

| Devolving Services to Parishes Project  |               |                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| Questions Received from Parish Councils |               |                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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|                                         | Date Received | Parish                                                 | Question                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 1                                       | 29/05/24      | Haydon Wick<br>pp. other<br>parishes<br>(Laura Cutter) | Whilst SBC is still in the process of pricing up work for the transfer of services over to parishes, can it confirm which year is it working towards for completion ?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | The council has committed to devolve services as part of the budget setting process for 24/25, whilst no actual date has been confirmed SBC would like to finalise this as soon as possible.                                                                                                                     |
| 2                                       | 29/05/24      | Haydon Wick<br>pp. other<br>parishes<br>(Laura Cutter) | To confirm that Wroughton Parish Council will be looking to set its budget (as will others) again in October / November 2024 and this now only leaves 4 - 5 clear months for any internal consultation work along with public consultation with residents, to help decide on whether or not Wroughton wants to take on any more for the next financial year of 2025/2026.                              | This is noted, as mentioned above the council has committed to devolve services as part of the budget setting process for 24/25, whilst no actual date has been confirmed SBC would like to finalise this as soon as possible. SBC would like to understand what additional information is needed to assist you. |
| 3                                       | 29/05/24      | Haydon Wick<br>pp. other<br>parishes<br>(Laura Cutter) | To enable the parish council make informed decisions it needs to know exact costs involved so that we can work this into the existing budget and how much this costs the tax payer. Once a conclusion has then been met it then requires the council's approval before entering negotiations with SBC with formal direction. 4-5 months is not manageable when we still don't have the details needed. | Yes SBC is able to provide a breakdown of costs (Resource(staffing)) and running costs (fleet, equipment etc) by Town Centre and grounds maintenance - <b>This information will follow.</b>                                                                                                                      |

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| 4 | 29/05/24 | Haydon Wick<br>pp. other<br>parishes<br>(Laura Cutter) | As we understand currently SBC are retaining services "in house" by financing them for the current financial year, the suggested cost to run the services was Est £900K per year and that this option would only be available for this current year. If this is correct what is SBC planning for April 2025 onwards into the next financial year? Is the plan to simply cease services altogether with no forward plan or will the "Transfer discussions" continue as they are until resolved regardless of time. | <p>The council set its budget for 24/25, this included a savings proposal to devolve services, - This proposal is based on devolving services to the Parishes related to grounds maintenance with the retention of any statutory posts in the Borough Council. Proposed activity that would move include areas such as: Gateways, Verges, Roundabouts, closed cemeteries etc. (but excluding trees management), town centre street cleaning (excluding environmental team) and public toilets. Assumed start date 1st October 2024 with savings split across 2 years (this equated to £900k (split £450k 24/25 and a further £450k 25/26) As per Appendix 4 (page 8) of the budget report which went before cabinet 7th February 2024<br/> <a href="https://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s135342/Appendix%204%20-%20Detailed%20Budget%20Proposals%202024-25.pdf">https://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s135342/Appendix%204%20-%20Detailed%20Budget%20Proposals%202024-25.pdf</a> .</p> <p>The council is keen to conclude the arrangements and necessary agreements in place as soon as possible.</p> |
| 5 | 29/05/24 | Haydon Wick<br>pp. other<br>parishes<br>(Laura Cutter) | Currently it is still impossible for parish councils to agree on taking over assets, services or other ie library (customer service) activities in the near future without the information being presented to us in a timely manner.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>Please note from a grounds maintenance and town centre perspective SBC are not expecting the Parishes to take over the Assets it's to maintain them, SBC have provided the proposed transfer of services document which provides details of the activity by category, as per the meeting on 31/05/24 SBC agreed to provide the activity by parish area where possible and additional information regarding the locations of grounds maintenance sites.</p> <p>The updated details are provided separately.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 6 | 29/05/24 | Haydon Wick<br>pp. other<br>parishes<br>(Laura Cutter) | I can't see any street sweeping street sign cleaning etc in there? Can you check if it is missed or they are no longer being transferred.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Street sweeping in a highway function and is not in scope with the exception of the small pavement sweeper used by the town centre cleansing team. Currently SBC do not undertake street sign cleaning.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 7 | 29/05/24 | Wroughton<br>(Emma<br>Freemantle)                      | <p><b><u>Rural Routes</u></b></p> <p>Verges – 1 visit per year    Hedges I visit every 3 years ?</p> <p>Red Barn to Wroughton</p> <p>Salthrop to M4 Junction ( we believe it should be just to the new roundabout ?)</p> <p>Elcombe to Wroughton Mill Lane</p> <p>Wharf Road</p> <p>Burderop to Wroughton</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                     | A list of the parishes this work is in can be provided. Barbury Castle is a strategic Country Park and is out of scope.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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|    |          |                             | Overtown Hill                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                           |
|    |          |                             | We have a query about Barbury Castle and Burderop downs, we thought that the country parks were not included in the TOS.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 8  | 29/05/24 | Wroughton (Emma Freemantle) | <u><b>Cemeteries</b></u><br>Wroughton Closed Churchyard – Once a year grass cut plus clear up.<br><b>WPC</b> consider that the maintenance of the closed churchyard is a statutory obligation of the Unitary Authority and the maintenance should <b>NOT</b> be a maintenance of decline which once a year cut is. The maintenance by SBC should be further discussed to ensure the churchyard does not go into decline.<br><b>WPC</b> also need guarantee that the trees will always stay with SBC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Agree this needs further discussion<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Trees will always remain with SBC                                                              |
| 9  | 29/04/24 | Wroughton (Emma Freemantle) | <u><b>HRA – Housing Maintenance</b></u><br>There are 33 HRA properties listed, and 177 GMS properties.<br><b>WPC</b> need to know – What is a HRA property and What are GMS properties and the description of work to each site including a Map showing areas to be maintained ?<br>a) We think that Markham Place and Hastings Court fall in to one of the categories, but need to know the full list of other properties in Wroughton, ie is Coronation road, Overtown, and St Andrews Close part of one of the maintained categories ?<br>b) Frequency and specification of the work carried out at each property in Wroughton.<br>c) We understand that the residents of some properties pay SBC through their rent for this service, can you confirm that this portion of the payment will be paid to <b>WPC</b> . | We can provide a list of properties and the frequencies - See attached EPGD Communal Gardens Maintenance Document - (further information regarding frequencies to follow) |
| 10 | 29/05/24 | Wroughton (Emma Freemantle) | <u><b>Additional Services</b></u><br>Weed Control pavement only - WPC need a map showing the areas that are currently sprayed and when this is carried out.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | We do not have a map showing the locations of weed treatment. We treat all streets in Swindon with the exception of back alleys                                           |

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|    |          |                             | Funded Property Maintenance ( corp estate) - a list of properties relating to WPC.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Reservoirs are located at Stanton Park, Coate Water and Peatmoor. The Grounds maintenance team currently carry out vegetation maintenance.<br><br>There are ponds that are maintained by grounds maintenance near to the old Honda site. |
|    |          |                             | Reservoir vegetation management ( we thought that the Overtown reservoir in Wroughton is maintained by Thames Water ?)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|    |          |                             | Pond Management, (similarly the Dewpond at Badgers Brook is managed by Thames Water ?)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 11 | 29/05/24 | Wroughton (Emma Freemantle) | <b>Call Out Services</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Noted thank you, I would welcome a wider conversation regarding this                                                                                                                                                                     |
|    |          |                             | Fly Tipping removal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|    |          |                             | <b>WPC</b> already collect and dispose of fly tipping at Waterside except for very large items.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|    |          |                             | <b>WPC</b> need clarification about how the collection of such items will continue on the future.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|    |          |                             | Similarly with Graffiti and dead animals                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 12 | 30/05/24 | Haydon Wick                 | What are HRA's and GMS's? Where are they? What Parish has what number? Chiseldon does have "Council properties". How do we know what is or isn't included in this?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | We can provide a list of properties and the frequencies - See attached EPGD Communal Gardens Maintenance Document - (further information regarding frequencies to follow)                                                                |
|    |          |                             | That would be a massive task for us to undertake. We just have 2 council staff and a part-time handyman for small jobs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 13 | 07/06/24 | West Swindon                | <p>The emerging indications are that SBC will cease to provide certain services regardless of an agreement from Parish Council.</p> <p>What is the communication strategy planned for the cessation of services ?</p> <p>Will parishes eg Swindon Local Council's Forum have the opportunity to comment on it ?</p> <p>I would advocate that there should be a clear communication distinction between SBC's decision to cease to provide and a decision from the Parish to take on some degree of service delivery. The Parish Council should have full control of its position, at what point in time it makes the decision and what level of responsibility it chooses and SBC should not infer that it is for the Parish to assume responsibility for delivery.</p> | The council has committed to devolve services as part of the budget setting process for 24/25 and agree a joint clear communication strategy is needed.                                                                                  |

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| 14 | 07/06/24 | West Swindon | West PC will seek clarity that for as long as SBC is the landowner that it is fully and solely for rain water issues on its land eg surface water run off, natural water flow, ditches, culverts etc and any related liabilities to neighbouring properties. Action or lack of action by the Parish Council is distinct from action the landowner should take on its own land                                                                                                                                                | SBC will continue to be the landowner and the associated responsibilities of the landowner will be retained unless otherwise prescribed within the agreement.                                                                      |
| 15 | 07/06/24 | West Swindon | With the cessation of services proposed, it would be helpful to start to see emerging clarity on SBC being willing to accept the consequences of the decisions it has taken. Eg large waste accumulations on the public highway/public open space. A statement from Legal setting out the statutory obligations that it will uphold might suffice - The Parish Council is not the Highways Authority and is not the landowner - until that changes it would seem impossible to disconnect itself from statutory obligations. | The council has committed to devolve services as part of the budget setting process for 24/25 not cease, should SBC take a decision to cease a service it will do so with the fully understanding of its statutory responsibility. |
| 16 | 07/06/24 | West Swindon | I would like to highlight that the cessation of its service provision does not empower SBC to set standards for the Parish Council for those said services - if you choose to end the provision that should be the end of your involvement or influence over what Parishes choose to do next. It seems logical that future deeds between the landowner and the Parish Council will be more about a framework for permission to deliver certain activities rather than setting standards and parameters.                      | The council has committed to devolve services as part of the budget setting process for 24/25 not cease, and the purpose of the deeds is to agree levels of service.                                                               |