waste collections and disposal;
- Operation of 10 household recycling centres;
- Provision of a composting facility;
- Provision of a materials recycling facility (to sort mixed recyclables);
- Provision of waste transfer facilities;
- Treatment and disposal of residual waste.

In addition to the contract payments noted above, a further £3.1m was paid in landfill tax.

Wiltshire Council

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21 July 2020

Public Participation

From Ian James

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

Question (P20-30)

Since 2012 Parish Councils have been completing Neighbourhood Plans for the benefit of their communities and the wider Council development plans. Both parish councils and Wiltshire Council have enthusiastically embraced this system, and the Council must be congratulated in getting 100 parish councils across the line with made Neighbourhood Plans.

Much of the development in Wiltshire is done in partnership with the Council, and parish councils have done their bit in proposing housing numbers to help the Council achieve its' housing supply.

How many houses have been completed or have attained outline planning permission in parishes and towns, which can be counted towards the Housing Land Supply since 2016, which were part of the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Supply?

Response

Since 2016, the Council's housing data for the monitoring years up to 31 March 2019 from allocated sites in 'made' (or adopted) Neighbourhood Plans includes the following:

No. of homes built (1 April 2016 - 31 March 2019)	320
No. of homes with planning permission not built (at 31 March 2019)	389
Allocated sites (without planning permission at 31 March 2019)	766

Since 1 April 2019, neighbourhood plans have been made that also include allocations for a further 182 homes.

Question (P20-31)

Parish Councils have prepared Neighbourhood Plans with their communities, over an average of 4 years, and many hundreds of meetings, a referendum and adjudication by a Planning Inspector. This is a community led undertaking and forms the path the parish will take on future development, and many other aspects of life.

It is of grave concern that it appears that the 2019 NPPF is having a significant impact on the effectiveness of Neighbourhood Plans in respect of managing development in their parishes. The recent planning decision made at Malmesbury is just a point in question.

Wiltshire Council planning department has put so much effort in helping parish councils achieve their Neighbourhood Plans it seems counter productive for the Council to change the way Plans support the local development plans.

- 1) Please will the Council outline its position in respect of the recent amendments to the 2019 NPPF and Neighbourhood Plans?
- 2) Will the Council make recommendation to respect the Bremhill Neighbourhood Plan made in 2018 at any future planning applications? A yes or no answer will suffice?

If the answer is no, please explain the context of the refusal to respect the Bremhill Neighbourhood Plan, and the recommendation of the Planning Inspector that there should be no development to the north and east of the Wiltshire North Rivers Cycle route so as to preserve the coalescence between Chippenham Town and the conservation village of Tytherton Lucas.

Response

- 1) The 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), sets out the Government's planning policy and is a material consideration informing both plan-making and the determination of planning applications.

The changes from the previous version of the NPPF (published in 2018) and the 2019 NPPF were limited and did not include any amendments in respect of Neighbourhood Plans. It is not clear therefore what amendments are being referred to in the question.

- 2) The Council, as Local Planning Authority, will continue to determine its planning applications in accordance with legislation; which requires that they are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for an area comprises both the Local Plan (prepared by Wiltshire Council) and neighbourhood plans (prepared by Parish and Town Councils). As such, in determining planning applications within Bremhill Parish regard will be given to any relevant policies in the made Neighbourhood Plan, as well as relevant policies in the Local Plan and other relevant material considerations (including the NPPF).

Planning applications are assessed on their merits and require judgements to be made. Their determination is a matter for the relevant decision maker, whether it is by a planning officer through delegated decision, planning committee or sometimes Inspectors through the appeal process. The Council itself cannot pre-judge the determination of any planning applications.

Wiltshire Council

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21 July 2020

Item 7 - Wiltshire Council's Response to the Climate Emergency (Carbon Reduction) and Business Plan Update

From Brig Oubridge

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing and Communities

It is estimated that at least 30% of Wiltshire's present carbon footprint is due to emissions from motor vehicles. In order for Wiltshire Council to achieve its target of making the county net zero carbon by 2030, those emissions will need to be reduced to close to zero by that time.

Question (P20-32)

- 1) What plans does Wiltshire Council have to achieve a reduction in carbon emissions from motor vehicles in Wiltshire during the current year, and in each subsequent year to 2030, in order to reach this target?
- 2) What action is being taken to ensure that the Council's development and planning policies will result in decisions which will reflect this policy and aid the achievement of this target?

Response

- 1) The current Wiltshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 (LTP3) identifies reducing carbon emissions as one of its two most important priorities and sets out a number of relevant measures (e.g. encouraging active travel and supporting public transport).

Earlier this year, the Department for Transport (DfT) published the first stage of its Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP). Wiltshire Council will engage with the DfT as this process progresses and ultimately the final TDP will provide a key steer in the development of Wiltshire's LTP4.

- 2) The Council in reviewing its Local Plan to cover the period to 2036, will do so in line with Government policy and legislation that has sustainable development at its core and will need to demonstrate that its policies ensure that development and use of land contributes to the mitigation and adaptation to climate change. In addition, regard will be had to the Council's declaration, which seeks for Wiltshire to be carbon neutral by 2030. Against this context we fully intend to develop a plan that is as low carbon as possible.

Question (P20-33)

- 1) Is there a strategy and costed schedule in place for replacing all the Council's own vehicles and those of its contractors with zero emission alternatives over this period?
- 2) What other measures are planned for reducing the need and demand for motor vehicle use over this period throughout the county in other sectors outside the Council's direct control?

Response

- 1) The Council's emerging Fleet Strategy details a fleet replacement programme with a key priority of improving efficiency and reducing carbon emissions in line with the carbon neutral target by 2030, this will include the provision by some of its contractors. The council's fleet replacement programme will be fully costed and scheduled.

The Council will be developing a Climate Strategy over the coming year which will look at how to tackle carbon emissions from other contractors.

- 2) Earlier this year, the Department for Transport (DfT) published the first stage of its Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP). This set out the following strategic priorities:
 - Accelerating modal shift to public and active transport
 - Decarbonisation of road vehicles
 - Decarbonising how we get our goods
 - Place-based solutions for emissions reduction
 - UK as a hub for green transport technology and innovation
 - Reducing carbon in a global economy

The council will engage with the DfT as the TDP process progresses and ultimately the final TDP will provide a key steer in the development of Wiltshire's fourth local transport plan.

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

21 July 2020

Item 7 - Wiltshire Council's Response to the Climate Emergency (Carbon Reduction) and Business Plan Update

From Chris Caswill

To Councillor Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing and Communities

Question (P20-34)

In a reply to a question at the last Cabinet meeting it was stated that *“The Council does not have a policy on the amount of tonnes psm of carbon in new development or a draft emissions policy for different types of completed build.”* Why on earth not? Will you now reconsider the need for these policies as obvious contributors to tackling the climate emergency in Wiltshire, not least because of the very high numbers of new houses that the Council is currently targeting.

Response

The need to introduce new planning policies in the Local Plan will be considered through the review process.

While we do not have a policy that directly addresses the need for all development to calculate its ‘whole life carbon cost’, the Wiltshire Core Strategy does seek to protect natural capital, for example soils, water resources and habitats such as Ancient Woodlands.

The challenge for the emerging Local Plan will be to take more steps towards reducing both ‘operational’ and ‘embodied’ carbon in all new developments. This can be largely achieved through a fabric first approach in the construction of new developments, but the Council cannot act alone in delivering this. The development industry will also be key in the carbon reduction journey and they too work to a range of British Standards to deliver sustainable construction.

Item 6 - Public Participation

From Chris Caswill

To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council

Question (P20-35)

How much of the £5.5 million public funding allocated to the Future Chippenham project for the current financial year has so far been:

- (a) Spent ?
- (b) Committed?

And is this funding currently ringfenced for Future Chippenham or can it be redeployed, at a time when the Council is heading for multi million pound overspend?

Response

The budget allocated to Future Chippenham programme is £5.2m of which £4.2m is forward funding of the HIF grant award of £75m. Of this £4.2m the amount spent in Q1 2020/21 is £665k. £1m was assigned to the programme to support resource requirements. This is currently under review.

The HIF grant award is in support of capital spend to deliver the proposed road and associated infrastructure and cannot be reallocated.

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Item 6 - Public Participation

From Isabel McCord

To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council

Question (P20-36)

In response to a question to the last Cabinet meeting, you declined to answer a yes or no question as to whether the Council-sponsored Stone Circle Development Company would form a part of the HIF Bid Grant determination agreement, on the grounds of commercial confidentiality. Given that there seem to be no commercial grounds for refusing to answer that simple question, and given that the Council is nominating its recently-departed joint CEO Alistair Cunningham to the Stone Circle Board, it is clearly in the public interest that you should now answer. Will you now do so, and if not, why not?"

Response

The Grant Determination Agreement is in the process of being drawn up and agreed by all parties and as such the contents of this agreement are not finalised.

The Council can confirm that as part of the GDA it will provide a Housing Delivery Strategy which will include details of the options it will consider to support delivery of the housing over the lifetime of the programme. Options for delivery are currently being considered and will require full evaluation before approval through the governance process.