

**Cabinet – June 2024
Members' Questions**

<p>1. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report</p> <p>Noting the 2023/2024 revenue budget underspend of £10.045 million, inclusive of £4.410 million arising from additional electricity income generated by the Energy from Waste (EfW) facility, and the fact that all of that income has been released to fund other projects - now that the draft guidance regarding the inclusion of EfW facilities in the Emissions Trading Scheme has been published (May 2024) for consultation, should the Council not consider reserving an appropriate amount to smooth the transition into that Scheme? While some aspects of the methodology are still under discussion, it would seem prudent, would it not, to consider some money put aside at this point, especially with an underspend available due to the current high price of electricity?</p>	<p>There is currently not full clarity on how the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) will impact Energy from Waste facilities. Therefore, there is no definite liability on which to make a commitment against reserves. If it transpires that the Council has a liability under the ETS then this will be funded from future surpluses generated at Javelin Park or from the Strategic Waste Reserve.</p> <p>The Strategic Waste Reserve was set up as a smoothing Reserve for the EfW facility and therefore an appropriate reserve already exists. I am comfortable that this reserve is at the appropriate level given the current information we have.</p>
<p>2. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report</p> <p>Noting that the former Stroud Library building is being prepared for disposal, when will the public engagement event mentioned take place? Can you confirm that community groups will have adequate notice and support in relation to bidding for future use of this building, should they wish to? Is a lease being considered as well as an outright sale?</p>	<p>The public engagement event will take place during July on a date to be confirmed. We will be giving all bidders 6 months to formulate their submissions in line with Community Right to Bid provisions (part of the Localism Act 2011) given the interest in the premises despite the building not currently being listed as an Asset of Community Value in accordance with this legislation.</p> <p>Our intention remains to sell the property.</p>

3. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner	Respondent's name: Cllr Lynden Stowe
<p>Agenda Item 5: Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report</p> <p>Noting that audit activity has identified gaps in the council's central oversight of Contract Management activity (SR1.4), please can you summarise the plans that have been made to strengthen that oversight, and for how long do you expect the heightened corporate risk to exist here?</p>	<p>A cross-directorate, senior officer level board has been established, chaired by the Director of Policy, Performance & Governance that will drive a range of improvements in Contract Management activity.</p> <p>The main elements of that activity will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve oversight and reporting of Contract performance, with an initial focus on the council's highest value contracts. • Prepare for the requirements of the new Procurement Act. • Ensure a consistent understanding of respective roles and responsibilities between commissioners, contract managers and the central procurement team. • Develop a skills framework and strategy for commissioners, contract managers and procurement professionals. • Oversee the implementation of the requirements arising from the Procurement Act 2023 – details of which are still emerging from central government. • Review and improving the Council's Procurement Pipeline to give better collective oversight of procurement projects coming down the track and manage capacity accordingly. <p>Alongside this, the council is also implementing its new SAP system which will go live by the end of March 2025. This will integrate procurement and contract management into a single integrated system with finance and HR information and will give us much better and more complete oversight. While we are not waiting for the new system to be in place to begin making improvements, that will be the point at which we expect to see a step-change, and I would hope that by that point we can reduce the risk rating accordingly. With so much uncertainty surrounding the Procurement Act, it would be unwise to commit to reducing it any sooner.</p>

<p>4. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Agenda Item 5: Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report</p> <p>I assume that the reported carbon emissions assessed under SR12.1 include only Scope 1 and 2 emissions. What progress has been made in considering how to report the Council's Scope 3 emissions?</p>	<p>The assumption on Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions is correct.</p> <p>The council has started to implement a programme of work to gain greater clarity with regards to its Scope 3 emissions. It is a significant piece of work with multiple factors to consider and our ambition is to have this completed by the end of this financial year.</p>
<p>5. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Agenda Item 10: Solar PV Installations using Salix Finance Loan</p> <p>Pleased to see the solar PV provision for GCC buildings as set out in the report. When is the parallel implementation of the £2m programme for maintained schools expected to commence?</p>	<p>The school pilot projects are nearing completion, and we are working on procurement arrangements for the remainder of the programme.</p>
<p>6. Questioner's name: Cllr Chloe Turner</p>	<p>Respondent's name: Cllr David Gray</p>
<p>Agenda Item 10: Solar PV Installations using Salix Finance Loan</p> <p>With this large number of PV panels being procured, it will be particularly important that ethical choices are made around the procurement. Will the Council be considering purchasing EU made (rather than just assembled) panels, so as to have maximum assurance around factors including the carbon footprint, pollution from manufacture, and the possibility of forced labour and conflict minerals?</p>	<p>These matters will be considered when developing specifications for bidders to install solar panels on both corporate buildings and schools during the next phase of the programme.</p>