



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 13 July 2023

Question under Council Procedure Rule 15(3)

QUESTION 1

From: Councillor Isaacs

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

“When your bin wears out or is damaged you would expect Winchester City Council to replace it. Yes? Free of charge?”

Well, as current policy stands this is not the case. If you need a new bin because yours is damaged, the Council currently expects you to fork out £33. I think this is unfair on hard pressed council taxpayers. I think that we deserve more. After all we are now concerned more than ever about preserving the environment: about waste segregation and recycling. It is time for a policy that encourages the replacement of bins as they get older and that seek to reduce this burden on residents. A fair bin policy would take into account the current economic challenges experienced by residents who are already paying for waste collection services, including council taxes. Paying additional fees for replacement bins may be an unnecessary financial burden and unfair. In 2004 and 2006 the conservatives ensured every resident had a free bin provided (black and then green). Where is the Lib Dem plan for replacement of these bins? If the bin breaks because it is old then well done to the resident for looking after it so well. It is not the fault of the resident or Biffa.

The Cabinet Member needs to urgently review the policy and look at how the council will replace bins as they get older. With revised policy guidelines in place, this Council can successfully reduce the burden on residents and encourage fair practices that promote a cleaner and healthier environment. So, will the Cabinet Member agree to introduce a fair bin policy that replaces bins as they get older?”

Reply

“As a member of Cabinet in the years mentioned and at the meeting in 2006 where Cabinet agreed to provide larger recycling bins, I can assure her that the Council was Liberal Democrat run on all recent occasions when new bins have been provided free of charge to residents. New waste receptacles were provided to all residents as changes to the refuse collection system have

taken place, initially the introduction of wheelie bins, in 2006, alternate weekly collection and in 2019, glass collection. In addition, residents signing up to garden waste since 2021 have been offered the chance to downsize residual and recycling bins for free.

The current policy of charging for replacing individual bins has been in place for at least 20 years. Bins belong to householders with the exception of the brown garden waste bin brought in by this administration in 2021.

Winchester City Council currently charges £36.94 for a £240l wheeled bin including delivery.

Examples from neighbouring authorities

- Fareham Borough Council £39 charge per 240l bin.
- Test Valley Borough Council £40 for 240l waste bin £28 for 240l recycling bin
- East Hampshire District Council £44 charge per bin
- Test Valley borough council £ 40 charge per bin
- Havant borough council £ 50 charge per bin
- Southampton council £ 40 charge per bin

Whilst we do appreciate that the charge incurs costs for households any change from the council's current policy would need to be dealt with through the normal budget processes. It should be recognised that the City Council is currently waiting, as are all waste collection and disposal authorities for the government's decisions and funding position on the future of waste and recycling. In line with the approach adopted by previous Liberal Democrat administrations if new bins are required our intention would be to provide the new bins for free.

The City Council will be consulting on changes to the waste and recycling system, to reflect the governments potential changes, to improve our recycling and ensure we can deliver the council's ambitions of going greener faster."



Winchester
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COUNCIL MEETING – 20 September 2023

Question under Council Procedure Rule 15(3)

QUESTION 2

From: Councillor Laming

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

“Can the Cabinet Member please give us an up-to-date financial appraisal so to assure the council of our financial position so that we know it is unlikely the council will need a section 114 as per Birmingham. We know only too well that many others may be required to follow suite.”

Reply

“Regular monitoring of the net spending position against the budget is reported in the quarterly finance and performance monitoring reports that go to Scrutiny Committee and then on to Cabinet.

The latest report (Q1 2023/24 Financial and Performance Monitoring, [CAB3415](#)) forecast a £1.7m surplus position for 23/24. This was largely caused by a one-off in-year adjustment to business rates receivable but also better than expected investment income. There is no indication that Winchester is in the position that other Councils have found themselves in recently; where forecast expenditure for the year will exceed budget (and, for some of those Councils, where it is forecast to exceed it to such an extent that there are insufficient reserves available to fund those overspends).

The 2023/24 General Fund Budget approved by Council in February ([CAB3388](#)) set out a Medium Term Financial Strategy with a balanced budget for 2023/24 and for 2024/25. Early intervention plans to tackle projected deficits of £3m by 2026/27 were set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy report ([CAB3374](#)), and that *Transformation Challenge 2025* (‘TC25’) programme is well underway as a tier 1 corporate project.

A fully revised and updated Medium Term Financial Strategy looking out to 2026/27 will be brought to Cabinet in November. This will be based on realistic financial assumptions around economic conditions, service demand and waning Government support. Whilst it is not possible, at this stage, to

know exactly what the council's bottom line will look like, the positive in-year financial projections show the Council has a strong starting position.

Despite the incredibly challenging financial conditions that all local authorities are facing, prudent budgetary governance has left Winchester in a far better position than those Council's who have had to issued a section 114 notice. This administration remains committed to ensuring that this remains the case."



Winchester
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COUNCIL MEETING – 20 September 2023

Question under Council Procedure Rule 15(3)

QUESTION 3

From: Councillor Wallace

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

“In July 2021 (as part of the statutory consultation) Winchester City Council sent a letter to National Highways commenting on the proposed M3 Junction 9 development. Part of that letter states that “the City Council is not expressing a view regarding the merits of the project and, by extension, whether it is able to support the proposed scheme.” One of the key reasons for not expressing a position was to give National Highways time to address concerns about the impact of the project on the council’s carbon neutrality goals.

In December 2022, National Highways formally submitted their application on M3 Junction 9, which fails to show how the project will help to get to net zero. Rather, the documentation highlights that if the proposal is approved then it will result in more traffic past Winchester, in particular as more HGVs use this route to travel north.

In light of this new information, please can Winchester Council confirm their position regarding the proposed M3 Junction 9 development?
Please note that in June this year the South Downs National Park authority confirmed that they plan to oppose the scheme.”

Reply

“Nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIP)s are determined by the Planning Inspectorate. The application, submitted by National Highways, seeks a development consent order, and is currently at the examination stage. Winchester City Council along with others are a formal consultee in the process.

The Council has responded on a number of matters and National Highways have addressed these by making amendments to their submission.

In response to comments by the council (and others) about the Climate impact of the proposals, the applicant has submitted the following formal response to the Planning Inspector:

- Relevant Representation – submitted 13 March 2023
- Local Impact Report and Written Representation – submitted 15 June 2023

These are available to view in full on the Planning Inspectorate's web site. [Documents | M3 Junction 9 Improvement \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/documents/m3- Junction-9-Improvement)

The Councils current position is that the proposals are in conflict with our Climate Change policies and the aims of the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan.

On 8th August 2023, our officers took part in a dedicated hearing (as part of the examination). At the hearing, they outlined the issues and our concerns, setting these against our local policies and national legislation. The City Council requested a formal mitigation plan for construction and operational emissions.

Following the hearing, the applicant has engaged with the city council to discuss their submission and mitigation methods. We outlined in our original Statement of Common Ground that mitigation for the additional carbon and greenhouse gases is not satisfactory.

We sought a hearing during the examination to present our case and challenge National Highways further on this point. At a subsequent meeting with National Highways on this topic disappointingly, the outcome was 'no change'.

Our position remains that there could be more mitigation: a proposal which they have rejected to date and therefore this remains a point of disagreement on the statement of common ground.”



COUNCIL MEETING – 20 September 2023

Question under Council Procedure Rule 15(3)

QUESTION 4

From: Councillor Tippett-Cooper

To: The Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement (Cllr Becker)

“Winchester City Council’s support to hosts and guests under the Homes for Ukraine scheme has been widely praised.

Many of Winchester District’s Ukrainian families are moving onto independent accommodation and many remain with host families.

Can the council update us on the current accommodation status of our Ukrainian community who have arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and the help Winchester City Council has put in place to support them?”

Reply

“The council continues to support Ukrainian households through the Homes for Ukraine scheme and Winchester has welcomed 283 households to the district. 112 of those households remain living with their hosts.

There are 171 households who have moved on from their hosts to live independently. 71 households moved to rent privately, 21 households moved into social housing and 53 households have been re-matched to different hosts. 26 households have returned to live in Ukraine.

The council provides housing support through financial assistance in the form of rent deposits and rent in advance. Helping to maximise income to cover household costs, help with moving in costs, sourcing white goods and furniture and help with setting up utilities.

To further support Ukrainian households to live independently and integrate into local communities the council provide a range of support services and activities which include direct support to hosts and guests through bi-weekly drop in sessions. Running budgeting and independent living sessions, assisting with wellbeing through the Peer to Peer support group, looking at services in the district that could be extended to serve our Ukrainian guests (and others), facilitating the creation of a Ukrainian community group and providing financial assistance through the council’s Independence and Integration support fund.”



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QUESTION 5

From: Councillor Lee

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

“There is growing concerns about the health risks to people and pets plus to our natural habitat and wildlife from the use of use of chemicals in our environment.

Community concerns have been raised about the Councils' ongoing use of chemicals to manage weeds in our built environment. During recent application of chemicals to pavements in Winchester, it was noticed that puddles of herbicide containing Glyphosates were evident.

Glyphosates have authoritatively been classified as a probable human carcinogen (WHO first declaration in 2015).

These chemicals are also non-selective and can potentially kill large trees, and easily destroy wider habitats and wildlife. (Pesticide Action Network UK). It is impossible to prevent their escape into the environment no matter how careful application is.

Use of these chemicals is incoherent with the Nature Emergency, the new planning Biodiversity Net Gain requirements and our Biodiversity Action Plan.

Safer non-chemical methods (inc. mechanical techniques) to remove weeds are available. 9 EU Nations and more than 70 Councils have already banned use of glyphosates and have turned to chemical-free options.

Has the Council done a review or is the Council considering a review to ban the use of chemical herbicides, such as glyphosate, on our pavements, verges, parks, and other open spaces?

It is noted any review would have or will require the collaboration with Hampshire County Council.”

Reply

“Your growing concerns about the health risks to people and pets and our natural habitat and wildlife from the use of chemicals in our environment is shared.

The majority of weedkilling in public across the district is carried out by the County Council who are responsible for maintaining the highway, footway and kerbsides. Their policy on using herbicides is available on their website.

This council regularly reviews what practical alternatives there are to the use of Glyphosates, which remain legal for use, and are commonly used.

The City Council and its contractors IDV use Glyphosate weedkillers in specific locations – generally to control weeds on hard surfaces such as footways and car parks. As do the County Council.

All materials to be used and all methods of application and tank mixes are in accordance with legislation arising from the Food and Environment Protection Act (1985). All pesticides used during this contract will be approved under the Control of Pesticides Regulations (1986) and as amended (1997).

Local Environment Risk Assessment for Pesticides are adhered to and applied.

To ensure minimal environmental impact this work is only undertaken in dry weather and a blue dye is added to ensure only the targeted area is treated. Products containing glyphosate are currently only used by the council in 2% of the district where impacts on the local environment are minimal and its use is restricted to twice a year.”



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QUESTION 6

From: Councillor Warwick

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

“Ahead of the imminent planning application for the development of Bushfield Camp in my ward what reassurances can be made to my residents about the business case to support the need for the development and to ensure these benefits outweigh any negative impact on the biodiversity?”

Reply

“Following Cllr Warwick's vote – along with the votes of her Conservative colleagues – to support the allocation of the Bushfield site for development in March 2013, the question of “need” is no longer a question that the council can legally address through the current planning process – although it will, of course, remain an issue for the landowner and any investors in the project.

The policy that Cllr Warwick voted for to support the use of Bushfield Camp for development (Policy WT3) did include the requirement for a conservation led approach to development of the site and a range of detailed policy criteria that any future planning application will be assessed against. The current plan was adopted in March 2013.

The Council has consulted on the Regulation 18 draft local plan after reviewing the policy to ensure it is deliverable in the next plan period. Recognising the changing nature of employment uses, the policy has been amended to support a high quality flexible business and employment space, an innovation/education hub and creative industries (Policy W5). Policy W5 has detailed policies.

The emerging Local Plan policy requires all significant sites to prepare a concept masterplan. The Bushfield Camp masterplan was considered and endorsed by Cabinet on 21st June 2023. The concept masterplan established the framework for development setting out how the developer would approach and seek to deliver against our biodiversity policies in the Draft Local Plan,

including the requirement to deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (policies NE1 and NE5). [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 21st June, 2023, 9.30 am - Winchester City Council](#)

From November 2023 biodiversity net gain becomes a legal requirement with developers required to provide a minimum of 10% gain, securing habitat for at least 30 years. This is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land. It is making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development. This provides a further safeguard for biodiversity on the Bushfield Camp site.

It will be for the applicant to consider their business case, and for the Local Planning Authority to assess and determine whether the proposal put forward accords with national and local plan policy.”



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QUESTION 7

From: Councillor Godfrey

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

“DEFRA recently published a league table of local authorities on fly tipping enforcement. Winchester City Council are listed as 262nd out of 265 local authorities on that government report. Would the Cabinet Member explain this poor performance and tell me how many flytipping incidents in the Winchester City Council area have been reported over the last year, how many of those have been cleared away by the City Council and how many have led to fixed penalty notices or prosecutions? Could you please classify these incidents by size, time to clear, ward and whether it occurred on public or private land?”

Reply

“DEFRA have not published a league table of local authorities on fly tipping enforcement. The league table Cllr Godfrey refers to is one which sets out how many fixed penalty notices were issued for fly tipping, compared to the number of incidents reported.

We are not sure why the government has chosen to highlight this singular measure when the important outcome which the city council is aiming to achieve is a reduction in the number of fly tipping cases, not prioritising the production of fixed penalty notices.

This council is not complacent, and we have secure important success in the courts.

At the member briefing on 12 September, members were shown the verified data publicly available data which shows that there are 18% fewer incidents in 21/22 which is a positive direction of travel and places this council comfortably in the top half of local authority performance. This compares to 4% reduction in England. We are also in the top 10% of councils in revenue earned from flytipping fines.

Early data from 2023 suggested this positive trend is continuing.”



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QUESTION 8

From: Councillor Cunningham

To: The Leader and Cabinet Member for Asset Management (Cllr Tod)

“Winchester Railway Station has given exclusive access to Private Hire operators to wait for customers on the taxi rank immediately outside the station. The private hire companies are two private hire taxi firms based in Winchester. It is a legal requirement that all private hire taxis must be pre-booked in advance and to travel without a booking invalidates the taxi driver’s passenger insurance.

The regulations regarding booking a private hire taxi in advance have been enforced to help preserve the safety of both passengers and drivers, breaching them could invalidate their insurance, opening them up to driving without insurance as well as touting penalties.

The majority of customers arriving in Winchester are unaware of the difference between a Hackney Carriage taxi and a Private Hire vehicle and are totally confused, not to say bemused, at having to wait in a queue to pre-book a taxi in the station or on the footpath, that is plainly waiting on the rank...empty! The danger is that customers may come out of the station and get into a private hire taxi, not realising that it is not a Hackney Carriage taxi. It is alleged that some drivers are telling customers to go back into the station and make a booking through a private hire representative with an iPad. There is another taxi rank on the opposite side of the road occupied by Hackney Carriage taxi drivers.

The city council has a duty to ensure public safety in the transport operator’s vehicles licensed by the council. There is a total lack of signage to explain to the public the difference between the two types of taxis, and which taxi rank is occupied by each one.

Would the Cabinet Member advise how this situation arose, what steps are proposed to sort out the present confusion and ensure that appropriate signage is provided for arriving passengers and the public so that they can make an informed choice of taxi and travel in safety?”

Reply

"I share your frustration at the current situation regarding private hire cars and taxis at the Railway Station. It's confusing for visitors and occasional users of the station. The access to taxis, particularly for people with disabilities, is poor. Until recently the signage has been non-existent as well.

The challenge in this case is that the former taxi rank is not part of the public highway but is owned by Network Rail and managed by South Western Railway. In addition, since April this year, highway regulations in the area have been managed and controlled by Hampshire County Council.

In line with your question, as a first step to improve the situation, we have worked to improve the signage. Our original request was to the station, but this was refused. We then decided to mount our own banner on the building we own in the area (the former Register Office), but have now authorized the taxi drivers to mount suitable signs on our building themselves.

We have also looked at whether we have highways options. The Chief Executive of Hampshire County Council has been asked what might be possible through improved highway markings, relocation of the rank or other interventions to make the experience better for people wishing to use taxis and these discussions are ongoing.

Officers have also undertaken and continue to undertake enforcement activity to ensure that Private Hire vehicles stick closely to their licence rules.

We also have a confirmed meeting with South Western Railway to discuss how we can resolve the situation and various other outstanding issues for the betterment of their customers and our residents and visitors.

The current situation arose as an unfortunate by-product of the recent pandemic. During Covid, the City Council was approached by the Hackney Carriage (Taxi) drivers, who were experiencing hardship arising from a significant drop in trade. They were concerned about the annual charges (in excess of £800), being levied by South Western Railway, for use of the rank.

The Hackney Trade asked the City Council for assistance in relocating the taxi rank to the other side of the road. At that time officers did suggest to the Hackney trade, that should the rank be relocated, this would leave a parking area available to Southern Western Railway for other use, such as a waiting location for the Private Hire Trade. The Hackney Trade still wanted an alternative rank, so the City Council obtained a temporary traffic regulation order to allow the taxis to ply for hire on the opposite side of the road. In February 2022, the owner of Wintax Cars met with the Licensing team to discuss their plans to sign a 3 year contract with South Western Railway, allowing them to use the old taxi rank as a private hire waiting bay. This was implemented at the beginning of June 2023."



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QUESTION 9

From: Councillor Horrill

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

“What additional safeguards is the Cabinet Member putting in place to protect the countryside from development in our District given the significant delays to the Local Plan and the state of the 5 year land supply?”

Reply

“The Council has an existing Development Plan which covers the period up to 2031, comprising Local Plan Parts 1 and 2 and the Gypsy, Travelling Showpersons DPD. The most recent report was published in December 2022 and it monitors all Local Plan policies annually through the Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR can demonstrate that the 5-year housing land supply requirement is exceeded. [Authorities' Monitoring Report \(AMR\) - Winchester City Council](#) . Accordingly, the Council can rely on its current Development Plan which has provided protection for the countryside and continues to do so.”



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QUESTION 10

From: Councillor Bolton

To: The Leader and Cabinet Member for Asset Management (Cllr Tod)

“As a district councillor for the Upper Meon Valley which is almost entirely within the SDNP, I have raised with the administration at previous meetings and with the park authority the poor level of communication on matters affecting our wards. It was my understanding from Cllr Tod that plans were afoot to resolve this issue. Would he please update us on what those plans are and how he sees things will improve going forwards?”

Reply

“Historically, there has been almost no requirement to report back by those appointed by the City Council to any outside body. I don’t recall any report back on the South Downs National Park (SDNPA), for example, since my election to the Council in 2012.

I believe we can and should do better than this.

So, I am pleased to inform you that, following discussion with Cllr Jerry Pett, the council’s new South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) representative appointed in May, he will be changing this situation dramatically and engaging more frequently with City Council Members on SDNP issues.

Earlier in September I asked the officer team to support Cllr Pett by setting up Members Briefing dates to enable Cllr Pett to bring all Members up to date on SDNP priorities and plans and provide a forum for Members to highlight issues they would like addressed. This has been arranged in two sessions:

Monday 25 September 12 noon to 1pm Teams invite for any members who would like to speak to Cllr Pett to ensure he is up to date on their current SDNP concerns ahead of his upcoming meetings with the SDNPA chair and other committees. This session is aimed at Members whose wards are in the

SDNP area, although Cllr Pett would welcome all members who have a relevant point to make.

Week commencing 9th October Cllr Pett will provide a full SDNPA briefing outlining the work and priorities of the SDNPA and enable an opportunity to all members to make input on the points they would like him to represent and policy priorities he should pursue.

Assuming these arrangements are successful, they will be scheduled for at least twice a year. During the year Cllr Pett will be placing up-to-date SDNP news in the DSU and, as always, is available anytime for direct member contact on jpett@winchester.gov.uk.

As part of the Constitutional review that is currently under formation, I have suggested that Members appointed to external bodies with an executive decision-making role report to Council at least once per year.”



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QUESTION 11

From: Councillor Langford-Smith

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

“Is it your intention to ask Parish Councils to take on the financial responsibility for the provision of the vital service of Public Toilets within their communities?”

Reply

“Through the City Council’s ongoing engagement with Town and Parish Councils, it is clear that some of them are ambitious for their area and keen to work with us to improve what, between us, we offer to residents in their community.

Not all Town and Parish Councils have the skills, scale, ambition or strength of governance to take this on but where they do, we are interested in working with them to see what might be possible.

Unlike the City Council, town and parish councils do not have a capped precept which at a time of severe financial pressure on County and City Councils gives them the opportunity to protect and improve services which could otherwise come under threat or have their provision reduced. Indeed, four parishes in our district currently charge their residents a higher precept than the City Council charges in council tax and this year twenty-seven increased their precept by a higher percentage than the City Council increased its council tax.

One of the areas we want to discuss with town and parish councils with suitable capacity is the provision and maintenance of public toilets. If town and parish councils are interested in higher standards of refurbishment, maintenance or cleaning than our funding plans allow, we will be happy to discuss this with them.”



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QUESTION 12

From: Councillor Laming

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

“Can the Cabinet Member please advise what measures are being taken to ensure parking is available for cars and coaches over the Xmas market period?”

Reply

“The City Council will be arranging for additional park and ride buses to run from The East Park and Ride car parks into The Broadway from 9am to 6pm as in previous years.

Coach parking is available at South Winchester park and ride and this will be promoted and advertised.

With Hampshire County Council taking back control of on-street parking from 1st October the City Council will not have control over the management arrangements in The Broadway but we are liaising with the County Council to put in place suitable arrangements and management of this area.

As our commitment to climate change, visitors to our city will be encouraged to use the park and ride as the first choice but there will be available parking for those with mobility needs closer to the city. and assessment of other available car parking areas will also be undertaken.

Coordination with the Cathedral in relation to coach scheduling for drop off in The Broadway and the provision of coach parking is taking place but this cannot be controlled fully as coaches come from many different places and through many different operators.”



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QUESTION 13

From: Councillor Lee

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

“Escalating energy prices and the urgent need to address the Climate Crisis means homeowners, communities, and businesses are urgently looking to move away from fossil fuel energy supplies. ‘Council,’ ‘Community’ plus ‘Privately’ owned Renewable Energy generation offer opportunities to accelerate decarbonisation of the district and to assist those struggling with rising energy bills. All three forms of wider ownership are needed.

Quick, accurate, independent predictions about the potential for Solar Photovoltaics on buildings is therefore required. This is most important for community groups who need both independent, affordable, and easy methods to find buildings within their neighbourhoods that offer the best potential for Solar Photovoltaics to plan community energy.

If a fully mapped online survey tool(s) was publicly made available by the Council, it would help to speed up these opportunities for homeowners, communities, and businesses.

It is noted that the Council has already commissioned work from geospatial services companies that could be adapted for this purpose. It is further noted the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)’s [‘Solar Wizard’](#) application, could also be tailored for our locality to form part of this service.

Does Winchester Council have any high priority plans to deliver this type of online service to our district?”

Reply

“The council has undertaken its own geospatial analysis of Solar PV potential within the district. We are investigating solutions to make this information widely available online and we will make this information available as soon as possible.

The analysis has been shared with organisations including WinACC and Community Energy South in recognition that this geospatial information is helpful in directing solar PV development, particularly to those organisations who have the expertise to interpret and apply the information.

This is a fast moving area of technology with increasing sources of geospatial analysis becoming available. The council will continue to explore options to increase the information on geospatial analysis of solar PV potential in the district available via the website, including the work by the Centre for Sustainable Energy.”



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QUESTION 14

From: Councillor Warwick

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

“Last week I visited one of the restaurants on the High Street area of the city. The owner mentioned how unusually quiet business was. Tower car park was empty. Will the Cabinet revisit the new overnight and evening parking charges that are adversely affecting businesses at this end of the city?”

Reply

The City Council's Parking & Access Strategy commits us to sustaining the 'economic, social and environmental wellbeing' of Winchester Town & District and to this end, a major priority is to maintain or increase footfall in Winchester while seeking to encourage people to park outside the Air Quality Management Area. This is one reason why we have ensured that that the 1,250 'Park & Walk' car park spaces that are within 10-minutes walk of the centre have had their prices frozen since 2020 - with a cut to allow 1-hour free parking in 2022 and why they remain free in the evening and on Sundays.

The City Council now has access to new footfall data via the Winchester BID which also provides reassurance that the figures for July were very close to those in June.

We continually review the effectiveness of our parking management in achieving the aims and objectives of the Parking and Access Strategy and the Winchester Movement Strategy. Where businesses and local organisations identify opportunities to improve our tariffs in a way that's consistent with our environmental and economic objectives, we listen and look to adjust.

Following meetings with businesses and the voluntary sector organisations that approached us and highlighted particular issues we have undertaken targeted consultation on further improvements to the parking charges and management regime. I will be considering those potential improvements at a Decision Day on 9th October which will be subject to consideration of the consultation responses which closed on 15th September.”



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QUESTION 15

From: Councillor Laming

To: The Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement (Cllr Becker)

“How are membership numbers for the Winchester Sport and Leisure Park progressing? Has any calculation been done on the value it brings to the District?”

Reply

“The membership base at WSLP continues to show growth. Overall income is tracking slightly above the contractual expectation and total visitor numbers have just topped 100,000 a month.

When comparing current membership data against River Park Leisure Centres performance, there is a 100% increase in both operator swimming lesson memberships and monthly visits. The fitness membership base is over 4,000 members higher when compared to River Park.

When looking at value to the district, we can share that the site has generated a social value of £3,865,314 in 22/23. More detail on this, and a full explanation of social value, will be discussed at the Health and Environment Policy Committee meeting taking place tomorrow evening (21st September).”