



**COUNCIL MEETING – 8 December 2011**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 1**

From: Councillor Henry

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport

“The pest control service is now in house so as to be able to respond more efficiently to areas of particular concern in the district. Given that the introduction of charges will prevent many people from reporting incidents of rat infestation, could the Portfolio Holder please confirm whether there is a system which actively encourages the reporting of such incidents which does not incur a cost to the individual.”

**Reply**

“The main reasons for bringing the Pest Control service in house was to provide a more cost effective and flexible service to residents. Part of this process included the introduction of charges in line with neighbouring local authorities.

All households are at liberty to report pest infestations whether these emanate from their own property or those of their neighbours, although in many cases this level of certainty is not always known at the time.

In introducing the charges Cabinet agreed to allow the Head of Environmental Protection Team to use his discretion to resolve any infestations informally, including waiving of charges in some cases, before relying on enforcement procedures to deal with problems.

The team is monitoring the trends in reporting of infestations and treatments and as agreed by Cabinet an update report will be provided 6 months after charges were introduced confirming the impact on service demands. This report will include an analysis of the number of complaints about infestations from other premises as trend data on treatment requests.”



**Winchester**  
City Council

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**QUESTION 2**

From: Councillor Maynard

To: The Leader of the Council

"Has Winchester City Council ever debated whether prayers should be said at the start of council meetings, and if so when was this?"

**Reply**

"There is no record of the Council debating the question of prayers at Council meetings for at least the last 15 years (and probably longer).

It has been the Council's custom and practice to have prayers said by the Mayor's Chaplain, before the start of each Ordinary Meeting of the Council. However, in 2007/08, the Mayor did not appoint a Chaplain and consequently no prayers were said before Council meetings during that year. There have also been occasions when the Mayor's Chaplain has been unavailable and again no prayers have been said.

Over the years, a few Members who did not wish to participate in prayers have remained outside the Council Chamber until the prayers were concluded.

Technically, prayers are not part of the formal Council meeting."



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**QUESTION 3**

From: Councillor Hiscock

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport

“When are we going to see the public toilets in Market Lane brought up to an acceptable standard of cleanliness as was promised by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport several Council meetings ago?”

**Reply**

“The new contractor for the cleansing of public conveniences began on 1 October 2011 and client monitoring staff have monitored their performance as part of the early mobilisation of the contract.

There were some initial teething problems with replenishment of supplies and cleansing but there has not been a significant increase in problems or complaints recently.

Staff will continue to make sure that performance standards are met and if necessary use contract enforcement procedures to secure improvements where required.”



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**QUESTION 4**

From: Councillor Rutter

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport

“When does the Portfolio Holder plan to introduce kerbside glass collection?”

**Reply**

“This option was considered at Council on 24 February as part of consideration of the 2011/12 budget paper when it was agreed that the project of collecting Kerbside Glass be deferred until the Council’s finances had measurably improved.

In the interim, a budget provision of £10,000 was provided to improve community bring sites funded by a release from the Major Investment Reserve. This has resulted in improvements to several sites across the District.

The financial projections for 2012/13 still show a significant deficit to be met in the Council’s overall budget and with predicted collection costs of approximately £200,000 and an additional £200,000 for the purchase of containers the proposal does not represent value for money in the current climate. The City Council therefore has no plans to introduce kerbside recycling for the foreseeable future.

We will however continue to support our comprehensive bring site network to capture glass for recycling and income levels from these facilities still make this a valuable contribution towards our recycling levels and recycling rates.”



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**QUESTION 5**

From: Councillor Hutchison

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport

“What progress has there been in producing feasibility studies of the potential for CCHP/District Heating schemes at the west end of Winchester town (covering the County Council and other institutions along the Romsey Road) and also as part of the Silver Hill development? Is the potential for CCHP/DH at Silver Hill being considered in relation to the expanded potential for such a scheme at River Park Leisure Centre as well as extending any such scheme to the Guildhall and City Offices?”

**Reply**

“The City Council is working closely with Hampshire County Council and other partners on the potential to establish a District Heating/CHP scheme within Winchester Town.

The project has now progressed to a detailed business case stage following successful completion of the stage 1 feasibility study earlier this year which established that the scheme could be technically achieved.

Part of that detailed business case will include identification of potential partners and customers for any scheme which is implemented and linking this to the City Council’s own asset management plan and potential refurbishment/redevelopment of City Council assets will be considered as part of this process.”



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**QUESTION 6**

From: Councillor Learney

To: The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement

“What verbal or written representations have been made by either of the Members of Parliament covering the Winchester District on the Winchester District Local Plan Joint Core Strategy?”

**Reply**

“I have spoken with our MPs through political channels and both have made clear that they consider the content of the Core Strategy a matter for the City Council guided by its public engagement and the local evidence base. They are satisfied that the Blueprint process gave local communities the opportunity to influence the Core Strategy as intended by the principles of localism which they both support.”