

COUNCIL

TUESDAY, 2ND MARCH, 2021

At 6.15 pm

in the

VIRTUAL MEETING - ONLINE ACCESS,

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

PART I

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
3.	<u>PUBLIC QUESTIONS</u> Written responses	3 - 6

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a) Alison Carpenter of Eton and Castle ward will ask the following question of Councillor Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot:

I am concerned that the tone of the funding section of the leaflet is unreasonably focussing on potential costs to residents rather than the potential benefits. Can it be amended to show competencies will be tailored towards the available budget e.g., there is no precedent, as highlighted in section 6.36 for WTC to take on responsibility for street lighting?

Written response from Councillor Cannon (Vice Chairman on behalf of the Community Governance Review Working Group) as per [Part 2 C9.2 of the council constitution](#): *Both the draft recommendations document and the consultation leaflet for the second stage consultation on the potential for a Windsor Town Council have been drafted by the cross-party Member Working Group following detailed consideration of the responses to the first round of consultation and research undertaken into establishing a town council.*

Whilst it is recognised that many respondents to the first round of consultation were supportive of the concept of a Windsor Town Council, some respondents raised concerns and questions about the potential costs of an additional layer of local government. The Working Group felt it was important to include in the draft recommendations a detailed explanation of how a town council is funded, the administrative costs of running a town council and the potential impact on the precept for services provided by a town council. Aside of the precept other opportunities for revenue raising are not guaranteed and therefore cannot be relied upon to meet the funding needs of the town council. Table 5 in the draft recommendations document lists the precept for a number of other town councils in Berkshire providing a realistic comparison of potential costs.

The aim of the leaflet is to raise awareness of the consultation and encourage people to respond, having considered all the information in the draft recommendations document which will be published on the website if approved by full Council. The leaflet includes a section on potential costs but also includes a section on the benefits of a town council therefore presents a balanced approach to the issue.

b) John Webb of Clewer and Dedworth East ward will ask the following question of Councillor Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot:

Why is panel proposing to set YR1 precept at £34.31 when staff/overhead costs plus the cost of allotments (the only service that can be mandated for WTC initially) adds up to far less than £470k raised by precept?

Surely precept MUST only be set based on known costs and any additional competencies can ONLY be negotiated by elected town councillors/RBWM?

Written response from Councillor Cannon (Vice Chairman on behalf of the Community Governance Review Working Group) as per [Part 2 C9.2 of the council constitution](#): *If a Windsor Town Council were to be established, elections would take place in May 2023. However the precept would need to be set as part of the overall council tax in February 2023. As no town councillors will have been elected*

at this point, it would be up to RBWM as the principal council, to set the precept for the first year of the town council's existence. The principal council is able to determine the services that will be provided by the town council in the first year and therefore determine the required precept. The assets and services transferred would include allotments as this is a statutory requirement, and other services to be determined. As detailed in the draft recommendations, further significant work would be required by the council to determine which other assets and services would be appropriate for transfer in the first year and these would not necessarily be those currently covered by the Special Area Expenses Account.

Once a Town Council had been established, RBWM would work with the elected town councillors to discuss the potential for any future service or asset transfer.

c) Claire Milne of Old Windsor ward will ask the following question of Councillor Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot:

Why is the wording formulated in a negative way to talk about increases rather than possibility of decreases of precept? There is no balance to this approach, as there are opportunities for other revenue raising which are not mentioned.

Written response from Councillor Cannon (Vice Chairman on behalf of the Community Governance Review Working Group) as per [Part 2 C9.2 of the council constitution](#): *Both the draft recommendations document and the consultation leaflet for the second stage consultation on the potential for a Windsor Town Council have been drafted by the cross-party Member Working Group following detailed consideration of the responses to the first round of consultation and research undertaken into establishing a town council.*

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d) John Holland of Eton & Castle ward will ask the following question of Councillor Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot:

Will the Windsor Town Council steering committee be consulted on the draft 2nd stage public consultation leaflet on the formation of a Windsor Town Council?

Written response from Councillor Cannon (Vice Chairman on behalf of the Community Governance Review Working Group) as per [Part 2 C9.2 of the council constitution](#): *RBWM, as the principal authority, is responsible for undertaking the Community Governance Review pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, including determining the appropriate methods of consultation. In July 2020 the full Council agreed to set up a cross-party Working Group to steer the process and present draft and final recommendations to the full Council; the draft recommendations are being presented at the meeting on 2 March 2021. The final decision on the form of consultation therefore rests with full Council and there is no requirement to consult on the methodology with any external group or individual. The 'Windsor Town Council steering group' is an independent group not connected to RBWM.*

If full Council approves the draft recommendation on 2 March 2021, the second stage of the consultation will begin immediately and run for a three month period. All interested parties, including the Windsor Town Council steering group, are encouraged to respond to the consultation in that period.

e) Richard Endacott of Clewer and Dedworth West ward will ask the following question of Councillor Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot:

There is a contradiction between information in section 6.31 of Appendix A and the leaflet which suggests the Town Council would be responsible for delivering of the following services: allotments and other services to be determined.

Can you confirm that services and assets taken on by a Town Council can only be determined once the councillors are elected?

Written response from Councillor Cannon (Vice Chairman on behalf of the Community Governance Review Working Group) as per [Part 2 C9.2 of the council constitution](#): *If a Windsor Town Council were to be established, elections would take place in May 2023. However the precept would need to be set as part of the overall council tax in February 2023. As no town councillors will have been elected at this point, it would be up to RBWM as the principal council, to set the precept for the first year of the town council's existence. The principal council is able to determine the services that will be provided by the town council in the first year and therefore determine the required precept. The assets and services transferred would include allotments as this is a statutory requirement, and other services to be determined. As detailed in the draft recommendations, further significant work would be required by the council to determine which other assets and services would be appropriate for transfer in the first year and these would not necessarily be those currently covered by the Special Area Expenses Account.*

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