

Council – 18 October 2016

Member Questions (7)

1.	<p>Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> <p>The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base was only released on 10 Oct, just 2 days before the deadline for questions to Council. This is simply not good enough and makes it very difficult to have a proper debate on JCS transport matters next week. This late release of key transport strategy information has been a regular feature of the JCS throughout the last couple of years.</p> <p>We will also have the situation that when the JCS next goes out for public consultation in November, we will still be waiting for the release of the 2013 Central Severn Vale base year Saturn model and new 2031 forecast models (also due in "November" but it will not be until Jan/Feb 2017 that we will have a model based on the 2031 developments and the associated traffic mitigation). Without that critical transport information we will be unable to fully consider the transport impacts of the JCS and its supporting Transport Strategy and to determine if their respective policy requirements are likely to be satisfied.</p> <p>Why is it that the JCS Authorities seem incapable of managing the release of key transport planning information in sufficient time to inform the democratic process of review?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> <p>Please see also answer to public questions 6 -9 on transport modelling. It was agreed at the hearings that we would utilise the 2008 model to determine the mitigations necessary and consequently a transport strategy for the JCS to review the new sites as proposed in the main modifications. This has been completed and is what will be consulted upon.</p> <p>With reference to timing of the transport evidence clearly this is not ideal although is not entirely within the control of the JCS Authorities. The work being done via the County Council is not a straight forward technical analysis as both they and Highways England need to review the outputs for accuracy before anything is issued.</p>
2.	<p>Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan</p> <p>The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base when considering the North West Cheltenham development, stated that a long term solution would be to introduce a south bound access to J10 on the M5 to reduce the traffic impact on Prince Elizabeth Way. Up to now, I had always understood that increases to traffic from JCS development was thought to be insufficient to justify a south bound access to J10. Do the JCS Authorities now believe that situation has changed and that we may be able to generate a realistic business case to modify J10?</p>
	<p>Response from Cabinet Member</p> <p>Yes – the increased volume of traffic which has come about from the new proposed sites to meet both the recommended housing numbers as well as the employment sites does strengthen the case for the south bound access to the M5 J10. However it must be noted that this emerging strategy will be refined as and when the 2013 SATURN model is eventually available.</p>

3.	Question from Councillor to Cabinet Member, Councillor Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base appears to indicate that the North West Cheltenham development of some 4,300 houses will need significant public transport investment on Tewkesbury Road, more than on any other JCS site. What is the latest view of transport operators on this demanding financial requirement of £19M?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	This is really a question for transport operators. It is important to note that the purpose of the DS5 scenario is to provide us with enough information to confirm that the strategic allocations are deliverable and that there are transport measures that can be implemented to mitigate their impacts. Whilst the work has achieved this, the exact schemes to be chosen will be a matter for master planning further down the line. This means that the current financial requirements are subject to change once specific layouts and schemes are decided, beyond this high level work.
4.	Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base suggests that Do Something 5 may be the best mitigation solution to meet JCS traffic problems. However, it does not include any dwellings in Leckhampton. Yet the TBC planning permission for 377 houses on SD2 is still extant (although subject to a Judicial Review) and Inspector Ord has agreed "of the order of 200 houses" could be built on CBC land to the east of Farm Lane. So in the 'worst case' situation of 577 houses being built in Leckhampton, should not future modelling of the DS5 transport mitigation measures factor-in that worst case traffic pressure?
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>To be consistent the JCS transport modelling work has mirrored that as proposed in the Main Modifications in terms of strategic sites. Of note however, is that the 'smaller sites growth' within the JCS (for the local plans to further define) is also included but as a background traffic demand. Therefore in this case for Cheltenham this would include the development as proposed at Leckhampton, albeit not as a specific site.</p> <p>The Cheltenham local plan work however would then be the plan and the time to better review any specific local need.</p>
5.	Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	The JCS Transport Strategy Evidence Base at Fig 71 on page 88 lists the potential funding sources of the £750M + required for the preferred DS5 solution. How realistic is this provisional breakdown? Please explain what level of confidence you have in each of the potential funding sources.
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>This provisional breakdown is a 'first level' calculation and therefore is merely guidance only. The actual number can only be better refined when:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 2013 SATURN model is available and 2. Detailed schemes are put forward for the final list of mitigations. <p>To answer the question of potential funding sources, there is growing confidence in these, and other, sources of funding to support the growth. Naturally substantial further work needs to be completed before funding could be confirmed, but at this stage, there is sufficient confidence to at least pursue these sources further.</p>

6.	Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>Para 2.6 on page 11 of the Main Modifications Report to Council, notes that the Farm Lane site of 377 dwellings can be accorded to Cheltenham's supply figures "should TBC and CBC agree." I thought they had agreed and that we were simply waiting for the legal paperwork to be signed? Also, why is this paperwork taking so long to conclude, given that Inspector Ord made her recommendations on apportionment of urban extensions/Duty to Cooperate in May/June, some 5 months ago? Does the 10,996 housing supply figures for Cheltenham on pg 43 of the Report include the 377 figure?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The statement of agreement between Tewkesbury and Cheltenham according the 377 dwellings to Cheltenham's supply is still being drawn up, but there is no known disagreement between the parties. Because these are technical and precise legal documents they can take some time to draw up. Yes the housing supply figure for Cheltenham shown includes this permission.</p>
7.	Question from Councillor Chris Nelson to the Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan
	<p>I wish to be assured that CBC officers are not planning to include in the Cheltenham Plan significantly more than 200 dwellings on the Leckhampton site east of Farm Lane, nor intending to include more than 200 dwellings, in line with Inspector Ord's JCS recommendations for an indicative figure of 200?</p>
	Response from Cabinet Member
	<p>The Inspector's Interim Report states that: (para 123 and 124)</p> <p>"Overall, in my judgement, a limited amount of development could be supported towards the north of the site where public transport is more accessible, subject to the avoidance of land of high landscape and visual sensitivity. Therefore, for reasons of landscape/visual amenity and highway impacts, I recommend that the Cheltenham part of the site be allocated for a modest level of built development in the order of 200 dwellings.</p> <p>This remaining modest level of housing would not classify as an urban extension and, therefore, it would be more appropriate to allocate the site in the emerging Cheltenham Local Plan rather than in the JCS. It is, therefore, my recommendation that the Leckhampton urban extension be removed in its entirety from the JCS."</p> <p>In light of the interim report the Leckhampton strategic allocation has been removed from the JCS and is now being considered within the Cheltenham Plan, local allocation in that document (which is less than 450 dwellings). Because the work on capacity for the landscape areas identified as having potential for development has not yet been undertaken (and will be through the Cheltenham Plan) it would be wrong to pre-judge the specific number of dwellings that could be sustainability accommodated, other than to say it would not be a site of strategic scale in JCS terms. Further work on the capacity of the remaining parts of the Leckhampton site, as well as local green space will be undertaken through the Cheltenham Plan.</p>