

Item 4:

Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 6 November 2025.

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 Simon Pike to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing:

"The Local Plan adopted by this Council on 10th June stated in Policy SP14 that it will lead the development of a Masterplan SPD for the North East Thatcham development, "which will be produced in collaboration with relevant town and parish councils, the community and other stakeholders", and that it intends "that the Masterplan SPD will be adopted within 12 months". A timetable presented at a meeting with Parish Councils on 24th July indicated that during this autumn there would be both public engagement events and then the drafting of the SPD. When will the Council start this collaboration with Parish Councils and the public engagement events?"

B. Question submitted by Ben Holden-Crowther to the Leader of the Council:

"West Berkshire Council holds the Silver Award under the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme and for publishing its Armed Forces Covenant Status Report and Action Plan earlier this year. That Action Plan commits the Council to "undertake an audit of the requirements of the Armed Forces Act 2021 and Covenant to understand the level of compliance and any improvements needed." Can the relevant Executive Member please confirm: 1) Whether that compliance audit has now been completed — and, if so, when the findings will be published; and 2) What key actions or improvements have been identified to ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory "due regard" duty to veterans and service families in housing, health and education decisions?"

C. Question submitted by Lee Allen to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"How many people have applied for an extra bin since the 3 week collection scheme was announced and how many have been approved?"

D. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:

"With bankruptcy staring the council in the face is it time to stop the wasteful spending on frivolous unpopular projects such as the 20mph limits, pedestrianisation and an extortionate loan to fund a dismal exercise in party politics planning an all weather pitch?"

E. Question submitted by Richard Garvie to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:

"In the past two and a half years I have warned repeatedly about poor project and financial management decisions by this Lib Dem administration. At Full Council you revealed that many proposed financial savings in your previous budgets had not been fully achieved. Is the dire financial plight of this Council directly linked to your failure to budget responsibly or execute even the most basic proposals?"

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F. Question submitted by Lee Allen to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"Has Fly tipping increased since the move from 2 to 3 week bin collections, and if so by how much?"

G. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Children and Family Services:

"Is it fair on the tax payer to spend over £5400 a day on just 2 children?"

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

"The financial illiteracy of this Lib Dem administration is quite staggering. A perfect example would be the proposed works at Faraday Road. Having not delivered the manifesto commitment of a community stadium "equal to or better than what was there before" funded mainly by grants, the Council are now rushing to do "something" before the next election if they are not successful in having the 2027 election postponed. They say it will generate a profit, but in figures they have released in the paper they didn't factor in the cost of a private company operating the pitch. What will Everyone Active charge to run the facility?"

I. Question submitted by Lee Allen to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways:

"Given the appalling state of rural infrastructure, especially the sewage systems around Lambourn, Eastbury, Chaddleworth, Great Shefford and other rural villages. Does this council have a plan to upgrade these areas which have not received a proper upgrade to infrastructure in decades and if so what is it?"

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

"Given the precarious financial position of the Council, why won't the Council put the Faraday Road facility out to tender to get best value and potential attract a community group to operate it while also generating grant funding?"

K. Question submitted by Richard Garvie to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:

"With the news that West Berkshire Council is potentially going to ask the Government for another bailout, is it not time to freeze all but essential spending including what BBC Berkshire describes as the "20mph Town" proposal for Thatcham? A pause whilst addressing the huge financial difficulties could then facilitate a proper consultation with residents, businesses and emergency services?"

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

"Given that money is incredibly tight for the Council, how much does it intend to spend on the Thatcham "20mph Town" project?"

M. Question submitted by Richard Garvie to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:

"Residents are upset that all this administration does is cut services and raise Council tax by the maximum allowed (5%). Lee Dillon promised a much different vision if people voted for the Lib Dems, but all we have is a pay more, get less service. How much would Council tax need to increase to allow it to operate sustainably?"