



COUNCIL MEETING – 27 June 2018

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 1

From: Councillor Weir

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment

While welcoming the work that has been carried out to put in the street signs and road markings for long-awaited new parking schemes in the Winchester Town area, can I ask the Portfolio Holder to update us on the timetable for informing residents about parking permit requirements, when these permits will be available, and when we can expect parking enforcement to get underway?

Reply

As the question is from Cllr Weir I assume she is referring to the new restrictions in Teg Down and Weeke, although there are also new restrictions coming in across the city within Winnall and Stanmore.

The Traffic Regulation Orders for all of the above have been made and came into effect from 16th April 2018. However they cannot be enforced of course until the necessary signs and markings are in place and residents need to be given the opportunity to apply for permits too.

The lining and signing works have taken longer to finish than expected. The latter is carried out by Hampshire County Council contractors. However I am pleased to confirm that all of Teg Down has been in place for some time and Weeke is now mostly finished with just a few roads still needing the parking bays painted.

The signing in Winnall and Stanmore is also complete.

Most of the lining in Winnall has been implemented but all of the lining work in Stanmore is still outstanding. Officers have chased up this work with Hampshire, and I am hopeful this will be carried out shortly, but this something which is not within the Council's direct control.

In terms of residents' permits, the Parking Office is hoping to complete the administrative work for Teg Down this week. The size of the program in the city relating to the introduction of new permit schemes, and the work this involves, coupled with some current resource issues within the team, means there has been some delay in implementing this element of the schemes but officers are working as quickly as possible to finish the job. However, this has not delayed schemes coming into operation in those areas where lining is incomplete as enforcing new controls can only take place once the lining and signing has been finished.

Once the schemes have been implemented in full the new restrictions can be enforced by the Parking Team.



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QUESTION 02

From: Councillor Weston

To: The Portfolio Holder for Professional Services

It was reported on the 18th June on the LocalGov site that half of council workers in the UK are thinking of leaving their job as they do not feel secure, the workload is unmanageable, they have no confidence in the future of local services due to spending cuts, with 83% saying cuts have had a negative impact on their ability to do the job as well as they can.

Can I and the public of Winchester District have reassurance that Winchester City Council is not facing these issues and that this Council has a stable and motivated workforce and that we have the right actions in place to ensure that Winchester City Council remains a stable and proactive environment and retains our committed and hardworking council workers?

Reply

The Interim Head of Human Resources reports in the outturn performance report (PER314) which will be presented to Personnel Committee on 02 July 2018 that turnover is 13.2% which is in line with the national average for councils.

To position Winchester City Council as an employer of choice and to attract and retain the right staff with the right skills, attitude, motivation and flexibility to deliver modern local government services and to support the type of organisation the Council wants to become as it moves forward, the Council's Employee Strategy (PER304 refers) sets out a number of key Human Resource developments which need to be implemented over the coming three years. Quarterly updates on progress against the priority outcomes within the Employee Strategy are reported to Personnel Committee.



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QUESTION 3

From: Councillor Laming

To: The Portfolio Holder for Professional Services

Please inform me of the personnel head count for the each of the last 3 years. The total employee cost for each of the last three years and also inform the council of the redundancy costs incurred for each of the last 3 years. The number of consultants and their costs also for the last three years.

Reply

- a) The Organisational Development Outturn Performance Report (PER314) which will be presented to Personnel Committee on 02 July 2018 shows the headcount as at 31 March 2018 was 492; previous years are summarised in the table below:

	Headcount	FTE
31/03/2018	492	440.5
31/03/2017	499	446.77
31/03/2016	481	426.45

- b) The Statement of Accounts presents a comparison of employee spend versus the prior year and also a breakdown of termination benefits and exit packages.
- c) The total employee costs; total redundancy costs; total consultants and associated costs for the last three years are set out below:

COSTS	17/18	16/17	15/16
	£,000	£,000	£,000
Total Employees	20,911	18,557	17,781
Redundancy	250	31	146
Consultants	1,413	744	1,079



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QUESTION 4

From: Councillor McLean

To: The Portfolio Holder for Environment

What measures has the portfolio holder put in place to reassure residents about the number of taxis licensed in Wolverhampton and operating in Winchester?

Reply

Private hire taxi's operating in Winchester's area under a Wolverhampton licence plate, are able to do so by virtue of the Deregulation Act 2015. This allows private hire operators to sub contract their work to another licensed private hire operator, without being subject to any geographical limitation. The only requirements are that the sub contractor must honor the original terms of the hire, as requested by the customer and that the licensing 'trinity' is in place, which is to say the operator, driver and vehicle must all be licensed. Winchester City Council's Licensing Authority is therefore unable to directly control the numbers of these 'non' Winchester licensed vehicles, under current national legislation.

Notwithstanding, the Leader has written to Wolverhampton City Council, expressing Winchester's concerns at their proactive practice of licensing private hire operators across the country and its impact within Winchester. The City Council would add its voice to that of various regulatory licensing authorities, most notably Transport for London, in seeking legislative change, and local Member of Parliament Steve Brine, has also given a commitment to lobby ministers for the Department of Transport, on the matter.

In addition, Winchester's Licensing Authority recognizes that this issue presents local concerns and is reviewing its own internal processes to identify whether they unintentionally encourage the practice of sub contracting and any measures that can be legally adopted in its licensing policy, to mitigate the practice.



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QUESTION 5

From: Councillor Power

To: The Portfolio Holder for Built Environment

What are the plans for reassessing Infrastructure needs as part of our review of the Local Strategic Plan?

Reply

As part of the preparation of the local plan to commence later this year it will be necessary to examine infrastructure requirements through the preparation of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). This will be a key piece of evidence to inform both the local plan and update of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule to commence in parallel with the local plan.

The purpose of an IDP is to identify all planned and projected development and associated infrastructure requirements. This is undertaken in conjunction with the numerous utility companies and other providers through extensive consultation and engagement and informs the expression of emerging planning policies allocating sites for development. This will also be fundamental in informing proposed changes to CIL when considered with viability testing.



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QUESTION 6

From: Councillor Stallard

To: The Portfolio Holder for Business Partnerships

Would the Portfolio Holder for Business Partnerships and Economic Development provide an update on the support we provide to our rural businesses and market towns.

Reply

Inspired by the Portas Pilot towns, Winchester City Council has been working closely with its market towns 2012. In 2013, a Market Towns Development Officer was recruited jointly funded by Winchester City Council, Bishops Waltham, Wickham, Denmead and latterly Alresford. Their task was to co-ordinate activities to increase footfall in the market towns, and over time build capacity in each community to allow local volunteers to take on this work themselves.

In 2017 the officer left for a new role outside the Council, two years after the original planned tenure for the post, such was its success. At that time discussions were held with each market town, and Bishops Waltham and Alresford decided to work independently of Winchester City Council, and Wickham and Denmead continued to contribute funding and work with the City Council. During internal Council staff reorganisations, a market towns support officer has been ensuring continued success of established market town events and projects. As such, the previously established events have continued and proved to be as popular as ever.

In the last week, officers have met with representatives of Wickham and Denmead to discuss the future, and what the next steps might be. No conclusions have been drawn as resources need to be planned for not only this area of work, but other economic development and tourism activities. However, it is clear that both towns' needs are unique, and both continue to need support in some way.

Winchester City Council remains committed to supporting our rural economy, including our market towns and our emerging economic strategy will make

clear the ongoing need to engage our rural business and communities alongside those within Winchester town. This was something discussed at length at May's Winchester Unconference, with those discussions being taken further with key stakeholders currently.

I am working with officers to create a sustainable solution that meets the needs of our market towns and rural areas. I expect to have plans in place in the next two months.



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QUESTION 7

From: Councillor Thompson

To: Portfolio for Built Environment

When will work start on the St Maurice's Covert project?

Reply: The delivery this project has been delayed following responses received to the public consultation undertaken on the proposed scheme in autumn last year when a number of concerns were raised which required us to re-assess the proposals particularly around elements like the bin/cycle store and plinth.

In light of the feedback received officers have continued to work with the architects, Scott Whitby Studio, to develop revised proposals which are designed to address the concerns highlighted.

I am confident that we will shortly be in a position to refer the scheme, in its revised form, back to the Steering Group for their consideration and we are therefore arranging a date for a meeting as soon as possible. Once this has taken place, and assuming the group is supportive of the amended scheme, it should be possible for the project to move forward to the implementation stage and for the envisaged enhancements of the Covert to be realized which will improve its contribution to the townscape of Winchester.



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QUESTION 8

From: Councillor Mather

To: The Portfolio Holder for Built Environment

While it is good to see that the Buttercross is now receiving a weekly clean, what is being done to preserve, or to restore, Winchester's historic resource? For instance, Hyde Gate and Chamber and the mediaeval walls and bridges dating back to Hyde Abbey, the Westgate, the two mediaeval passages (Cross Keys and Got Begot), etc., all require immediate attention. Have we a maintenance schedule and a restoration plan in place covering the whole of historic Winchester?

Reply

I am aware that there have been issues recently regarding the general cleanliness of some of our historic assets in the city and we have addressed this in the short term by arranging for the Council's Special Maintenance team to carryout basic cleansing of the Buttercross and Hyde Gate which has improved the situation significantly.

Furthermore, the recently announced pigeon control strategy includes regular cleansing of a number of hot spots in the city; The Royal Oak Passage, Hammond Passage, the Guildhall entrance area, St Lawrence's Passage, and Kings Walk as well as the Buttercross.

Officers from our Estates and Historic Environment teams will be working together going forward to agree an approach for caring for our assets. This will also need to involve Historic England as wider repairs and maintenance works may well require their consent and discussions are already underway regarding the future maintenance and repair of the Buttercross.



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QUESTION 9

From: Councillor Burns

To: The Portfolio Holder for Professional Services

What positive measures has this Conservative administration taken to prepare for the Universal Credit scheme, and how will we support local residents when it is introduced in Winchester, next month?

Reply

Council officers have been working closely with representatives from the Department for Work and pensions to prepare for the roll out of Universal Credit, the full roll out of which commences in July.

With regard to the Council's specific support proposals, plans include:

- An in house Support team which will increase capacity over the coming months but which is already offering targeted personal budgeting and digital support to all residents. Provision has been made initially for two "Money and Benefits Advisers" who, whilst being based in the Housing team will work with colleagues in Benefits, and Customer Services to identify who may need assistance with claims.
- £138,000 to cover Discretionary Housing Payments with proposals to increase this provision if needed from the Council's Housing Revenue Account
- £10,000 to fund additional external money advice and support
- Information (printed and digital) signposting claimants to available services

The service will aim to support claimants in a way that suits them. This will include home visits or meeting at mutually agreed locations, not just expecting

customers to come to Winchester. The extent of out of hours working is not clear at this stage but will be considered where appropriate if demand is there.

Numbers requiring assistance in the early months is likely to be low but will no doubt increase over time.

A member briefing has been arranged for Thursday 5 July 2018 at 6pm in the Walton Suite, Guildhall. Representatives from the Department of Work and Pensions will be attending along with officers from Housing and Benefits teams. I would encourage all members to attend.



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QUESTION 10

From: Councillor Power

To: The Portfolio Holder for Professional Services

CAB3003 does not make it clear if help for claimants of Universal credit will be available in the market towns, and in the evening as many claimants will be working during the day. Would the portfolio holder please confirm that this will be the case, and the details of that support? I also seek clarifications as to why this is seen as a Housing issue, are we not offering help to other claimants?

Reply

Providing advice and assistance to claimants of Universal Credit is certainly not seen as “a Housing Issue” and the Council is seeking to assist all residents by establishing a “cross tenure” support service. Officers are working with other landlords and agencies throughout the district and claimants will be able to seek advice from a number of sources.

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QUESTION 11

From: Councillor Gemmell

To: The Portfolio Holder for Built Environment

Can the Portfolio Holder please tell us where we are with CIL monies in the Southern Parishes?

Reply

The Council introduced CIL in April 2014 for the part of the District outside the National Park. To date we have collected more than £2.1m from developments in the southern parishes. Under the regulations the City Council passes 15% of this income to the parish council where the development takes place (the neighbourhood portion) or 25% in Denmead as they have an adopted a Neighbourhood Plan. It should be noted that the South Downs National Park introduced its own CIL in 2017.

In terms of the neighbourhood portion the total the southern parishes have already received, or will receive shortly, is about £332k and this can be broken down as follows; Denmead £22k, Shedfield £183k, Soberton £2.7k, Southwick and Widley £855, Swanmore £115k and Wickham £9k. Each parish decides how these funds are spent.

The City Council has also allocated significant funds from the CIL income it retains to a number of schemes in the District including £183k for improvements to the New Road playing fields in Swanmore and £250k for drainage improvements at Wickham to help bring forward housing developments on sites allocated in our adopted Local Plan. We will shortly be reviewing how we allocate our CIL funds moving forward.



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QUESTION 12

From: Councillor Ruffell

To: The Leader with Portfolio Holder for Housing Services

Now that Chesil Lodge is to be occupied in the near future. How is the Council progressing on new homes delivery?

Reply:

The handover of Chesil Lodge was completed on the 21st June 2018. Building testing and furnishing of communal areas has commenced with residents starting to move in from the 28th June.

In terms of the overall New Homes programme and our aspiration for 600 new homes we have completed **160** new homes, we are on-site with **51** homes at Victoria Court, Bailey Close, Mitford Road and Knowle.

We also have planning consent on **83** homes but awaiting tender at the Valley and Rowlings Road

2 consultation events are planned in the next 4 weeks for approximately **110** homes at Winnall flats and Hookpit in Kings Worthy.

In addition a large community led scheme in partnership with Wickham Parish Council and Homes England at Knowle for **200** homes will be submitted to planning shortly for consideration.



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QUESTION 13

From: Councillor Gottlieb

To: The Leader with Portfolio for Housing Services

Can we please have an update on the total cost of building Chesil Lodge, including any interest charges incurred as a result of the recent delays?

Reply:

I am delighted to announce that Chesil Lodge has been fully handed over to the Council from Galliford Try and is a wonderful addition to the Council's stock of affordable housing. Extra Care housing is a very important part of our Housing Strategy and our commitment to provide affordable housing for all sectors of the community. This accommodation allows elderly residents to live independently as their care needs change, the apartments are spacious and all enjoy private balcony's. There is a restaurant on site serving residents and visitors as well as a treatment room / hairdresser.

Current expenditure on Chesil Lodge stands at £15,323,000 (as at 31st May 18) which includes build contract / land /fees and marketing costs. Current forecast cost is £16,983,000 before Liquidated Ascertained Damages (LADS) are applied following the delay in handing over the scheme by the builders . This will result in a reduction of the scheme cost but have yet to be included as the final account is still to be prepared.

The (revised) approved budget for the project (as of May 17) is £16,828,000

Its difficult to carry out a calculation of interest for the project because of pooling of interest charges within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), however due to the delays the Council has lost potentially £253,000 in rental payments (which will be an element of the LADS claim).



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QUESTION 14

From: Councillor Becker

To: The Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing

The Winchester Breastfeeding Welcome scheme was launched in 2015. When were the lists of the central Winchester and Alresford and Bishops Waltham cafes and restaurants participating in the scheme last updated on the Council website?

Reply

The Winchester Breastfeeding Welcome scheme signed up businesses in 2015 to ensure mothers could confidently breastfeed their baby in locations primarily around the city centre including cafes, shops and restaurants.

Whilst anecdotal evidence suggests mothers felt more confident entering participating retailers and eateries, there are no quantitative outcome measures recorded.

Southern Health is responsible for leading the 'Winchester Local Implementation Group: Breastfeeding'. Lanterns Nursery and Extended Services is a key member of the group, with Joss King from the extended Services team having last updated the welcome scheme list in 2017. The list is available on the Council's website at <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/community/health-wellbeing/winchester-breastfeeding-welcome-scheme/> and officers are awaiting an updated version for publication on the Council's website from the extended services team.



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QUESTION 15

From: Councillor Gottlieb

To: Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Can we please have full details of the rental/purchase costs of all the concrete blocks in the High Street up to date and until they are due to be removed?
Can we also please have a date for their removal and full details of what it is intended to replace them with, in advance of their actual order/installation?

Reply

The blocks to which Cllr Gottlieb refers were supplied by Hampshire County Council from their highway management stock and are provided without capital or on going cost. They will be returned to the County Council for further use once their current function has ceased.

The two authorities are currently finalising proposals for the replacement of these blocks with a scheme which is both secure and more aesthetically pleasing. We will need to use installations that comply with PAS 68:2010, the British Standards Institute's Publicly Available Specification for vehicle security barriers. This standard is the benchmark for HVM (Hostile Vehicle Mitigation) equipment. The positioning and layout will also need to meet the approval of Hampshire County Council, especially in relation to emergency planning and highways requirements. We aim to produce an aesthetically pleasing design that is acceptable in this historic setting and we will involve members in the decision in due course. This will incur a capital cost, which will be met jointly by HCC and WCC. Installation is targeted at September/October this year.



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QUESTION 16

From: Councillor Gottlieb

To: The Portfolio for Professional Services

Can we please have details of all the new officers in senior and management position appointed over the last several months, including who they are and what they do? Could we also please have details of the total numbers of staff employed by the Council - has this gone up or down in recent years?

Reply

- a) PER301 (25 July 2017) sets out the details of a senior management restructure which was proposed by the Chief Executive to continue to support the council's strong track record in the delivery of front line customer facing services and strengthen its capacity to deliver a range of significant projects.

The new senior management structure is now in place and will enable delivery of the council's ambitious agenda through additional investment in a number of key areas and enhance accountability through clear line management through Directors to the Chief Executive.

As part of this restructure, the Council has appointed to a number senior posts:

Name	Title
Chas Bradfield	Strategic Director: Place
Lisa Kirkman	Corporate Head of Resources
Ellen Simpson	Corporate Head of Strategic Support (Interim)
Susan Robbins	Corporate Head of Engagement
Andy Hickman	Head of Programme (Sports and Leisure Park)

Ian Charie	Head of Programme (Station Approach)
Veryan Lyons	Head of Programme (Central Winchester Regeneration)

- b) The Interim Head of Human Resources reports in the outturn performance report (PER314) which will be presented to Personnel Committee on 02 July 2018 that the headcount at 31 March 2018 was 492. Previous years are summarised below:

	Headcount	FTE
31/03/2018	492	440.5
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Organisational Structure

