



**Winchester**  
City Council

**COUNCIL MEETING – 6 July 2022**

**Question under Council Procedure Rule 15(3)**

**QUESTION 1**

From: Councillor McLean

To: The Leader (Cllr Tod)

“Could the Leader please comment on the appalling condition of the toilets at Abbey Gardens, and Bishops Waltham? These are much used toilets and are in no condition for use by our residents and the many visitors to both Winchester and Bishops Waltham.”

**Reply**

“One of the reasons that we increased the budget by £185,000 for our city and market centres back in February and appointed a new officer for our centres was to get noticeable improvements on exactly this kind of issue.

The officer’s role is to lead on improving the street scene across the District and this includes our public toilets. The role has had an immediate impact on quickly coordinating improvements to the maintenance and condition of our toilets.

Our contractors who clean the public toilets are generally finding it difficult to recruit suitable staff, but we are regularly meeting with them and following the appropriate contractual procedures to ensure that the quality requirements for the public toilets in Winchester District are met.

We are also developing a long term plan for our public toilets which includes reviewing our stock and identifying what investment is needed, which would include how our facilities meet the ‘changing place’ standards which allows everyone access to toilets and changing facilities.

Abbey Garden and the Bishops Waltham facilities are included in this review, and so whilst we are seeking to ensure short term improvements to ensure maintenance and cleaning are carried out effectively, we are also starting to review long term infrastructure options to raise the standards, and reduce maintenance issues.”



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**QUESTION 2**

From: Councillor Wallace

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

“Winchester City Council has set out actions to achieve carbon neutrality in its Carbon Neutrality Action Plan. These actions stretch across all areas of the Council. What management system is in place to monitor progress against the Climate Action Plan?”

**Reply**

“The council has an extensive project management monitoring approach and all of our projects are monitored using this methodology.

As a first stage, monitoring of progress on the actions and projects takes place monthly through our operational delivery group. This ensures that progress is on track, with any exceptions highlighted and escalated to the Carbon Board.

The Carbon Board comprises three Cabinet members, including the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and a Strategic Director and they have oversight of the programme of delivery. It considers exceptions escalated by the operational delivery group, budgetary implications and acts as a gateway for progress to the next stage for certain projects.

The Carbon Neutrality programme is identified as a Tier 1 project and as such is reported to members via the council’s corporate quarterly performance monitoring reports to Performance Panel and Scrutiny Committee. These reports include a written summary of progress against the Council Plan outcome, as well as the carbon neutrality action plan highlight report.

Finally, the Health and Environment Policy Committee receives regular reports on progress against the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) priorities of transport, energy and housing. It also receives the CNAP annual report which summarises progress across the year and includes metrics to map progress towards our 2024 and 2030 targets.”



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**QUESTION 3**

From: Councillor Warwick

To: The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing (Cllr Ferguson)

“Can the Cabinet Member outline what plans are in place by the City Council to protect areas across the District (such as the Compton Lock) from increased littering or other antisocial behaviour as the weather improves and school exams finish?”

**Reply**

“Last year the team undertook 31 patrols at Compton Locks alongside the Police and Fire and Rescue Service. Education around BBQ use and water safety was provided alongside littering and reporting anti-social behavior. I am pleased to confirm that during that 6-month period there were no witnessed anti-social behaviour concerns.

A patrol at Compton Locks is due take place the week commencing 18th July as part of anti-social behaviour awareness week. A meeting has also been scheduled to meet with the Parish Councils, Ward Members and PCSO's to better understand and discuss local concerns.

Our Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety team is currently finalising the annual anti-social behaviour engagement plan, developed in conjunction with the Police and other key partners. This plan focusses our combined efforts on identified anti-social behaviour hot spot locations across the Winchester district.

The anti-social behaviour campaign aims to undertake partner patrols, street and block briefs, beat surgeries and walkabouts. It will provide a visible presence/reassurance particularly in areas that are either known to be anti-social behaviour hotspots or areas that have the potential to be, and to encourage individuals and community representatives to report their concerns via the appropriate reporting methods.

The partnership also takes the opportunity to educate those they meet and engage with on all forms of anti-social behavior such as littering, being considerate neighbours, reporting incidents and staying safe.”



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**QUESTION 4**

From: Councillor Edwards

To: The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing (Cllr Ferguson)

“Mr Mayor, you will remember opening the new, state-of-the-art skatepark at King George V playing fields on 11 June, dedicated to our late colleague Susan Lord. It was a great day, and the skatepark is already proving popular. But much more needs to be done in this area. Can the Cabinet Member for Community & Housing please update Council on progress with the KGV Park Plan and the pavilion project, which will be of great interest to residents of Highcliffe and Bar End?”

**Reply**

“The KGV Park Plan and Pavilion are two separate projects although holistically they are linked and I know that they are both are of great interest to residents in High Cliff and Bar End.

In respect of the KGV Park Plan, now that the skate park has been opened and is already been well used by both younger and older residents, we are focused on the next stage of the park plan which is the implementation of a perimeter path. We have applied for CIL funding for this path and are currently awaiting the outcome of this application. In the meantime some additional tree planting has been undertaken and more is scheduled for Spring 2023 along with some new hedge planting to enhance the area. The play area is also set to be refurbished/upgraded this financial year and consultation for this has already been undertaken. The tendering process for this work is anticipated to start shortly with a view to completing the refurbishment of the play as soon as possible.

Progress on the new KGV Pavilion is going well. The planning application has been approved, and the work is now out to tender. We anticipate being able to provide a further update once the tenders have been returned and assessed in late August/early September.”



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**QUESTION 5**

From: Councillor Kurn

To: The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing (Cllr Ferguson)

“Residents of Claylands Road in Bishops Waltham will be pleased to know they are being consulted about the extension of residents car parking, but there are still lots of concern when it comes to flooding. Where are we with this issue to protect our residents and our council properties which keep flooding?”

**Reply**

“Following the flooding issues at Battery Hill and Claylands Road during the winter months, an options appraisal report was commissioned from Arup who are a local independent technical firm of sustainable development specialists. This report has identified a number of potential options which are now being costed up. At the same time, additional drainage surveys are being undertaken to complement the report so we have a complete picture.

All of this work will support the various mitigation measures available and their impact in order to identify an affordable and sustainable solution to local flooding in the area, helping to protect residents and council homes now and in the future. We anticipate the revised report and drainage surveys will be completed by September 2022.

Any works are complicated by the joint land responsibilities of Hampshire County Council and establishing whether the water drains suspected as causing the overflow and flooding sit with Hampshire County Council or Southern Water.

Regardless of this we do need to be proactive to prevent further flooding this winter through interim measures which will include diverting flood water coming down the hill into a temporary ditch on the green space at Claylands Road.”



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**QUESTION 6**

From: Councillor Tippett-Cooper

To: The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities (Cllr Ferguson)

“A huge challenge facing the Council now and in the next few months will be the ongoing support to our new Ukrainian community who have arrived in the District as refugees. The last few months has seen both a hugely uplifting response from the communities in our District in support of these refugees (in particular, the brilliant hosts under the Homes for Ukraine scheme whose kindness is an inspirational example of how we should support vulnerable refugees from all over the world) and an astonishing amount of commitment and compassion from Winchester City Council officers who have been working tirelessly in this area and truly reflecting our City of Sanctuary commitment.

While we know that we have almost 500 individuals who have arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, Winchester District also has an unknown number of Ukrainians who have arrived under the Ukraine Family Scheme - can the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities please provide details of what, if any central government funding/support has been provided for Ukrainian refugees who have arrived under this scheme?”

**Reply**

“The council is pleased to welcome our Ukrainian guests to the district, and is proud of the numerous offers to host families and provide support from our residents. We have set up a community hub as a safe space for arriving refugees to meet together to access information, advice and support in one location.

A local welcome booklet translated into Ukrainian and Russian is available to both our Ukrainian guests and their hosts containing lots of helpful information.

Unlike the Homes for Ukrainians scheme the Ukraine Family Scheme does not attract any government funding. But they are able to live, work and study in the UK and to access public funds, such as health care, applying for

benefits and social housing. We encourage and welcome those on the Ukraine Family Scheme to attend the council's Community Hub to access support from community and charitable organisations with the council signposting them to specialist support and offering advice wherever it can.

The councils housing team is readily available to offer housing options advice to any arriving refugees who may find themselves at risk of homelessness, providing advice and support through a range of interventions to prevent homelessness.

We remain committed, working closely with the City of Sanctuary to welcome and support all arriving refugees to our district.”



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**QUESTION 7**

From: Councillor Cook

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

“There was a paper recently at the Town Forum that was titled Bike Parking and Security. I believe the purpose of the paper was to provide an update to the provision of improved and additional cycle parking facilities for the Town Centre.

Now the implications as noted in the report referred to.

A Cycle Parking Plan supporting the priority of Living Well which seeks to support good mental and physical health for the residents and the improvements in the Plan will improve Cycle Infrastructure in the Town. It referred to a number of areas within the Town Centre but the one that I would like to ask a question about is the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park at Bar End.

On Page 35 of the Report it gives a breakdown of the current facilities that are located at the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park but the crucial matter or should I say question is that I should like to ask the Cabinet Member is exactly what measures have been put in place as additional security for one when they visit the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park by the mode of transport that we as a City Council are encouraging to all residents not just in the city Centre but the District to Cycle to the Venue?

There have been numerous thefts from the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park and only recently a metal x4 Cycle Secure Locker that has been literally been positioned on the Public walkway is the only additional Secure place to secure one's Cycle.

Which May I say on four occasions I have popped in to ask about the Cycle Lockers to be greeted with I'm not sure how they work.”

Reply

“As a regular cyclist and user of the Leisure Centre myself, as well as being in regular contact with local organisations promoting cycling I have been well aware of and very concerned by, the increased level of bike thefts across the City.

As part of the Council response a set of four secure cycle lockers have been placed close to the building entrance of the Leisure Centre along with two sets of cycle toaster racks. Their location was chosen to make sure that they are in full view of reception and where footfall and therefore natural surveillance is high. It is also the location where Leisure Centre users were locking their bikes to the railings but the position of these can be changed if it is felt necessary. The management of the Leisure Park have briefed staff how to help customers use the racks.

In addition, we have been working in partnership with our local Police teams who have increased their surveillance at the Leisure Park and apprehended a suspect. The existing CCTV coverage for the Leisure Park has also been reviewed and improved with their assistance and finally they have also carried out a bike marking and bike security event with Cycle Winchester in attendance and we hope to run a second event in the near future.”



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**QUESTION 8**

From: Councillor Rutter

To: The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing (Cllr Ferguson)

“Some people have complained about a lack of bunting in Winchester for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. Can the Cabinet Member explain where the Council's considerable financial support went and how local communities will have benefited in the longer term from grants and other support, rather than spending scarce resources on bunting which is by its very nature disposable?”

**Reply**

“The council's main priority was to support communities across the district to organise their own celebrations – since we know from our own experience that jubilee street parties, community festivals, beacons and other such events stay with people for a lifetime.

We created a how to guide for communities to safely run a street party and gave out 12 grants for community events taking place in Micheldever, Droxford, Upham, Denmead and Wickham to name a few.

We issued 48 temporary road closures across the district for local street parties throughout the city and Twyford, Sparsholt, Crawley, Bishops Waltham and Southwick, again to name just a few.

As part of our Jubilee celebrations that leave a lasting legacy, in support of the Queen's Green Canopy challenge, a number of trees were planted in commemoration, and we provided support and assistance throughout the district, including assisting the local girl guides with their own tree planting, and we supplying and installing plaques for trees planted in commemoration to

- 24 parishes across the district
- 48 plaques at our housing sites
- 27 on our open spaces.

We also have commemorative planting on the Bar End Roundabout

The Visitor Information Centre was dressed in bunting, red, white and blue balloons, and sold souvenirs such as books, keyrings, flags, mugs, teapots etc. There was also a display with information on things happening over the weekend and showcase our Royal Blood trail.

Visit Winchester promoted attractions that were putting on special jubilee events in the city and elsewhere in the district including The Cathedral, The Arc, Theatre Royal, City Mill and the Watercress Line.”



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**QUESTION 9**

From: Councillor Horrill

To: The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing (Cllr Ferguson)

“Please can the Cabinet Member advise how we intend to deliver the 1000 new homes, which the Council has a key objective – one that we all wholeheartedly support?”

How can this be achieved whilst we have many project manager vacancies, nitrate and phosphate constraints are delaying planning permissions and when costs are rising so significantly for building works.”

**Reply**

“Thank you for your support for the Council’s objective to build 1000 new homes between 2021 – 2030. I am pleased to confirm that to date we have completed 121 new homes with a further 131 are under construction. This amounts to 25% of the target.

While there are a number of short-term pressures, the Council remains resolute in its determination to meet this ambitious target. In respect of staff, all current schemes have a nominated Project Manager whose role is to ensure the project comes forward in a timely way, and further Project Managers will be recruited this year as currently unallocated projects progress. In addition, a new senior manager will be joining the New Homes team in July and we are actively seeking to recruit a further senior member of staff.

In relation to nutrients, strategic solutions have been developed working with private land owners, neighbouring authorities, and Partnership for South Hampshire which means that we can grant permission for new housing across the district where nitrogen neutrality needs to be achieved in order to avoid adverse impacts on nationally protected sites.

However, in relation to the river Itchen catchment, which includes Winchester town and surrounding areas, there is the additional issue of the effect

phosphorous on the quality of the water environment which means that, in most cases, we are not able to give permission at the present time. Finding solutions to mitigate the effects of phosphorous is technically more challenging than nitrogen, no strategic schemes have been identified currently and it will take time to put these in place.

Cost increase and shortage of materials is an on-going issue facing the construction industry as a whole and something which the Council has very little control. However, we are working closely with our contractors as they look to mitigate any potential delays in the build programme.

We continue to review all potential sites in order to meet the 1000 home target and where appropriate will look to bring forward some sites that had originally been earmarked for later construction where that is possible.”



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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 15(3)**

**QUESTION 10**

From: Councillor Lumby

To: The Leader (Cllr Tod)

“It is clearly important that all members be able to access relevant information in order to allow them to perform their duties, make effective decisions and ensure proper oversight and scrutiny. Please confirm what progress is being made to ensure a proper policy is in place in relation to when members may be required to give non disclosure agreements, so as to avoid the debacle that occurred in the last municipal year being repeated.”

**Reply**

“I am pleased to confirm that at the Audit and Governance meeting last week consensus was reached by the committee in respect of the Council motion that was referred to this committee for action. Our Monitoring Officer will update all members on all aspects of the motion shortly through the Democratic Services Update (DSU) as non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) was only one part of that motion.

In respect of NDA’s the Audit and Governance Committee agreed with the opinion of both the Monitoring Officer and legal advice provided by Veale Wansbrough Vizard to the committee, that the use of NDA’s should always be the exception. Any proposed future use of an NDA will have to be signed off by the Executive Leadership Board and the terms of the NDA approved by the Monitoring Officer.

Improvements have also been agreed in how exempt papers are displayed in mod.gov so that members have absolute clarity on what is and is not exempt material. The pages of exempt information will now clearly be shown on a pink screen.”



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**QUESTION 11**

From: Councillor Brook

To: The Leader (Cllr Tod)

“With the lack of consultation especially around River Park, the local plan (we asked for an update before being given it) and Station Approach (again we had to ask for a briefing) it is evident that key decisions are being made behind closed doors. What are the intentions of this new leadership to make these decisions more open and collaborative. We stand ready to work with you for the best of the residents and the whole district. We just ask that the select few, especially with no rural representation, start collaborating effectively.”

**Reply**

““This administration is committed to listening to the public as well as actively engaging with councillors on key decisions – and is demonstrating that commitment by its actions.

The new way forward for the Station Approach Project was briefed to councillors at my specific request – not in response to anyone else. A paper has been prepared outlining the way forward which will be discussed in public at the Scrutiny Committee before a decision is made in public at Cabinet – and, subject to that decision, the open public consultation on the project will begin. The Council has written to the public in the local area and local stakeholders to inform them of the way forward – and the public and local stakeholders will be at the heart of the decision-making process.

Similarly, the briefing for councillors on the local plan process was requested by Cabinet – along with the extra consultation and engagement that we have already added to the plan – ahead of a decision to start the public Reg 18 consultation in the Autumn. The engagement and effectiveness of the Local Plan process so far has been recognised for its quality in the 2021 Royal Town Planning Institute (RPTI) South East Awards for Planning Excellence where it was the overall winner and the winner of the “Plan Making Category”.

Finally, no key decisions have been made behind closed doors. If any had, under our constitution, the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that decisions are adequately and publicly scrutinised and examined sits with the Scrutiny Committee.

This administration remains committed to doing what we can to ensure that the Scrutiny Committee fulfills its constitutional duties.”



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**QUESTION 12**

From: Councillor Wallace

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

“Many cities across the UK are working to introduce regular car-free days, allowing people to experience streets free of motor traffic. What plans is the Council putting in place for International Car Free day on 22 September?”

**Reply**

“The council is, jointly with the County Council, working hard to get the infrastructure needed to reduce traffic in place via the Winchester Movement Strategy, the so-called Mini-Holland programme and the district Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure plan. We are also progressing the implementation of the parking and access strategy including changes in parking tariffs, provision of new park and ride spaces, additional cycle parking and associated reductions in city Centre parking all aimed at encouraging a reduction in city Centre traffic.

We are consciously concentrating officer resource and priority on working closely with the public to identify and resource permanent changes that lead to long-term change to more active sustainable travel.

I have carefully considered International Car Free Day and how we might use it to help us achieve our goals of reducing motor traffic and encouraging active travel.

As a one-off day in the working week the danger of any meaningful road closures is that we create congestion, confusion and cause public transport delays – reinforcing the convenience of the car and reducing support and resource for the longer term initiatives that will give people the low traffic experience we want to see throughout the district.”



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**QUESTION 13**

From: Councillor McLean

To: The Leader (Cllr Tod)

“It would seem the council cabinet is totally drawn from the City of Winchester, with no representatives from the Southern parishes, including Wickham and Whiteley. Can the Leader explain why this unbalanced and unrepresentative makeup?”

**Reply**

“All Cabinet Members take their responsibility to represent the entire district in how they undertake their role extremely seriously – and, constitutionally, Cabinet is not large enough for every ward to be represented.

Currently 4 of the 7 members of Cabinet live in and represent areas in the City and 3 live in and represent areas outside the City.”



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**Question under Council Procedure Rule 15(3)**

**QUESTION 14**

From: Councillor Lumby

To: The Leader (Cllr Tod)

“Please identify the bidders in the initial round for the Central Winchester Regeneration and which of these have progressed to the next round?”

**Reply**

“The council has to be mindful of its various confidentiality obligations under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and it is commonly held good practice, in relation to public procurement processes of this kind, to maintain bidder anonymity. This relates to reporting and decision making so as to guard against any risk of pre-determination or bias. In addition, maintaining anonymity between the bidders themselves ensures that competitive tension is maintained throughout the procurement process which is key to obtain the best result for the council.

What we can say is that the council formally launched the procurement process to find a development partner on 17<sup>th</sup> March this year with the deadline for submissions of the Selection Questionnaire (SQ) was the 21 April. The market response to the procurement has been strong and the council received 13 SQ submissions.

On the 16 May, following evaluation of SQ submissions, 3 bidders received an Invitation to Participate in Dialogue (ITPD). This stage continues through until the end of 2022.