

Supplemental Items for Executive

Thursday 23rd May 2024 at 6.00 pm
in Council Chamber Council Offices
Market Street Newbury

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Sarah Clarke.

Sarah Clarke

Service Director (Strategy & Governance)

For further information about these items, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Sadie Owen (Principal Democratic Services Officer) on 01635 519052, e-mail: sadie.owen1@westberks.gov.uk

Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at

www.westberks.gov.uk



Supplemental Items
Executive to be held on Thursday, 23 May 2024 *(continued)*

West Berkshire Council is committed to equality of opportunity. We will treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, disability, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation.

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Sadie Owen on telephone (01635) 519052.



Item 4:

Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 23 May 2024.

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 John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing:

"Referring to the Flood and water management act 2010 the west Berks 2021 Local Flood risk Management Strategy 2.1.2 states The Act reinforces the need to manage flooding holistically and in a sustainable manner. Is there going to be a holistic drainage plan for the london road estates prior to any plans being submitted?"

B. Question submitted by Richard Garvie to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"Given the issues with flooding in the District this year and the fact that we had sewage in our streets for almost four months, will this Council make a cast iron promise to ensure that all drainage assets that are under the responsibility of the council are fully inspected and cleared over the Summer?"

C. Question submitted by Alison May to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"West Berkshire District Council's commitment to tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency is commendable. The delivery of decarbonisation related projects will contribute to a reduction in harmful pollutant emissions throughout West Berkshire and other areas. Can the Council provide details of decarbonisation related initiatives that would seek to reduce West Berkshire Council's emissions and seek to reduce emissions associated with other sectors?"

D. Question submitted by William Beard to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"A recent proposal to introduce a reduce speed limit in Theale was not accompanied by an environmental impact assessment. Reducing the speed of fossil vehicles reduces the miles per gallon considerably. In order to achieve the Council's Environment Strategy should all decisions by West Berkshire Council consider and, where practicable, mitigate carbon and other emissions?"

E. Question submitted by Paul Morgan to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"Can the Council please confirm from which budget(s) (capital and revenue) the current expenditure (of at least £230,000) and future expenditure for the Faraday Road Football ground has / will be coming from?"

F. Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"It's just over one year since the Liberal Democrats have been in control of the Council. Can the newly appointed Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport, and Countryside please give his absolute assurance that within the next 2

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years a new Community Sports Stadium, with a new pitch, and with enhanced stadium facilities will be built and fully operational as promised in the Liberal Democrats Election Manifesto and subsequently adopted in the 2023 -2027 WBC Council Strategy?"

G. Question submitted by Siena Woods to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"Will the Executive Member for Highways join with the Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group, which campaigns on behalf of rail users in a large part of the west of your District as well as east Wiltshire, in calling for reinstatement of some or all of the pre-pandemic through train service with minimum delay and as part of this, ask the MP for Newbury to explain why BTPG has not heard from her in the two months since they last communicated with her on this matter?"

H. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration:

"Agenda Item 6. Paragraph 5.9 mentions an Ardent Sustainable Drainage Strategy for Bond Riverside, so please may the New Newbury Flood & Drainage Forum have site of this, what date was it produced please, and why was it (under the title of a Planned Flood Mitigation Plan) not attached to the Papers for the June 2022 Executive Meeting?"

I. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"As landlord to many of the polluters what action has been taken by the council to reduce the levels of pollutants outlined in the Geo-environmental report on the results taken on the boreholes on the LRIE?"

J. Question submitted by Richard Garvie to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"It was recently revealed that the Council has no money available to spend on Faraday Road, and that any money spent on the facility will be through borrowing. Does the Council agree with me that now is the time to give the ground to the community on a minimum 25 year lease at a peppercorn rent to let the community begin fundraising and getting the ground up to standard for Senior football?"

K. Question submitted by Alison May to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"West Berkshire District Council's existing multi-million pound Private Funding Initiative (PFI) waste contract, reportedly valued at £550m, is due to expire on 30 September 2032. The Infrastructure & Project Authority (IPA) estimate that it can take up to seven years to adequately prepare for a PFI expiry. Can the council detail how they intend to regularly update West Berkshire citizens of

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their plans to transition their existing Private Funding Initiative (PFI) waste contract to align with the Council's Net Zero / Decarbonisation commitments?"

L. Question submitted by Paul Morgan to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:

"In March 2024 it looks like the Council has borrowed £25 Million (5 x £5 Million) from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) on a short-term fixed maturity basis. Can the Council please provide a full breakdown of what this money has or will be used for?"

M. Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Corporate Programme:

"Executive meeting 23rd May 2024 question in relation to agenda item 6. The Bond Riverside Programme Review EX4494 report says that (3.0) "The Depot Site is being reviewed by the Transformation Service as part of the Council accommodation review, and may require input from Property, Legal, Commissioning and Economic Development" (6.2) "potentially as part of the Council's accommodation review" (6.4) "A separate report regarding this site is currently being prepared by the Transformation Service" Please can the Council expand upon and explain what is included in and what is meant by the Council accommodation review?"

N. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration:

"Agenda Item 6. 1. 2.1.d & 3 under Policy – mentions a LRIE Designated Employment ZONE & a LRIE Designated Employment AREA, where as the Submitted Local Plan Review currently under Examination refers to the bigger Area which includes some non-WBC lands as the London Road ESTATES Dedicated Employment Area (DEA), so are we making reference to the latter DEA which is listed in Appendix 4 of the Submitted Local Plan Review, the Map for which does NOT include the Open Green Space at the end of Faraday Road?"

O. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"The building of the A339 / Flemming Rd junction increased the area of impermeable surfaces by nearly 1000 Sqm and subsequently increased the amount of surface water run off into the Thames Water Sewer. The sewer was already causing flooding of property downstream and since the addition of the extra surface water runoff, flooding has occurred several times. With reference to the Highways act 1980 chapter 66 section 100 (3) What compensation is payable to residents affected by flooding from highways activity?"

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P. Question submitted by Alison May to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"West Berkshire citizens continue to increasingly contribute to reducing their waste arisings by ensuring their 'unwanted stuff' is either reduced, reused or recycled. West Berkshire District Council, being a registered Waste authority, is ideally positioned to contribute to further encouraging West Berkshire citizens, West Berkshire businesses, schools, colleges etc to adopt sustainable waste management initiatives. Can the council detail how they intend to further contribute to ensuring West Berkshire citizens,businesses, schools, colleges etc to maximise opportunities by ensuring 'discarded items' benefit from being appropriately reused, recycled or reduced?"

Q. Question submitted by Paul Morgan to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"Agenda Item 6 Forward Plan Ref: (EX4494) report: My question relates to section 6.6 of the report and is in two parts.

i)Can you please correct the first sentence to say that football pitch was available for teams to use from February 2024 (not October 2023).

ii) If the Council had adopted / progressed the NCFG planning approvals that was unanimously approved by the Western Area Planning Committee, over 2.5 years ago, do you think that this would have avoided doubts / questions / confusion regarding "what that project may become, and its timeline"?"

R. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration:

"Agenda Item 6. The Review makes several mentions of the Gateway Plaza Development which is a mixed development and has been offered up as a late including in the Local Plan Review, however the Advertised Site includes Lands for which WBC is not the Land Owner, so how will the Cumulative Impact of Development on the Surface Water Network in wider Catchment Area be dealt with, please?"

S. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing:

"The A339 / Flemming Rd junction was screened and determined not to need an Environmental Impact assessment, yet It has striking similarities with the infamous Glasgow bridge to nowhere which after a judicial review was found to need an EIA.Please could the council confirm that before any work is undertaken to regenerate any plot of the London Rd estates a full Environmental Impact Assessment will be carried out?"

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T. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration:

"Agenda Item 6. Under Section 5 – Flooding & Drainage - The Review makes no mention of the Surface Water Pollution of the Northbrook & pollution in the underly Aquifers which have both been the subject of investigations, so why is that, and are there any tasks within the Project Work Plans to try and identify the Sources of the Pollutants please?"

U. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration:

"Agenda Item 6. The Review mentions in several places that Flood Risk & Mitigation will be dealt with through the Planning Process so are the Project Team aware that the WBC Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2, which is submitted in evidence in the Local Plan Review, calls for a whole site (excluding the Green Space) Flood Risk Assessment & a Surface Water Drainage Strategy and that seems to be contra to the recommended Plot by Plot basis, so how will the Cumulative Impacts of these Developments be Assessed, please?"

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Item 13:

Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 23 May 2024.

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

A. Question submitted by Councillor Chris Read to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing:

"There are now a number of significant planning breaches within the Parish of Woolhampton in the Ward of Bucklebury, to the east of Woolhampton village along the A4. Woolhampton Parish Council and myself understand the Planning Enforcement team are looking into these issues and would like an update and an understanding of the next steps from the Council on this problem to ensure unapproved development and planning breaches are properly managed."

B. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Leader of the Council:

"In January, the Council announced on its website that Cllr Dillon would be "taking a sabbatical" from his role as Leader, and "The new arrangements will be in place until after the election has been held - which must be held by January 2025 - at which point they will be reviewed by the Executive group." Why have the arrangements been changed despite no general election having taken place?"

C. Question submitted by Councillor Dominic Boeck to the Portfolio Holder for Children and Family Services:

"In a recent survey for the Times, this council was ranked 181st out of 317 local authorities for Finance. What steps is the lead member for Education taking to make sure our schools receive the capital funding they need?"

D. Question submitted by Councillor David Marsh to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing:

"Will the executive member for housing ask the officers to draw up a register of all residential properties that have been left empty for 12 months or more? The aim would be to work with the owners, whether housing associations or private, to get these homes back into circulation to provide much-needed accommodation in the district."

E. Question submitted by Councillor Tony Vickers to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Regeneration:

"How can this Council help Benchmark remain in West Berkshire, where it was established with the help of Habitat's Sir Terence Conran in 1984 on his land near Kintbury, having since become a major part of our rural economy, gained an international reputation in design using sustainable timber, but whose lease ending in 2027 is not being renewed?"

F. Question submitted by Councillor Howard Woollaston to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"I am delighted to see £1.2 Million allocated in the Capital Budget for a new Library in Thatcham, an initiative commenced by me as Portfolio Holder for

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Culture in the previous administration . Could the current Policy holder provide an update on the proposed location and likely timescales?"

G. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"In the Liberal Democrat manifesto for the May 2023 elections, you promised to immediately return the Faraday Road pitch to bookable football space. How many hours of football have been played on the pitch since May 2023"

H. Question submitted by Councillor David Marsh to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"What progress has been made on reducing the speed limit on the A339 between Newbury College and the Swan roundabout from 50mph to 40mph, as agreed by the Speed Limit Review on February 29?"

I. Question submitted by Councillor Howard Woollaston to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"Given the issues with flooding and raw sewage in the roads in my ward in Lambourn for three months and I know other wards down the Lambourn Valley and the Pang Valley , what extra resources can be provided both human and financial to try to ameliorate the situation? The Officers are doing their level best but are hideously under resourced after what has been the wettest February and April since records began in in 1835 and I understand one of the 5th wettest Winters over the same period. This is an emergency!"

J. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"How much money has the Council spent on the Faraday Road pitch since May 2023?"

K. Question submitted by Councillor David Marsh to the Portfolio Holder for Children and Family Services:

"What plans does the council have to encourage schools across West Berkshire to participate in Walk to School Week from May 20-24?"

L. Question submitted by Councillor Howard Woollaston to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:

"Could we be told the total borrowings from the Public Works Loan Board to the Council during the 2023/4 Municipal Year , the interest rate payable , the term of the loan and what it is being used for in each instance?"

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M. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"In the Liberal Democrat manifesto for the May 2023 elections, you promised to introduce cheaper parking. How much cheaper is parking in West Berkshire than in May 2023?"

N. Question submitted by Councillor Howard Woollaston to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"I am getting various questions about the charging structure at our Leisure Centres and specifically at our pools, the lido and Cricket and the new dance Studio in Hungerford. I appreciate that the new Management Contract is designed to at least break even for the Council, but given that the lido and dance studio were fully funded and a major contribution made for the 3G artificial pitch at John O'Gaunts School in Hungerford under my time as Portfolio Holder for Leisure under the previous administration, sharp increase seem inappropriate at the end of the cost of living crisis even though inflation is now back under control, the economy is expanding and significant tax cuts have been made under this Conservative government."

O. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"What progress has been made in the investigation of a Low Emission Zone for Newbury, as promised in your May 2023 manifesto?"

P. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside:

"How many pets have been given away as prizes in West Berkshire since May 2023?"

Q. Question submitted by Councillor Ross Mackinnon to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"How quickly has the Council fixed dangerous potholes during the year since May 2023, and how does this compare to the year to May 2022?"

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