



COUNCIL MEETING – 17 January 2024

Questions by Councillors under Council Procedure Rule 19.1

- Each questioner will have 2 minutes in which to ask their question.
- If a questioner who has submitted a question is unable to be present, the Mayor may ask the question on their behalf, or invite another Councillor to do so, or indicate that a written reply will be given and published on the website following the meeting. or decide, in the absence of the questioner, that the question will not be dealt with.
- Please note that following the response given by the Leader, a Cabinet Member or Committee Chair, the questioner may also ask a supplementary question which must arise directly out of the original reply.
- The **total** time allocated for Councillor questions will normally be limited to 40 minutes.
- Written answers will be published to questions submitted (but not supplementary questions) following the meeting.

	From Cllr:
1	Godfrey
2	Williams
3	Horrill
4	Power1
5	Read
6	Pett
7	Warwick1
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QUESTION 1

From: Councillor Godfrey

To: The Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“Village Design Statements are an important component of the local plan, giving communities the opportunity to highlight the details of what is important to each community when planning development. A notice on the City Council’s website advises that VDS need to be refreshed to make reference to Local Plan 2039 once that plan has been adopted. The VDS for Micheldever and Littleton have recently been refreshed reflecting the emerging Local Plan. These refreshes have taken 2-4 years to complete, while the Local Plan keeps being delayed and amended. What steps have you taken to ensure that these recently refreshed Village Design Statements remain fully valid supplementary planning documents for the next five years?”

Reply

“You’ve raised an issue which is causing the Council a great deal of concern. We greatly value the work that goes into Village Design Statements and find them valuable and important parts of our planning process – and, for as long as we are able, we will seek to keep them as valid Supplementary Planning Documents and informing our planning decisions.

Unfortunately, Parliament – when it passed the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 – in Schedule 7 of the legislation – has put in place legislation to scrap SPDs. The legislation is not in effect – but once it is enacted: the effect is unambiguous – SPDs will cease to exist.

There is a proposed replacement in the Act – the ‘Supplementary Plan’ – but the Government has not yet provided details and regulations of how they may be prepared and agreed. They appear to be more restricted in scope – and it’s unclear whether the kind of design input that is so valuable in Village Design Statements can be included – and how Village Design Statements and Supplementary Plans will relate to the Government’s approach to Design Codes, for example.

Our intent remains. We want local communities to be able to work together to produce clear planning guidance on the issues that matter in their area. Our challenge is that mechanism for doing is – at the current time – far from clear.

WCC is taking legal advice on the matter and awaiting new Government guidance. We will update members as soon as the situation is clearer.”



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QUESTION 2

From: Councillor Williams

To: The Cabinet Member for Business and Culture (Cllr Thompson)

“With the Rural England Prosperity Fund application deadline having closed earlier this month, can the cabinet member tell me how many applications to the fund have been made, and when the applicants will be informed of the determinations of their applications?”

Reply

“I am very pleased to say that we received a total of 11 applications for this allocation of funds from the Rural England Prosperity Fund. Of those 11 applications, 3 were from micro enterprises – ranging from equipment supporting return to work opportunities aimed at young mothers, filming equipment and help towards the purchase of an electric van. 4 applications are working towards net zero infrastructure, for example, placing solar panels on community buildings. In addition, a further 4 applications support active travel, enhance our cultural offer, seek improvement to local green spaces and developing the visitor economy.

It is particularly pleasing to see that the applications come from a broad geographical spread right across our district including Alresford, Otterbourne, Kings Worthy, Denmead, Colden Common and Bishops Waltham as well as some of our smaller settlements such as Chilcomb, Easton, Soberton and Shawford.

The value of this first round of the Fund is £350,000. Applications closed on 5th January. All 11 applications will be checked against mandatory and deliverability requirements and then scored against the published criteria. The successful applications will be discussed with the SPF board on 9th February and the results communicated to applicants by the end of February.”



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QUESTION 3

From: Councillor Horrill

To: The Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“This Council is committed to the use of supplementary planning documents to support the current local plan. The use of Supplementary Planning Documents ensures that developments in the District reflect the input and conform to the desires of the thousands of residents who have been consulted on such documents and ensures there is no uncertainty about issues such as massing, height, mix, design, and quality of the development.

In June 2018, the Council approved the Supplementary Planning Document for Central Winchester, with input from more than 3,000 people following the requirements of the National Planning Framework, post the cancellation of the Silver Hill project.

The SPD sets out the vision, objectives and Planning and Urban Design framework for any future development of the Central Winchester Regeneration area and the desire to reset the development agenda.

The document has been used to provide planning advice and guidance to the selected developer for regeneration within this part of the Winchester city centre. The adoption of the SPD means it became a material consideration in the determination of any planning application within the central Winchester area as identified in the SPD.

With the emergence of a new local plan can the portfolio holder please confirm that the CWR SPD will be adopted as part of the new Reg 19 draft Local Plan and ensure that the appropriate steps will be actioned before the adoption of the new Local Plan so that there is no uncertainty and gap between the current and new Local Plans?”

Reply

“The SPD sits at the heart of our plans to regenerate central Winchester. And as a piece of planning guidance, it remains in force until the new Local Plan has passed through inspection and been agreed.

Our wish is that we would be able to update it as needed to sit alongside the new Local Plan as soon as this is finally agreed. However, as highlighted in my earlier answer to Councillor Godfrey, it will be difficult to carry over the SPD into the Local Plan when Parliament has decided to abolish SPDs in future Local Plans.

As we seek the legal advice outlined in my earlier answer, one of our questions will be how we carry forward the policies of the SPD into our new Local Plan. Will we be able to do this via Supplementary Plans? Or do we need some other mechanism? Or have the changes to legislation made it altogether impossible?

As soon as we have clearer guidance from Government and confirmation of the details of their plans for Supplementary Plans, we will let members know how we intend to proceed.”



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QUESTION 4

From: Councillor Power

To: The Cabinet Member for Housing (Cllr Westwood)

“The Upper Itchen is interested in the success of the improvements to the Waste Water Treatment plant on Northington Road. How will the nutrient content of the current and after upgrade discharge be monitored and reported, so that the improvements may be quantified? Is the input nutrient content monitored as well?”

Reply

“I am pleased to confirm that the upgrades to two water treatment works owned by Winchester City Council in the Itchen Valley, at the Northington Road plant near Itchen Abbas and also at The Goodens plant near Cheriton have now been completed.

Winchester City Council is one of the first in the country to install this new generation of treatment plant – and it will make a real difference – cutting phosphates and nitrates in the Itchen catchment area. I think we are all aware of the problems with pollution in our rivers, and especially the impact this is having in our local chalk streams – and how disappointed many of us continue to be at the failure of the Conservative Government and the water companies to act fast enough to tackle it.

We will also be measuring the impact of these upgrades.

Before the upgrades were installed, discharges from the plant were monitored to establish a performance baseline from which the improvements can be accurately measured.

Following installation, water sample outputs from the upgraded plant will be analysed by an independent laboratory on actual samples collected and the results kept by the council and provided on demand to the Environment Agency.

In answer to the second part of the question, we don't measure pollution input on a regular basis – since the outputs are what do the damage to the local rivers and the focus of our efforts. Nutrient input into the plant is based on a series of assumptions on flow rates and average occupancy of the dwellings connected to the plant.

These new plants will also have an impact on new housing schemes.

Nitrate neutrality is required for new housing schemes in the Winchester District, and Phosphate neutrality is required for all new housing developments in the river Itchen catchment area. The requirement for Phosphate neutrality has effectively stalled new planning permissions in the Itchen catchment area since March 2022, including those of our Winchester Council new homes team.

So, this phase 1 investment in the first two Water treatment Works will deliver two significant benefits:

- Firstly, the upgrades to the water treatment works will reduce the Nitrates and Phosphate in the treated water and provide significantly cleaner water quality for the Itchen catchment area.
- Secondly, the nutrient credits generated by these improvements will be used to allow our affordable housing programme in the Itchen catchment area to restart using the generated credits to meet planning requirements.

On the back of successfully upgrading two of our plants we are planning to roll this solution out to more of our water treatment works in the Itchen valley over the next year.”



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QUESTION 5

From: Councillor Read

To: The Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“In the preparation of the Local Plan there has been NO mention to-date of the requirement for Gypsy and Travellers, we are now working on the Reg 19 penultimate document which is the final stages towards the publication of the proposed New Local Plan. The current LP likewise failed to include the said item and was after due consultation published as a SPD to work alongside the Local Plan. This is a matter of public concern to the Rural Areas of the district as they suffer with the effects of intrusion into the countryside and the problems which emanate from such decisions.

How and when is the District going to publish its proposals?”

Reply

“As I understand you have already been briefed on this by officers you will understand that this has to be addressed in our Reg 19 Local plan.

We both know this is a pressing issue. The challenge of finding plots to fulfil the need has been exacerbated because the Conservative Government has extended the definition of Gypsy and Travellers.

The City commissioned a study into the number of plots and Showperson pitches required and published a criteria based policy in the Reg 18 plan.

The City Council has left no stone unturned in trying to find land to accommodate the needs of this community.

I know that you are a Parish Councillor too. I must congratulate Denmead Parish Council who are considering identifying 1% of its housing as a plot for this purpose as their contribution to providing land in their Neighbourhood Plan. If every community committed to this, then we could accommodate this housing need, which is especially needed in the southern part of the district. In our call for sites, the City Council has asked neighbouring authorities, large landowners and developers and looked at our own estates.

There is no easy solution: and suggestions are welcome.

As you say in your question, the Conservative administration ducked the issue in the last local plan and had to follow up with a later SPD.

The Liberal Democrats will not do this: the Local Plan will address this need as part of the main submission to the Planning Inspector.

In answer to your question, the final proposals will be published as part of our Local plan consultation later this year.”



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QUESTION 6

From: Councillor Pett

To: The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency (Cllr Learney)

“Will the City Council support a nascent campaign to secure 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' status for the River Meon throughout its length, so giving it the same degree of protection and placing the same obligations on water companies as apply to the Itchen, by taking a catalyst role in revitalising The Meon Partnership and so encouraging its partners to work urgently towards this goal that will have a significant impact on its work towards addressing the declared Nature Emergency?”

Reply

“Thank you, Councillor Pett for taking a lead on this matter. While the Itchen gains significant attention as a river of international importance, the Meon and its surroundings are a very important part of our local landscape and ecosystem but it does get overshadowed by its' neighbouring river.

I know Councillor Pett is aware of this but under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 Sites of Special Scientific Interest are determined by Natural England, and are not something this council can designate.

The Leader and I are both happy to give our support to those campaigning to give the Meon additional protection. This is particularly important at a time when climate change and the failure of water companies to invest sufficiently in cleaning up their operations are causing extreme stress and damage to so many waterways across the country.”



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QUESTION 7

From: Councillor Warwick

To: The Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“Public consultation for the Bushfield Camp planning application opened on 27th October and closed on 7th December 2023. When will the application be heard by the planning committee and how many residents will be allowed to address the committee?”

Reply

“It’s become clear as the process has continued that concerns about the highways impact of Bushfield are particularly important for residents – and so the Council is absolutely committed to ensuring that National Highways and Hampshire County Council take the time they need to properly and thoroughly assess the impact of the applications.

As a result, based on the timetable they have given us, it is likely that the Bushfield application will not be able to come to committee before May or June – possibly later.

The decision as to how it will be handled is – as was agreed in the new Constitution last month – is a matter for the Planning Committee itself and not for the administration.

If you look at page 67 of the Constitution - Part 3.3, section 1.8a – it makes clear that the Planning Committee decides their own public speaking arrangements and are also able to determine specific arrangements for public speaking on certain applications.

My hope is that the Committee will look to run a process that allows a full range of residents and affected organisations – including Parish Councils to have their say. I have spoken to the Chair of the Committee, Councillor Rutter, and this is her intention as well.”



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QUESTION 8

From: Councillor Brophy

To: The Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“Given the request by National Highways to have more time to assess the traffic impacts of the proposed development at Bushfield Camp, can the Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan outline how this will affect the timeline for decision making?”

Reply

“I know how concerned local residents are about the traffic and transport implications of the Bushfield planning application.

I am reassured therefore, that National Highways have sought more time to work through the highway implications of the application with the developer.

The outcome of the National Highways’ discussions with the applicant will then be reconsidered by Hampshire Highways who will be given the opportunity to resubmit their comments too.

Once those comments have been received, it will be important for the public to have their say as well – particularly if there is significant new information. And, if this is the case, we will allow time in the process for this to happen.

The combined effect of this is likely to mean that determination will not be possible before May or June this year – possibly later.”



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QUESTION 9

From: Councillor Bolton

To: The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency (Cllr Learney)

“In the CNAP, offsetting is stated as a last resort to achieving net zero. We all know that’s exactly where you will be when you spend your first pound on offsetting.

The proposal to build/invest in utility scale green energy generation with the aim to generate carbon credits to offset the councils own carbon emissions raises way more questions than can be dealt with here but requires proper scrutiny and this has not happened.

Spending residents’ money and inevitably creating a huge web of debt on schemes to build an energy provider with no direct benefit to residents is unacceptable.

The difference between the council owning utility scale energy companies and every home having solar pv, on well insulated homes is huge. One will cost council taxpayers literally millions of pounds with no direct benefit to residents, other than a net zero certificate for council assets in the Guildhall, and the other, will genuinely achieve net zero and bring real benefit to all residents right across the district. The problem is the latter takes much more time and effort to achieve.

Will the administration confirm that council tax funds will never be used to finance schemes to offset carbon usage within the district until every effort has been made to achieve greater than 80% with the fabric first approach, and will only be used in the genuine pursuit of net zero to the direct benefit of residents in our district?”

Reply

“November 2023 Office of Budget Responsibility forecasts indicated that investment in UK oil and gas production between the second half of 2022 and the first quarter of 2028 will result in the industry receiving £11.9 billion in tax relief under the windfall tax (Energy Profits Levy) investment allowance.

The Conservative government's use of taxpayers money to fund expansion of the oil and gas industry, stands in stark contrast to this Liberal Democrat Council's proposal to consider investment in utility scale renewable energy generation, an investment in line with this Council's aspiration for a zero carbon district, broadly self reliant in renewable energy, which would only to be undertaken with a positive business case and after scrutiny.

The benefit to residents is clear, previous investment in commercial solar energy on buildings such as the Biffa depot and at Marwell zoo generate income for the council while panels on our City Offices, Leisure Centre and Barfield car park reduce both carbon generation and running costs. Even with these investments this Council has no debt outside that associated with our council housing.

We will continue to do what makes most sense in a situation where avoiding further warming of our climate is urgent and that means following multiple routes to carbon reduction simultaneously, including not only renewable energy generation, but increasing energy efficiency of housing and commercial buildings, decarbonising transport and reducing waste."



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QUESTION 10

From: Councillor Rutter

To: The Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“Could the Cabinet member for Place and the Local Plan please let us know if recent government announcements on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework have changed our approach to completing our Local Plan?”

Reply

“Earlier in this meeting, I highlighted how the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 was leading to the scrapping of Supplementary Planning Documents as part of a major overhaul of the Local Plan Process.

But also how the lack of clear regulations or guidance on the possible replacement for SPDs was leading to lack of clarity on how to proceed in protecting the Central Winchester SPD or local Village Design Statements.

But I’m afraid that’s just the beginning of the changes we face – some of which are part announced – and some of which not implemented – and some of which – separate from the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act – have come completely out of the blue via Ministerial Statements, NPPF changes and letters from the Chief Planner.

And some of these changes have substantive impact on the viability, cost and impact of local plan policies – including:

- The new Infrastructure Levy – another policy area where details are not available.
- The new nitrate and phosphate mitigation programme
- The delay to biodiversity net gain regulations
- The introduction of Target Emission Rates as a measure for housing environmental performance

Quite aside from other overall Local Plan process changes introduced via the new Levelling Up Act.

To deliver a Local Plan document in a timely manner, requires consistency in National Planning Policy.

Our recent experience has been quite the opposite.

Frankly, it feels rather like the new Gladiator programme, with new obstacles to beat along the way, but we will reach our goal.

Assuming that we will resolve all of these issues, I remain committed to going out to Public Consultation on the Final version (reg 19) of Winchester City Council's Local Plan in late Summer of 2024.

Given the technical impact of these issues, I have also asked officers to arrange a briefing for all councillors on the full implications of the various changes to legislation, the NPPF and other regulations as soon as is practical.”



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QUESTION 11

From: Councillor Lee

To: The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency (Learney) and Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“We have once again experienced widespread flooding in our District due to a combination of warmer wetter winters caused by Climate Change and inadequate drainage and sewerage infrastructure. Three flood warnings were issued, and many areas blighted by excessive surface water often contaminated with foul water e.g., Hambledon. In the future, local flooding is likely to worsen without some new approaches and thinking.

We have already agreed a Motion to protect our Waterways(1), we have declared a Nature (2) and Climate (3) emergencies along with improved sustainable aspects in our emerging Local Plan (4) - SUDS, Nature based Solutions and Green Infrastructure etc.

Can our Council do more for flooding mitigation and adaption measures a future of increasing risks of flooding. New measures could include strengthening mitigation and adaptation policies in our emerging new Local Plan including seeking improved responses to Planning Applications from our statutory consultees - Water Companies, Hampshire, and EA.

Earlier and clearer responses from Planning statutory Consultees about the resilience and capacity of existing ground/surface/water ways drainage plus foul water connecting infrastructure to cope with the additional development connections is much needed. Too often the consulted responses are lacking detail with too many unspecified future unclear dependent variables. More fulsome explanations and details are much needed.

Question: Can the Council commit to developing a mitigation and adaption ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ (MOU) or similar with key Consultees. The aim to ensure both our Officers and the Planning Committee receive enhanced information for more optimal Placemaking and Planning decisions with least flood risk?”

Reply

“In the last 12 months residents have suffered flooding, sewage in the streets poorly maintained drainage systems and only this last week, water shortages due to poor maintenance by Southern Water.

Water is a key commodity and yet we must ensure our communities do not suffer from too much water manifested in rainfall, fluvial and groundwater flooding, or too little.

When Planning Officers and you as the planning committee receive reports, you receive the professional expertise of the Environment Agency, the County Council as flood authority and Southern Water or Portsmouth Water as providers of water services. Winchester City Council uses the knowledge and expertise of our internal drainage engineer who has experienced local flooding in past years.

And still the intensity of the rainfall is adding an unprecedented flood risk, and our drier summers, creating drought conditions.

The Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan already included strong policies on flood risk, but we have already revised the plan to be even stronger.

Rather than a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’, the Strategic Planning team has sought a Statement of Common Ground with Southern Water and commissioned a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

The Planning team also continues to raise matters of concern in the community with Southern Water direct. Additional guidance has been inserted into the new plan to reflect the changing climate patterns reflecting the responses we received.”



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QUESTION 12

From: Councillor Brook

To: The Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“Partnership for Southern Hampshire have been discussing for a long time, the statement of common ground for fulfilling planning numbers that are not able to be delivered by neighbouring local authorities.

I note that they have identified land east of Botley within the Winchester district as part of their broad area search for growth. This area has been discussed in the past and would need to be allocated properly and would likely take well over 1000 houses. How does this impact or eliminate the allocations across the rest of the district and is this an area that would be supported by the strategic planning team?”

Reply

“As discussed earlier in the meeting, on 6 December 2023, the Partnership for South Hampshire Joint Committee met to consider two substantive papers, to

- note the ‘Statement of Common Ground - Broad Areas of Search for Growth Assessment’ and
- approve a Spatial Position Statement or SPS

The SPS assessed environmental constraints on development across the PfSH area as well as the level of sustainable travel facilities and opportunities. Based on this assessment, it identified the following locations as broad areas of search for sustainable strategic-scale development to potentially deliver a combined total of approximately 9,700 homes:

- South-east/east of Eastleigh Town (Eastleigh)
- Havant Town Centre (Havant)
- Waterlooville Town Centre (Havant)
- Southleigh (Havant)
- East of Romsey (Test Valley)
- South-west of Chandler’s Ford (Test Valley)
- East of Botley (Winchester)

The SPS report made clear that it is not an upper tier plan with which future local plans will need to conform but is created to assist all Local Planning Authorities within the partnership area, to progress their local plans and provide evidence of a duty to cooperate.

As such, it is not a local development document and forms no part of the adopted development plan – it has not been subject to any form of public consultation, for example – and I do not believe the proposals within it are at a stage of detail that would justify reconsideration of our entire spatial strategy.

As a result, the council will – as it is required to – consider it as we prepare our Reg 19 submission – however, subject to that consideration, I currently believe it will be most appropriate to review its recommendations in more detail during the next local plan cycle.”



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QUESTION 13

From: Councillor Chamberlain

To: The Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“The 6,000 house Welborne development - just south of Wickham and Knowle - has a health facility included as part of its approved design, but it does not yet appear that the NHS has committed to take it on.

A recent Freedom of Information request to the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board says that Wickham Surgery will be expected to register residents in the first phase of development, covering some 690 homes - even though the surgery, along with the wider Health Service, is already under significant pressure.

What can the Cabinet Member do to ensure that adequate provision is made for the new residents of Welborne without putting services in the Southern portion of the Winchester district under unacceptable pressure?”

Reply

“Winchester City Council is determined that our residents will have access to the best primary healthcare possible – and is willing to work with whoever we need to in order to make that happen. We have provided land for a GP surgery being built in Winchester and funding for two more consulting rooms at Bishops Waltham.

WCC has a strong working relationship with the NHS’s Integrated Care Board for Hampshire and we will continue to monitor the situation at Wickham Practice. The GPs are confident that they can organise their operations to handle the first phase of the development as they have been required to do – but, like us, they believe that a new development of 6,000 houses should not be supported out of Wickham.

Ultimately it is our belief that the solution to this problem has to lie in the Fareham Borough.

And to the best of our knowledge – that’s the belief of Fareham Council too.

All the residents of Welborne will be Fareham borough residents. Fareham Council approved the planning application for the housing and community facilities – including a GP surgery – although, to date, the developer, council and NHS have been unable to agree how this might be implemented.

We believe that the health needs of this community need to be met in Welborne or from Fareham itself – and have made it clear that we are happy to support Fareham Council, the developer and the local NHS to make this happen.

I have asked Cllr Chris Chamberlain who is our WCC representative for the Welborne development to make these concerns known at future Welborne meetings. The Leader has also discussed the issue with Cllr Woodward, the Leader of Fareham Borough Council.

We will continue dialogue with Fareham and with all relevant parts of the NHS – not just so that residents in the south of our district get the GP services they need – but so that the new residents of Welborne do as well.”



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QUESTION 14

From: Councillor Wallace

To: The Leader (Cllr Tod)

“On 8-Jan, Hampshire County Council launched a consultation on cutting a wide range of services including homelessness support, household waste recycling centres, passenger transport and to reduce highway maintenance. If implemented these changes would have a massive impact on our residents (particularly the most vulnerable) and, at the same time, potentially increase costs for Winchester City Council.

Just focussing on passenger transport, the cuts that are being consulted on include withdrawing funding for community transport services (including Dial-a-Ride, and Group Hire Services), removing all bus route subsidies, cutting the Concessionary Travel Scheme for older and disabled residents, and reducing the school transport service. There is already a lack of public transport across the district and particularly in our rural areas. If these changes go ahead, they will have a massive impact to some of our residents.

Moreover, stopping homelessness support puts all responsibility onto the District Councils. Closing household waste recycling centres risks increasing fly-tipping and the associated clean-up which is the responsibility of District Councils. Both areas that could result in increased costs for the City Council. Plus, the potential cuts in highway maintenance include postponing drainage improvements, which could increase the risk of flooding.

Will Winchester Council be responding directly to the County Council on this consultation and, if so, how can Councillors contribute to this response on behalf of local residents?”

Reply

“We are extremely concerned about the County’s budget consultation and its potential consequences. Although the consultation is framed as a county wide one – there are decisions included within it that have decidedly local impacts – and as you highlight – impact on the City Council as well.

So the City Council will be responding directly. All the City Council's heads of service have been asked to comment on the questions listed under the thirteen service change proposals that Hampshire is putting forward and asked to highlight potential impacts to this council, our residents and also – indirectly – potential impacts to Hampshire itself.

These will be consolidated and considered by the Chief Executive and Directors before review by Cabinet ahead of submission.

The decision with most immediate impact is the decision to withdraw all County Council funding for homelessness support services from Winchester Beacon and A2 Dominion. Winchester City Council takes its commitment to fighting homelessness very seriously – and we are carefully reviewing what consequences this has for us and some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

Your question mentions closure of the Household Waste Recovery Centres. Similarly, two of the five they highlight as most likely to close – Bishop's Waltham and Alresford – also sit within our district – and the likely increase in fly-tipping that our community risks from these closures will fall upon the City Council's shoulders.

But other decisions will have an impact on the council's wider goals – and we will also address these concerns in our response. For example, if you look at our goals for active travel and air quality – the cuts to 10 different bus routes – including the 49 and the Meon Valley Community bus in your own ward – as well as the Winchester Dial-a-ride and Denmead Connect services – will potentially work directly – not just against our own objectives – but the County Council's as well.

To have the best chance of impacting County Council decisions, it will also be important for local members to make their own submission and to encourage any affected local residents to respond as well.

You can of course send through any information you would like considered for inclusion as well to me or to the Chief Executive – and where consistent with our response, we will include it as well.”



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QUESTION 15

From: Councillor Power

To: The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance
(Cllr Cutler)

“What government settlement may we expect for 2024-25, and is there any indication of future settlements?”

Reply

“Last year the government indicated that settlements for 22/23 and 23/24 would be broadly similar. In drawing up the MTFS in November we took this into account. The provisional settlement was published just before Christmas and is as expected with only a small variation from the figures used in the MTFS.

General Fund Revenue (£m)	Forecast 2024/25	Provisional 2024/25	Variance
Funding			
Revenue Support Grant	0.165	0.166	0.001
New Homes Bonus	1.629	1.645	0.016
Services Grant	0.090	0.014	-0.076
3% Guarantee	1.006	1.054	0.048
Rural Services Delivery Grant	0.054	0.054	0.000
	2.944	2.933	-0.011

These figures are yet to be formally approved, this is expected in late January or early February.

The government has given no indication of the level of next year’s funding or when the Fair Funding review will be implemented”



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QUESTION 16

From: Councillor Warwick

To: The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency (Cllr Learney)

“Chesil Street car park is very popular on a Sunday and carries the Parkmark award for safe and accessible parking. When will the lift be repaired?”

Reply

“The lift at Chesil is currently working during the hours it is scheduled to operate.”



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QUESTION 17

From: Councillor Lee

To: The Cabinet Member for Place and Local Plan (Cllr Porter)

“Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 places a duty on the Council to keep a register of individuals and associations who wish to acquire serviced plots of land for self-build.

The right serviced sites in the right locations can help people to get onto the housing ladder especially with the benefit of lower deposit mortgages. Self-build can also make a significant contribution to meet the demand for more homes in the District.

How many individuals and/or associations are on the Self-Build register and can the Council explain its intentions to promote this opportunity and how serviced sites might be increased in the forthcoming Local Plan?”

Reply

“The Council holds a list of persons who are interested in self-build and custom build homes. The updates are documented annually and we are currently revising the way in which the list is recorded, to update the required numbers regularly, and to remove applicants who have found land by other methods.

In the year to October 30, 2023, there were 26 additions to the self-build register, leading to a total of 475 on the list, 407 of which have a local connection.

During the year, a further 21 plots came forward, giving a total delivery since the register began in 2016 of 202 plots delivered.

The Council’s *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* document prepared by Icenic consultants recommended a specific planning policy to help promote and encourage delivery of self-build and custom housebuilding. As a result, our Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan Policy H5 proposed that every site of more

than 50 homes should make provision for a number of self build or custom built homes.

This policy formed part of the Regulation 18 consultation process and so will be reviewed ahead of Regulation 19 submission in light of submissions received.”

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