



Winchester
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 26 June 2019

Question under Council Procedure Rule 14

QUESTION 1

From: Councillor Pearson

To: The Cabinet Member for Environment (Cllr Murphy)

“At present the cost of collecting household waste is in the region of £70 per household. Would the Portfolio Holder today report to Council the additional cost per household of a separate weekly collection of food waste from each household?”

Reply

“We have included a food waste collection service as a ‘priced option’ within the tenders for the new waste contract. Until those tenders are received later in the year I would not want to speculate further on the cost.

By having priced options, the Council will be able to make a judgement on whether a food waste collection service is affordable and if so, on what precise basis.

The issue is made a little more complicated by the recent DEFRA consultation on the government’s Waste Strategy which suggests that food waste collections receive separate funding from 2023 as part of a move to consistent waste collection services across the country. We have no details of how much additional funding there might be or on what basis it will be shared out. Therefore we are keeping our options open at this time.”



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QUESTION 2

From: Councillor Power

To: The Cabinet Member for Environment (Cllr Murphy)

“Is the Cabinet Member aware that landowners are suffering the expense and risks of damage to live stock and contamination from fly tipping? Our current reporting practice is only for fly tipping on public land, will steps be taken to report both the volume and occurrence of tipping on private land that we are told about, so that the extent of the problem is more fully reported?”

Reply

“We are aware that there is increasing incidences of fly tipping taking place throughout the district including private owned agricultural land. This sadly reflects the national trend, with the Local Government Association reporting a 40% increase in fly tipping incidences since 2012.

[\[https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/lga-courts-must-hand-out-tougher-punishments-defer-fly-tippers\]](https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/lga-courts-must-hand-out-tougher-punishments-defer-fly-tippers).

Currently the Council does receive and respond to reports of fly tipping both on public and private land. However, any records relating to private land would not provide an indication of the extent of the problem as the majority of landowners do not report instances to the Council and simply clear them at their own expense.

Where fly tipping on private land is reported and where the perpetrator can be identified, the Council will investigate, support legal action and seek to recover costs.

I have asked officers to review options for additional reporting to assist with raising awareness of the problem.”



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QUESTION 3

From: Councillor Laming

To: The Cabinet Member for Environment (Cllr Murphy)

“Since March this year residents have increasingly experienced unacceptable delays regarding bin collection. Not only in Winchester but across the district. Could the Cabinet Members please assure the council that measures have been put in place to rectify this problem?”

Reply

“I can confirm that the Leader and I have met Roger Edwards, Biffa’s Managing Director, to express our concerns at the unacceptable delays to bin collections in some areas of the district.

We have been given assurances that Biffa are taking this matter very seriously and I am pleased to report that the measures they have subsequently put in place including drafting in more vehicles and staff has enabled them to catch up and provide the consistent level of service we expect.

To ensure this ongoing level of service it is being closely monitored and I am receiving daily updates.

If a member or resident has any further issues they can be reported on the Councils website or through our Customer Services Centre where they will be actioned.”



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QUESTION 4

From: Councillor McLean

To: The Cabinet Member for Environment (Cllr Murphy)

“What progress has been made to deliver the electric vehicle charging points agreed by the previous administration - an important action in the drive to support climate change initiatives?”

Reply

“The Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy approved in January 2019 (CAB3120) included proposals for installing 46 charging points serving 57 parking bays across the district over 5 years.

Officers are currently assessing potential delivery options in consultation with the preferred provider through Hampshire County Council’s ‘Electric Vehicle Charging Points Central Southern Regional Framework’.

Options include the Council fully funding the provision, shared funding, or allowing the contractor to fully fund the works. Material considerations include capital costs, levels of retained control and rates of return on the investment.

It is anticipated that the assessment and final recommendations will be reported to Cabinet in September along with a proposed timetable for the programme. This will include comment on the potential to bring forward works ahead of the anticipated 5 year programme.”



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QUESTION 5

From: Councillor Miller

To: The Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management (Cllr
Learney)

“Can the Cabinet Member advise where we are with the agreement to build the doctors surgery for 17,500 residents in the city and safeguard this provision. Is the negotiation completed and when will building work commence?”

Reply

“Negotiations with the Practice are progressing and it is anticipated that these could be concluded during the course of the next month. A report will be prepared setting out the provisionally agreed terms and setting out the mechanism for proceeding with the project.”



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QUESTION 6

From: Councillor Horrill

To: The Leader (Cllr Thompson)

“Can the Leader please advise whether in the new order of the ‘open and transparent’ Liberal Democrat administration, the announcement on local television of public questions in Council meetings and the filming of Council is the way we, as democratically elected Councillors, can expect to be advised of the future work and procedures of the Council?”

Reply

“We are considering the different options that are available to promote a more open and transparent council through enhancing public access and will consider those in the coming weeks. At tonight’s meeting we have set out proposals for public questions at full Council. As an administration we want to enhance the transparency of the council and will continue to promote the ability of our residents to participate in democracy.”



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QUESTION 7

From: Councillor Mather

To: The Cabinet Member for Local Economy (Cllr Weir)

“What has this administration done to safeguard the £5m grant from the LEP that will fund the public realm improvements around the station?”

Reply

“There have historically been multiple funding streams available to the Local Enterprise Partnerships to support projects to delivery improvements to the economic vitality of an area. This council has been in negotiation with the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (EM3LEP) since 2014 regarding potential support for the Station Approach development. In 2016 an Expression of Interest was made for £5million financial support 2016 and a full bid was invited in 2017. Formal approval was given by the EM3LEP Board to this grant, subject to conditions, in March 2019. The Leader and Cabinet Member will be meeting with the EM3LEP to better understand the conditions relating to that grant funding in order that we can work together for the economy of Winchester and district.”



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QUESTION 8

From: Councillor Griffiths

To: The Cabinet Member for Sport, Leisure and Communities (Cllr Prince)

“Can the Cabinet Member advise when the 4 court sports hall report will be made available to Councillors and when will the opportunity for the southern parishes to address their need for additional sports hall facilities be confirmed?”

Reply

“I have been briefed on the study commissioned by the previous administration and we are currently reviewing how to take this forward. It will be brought to a Cabinet meeting later this year.”



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QUESTION 9

From: Councillor Gemmell

To: The Leader (Cllr Thompson)

“Can the Leader please confirm the process for democratically elected Councillors to be involved in decision making beyond Cabinet meetings for all major projects, local plan, and housing?”

Reply

“Democratically elected Councillors are all already involved in a plethora of decision making across the council, and our consolidation of the multitude of cabinet meetings into one, streamlined, Cabinet meeting provides a clear, open and transparent focus where all key Cabinet decision making takes place. We are reviewing the future options and will put in place appropriate arrangements that seek to engage with fellow elected councillors from across the council chamber, with project forums to support decision making.”



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QUESTION 10

From: Councillor Godfrey

To: The Leader (Cllr Thompson)

“This being Armed Forces Week, how many serving and veteran members of the armed forces reside in Winchester District and how many and in what ways have they benefitted in the last year from the Military Covenant, to which the City Council is a signatory?”

Reply

“There are currently believed to be 1,280 serving military personnel in Winchester District¹. Data about veterans is limited at local level. In 2017 it was estimated that there were around 104,000 veterans in Hampshire², though the greatest numbers are believed to live in other districts.

Winchester City Council signed a Military Covenant in 2013, reinforcing the close and cordial association that has existed with the Armed Forces over many years. The Covenant does not seek to provide services that are bespoke to those with current or past military service, rather to ensure that they experience no disadvantage in access to services or in dealings with wider society as a result of that service.

Examples of actions this Council has taken to support the armed forces and to ensure no disadvantage include:

- Two households who were serving members of the armed forces but were served notice relating to the termination of MOD accommodation have been direct matched to properties through Hampshire Home Choice in the last few months.
- 52 people who are currently taking advantage of up to 20% discount to serving personnel for use of sports facilities at River Park Leisure Centre and Meadowside Leisure Centre.

¹ MOD Annual Location Statistics, 1 April 2019

² Annual population survey 2017

- Recognition of the role and value of reservists in the Council's *Working Hours and Time Off Policy*.
- Training for some front line staff to better understand the needs of the armed forces and their families.
- Kit bags and berets – an activity group for veterans with dementia takes place monthly at Winchester Garrison.

Serving and veteran members of the armed forces in Winchester District also benefit from the support provided under the Hampshire Military Covenant, in particular on important issues such as school placement and access to GP, dentist and other health services.

Finally, there are wider civic activities such as participation in the Armed Forces Week celebrations, Remembrance Day, freedom parades and commemoration of 1st and 2nd World War milestones that commemorate the service and sacrifice of military personnel. The widespread support for these events is a fitting symbol of the gratitude that the whole of Winchester District has for our Armed Forces.”



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QUESTION 11

From: Councillor Scott

To: The Cabinet Member for Housing and Asset Management (Cllr
Learney)

“Can the Cabinet Member confirm that the objective to build 1,000 affordable homes across the District is on track to be delivered?”

Reply

“I can confirm that plans to build a minimum of 1000 affordable homes across the district are on track.

Encouraging progress has been made to deliver this figure, to date the Council has;

- Completed 201 new affordable homes
- Is on-site with 90 new homes
- In contract or out to tender for 44 new homes

The New Homes Team is currently considering development options on a number of new sites which have the potential to deliver a further 300 homes in the next 2-3 years. Included within this programme are opportunities to deliver rented (both social and affordable), shared ownership and low cost sale properties to broaden the housing offer to Winchester District residents.

Local Members will be kept informed of proposals on sites in their Ward in advance of schemes being brought to Members for full project approval.”



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QUESTION 12

From: Councillor Weston

To: The Cabinet Member for Environment (Cllr Murphy)

“Can the Cabinet Member advise on the status of the movement strategy and the progress made to date in the pursuit of additional park and ride facilities, which are fundamental to reducing the traffic in the centre of Winchester and improving climate change?”

Reply

“Officers are working closely with the County Council to progress the Movement Strategy which will involve further study into key issues such as additional park and ride provision alongside the Council’s own parking strategy which will be considered by the Environment and Health Policy Committee on the 9th July.”



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QUESTION 13

From: Councillor Brook

To: The Leader (Cllr Thompson)

“Can the Leader explain how she can justify holding the cabinet meetings at 9:30 in the morning when many Councillors cannot make the meeting at this time? In light of the Climate Emergency Declaration, surely you would prefer Cllrs use public transport or other means of attending than driving? Given this timing, this becomes far less of an option. How is it justifiable to disenfranchise 30% of opposition Councillors who work full time from being able to participate in addition to their own members in a similar position? That is on top of those of us who have school runs to do and unlike most of Cabinet, live outside of the city?”

Reply

“The new cabinet meeting timings have seen good levels of engagement from members of public as well as fellow councillors and are just as inclusive as those Cabinet meetings that started in the afternoon. More importantly, as highlighted in other council questions, we are seeking to reach out and make our meeting more open and transparent, through investigating webcasting so that people can engage with meetings without having to travel and can watch the debate at their own convenience.”



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QUESTION 14

From: Councillor Lumby

To: The Cabinet Member for Local Economy (Cllr Weir)

“Can the Cabinet Member advise what are the key priorities for the growth of the local economy?”

Reply

“For this administration the priority outcomes for growth in the economy of Winchester District are:

- Carbon neutrality
- Sustaining high quality jobs across the diverse business, public and non-profit sectors active in our economy.
- Vibrant City and Town centres and thriving rural areas
- An environment where all the people who work and live here enjoy a strong sense of wellbeing.

We have started to develop our economic strategy around these priorities. We shared our initial thinking with the new Business & Housing Policy Committee on 18 July 2019.

Central to delivering these outcomes, this administration’s priorities are:

- Unlocking opportunities for clean growth and supporting local businesses in becoming carbon neutral
- Ensuring a strong mix of office, workspace, retail, industrial and event space to meet the growth needs of larger and smaller businesses and other enterprises in our District with a focus on the digital and creative sectors
- Developing a vision for our high streets that future-proofs them in the face of changing consumer behaviour and provides access to the infrastructure that will enable innovation and new businesses to emerge and thrive.

- Signposting and supporting individuals and enterprises towards guidance and resources they may need to launch and grow their businesses.
- Underpinning our successful visitor economy with an events and festivals hub that helps build and strengthen the offer across the District

The Local Economy Team will work closely with colleagues in Housing and the Built Environment to address challenges to recruitment and retention of younger people arising from the cost of housing in the District; and with the Environment team and the County Council to secure early progress on delivery of the Movement Strategy to improve mobility and connectivity between rural and urban areas of the District.

Our partnerships with Hampshire County Council and the EM3 LEP will play a critical part in meeting our ambitious plans for Winchester District and we will set these out in more detail as our strategy develops. Engagement with Councillors, local businesses and other local employers will play a vital part in shaping this strategy and its ultimate success.”



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QUESTION 15

From: Councillor Pearson

To: The Cabinet Member for Environment (Cllr Murphy)

“With regard to the Climate Emergency declared by an Executive decision, has the Cabinet Member calculated the carbon foot print of kerb-side food collection, as opposed to the present policy of persuading households to “Love Food : Hate Waste”? Would the Portfolio give us a carbon emission comparison?”

Reply

“The Love Food: Hate Waste policy of reducing food waste is absolutely the right approach. We should avoid buying food we won’t use, or letting food which could have been eaten go to waste. A food waste collection service isn’t an alternative to this approach, it is designed to ensure that food waste like vegetable peelings and fruit skins which are an inevitable part of the waste stream are collected separately and processed into something useful.

We don’t need to make a comparison because they are not alternatives.”



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QUESTION 16

From: Councillor Laming

To: The Cabinet Member for Sport, Leisure and Communities (Cllr Prince)

“Could the Cabinet Member please inform us of the amount of money WCC has been required to spend on Riverpark Facility in the last 8 years? Also could you please advise the number of penalty notices issued during that time particularly in regard to Maintenance and Cleanliness of the site?”

Reply

“Under the terms of its contract with the RPLC operator the City Council is responsible for the maintenance of the exterior of the building and repairs of the interior which exceed a stated threshold, which is indexed each year. For the period 2011/12 to 2018/19 the sum of £125,513 from revenue budgets was spent on repairs and maintenance of the building. In addition Capital expenditure of £376,898 was incurred between 2010/11 and 2012/13 and £181,747 between 2017/18 and 2019, being £558,645 in total.

No penalty notices have been served on the operator with regard to cleanliness and maintenance.”