



COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 1

From: Councillor Evans

To: The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

Could the Portfolio Holder please confirm whether local members and parish councils are consulted with by the Council on the names for new street names proposed in their wards?

Reply

“It has always been our policy to consult with Ward Councillors on the names of new streets within their ward. Parish councils are also consulted where appropriate.

We do not consult on the names of new buildings, unless the name requested by the developer is contentious, as was the case with the new apartment block in Kings Head Yard - Mozzetta.

Mews style developments that are addressed onto existing streets are not generally consulted upon. However, we may consult on these types of developments when we consider it is appropriate or advisable.

There is a time factor imposed of 5 weeks for a reply to the consultation, which we would chase after 3 weeks and again at 5 weeks. If there has been no response, we will accept the name or one of the suggested names in the consultation letter on the assumption that there has been no objection.

The reason for the time factor is due to the timescales involved in requesting and receiving post coding from Royal Mail; this can take up to 5 weeks and has in the past taken longer.

So the maximum time involved getting the street name and postcode could be 3 months. Developers need the postcode to enable them to get services such as water, gas electrics and telephones laid in at the start of the site construction”.



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QUESTION 2

From: Councillor Hiscock

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety

What advice would you give to householders needing to dispose of low energy light bulbs?

Reply

“Similar to many other materials in the home such as cleaning agents, insecticides etc, Compact Fluorescent Lights (commonly known as low energy light bulbs) have the potential to cause harm if they are incorrectly handled or disposed of.

Compact Florescent Lights (CLF's) contain very small amounts of mercury sealed within the glass tubing about, 5 milligram's on average. No mercury is released when the bulbs are used or handled but small amounts are released when the bulb is broken.

So long as common sense precautions are taken risks associated with the handling and disposal of CLF's are minimal and the following advice is offered:

Disposal of Intact or Broken Bulbs

Hampshire County Council (the Waste Disposal Authority) has been contacted regarding this matter and informs us that initially householders should be advised to take intact low energy light bulbs to any one of the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) to be recycled or taken back to the retailer if they are a Member of the Distributors Takeback Scheme.

Where this not possible (and all damaged bulbs) should be wrapped and sealed in plastic bags and disposed of in their in domestic refuse bins as part of their normal waste.

Similar to other potentially toxic material in the household such as cleaning agents, aerosols, insecticides etc they will then be removed and incinerated at the Energy from Waste Facilities in a safe and controlled manner.

Information will be provided to residents on the Council's Web site as to the precautions to be taken and the Customer Services Department provided with a list of Frequently Asked Questions to deal with any enquires received. We will also continue to review this advice and amend it when appropriate”.



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QUESTION 3

From: Councillor Lipscomb

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety

Given the quite draconian advice to householders, apparently from DEFRA, which has featured in the media this past weekend, will the Portfolio Holder please make a statement regarding the handling and disposal of energy-saving light bulbs which have either failed intact or been broken?

Reply

“Most of the answer to this question is contained in my previous reply. With regard to the specific point about breakages, the following additional information is relevant.

Clearing Up Broken CLF’ss in the Home

1. Open a window and leave the room (restrict access) for at least 15 minutes.
2. Remove all materials you can without using a vacuum cleaner.
 - Wear disposable rubber gloves, if available (do not use bare hands)
 - Carefully scoop up the fragments and powder with stiff paper or cardboard.
 - Wipe the area clean with a damp paper towel or disposable wet wipe.
 - Sticky tape (such as duct tape) can be used to pick up small pieces and powder.
3. Place all cleanup materials in a plastic bag, seal it and put in your refuse bin or sack for collection and disposal as normal. Wash your hands after disposing of the bag.
4. Should you have to vacuum the area where the bulb was broken, say on a carpet, remove the vacuum bag once done cleaning the area (or empty and wipe the canister) and put the bag and/or vacuum debris, as well as the cleaning materials, in two sealed plastic bags in the refuse bin or sack for collection as normal”.



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QUESTION 4

From: Councillor Spender

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

It has now become clear that many other local authorities are not reducing the hours of usage of over-60s bus passes in line with the government's minimum standards. With this precedent in mind, will Cabinet re-consider their earlier decision and retain the hours of 9 am to midnight for local residents rather than reducing this service to the public to the hours of 9.30 am to 11 pm?

Reply

“The method of distribution of Government funding for the new national scheme means that some local authorities will receive more than they need to run the minimum scheme and others less. Winchester is one of those that will receive less so we are already increasing the funding provided locally to meet this shortfall. A number of authorities who have received more generous funding can exceed the minimum standard but my understanding is that there is a large number across the country who cannot.

The cost of the scheme in the City Council's area is high compared to other authorities due to the high number of over 60's who live in the District and the high rates of growth seen in the take up of free travel. Under the National scheme, which starts in April 2008, authorities with higher levels of tourism will incur additional charges from bus operators as the cost of visitors from outside the area who use their passes will fall to the City Council.

The City Council cannot, therefore, provide additional free travel beyond that covered under the National Scheme at this time”.



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QUESTION 5

From: Councillor Cook

To: The Leader

Would the Leader confirm that there is currently no formal procedure for the election of the Deputy Mayor which allows members to consider information about the candidates' previous service to the Council prior to a vote being called?

Reply

“There is no formal procedure set out in the Council Procedure Rules regarding the nomination of Deputy Mayor. For many years, it has been the customary process of this Authority to send a letter to all Members around 1 February, inviting nominations for the positions of both Mayor and Deputy Mayor. In practice, the exercise is really to nominate only the Deputy Mayor, as custom dictates that, apart from exceptional circumstances, the current Deputy will be Mayor in the following year. There is no requirement for those nominated to submit any form of application or ‘cv’.

Immediately following the conclusion of the February full Council meeting, ballot papers are circulated containing the names of those nominated for Deputy Mayor. Members are invited to vote accordingly, with the completed ballot papers being collected before Members leave the chamber. The result of the informal ballot is announced through the weekly Briefing Note and the successful candidate has been duly accepted by the whole Council. This process has, to date, avoided any problems at the annual Mayor-making ceremony in May and allowed the two appointments to be recorded as unanimous.

In administrative terms, it would be straightforward to devise a form for completion by those wishing to seek the office of Mayor, which could then be circulated to all Members prior to the informal vote being taken. I will ask the Head of Democratic Services to arrange for this to be done”.



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QUESTION 6

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety

What measures are in place to deal with infestations of rodents and how long ought a householder wait for action to be taken.

Could I also be advised of the number of reports of problems with rodents that have been referred to the Council over the last 4 years.

Reply

“The City Council provides a service for the treatment of rats and mice at domestic premises free of charge. Householders requesting the service are usually contacted within two working days (over 99%) and arrangements made to undertake treatment at their convenience during normal working hours Mondays – Fridays (inclusive).

The numbers of treatments undertaken for rodents during the last four years (April – March) are as follows:

2003/04 – 2,505
2004/05 – 2,513
2005/06 – 2,872
2006/07 – 2,641

There has been an increase in the numbers of treatments undertaken this year compared to the corresponding period of last year (April to November inclusive) and the full year results will be provided when available. Rodent activity varies from year to year depending upon a number of factors including climatic conditions and the availability of food”.



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QUESTION 7

From: Councillor Bell

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

The City Council are aware of the closure of the Romsey-Winchester Rail Link Bus service, announced in October and greeted with considerable strength of feeling by users at a public meeting in Romsey on 1 November 2007. This service provided not only a non parking non congestion access to rail links for commuters to London, Basingstoke, Reading etc, but also ordinary commuter and general service for those living along the route and working or shopping or accessing services in Winchester.

Since November, a Working Party has met twice with Stagecoach, SWT and Hampshire County Council. After the closure of the Rail Link service on 9 December, a further meeting with the operators was held at HCC, and others are planned. Transport representatives from both WCC and TVBC have been invited to these meetings, and whilst TVBC have been represented, it is disappointing to note that WCC has not.

Would the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport agree that the Romsey-Winchester Rail Link Bus service constituted an essential element of a coherent integrated transport policy, essential to the economic prosperity and environmental health of Winchester city?

Can he explain why WCC has not been involved in recent discussions and say what steps are being taken to ensure that WCC Transport team is represented in future at negotiations with Stagecoach, South West Trains and Hampshire County Council to secure the continued provision of an equivalent service?

Reply

“Many of the issues raised in the question were covered in a briefing note to all members sent out on 8 November 2007.

SouthWest Trains (SWT) made a financial decision to cancel the Romsey – Winchester Rail/link bus in order to save the £95,000 annual subsidy. SWT were not obliged to run the service by their franchise and where high levels of subsidy are required they have taken a commercial decision. The cancellation of the SWT rail link bus still leaves a bus operating along the route (x66) at an hourly frequency and therefore the opportunity for sustainable travel between Romsey and Winchester remains.

Hampshire County Council have made it clear that they will not subsidise the SWT rail link bus as the remaining service (x66) is considered satisfactory to meet social needs. There are, therefore, no negotiations to become involved with.

City Council officers have strong liaison links and regular meetings with StageCoach Bus, SWT and HCC passenger transport officers at which matters relating to bus services and other public transport links are discussed. It is erroneous to draw any conclusions from the presence or otherwise of a particular officer at a particular meeting”.



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QUESTION 8

From: Councillor Jackson

To: The Portfolio Holder for Performance and Communications

The last Statement of Accounts showed an increase in spending on Council newspapers and public relations of 25%. What action has the Portfolio Holder taken to ensure that spending in this area – if it can't be reduced – at least returns to previous levels?

Reply

“The figures quoted in the question relate to the Statement of Accounts for this particular cost centre for the 2005/6 and 2006/7 financial years. The figure in the Statement of Accounts is useful for overall spend but does not tell the story of the actual spend on public relations and the council newspaper as it includes a lot of management overheads. The 25% increase in expenditure relates to increases in recharges from other Council support services including a one-off cost of an internal audit review. Some of these charges have dropped out for the current year altogether and others are reducing to the expected levels. There was also a staff vacancy for a period in 05/06 which artificially reduced the actual spend in that year.

However, since May 2006 the emphasis given to Corporate Communications which leads these areas of activity has been reviewed and reprioritised. The result has been a better co-ordinated approach across the Council bringing together the work on e-communications and internal and external website development as well as reviewing the approach to our use of printed literature and public and media relations. Given the ever increasing importance of reputation management through the media and public awareness of the Council's activities, achieving a step change in the Council's approach without increasing resources has been a great move forward.

Looking at the expenditure on publicity in the current year there have been a number of initiatives that will reduce the overall spend and we have made better use of resources in the Corporate Communications team to allow a more cost effective management of the process. Examples of this are negotiating with the local press which will bring about a reduction in the cost of some of the statutory print advertising in local newspapers, and an even more significant reduction in the use of printed materials. Perspectives also now incorporates the What's On guide to the benefit of both, and the changes to print practices within the Council has seen reductions in quantities of materials being purchased of the order of 35%.

This area of expenditure in this financial year is on budget. The adjustments made to the Corporate Communications team by bringing in resources from Cultural Services to enhance the delivery of e-communications and web site development, at no overall cost to the Council, demonstrates the efficiency and effectiveness gains that have come from this part of the Organisational Development review”.



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QUESTION 9

From: Councillor Mather

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

Please could the Portfolio Holder give the Council a progress report on the repaving of the High Street?

Reply

“The Leader and I have had very useful discussions with the County Council regarding the timing and funding of the much needed works to repave the High Street in Winchester. The County Council has agreed that repaving must take place and project planning has now started. Members will appreciate that this will be a major construction project.

The County Council as highway authority has primary responsibility for the works. The City Council has set aside top-up funding to contribute to ensure that they are not just functional but also aesthetically pleasing and use the most appropriate materials.

Joint work with the County Council is underway to survey the area and trial holes will be undertaken during January in order to ascertain the state of the ground and hence the sub-ground works that will be required. This will determine the extent of works required and following this a scheme can be finalised.

We are currently planning to undertake public consultation in March 2008. The works themselves should begin in 2009”.



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QUESTION 10

From: Councillor Wagner

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety

Although I welcome the distribution of the Waste Collection Calendar, can the Portfolio Holder tell us why, in this era of E-government, the important collection changes over the Holiday Period were not posted with a prominent link on the home page of the Council's Website as they were for instance on our near neighbour's at Eastleigh?

Reply

"The Council uses a range of measures to inform residents of changes to collections over the Holiday Period including the use of the Council's web site and this information was available on the site from 4 December 2007 through the Recycle for Winchester information pages.

A press release covering the Recycling of Christmas trees including the link to Christmas Refuse Collection arrangements was published on 17 December 2007 and included on the home page of the City Council's website. In addition to the delivery of householders Collection Calendars, bin hangers were put on householder's individual bins to ensure that those not having access to the internet were made aware of any changes that will have affected them.

Officers are always looking to improve communications and will review the home page of the Council's web site to ensure that in future a more prominent and readily accessible link is provided to the collection calendar over the holiday period".



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QUESTION 11

From: Councillor Verney

To: The Leader

Can you give an indication as to how the local economy performed over the Christmas period?

Reply

“The Christmas and January sales period is the most important in the retailing year. As it is still early in the new year, it has not yet been possible to gather meaningful indicators about trading during this period. However, a selection of feedback received to date is outlined below and further information should be available for the January meeting of the Local Economy Scrutiny Panel.

In Winchester, the ice rink and Christmas market proved a big draw, building on the success of 2006. 40,000 skaters booked tickets – a 14% increase on the previous year – generating over 80,000 visitors to the rink in total. The Cathedral Enterprises team estimates 200,000 visitors through the Inner Close for this winter’s 17 day market, based on a figure of 126,000 in ten days last year. Stallholders reported favourable sales, especially in the latter ten days when there was better weather. In spite of a fairly difficult economic situation many traders have expressed interest in returning in 2008. There have been positive comments in the media made by retailers in the city centre about the impact of the cathedral events on business levels. However, feedback about performance in general has been mixed across the city with some traders attributing lower levels of sales to this year’s surge in internet shopping.

Hits to the tourism website www.visitwinchester.com were up 197% for December 2007 over December 2006 and the overall number of enquiries (in all forms) to the tourist information centre (TIC) was 141% up for the period. Enquiries received suggested that visitors were intending to book local restaurants and accommodation, with a resulting effect likely on the town’s early and late evening economy. Staff estimate that approximately 50% of telephone queries received at the TIC during December were on Winchester Cathedral activities, including the popular carol concerts.

Elsewhere in the district, Bishop’s Waltham Chamber of Trade report that Christmas trading in the town was reasonable, but ‘not outstanding’. Performance is thought to have been influenced by the general economic climate. This view is reflected by the management at Whiteley Village Outlet Shopping Centre, with trading potentially 0.5% down on last year, mainly as a result of decreased sales in the early part of December. Post Christmas sales have shown good increases although turnover for January has tailed off more quickly than in previous years and three companies have gone into administration over the Christmas/New Year period”.



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QUESTION 12

From: Councillor Beveridge

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

The Enforcement Section is an important part of the Planning Development Control Service valued throughout the District, so the reduction in the scope of the service announced last week will be a very unwelcome change. What steps are being taken to inform the public about this apart from informing all parish clerks and e mailing all Winchester City Councillors.

Reply

“Steps taken to publicise the temporary prioritisation system being applied in Enforcement are as follows:

1. All Parish Councils have been e-mailed with the information.
2. All City Councillors have been e-mailed with the information.
3. An announcement will be placed on the website.

All correspondence clearly states that this arrangement is temporary and will not prejudice the current work being carried out by the Informal Scrutiny Group of the enforcement service”.



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QUESTION 13

From: Councillor Godfrey

To: The Leader

Can the Leader confirm if any reply has been received to his letter to the Secretary of State concerning the proposal for an "Eco-Town" at Micheldever Station?

Reply

"No. We have been informed by Department for Communities and Local Government that they will assess the 50+ Eco-Town applications during December 2007/Jan 2008 and that the local authorities for those which have been shortlisted will be contacted during January. We have not currently been contacted".



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QUESTION 14

From: Councillor Sutton

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

Apart from the message on the Web Site, how is the cutting back or moratorium on giving simple advice on planning applications to the public, going to be advertised? Is this reduction in service a short term measure or likely to become permanent?

Reply

“Most local authorities in the South East, and many elsewhere, are reviewing the way in which they provide pre-application advice to those considering planning applications. This is because the amount and complexity of development being considered continues to increase whilst the resources available to planning departments are limited, not just by money but also by the availability of qualified staff. Time spent in giving pre-application advice to potential applicants, some of whom have not prepared and want information that is easily available to them elsewhere, takes staff time from processing the applications of people who have already committed time and are anxious to receive a decision in a timely manner. Winchester’s planning team continue to meet all the national targets for determining applications – a major achievement given the pressures upon them.

The changes to the way in which advice being given form the planning control team fall into two categories:

Pre-application advice

This relates to enquiries regarding the acceptability of development proposals, comments on layout and design and the interpretation of planning policy.

The service is being changed so pre-application advice is given only at pre-arranged meetings. This will require the submission of information prior to the meeting, which will enable the planning officer to research the case prior to the meeting thereby making it more useful for both parties and an efficient use of time.

It is envisaged that this change, or an adaptation of it, will be permanent.

Permitted development enquiries

This relates to enquires regarding whether or not a particular type of development requires planning permission. The amendment to this service is temporary, until March 2008, and this is advice that individuals can obtain via consultants, or in many cases, the Planning Portals website.

Both changes have been introduced in due to the need to align resources within the planning control team to where they are most needed by our customers. They have been advertised on the website, and by letters to all agents who have submitted planning applications to the authority within the last year”.



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QUESTION 15

From: Councillor Learney

To: The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

Which posts in the Council are currently subject to vacancy management?

Reply

“There are currently 42.29 fte vacant across the Council, 31 full time posts and 48 part time posts. These are listed in the attached table. The table shows a ‘snap shot’ of the establishment and does not show changes to the establishment which are part of ongoing restructures.

All vacant posts are subject to vacancy management, that is the post is held vacant for four months unless the Portfolio Holder for Resources accepts a case for earlier recruitment because of pressures on the service in question. Since the vacancy management scheme was instituted in August 2007 there have been 32 full- and part-time staff leaving the Council. Of those, 17 vacancies were put to the Portfolio Holder with a case for early recruitment and 6 were approved.

A number of the posts in the attached list are held vacant for a longer period by Heads of Division, for example to allow the resources to be temporarily re-directed to areas of higher priority, or to facilitate re-structuring of teams”.

Post	PostTitle	DivisionDesc	SectionDesc	ContractTypeDesc	PostGradeDesc	PosnAvailable	PosnFilled	PosnUnfilled	recruiting to?	comment
2	Clerical Assistant	Performance & Scrutiny	Performance & Scrutiny	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	0.5	0.47	0.03		funded to allow cover for job share
3	Clerical Assistant	Performance & Scrutiny	Performance & Scrutiny	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	0.5	0	0.5		
7	Complaints Officer	Performance & Scrutiny	Performance & Scrutiny	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	0.41	0.09	0.31		funded to allow for peaks in workload
21	Project Officer (Major Development)	Strategic Planning	Strategic Planning	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	0.5	0	0.5		covered by contractor on long term basis
24	Planning Solicitor	Legal Services	Legal Services	Permanent	NJC LGS PERSONAL SCALE P	1	0	1	yes	
33	Assistant Solicitor	Legal Services	Legal Services	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0.81	0.19		covered by temporary post
43	Legal Assistant	Legal Services	Legal Services	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	1	0	1		
123	Electoral Services Assistant	Democratic Services	Electoral Services	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.57	0	0.57		
126	Business Manager	Director of Governance	No Section	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	0.5	0	0.5		held as part of organisational development
142	Meadowside Receptionist	Cultural Services	Recreation & Sports	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	0.76	0.47	0.28		
150	Administration Officer	Environment	No Section	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1		
170	Environment Officer (Waste Management)	Environment	Environment Team	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	1	0	1		
178	Environmental Health Officer	Environment	Environmental Protection Team	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0.61	0.39		
188	Technical Officer	Environment	Commercial Team (Environment)	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	1	0	1		
195	Rent Accounting Supervisor	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Landlord Administration	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0.81	0.19		
198	Senior Administration Assistant	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0.8	0.2		
225	Residential Scheme Manager Firrstone Road	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1		
227	Residential Scheme Manager Simmonds Court	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1		
228	Residential Scheme Manager The Valley	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1		
238	Non Residential Deputy Scheme Manager Matilda Place	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1		
243	Cleaner	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 01	1	0.57	0.43		
244	Cleaner	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 01	0.09	0	0.09		
247	Tenant Participation Manager	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	1	0.81	0.19		
250	Non Residential Deputy Scheme Manager Matilda Place	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.81	0	0.81		
258	Assistant Surveyor	Housing Landlord Services	Contract & Property Services	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	1	0	1		
259	Property Surveyor	Housing Landlord Services	Contract & Property Services	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	1	0	1		
269	Clerical Assistant	Housing Landlord Services	Contract & Property Services	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	0.57	0	0.57		
271	Customer Liaison Officer	Housing Landlord Services	Contract & Property Services	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1		
273	Contract Surveyor	Housing Landlord Services	Contract & Property Services	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0.81	0.19		covered by acting employee
280	Mobile Warden	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.5	0	0.5		
283	Care Assistant Victoria House + 15.2	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	0.68	0.54	0.14		
284	Mobile Warden	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.54	0	0.54		
286	Care Assistant Matilda Place + 9.21	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	0.46	0	0.46		
296	Central Control Operator + 17.38	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.5	0.47	0.03		
303	Mobile Warden - Rural	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.71	0	0.71	yes	
307	Housing Advisory/Homeless Persons Officer	Strategic Housing	Housing Options	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	1	0	1	yes	
308	Homelessness Support Officer	Strategic Housing	Housing Options	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0.5	0.5		
309	Senior Housing Advisory/Homeless Persons Officer	Strategic Housing	Housing Options	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0	1		
320	Environmental Health Technician	Strategic Housing	Housing Options	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	1	0	1		
348	Curator of Photographs	Cultural Services	Museums	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	1	0	1		to be disestablished 31/4/08
355	Visitor Assistant - Westgate Museum 9/12hrs	Cultural Services	Museums	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	0.49	0	0.49		
363	Administration Assistant	Cultural Services	No Section	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	0.5	0	0.5		
375	Senior Event Manager	Estates	Guildhall	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	1	0	1	yes	
379	Guildhall Event Manager	Estates	Guildhall	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	1	0	1		
383	Information Assistant	Cultural Services	Tourist Information Centre	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.5	0.41	0.09		
385	Tourism Marketing Manager	Cultural Services	Tourism & Marketing	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0	1		
390	Information Assistant (Saturday)	Cultural Services	Tourist Information Centre	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	0.15	0.14	0.01		
398	Information Assistant	Cultural Services	Tourist Information Centre	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.5	0	0.5	yes	
399	Information Assistant	Planning Control	Planning DC Administration	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0.5	0.5		
407	Arboriculturalist	Planning Control	Landscape Team	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	1	0	1		
410	Planning Enforcement Officer	Planning Control	Planning Enforcement Team	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	0.61	0	0.61	yes	
411	Principal Landscape Architect	Planning Control	Landscape Team	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0	1		
429	Planning Assistant	Planning Control	Planning DC - East	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1	yes	
438	Planning Officer	Planning Control	Planning DC - West	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	1	0.64	0.36		
494	Administration Officer	Access & Infrastructure	Projects Engineering	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0.61	0.39		
510	Customer Service Advisor	Customer Services	Customer Service Centre	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1	yes	

522	Customer Service Advisor	Customer Services	Customer Service Centre	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1	
532	Senior Office Support Assistant	Customer Services	Office Support	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0.8	0.2	
537	Management Accountant	Financial Services	Accountancy	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0.61	0.39	yes
539	Chief Accountant	Financial Services	Accountancy	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 08	1	0.46	0.54	yes
559	Risk Management & Insurance Officer	Financial Services	Risk & Insurance	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	1	0.81	0.19	
563	Address Technician	I M & T	I M & T	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0.61	0.39	
574	Creditors Officer	Revenues	Exchequer Services	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.8	0.73	0.07	
583	Benefits Officer	Revenues	Benefits	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	1	0.54	0.46	
586	Benefits Officer	Revenues	Benefits	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	1	0	1	
587	Benefits Officer	Revenues	Benefits	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 04	0.31	0	0.31	
600	Benefits Team Leader	Revenues	Benefits	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	1	0.89	0.11	
638	Business Manager	Organisational Development	Human Resources	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 05	0.5	0	0.5	held as part of organisational development
elec	Principal Area Housing Manager	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0.81	0.19	
664	Customer Service Advisor	Customer Services	Customer Service Centre	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.75	0.74	0.01	
704	Design & Print Support Assistant	Financial Services	Design & Print	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1	
709	Customer Service Advisor	Customer Services	Customer Service Centre	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1	
716	Planning Assistant DC Major	Planning Control	Planning DC - Major Developments	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	1	0	1	yes
742	Care Assistant Victoria House + 11.56	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	1	0	1	
784	Senior Mobile Warden	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS PERSONAL SCALE P	1	0.61	0.39	
787	Administration Assistant	Democratic Services	Committee Administration	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 02	1		1	
793	Residential Scheme Manager - Saxon Road	Housing Landlord Services	Housing Management	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.52	0	0.52	
794	Building Control Administrator	Building Control	Building Control	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 03	0.5	0	0.5	yes
799	Engineer	Access & Infrastructure	Projects Engineering	Permanent	NJC LGS SCALE 06	1	0	1	

LOG OF VACANCY CONTROL FORMS SUBMITTED UNDER THE VACANCY MANAGEMENT SCHEME

Post Number	Submitted to Claim Exception to 4 Month Vacancy Rule	Division	Post Title	Date of Vacancy	Planned Date to Fill	Calculated Vacancy Duration (Months)	How is the Post Funded	Basic salary per annum	Recruit-ment Costs	Decision
221	Yes	Landlord Services	Supporting People Coordinator	July 2007	Immediately	nil	HRA - Ring fenced	£ 34,746	Shared	Approved
230	Yes	Landlord Services	Sheltered Scheme Manager - Normandy Court	June 2007	Immediately	nil	HRA - Ring fenced	£ 17,922	Shared	
235	Yes	Landlord Services	Sheltered Scheme Manager - Whitewings	June 2007	Immediately	nil	HRA - Ring fenced	£ 17,922	Shared	
EHHP18	Yes	Landlord Services	Property Services Administrator	n/a	Immediately	nil	HRA - Ring fenced	£ 17,922	Shared	
438	Yes	Planning	Senior Planning Officer	01-Sep-07	22-Oct-07	1.7	General Fund	£ 14,929	£ 1,000	
716	Yes	Planning	Planning Technician	01-Aug-07	22-Oct-07	2.7	General Fund	£ 15,096	£ 1,000	Refused
429	Yes	Planning	Planning Technician	21-Sep-07	22-Oct-07	1.0	General Fund	£ 18,450	£ 1,000	Refused
414	Yes	Planning	Planning Officer	14-Sep-07	17-Sep-07	nil	General Fund	£ 20,892	none - internal	
410	No	Planning	Planning Enforcement Officer P/T	08-Sep-07	January 2008	4.0	General Fund	£ 11,588	£ 2,000	Refused: further review in 4 Months
n/a	Yes	Estates	Guildhall and Conference Manager	16-Sep-07	16-Jan-07	4.0	General Fund	£ 35,772	£ 2,000	Approved 12 Sept 07
600	No	Revenues	Benefits Team Leader	2005			General Fund	£ 3,228		
614	No	Revenues	Taxation Officer	Mar-07			General Fund	£ 20,235		
587	No	Revenues	Benefits Officer	2005			General Fund	£ 4,459		
586	No	Revenues	Benefits Officer	Jul-07			General Fund	£ 20,895		
524	Yes	Customer Service	Customer Service Advisor	26-Oct-07	TBC	??	General Fund	£ 15,825	£ -	Approved CMT + Portfolio Holder 11Oct
457	Yes	Access & Infrastructure	Parking & Concessionary Travel Manager	31-Dec-07	31-Dec-07	nil	General Fund	£ 39,132	£ 2,000	Signed by Cilly Keith Wood and Steve Tilbury
355	No	Cultural Services	Museum Visitor Assistant	01-Oct-07	01-Feb-08	5.0	General Fund	£ 6,877	£ 1,000	See Authority to Recruit received 7 Dec
524	Yes	Customer Service	Customer Service Advisor	20-Oct-07	TBC	??	General Fund	£ 18,450	£ -	Not approved original - G Beckett signature
524	Yes	Customer Service	Customer Service Advisor	21-Oct-07	TBC	??	General Fund	£ 15,825	£ -	Approved CMT + Portfolio Holder 11Oct
EHHS21	Yes	Finance	D&P Admin Assistant	12-Oct-07	15-Oct-07	nil	General Fund	£ 18,419	£ 500	
303	Yes	Strategic Housing	Homelessness Officer	08-Oct-07	15-Nov-07	1.0	General Fund			
303	Yes	Landlord Services	Mobile Warden	01-Sep-07	Immediately	nil	HRA - Ring fenced	£ 18,450	£ 500	

024	Yes	Legal services	Principal legal officer	04-Jan-08	04-Jan-08	nil	General Fund	£	36,636	£	2,500
410	Yes	Planning	Planning Enforcement Officer P/T	21-Dec-07	asap	?/	General Fund	£	11,588	£	2,000

Approved by G
Beckett - see email
22 Nov

APPROVED

REFUSED

REFUSED BUT TO BE REVIEWED AGAIN AFTER 4 MONTHS



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 16

From: Councillor Hiscock

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

When will the cycle parking facilities be restored at the former Library now the Discovery Centre?

Reply

“It is hoped that the cycle stands to serve the Discovery Centre will be erected over the Easter period. These will be located just inside the entrance to the car park where building works are currently being undertaken to an adjacent development. The current plan does not include for any stands to be erected at the front of the Discovery Centre. However, due to representations from the City Council and the Winchester Cycling Group, the Discovery Centre staff are now in discussion with Hampshire Architects and Planners to see if some stands can be installed at the front of the Centre and are hopeful of a positive outcome”.



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 17

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety

Could I be advised of the cost to the Council to supply and empty a refuse bin in the High Street and what measures the Council has taken to encourage the users of such facilities to recycle their "rubbish".

Reply

"The cost of supplying and installing a suitable litter bin in the High Street is approximately £600. They are emptied eight times per week at a cost of £0.41 each per emptying (£169.35 per year). For operational and efficiency reason this is integrated with other street cleaning activities undertaken in the City Centre.

The cost of providing and emptying bespoke recycling bins in the High Street is likely to be significantly higher. Due to operational reasons it may not be possible to use the same vehicle and crew for this purpose as they are committed to undertaking other activities.

Currently the City Council does not have any on street recycling facilities other than those provided for the recycling of glass, cans and plastic bottles adjacent to the Cathedral green. Whilst the installation of on street recycling bins would raise the profile and encourage persons to recycle more, the cost of servicing such facilities is likely to be expensive in comparison to the amounts of material collected and would not significantly improve Council's overall recycling rate. In addition, there is a significant risk that the bins may be contaminated with litter making the materials collected unsuitable for recycling.

Notwithstanding the above, it is proposed to undertake a trial scheme in Abbey Grounds, St Maurice's Covert and High Street. The trial will include an estimate of the costs, quality of materials collected and practicalities associated with providing a scheme in the City Centre".



COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 18

From: Councillor Sutton

To: The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities

What is the Portfolio Holder doing to encourage the owners of long term empty homes to bring them into the rental market?

Reply

“The Council has an Empty Property Strategy and currently our actions (either directly or indirectly) return approximately 10/12 empty properties back into use each year. While there are empty properties in the district the issue of long term empties is not significant (approximately 70 empty for 3 years or more at the last count). At present the action taken is primarily in response to complaints received. This is often as a result of a neighbour reporting a perceived health risk.

There are a number of options open to the council to tackle empty properties including:

Encouraging - owners to use properties and offering advice

Penalising - e.g. by reducing Council Tax discounts (as has already been done for second homes)

Offering incentives – e.g. loans or grants to bring back into use and leasing properties in return for nomination rights

Enforcement – e.g. under health legislation, Empty Property Management Orders, Compulsory Purchase

All these examples provide the opportunity to bring properties to the rental market.

There are plans to carry out further research on empty properties and to update our existing empty property strategy in the first half of this year. Bringing empty properties back into use is a very resource intensive activity. The actions that the strategy will propose will need to be proportionate to the scale of the problem, have regard to resources needed to take action and other priorities such as the delivery of new affordable homes”.



COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 19

From: Councillor Lipscomb

To: The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

Has the Council, in the past 3 years or longer if records are available, lost or mislaid any sensitive data relating to individuals or its own business?

Whatever the reply, will the Portfolio Holder please confirm that a thorough review has taken place of our security processes and that, as a result, he believes them to be robust and fit for purpose against loss of data?

Reply

“We have had no reports of the Council having ‘lost or mislaid’ any sensitive data and we are constantly reviewing our security procedures to ensure that we meet ‘good practice’ standards where possible.

In light of recent issues at government level, we have undertaken our own exercise in December to ensure that our procedures are as up to date as possible.

We are working towards Code of Connection which is part of Government Connect (GC Connect) standards. It is possible that all authorities will have to move towards GC Connect in the future for sharing of data.

An updated Information Security Policy is due to be presented to Standards Committee. This policy is a ‘living’ document and is reviewed on an annual basis.

As part of the Digica contract we have a ‘vulnerability security’ test (through an external third party) every year. This identifies any weaknesses or vulnerability within the network and recommendations are actioned by Digica.

Heads of Service are responsible for paper data and we have had no reports of data loss”.



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 20

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

Could I be advised of the opinion of the Portfolio Holder on the merits of pollarding trees, particularly Lime trees and why the policy of both the County and City has changed over the years from active pollarding to very limited lopping of branches.

Reply

“I have no strong views to express on this issue as Portfolio Holder. In general trees should not be subject to more maintenance than is necessary, to ensure safety and their continued amenity value”.



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 21

From: Councillor Cook

To: The Leader

Does the Leader consider it democratic or sensible to allow the Mayor absolute discretion with the time allowed for questions at full Council meetings, having regard to the fact that frequently these are topical matters which are often of more interest to the public than routine Council business?

Reply

“Council Procedure Rule 14(6) states that ‘The time occupied by supplementary questions and the answers thereto shall not exceed 30 minutes’. This is on the basis that the original questions and answers are both taken ‘as read’.

The Mayor exercises discretion over this process under the general authority which any chairman has, to facilitate the effective conduct of meetings.

At the past six Council meetings, 16,19,16,14,17 and 18 original questions respectively have been asked (24 tonight) Most questions result in at least one supplementary question and, on occasions, the Mayor has used his discretion to limit these, to ensure that the process is completed within (or close to) 30 minutes.

The issue of the time allowed for questions has been raised in the past and the co-operation of Group Leaders was sought to monitor the appropriateness of questions from their respective groups, and to remind everyone to avoid making long statements which are closer to debate than a question”.



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 22

From: Councillor Collin

To: The Portfolio Holder for Performance and Communications

Can the Leader update the Council with any developments in respect of the future of the 101 (single non-emergency number) service?

Reply

“The 101 service will continue to operate until 14 February 2008, the Police Authority is broadly supportive of the service and would like to see the benefits continue after this date.

The Chief Constable has sought the views of each partner local authority to establish the level of support for continuing the service and to identify what, if any, level of funding could be provided by the partners to continue the service during 2008/9 through the Chief Executives meeting which was held on Friday 4 January 2008.

It was the view of Winchester City Council's Cabinet that we would support the continuation of the 101 Service and would help to fund it, however at that meeting CX's agreed to recommend to Members that, in the light of the Home Office decision, the service be phased out and not continued with council funding.

A responsive service should in future be provided through local authority customer service centres. However, that the transition should be managed to minimise disruption to services”.



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 23

From: Councillor Stephens

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

Can the Portfolio Holder assure us that Southern Water will be working to keep the closure of Romsey Road to a minimum, during the installation of the new drainage system?

Reply

“The works are permitted under the Street Works Act and require a Road Opening Notice which is issued and monitored by the County Council. This has been subject to detailed discussions with Southern Water and has been restricted to 10 weeks. Southern Water is liable to a fine if they exceed this.

Advance works have already been undertaken which did not affect the highway but which will help to shorten the length of time which Romsey Road is closed”.



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 9 January 2008

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 24

From: Councillor Beveridge

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport

At its December meeting Cabinet discussed the removal of Pay on Foot equipment from all car parks in Winchester using this system and resolved in principle to remove all this equipment and to replace it with Pay and Display. As there has been considerable opposition to this change will the Portfolio Holder confirm that no changes will be made to the Pay on Foot car parks without a thorough examination of all the relevant factors including other pay on foot systems.

Reply

“The proposals will be advertised by Public Notice in the Hampshire Chronicle on Thursday 10 January 2008 seeking views on the possible removal of pay on foot systems and replacement with pay and display machines. This will allow objections and comments to be submitted up till 1 February 2008. A meeting of the Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee will then consider the matter during February.

The building works at Ashburton Court require the closure of the Sussex Street entrance/ exit from the end of February for a period of around 12 months. The works also require the removal of a microwave link transmitter back to the car park/CCTV office which allows for the barriers to be operated remotely through the CCTV help point when problems occur. The pay on foot system cannot therefore operate without this link, and with only one entrance/exit, without causing lengthy delays to customers and resulting in long queues in Tower Street which would have knock on effects for the one-way system in that part of the Town. As such pay on foot in Tower Street will have to be suspended from the end of February and replaced with pay and display machines for around 12 months”.