

# QUESTIONS TO THE EXTRAORDINARY EXECUTIVE

## 11 SEPTEMBER 2020

### PUBLIC QUESTIONS RECEIVED AFTER DESPATCH OF THE AGENDA

#### EP1

Chris Johnson has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

#### Question

The agenda states on page 10 that the life expectancy of the sacks is now 3 to 5 years, and not the 5.5 years as previously stated, or in fact the 13.3 years as indicated by the financial weighting in the options appraisal. As this solution is supposed to last until 2026, there is clearly going to be an increased need to replace these sacks during this time. Why has this not been fully realised in the modelling?

#### EP2

Beth Rowland has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

#### Question

Please will you tell me how you consulted with representatives from protected characteristic groups for completion of the Equality Impact Assessment on the proposed 'hessian' recycling bags and what was the input from those groups?

#### EP3

Ian Shenton has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

#### Question

How do you know that you'll be getting value for money when procuring the sacks as the procurement process is being handled by Veolia?

#### EP4

Mike Smith has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

#### Question

I note from the agenda for this meeting that the purpose is to discuss and approve the expenditure of £288,000 on the purchase of close-able, waterproof recycling bags as a replacement of the currently used, open, hard plastic boxes. This is to mitigate against

wet paper waste. I also note this purchase would result in a commitment to an additional £235,000 annual costs.

I have 4 years' experience of these types of weighted, waste segregated bags as currently used by Cornwall County Council where the County average for recycling is just 25.2% according to their website in January 2020. Currently many of these plastic sacks are tatty, they do blow around in relatively modest winds despite being weighted and the lid fastenings are not particularly functional in keeping water out.

I note from the Enclosure One document that the appraisal has been entirely desk based and includes a highly subjective and complex model. For example, the first (and most influential) criteria in the model is "Impact on recycling rates" with a weighting of 40% – You have scored the plastic sacks at 10 but only 6 for shower caps and lids – in my mind, there is no difference as all three do exactly the same in keeping the rain out. The rest of the model is equally open to criticism.

There is a comment in the main document that Monmouthshire Council has trialled them for a year on page 10. Actually it is less than 9 months and your report does not say it is only on just 2000 households - therefore the comments on page 11 of your report about replacement cycles compared with Black Boxes is entirely invalid and misleading. And they have not been implemented across that whole County.

Please can you explain how you justify to the residents of Wokingham, not doing any practical trials with the residents before spending over a quarter of a Million pounds in capital with additional annual costs of £235,000 as the business case is not, to my mind, as a retired technical auditor, comprehensive, robust and compelling.

## **MEMBER QUESTIONS RECEIVED AFTER DESPATCH OF THE AGENDA**

### **EM1**

Gary Cowan has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

#### **Question**

Can you confirm that the Council's preferred option is a container, dimensions 40 x 40 x 60 cm with 350g rubber weights for stability?

### **EM2**

Sarah Kerr has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

#### **Question**

It has been highlighted that there are serious flaws in the options appraisal that could materially change the outcome of the report. Why is this same options appraisal still being used when it's clearly flawed?

**EM3**

Clive Jones has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

**Question**

In the options report it states that only one additional vehicle and crew is needed when the plastic hessian sack option is followed and that if the other two options were followed then two vehicles and crews would be needed. Where is the evidence for this? There is no supporting evidence in the options report.

**EM4**

Paul Fishwick has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

**Question**

Looking at Table 1 (pages 23 and 24) in the Wet Waste Options Appraisal (Appendix 1), could you tell me how these authorities collect paper and card, when they introduced this system and what impact it has had on recycling rates?

**EM5**

Prue Bray has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

**Question**

Monmouth County Council in their trial of plastic hessian sacks are separating the collection of paper card etc. and cans, plastic bottles, yoghurt pots etc. into different coloured sacks. Stopping co-mingling like this considerably reduces the chances of contamination. Given that one of the problems which the Council has had is the inability to separate plastic from wet paper in co-mingled recycling, it is surprising that there does not appear to be any consideration of stopping co-mingling in the options considered in Wokingham. Why was this not looked at?

**EM6**

Caroline Smith has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

**Question**

When reading the supporting documents into the rationale of buying the plastic sacks it states that they will result in a 6% improvement in recycling rates and an extra 1.5% as the bags are bigger. This is based on an assumption that people, having no room in their black boxes, are putting extra recycling into blue bags. Where is the evidence for this currently happening, which can be accurately determined as 1.5% not being recycled?