

Questions and Answers

Budget Council
Thursday 27 February 2025

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

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

Question (A)	Council Meeting on 27 February 2025
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(A) Question related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources by Paul Morgan:

“Appendix A of the Capital Programme for Financial year 2025 -26 shows a budget (total project cost) of £340,000 for the Playing Pitch Action Plan, but nothing beyond 2025-26.

Is £340,000 the total amount that is now allocated for the Playing Pitch Action Plan (and has the Newbury Sports Hub (PPS) now been amalgamated / included in this)?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources answered:

Thank you for your question.

There is a £340k project included within the 2025-26 capital programme for developing an action plan for playing pitch provision across the district. As projects are scoped and reviewed these will be added to the capital programme as part of the budget setting process for later financial years.

There is no separate Sports Hub budget allocated in the 2025-26 capital programme.

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:

“Does the £340k in the 2025/26 budget cover everything and was there nothing allocated for future years?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources answered:

That is correct.



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

Question (B)	Council Meeting on 27 February 2025
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(B) Question related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources by Lesley McEwen:

“Has an equality impact assessment been done regarding the possible suspension of the Mobile Library service?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources answered:

Thank you for your question and the answer is yes, and you can find this starting at page 353 of the Agenda pack.

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?”*

Lesley McEwen asked the following supplementary question:

“Have the mitigation measures for the loss of the Mobile Library service been fully costed and accounted for in the proposed Budget?”

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources answered:

Yes, I can confirm that they have.



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

Question (C)	Council Meeting on 27 February 2025
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(C) Question related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources by Alison May:

“The amount of funds set aside for key budgets having a contractual inflationary element suggests WBC's Waste PFI (Private Finance Initiative) contract continues to be the most significant, allocating £7.2 million (RPIX) for the period 2025/26 thru 2028/29. Can the Council advise of plans to explore opportunities to reduce the long-term financial burden associated with this PFI Waste Contract? (*WBC MTFS v3.0 dated 31/1/25, page 6, line ref 8b)”*

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources answered:

Dear Ms May. Thank you for your question.

The Council is constantly exploring opportunities to drive efficiencies in the delivery of services and the Waste Contract is no different. Significant savings have been delivered through the waste contract in recent years whilst delivering service improvements such as separate food waste and the inclusion of the kerb side collection of pots tubs and trays.

We recently consulted on our Waste Strategy which will be presented to Executive in April and sets out how we can further streamline our services over the remainder of the current contract.
