

Appendix 2: Additional Feedback

Having witnessed first had the deplorable and manipulated behaviour of WC under Jane Scott, I am most disappointed that the new incumbent, Mr Whitehead, appears to be following the same footsteps from an integrity and due process perspective. This is demonstrated and evidenced so far with his HIF bid - and his communications around this. Dreadful. HIF is not a relief road / ring road / traffic alleviation scheme - which is being spun here, and WC need to be 100% clear on what HIF is within all of their communication to the public on this, and on what grounds a HIF application is considered and granted. It's for house building - and that's 100% clear in the Government documents. When it comes to housing, WC have an integrity issue, its that's simple due to previous shenanigans. The upside as discussed, is at a time when politicians and political leadership is firmly in the gutter, with the public are rightly cynical and utterly fed up with spin and lies, a straight forward honest and open approach to delivering plans and polices, following correct due process and procedures will be welcomed, even it's not the desired outcome for all, which is never will be. This will support public engagement and help to start turn around the apathy created by the current style of manipulative an insincere leadership and decision making. Councils, including Local Councils, are simply charged with delivering the plans and best outcomes by following their own correct and robust procedures, alongside even handedness & common sense. The handling of HIF bid from WC and Chippenham Town council, who's leader took the HIF in to close session with a selected few, and then blamed WC I noted, amplifies what poor / distasteful looks like. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/625528/DCLG_Introduction_to_Housing_Infrastructure_WEB.pdf

I ask that my dissatisfaction is registered in regards the clear fact that the public engagement has only in fact started now (Saturday 23rd November), after the HIF bid was confirmed. This appears at total odd's to claims made by WC & CTC prior to the announcement of the HIF bid being approved. This is also echoed by MP James Gray's article in the Gazette & Herald on 17th October. None of the public are aware of anything that would credibly count as 'public consultation / engagement'; in support of the HIF submission for the proposed development of land east of Chippenham, which will see c7,500 homes built, as this is what underpins the WC's HIF £75m bid. It has / is being spun, primarily as a traffic congestion alleviation ring road for the residents of Chippenham! It's vital people are properly informed so can then make based democratic considerations and decisions. This is the primary and core function of an elected Councils - be that County or Town. If Councils had public surveys that produce 'Trusted'; star ratings, similar to Trip Adviser /Checkatrade, where do you think WC and CTC would rank? I'd suggest probably 4th quartile at best on housing development and road schemes due to recent poor behaviours. It's a shame, and a missed opportunity as discussed on Saturday - but not that difficult to fix.

My first complaint concerns Cllr Philip Whitehead's comment: "The money from HIF will enable us to build a road to bring long-overdue relief from Chippenham's severe traffic congestion problems." This is not a factual statement - building new roads only ever increases the number of cars in the long-run. Also, a 'relief road' within the boundaries of Chippenham would mean that all the noxious fumes would remain within the town. That should be the real issue here, not the amount of traffic. 40,000 people die each year from traffic pollution and you want to build MORE roads and increase car use? Putting the car first is such backward and unhelpful thinking in this day and age. My second complaint concerns Cllr Whitehead's comment: "It also provides development in a consistent, strategic way and support the potential for long-term, sustainable growth for the town". In what world is building new roads sustainable? Growth, in a business-as-usual way, is never going to be sustainable - the way we are living in general is not sustainable. We are decimating our wildlife and countryside: that same natural world which supports human lie. Sustainable means using natural resources at a steady level; a level not likely to damage the environment. This development is the polar opposite of that. My third complaint is that even supposing a relief road did help the traffic situation in Chippenham (which it won't), don't the Council realise those 7,500 new homes proposed as part of this development (not to mention 'new commercial space') will bring in potentially 10,000-15,000 cars to the town (given that most households have at least one car, but most have two)? How is that going to relieve "Chippenham's severe traffic congestion problems." I'd also like to ask: - what improvements to public transport and cycle links will be made within this proposal? This is the only way to reduce traffic problems. Also, - given that WCC and CTC have both acknowledged/declared climate emergencies (once again, a new road does not fit in with this), I would assume that all of these new 7,500 homes are going to be carbon neutral and if not, why not? On this page: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/articles/bid-for-75m-improvements-in-chippenham-put-forward-to-government> it states that "The feedback from recent public consultation events held in Chippenham...". What 'recent public consultation events'? It might be that I missed something, but I don't remember being asked what I thought. This whole scheme is madness and I appalled that the Council appear to be doing much of this behind closed doors and not fully engaging or listening to local residents views. It seems they feel they can do whatever they like and those who voted for them to look after our interests, are not listening to us now.