

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**10 December 2019**

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**Statement and Questions from Bill Jarvis**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors**

**To Councillor Simon Jacobs – Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement,  
Councillor Richard Clewer – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate  
Services, Heritage, Arts, Tourism, Housing, Climate Change and Military-  
Civilian Integration and  
Cllr Bridget Wayman – Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste**

**Statement**

There is a real need to get a baseline to support and guide action on the Climate Emergency. This however seems to be a long way from being delivered and, so far, the Council has not given any indication of when it will be published.

In an emergency, tackling the obvious big issues while considering the detail of others must be priority. After all, if there was major flooding in the County, naval gazing as to the long-term solutions might happen, but only once the major incidents had been addressed.

The Scatter diagram used by Cllr Clewer, as he says, is not properly reflective of emissions, however it does give a broad view of the 2 large emitters in the County, creating up to 80% of emissions:

- buildings (overall) c50%
- on road (transport) c30%

The recent Friends of the Earth report recommends that buildings and transport should be tackled, and that the County immediately start to insulate houses and implement conversion from gas/oil to renewable heating. There are over 120,000 homes in Wiltshire with inadequate insulation, over 200,000 needing renewable heating. Only 6% of people use public transport to and from their work.

There is much to do and little time to do it. We only have 10 years. 12,000 home to be insulated per year, never mind the rest of the buildings and transport needs.

Tackling the big immediate issues should surely be a priority in any emergency.

The detail can and must follow, but real progress is needed, not words.

### **Question**

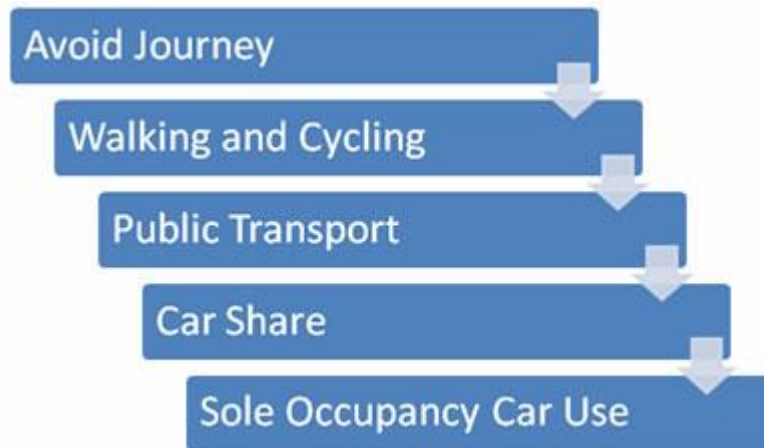
With a mountain to climb, can you take the first steps and:

1. Commit to start delivering home insulation and renewable heating, providing in your budget to employ the resources you need and start the programme in 2020?
2. Commit to developing an integrated transport system for the County, including dedicated footpath/cycleway networks, integrated rail and bus connections and positive car park/bus/train interfaces and start delivering in 2020?

These would demonstrate Wiltshire Council's belief in the need to tackle the problems effectively for their citizens.

### **Response**

1. The Council's climate emergency task group has already considered the current Council approach to home insulation and renewable energy. The Council has a number of roles to play in that respect; as a landlord and improving the insulation and heating of the Council's housing stock, to support households who are in fuel poverty via the affordable warmth programme and lastly the Council's private sector renewal strategy will focus on provision of advice and support for home owners so that they can improve the insulation and carbon efficient heating of their homes. The Council is reviewing existing budgets to see how it can better support these policy objectives.
2. Sustainable development and sustainable transport have been at the heart of the council's core strategy and local transport plan for more than ten years. Over this time:
  - a plethora of improvements have been made to footpath and cycle networks as a result of development funded works;
  - in contrast to most other shire local authority areas, the vast majority of supported bus services have been retained by funding from revenue income from parking charges;
  - working with partners, improvements have been made to a number of rail stations and a significantly enhanced Trans Wilts train service was introduced;
  - to mitigate the impact of housing growth, transport strategies have been developed in Chippenham, Devizes, Salisbury and Trowbridge; and
  - Wiltshire Council staff are advised to follow a hierarchy when planning trips (see below) including working from home and using Skype.



The above and other transport-related measures have contributed to Wiltshire being identified by Friends of the Earth as the top performing local authority in England and Wales on climate change (see <https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/download/league-table-local-authority-performance-climate-change>).

To support Salisbury, the SWLEP has allocated funding a Salisbury Transforming Accessibility project. This will aim to take forward the Salisbury Central Area Framework's objective to deliver 'people friendly streets'. It is likely that the Transforming Accessibility project will provide the framework for developing and delivering similar projects in other market towns in Wiltshire (subject to available funding).

The Council is currently progressing a Local Plan 2036 review and allied to this will shortly be developing its fourth Local Transport Plan also to 2036 (LTP4). As part of the LTP4, an evidence base document will be produced which will set-out relevant economic, environmental and social information. This and other relevant information will be used to inform an Issues and Options paper which will be used to consult with key stakeholders next year. Feeding into this process will be the findings of the Environment Select Committee which has been set-up to develop recommendations and a plan to achieve the ambition to 'Seek to make the County of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030' included in the motion agreed by full council at its meeting on 26 February 2019.

The above motion also included a 'Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible'. Associated with this is the reality of Wiltshire as a predominately rural area. This rurality is reflected in key Government documents and processes. For example, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that "...opportunities to maximise sustainable

transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making” and the Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy document includes that “...[the Government] will explore the specific challenges and opportunities for rural transport with a Future of Mobility: Rural Strategy” [yet to be published]. This context is likely to mean that, while the council will work with relevant partners to achieve modal shift to sustainable transport modes in Wiltshire’s market towns, in the rural areas the approach is likely to be focused on encouraging the increased take up of zero/low emission vehicles.