



COUNCIL MEETING – 15 January 2025

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	Lee
2	Batho
3	Brook
4	Wallace
5	Godfrey
6	Bolton
7	Horrill
8	Miller
9	Warwick
10	Lee
11	Godfrey
12	Wallace



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QUESTION 1

From: Councillor Lee

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

Reduction of Harm from Plastics in Winchester

Plastic pollution is a global crisis, with production surging from 2 million metric tons in the 1950s to over 400 million metric tons annually today. The environmental, health, and economic impacts are profound, with microplastics contaminating water, soil, air, and even the human body. Plastics also exacerbate climate change, contributing 850 million tonnes of CO₂e annually through production and incineration—a figure projected to rise dramatically. Without more action the cleanup costs increase, worsens health risks, and accelerates biodiversity loss for our local environment, residents and communities.

While Winchester City Council has made progress through initiatives like improved waste management, new street market contracts and procurement reforms, plastic pollution persists.

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation is a distraction, but there is still time to do more to ensure a cleaner, safer world for future generations. By building on our existing efforts, we can create/influence a stronger foundation and legacy for the organisations that will succeed us.

Should the Council expand its leadership and actions to reduce the harm from plastics by adopting additional plastic reduction measures? What additional steps can ensure Winchester leads by example to tackle this urgent crisis and the associated challenges?



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QUESTION 2

From: Councillor Batho

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

Dealing with the household waste generated by residents of our District is a joint responsibility between Winchester City Council who collect and Hampshire County Council who manage disposal.

As part of the drive to be Greener Faster the District would like to widen the range of waste that can be recycled, however this is dependent on facilities provided by the County Council. A major impact on this is the lack of a decision on the building of a new Material Recycling Facility (MRF), which has now been outstanding for years.

Can the Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency please explain what the impact of this dither and delay by the Conservative administration at Hampshire has had on the recycling aspirations of the District?



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QUESTION 3

From: Councillor Brook

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

In advance of the follow up scrutiny assets meeting; how many Council assets are directly effected by the central Winchester regeneration and what is the value of those?



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QUESTION 4

From: Councillor Wallace

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

Devolution and local government reorganisation will be very complicated and has massive implications across all level of local government, including local parish and town councils. To help with the transition process, please can you confirm that relevant Ward Councilors will be included in all communications (including meetings) with Town & Parish Councils where devolution and local government reorganization matters are involved?



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QUESTION 5

From: Councillor Godfrey

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

It is now another 6 months through the 5-year period agreed for the University of Southampton to develop and share their proposals for the River Park Leisure Centre site. It is also another 6 months since I last asked the Leader about the absence of any public indication of these proposals. When does the Portfolio Holder expect a clear milestone plan to be published leading to the submission of a planning application?



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QUESTION 6

From: Councilor Bolton

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

In 2019 the administration declared a climate emergency and your stated aim was to commit to making the activities of Winchester City Council carbon neutral by 2024. At what point since then did the administration decide that of those activities now designated as scope 1, 2 and 3 only scope 1 and 2 would be included as WCC activities?



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QUESTION 7

From: Councillor Horrill

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

Would the Leader confirm if he is prepared to establish a regular cross-party committee to discuss the devolution and local government reorganisation proposed for our area and the agreed WCC responses?

Reply



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QUESTION 8

From: Councillor Miller

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

What reassurances can be given to the residents of the Winchester District that neither Devolution or LGR will not delay the major projects such as Central Winchester and Station Approach.



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QUESTION 9

From: Councillor Warwick

To: Councillor Thompson (Cabinet Member for Business and Culture)

Are there any plans to enhance the signage for and protect the remaining small piece of Roman wall just below the Bishop on the Bridge in Winchester?



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QUESTION 10

From: Councillor Lee

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

Devolution and the Local Government Review (LGR) – Lessons Learnt, Best Practices and avoiding wasting public funds.

LGR aims to streamline services and reduce financial pressures, yet external audits of eight unitary councils created since 2019 show limited financial success and adoption of best practices from previous authorities. This is particularly evident with the transfer of environmental and climate policies into new the new combined authorities.

Can Council members be assured that our existing best practices and achievements will be identified early and carried forward into the new unitaries and Mayor led Strategic Combined Authority? Specifically, how will we address concerns about Hampshire County Council's lack of clear progress data and comprehensive plans for achieving net zero, ensuring we avoid replicating the lowest benchmarks into these new organizations with a need for repeated work and wasted public resources?



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QUESTION 11

From: Councillor Godfrey

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

The main purpose of sharing IT Services with Test Valley Council is to ensure resilient services for our Council at an affordable cost. This should have meant that the recent flood in the Council Offices would have triggered an automated failover to prevent any significant loss of service. Why did this not happen and is there now any benefit in sharing IT Services with Test Valley?



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QUESTION 12

From: Councillor Wallace

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

As part of combining local authorities together, there is a risk that the new 'standards' are set at the lowest level for any authority. For example, the new Winchester air quality strategy is aiming to improve air quality across our district to above Government minimum standards. How can Councillors help to ensure that these higher requirements are retained in any future combined authority, rather than reverting to absolute minimum levels?