

Item 4:

Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 9 February 2023.

Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by members of the public in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution.

A. Question submitted by Susan Millington to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transformation:

"While congratulating WBC on its environmental improvements by allowing wildflower verges to develop and reducing the frequency of hedge cutting, I would like to know what other progress is being made to develop a nature recovery plan, including any rewilding opportunities being developed, as mentioned in your Environmental Delivery Plan 2021 (RC010)."

B. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Deputy Leader:

"When interviewed on BBC South Today programme regarding the replacement of the Faraday road football pitch Councillor Bridgeman stated " We want to get on and Build... This fantastic Football pitch on the site of Newbury Rugby Club" Could he please explain why he did not say that the pitch at Monks lane was not a replacement for Faraday Rd and that he had voted at the district planning meeting to that effect?"

C. Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside:

"The non inclusion of the LRIE in the new Section 19 Consultation of the Local Plan Review is causing confusion so please can the Council explain why it has not been included?"

D. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:

"It is confusing to simple residents like me not to see an RSA or ESA Policy for the London Road Industrial Estate and its exclusion from the LPR as articulated on Page 84 para 7.10, and as the web site is not clear on how the Re-development Project is progressing to the next Checkpoint, I would like to see an update which includes a picture of the Timeline and a Gannt Chart showing the Critical Path through to the end of the current phase, and what the deliverables will be at the End of Phase Checkpoint and a high-level plan for the next phase so is an update possible please?"

E. Question submitted by Mark Hayes-Newington to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:

"The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average of its investment portfolio, and states its target is A or 6.0 and in calculating this Unrated Investments are assigned a score based on perceived risks. Could the Council confirm how does its investment portfolio currently compare with the stated target, and what is the proportion of the unrated investments within the portfolio?"

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F. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Leisure and Culture:

"Could the executive explain why they have passed a stand alone shared football / rugby pitch (with a second clubhouse and stands) at Monks lane on what is currently and will still be only large enough to be a training pitch for rugby?"

G. Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:

"Following the recent judicial review could the Council now please identify with regard to the Medium Term Financial Strategy for Monks Lane Sport Hub, what they now expect the capital cost to be as it will fall in the capital budget 2023/24 and what funding rate will apply to the borrowings used for the capital part of the project?"

H. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside:

"Thankfully the LPR Policies under Section 19 in relation to most of the Environmental Issues have been much strengthened from the Section 18 versions, and the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessments are very useful, so if the LRIE is excluded from the LPR Section 19 Consultation how will WBC LPA & LLFA ensure that the recommendations in the SFRA Level 2 Site Specific Analysis in relation to Local Plan Policy are complied with?"

I. Question submitted by Mark Hayes-Newington to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:

"The Council has published various financial statements for consideration at the Executive meeting of 9 February 2023. However, thus far there are no Audited Financial Statements for 2021/22 even in draft form, which means Neither the public of the Executive to properly consider and scrutinise the these statements and plans upon which the budget for 2023/24 is set. When will the Council produce audited figures for comparative purposes?"

J. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:

"Was any viability study for that change from residential to commercial on the LRIE completed? If so has it been published and what was the cost?"

K. Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:

"Could the Council outline what new public Sports Facilities, and their associated costs, have been provided for in the capital budget. and Medium Term Financial Strategy?"

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L. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside:

"Which part of the Freehold of the Newbury Gateway Plaza Development as shown in this video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCa_C7DGfR8 does West Berks Council own, and why is this Development not included in the Local Plan Review Section 19 Consultation please?"