



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 1

From: Councillor Mason

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport

“At the last Council Meeting I asked a supplementary on road sweeping in the District. It concerned scheduling arrangements to which the Portfolio Holder said ‘I will have to come back to you on that’.

I have heard nothing.”

Reply

“I am sorry that you did not receive the information on cleansing schedules as requested at the last Council meeting.

This information has now been received and forwarded to you for information. These schedules will form the basis of contract monitoring by client staff so if there are any issues with contractor performance then please raise this with Robert Heathcock who will ensure that they are properly investigated.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 2

From: Councillor Evans

To: The Leader

“Statements from Wickham Parish Council backed up by surveys from the residents of Wickham clearly show that local people wanted no more than 100 extra houses to be allocated to Wickham in the Winchester City Council Core Strategy. As at the last Council meeting, the Council decided to ignore local residents’ views and voted for a much larger number of up to 250 houses to be allocated for Wickham. Could the Portfolio Holder please explain what options are now available to Wickham residents and the Parish Council who still feel that because of the proposed Fareham SDA of 7,500 houses right on its border there is no need or desire to have the higher number of housing?”

Reply

“The Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy has been published for public consultation and I note that Wickham Parish Council has submitted an objection to the ‘soundness’ of housing allocation for Wickham (150-250 dwellings) and this will be considered by the independent Inspector appointed to examine the Plan. It will be for the Inspector to determine whether he/she considers this to be a ‘soundness’ issue and, if so, who they wish to invite to the examination to discuss it. The examination is expected to be held in July 2012, with the Inspector’s report likely to be published in the autumn.

The Parish Council may wish to consider developing a Neighbourhood Plan, as the Localism Act provides for, to set out clearly their aspirations for the community’s future within the Government’s new framework for locally-led planning.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 3

From: Councillor Sanders

To: The Leader as Portfolio Holder for Local Economy and Tourism,
Communication and Special Projects

“Was the Portfolio Holder surprised by the results of the Winchester street market survey carried out by Tourism South East and published last week?”

Reply

“The results of the independent market survey undertaken by Tourism South East were welcome and showed that over 94% of residents and visitors interviewed felt that the markets made the experience of visiting Winchester more enjoyable. The overwhelming majority of the people interviewed believed that the look and feel of all the different markets were in keeping with Winchester’s image as a visitor destination.

In managing the Market, the Council has considered the views of the BID, together with those of a wide range of retailers and residents and has continually sought to fine tune the offer to take account of these opinions. The markets are not to every ones taste, but in general they are a significant part of the retail offer of the City and help attract visitors to the advantage of many City Centre businesses.

In answer to your question, I am pleased that the outcome of the survey has been so clear and helps identify the important role that the Market plays in making Winchester such an attractive place to shop in and visit. A final report on the subject will be presented to Cabinet during March or April.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 4

From: Councillor Higgins

To: The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Estates

“At what stage will ward members be included in information about development of Council land in their Ward?”

Reply

“The nature and extent of Members involvement in the development of Council land in their ward depends upon the scale and type of development under consideration.

Any significant decisions regarding land will involve either reports to Council or under the PHD system. At this stage in proceedings Members have the opportunity to make representations before a decision is made. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to provide Members with further information and the need for this will be considered on a case by case basis according to the circumstances pertaining at the time.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 5

From: Councillor Berry

To: The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Landlord Services

“Two weekends ago there were prolonged power cuts of 2 to 3 hours and longer in Kingsworthy, Twyford and other areas, some going on all day. I have been asked by Judith Steventon Baker representing TACT to raise her concerns over the lack of response and information from Winchester City Council.

These power cuts corresponded with the coldest weather this year and many people were trying to contact Winchester City Council because of their concern for the wellbeing of the older and vulnerable people of the district. They were particularly disappointed as there is a government directive for councils to put in place contingency plans to ensure the safety of such people during extreme weather conditions. Although I understand such action is for temperatures of below -10, the extreme conditions that weekend combined with the power failure I believe should have meant that action should have taken place and that Winchester City Council should be well aware of these actions and able to advise people what they are and what people can do to help.

I understand this government directive may not be pointed at district councils, however partnership working which we are promoting should mean that we are involved and able to help. Can I and TACT be assured we will be in that position in the future?”

Reply

“The City Council’s response to such instances would be dependent on the circumstances. Reports of power failures are common place (at least weekly) and in the first instance, callers are referred to Southern Electric or Scottish and Southern Energy Group for further information. Customer Service Advisors will also liaise Southern Electric or Scottish and Southern Energy Group for an estimated repair time and a decision would be taken at this stage as to whether the matter should be escalated. In the majority of cases,

estimated repair times are less than two hours and in general these would not be escalated.

The City Council works very closely with Hampshire County Council regarding the operation of its Emergency Plan. The County Council has supplies of temporary heating and have protocols agreed with Southern Electric or Scottish and Southern Energy Group regarding them being notified of serious problems. However, they were not notified of any instances recently and will be investigating why this did not happen.

With regard to the cases referred to in the question, the Kings Worthy and Compton 'outages' were estimated to be fixed within two hours. Unfortunately, further problems were experienced throughout the weekend where power was lost on a number of occasions.

The Twyford incident did affect sheltered housing tenants. An Older Persons Support Officer attended the site to ensure the wellbeing and provide support to residents. Again, the repair took longer than predicted, although it was not considered necessary to rehome residents.

An incident at Whitewings House in Denmead this time last year was predicted to run into the night and arrangements were therefore made to decant residents. Arrangements for responding to similar incidents for sheltered housing were reviewed in light of this case. For general needs housing, the Council's response would be in accordance with its Emergency Plan, as it would for all private sector housing.

Council officers will be meeting with the County Council's Emergency Planning team to discuss these cases and to review whether any further action is required in the future."



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 6

From: Councillor Jackson

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport

"What is the Portfolio Holder to do to ensure that Winchester City Council is signed up to support the 'Cities fit for Cycling' campaign, currently being run by *The Times*?"

Reply

"The aims of the campaign are supported and the City Council is working on schemes along with the County Council which support these aims including:

- 20mph speed limits
- The Hampshire Sustainable Transport Towns initiative
- Traffic management and safety schemes
- Cycling Route projects such as the National Cycle Network through Winchester
- Development of a District-wide cycle strategy
- Appointment of a Cycling champion for the City Council

I would encourage individual members to support the campaign."



COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 7

From: Councillor Scott

To: The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing & Landlord Services

“Could the Portfolio Holder advise me of the funds to be made available for Estate Improvements in St Lukes in the coming financial year and how he intends to apply these resources?”

Reply

“The proposed Housing Revenue Account budget for 2012/13 includes provision of £250,000 for the Estate Improvement programme. Proposals from members, officers and the community will be invited in shortly.

Submitted proposals are considered by myself and the Head of Landlord Services, with advice from other officers, taking into account:

- a) Cost of proposal
- b) The scope for any match/joint funding from other sources
- c) The scope for the proposal to be funded from another source
- d) Number of tenants benefiting from the proposal
- e) Severity of issue
- f) Other projects that have been undertaken or are currently in progress in the location

How much will be available for particular wards will depend on the number and quality of proposals made.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 8

From: Councillor Thompson

To: The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing and Landlord Services

“Can he give an update on the results of the consultation carried out in Stanmore with landlords and others on the implementation of an Additional Licensing Scheme for houses in multiple occupancy?”

Reply

“The formal consultation period for the proposed Additional Licensing Scheme (ALS) for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) in Stanmore closed at the end of October 2011. A wide range of comments were received from residents, businesses, Landlords, Property Agents and the University about the issues caused by HMO's and whether an ALS would assist in dealing with the problems.

The feedback identified several common complaints allegedly caused by HMO's, these included noise, rubbish in gardens and littering. The majority of respondents were of the opinion the Council should intervene to deal with the poor management of HMO's however there were mixed views on whether an ALS would be the most effective measure of doing this. The Guidance which accompanies the regulations for the introduction of an ALS suggests that a Council must justify what other actions it has already taken and have not been successful to tackle local HMO issues, before embarking on the formal declaration of an ALS.

Officers have been exploring the appropriate response to the range of issues raised by the consultation and have been working on developing a Neighbourhood Management Team (NMT), initially in Stanmore as a pilot but subject to resources could be rolled out across the District. A Cabinet report is being prepared by the Assistant Director (Environment) which will report back on the Stanmore ALS consultation and more importantly the measures the Council will introduce to tackle the issues raised.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 9

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Safety and Public Health

“Could the Portfolio Holder advise me what are the current legal requirements (including those relating to health) appropriate to operate a tattoo parlour and has he any idea how many un-regulated operators there are across the District?”

Reply

“The Health Protection Team maintain a database of commercial premises where they have responsibility for health and safety, this includes 4 known tattoo parlours who receive regular inspections.

- Asgard Body Piercing and Tattooist, Parchment Street, Winchester
- Mr Bubbas Tattoo Shop, Cromwell Road, Winchester
- The Angel Shop, Little Minster Street, Winchester
- Destiny Tat2, Stockbridge Road, Winchester

Under health and safety law the City Council has no powers to inspect domestic premises where it is possible for a tattooist to operate, the Health and Safety Executive has this responsibility.

To enable the City Council to have greater controls over skin piercers a consultation process has just begun with a view to adopting by-laws later this year so that tattooists and other skin piercers can be regulated and this would enable the City Council to include those operating in domestic premises.

There are allegations of 1 tattooist operating from a domestic premise but investigations have failed to confirm this at present.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 10

From: Councillor Cook

To: The Portfolio Holder for Administration, Innovation and Improvement

“Would the Portfolio Holder state how the target saving of £200k is to be achieved and:-

- a) how many posts are likely to go and
- b) the anticipated impact on services to the public?

Reply

“As the Budget Paper makes clear, the Administration will continue to look for opportunities for savings by rationalising our staffing arrangements and seeking further efficiencies. At the same time, we are committed to protecting services to the public.

Papers to the Personnel Committee have made clear that reviews are underway in a number of areas, and that savings totalling £40k have already been achieved through reductions in finance and planning, whilst more legal services are being provided to the Housing Revenue Account rather than charged to the General Fund. Further reviews are underway in Museums – which have been reported to Cabinet – and in the Finance, Human Resources and Customer Service teams.

Officers are also exploring options for a more integrated approach to managing services which affect local neighbourhoods, and for better management and greater flexibility in how we manage our administrative support resources.

It would be wrong to speculate precisely how many posts will be affected at this stage, and of course Members will be consulted as matters are brought forward for decision. Councillor Cook will appreciate that managing change, seeking improvement and driving out efficiency in the Council is an ongoing process and it is entirely appropriate to factor that into the budget without entering into too much detail. This is, after all, exactly the same approach as the Liberal Democrat Administration took in their 2011/12 Budget.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 11

From: Councillor Hutchison

To: The Leader

“Does the Portfolio Holder agree that the area around Winchester railway station, including the Cattle Market site, is ripe for further development and that - to secure the best possible future uses for the area - the City Council needs to be pro-active, produce a spatial analysis of the needs of the City which should include a planning brief for the area round the station?”

Reply

“Yes I agree that there are important areas of land in the Station area which would benefit from redevelopment. I would want the priority to be on using these developments to contribute to the modernisation of Winchester’s economy, although there is also likely to be scope to include housing, leisure and other uses. The Council’s Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy includes an analysis of the needs of the City and sets out a broad spatial strategy and proposals to achieve this. The emerging Vision for Winchester also provides a context for shaping the future of this site.

As the owner of some of the key areas involved the Council has the opportunity be pro-active and have substantial influence over development, particularly on the ‘Carfax’ site and the Cattle Market car park. A planning brief or action plan for this area would be an option although there are not currently resources allocated to this and the Council has also to take account of its interests as landowner, car park provider, etc. I will discuss with officers how best we can coordinate the development of these areas to best secure the types of economic and other development needed in the town.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 12

From: Councillor Hiscock

To: The Leader

“What plans do the administration have to reduce City Centre car parking and what stage have they reached with any plans for individual car parks?”

Reply

“The agreed Winchester Town Access Plan states that opportunities will be explored with a view to initially reducing car parking capacity within the Town centre by up to 15% (500 spaces). In accordance with this a number of opportunities are being explored. These need to be considered in relation to the parking strategy and therefore the location and role of each car park needs to be carefully considered.

The Council is currently progressing the development of a replacement Doctors Surgery and Pharmacy on the site of the Upper Brook Street Car Park and a planning application will shortly be submitted for this development. Consideration is also being given to the potential for the development of part of the Chesil Street surface car park.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 13

From: Councillor Scott

To: The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing & Landlord Services

“Could the Portfolio Holder advise me of the average time it takes to re-let a Council owned property in St Lukes and how this compares to a year ago?”

Reply

“The Council’s average relet time for general needs properties is currently 19 days compared to 22 days at this time last year and 34 days the year before.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2012

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 14

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport

“Could the Portfolio Holder advise me what consideration was given to including trees within the refurbishment of the Square project and is it now too late to do so?”

Reply

“This matter was considered as part of the consultation and design of the refurbishment scheme for The Square. There were a number of issues to consider including the impact of trees on the historic environment of the area: the number of services/cabling under the ground and the impact roots may have on these services and on buildings; and maintenance issues such as leaf sweep and tree trimming. As such it was decided that it would not be appropriate to include the planting of trees as part of the scheme.

Discussions are however underway, facilitated by BiD, to determine whether small trees and other planting could be provided in pots/planters. This was discussed at a recent meeting following which some proposals will be drawn up by BiD for further consideration.”