

Item 8 Questions to the Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holders

Councillor Davison question for Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property

It's good to see that the council is looking to improve the EPC ratings of our tenants' homes and that in February the Executive approved a climate emergency report which included:

2.11 The Executive agrees that the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan be reviewed and brought to the Executive for approval in March 2020 to include provision of circa £18m over the period up to 2030 to ensure all the Council's housing stock has a minimum energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C and for any properties that cannot be brought up to EPC C rating, for either technical reasons or at an acceptable cost, to be subject to an options appraisal through the Council's Asset Management Strategy.

Of course it was not possible for this to happen in March, so can you update members on this aspect of the HRA business plan.

Response from Councillor Matecki

Officers are in the process of commissioning specialist consultants to survey property archetypes, and make recommendations to improve the EPC rating of the existing housing stock to a minimum of EPC C to meet current requirements.

The work is being separated into various categories relating to the current EPC levels as those properties which are rated E, F and G will require a different approach to those with EPC levels of D, C or above.

We are also seeking recommendations for improving all property above EPC C as a separate piece of work to meet the Council's climate emergency agenda.

When recommendations and costings are available, we will be in a clearer position to understand the level of work required. We are also preparing to bid for any opportunities that may arise linked to this area of work.

Question from Councillor R Dickson to the Leader

will you be able to give an update about what form the input has taken that has been sought this summer from all residents and businesses in South Warwickshire about the plans for a fresh look at local government in the area and what progress has been made in collecting this input?

Response from the Leader Councillor Day

Alongside the work commissioned on behalf of all Borough and District Councils in the County on the options for local government going forward, work is already underway on surveys of residents, businesses and parish and town councils. This work will then feed into the reports for Councillors to consider on the options for local government in Warwickshire. Whilst we all will have preferences, I am sure, for what we think is the best way we all need to keep an open mind with our focus being on the best way forward for the local community. That is why the research that is being commissioned is important. It should not be left to Councillors alone to have their say

Question from Councillor Nicholls to Portfolio Holder for Environment

The District's Climate Emergency Action Plan established that 33% of the 1m tonnes of The emitted Carbon Dioxide in the geographic District is attributable to transport. We will not meet our target of getting as close to zero carbon in the District by 2030 without reducing significantly or eliminating this source of carbon dioxide. Warwickshire County Council is undertaking a review of its Local Transport Plan 2011 -26. This is now particularly urgent and timely in the light of the government's Gear Change strategy which includes an aspiration that 50% of all journeys in towns and cities are cycled or walked by 2030. Yet I sense a worrying lack of commitment from WCC to address these expectations with vigour or ambition. Recent interviews on BBC CWR underline that point. Nor does it seem to want to engage seriously in the sustainable transport review that we as a Council have called for and written to our colleagues in WCC about. Can the Portfolio Holder please tell us what action is being taken to bring WCC to the table to address these pressing matters; and how he and they intend to engage more widely with the public and voluntary groups that can support the Councils in their endeavours. Finally, would he consider whether we as a Council should set a modal shift target for transport in the District similar to the national target? It would be simple to communicate and become the benchmark by which investment and policies are judged. How to achieve such a target could also be a topic at the proposed Citizens' Assembly given its importance in our response to the Climate Emergency.

Question from Councillor Tangri to to Portfolio Holder for Environment

Although the Council's Fuel Poverty Strategy has been delayed several times, can you update the council on the work done so far. Does the council intend to apply for the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme? See https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/906545/local-authority-delivery-scheme-guidance.pdf Approximately how many households in the district may be eligible i.e. household income under £30,000 per year living in homes rated EPC E, F or G?