

**Item No. 5 - Public participation and Questions from Councillors**

**Question from Mr Clive Owen**

**Responses from Cllr John Thomson,  
Cabinet member for Highways and Transport**

**1. What steps has Wiltshire Council taken in the last 12 months for the train station to be reopened in Corsham?**

**Response:** Corsham Station was included in a long list of potential major transport infrastructure projects considered by Wiltshire Council's Cabinet at its meeting on 21 May 2013 (see <http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=35934&Opt=3>). Subsequently, the station was approved as a 'Development' scheme by the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Transport Body (SWLTB) at its meeting on 8 July 2013 (see <http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=940&MIId=6298&Ver=4>).

Corsham Station was included in the 'Wiltshire Rail Study: Strategic Analysis Report' (May 2013) presented to the SWLTB meeting on 2 October 2013 (see <http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s62344/Wiltshire%20Rail%20Study.pdf>).

The station was included in the Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Economic Plan (SWSEP) submitted to the Government by the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) in March 2014 (see <http://www.swlep.biz/news/150>).

**2. Has Wiltshire Council met with anyone from the Department of Transport or Network Rail to discuss a train station at Corsham? If so what were the dates, the result of the meeting and was the meeting minuted?**

**Response:** Officers met with Network Rail officials on 4 February 2014 to discuss potential rail infrastructure schemes, including Corsham Station, to be included in the SWSEP.

Councillor John Thomson (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene and Broadband) and officers attended a meeting with Stephen Hammond MP (then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport) and representatives from Corsham on 28 March 2014.

Councillor Horace Prickett (Portfolio Holder for Transport) and Councillor Dick Tonge (Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform; and Corsham Without and Box Hill Division) attended a meeting with Department for Transport officials and representatives from Corsham on 28 October 2014.

As far as the Council is aware, the above meetings were not formally minuted. In addition, Network Rail is an 'Advisory' member of the SWLTB.

**3. Did Wiltshire Council respond to the recent Great Western Rail Franchise consultation asking for Corsham station to be reopened?**

**Response:** In its submission, the Council highlighted that the SWSEP promotes Corsham Station and made the following relevant points:

*"We are generally supportive of the Bristol Metro proposals. The franchisee should consider the challenges of integrating the Bristol Metro with the proposed Bristol-Oxford (or other) service that would serve Corsham and other proposed stations; in particular, rolling stock requirements and the efficient use of line capacity between Bristol and Bath".*

*"Although there are other options for providing services to new stations at Corsham and Royal Wootton Bassett, a Bristol-Oxford service is seen as having significant potential for providing economic benefits".*

**4. Has Wiltshire Council created a business case for the reopening of the train station at Corsham. If not, when will Wiltshire Council start this work?**

**Response:** A brief has recently been issued to the council's term transport consultant, Atkins, to produce a Project Inception Report (PIR) in accordance with Network Rail's 'Investment in Stations: A guide for promoters and developers' (May 2011). The broad aim of a PIR is to assist the rail industry in understanding the objectives and outcomes of any third-party investment.

**5. When does Wiltshire Council anticipate a business case for Corsham train station will be submitted to the Department of Transport for their approval?**

**Response:** As stated above, Corsham Station has been included in the SWSEP and a brief for a PIR has recently been issued. Further progression of the proposal (i.e. through Network Rail's Guide to Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) process) will be dependent on the outcomes of the Local Growth Fund process and PIR.

**6. Does Wiltshire Council have any viable plans for a Corsham train station to be opened in the next 10 years? if so, what are those plans?**

**Response:** See response above.

**7. How much does Wiltshire Council expect a new train station in Corsham to cost considering it closed in 1965?**

**Response:** A cost estimate of £10 million (with a 50% contingency allowance) was included in the SWSEP.