

COUNCIL 16 Oct 2024

Item 11 – Questions: Written Responses

3 Cllr T Dean

Written Response

Informal officer dialogue was undertaken around the potential for cross boundary sharing of HWRC sites however it became clear that the operational, contractual and practical constraints associated and therefore viability of delivering such an arrangement was very unlikely.

The reasons for not moving forward with these type of cross border arrangements were stated in the report taken to the recent meeting of Environment and Communities Committee, [HWRC Review Final Recommendations](#), see paragraph 55.

As referenced at the same Committee meeting there is no long term direct correlation between the number of recorded fly tipping incidents and the proximity of a nearby HWRC. Fly tipping incident levels will continue to be monitored, reported and dealt with in the established way, to understand the immediate and long term effects of these now confirmed closures.

It is considered by officers that even of a cross border HWRC service arrangement could have been established the additional administration due to the ongoing need to manage multiple services under different contracts, would have substantially or wholly negated any real cost savings for the waste disposal authorities involved.

6 Cllr S Gardiner

Written Response

A Stage 3 Safety Audit of the new junction at Canute will take place 3 months after the completion of the works. Any issues raised by this independent audit will need to be addressed by the Contractor before the works can be signed off by the Highway team. If there are suggestions that the audit should focus on, then the team will ensure these are examined within the audit.

7 Cllr P Redstone

Written Response

As part of the new schemes being delivered in Crewe, the team has secured through the MTFS some additional maintenance funding to ensure they are kept to a good standard. It will be necessary in future years to ensure that this additional funding is retained into the future, subject to competing budget pressures.

Grant funding from government is however always insufficient to maintain the council's existing highway assets and liabilities. This necessitates prioritising maintenance in line with the council's Asset Management Policy and Strategy.

Wherever possible, officers seek to ensure that new asset liabilities are accompanied by funding for the whole life of the asset.

10 Cllr L Buchanan

Written Response

In addition to the targeted funding for working age adults living in poverty that will be allocated from the household support fund, the Council are:

1. Investment into the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector to support local residents. The Council will be launching a further round of cost-of-living grants on the 4th November. They will be advertised here w/c 28th October:
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/connected-communities/community_funds_and_grants/community-grants.aspx
2. The Council have launched the **Warm Places** scheme again this year for the 3rd year running, where we are working with local businesses and voluntary sector organisations to use local venues to heat the person not the home.
<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/education-employment-and-money/money-matters/warm-places-keeping-cheshire-east-warm.aspx>
3. The Council to continue to **promote services** that have been funded directly by the Council as well as promoting other provision to help mitigate the implication the cost-of-living crisis has on our most vulnerable residents via our cost of living webpages where all local and national support is regularly updated: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/education-employment-and-money/money-matters/cost-of-living.aspx>

12 Cllr R Morris

Written Response from Head of Highways

No. A chicane is a constructed feature on the highway, so would not be stored. If this does not answer the question, please clarify further and we can investigate and respond.

14 Cllr A Burton

Written Response from Head of Strategic Transport and Parking

At the Council meeting, Councillor Crane responded that work was ongoing to expand the Flexi link and Go-Too services as a direct response to D&G withdrawing their Nantwich services.

Further to this, I can confirm that bus users in the areas of Nantwich, Audlem, Wrenbury and Bunbury have been affected by D&G's decision to hand back the contract to operate services 70 / 71 / 72 / 73, collectively known as the Nantwich Rural services.

These services provided local bus connections to a number of our communities in the south west of the borough, enabling local residents to make a range of journeys including home-to-school travel and shopping trips.

Whilst these services are undoubtedly important for rural connectivity, they were used relatively lightly by local people – with average daily patronage in July of circa 25 passengers per route. This included a significant number of home-to-school travel journeys, which the Council has already reprovisioned by letting a school service contract with Lakeside Coaches. We are also marketing spare seats for any pupils who are not entitled for free home-to-school travel.

For other users, there are a couple of options through both Go-Too and Flexilink demand-responsive transport services. Both are operated by ANSA on behalf of the Council. Whilst they are not conventional bus services, with a requirement to pre-book travel, they can provide essential connections for residents who have no alternative transport available. We have agreed to continue funding Go-Too, beyond the end of the Defra Rural Mobility pilot project in October 2024, to ensure continuity of service until our re-tendering of local bus services is complete. I would urge local residents to consider trying these services to meet their essential travel needs. The booking clerks at ANSA will endeavour to assist residents, or people acting on their behalf, to identify bookings that can meet their needs.

The Council is inviting tenders to a new set of contracts for supported local bus services, with tender returns expected by the end of November. Contracts will be awarded to commence from the 1st April 2025. We anticipate there may be significant cost inflation and contract awards will be prioritised according to the assessment framework approved by Highways Committee in November 2023. Additionally, the operation of demand-responsive transport services will be improved in accordance with the recommendations agreed at Highways Committee in September 2024.

Unfortunately, it is not practical to prioritise a contract award for this particular group of services in isolation of the other contracts let by the Council.