

Questions and Answers

Executive

Thursday, 25th March, 2021

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Public Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

Item (b)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Tess Ethelston

(b) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Leader by John Gotelee:

“Is there anything in conservative ethos that makes it wrong for a person or institution to try and protect any asset that they have legally obtained?”

The Portfolio Holder for Leader answered:

No, Mr Gotelee in fact the Conservatives have done much to protect an individual's assets. The obvious example I perhaps highlight to you Mr Gotelee, and particularly relevant here in West Berkshire, and very much welcomed by this Local Authority, was this Government's strengthening of police powers with regards to protecting one's land from unauthorized encampments. There are other examples, the investment into 20,000 new police across the country is very welcome particularly when you look at fraud as one of the most common British crimes at the moment. So anything that will help to protect one's assets is very much welcome.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

John Gotelee asked the following supplementary question:

“I do. Thank you for that answer. It was much as I expected actually, but my supplementary question is to actually seek your advice and perhaps you can give me the benefit of your experience as a Councillor, and perhaps give me an outline of what action you would take to protect your beautiful garden if it was periodically flooded by dirty urban runoff water which appears to be caused by the reluctance of planners and developers to observe flood management laws?”

The Portfolio Holder for Leader answered:

I'm not quite sure that that actually relates to the original question Mr Gotelee and I think I've explained what that would be and if I had a legal right to protect my asset I would work within the law to do so. Thank you, I think I've answered that as well as I am able to answer it at this point.

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Item (d)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Bill Bagnell

(d) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development by Stuart Gourley:

“Based on the indicative plans in your approved Master Plan for the LRIE, which involves demolishing the rest of an Asset of Community Value, and based on current CIL rates; what is the West Berks Council forecasted income from CIL funds due to the redevelopment of the LRIE?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

You mentioned our plans for the LRIE and it's important to remember why we are regenerating that estate. We want to ensure employment opportunities for local residents, we want to attract inward investment and enable existing businesses to thrive and grow. These were key commitments of course in our 2019 Conservative Manifesto for the West Berkshire elections and we are going to do all we can to ensure that the district is attractive to the business community.

Now on your specific point about CIL funds, the proposals are of course at far too high a level at the moment to make any assumptions of CIL at this stage. Once further master planning work has been carried out in conjunction with an environmental impact assessment, and we've got a bit more detail on what development type is going to go on what part of the site and so on, then it might be appropriate to consider CIL forecasts at that point. You mention the Asset of Community Value status and I think it is important for me to point out that there is nothing improper at all in what is being proposed relating to the Asset of Community Value status. I'm sure you're aware of that but I'm going to make that point forcefully right now. Thanks Mr Gourley.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Stuart Gourley asked the following supplementary question:

“Yes I do please Leader. So obviously with the football ground on the London Road being a community asset, when the Council is further along and has the CIL funding from the redevelopment, will the Council commit to reinvesting that and ring fencing it for the community of Clay Hill?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

Thanks Mr Gourley.

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I think you might be a bit confused about what the Asset of Community Value status entails. It allows the registrant of the asset to make a bid for the purchase of that asset when it's disposed of. The Council's under no obligation to accept that bid but they are entitled to make the bid. At the moment it's not being disposed of and there may not be a disposal of that asset. It should be pointed out of course that we're making an exciting alternative provision for football and other sports elsewhere in Monks Lane so I wouldn't want to commit to ring fencing any funds at the moment but we're already making those provisions right now for the sporting community, but thanks for your question.

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Item (e)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Jon Winstanley/Jenny Graham

(e) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment by Alison May:

“When will the council release details of their Carbon Sequestration and Storage Performance Management plans into the public domain?”

The Portfolio Holder for Environment answered:

This is an important element of our Environment Strategy and we do recognise the part that our carbon sequestration has to play in helping achieve our 2030 target of carbon neutrality, and since publishing our Strategy last summer we've been focused on developing an overall Delivery Plan and building a team to help move projects forward.

We are currently engaging on the Draft Delivery Plan and this is out for consultation now, you can view it on our website and if you scan through that fairly detailed plan you will see that a high level item 'exploring opportunities and planning for Natural Carbon Sequestration' is definitely a key part of that. This also links with the Government Environment Bill and how we work to ensure biodiversity improvements are delivered in the district in connection with development. We continue to build the necessary expertise and capacity within our team to cover the wide-ranging work involved in the delivery plan.

As you may know, carbon sequestration is a complex and deep issue and we are engaged in conversations with partners and other organisations to develop a joint approach to this to deliver key pieces of work. We're therefore hoping to make good progress with our plans and make more detailed plans available for sharing over the next six months. So in summary, we've got a very high level of detail which is now open for consultation. We continue to consult and we will follow up with more detail within six months.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Alison May asked the following supplementary question:

“Yes I have actually read the Strategy and I noticed the high level reference to CSS but I'm sure you can appreciate it can actually take quite a while to generate the baseline data in order to start actually measuring CSS performance. So I was hoping actually that by this stage, you'd actually commissioned relevant surveys of our natural

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landscapes in order to actually have that baseline data there to contribute to the measurements that you should be releasing hopefully within the next six months or so. So my question is when are you expecting the results from the Natural Landscape CSS Surveys? Have you commissioned them?"

The Portfolio Holder for Environment answered:

We are already working with partners who themselves are doing this. We at West Berkshire are not commissioning directly. Our intent is that developments will, as the Environment Bill has set forth, within this district be obliged to offset development with a biodiversity net gain.

Therefore, the measurements for individual projects, I would expect to follow on those. We don't have, and I wouldn't expect to have, a district-wide blanket survey of this matter, but absolutely areas which are most promising, I would hope for us to be able to share within the coming six months. Thank you very much.

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Item (h)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Janet Weekes

(h) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing by Graham Storey:

“How many people tried to apply for the new housing register and what proportion of the old register (qualifying and non-qualifying) does that number represent?”

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing provided the following written response:

- 1536 people applied to the new housing register
- The old housing register - 800 out of 2300 were qualifying = 35%
- The new housing register – 487 out of 1536 are qualifying = 32%
- The old housing register – 1345 non-qualifying
- The new housing register – 767 non-qualifying

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Item (n)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Bill Bagnell

(n) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development by Vaughan Miller:

“One of the justifications for rejecting the Motion relating to the demolition of the football ground clubhouse states:

Council Strategy Priorities: The redevelopment of the London Road Industrial Estate is a key priority for the council and any delay in the demolition of the building and entering into a new single sports use occupancy of the old football pitch could have an impact on the project.

Could you please explain what negative impact opening up the ground, for example for youth football, could possibly have on the project?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

The old football ground in its current state cannot be reopened to anyone until the unsafe structures that are there are removed and the area generally made suitable for a health and safety point of view. In terms of youth football, it's recommended that the present arrangements are kept in place until the new facility is completed down at Monks Lane and then it's entirely appropriate for youth groups to play at the new facility. As a general point about the LRIE project, at the moment we have vacant possession of the old football ground site and we want to maintain that status in readiness for the regeneration. If the old pitch opens again for general recreational use, which is what the Council has decided to do, then that vacant possession isn't affected. If we were to enter into single-use occupancy for a particular sport then that position may be jeopardised, so that is not something the Council is willing to do. Thanks.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Vaughan Miller asked the following supplementary question:

“Yes I do. Thank you. So just to be clear, the motion was to postpone the application for demolition and then engage with the local football and interested parties to explore options to make it available in the meantime until it's required for development. So no one is proposing single-use occupancy or having a tenant as before. I mean there can be several years before any development starts. There's clearly no requirement to spend public money on the general recreation field in that area. There are public fields available close by and to say you don't want to limit it to one sport as you've said before

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and this has been a football ground for over 50 years. So again it seems to me like you're making misleading statements.

My actual question is why will you not talk with appropriate stakeholders, Newbury Town Council and the football community to make the best use of the space and the taxpayer's money as part of a Covid recovery plan for grassroots youth football?"

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

I'm afraid the only one of us making misleading statements here tonight was you there Councillor Miller. The motion doesn't say what you just said. In fact, the motion calls for the postponement of the demolition until such time that the alternative site is confirmed and approved by the football community. The motion calls on the Council to tie its own hands and be beholden to the consent of this very vague group of the football community. That's what the motion says which is not entirely what you said a moment ago. So I'm afraid you're mistaken and we eventually got to a question which I believe is a repetition of your first one, so I refer you to the answer I gave some moments ago.

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Item (o)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Bill Bagnell

(o) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development by Gary Norman:

"One of your 'justifications' for rejecting the Motion relating to the demolition of the football ground clubhouse states:

"Financial: There are ongoing costs associated with the maintenance and security arrangements for the existing structure. These would rise in the event that the proposal as laid out in the motion was accepted."

Could you provide current costings and how and why this would rise if the motion was accepted?"

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

Metal sheet hire and 24 hour emergency call out in respect of the old clubhouse costs on average about £570 per month. As long as that building remains in situ and there's no income from the asset to support those security costs, that burden will continue to increase for as long as the demolition is postponed. There are also periodic repairs to the existing boundary to prevent unauthorised occupation of the site, which of course, the site being where it is and the nature of it, it is always a risk. The site's already been broken into, children have already been caught playing in the roof of the old clubhouse, and it's imperative that we get moving on the demolition as soon as possible. In fact, with the lifting of lockdown, the Council will probably have to increase the security to include CCTV and periodic dark hours' drive by security. That's going to increase security costs still further in order to prevent unauthorised access into a potentially dangerous building, a building for which there is no future purpose and no logic at all in retaining. Thanks.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

Gary Norman asked the following supplementary question:

"Given that it's going to be £570 a month and that the Council itself wants to spend in excess of £190,000 to demolish buildings in order to provide an open field surrounded by a car park, in effect starting a future developer's site preparation for them, can you explain why this is not a misuse of public money? You're going to spend £190,000 to effectively save a developer's costs in the future and to provide something that isn't required in order to save £570 a month. That doesn't add up to me."

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

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Well the £570 a month relates solely to the current metal sheet hire and emergency call out. Costs of unauthorised occupation, and potential pay-outs if people are injured in the building, would obviously spiral much higher than that. The reason we are spending the money on LRIE is to safeguard jobs and invest for the future. Alternative provision is being made elsewhere for the sporting and football communities, so of course it is not a misuse of public funds.



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Item (p)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Bill Bagnell

(p) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development by Jack Harkness:

“The report associated with agenda item 9 states that “delays in implementation (to demolish the club house) could have serious financial implications for the Council”. Please can you explain what these serious financial implications are?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

I've just answered, I think, a very similar question. Current arrangements are in place to prevent serious injury to anyone breaking into the old clubhouse. From an insurance point of view, the Council has to take reasonable measures to prevent that unauthorised access to the building and be prevented from potentially receiving a major claim, in the event that an individual is seriously injured while breaking into the building; which has already happened (the breaking in and not the injury thankfully). The surest way of removing the risk of a serious and potentially expensive claim, is to remove the risk all together and demolish the clubhouse and associated structures.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Jack Harkness asked the following supplementary question:

“The question that I was particularly interested in, was the expenditure of £190,000, which has been answered in the previous question, but the word ‘serious’ in the question, could you just explain further what the serious implications are for the Council? I wanted a little bit further explanation on the word serious? I understand that it costs money to demolish things and so on.”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

The security cost, the potential insurance pay out if someone's injured in breaking into the building and the potential cost of removing unauthorised occupants off the site; they mount up and would become serious.

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Item (q)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Bill Bagnell

(q) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development by Paul Morgan:

“By rejecting the motion (Agenda item 9) outright, prior to any planning applications being heard and contrary to public opinion, has the Council left itself open to a charge of predisposition, predetermination or bias (contrary to Probity in planning: Advice for councillors and officers making planning decisions - Guidance December 2019)?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

No, we do not agree that the Council has left itself open to a challenge on rejecting the motion and on the charge on the grounds that you state. The Council as a landowner, has been very clear in its intentions for redeveloping and regenerating the London Road Industrial Estate. This is to deliver regeneration to the benefit of the wider community. Any planning application in this regard would be subject to the full planning process and would be dealt with under the Council's local planning authority powers and duties. The Council, as a landowner, is entitled to reasonably protect its assets and bring forward proposals for regeneration. Thanks.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Paul Morgan asked the following supplementary question:

“Yes I do, thank you for that response Councillor Mackinnon, much appreciated. It still concerns me because it just smacks to me of predetermination and predisposition. I mean for example, Councillor Mackinnon, you mentioned a number of times in your earlier responses that the new facility in Monks Lane will be completed and will go ahead. Whereas we haven't received any details of that planning from anybody, we've got one diagram and it hasn't gone through the planning process; so again you're pre-determining an outcome of something that you really shouldn't be doing.”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

I don't accept that interpretation so I'm afraid we'll have to agree to disagree.

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Item (c)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Gary Lugg/ Janet Weekes

(c) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing by John Gotelee:

"I was recently told by a council housing officer that there was a surplus of 2 bed flats to rent in the area. has there been any planning into the size and distribution of the numerous new flats being built in the area?"

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing answered:

The Housing Service works with the range of providers for accommodation and are not aware of any surplus two-bedroom flats in the area. This is different to advising customers that two bed flats may be coming up due to a new build site completing or where we might be procuring two bedroom flats in partnership with a landlord that will be ready to let. With regard to planning, all new build properties, whether they are flats or houses of differing sizes, have been subject to meeting planning policy and the needs of the area in terms of achieving a mix of tenures, sizes and types of housing across the district. The Local Plan also sets out the framework for the future development of sites in the district.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

John Gotelee asked the following supplementary question:

"Thank you for your answer, very interesting. I'm just wondering though if we're not falling into the same mistakes as have been made in the past. There seems to be massive amounts of development around the Newbury area. A large proportion is flats and there's demand for affordable housing. Are we not just going to create the ghettos of the future with these plans that we've got? Especially, for instance, the flats next to where the Council Offices are, it just looks like rabbit hutches for people."

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing answered:

Thank you, I disagree that we're creating ghettos of the future, Mr. Gotelee. Certainly, the site that you've mentioned near the Council offices, they are high quality apartments and we do have size standards for all apartments so nothing will ever resemble a rabbit hutch. If applications are brought forward they go through the due planning process.

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Item (l)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Bill Bagnell

(l) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development by Stuart Gourley:

“If the Rugby Club proposal gets the go ahead from the Executive will the Council withdraw its planning application 20/02402/REG3 to demolish the clubhouse at Faraday Road?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

No the Council won't withdraw the application to demolish the clubhouse if the Rugby Club proposal is approved. Regardless of future plans generally, the old football clubhouse and associated structures are wholly beyond economic repair. They are a health and safety risk and an ongoing security maintenance cost. It's imperative that we demolish them as soon as we can. So the answer is no.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Stuart Gourley asked the following supplementary question:

“Yes thank you. With the plan to use the football ground as a green space in the interim, will the Council look to provide alternative facilities for community people that are using the area? I mean in terms of toilet facilities and amenities for use for people that are using the green space?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

No, the plan is to turn it into a recreational green space for the use of the public much like the nearby parkland. So no I'm not aware of any public toilet facilities or the like that's proposed.

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Item (a)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Kofi Adu-Gyamfi

(a) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment by Gareth Beard:

“Some councils are doing trials of electric refuse collection vehicles. What aspirations do west berks have of introducing these types of vehicles to achieve net zero and when and how might you achieve this aspiration?”

The Portfolio Holder for Environment provided the following written response:

Thank you for your question. Indeed, some councils are beginning to introduce electric vehicles as part of their waste collection fleet. West Berkshire Council will continue to actively explore emerging low-carbon transport options which could help us to reduce the carbon emissions associated with the delivery of our services.

Our initial assessment shows that the majority of these trials involving the use of electric waste collection trucks are being done by urban or metropolitan local authorities which have a higher population density and relatively short distances between collection points and depots/waste transfer stations. The limited range (i.e. the maximum distance which can be travelled on a full battery charge) currently available on electric trucks and the rural nature of West Berkshire mean that it would not be practicable to adopt electric trucks at this time.

We will continue to look for opportunities to decarbonise our waste collection fleet in future.

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Item (f)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Gary Lugg/ Bryan Lyttle

(f) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing by Ian Hall:

“Has the council considered the Show Ground at Hermitage as a potential ground for housing?”

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing provided the following written response:

Thank you for your question.

The answer is no because the Show Ground is situated in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at paragraph 172 states: “Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.”

The site was not put forward by the owners as part of the Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment for inclusion in the Emerging Draft Local Plan 2037, and the permission for the Showground contains a clause that if the Showground is no longer to be used as a showground then it is to be returned to agricultural land.

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Item (g)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Ian Pearson

(g) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education by Ian Morrin:

“How much budget is assigned to the education team and how is their effectiveness measured?”

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education provided the following written response:

The Council's Education Service budget for 2021/22 is £9m.

In terms of effectiveness, the Service is measured / evaluated in a range of ways e.g.

- Against Corporate Standards
- Service specific key performance indicators
- Feedback from schools and service users
- Ofsted inspections / visits
- DfE feedback
- Overall school performance (including Ofsted grades) and results

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Item (n)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Kofi Adu-Gyamfi

(n) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment by Alex Pulleyn:

“Will West Berkshire Council agree to a 'moratorium on incineration' with immediate effect?”

The Portfolio Holder for Environment providing the following written response:

Thank you for your question requesting that the Council should declare a moratorium on incineration with immediate effect.

It is not fully clear why you are making this request and I am assuming you are referring to the incineration of municipal solid waste.

West Berkshire Council is committed to achieving greater environmental stewardship. We encourage our residents and businesses to reduce their waste generation as much as practicable and aim to continually improve the amount of waste that we reuse or recycle. Currently, about half of all waste collected from households in West Berkshire is recycled. For waste that cannot be reused or recycled, incineration in energy from waste (EfW) facilities is a suitable treatment option and is better for the environment than sending the waste to landfill. Modern EfW facilities are equipped with advanced technology for the control of emissions before they are released into the atmosphere. The electricity generated by these facilities is also fed into the national grid and used to offset the need for fossil fuels. Wherever practicable, the use of heat from EfW facilities in addition to the electricity generated can help to significantly increase the efficiency of the plant and achieve further environment benefits.

Any planning application for an EfW facility in West Berkshire is subjected to the usual stringent assessment criteria to ensure that the proposals are technically robust, minimise environmental impacts and the need is suitably justified. The applications are also published so that the views of community stakeholders and statutory consultees can be taken on board before decisions are taken.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you wish to discuss this matter further.

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Item (a)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Gabrielle Mancini/Gary Lugg/Jon Winstanley

(a) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development by Councillor David Marsh:

“Do you share Newbury BID’s vision for the town centre as “a safe and welcoming space for visitors, residents and workers to eat, drink and relax in, enjoying an ambient, atmospheric setting without the noise and safety risks that vehicle access brings?””

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

Thank you Councillor Marsh for your question. Okay, so firstly I would point out that for the vast majority of the working day, as you know, the town centre is traffic free. The Council does share a common goal with the BID to ensure that Newbury Town Centre thrives. In fact, we've provided lots of means of support for businesses during this pandemic.

We've distributed over £40 million in business grants, we've unilaterally offered a business rates holiday, we supplemented the government's grants for wet led pubs before Christmas with our own match funding, we've accelerated applications for tables and chairs licenses and much more besides. You bet, we want our town services to thrive, but, and to be fair to this Administration we've tried to explain this to you more than one occasion, I'll have another go now: There are practical issues involved in removing all vehicular access from the town centre until midnight as requested by the BID. Access to the town centre must be maintained for residential properties, emergency services, and deliveries.

Preventing evening access for deliveries and collections would be devastating for the very businesses that we are trying to protect and grow. The current town centre master plan work will deliver proposals on the future operational timings of the pedestrianised zone. This will have to be based on a comprehensive consultation and information gathering process and it's felt that this is the most appropriate way to deliver change in the Town Centre; rather than ad-hoc temporary measures that may confuse visitors and do more harm than good to businesses. Thanks.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor David Marsh asked the following supplementary question:

Yes I'd like to know what you would say in view of that to the owners of businesses I've been speaking to in Bartholomew Street, which is temporarily closed and has been

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for weeks without apparently causing any confusion, and who in one case, told me he'd lost a million pounds in turnover in the past 12 months and had desperately been hoping that he would be able to serve customers outside from April 12th. This is now impossible because of this, frankly inexplicable decision. What do you say to them? All those businesses, 80 of them in the BID, support the BID's request. How can you ignore them? Why won't you help them? That's my question.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

It's not, with respect Councillor Marsh, frankly inexplicable, is it? Because I've just had a go at explaining it to you. You might disagree with the reasons; but it is not inexplicable, in fact, the explanation has just been given. I understand that you did refer to a survey at the Town Council Annual Meeting last night, I understand the number of businesses who responded to that was 30, and that one of the businesses who were in favour of the pedestrianisation were actually one of the most vocal ones against it. So I'm not entirely sure about the scientific or comprehensive nature of the survey that you cite. Thanks.

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Item (j)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Jon Winstanley/Jenny Graham

(j) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment by Councillor Adrian Abbs:

“What will be the carbon footprint impact of cancelled bus services proposed in West Berkshire?”

The Portfolio Holder for Environment answered:

Thank you Councillor Abbs for your question. I am not at all sure what the source of your information is, because this Council has no current plans to cancel bus services in West Berkshire.

Throughout the pandemic, we've maintained and supported the bus network at full capacity, and this Council has agreed a three-year extension to this contract with Reading Buses and services will be maintained until August 2024.

There may be times when certain journeys are scaled back in order that resources can be used more effectively elsewhere, but this is only done where the existing service are only being used by one or two people at a time and where a taxi would have a lower carbon footprint than an almost empty bus. We've got two actions in the draft delivery plan CN020 and CN021 which is to work with public transport operators to support the recovery of passenger numbers following Covid and then to increase the use of public transport.

And at a national level, the National Bus Strategy for England launched this month supports these actions with a central aim to get more people traveling by bus, by making buses a practical and attractive alternative to the car. And so we will be working with bus operators to develop an enhanced partnership over the next 12 months; though of course the details of what this will mean for West Berkshire are still to be determined. The Council will also publish a Local Bus Service Improvement Plan by October, which will be updated annually.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor Adrian Abbs asked the following supplementary question:

Yes, just first the source is the Newbury Weekly News, which on March the 8th had the story that the bus service between Bucklebury and Bradfield is to be scrapped, so that is the source. In reality I agree, I mean you know the bus services are key; so

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what's my supplementary? That no bus services will be cancelled under the Conservative watch?; did I understand you correctly?

The Portfolio Holder for Environment answered:

No, I didn't say that; I said there will be exceptions when there is a virtually empty bus, of one or two people, where environmentally and economically it would make more sense to use a taxi instead.

The Leader commented that: Councillor Boeck would send Councillor Abbs an email regarding the specific issue raised in the media article.

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Item (l)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Coe

(l) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care by Councillor Alan Macro:

“What is the council doing to support Alice Bye Court Extra Care Sheltered Housing to improve its CQC rating for safety and leadership?”

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care answered:

Yes thank you Councillor Macro and I'm going to apologise in advance for the possible length of this response because I think it's very important that we get the role of the Council, in relation to a service which has a CQC report, accurate because there are two or three different levels to the relationship.

I'd start by saying that where there are issues with an external provider and their provision, such as in this case Housing 21 as the service provider and Alice Bye Court as the service provided, the fundamental responsibility for improving the service and thus raising up a CQC rating is with the service provider itself. Indeed Adult Social Care, and this is one of my points, will have a statutory responsibility for challenge and to have regard to residents being safeguarded. I think we should also recognise that in the CQC report you refer to, Housing 21 achieved three Good ratings for the categories of Effective, Caring and Responsive.

So turning to your specific question, my reading of the March 2021 CQC report is that it centres on the procedures and practices surrounding the administration of medicines to residents, and to quote from the summary report:

“People were at risk of harm because staff had not always administered medicine safely and people had not consistently received their medicines as prescribed. The provider had implemented the new policy and procedures to ensure medicines were managed safely and had appointed a medicine champion. However, staff were not consistently following the new procedures. The provider has improved their reporting of medicine errors which were now open and transparent. However, a high level of medicine errors continued to be made.”

Now so far as engagement generally is concerned, the way in which the Council engages with the provider regarding the quality of the service they're providing, is via the Contracts and Commissioning Care Quality Team. Although of course there are roles for Adult Social Care and for example it's Care Management and Safeguarding teams.

The Care Quality Team has been actively engaged with Housing 21 and the management at Alice Bye Court since issues first arose as highlighted in the previous

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CQC report in March 2020. It is disappointing a year later that Housing 21 haven't managed to address the issues sufficiently to move the grades for Safe and Well-led up from Requires Improvement and as a result a 'place with caution' restriction was imposed upon all placements by Adult Social Care at Alice Bye Court, but by September last year there was enough apparent improvement that the restriction was lifted and that was with effect from November.

Then however concerns started to resurface around safe medication practice and Adult Social Care began to be notified, and, I make this clear, this is very important (as recognised in the CQC report) those references were made by Housing 21 itself and they regarded a number of medication errors that appear to be affecting clients and this is positive that the provider was transparent and active in self-reporting which is something Care Quality encourage and fully welcome. Care Quality joined in with Alice Bye Court staff meetings to support both staff to manage the rise in these medication errors and indeed shared a copy of our own medication policy and that resulted in Alice Bye Court updating their own policy; but because of the problems 'place with caution' restriction was re-imposed.

Now of course what you will appreciate, we all appreciate, is that the pandemic has got in the way of face-to-face meetings. So Care Quality held a number of zoom meetings in order to establish an improvement plan with the Alice Bye management. Housing 21 forwarded their action plan on the 18th December and updated on the 29th January. Care Quality had a follow-up meeting in early February but disappointingly there were still errors occurring.

Now, as I've said, there's also been involvement from Adult Social Care's Care Management and Safeguarding staff and because there were still issues with medication practice there was an embargo upon all new placements into Alice Bye in mid-February. Care Quality have held follow-up meetings on 26 February and 19 March and what is positive is that as referred to in the CQC report I quoted from; a Medication Champion has been appointed and that is a positive step. Care quality has remained in contact with the CQC Inspector throughout this and will be supporting Alice Bye management to address the issues.

But let me go back to what I said at the onset, Adult Social Care has a statutory responsibility to have regard to the safeguarding of residents and that's paramount, hence the initial place with caution and then the embargo. It's a difficult tight rope to balance for Officers between the need for support on one side and challenging the service on the other. While some improvements are being seen, Adult Social Care and our Contracts and Commissioning colleagues are taking a cautious approach to ensure that the changes become embedded in Alice Bye's practice and procedures.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

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Councillor Alan Macro asked the following supplementary question:

Thank you, well I welcome the fact that we put that to a place with caution and then an embargo because these medicine errors seem to be somewhat alarming; particularly with one resident saying she had to be hospitalised as a result. But could I just refer you to the, I think it's actually the last paragraph in the CQC report, where it says the Registered Manager did not feel well supported by Local Authority quality assurance who had engaged with the service in relation to the high level of medicine errors. What I'd like to ask is that an error, do you think, on the part of the Alice Bye Court, or is there a problem with our care quality people, or is it just a breakdown in relationships?

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care answered:

Well, as I've tried to lay out, there has been a huge amount of interaction between our teams, in particular Care Quality, and the management of Alice Bye Court. That is why it is disappointing if a manager or managers in that provider has made those comments to the Inspector. All I can say is that the assurance I receive from Adult Social Care and through them from Commissioning is that a huge amount of support has been offered and taken up as you can see. So I'm not going to comment on what someone else says about the support they've received from Adult Social Care but I think what I've said to you, in the answer to your question, shows that a huge amount of effort has been put in.

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Item (m)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Gabrielle Mancini/Gary Lugg

(m) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development by Councillor Andy Moore:

"I am aware that the Newbury Business Improvement District (BID) has written to this Council (letter dated 1 Mar 21) seeking assistance on matters such as traffic-free timings and licences for outdoor hospitality as the COVID-19 restrictions are eased this spring. Furthermore, the BID's request and approach has been broadly supported by Newbury Town Council's Planning & Highways Committee. What actions will the Council take to respond to these requests and ensure that Newbury Town Centre is given the best chance to recover from the effects of the pandemic?"

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

Thanks Leader and good evening Councillor Moore, I hope you're doing well. Look we know that this past year has been a really difficult one for local businesses, particularly those in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. We've put a significant amount of assistance, both financial and practical, in place to help them to reopen safely and successfully. I mentioned several initiatives and grant distributions etc. in my response to Councillor Marsh a little earlier so I won't repeat them again.

Now in our written response to the requests from the Newbury BID and Newbury Town Council that you mentioned in your question, we included details of these plans which are part of the comprehensive package of support we have made available up to this point. A copy of this correspondence will be provided to you and will be reproduced in the minutes. Furthermore, Councillor Somner and I had a very good and productive meeting with the CEO of the BID last week, where we explained the reasoning behind our not being able to agree to all of their requests. Some of the reasoning where those given to Councillor Marsh earlier on, but all parties agreed to work together collaboratively in future.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

Councillor Andy Moore asked the following supplementary question:

Yes, thank you Councillor Mackinnon for your answer. My supplementary is what has changed between now, when you've rejected a well thought through request on traffic free timings (which has the support of the Town Centre businesses) and last summer when this administration introduced a 24/7 traffic free zone with little consultation?

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The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development answered:

Well, I can only refer you to the answer I gave earlier on to Councillor Marsh and others have given that answer before that to increase the pedestrianised hours without consultation, without a temporary ad hoc measure, would be to the detriment of those businesses that need vehicular accesses for deliveries and their emergency services who need access to the town. So I again, I understand why you might disagree, but the reasoning for refusing the request for 24 hour pedestrianisation or pedestrians to midnight, those reasons are valid and they're solid and I can only give them again Councillor Moore but thanks for your question.

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Item (n)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Ian Pearson

(n) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education by Councillor Erik Pattenden:

“How many children in West Berkshire schools will no longer be eligible for Pupil Premium after the Government's change to the date on which eligibility is calculated now being before the end of furlough scheme, and with the effect that families where the major bread winner is made unemployed and are forced to go onto benefits will not be taken into account?”

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

Thank you for your question Councillor Pattenden. The government's change of free school meal census date from January to October means that around 282 children will not qualify who otherwise would.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor Erik Pattenden asked the following supplementary question:

I do, thank you. So what extra support are you going to give to these 280 children who are going to lose their Pupil Premium funding as a result of the government moving the goal posts and changing the Census date? Because with food bank usage rising in West Berkshire and demands on organisations like the West Berkshire Baby Bank increasing as well; just because the government has changed this date, it doesn't mean that the financial circumstances of those families is going to change. So that people premium is very significant to them and losing it is going to be critical.

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

Councillor Pattenden, I think you misunderstand the purpose of the nature of Pupil Premium; Pupil Premium is not a payment that goes to the children's families. It's a payment that goes to the school, to allow schools to provide additional support in educating those children and is aimed at closing the achievement gap.

Now as far as the schools are concerned the government have already made significant funding of around a billion pounds for catch-up support which is targeted at the most disadvantaged. In addition, this group are set to benefit from the holiday activity and food programme with a DfE investment into West Berkshire of around £343,000 across Easter, Summer and Christmas. This will benefit children directly, the

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free school meal children will be receiving food vouchers over the Easter holidays which will soon be upon us.

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Item (p)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Coe

(p) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care by Councillor Lee Dillon:

“How many hospital referrals to West Berkshire located care homes are refused because the appropriate medical care can't be provided?”

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care answered:

Thank you Councillor Dillon, I will seek to answer your question as best I can, but let me start by setting out a number of difficulties in answering it phrased in the way it is. First let's acknowledge that in the context of a care home, medical care is really nursing care. Care homes aren't hospitals and if a patient needs full-time medical care, a hospital is the place for them, not a care home. As I'm sure you know, care homes are categorized as one of two types; those offering nursing care, and that might be in whole or in part, and those that only offer residential care. So let's say that an individual, or possibly more likely the family of that individual, who is discharged from hospital and needs nursing care approaches a residential and not a nursing care home and is told no because the care home can't accommodate the individual's nursing needs. Now is that a refusal because appropriate medical care can't be provided?

Councillor Dillon clarified question – It's just that those who have got acute nursing needs when they come out; so for example, I've got someone who I know who's got a tracheotomy and there is no nursing care for them in West Berkshire so they're now living in Reading.

Councillor Bridgman - Thank you Lee and I take that on board, so let me seek to answer that element of the question. Yes, there will be occasions and a point I would make is that someone discharged on a Monday might not find a bed place in their particular nursing need within district or even immediately outside the district, and then on Tuesday a bed might have appeared, had they come out on the Tuesday instead. So there's a huge fluctuation and fluidity in bed placement, and the reason why someone with a particular medical need might not be able to be placed, and you've given me tracheotomy, I was going to give you the example of a feeding tube or a syringe driver, we might not be able to find a nursing bed in West Berkshire for those precise issues for that particular individual on that particular day. But what I will say is that there certainly will be cases, and this is in particular, as you rightly say, for a discharged patient with what's been described in my answer as complex medical needs, but they can be also very specific medical needs, there may not be a care home in West Berkshire that on that day has the ability to accommodate their requirements; however, what I did ask Officers to confirm to me and they did is that Adult Social Care has never had a situation, to their knowledge, where it was

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impossible to find a way to meet that individual's needs. I hope that answers an aspect of the question.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor Lee Dillon asked the following supplementary question:

What I will do Lynne, if it's okay with you, is take it offline and speak to Graham and Jo. Just on that last comment you made there Graham, the very last sentence you said, sorry can you just repeat that sentence for me?

Councillor Bridgman – I will just clarify, I specifically asked the question whether there was anyone we had not been able to place and I was told no and this was Service Director Level response, not in the knowledge of those Officers had we been unable to place someone.

Councillor Dillon - *Okay so my supplementary then is: Does placing include placing out of authority?*

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care answered:

Oh absolutely and I've said that I think I've been explicit that there will be there will be occasions; there's all sorts of reasons why you place out of authority. I was going to give you the example of someone placed in Swindon, who's based in Swindon because his or her family's based in Swindon. So there are all sorts of reasons; but two things will drive that: one is certainly potentially medical need and the other is cost. You know I make no apologies for protecting our budgets and protecting Council taxpayer's Council tax by placing out of District if that is substantially cheaper than placing in District. Although what I would say is that we have deliberately placed in Districts during Covid to support the care home providers within West Berkshire, we've made an absolute policy of placing within West Berkshire. However, on the medical point, yes there will be occasions when you place out a District and you have to.

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Item (q)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Ian Pearson

(q) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education by Councillor Martha Vickers:

“In the light of continuing concerns in society regarding the attitude and behaviour of some men towards women does this Council recognise the need to begin the process of attitudinal change through initiatives in our schools?”

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

Thank you for your question Councillor Vickers. From September of last year, schools were given a duty to teach and deliver the new statutory subjects which are Relationships Education for Primary schools and Relationships and Sex Education as RSE for Secondary schools. These subjects and the wider PSHE Curriculum are key in educating children and young people and developing their understanding of healthy relationships boundaries and consent. It is important that the subjects are delivered in a safe age-appropriate way, not through fear, shame, or shock tactics. The focus is on what children and young people can do to keep healthy and safe. West Berkshire Schools have access to a an RSCH Subject Support Officer through the Health and Wellbeing and Schools Program who leads Subject Network Meetings, Subject Development including School Policy Resources and Content Advice and Teacher Development and Training. The Subject Support Officer is currently reviewing resources, teaching materials and guidance published by organisations such as the PSHE Association and Safe Streets now. And has issued a Sexual Harassment and Personal Safety Resources Guide to all schools.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor Martha Vickers asked the following supplementary question:

Well thank you for that. That was interesting to hear what's happening in the schools and I think I heard you say that this is being updated. Can I ask how regular this teaching is? Is it just like a one-off session or if it ongoing and it's quite regular and I think I heard you say it involved primary schools as well which was going to be my supplementary. So how frequently are these sessions held?

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

They are regular sessions. It's part of the PSA PSC Curriculum and it's scheduled into the children's program across the term.

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Item (s)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Bryan Lyttle/Gary Lugg

(s) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing by Councillor Phil Barnett:

“How much has West Berkshire Council received in both Section 106 and CIL receipts since 2016 regarding all new approved developments in the Greenham Ward?”

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing answered:

Thank you Leader and thank you for your question Councillor Barnett. I would like to start by saying that our data isn't actually organised by Ward but rather by Parish. Since the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy in 2015, the amount of income derived from Section 106 payments has declined. There has been £8.8 million in Section 106 payments within Greenham Parish area since the 1st of April 2015. 8.3 million of this arises from the development at Newbury Racecourse.

Since 2016, there have been no developments in Greenham Parish that have had a section 106 contribution attached. With regards to the Community Infrastructure Levy, the developments since the 1st of April 2015 which are CIL liable have generated and £72,323.72 in silver seats within Greenham Parish, of which 15% or £70,335.41 has been passed directly to the Parish Council for spending on Local Infrastructure Projects..

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor Phil Barnett asked the following supplementary question:

Thank you for that answer, you've actually partially answered, you've obviously identified the percentage of the the CIL money which relates to the Greenham Parish. Obviously it's a difficult situation because Greenham Ward of course covers part of Newbury Wards which used to be the old Victoria Ward. So you've obviously referred to Greenham parish in particular; the only thing I would say is have you got any breakdown at all for the Section 106? You obviously give the total amount but has that gone into Greenham Parish or Greenham Ward beneficiary projects? Or is this been diverged across the District?

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The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing answered:

Well don't forget with Section 106 Councillor Barnett, Section 106 was a different method of distributing monies. And the only monies from Section 106 contributions that went to Town and Parish Councils was that for public open space; Whereas CIL, it's 15 of all the CIL in that particular Parish that goes to the Parish Council.

I cannot tell you how much public open space Section 106 was given to Greenham Parish or Ward, but if you want that information I'm sure it can be made available to you.

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Item (u)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Ian Pearson

(u) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education by Councillor Tony Vickers:

"Why does the Council still use 'as the crow flies' distances for determining entitlement to free school travel when there is free off-the-shelf software that can calculate journey distance by bus, car, bike or on foot?"

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

Thank you for your question Councillor Vickers. The Home to School Transport Statutory Guidance dictates that As the Crow Flies is used to determine the nearest school. And then further to address the entitlement, the walking route distance is calculated using mapping software to determine if the application meets the distance criteria. And we do this using, as I say mapping software, you could try this yourself Councillor. You can use the Interactive Map on our Council's own website to do this.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

Councillor Tony Vickers asked the following supplementary question:

I do, it does seem ridiculous, and I mean you might have a large body of water. As the Crow Flies and have you know miles to walk around Lake Windermere or somewhere. We don't have lakes, do we but isn't there some move by the LGA in particular, to bring this whole system up to date and change the legislation? Because this is totally unfair; it depends on the particular terrain, the particular geography that somebody happens to live in. And you're not going to tell me you know with these large sums of money that are now involved in school travel that this can't, you know, isn't open to huge unfairness. So isn't it time, would you agree, that it's time that it should be changed and shouldn't the LGA and we should ask the LGA to lobby for this?

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

You're misrepresenting the situation Councillor Vickers, The Crow Flies Measurement is used to define the catchment areas; oh sorry, to define the nearest school and so and if then the walking distance, it needs to be measured. So if there's a large body of water and the child has to walk around that route, it's almost certainly going to be beyond the threshold and they would be entitled to a free home to school transport, on that basis.

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Item (b)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Anstey/Tess Ethelston

(b) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture by Councillor David Marsh:

“How many members of the Executive have visited the site of the proposed sports ground at the rugby club in Monks Lane?”

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

Thank you for your question Councillor Marsh. I'll be on site as a direct result of the ongoing negotiations. I've been to the Rugby club on numerous occasions some years ago taking my stepsons to mini rugby. I'm also aware colleagues in the Executive have visited the site in the last two years so I'm familiar with the layout and our proposals. This is in addition to various Council meetings we've held about the club over previous years.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor David Marsh asked the following supplementary question:

No.

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

N/A

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Item (k)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Jon Winstanley/Jenny Graham

(k) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment by Councillor Adrian Abbs/Royce Longton:

“What consideration has been given in the Environment Delivery Plan to investigating the carbon footprint implications of home to school journeys?”

The Portfolio Holder for Environment answered:

Thank you again Leader and thank you again Councillor Abbs. So working with schools is a key part in our Community Engagement Program. We're exploring how we can most effectively engage in taking advice from our School Improvement Advisors. There will be more information communicated with schools in the summer term when schools will be able to turn their attention to such things as travel following their very busy and disruptive start to education in this last stage of the pandemic. We've been diligently collecting data on modes of travel for journeys to and from school, for quite some time; so once in a position to engage more fully with schools we'll have the necessary data to assist them to encourage more Active Travel to reduce car journeys.

Again, we are influencing school travel choices already; you'll be well aware of the investments we're making in walking and cycling routes, in cycle training and quite recently, we have been announced and we will shortly be starting a Public Health partnered trial with a school streets initiative in Calcot. So a lot is going on, we are very focused on the schools and the contribution to which they can, hopefully will make towards reducing the overall carbon footprint in the District.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor Adrian Abbs/Royce Longton asked the following supplementary question:

Yeah and I agree with most of what you said there Councillor Ardagh-Walter. The hearts and minds of children at school is a great place to start and we do need to very much focus on that. I think I'm looking for really whether you believe people should be taken out of cars and into buses, or put onto bikes, or where's your emphasis in the Delivery Plan, in the consideration where is your thinking going?

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The Portfolio Holder for Environment answered:

Well I know from certain engagement with my local school, Francis Bailey school in Thatcham, that there are a wide number of options open to children and parents, and obviously those have different carbon impacts and some parents need a bit more encouragement to leave cars than others. Many other parents are enthusiastic already in terms of walking and cycling. Whether a journey is more appropriate by bicycle or bus, I think really comes down to the individual and the geography of the school and its catchment area. So in general, we need to obviously enable a large number of opportunities and alternatives, and offer parents the most attractive way to reduce the carbon impact of their travel. Thank you.

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Item (o)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Ian Pearson

(o) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education by Councillor Erik Pattenden:

“When were secondary school catchment areas last reviewed and what plans does the Council, as LEA, have to review them again?”

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

Thank you Leader and thank you Councillor Pattenden. Catchment areas are used in admission policies to help prioritise applications for schools when more applications are received than there are places available. Admission Authorities, we're an Admissions Authority, but some schools, especially Academy schools are their own Admission Authorities. They do not have to use catchment areas but they are widely used as a high priority.

Children do not have to attend their catchment school. Numbers are constantly monitored and catchment areas are reviewed as and when necessary in line with demography and large housing developments. Should a logical change be proposed a full constant consultation will take place. Catchment changes are detailed on our website and the most recent is an increase in the size of the Downs catchment.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor Erik Pattenden asked the following supplementary question:

Yeah, so as an example of how the system you describe, doesn't work very well what would you say to children and their parents at the Racecourse development in Greenham who find themselves in the catchment area of Park House in Wash Common which is by no means their nearest school? And would be affected when and if the huge Sandleford development in Wash Common goes ahead?

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

Well Councillor as I said, we do constantly review catchment areas. And in general, we have very few complaints or challenges from parents relating to catchment areas. And you have to bear in mind that choice of school is in it is made by parents. Catchment areas only are used to prioritise the allocation of places.

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Item (r)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Ian Pearson

(r) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education by Councillor Martha Vickers:

“What evidence is there that access to the means of travel to school (perhaps through income level and employment status) is linked to educational, health or income inequalities?”

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

Thank you Councillor Vickers. Recognising that low-income families may have reduced access to travel options, the DFE fund extended eligibility to free transport where pupils are entitled to free school meals or when their parents are in receipt of maximum working tax credit; if the nearest school, the nearest suitable school, is beyond two miles for children who are over the age of eight and under eleven. If the school is between two and six miles, if aged 11 to 16 and there are not three or more suitable nearer schools, and if or if the school is between 2 and 15 miles and is the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief. That's for children aged between 11 and 16. We manage these arrangements locally, so we do through the DFE fund support children who need the transport when they're disadvantaged

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor Martha Vickers asked the following supplementary question:

Thank you for that answer Councillor Boeck and for those families that don't qualify for free transport but who are still struggling, is there a possibility that they could pay their fees by instalment? Is that something that's considered or is that just too complicated because some families are border line?

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education answered:

Presumably you're talking about our fair payer scheme? Is that what the question is about? Councillor Vickers, if families are in financial difficulty then they can make an appeal to the Council, to the education service, and we'll always do what we can to help them.

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Item (t)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Anstey/Sean Murphy

(t) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing by Councillor Phil Barnett:

"The government are now offering local authorities a chance to tap into a £30m "Changing places toilet fund" - will West Berkshire Council be making a bid?"

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing answered:

Thank you Councillor Barnett. The Officer and I have rather struggled over this question, the press reasons issues suggest there will be further contact with local authorities. Shown how they'll be able to access funding; we propose to ask community groups where they think these facilities should go and approach other companies as well to improve the overall coverage. As far as I'm aware this has not been followed up with a press statement, but when they do, we'll be able to fill in the Expression of Interest Form. I'm sorry not be able to shed more light on this Government Initiative, at this stage, but you may be able to enlighten me further with your supplementary.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

Councillor Phil Barnett asked the following supplementary question:

Well thank you Councillor Woollaston, you actually did make a couple of observations which are part and parcel of this supplementary. My understanding is that this 30 million is going to be devolved to Lead Authorities. And obviously I looked upon West Berkshire Council as the Lead Authority, but in turn obviously what my question was going to be was how you were going to try and ascertain the amount of interest that would be from the Town and Parishes that might wish to tap into that fund. So you did partially answer it, that you would obviously have to consult with these subgroups to establish what they might be hoping to achieve out of the funds. So I watch this space Councillor Woollaston and I'm sure you do as well.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing answered:

As do I.

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Item (v)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Sarah Clarke/Shiraz Sheikh

(v) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance by Councillor Tony Vickers:

“Why doesn't this Council publish draft minutes of its public meetings in a timely manner, like most local councils do, so the public can see how their elected representatives debated the important matters which they were elected to decide?”

The Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance answered:

Thank you for your question Councillor Vickers. This Council does publish draft minutes of Public Meetings and these are published as soon as they become available. I would imagine the reason for your question is that there have been occasions over the last few months where for some meetings the draft minutes have not been published as promptly as the Public and Members have a right to expect.

This situation has been partly created by the impact of Covid 19; where like many services across the Council, as we heard earlier, have been called upon to support a number of additional activities and Recovery Meetings and in particular the Democratic Services Team and some of those, some of that team who will be supporting us tonight have absolutely had to deal with very many more situations than they normally would have done supporting things like Recovery, Gold and Silver meetings the Local Outbreak Engagement board, I could go on.

But also as discussed at the last Executive, we know that this area is being reorganised at the moment and there are a number of vacant posts which need to be filled. And the aim is to create a smoother and much more efficient service in future. I want to reassure you that I am pressing for the outstanding minutes to be published urgently on our website. I've been assured that the Service Director has this as an urgent task and indeed have confirmed to me, just today, that they expect the situation to be rectified over the next couple of weeks.

I would like to say though that until the area restructure is complete and all positions are recruited to, realistically there may be some further delays. But these will be kept to a minimum wherever possible. And, I also just wanted to point out again, in terms of this meeting that we're at today, it's really important to note that if the public want to see how their elected representatives debated the important matters, which they were elected to decide, meetings of Council are available to watch on YouTube. And we know that we've had a huge number of the public taking advantage of this fact; so a real positive of the pandemic situation is that now we have far more people being able to view the meetings and to see what we debate and discuss. Thank you.

Member Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor Tony Vickers asked the following supplementary question:

Thank you, yes, just a brief one. Slightly concerned about what you say and I fully agree that it's good that lots of people can watch; but can you reassure me that the fact that more people can watch us live as it were, or even in recorded, is not going to mean that getting back to what is the normal standard, which I think is ten working days, when we should get the draft minutes published and available on the website, that, that is the priority, that notwithstanding the positive sides of this form of meeting? That we should stick to our standards and you will not put the one ahead of the other.

The Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance answered:

I can absolutely assure you and I'm sure Councillor Woollaston will also take up that mantle when this becomes part of his portfolio. But absolutely, I've had these discussions with the Service Director and the aim is for that good service to return.



Member Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

Item (c)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Anstey

(c) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture by Councillor David Marsh:

“What are the estimated running costs of the proposed sports ground in its first three years of operation, and will these costs be met by council tax payers?”

This question will not be answered as it seeks disclosure of exempt and/or confidential information.

Member Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

Item (d)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Anstey

(d) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture by Councillor David Marsh:

"If the new sports ground goes ahead, what assurances can you give residents of Monks Lane, Heather Gardens, Sutherlands and other residential roads in the area that their lives will not be made intolerable by the increase in traffic and, particularly, parking?"

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

Councillor Marsh, I'm obviously your favourite Executive Member tonight. Our plans focus on the needs to encourage Active Travel and the use of public transport in line with our wider environmental targets. This will include park and ride, and direct links to both the bus and train stations, in line with the sporting calendar. We do however acknowledge that this will not be possible in all cases and I put together a comprehensive Traffic Management Plan which looks more widely at the areas in terms of off-site car parking. There will be secure bike storage and we'll explore the possibility of charging points for electric vehicles. Various discussions are underway which will provide ample overflow car parking, but I'm not at liberty to reveal this at present until negotiations are completed. In summary, we do not anticipate that the new sports ground will significantly increase congestion or create parking issues for nearby residents.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

Councillor David Marsh asked the following supplementary question:

Yes I do and before I put my supplementary; can I just say I'm sorry to have to take quite so many questions and I'm doing it because this is my only opportunity really to raise the issues such as the one you've just replied to; that residents are raising including members of the Rugby club. I'll try and combine some of these questions and reduce the number of supplementaries to make it move a little bit brisker but we don't any opportunity to debate this matter at all. So this is why, as you said to me yourself at the last Executive meeting, this is why I should have to put my questions to the Executive. In terms of question d, Councillor Woollaston and you are my favourite member, thank you for that. Until your portfolio changes, there's already a lot of congestion now, when there's a big Rugby match or when there's a Rugby festival,

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towards the end of the season; are you really sure that all these things that you're talking about are going to happen because already there are problems particularly in Heather Gardens which is not suitable for anybody to park in. They still get a lot of people parking there. Have you sort of modelled how that will be affected?

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

We have modelled it and we are, as I say, in discussion with some solutions which I am not at liberty to disclose at the moment, but I think we will have a satisfactory result which will solve the problems of the local residents.

Member Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

Item (e)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Anstey

(e) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture by Councillor David Marsh:

“What impact would the proposed floodlighting in Monks Lane have on nearby properties, ancient woodland and wildlife, and what advice has the council taken on the potential ecological impact on, for example, bats’ flight paths?”

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

Thank you Councillor Marsh again. The Council will ensure that all appropriate steps are taken to avoid any light nuisance to neighboring properties. Modern LED floodlights are very directional, significantly reducing light pollution; so there should be little or no impact on residents. We have started an ecological survey which was part of the planning process and nothing has been identified at this stage that gives any cause for concern. We do not feel the proposals will cause any new issues for the site.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor David Marsh asked the following supplementary question:

No thank you.

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

N/A.

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Item (f)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Anstey

(f) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture by Councillor David Marsh:

"How is the location of the proposed sports ground, which will inevitably increase car use, consistent with the council's active travel strategy?"

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

Councillor Marsh, I think my answer is the same as to your 'question d'.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

Councillor David Marsh asked the following supplementary question:

That's fine.

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

N/A.

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Item (g)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Anstey

(g) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture by Councillor David Marsh:

“Have the proposals for Monks Lane factored in the prospect of future success, and therefore competing at a higher level, for football, rugby or indeed both?”

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

Thank you Councillor Marsh. In a single word yes, the ground is to build Step Six requirements with the ability to go to Step Five. The uninitiated, that includes: stands, Fencing, flood lights, turnstiles, male female and official changing facilities. Currently this will help at Newbury FCN Ladies, sorry, Newbury Ladies who are both looking to progress to this level and beyond. The site plans are being designed to find the right balance between financial sustainability and ambition, looking at ways to allow progression up to Step Four and I'm now being ensured that is achievable. This involves our consultants and the Rugby club to look at the most cost-effective ways to accommodate up to a thousand people.

We'd see this as a medium to long-term ambition for the clubs of Newbury but not short-term. In terms of Rugby, the ground will offer superior training options for their teams, with the ability to play matches when needed. This will all be managed through the collective schedule assisted by our colleagues at Sport England, the RFU and the FA.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor David Marsh asked the following supplementary question:

Yeah, so only that if the Football club the Senior Football club playing at this ground were to achieve two promotions, which is not that outlandish, it's happened at clubs all over the country. There being Step Four, the same level at which Thatcham town compete, so it's not that far-fetched. And you are saying that you think this ground could cope with the requirements for Step Four?

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

I've been assured it can be and it could possibly go beyond that.

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Item (h)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Anstey

(h) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture by Councillor David Marsh:

“What safeguards have been put in place should circumstances change and, for whatever reason, the rugby club decides it no longer wishes to rent its land in Monks Lane to the council?”

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

Thank you Councillor Marsh. The Council is working to agree a 40-year lease; this is in the long-term interests of support for local sports clubs and there'll be clauses within the agreement that ensure the partnership is built on trust and mutual desire to provide great facilities to the people of Newbury and surrounding areas. Both parties see this as a community project that will last for decades.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor David Marsh asked the following supplementary question:

No I don't, thank you.

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

N/A.

Member Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

Item (i)	Executive Meeting on 25 March 2021
Submitted to:	Paul Anstey

(i) Question submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture by Councillor David Marsh:

“Has the council considered how it can increase the acreage devoted to community sport in Newbury, rather than concentrate it on one site?”

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

Thank you finally Councillor Marsh. The Council is always looking at ways to improve the amount of space that can be dedicated to community sport. As with any land near larger populations, our need is in direct competition for other land uses such as housing and commercial buildings. The Play and Pitch Strategy approved by this Administration in February 2019, clearly states commitment to six, 3G artificial pitches across the District and a 10-year planned time scale. We also accept there's a shortage of good quality grass pitches, and we've already commissioned a report to identify pitches which can be enhanced through design; drainage schemes for example, and be suitable compared for competitive community football. I expect to be able to make further announcements on this in the Autumn ready for playing in Spring 2022, but this will certainly involve pitches in Newbury. Our intention has been quite clear; it is to provide Newbury with the very best football offer that that it has ever had.

The Chairman asked: *“Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?”*

Councillor David Marsh asked the following supplementary question:

Not really, just I can recommend a very good grass pitch, or potentially good grass pitch in the Centre of town. But let's not get into that debate again. And thank you for your patience Counsellor Woollaston. You have been very helpful.

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture answered:

My pleasure, thank you.

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