



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 1

From: Councillor Hiscock

To: The Leader

“What is the projected annual income to the Council from a completed development on Silver Hill using the 2009 Planning Approval?”

Reply

“Under the Development Agreement, the Council is to receive an annual rent geared to a percentage of the overall rental income of the scheme, with a minimum guaranteed annual rent of £250,000. This would be the minimum level of rent, and it is quite possible that the actual income may be around £400,000.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 2

From: Councillor Rutter

To: The Portfolio Holder for Service Delivery

“Now that the entire development at Barton Farm has been closed down indefinitely, pending conclusion of price negotiations with the landowner, Winchester College, what role does the City Council think it should play to ensure the development will still deliver the 40% or 800 affordable homes currently in the plans?”

Reply

“I am not sure how or why Cllr Rutter has come to the view that the Barton Farm development has ‘closed down indefinitely’.

The planning consent has been implemented and as soon as Cala Homes and the College have concluded their negotiations Cala will mobilise to begin the first house building phase of the development. We do not know precisely when this will be and therefore the site is being secured until a start is made.

There is nothing the Council has been asked to do or needs to do in relation to achieving a total of 40% affordable housing from the development. There is already provision in the Section 106 agreement for different phases of development each to have a slightly different percentage of affordable housing depending on what type of housing that phase consists of, providing that the final total is 800.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 3

From: Councillor Twelftree

To: The Leader

“Have you received any indication from Ms Lloyd-Jones's as to when her review will be completed and her report will be available to this Council?”

Reply

“The timing of the completion of the review is a matter for Ms Lloyd-Jones. The Council did not set a deadline, but agreed she should have the time she felt necessary to complete her work.

I understand she continues to receive submissions from Councillors, which I am sure she will wish to give careful consideration to. So I would suggest the completion of the report is not imminent.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 4

From: Councillor Laming

To: The Portfolio Holder for Local Economy

“Why are the Council and Hampshire County Council cutting funds from Dial a Ride when the service is being increasingly needed? In the case of the elderly residents in Oliver’s Battery that used to be served by the No 2 Bus service, when this service was removed from the timetable the residents were told that they should use the Dial a Ride.

If Dial a Ride becomes unavailable how do you expect these people to be able to visit the doctor or go shopping? It is unacceptable for them to be marooned particularly when they live in the city boundary.”

Reply

“The City Council has no plans to cut funds for Dial-a-Ride. Furthermore we have not been informed by the County Council that they are considering withdrawing their financial support for this service. We would have to consider our position regarding the funding the City Council provides for Dial-a-Ride should the financial situation change in future.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 5

From: Councillor Warwick

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing

“Are the fleet of Stagecoach Kings buses launched recently likely to have a measurable impact on the air quality in Central Winchester?”

Reply

“A report addressing traffic profiles and their modelled impact on Winchester City Centre’s air quality was commissioned by the Environmental Health Service, back in the spring. The final report by Bureau Veritas Environmental Consultants was received last week on Friday 30th October.

Section 6 of this report discusses the modelled impact from the adoption of Euro VI engine buses for scenario 1 (SC1) Park and Ride buses only and a scenario 2 (SC2) where both Park and Ride buses and all of the Stagecoach Fleet use Euro VI buses. The report states:

‘that owing to the upgrade of buses on the Winchester Park and Ride route to Euro VI annual mean NO₂ concentrations reduce at the worst-case receptor locations (i.e. those locations that experience the highest annual mean concentrations in the Base scenario) by 1.6µg/m³ to 2.8µg/m³; this represents a reduction of 2.9% to 4.8% relative to the baseline concentrations.

By comparison, upgrading all Stagecoach buses in Winchester to Euro VI will reduce annual mean NO₂ concentrations at the worst-case receptor locations by 3.2µg/m³ to 4.7µg/m³; this represents a reduction of 5.8% to 8.1% relative to the baseline concentrations’.

The worst case reception locations identified in the report are Romsey Road Chesil Street and St Georges Street.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 6

From: Councillor Simon Cook

To: The Leader

“What is the estimated cost to the Council of the campaign by those opposed to the Silver Hill development, in terms of providing formal responses to critical submissions and the expenditure on professional advice?”

Reply

“Before agreeing to the 2014 Silver Hill scheme, the Council took legal advice which indicated that it was lawful to agree the proposed scheme.

As a result of the challenge being made, the Council had to engage consultants and advisors (including legal and surveying expertise) to defend the Council’s position. As well as these costs, the Council must also pay Councillor Gottlieb’s costs of bringing the challenge.

Following the judgment, further professional advice was needed on the various options open to the Council. When Henderson elected to pursue the 2009 scheme, legal and surveyor advice was required to review the submissions made by Henderson, and the costs of this were increased due to the Council’s decision to engage a second set of consultants to advise on the financial viability of the scheme.

Some costs (such as advice on the identity of the funder and social housing provider) would have been incurred in any event, whether the scheme being pursued was the 2014 scheme or the 2009 scheme. However, the costs attributable to defending the challenge and considering options after the judgment were only incurred as a result of the challenge.

I understand that the total extra costs incurred since the challenge is in excess of £500,000 excluding officer time.

Although a proportion of these costs will be reimbursed by the developer and included in the development account, the effect of this will be to reduce the overall profitability of the scheme, and potentially therefore reducing the profit share payable to the Council. Any costs which cannot be properly charged to the development account will have to be paid by the Council directly.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 7

From: Councillor Thacker

To: The Portfolio Holder for Local Economy

"Winchester is a large, predominately rural district. Emphasis is put on the need for rural affordable housing, better transport and broadband; but equally fundamental to the success of rural communities is the survival and growth of the rural economy. How do we in Winchester support local rural business and tourism?"

Reply

"The Winchester District Economic Strategy 2010-2020 fully recognises the importance of Winchester's rural economy, acknowledging that two thirds of the District's population live outside the city. This translates into a number of actions to help rural businesses, economies and communities thrive, and some examples are given below.

The Council co-ordinates a highly successful market towns development project, employing a project officer who is part funded by the four market towns. Their remit is to deliver projects and events which promote businesses and encourage visitors and their local communities to make the most of the shops and services available to them. For example the *Road to Agincourt* event in July this year in Bishops Waltham brought 2,000 people into the town, and *The Taste of Wickham* attracted 5,000 visitors in this its second year. Denmead and Alresford have also benefitted from family orientated events for Hallowe'en and Easter, alongside a more active business forum that connects with local residents. The scheme has attracted external funding not only from the businesses themselves, but from the Awards for All lottery fund and The Southern Co-operative Limited.

The Council is the Accountable Body for the Fieldfare LEADER programme. Between 2009 and 2013, 134 projects were allocated £1.4 million across the Winchester and East Hampshire Districts, resulting in 126 new jobs. A new LEADER programme is soon to be launched with plans to deliver more grant funding to aid rural economic projects.

Some of our biggest visitor attractions are based in the rural areas, and are active members of the *Winchester and the Heart of Hampshire* Destination Management Partnership led by the Council's tourism team. The team has close links with the South Downs National Park Authority, too, and was instrumental in developing new rural bus routes to places such as Marwell Zoo with the help of a Local Sustainable Transport Fund allocation for the Park. As food tourism continues to grow, the Council works ever more closely with rural pubs, vineyards and producers to encourage visitors to explore the whole of the District and not just the city.

Whilst the Council is proud of the services it has put in place to support rural businesses – such as our Rural Planning Advisors in the Development Management Team - officers generally seek to provide support equally for all businesses, wherever they are based. Grants, inspections, training opportunities, networking meetings and advice are available for all businesses. We hope that you, as Members, spread the word about the benefits of working with the Council and encourage your local businesses to attend the *Future of Winchester* conference on 3rd December to find out more.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 8

From: Councillor Thompson

To: The Leader

“Could he confirm whether Hendersons have now met all the conditions in the Development Agreement for it to go unconditional. If not, when does he expect this to happen?”

Reply

“The position remains as reported to Cabinet on 21 October 2015. The outstanding conditions in the Development Agreement have not yet been met, but Hendersons are continuing to work towards finalising the agreements with the affordable housing provider and the funder to allow the Agreement to go unconditional.

In their letter to the Council of 13 October (CAB2736 Appendix 1), Hendersons indicated their intention to be in a position to start on site by the end of this year.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 9

From: Councillor L Ruffell

To: The Portfolio Holder for Service Delivery

“Re: Station Approach, Has the Council taken on board the advice from the City of Winchester Trust and others to seek external advise?”

Reply

“The Council has secured external legal advice on all aspects of the project including procurement. An RIBA accredited adviser has also been commissioned to provide advice and technical support through the tendering and design stages including assisting with the pre-qualification and short listing processes.

Hampshire County Council is also providing architectural and procurement advice and support.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 10

From: Councillor Power

To: The Portfolio Holder for Built Environment

“What was the value of the government grant spent on the Denmead Neighbourhood Plan? How much was the funding from WCC spent on the Denmead Neighbourhood Plan? Why was this opportunity not offered to other parish & town councils?”

Reply

“The Government offered ‘front runner’ funding of £20,000 per neighbourhood plan in advance of the Localism Act, in order to initiate interest in neighbourhood planning. The City Council applied for front runner status on behalf of Denmead Parish Council and, in December 2012, the City Council agreed that Denmead Parish Council could claim all £20,000 of the ‘front runner’ grant to progress its Neighbourhood Plan and that the City Council should claim any additional funding available to support neighbourhood plans (see report CAB2427(LDF), 17 December 2012).

Denmead also successfully bid for free consultancy support, funded directly by DCLG, for its plan. All of this support and funding was used by the Parish Council to help it develop and draft the plan as well as for consultation and publication of documents.

As the local planning authority, the City Council has a duty to support the preparation of neighbourhood plans and to undertake key stages which are set out in legislation. In recognition of this the Government provides funding of up to £30,000 per neighbourhood plan.

Payments are staged and, in Denmead’s case, the first payment of £5,000 was claimed following designation of the plan area (received 2012), a second payment of £5,000 once the pre-examination plan was publicised, and the third payment of £20,000 following the successful completion of the examination (2nd and 3rd payments received 2015). These payments covered the costs associated with both the Examination and Referendum (Examiner’s expenses approx. £11,500 + VAT and referendum costs approximately

£7,000) and contributed to covering the City Council's staff costs in supporting the development of the plan.

More recently, the Government has made additional funding available directly to neighbourhood plan groups, of up to £8,000 per plan. This can be used for a range of matters such as household surveys, developing the evidence base, engaging planning consultants, and consultation costs.

All the funding sources mentioned above came from and were promoted by Government with some of the support being made available directly to neighbourhood planning groups, and other grants being to the City Council to help cover its costs.

The opportunity was offered, by Government, to every town and parish council and the City Council had no objection at all to communities taking up the offer as Denmead did. However most communities came to the conclusion, correctly in my view, that the level of engagement being offered as part of Local Plan Part 2 represented a much quicker and cheaper route to local involvement in site allocations."



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 11

From: Councillor E Berry

To: The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services

"Can the Portfolio Holder assure me that the new projects going ahead are being built to a decent standard?"

Reply

"In my response I have mainly assumed that the question refers to the Council's new build programme.

All of the Council's new homes are designed and built to a high standard, in particular all are built to lifetime homes standards (which allows homes to be adapted as occupants needs change) and meet "secured by design" principles.

Prior to the replacement of the Code for Sustainable Homes all new properties met the equivalent of Code 4 for energy and water to minimize the running costs for future tenants, it is the intention to uphold these standards in future Council new homes schemes.

With regard to other housing projects such as loft conversions, common room conversions, sheltered upgrades, new scooter stores, all are fully compliant with building regulations, planning rules and exceed the Decent Homes standard where appropriate."



COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 12

From: Councillor Scott

To: The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services

“Of the 5,000 homes managed by the City Council, it is estimated that 1,200 may be valued above the suggested thresholds for the South East region to support the up and coming "Right to Buy" scheme for Register Providers. Can the Portfolio Holder confirm what impact this will have on the City Council housing provision and in hindsight should the Council have entered into the 30 year debt with the government in buying the Council stock?”

Reply

“The Department for Communities and Local Government has yet to issue any guidance on thresholds for High Value properties, or any information in relation to annual sales expectations. Any thresholds already published in the press have been speculative and we are waiting for more details on this issue.

The Government has indicated that councils will be able to retain sufficient receipts to clear any debt but again no firm information has yet been published.

The “Self financing” regime introduced in 2012 allowed the Council to invest more in maintaining existing homes, building new homes as well as introducing a range of discretionary programmes.

The Council had little choice about taking on the debt associated with its properties. However, resources available from next year will remain much higher than those available to fund housing services through the old Housing subsidy system.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 13

From: Councillor Gemmell

To: The Portfolio Holder for Local Economy

"Can the Portfolio Holder tell me what support for business is being provided by the Council - especially following on from the previous Mayor's dinner for young entrepreneurs?"

Reply

"There is hardly a team in the Council which does not provide services for the business community, from planning and food safety advice to commercial leases and start-up grants. My response to Cllr Thacker's question elsewhere in these papers provides a flavour of the work done by officers to support our rural businesses in particular, but more information can be found on the Council's website at www.winchester.gov.uk/business/ and all Members receive a regular copy of our *Entrepreneur* newsletter which is sent to businesses across the District.

Recent Administrations have placed the local economy at the forefront of Council policy, and many of our big projects are designed to create a successful business environment. Ambitious and exciting developments such as those at Station Approach and Silver Hill will provide new workspace, retail premises and eateries, and the recent Winnall Planning Framework project has led to new policies in Local Plan Part 2 which will enhance the long term success of Winnall as one of the business powerhouses of the District.

I am delighted to announce that – following an early workspace study commissioned by the Council - work has now begun on the project to develop a Creative Enterprise Centre at Barfield Close, providing space for start-ups and developing businesses from across the creative industries. Officers are working closely with the two universities in the city to ensure that this provides the support and facilities needed to ensure that the businesses can make a valuable contribution to the cultural economy of the District.

Meanwhile, our work at North Whiteley has identified a demand for affordable industrial units for tradespeople, and we are beginning to explore the potential for rural business zones in the south of the District.

In the midst of these bigger projects, the Council is also gearing up for the visit to Winchester on 24 November of the national Small Business Saturday bus. This is an opportunity for small and start up businesses across the District to hear from 14 local business experts about issues they may face. With subjects ranging from website copy and compliance through to employment law and rates relief schemes, small businesses are being invited to attend, for free, and hear some top tips to better their business.

In addition to such interventions, the Council has ongoing relationships with Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, Winchester and Segensworth Business Improvement Districts, Hampshire County Council and a range of other partners across Hampshire who together seek to ensure our local businesses' needs are being met.

With the Christmas season starting in earnest in Winchester on Tuesday 10 November with what will be the biggest-ever switch-on event, you can all play your part in supporting our retail businesses by shopping in your local high streets this festive season.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 14

From: Councillor J Berry

To: The Portfolio Holder for Local Economy

“Given that this week is Living Wage Week, how is the Council encouraging its contractors and other employers in Winchester to become Living Wage employers?”

Reply

“From 1 April 2016, the Government will introduce a new mandatory National Living Wage for workers aged 25 and above, initially set at £7.20 – a rise of 50p relative to the current National Minimum Wage (NMW) rate. That’s a £910 per annum increase in earnings for a full-time worker on the current NMW.

The NMW (currently set at £6.70 for adults) will continue to apply for those aged 21 to 24, with the premium added on top for those aged 25 and over, taking the total hourly rate to the National Living Wage.

The Government has furthermore asked the Low Pay Commission to recommend the level of the path of the National Living Wage going forward, with the target of the total wage reaching 60% of median earnings by 2020. The Office for Budgetary Responsibility forecasts that a full-time NMW worker will earn over £4,800 more by 2020 from the National Living Wage, in cash terms.

With so much in the media about the National Living Wage, employers are already pre-empting the 1 April date and making early introduction a point of differentiation in their offer to employees and customers alike. Officers continue to promote the Living Wage to businesses locally, and voluntary organisations applying for core funding for 2015/16 have also been informed that they will need to be paying the mandatory Living Wage in order to receive funding from the Council in future.

The European Commission states that any requirement that contractors pay their staff higher than the UK minimum wage is unlikely to be compatible with European Law. The Council therefore encourages – rather than mandates -

contractors to adopt the living wage, particularly through tendering processes. The recently renewed cleaning contract provides for all staff to be paid the Living Wage, in advance of the national deadline.

Officers continue to work with partners such as the Business Improvement District and Chamber of Commerce to promote the Living Wage to other employers. Moreover, voluntary organisations applying for core funding for 2015/16 have also been informed that they will need to be paying the mandatory Living Wage in order to receive funding from the Council.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 15

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing

“In the Portfolio Holder’s reply to the question I asked at Full Council on the 15 July 2015 (see question 21) regarding commercial refuse bins left permanently on the public highway it was stated that due to the actions of the Council’s Public Realm Group and Neighbourhood Services Officers there had been a number of improvements regarding bins left on the highways. Particular reference was made to Zizzi’s restaurant and Hammonds Passage. Similar views were also expressed in the Press Release dated 1 September 2015, headed “Restaurants commended for action on waste”.

I was wondering if the Portfolio Holder has walked along Hammonds Passage recently as when I was there on Sunday 1 November on top of the 14 refuse bins that are left permanently on the pavement there were additional black sacks on the ground and two of the largest bins were overflowing with rubbish.

Does the Portfolio Holder feel that this is acceptable and if not then what action can be taken to address this problem. Interestingly, Cote Brassiere which is located further up the High Street and is of a similar size to Zizzi doesn’t leave any bins on the pavement yet they have very limited storage space available inside the premises so what I wonder are they doing that Zizzi’s isn’t.”

Reply

“I would be concerned about any business in the city centre where the storage of commercial waste is causing a real problem.

However, I understand that this particular restaurant has been working with our officers and the BID to improve the storage of waste in this location which has resulted in a significant improvement compared to the situation a year ago. They have changed contractor and are generally attempting to keep all waste inside bins.

We are also aware that some black sacks are being left at the end of the Passage adjacent to St Clement Street. I understand that these sacks are from other premises and are not connected to the restaurant. Officers are looking into this problem.

A Neighbourhood Support Officer visited the area on 2nd November and noted that the passage was in tidy condition but nevertheless spoke to the restaurant manager regarding this issue.

I can add that the BID is currently looking at the feasibility of introducing a free re-cycling service for dry mixed waste. If this is implemented it should provide further benefits for businesses in relation to waste storage.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 16

From: Councillor Hutchison

To: The Leader

"Could the Leader please tell us who will be assessing the PQQs and shortlisting bidders in the Station Approach area design competition, will there be someone with design expertise and which stakeholders will be involved in the subsequent dialogue process?"

Reply

"An RIBA accredited adviser has been commissioned to provide technical and professional support and advice for the pre-qualification and short listing process. Relevant Council officers will also be involved in this process.

Hampshire County Council architectural support will be provided to assist with the Competitive dialogue. Other relevant stakeholders will be included such as Hampshire County Council transport and highways, Network Rail and train and bus operating companies as appropriate.

The Council will also commission external Cost Consultants and Valuers to support the dialogue process."



COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 17

From: Councillor Mather

To: The Portfolio Holder for Local Economy

“What parking and other preparations has the Council made for the Christmas period?”

Reply

“We have made a number of arrangements for the Christmas period in 2015 based on our experience of what worked effectively in previous years.

We will close the Broadway central bays, move the park and ride stop to outside Guildhall and coaches will be able to park in the Bar End depot to reduce congestion in this part of the centre.

In addition to this extra park & ride bus services will begin on Thursday 19th November and will run until Wednesday 23rd December. The South park and ride bus stop will once again move to the front of the Guildhall between Thursday 19th November and Thursday 24th December.

Extra bus services to cope with the additional passenger demand will also operate and include the following:

Monday to Fridays

Park & Ride buses running every 10 minutes until 6pm and then every 30 minutes until 8:30pm.

An extra bus will also run every 30 minutes picking up from Westgate & the Hospital to South Park & Ride from 3:35pm to 5:35pm.

Saturdays

Park & Ride bus frequency increases to every 10 minutes from 9:30am to 6pm and then every 30 minutes to 8:30pm.

Sundays – (22nd, 29th November, 6th, 13th, 20th December)

A free shuttle service will operate.

For East Winchester (St Catherine' s and Barfield) the Park & Ride shuttle bus to The Broadway only will run every 10 minutes from 9am to 6:30pm.

For the South Winchester Park and Ride the Shuttle bus to The Broadway only will run every 12-15 minutes 9am to 6:30pm.

We are also hoping that Pitt Park and Ride will be ready to use and are meeting with the developers this week to check on progress.

Finally, a number of Council employees are also moving from the Chesil Multi-Storey Car Park to the depot and park and ride in order to make available up to 100 extra spaces for shoppers and visitors during the festive period.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 18

From: Councillor Gottlieb

To: The Leader

“At its meeting on 10th September 2014 Cabinet agreed to let Henderson acquire the Friarsgate surgery from itself.

When Henderson acquired its interest in 2010, it put the development contract in one company, SW1, and it put the surgery which Thornfield had acquired some years earlier in another company, SW2. Last year, when the Leader was P.H. Finance, the Council agreed to let SW1 ‘buy’ the Friarsgate surgery from SW2 for an amount significantly greater than Henderson/Thornfield originally paid for it.

In the context of normal development partnerships describing SW2 as “a third party”, as CAB2609 does, is misguided. Because Henderson has been allowed to improperly inflate their actual costs the amount the Council will potentially receive for its assets has been diminished.

Can the Leader please explain how this curious arrangement is meant to comply with Council’s statutory obligation to achieve best consideration?”

Reply

“The acquisition took place as part of the administration of the various Thornfield companies by the appointed administrator. This was by way of a sale of shares, and the Council’s involvement in the administration process was limited to dealing with consequential matters such as the guarantee arrangements under the Development Agreement which were needed to protect the Council’s interests. As explained in CAB2609, the terms of the acquisition by SW1 which were approved in 2014 were properly negotiated, and reviewed by the Head of Estates, who concluded that they should be approved, on the basis that the price to be paid was a fair and reasonable one.

The Council’s duty to obtain best consideration only arises on a disposal of land owned by the Council, not by a third party such as SW2.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 19

From: Councillor Susan Cook

To: The Portfolio Holder for Service Delivery

“As I understand the way in which minutes of meetings are taken throughout ALL meetings is that we have a dedicated member of the Democratic Services Team take by hand the conversation that takes place in that particular meeting. Can you please tell me why we do not record the meeting or video the meeting so that in a case were there appears to be something said maybe in answer to a question or a statement which in the future needs to be referred to its not by notes where things can be missed or misunderstood when written by another Human?”

Reply

“The Council has previously considered webcasting council meetings, but this was not pursued due to the level of cost and issues such as management and operation of the necessary equipment.

The official record of any meeting is the minutes of the meeting, which are drafted by the Democratic Services Team, and subsequently approved at the following meeting. I see no reason to change the current practice for producing minutes.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 20

From: Councillor Twelftree

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing

“What is the role of this Council in administering Traffic Regulation Orders and Stopping Up Orders on behalf of Hampshire County Council?”

Reply

“Winchester City Council carry out various Traffic Management functions on behalf of Hampshire County Council under a Traffic Management Agreement between the two Authorities.

The introduction of new Traffic Regulation Orders for waiting and parking restrictions is one of the functions included in the agreement.

Stopping Up Orders or other Orders whereby any road will cease to be available as a vehicular highway are reserve matters and are generally only carried out directly by HCC.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 21

From: Councillor J Berry

To: The Portfolio Holder for Local Economy

“Winchester city centre is without a fishmonger or greengrocer or butcher’s shop – what can the Council do to address this and to ensure that there is a range of affordable shops in the city centre?”

Reply

“My predecessor, Cllr Rob Humby, commissioned an Independent Retailing Healthcheck for Winchester City Centre from The Retail Group. The findings, published in March 2014, were extremely complimentary about the range of shops on offer, and about the economic health of the City Centre as a whole.

Winchester is a ‘place to be seen’ for many retailers, and there is little delay in finding new tenants for empty premises on the High Street. However, the success of Winchester as a location has led to continued rises in commercial rents and National Non-Domestic Rates (business rates) over the years which even national chains find challenging. The businesses that successfully establish themselves in Winchester have to generate high yields, and this is unlikely to be possible for the traditional food shops referred to by Cllr Berry in her question. Coupled to this, shopping habits have changed radically with the growth of internet retailing alongside a ‘24/7’ shopping culture which is challenging for even the most successful independent retailers.

The Healthcheck formed the basis of a joint action plan by the Council, the Business Improvement District and the retailers which included training, networking, additional signage, marketing campaigns and new partnerships with organisations such as Hat Fair which have the potential to drive footfall into the secondary shopping areas of the city. We continue to support delivery of this action plan, alongside our ongoing business start-up and development grants and advisory services.

As a Council we would not wish – and indeed are not able – to intervene in the competitive retail market. However, we should be proud of our thriving street markets, which do provide affordable alternatives for some shoppers

and opportunities for business to try out their ideas before committing to permanent premises. We should also celebrate the work being done to support our market towns where these kind of shops are better able to flourish.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 22

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Built Environment

“In light to the decision of the Planning Committee to approve the proposals for 3500 new homes in Whiteley and with the acceptance of a financial payment of £17.5m in lieu of 10% of the affordable housing provision (350 homes with a payment of £50k per home) could the Portfolio Holder outline where he thinks these 350 homes will be built.

Does he envisage any difficulty in finding the sites to deliver these new homes?”

Reply

“There are a number of ways in which the Council could use the £17.5 million off site contribution to create new genuinely affordable homes:

1. Make a financial contribution to a Registered Provider to increase the overall proportion of affordable housing of all types in an S106 development;
2. Make a financial contribution to a Registered Provider to increase the proportion of rented property (rather than shared ownership) in an S106 development;
3. Make a contribution to an exception site scheme which achieves affordable housing in a location where it is required;
4. Purchase land within a settlement boundary on the open market to enable a scheme with affordable housing in whole or part to be developed;
5. Use funding to assist with the clean up costs of a brownfield site to create a development opportunity for affordable housing;
6. Convert existing or acquired property from its existing use into affordable housing;
7. Assist an RP to expand or modify an existing property to better meet housing need.

I am sure there will be other opportunities as well as these. None of them assume that the Council needs to build 350 properties on green field sites that

have not been identified in the Local Plan. Having a substantial amount of available funding which is not tied to a particular location will help us to match investment to areas of need and be more flexible about the type of development we are investing in.

We need to be creative and innovative, especially at a time when the more traditional route for achieving affordable housing for rent through Section 106 agreements is likely to diminish. Cllr Horrill and I will be working with officers to look at all of the options available.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 23

From: Councillor Gottlieb

To: The Leader

“In the material that the Information Commissioner directed the Council to disclose, the total cost of construction estimated by Henderson’s own cost consultants, Gleeds, is £89,010,000. In the ‘High Level Summary Development Appraisal’ produced by Henderson, the “Construction Costs” are stated as being £75,960,176. Can the Leader please provide an explanation for the approximate £13,000,000 difference between the two figures?”

Reply

““The figure included in the high level appraisal produced by Henderson in July 2014 two months after the Gleeds document to which Cllr Gottlieb refers and was its most up to date assessment of what the total construction costs would actually be after value engineering and negotiations with a construction partner.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 24

From: Councillor Scott

To: The Portfolio Holder for Housing Services

“Can the Portfolio Holder confirm the rent setting at the New Queen Gate, Stanmore is in line with the IPG rent setting Group where Members agreed on 70 %, and can the Portfolio Holder explain if rents are going to be higher because of buying the land etc, what thoughts have been given to sale one of these properties to help keep rents low?”

Reply

“Rents for the New Queens Gate development have been calculated and are being advertised at 70% of the market rent (of similar local properties). This is in line with the rent policy agreed by Cabinet (Housing) Committee on the 30 June 2015.

The option to sell properties on new developments will be considered on a scheme by scheme basis in order to make a development viable. For example with the Extra Care and Victoria House scheme there is an element of sale and /or shared ownership as this makes a positive impact on the overall scheme viability, in effect the sale receipts help keep the rent at an affordable level.”



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 25

From: Councillor Gottlieb

To: The Leader

“To save bothering the Information Commissioner again, can the Leader please kindly ensure that the same information he directed should be made public will be made immediately available in respect of the Silver Hill scheme consented in 2009?”

Reply

“As the information in respect of the 2009 scheme was supplied to the Council on a confidential basis, it would be necessary to consult Henderson before releasing any of this information. I have asked officers to consult Henderson accordingly, and (subject to any views Henderson may have), release the equivalent information to that directed to be disclosed by the Information Commissioner for the 2014 scheme.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 4 November 2015

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 26

From: Councillor J Berry

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Wellbeing

“How can the Council make it easier for households in Winchester to recycle glass?”

Reply

“The City Council provides a comprehensive network of bring sites in convenient locations for residents to use for glass recycling.

As part of the delivery of the Council’s Waste Minimisation Plan work will begin shortly on a programme to improve these to make them more attractive to use with information panels promoting recycling. There will also be promotional activities reminding residents of the need to recycle. The recycling pages of the website have also been updated with fresh information including a postcode search option for the nearest bring site. This will help in cases where sites are removed or relocated to support any signage advising residents of the position.

The value of glass recyclate has reduced considerably in recent years from £48 per tonne in April 2013 to as low as £11 per tonne in April 2015. This instability of the market makes future decisions on options difficult because of the net costs involved.

The option of kerbside glass collections was last considered in 2012 when the value of glass was much higher. At that time predicted collection costs were approximately £560K with income of £120K so the decision was taken not to pursue this options as it was unaffordable.”