



<b>Meeting</b>	Council
<b>Date and Time</b>	Wednesday, 6th July, 2022 at 7.00 pm.
<b>Venue</b>	Asburton Hall, Elizabeth II Court, The Castle, Winchester SO23 8UJ

Agenda Item.

4. Questions from Members of the Public (Pages 3 - 8)

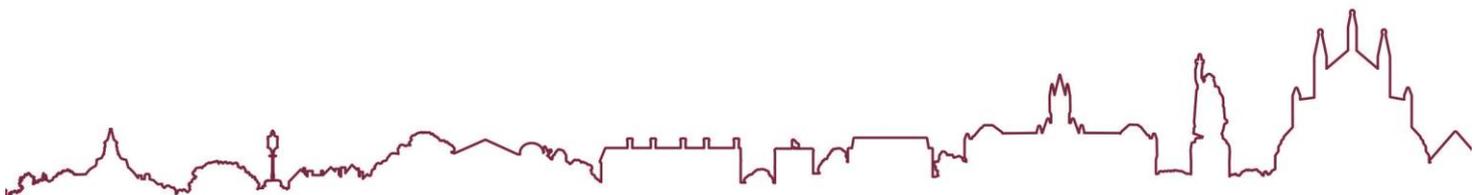
City Offices  
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**Laura Taylor**  
**Chief Executive**



7 July 2022

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## COUNCIL MEETING – 6 July 2022

### Questions by the Public under Council Procedure Rule 15(1)

- Each questioner will have 2 minutes in which to ask their question. The order of the questions to be asked is as set out below and an officer will pass a microphone to the questioner when their name is called by the Mayor.
- Please note that following the response given by the Councillor, the questioner may also ask a supplementary question which must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.
- The total time allocated for questions will *normally* be limited to 20 minutes. For any question which cannot be dealt with at the meeting, a written answer will be provided, normally within one working week.

	From:
1	Linda Gemmell
2	David Kileen



## COUNCIL MEETING – 6 July 2022

### Questions by the Public under Council Procedure Rule 15(1)

#### QUESTION 1

From: Linda Gemmell

To: The Leader (Cllr Tod) on behalf of Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

"Some 11 years ago this Council won awards for the Blueprint exercise whereby it consulted widely with residents, businesses, parish councils, interest groups, individual groups, leisure groups from Brownies to U3A groups, from the Quilters to the Wolves. Every possible occupant of the wider Winchester District... and they bought into the wider vision, the seeds of which were sown by longsighted officers who had devised an almost perfect consultation tool which was trusted by the communities. It was a joy to see villagers who had no reason to speak to the others in the room, debating widely the merits and de-merits of what was needed, wanted and vital to building a better community through structured expansion of housing and infrastructure. The responses were collated, and then published, taken back to the groups involved where further debate led to more fine-tuning of the plan.

I am not so sure that the anywhere near the same level of attention to detail, and the wishes of the communities involved are being listened to in the same meaningful way. So I ask you today 'When will action be taken to comply with the wider district's needs and wants as voiced increasingly loudly from the side-lines? When will we see better consultation, and a feedback loop that demonstrates that the Council has heard and acted upon the results of that consultation? The people of this district do not need to be given numbers of houses to be built – put up and shut up – our land is finite and precious – the people need to be heard and their concerns answered."

#### Reply

"First of all, thank you for your positive comments about the Blueprint consultation. As you know, it was a process designed and implemented under Liberal Democrat administration in 2010 and ran from October 2010-December 2010.

It is, of course, very pleasing that not only the consultation designed during the Liberal Democrat administration in 2010 proved to be an award winner, but also that our current process is also an award winner - despite the very different challenge of the public consultation having to be undertaken during a national lockdown. It would have been impossible to replicate the Blueprint exercise without breaking the law and so this administration deliberately designed a process that took lockdown restrictions into account.

The Local Plan team consulted on the Strategic Priorities for the Local plan (which was an additional public consultation stage over and above what we were required to do in the legislation) in such an effective way that we won Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) South East Awards for Excellence in Plan Making Practice and the Overall RTPI South East Winner Award. Being recognised as South East winners by our accreditors is a huge success and I again congratulate the team.

It might be helpful to remind people of the comments made in the citation and by the judges:

Winchester City Council Local Plan Consultation represents a real planning success story, demonstrating excellence in local engagement as well and a real commitment to learning from the exercise and reaching as many stakeholders as possible. This project leads the way for improved short-term as well as future consultation processes with excellent collaborative working, monitoring, review, and dissemination of results. It demonstrates "real world" adaptability and effective use of new tools such as polls, software, and mobile applications.

Gareth Giles FRTPI, Chair of RTPI South East judging panel, said:  
“Winchester’s Local Plan Consultation project demonstrated excellence in engagement and a willingness to actively learn from, and improve its processes to reach as many people as possible. It is a shining example of innovation in a pandemic context, as well as making use of new technological innovations. Local authorities should look to this as an example of best practice for consultations in their own areas”

The Strategic Issues and Priorities consultation did reach out to a younger demographic through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and we used interactive polls on the new website enabled us to capture brief feedback from respondents who are not inclined to engage more fully with the detailed consultation questionnaire. 72% of website visitors responding to the poll indicated they had not been involved in Local Plan preparation before.

We also reached out to our Local Councils, local businesses and organisations to help us to spread the word about the consultation and kept Local Councils updated on progress on the Local Plan and the new challenges that we are facing - particularly nutrient neutrality in terms of nitrates and phosphates. We changed the plan timetable when Local Councils asked for additional time to consult with local residents regarding the housing targets.

I'd like to use this opportunity to bring to the public and Council's attention that we will enter a very important stage in our creation of a new local plan later in 2022. We will be consulting on our draft plan in full. This gives the public the full opportunity to comment on every proposed policy, all sites and to add any further information that they think is important that we hear. We will be reaching out with in-person events, digital forums, on-line and range of others methods.

I am very pleased that we received a very broad range of feedback from people of all ages as part of the consultation on the Strategic Issues and Priorities and we are keen to engage with even more people when we consult on the Local Plan later on this year.

I am confident that we have been and will continue to be open and transparent in this activity and that the end result will be a local plan that is robust and that meets the needs and challenges of our district for years to come."



**COUNCIL MEETING – 6 July 2022**

**Questions by the Public**  
**under Council Procedure Rule 15(1)**

**QUESTION 2**

From: David Kileen

To: The Leader (Cllr Tod) on behalf of Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“Between 2011 and 2021, the date of the last census, population growth in Winchester was significantly higher at 9.4%, and Test Valley 12.1%, than the other PfSH authorities (Eastleigh 8.9, East Hampshire 8.7, Fareham 2.6, Gosport -0.9, Havant 2.9, New Forest -0.4, Portsmouth 1.5, Southampton 5.1) why would we take an additional housing allocation on their behalf and how will this census data influence our local plan?”

Reply

“Thank you for this question and thank you for highlighting these new census figures.

First, let me reassure you that this administration has not agreed to any additional housing allocation on behalf of neighbouring authorities or the Partnership for South Hampshire at the present time.

The Government has placed a legal ‘duty to co-operate’ on all local authorities through the National Planning Policy Framework or NPPF. This requires local authorities to take account of unmet needs in neighbouring areas when determining housing numbers and this is specifically mentioned in the NPPF as a key test of a local plan’s ‘soundness’.

Failure to show that the duty to co-operate has been properly met would result in a Plan being found to be unsound and is a matter which cannot be corrected retrospectively by the Local Plan Inspector.

Failure to have a sound plan risks a planning by appeal where the council effectively loses control of where housing is built in their area. Current Government advice is clear that authorities should plan for their own growth –

currently calculated using the Standard Methodology, where they have capacity within their own area and consider any requests from neighbouring areas under the duty to co-operate.

Population growth between 2011 and 2021 is only partly influenced by planning policies, but housing requirements at that time were based on each authority's assessment of local housing needs. They also took into account each authority's capacity to meet these needs, which was limited in some of the more urban authorities in South Hampshire and in the New Forest.

Government policy now expects local authorities to use the 'Standard Method' to calculate local housing need and to take account of any unmet needs in neighbouring areas. The Standard Method takes into account household projections (which may be updated as a result of the Census) and local house prices and affordability (which are not affected by the Census). The Standard Method housing requirement will be updated annually up to the point at which the Local Plan is submitted for examination.

It is possible that the application of the new census data to the Standard Method may reduce the requirement for housing in our neighbouring authorities – and thus reduce the pressure on our district from the duty to cooperate. We continue to work to ensure that any work done by the Partnership for South Hampshire to assess this potential need is done on the most robust possible basis – which will include reflecting the impact of the new census figures on estimates of housing need - and properly reflects both the level of demand in neighbouring areas as well as this authority's effectiveness in meeting demand in our own area.”