



**Winchester**  
City Council

**COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2017**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 1**

From: Councillor Porter

To: The Leader

“In the light of creeping changes to the way Post Offices are funded, which is resulting in more difficult trading conditions, can the Council affirm their full commitment to the provision of a full range Post Office services throughout the district and particularly in Rural areas?”

**Reply**

“Post Offices are a key part of infrastructure across the District, and especially in our rural areas. The Council recognises this through the allocation of Business Rates reliefs to Post Offices across the district, with over £6,000 provided through discretionary rate relief in the current financial year. In 2016/17 to date, seven rural Post Offices have received business rates reliefs including five Post Offices who have received discretionary rate relief.”



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### Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

#### QUESTION 2

From: Councillor Laming

To: The Portfolio Holder for Professional Services

“The planning and enforcement department continues to have a large turnover of staff. As this reduces the efficiency of the department what plans do you have to correct this?”

#### Reply

“I am aware that there has been some turnover of staff within our Development Management team including within Enforcement.

The employment market in these areas continues to be buoyant which means that planners and other professionals are in high demand with employers nationwide in both the public and private sectors. Opportunities in the private sector are commanding high salary packages and this is proving particularly attractive to some. There are a number of ways we are looking to address this issue.

The Vanguard process has transformed the way the planning team works. It means that there is more scope for staff to be developed within the team and we have focused on growing our employees in their new roles as well as looking at other employment options such as apprentices. There is also an emphasis on giving staff the opportunity to progress within the team where possible rather than looking to fill vacancies externally.

Overall therefore, while the Planning Team has had to deal with making the transition to a new way of working and vacancies in some areas, performance has generally been good. The outcome has been positive for both the team and our customers.

However I recognise that the economy does provide retention and recruitment challenges for the Council in certain service areas. We review where we are positioned in the market and consider measures, such as market supplements, where the trend evidence tells us we are struggling to compete with other comparable employers.”



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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 3**

From: Councillor Byrnes

To: The Leader

“As the River Park Leisure Centre project continues to make excellent progress, what efforts has the Leader taken to begin conversations with the public about what might replace the existing facility when the site becomes available?”

Reply

“This is a very important consideration and I welcome the opportunity to comment on the important next steps which need to be taken to address it.

The business case for the replacement leisure centre at Bar End will be formulated over the summer and brought to members for approval once all the inputs have been determined and tested. Until this has been agreed and hence it has been established that a new leisure centre at Bar End is deliverable then I feel it would be premature to enter into formal conversations and /or engagement processes concerning the future use of the current River Park Leisure Centre site.

However, I appreciate that residents and other stakeholders will be keen to know what any future plans might be and to be involved in any process to decide. We will therefore be considering the options for the River Park site as soon as possible once we are sure that the replacement Leisure Centre and other major projects are on track.”



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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 4**

From: Councillor Clear

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment

“When will the long awaited yellow lines for Wickham be implemented?”

**Reply**

“The Traffic Regulation Order for parking restrictions in Wickham is now being advertised and the period for people to comment on these proposals ends on 17<sup>th</sup> March.

The number and nature of comments received will determine how the Order is progressed. If we receive 10 or more objections we will need to arrange for the matter to be considered by Cabinet (Traffic and Parking) Committee and, in these circumstances, the decision rests with them. This will take longer than if fewer objections are made which would enable the matter to be dealt with by a Portfolio Holder Decision Notice.

It is therefore difficult to say when any agreed parking restrictions will come into effect but I would hope to see them in place by June.”



**COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2017**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 5**

From: Councillor Gottlieb

To: The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing

"Can the Portfolio Holder explain why we are delivering her projects when Winchester City Council has no statutory role in health delivery?"

**Reply**

"Many of the services provided by the Council are non statutory, however it has been a requirement since 2008 for local government and CCGs to work together, along with the Health & Social Care Act 2012 which enshrines the role of Local Government in improving health and reducing health inequalities.

The Council's Health and Wellbeing and Sport and Physical Activity teams deliver outcomes which are important to local residents and as a result have been identified as key objectives in the recently approved Council Strategy. As social, physical, economic environments and conditions ("**the social determinants of health**") have a greater impact than medical care on how long and how well people live, we are focused on delivering activities which have an effect on the mental and emotional wellbeing as well as residents physical and health and resilience.

Our teams work in partnership with statutory bodies to ensure that the outcomes in the strategy are delivered.

Examples of this joint working include:

- Exercise Referrals – a scheme introduced to the District in 2007 which works in partnership with GPs and health practitioners to deliver individual activity programmes and classes for patients with long term health conditions.
- Health Walks – seven weekly walks operate in the District in partnership with 'Walking for Health' and local GPs.

- Supporting Families – embedding the service plan within the wider work of the City Council.

The Winchester District Health and Wellbeing Action plan has been developed by the Winchester District Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board which was established in 2011 to ensure that the City Council was in the best possible position to respond to the implications of health reforms. Along with the Community Safety Partnership, we work to address problems from the more vulnerable residents and seek to resolve issues arising out of undesirable behaviour.

Although statutory responsibility for public health and the provision of local health services rests with Hampshire County Council and the NHS, district councils still have a critical role to play. Our role in delivering programmes may not be statutory, but by supporting our residents in challenging times, we aim to provide the means to live their lives better.”



## COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2017

### Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

#### QUESTION 6

From: Councillor Weir

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment

“In view of the growing incidence of dangerous parking, particularly at peak traffic times, on the verges of Andover Road north of Stoney Lane, and of irresponsible parking blocking bus routes and service and emergency vehicle access to north Winchester estates, what is the Council doing:

1. to secure the early provision of the Park and Ride Scheme at Barton Farm and
2. to plan for future growth in demand for visitor, student and commuter parking on the northern edges of Winchester?”

#### Reply

“I am aware that there is a highway issue relating to vehicles parked on Andover Road. The agreed traffic regulation order programme for 2017/18 includes Andover Road and officers will therefore consider measures to tackle this problem and draft proposals will be progressed in the usual manner which will provide an opportunity for interested parties to comment.

A 200 space park and ride “light” is planned for Barton Farm. The triggers for its provision are set out in the s106 agreement for the development which states that no more than 650 homes shall be occupied until the park and ride facility has been completed in accordance with the approved scheme. This will tie in with the construction of the diverted Andover Road which also needs to be delivered by the occupation of 650 units. The Council cannot require the park and ride to be built sooner.

I am unable therefore to be precise about when the facility will open as this will depend on the developer’s build out rates which are affected by a range of factors. We envisage however that the park and ride should be available by 2019 or 2020.

As you are aware the City Council will be working with the County on developing a Movement Strategy for Winchester. I would expect this work to consider the need for additional parking on the north side of the town and whether this could be satisfied by a further park and ride facility.”



**COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2017**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 7**

From: Councillor Pearson

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment

1. "Is the Portfolio Holder happy with the consultation process for the Air Quality paper, and that the comments about it were constructive and therefore valuable?"
2. Does the Portfolio Holder agree that traffic management (movement and parking) is only part of the solution towards cleaner air in Winchester, and that the Royal College of Physicians paper of 2016 along with the more recent N.I.C.E. consultation paper point towards issues within the 'built environment' within which we all live and work need also to be addressed?"

**Reply**

**"Question 1**

Councillor Pearson is referring to Winchester City Council's Draft Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). This report was recently shared for public consultation as outlined below:

**Written correspondence** to all statutory consultees detailed in the DEFRA Local Air Quality Management Policy Guidance (PG 16).

**A series of presentations/consultations** to organisations including:

WINACC/FoE,

Winchester Town Forum,

Winchester District Health & Wellbeing Partnership Board,

Transport Services (Winchester City and Hampshire County),

BID

Bus Operators

**A public web based consultation exercise.**

I am satisfied that this approach has resulted in an excellent consultation process, with considerable high quality feedback requiring further assessment. It is proposed to include a summary of all feedback received as an appendix to the final AQAP. Although the main direction of travel within the draft AQAP is likely to remain, there will be considerable alterations to provide clarity and further explanation. It is proposed to present the revised AQAP to the April Cabinet for final approval.



The AQAP is the beginning of a journey that will see many challenges over the coming years to deliver on the core objectives identified. Over the last year, a lot of good work has been performed by the Air Quality Steering Group, which included Councillor Pearson. It is proposed that this group will continue to assist in developing the detailed delivery programmes necessary to drive the core actions forward.

## **Question 2**

The proposed Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) is a document that focuses only upon the delivery of the air quality objectives set within current legislation. There are many developing health concerns that we may need to consider in the future which, although important, do not currently form part of this regulatory regime.

Whilst our evidence base shows traffic management (movement and parking) has an important role to play, there are many other strands to our strategy including the encouragement of behavioural changes, planning controls and the introduction of a regional Low Emission Strategy (LES).

The recent NICE consultation on outdoor air quality and health is an important example of work that may in the future influence central and local government policy and therefore our role and focus in protecting public health. Core action 9 of the draft AQAP commits us to annual review to ensure alterations can be made as and when necessary.”



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**QUESTION 8**

From: Councillor Dominic Hiscock

To: The Leader

“How will the Portfolio Holder work out how the developments at River Park, the City Centre, Station Approach and Bar End all work together for the good of the City?”

**Reply**

“I believe that the good of the city encompasses its economic, environmental and social success. This success should be felt across the whole of our District as well. These projects will help achieve the success of our District through supporting the health of our residents; by delivering employment opportunities for our residents and businesses; and by utilising the Council’s assets to help secure our future financial viability and the continued delivery of important services across the District.

No firm plans have yet been made for the River Park site should it be decided that the Leisure Centre will move to Bar End: this is subject to a business case which is currently being formulated.

The case for office development at Station Approach will be made in detail at Cabinet in March but the aim to provide much needed grade-A office accommodation is clear and is an integral part of the new Council Strategy.

The provision of a new Leisure Centre and associated facilities is also clear and is supported in the new Council Strategy as well as wide ranging Government objectives relating to health and wellbeing.”



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**QUESTION 9**

From: Councillor Cook

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment

“Recycling rates for the District seem to be getting worse, can the Portfolio Holder advise us and let us know what plans there are to improve residents’ ability to recycle more household waste?”

Reply

“The fall in the City Council’s recycling rate is in line with both National and local trends caused by a number of factors including the lack of heavy materials such as newspapers in the recycling mix. As recycling rates are measured by weight this has a significant impact upon the final figure.

However, the City Council’s latest recycling rate for 2015/16 of 34.57 % still compares favourably with our neighbouring authorities and we were 3rd best performing authority of the 13 in Hampshire.

The City Council continues to work hard to try and improve our recycling rates by increasing the capture of materials and reducing contamination through education and awareness raising projects. For example additional information was included with the annual collection calendars in 2016 using the ‘Recycle Right’ branding which also now appears on the refuse collection vehicles.

The Council delivers this work through its joint Waste Resources Action Plan with our partners East Hampshire District Council. Both Councils also support the Hampshire wide Project Integra Partnership which it is hoped will achieve a widening of the range of materials which can be recycled at the kerbside through improvement works to the processing facilities and securing markets for their re-use.”



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**QUESTION 10**

From: Councillor Tod

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment

“Is the Portfolio Holder happy with the appearance of the 'pollution patio' in St George Street?”

**Reply**

“The enhancement work to the frontage of the Casson Block will be completed this week.

The brief for the scheme was to provide new terrace areas, new lighting, repave the whole frontage and to provide planting that will help screen the terraces from traffic thus providing an inviting terrace area that can be utilised by the businesses and enjoyed by their customers.

In that respect I believe that the brief has been met. Discussions are ongoing with the businesses in the Casson Block to determine if there is a consensus in favour of the new planters and what they are seeking to achieve. Changes could be made to the planters: however, I would like to give some time for the planting to be established in order to see the full effect of the scheme. I hope therefore that the businesses will support the Council in its aim to enhance this frontage and hence to allow us some time to properly assess it.

I acknowledge the air quality concerns which I believe are being alluded to here through the use of the term ‘pollution patio’. However, the scheme is genuinely seeking to improve the area to the benefit of the businesses and customers. The Council is in the process of formulating a new Air Quality Action Plan and is committed to improving air quality. However, it must be acknowledged that air quality is a national issue and surely should not be used as an excuse not to carry out enhancement schemes in the meantime.”



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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 11**

From: Councillor Thacker

To: The Leader with Portfolio for Housing Services

“Please can the Portfolio Holder update us on the New Homes Programme in the light of the budget pressures for the Housing Revenue Account (“HRA”)?”

**Reply**

“I am pleased to advise Members that 91 new homes have been funded by the New Homes Programme to date with a further 105 on site and a planning application about to be submitted for 76.

The New Homes Team have identified sites for a further 150 new homes which they will progress to planning over the next financial year (2017/18).

Despite the pressures resulting from issues such as the 1% annual rent reduction, the Housing Revenue Account budget and Business Plan that I will be asking Council to support this evening proposes investing over £7 million each year in developing new homes.

This will not be sufficient to fund the Council’s entire programme. We are currently liaising with both the Government and the Homes and Communities Agency to seek additional funding and grant. We are also seeking to establish a housing company or “special purpose vehicle” to support future development.

The recent White Paper confirmed the Government’s intention to support councils who are in a position to build and who can demonstrate they are able to deliver. I believe the success of our programme to date demonstrates our commitment.”



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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 12**

From: Councillor Hutchison

To: The Portfolio Holder for Estates

“When can we expect to see the draft brief for the area plan that has been agreed for the Bar End area and when is it anticipated the plan will be completed?”

Reply

“The Tender Documents for Architectural services, including a specification for the Urban Design Framework, will be published by 24 February 2017.

Following the tender process, a plan for Stakeholder Engagement will be agreed by the City Council and the appointed architect in late May 2017.

The proposed schedule is for stakeholder engagement to take place during June and the Urban Design Framework stage to be completed in July 2017.”



## COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2017

### Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

#### QUESTION 13

From: Councillor Tait

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment

“Following up on the excellent presentation made to members on the 15 February 2017 by Jarno Stet – Waste Services Manager for the City of Westminster, what steps will officers at Winchester City Council take to ensure that the plague of commercial refuse bins left permanently on the highway will be addressed.

Does the Portfolio share my view that if businesses choose not to work with the Council (or BID) then rather than using a ‘carrot and Stick’ approach the Council will use the various enforcement powers available to ensure compliance with the law particularly in light of the experience seen with both Cote Brasserie and Pret a Manger who have clearly demonstrated that they can effectively manage their own waste without resorting to leaving it on the highway?”

#### Reply

“I agree that the presentation given by colleagues from Westminster City Council on 15<sup>th</sup> February was excellent and presented some real practical options for dealing with the issues caused by waste collections in the city.

Both the Leader and I take this matter very seriously and I have asked officers to review the options available, including any resource implications, and submit a proposal which will enable us to make significant progress with this issue. We will also need to discuss our plans with other agencies that have relevant responsibilities including the Highways and Fire Authorities, as it was evident from Westminster’s experience that a new approach would only be successful if the issue is tackled holistically. The views of the BID will also be important in shaping our approach.

Those present at the workshop acknowledged that the use of enforcement was an important strand to resolving this issue. It was also recommended that we should begin with a pilot project to test out the most effective solution before widening it to the rest of the City.

Once I have received the officer proposals and have decided on the best way to proceed, I will make sure that members are advised about the next steps. In the meantime I will be personally monitoring progress closely.”



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**QUESTION 14**

From: Councillor Lucille Thompson

To: The Portfolio Holder for Professional Services

“How many leased cars does the City Council have and how many of them run on diesel?”

**Reply**

“There are currently 113 company cars on the fleet. Of these 83 are diesel, 26 are petrol and 4 petrol/electric hybrid. The vast majority of vehicles are less than three years old, and therefore have engines which use modern technology to reduce emissions.”





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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 15**

From: Councillor Learney

To: The Leader

“What plans does the City Council have to develop special planning policy for any future redevelopment of Sir John Moore Barracks?”

What public engagement is the portfolio holder intending to take place before any discussions with the Ministry of Defence over the future of the site?”

Reply

“We were disappointed at the news that the excellent training facility at St John Moore Barracks is due to close in 3 to 4 years. The Council wholeheartedly supports the presence of the Armed Forces in our District and Sir John Moore Barracks provides the first 14 weeks of training for new soldiers to join the Army. We will miss them greatly.

However, it is somewhat premature to ask what spatial planning will be undertaken or what public engagement as to the future of the site. I was fortunate to visit the Barracks last week with the Chief Executive and our focus was on how to maintain and enhance positive relations with our MoD neighbours whilst they were with us – not a discussion on the future of the MoD land - this will come in time and Members will be updated accordingly.”



**Winchester**  
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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 16**

From: Councillor Evans

To: The Portfolio Holder for Built Environment

“Could the Portfolio Holder please give me a more precise indication as to when the public consultation for the draft Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document will take place?”

**Reply**

“The approved Local Development Scheme (October 2016) sets out that consultation on the draft Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document will take place during March – April 2017. Preliminary work to inform the development plan document is currently underway with an assessment of sites and identification of options of how the identified need as expressed in Policy DM4 of LPP2 can be met. Two ‘calls for sites’ have not revealed any new sites for consideration, and it will therefore be necessary to assess existing capacity and options for expansion on suitable and appropriate sites, together with the identification of potential new sites. Active engagement with the travelling community is ongoing and to date this has not identified additional sites for consideration. Parish Councils via Parish Connect have also been requested to submit sites for consideration. As with housing sites, it is necessary for the Council to ensure that sites identified are available and deliverable to maintain a 5 year supply, and failure to do so will result on sites coming forward via the appeals process.

An update report is being presented to Cabinet (Local Plan) Committee on 27 February, CAB2904(LP). However, given the requirement of Policy DM4 to meet the needs for about 15 gypsy/traveller pitches and 24 travelling showperson’s plots between 2016 and 2031, publication of a draft plan for consultation is now likely to be in June. The aim will be to seek approval of the draft plan at Cabinet 26 April and Council 17 May. This stage of consultation will be for 6 weeks, to be completed before the summer holidays.”



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**COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2017**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 17**

From: Councillor Scott

To: The Leader with Portfolio for Housing Services

“At the recent Cabinet Housing meeting (Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017) it was mentioned to Members that the Government will no longer carry out their plans to bring in ‘Pay to Stay’.

Can the Portfolio Holder please confirm if ‘pay to stay’ is now off the City Council agenda too?”

**Reply**

“The Government has now announced that the mandatory “Pay to Stay” proposals, that sought to charge increased rents to households with joint incomes over £30,000 (tapered up to a market rent for those earning over £50,000) as set out in the Housing and Planning Bill, will now not be implemented.

Housing providers do have the option to implement their own local scheme and I have asked officers to prepare a briefing paper on the potential merits or otherwise of a local scheme.

With the pressure on the Council’s Housing budget, it is essential that we continue to assess all aspects of provision and properly evaluate options for reducing expenditure and generating income.

I have asked that a further “all member” briefing be arranged for later this year to discuss this and other potential changes which are likely to impact on the Council’s Housing service.”



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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 18**

From: Councillor Hutchison

To: The Portfolio Holder for Estates

“Please can you inform us what arrangements are being made to find a short term use for the former Register Office opposite the main station building in Winchester?”

**Reply**

“As you might expect, the former Register Office is set out internally for use as a place to hold wedding ceremonies. A number of short term uses have been considered and the adjoining car parking has been let, since the property was acquired. As members know, the property forms part of the Carfax site and it may be that potential occupiers consider the need for planning permission and internal adaptations cost prohibitive given the limited time the premises may be available. Of course, if there is interest in the Register Office we will explore this with potential occupiers on a short term basis.”



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**COUNCIL MEETING – 23 February 2017**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 19**

From: Councillor Scott

To: The Leader with Portfolio for Housing Services

“Can the Portfolio Holder explain how the up and coming Winchester City Council housing development proposals for The Valley in Stanmore can be both viable & affordable?”

**Reply**

“The New Homes Team is currently finalising the planning application for 76 new Council homes at The Valley, Stanmore which will be submitted before the end of February 2017.

The design of the scheme has been challenging due to the nature of the site and will be more costly than developing a level green field site. We have also taken the conscious decision to ensure the design positively embraces the local environment, improves the quality of the open space and retains established pathways and views across the Valley.

Taking all the above into account and having taken regular cost advice throughout the design stage, the estimates still indicate that the scheme meets the Council’s viability criteria based on 100% affordable accommodation, split between rented and shared ownership tenure types.

I would like to reassure Members that before proceeding to tender, a report will be prepared for Cabinet (Housing) Committee detailing the viability and affordability of the scheme. Members will have the opportunity to question the financial details and debate the proposals before a decision is made on whether to progress to tender.”



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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 14**

**QUESTION 20**

From: Councillor Scott

To: The Leader with Portfolio for Housing Services

“Can the Portfolio Holder confirm who will meet the cost of remedial work following damage to the verges and properties by scaffolders contracted by Winchester City Council for the recent roofing work in Stanmore?”

**Reply**

“I can confirm that scaffolding and/or roofing contractors will be liable for making good damage they have caused to the verges during the execution of works. Council surveyors are currently determining the areas for repair with the three roofing companies on completion of the contracts, which will involve top soil and seeding or turfing.

It should be noted that many verges in Stanmore are in poor condition. Whilst the roofing works have contributed to this, so do residents parking, deliveries, refuse collection lorries etc. I have asked Housing officers to work with Hampshire County Council to identify how best we can address this issue, including the potential for further investment from the Council’s Estate Improvement works programme.”