



Public Document Pack

Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

SUPPLEMENTARY PACK

Council

Date: Tuesday, 6th December, 2022
Time: 7.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber - Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Chair: Councillor H Asker
Members: Councillors A Armstrong, G Bagnall, S Barker, M Caton, A Coote, C Criscione, A Dean, G Driscoll (Vice-Chair), D Eke, J Emanuel, J Evans, P Fairhurst, M Foley, R Freeman, N Gregory, N Hargreaves, V Isham, R Jones, A Khan, P Lavelle, G LeCount, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light, J Lodge, J Loughlin, S Luck, S Merifield, E Oliver, R Pavitt, L Pepper, N Reeve, G Sell, G Smith, M Sutton, M Tayler and J De Vries

ITEMS WITH SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION PART 1

Open to Public and Press

5 Questions to the Leader, Members of the Executive and Committee Chairs (up to 30 minutes) 3 - 14

To receive questions from members for the Executive and committee chairs.

- Response to written questions of clarification (Questions 12 and 13).



Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

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Uttlesford District Council 6 December 2022

Written response to clarification questions (Questions 12 & 13) following 6 December 2022 meeting

12. Original question: Councillor Caton to Councillor Pepper – Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues; Equalities:

“Given the Senior Management Team is forecasting a black hole in the Council’s future financial strategy requiring £5m cuts to the budget over the next five years because of the current administration’s management of the council’s finances, can you tell the Council what your plans are to safeguard the vital Climate Change Action Plan and Equalities activities that you are responsible for as portfolio holder?”

Response from the Leader and Councillor Pepper:

“This question sits alongside others that are clearly a coordinated slew of questions. Not only do they contain a false premise, but a premise risking disproportionately worrying staff and residents alike.

Members were briefed for two hours on how the national and international economic situation is affecting the council’s finances – only two days prior to submitting the questions. It appears that the motivation of the questioners was not to listen to what is happening and how to go forward- but how they can USE this to their advantage. Councillor Hargreaves and the rest of the Cabinet have found those questioners consistently absent in constructive collaborative discussions on the budget, instead of engaging in constructively addressing the economic challenge facing every single council in the county, including for example our neighbours in South Cambridgeshire and Chelmsford. At least two councils have written to the Government stating that unless additional support is provided, they will shortly run out of money. A recent survey suggested that one sixth of all English councils are forecasting that they will use all their available reserves to set their 2023/24 budgets.

Uttlesford is not in this position. We are not in this position because of our effective financial management.

Without our highly successful commercial portfolio the forecasted shortfall would be closer to £9 million, which would be comparable with the challenges faced by many other councils.

In April 2020 when the rest of us were working very hard setting up support arrangements in our communities at the height of the first covid wave there was a long copy-to-all attack letter on the commercial investments by the Lib Dems and Green Councillors and said ‘no further investments should be made’ and gave the impression that they would have nothing to do with them. In four years, those

investments have turned a net profit of £16.5m and a multi-million pound capital gain.

In February 2022, the council announced a balanced 2022/23 budget alongside a medium-term financial strategy that set out how it would need to make between £3.5 to £4 million savings over the next five years. This was based on the reasonable assumptions and forecasting at that time. In the half-year predictions based on current forecasts, the council is anticipating it will have to make 20 to 25% net reductions in spending – up to £5 million – by 2027. These predictions already consider immediate tighter spending controls across all departments and a review of existing budgets to see where further savings and efficiencies can be made. The contributing factors for the increasing pressures are outside of local authority control and include rising inflation rates and additional utility costs – over £800,000 extra for inflationary costs in goods and services, and especially utility bills (including leisure centres), and £600,000 to pay for the nationally-set pay rise averaging 6% for council staff, as well as changes to government policy that would potentially substantially reduce income, such as from business rates.

An option is being developed over coming weeks and months for the sale of one or more of the council's commercial assets which may potentially bring down the five-year savings target from £5 million to £3 million. These proposals will be brought forward when they have been worked up, both over coming weeks, when we set our budget in February, and then with more longer-term options next summer.

Uttlesford District Council is facing “tough but manageable” financial challenges over the next few years as it continues to monitor and respond to the impacts of the UK and global economic crisis.

Residents and business owners across the district and beyond are taking tough choices as they see their shopping bills, their fuel bills and their mortgages go through the roof.

Could the questioners explain how the administration party is responsible for energy bills going up and Uttlesford needing to find hundreds of thousands of pounds extra.

Would they like us to:

- Not find the hundreds of thousands needed extra to heat our pools and leisure centres over this winter, and to padlock their doors
- Not honour the legally binding long-term contracts we have entered which see annual inflation-linked uplifts, then perhaps he should say so
- To pull out of the legally binding national agreement to pay our employees

We are weeks away from seeing detailed officer proposals on next year's budget and the next five years' medium term financial plan. Members will not have long to wait before seeing and debating this detail all in public.

I have accepted that when we stated ‘we would like the Council to work differently under our administration, more collaboratively and collegiately’ we hadn't realised that we needed others to share that ambition. We would prefer that the questioners commit to being constructive partners in addressing the national recession

locally and realise that the difficulties that will be faced by our council and residents far outweighs the need for political electioneering.”

Clarification Question asked by Councillor Caton:

“Thank you for your standard reply which clearly did not answer my question. What plans do you have to prioritise the activities contained in the Climate Change Action Plan and your Equalities portfolio in the light of the squeeze on spending forecast by the council’s Senior Management Team?”

Response from Councillor Pepper:

“Thank you Cllr Caton for your question of clarification. Firstly, I would like to point out that I did circulate a detailed response to all councillors on November 30th to your initial question regarding “*what are my plans are to safeguard the vital Climate Change Action Plan.*” However, a generic response was agreed to be published. I can appreciate however, why you would like clarification regarding our Climate Crisis Action Plan, which has 37 components. Please see below, how these objectives will be achieved (up to December 2022 and onwards), including monies allocated against our budget (or committed) and external government grants.

In relation to Equalities, I have outlined what was published in my last report however, I will notify you and other council members of any further updates.

Climate Crisis Action Plan objectives & available funding

The Council agreed a specific **climate change budget** of **£1,000,000** budget over a 3-year period (from April 2021 to April 2024).

A total of **£615,733k** of the climate Change budget has been committed or spent.

External government funding over **£1,700,000** has been secured (**Sustainable Warmth total £1,268,000 (LAD2 - £249k & LAD3 £919k)** & **Saffron Walden Air Quality Initiative grant £517,124.**

The Climate Crisis Action Plan (CCAP) is a live document that is subject to change and will be consistently reviewed.

Climate Change Spend or commitments		24/25	23/24	22/23	21/22	Totals
Comments		£	£	£	£	£
Climate Crisis - Project Costs						
Littlebury Energy Plan Project <i>provided by Community Energy South</i>	Project initiated and will be progressed by Lead Climate Change Officer			5,070		5,070
Uttlesford Active Travel and Biodiversity Surveys <i>provided by Common Place Digital</i>	Surveys completed and next steps will be progressed by Lead Climate Change Officer				9,950	9,950
M&B Printing	Completed				213	213
LetsTalk Uttlesford Website / Engagement Tool	Project initiated and will be progressed by Lead Climate Change Officer		11,000	11,000		22,000
Solar Panels for 5x LGV fleet – Provided by Trailar	Order placed fitting this week. Review of performance End 2023 as part of fleet decarbonisation strategy.			17,500		17,500
Historic water infrastructure deficit project	Value subject to procurement of necessary external expertise.			60,000		60,000
Zero Carbon Communities Initiative	Feedback on budget allocation sought from working group		150,000	150,000		300,000
Inhouse Carbon Saving Initiatives*	Feedback on budget allocation sought from working group		145,000	5,6000		201,000
Projects Financial Year totals			306,000	299,570	10,163	615,733

N.B Please ignore tabled comments (they are outdated). See below a brief description of key objectives for individual projects that are listed.

Littlebury Energy Plan Project - Community Energy South was a trial set up to produce practical plans for individual households to improve energy savings and a community-based approach with potential collective buy ins. **Action 20 Total £5070**

Uttlesford Active Travel (£4975) will assist with WCWIP, the Saffron Walden Clean Air Project & the Zero Carbon Communities Grant. **Action 14 & 15. Biodiversity Survey** (£4975) will assist the Local Plan & BNG, suitable areas for tree planting & the Zero Carbon Communities Grant. **Action 21 & 34. Total £9950**

M&B Printing A4 Posters for advertising the LAD2 energy grant **Action 33 Total £213**

Let's Talk platform media platform that will be utilised for engagement on **Zero Carbon Communities work programme**, and the **Saffron Walden Clean Air Project. Lobbying & Raising awareness Total £22,000**

X5 Solar panels installed on refuse vehicles **Action 13 Total £17,500**

Historic water infrastructure deficit project will be an independent water and rivers survey. Can assist with evidence of good and poor biodiversity areas to forward to Affinity & Anglia Water, Local Plan water efficiency policies (greywater recycling and rainwater harvesting - water butts) & projects for BNG. **Action 21 & 34. Total £60,000**

Zero Carbon Communities Fund will fund community-based projects that are designed to reduce direct carbon emissions or that will lock up carbon or improve biodiversity. Split in half. **£150k** allocated to the end of April 2023 and a further **£150k** allocated to the end of April 2024. **Action 15 Total £300,000**

Inhouse Carbon Saving Initiatives will include an audit of council owned buildings to establish whether any are suitable for solar panel installations. **N.B** The Museum is a listed building. London Road is also listed and the wrong orientation for solar panels. **Action 20 Total £201,000**

Additional costs/consideration not included in budget above: -

Fritch Way Cycleway Study is a proposal to investigation options for cycle links between the Fritch Way and the south side of Bishop's Stortford, Stansted Airport and Start Hill. **Action 29 Total £5,000**

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) will identify barriers to active travel and opportunities to improve infrastructure. **Action 14 Total £50,000**

Ecology Officer to assist with our historic water infrastructure deficit project, planning & BNG. **Action 21**

Retrofit assessor who could be trained locally and sit within Saffron Walden Community Energy, subject to funding. **Action 19 & 20**

Current Climate Crisis Action Plan objectives in more detail: -

Action 13 – December 2022 – Transport Emissions – Uttlesford’s business travel

Expected timeline for delivery of service delivery model: **March 2023**

The completion of this phase is expected to change in response to government waste legislation that may impact on collection models and the county waste strategy.

Trials of several electric vehicles have been organised, a large van was trialled in November which could be utilised for Grounds Maintenance services, workshop, and street cleansing. Two refuse / recycling lorries are due to be trialled in December.

x5 refuse vehicles have solar panels installed.

The Council Management Team (CMT) will continue to **evaluate potential ways to reduce business travel** or, where it cannot be avoided, encouraging the most carbon efficient option.

Action 14 – December 2022 – Transport Emissions – Active Travel

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is being procured /commissioned currently. **£50k** is allocated out of climate budget. Total cost is around £70k. ECC have no budget for this project. Further update available when bids assessed later in December. Project to be delivered by July 2023.

The **active travel survey** (please see below) will feed in specific project ambitions.

Action 15 – December 2022 – Transport Emissions - Active Travel

Active travel survey is used to help identify barriers to active travel and opportunities to improve infrastructure.

Projects are being built from the resident’s survey results. UDC received over 1600 comments.

This will inform the **Local Plan and developer contributions** for any planning applications that come forward in advance of the Local Plan being in place. The **Saffron Walden Clean Air Project** government grant will pilot several active travel schemes. The **Zero Carbon Communities Grant** may provide opportunity to kick start local community schemes where demand for active travel schemes/infrastructure has been identified.

Action 16 – December 2022 – Transport Emissions - EVs

Initial investigations have been made into the potential for an **EV car club** in Uttlesford. Kick-start funding for an EV car club in Saffron Walden is now possible with the **Saffron Walden Clean Air project** government grant and this could be used for council and museum staff where the journey starts and ends in SW.

Action 17 – December 2022 – Transport Emissions – EV Charging

A pilot is due to be explored for UDC at London Road as part of the options for implementation of the active travel schemes being delivered through the **Saffron Walden Clean Air project** government grant. Discussions has commenced to look at how to influence policy formulation and section **s106 negotiations** e.g. to **secure car clubs within larger developments**.

Action 18 – December 2022 - Domestic Energy Private

Work is underway to **target private renters**, who may not be meeting minimum standards, as part of the **Sustainable Warmth government grants** promotion. There remains an issue with delivering Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) due to the limited data available. Successful delivery is also dependent on emerging government legislation which is due in 2023.

The government has just introduced a **three-year energy scheme** that will offer grants to make homes more energy efficient for **middle-income households** starting in April 2023.

Cost of Living booklet to be published looks at available benefits, government grants and tips on keeping yourself warm.

UDC websites also offers guidance and energy efficiency funding available.

Action 19 – December 2022 – Domestic Energy – New Build

Current building regulations up to **31% for net zero buildings**. From **2025, the Future Homes Standard** will deliver homes that are zero carbon ready. Homes build under the Future Homes Standard should produce **75-80% less carbon emissions** compared with current levels.

Interim **planning policy** is in place and being used for new planning applications. Supplementary Planning document to be drafted alongside local plan when at Reg19 stage. The inclusion of exacting energy efficiency standards is aimed to be applied in the new local plan policy but will be subject to viability considerations.

Action 20 - December 2022 – Industry and Commerce – District Wide Decarbonisation

Littlebury Village Community Energy Kickstart Project this project surveyed carbon emissions and energy usage in the community, and reviewed housing archetypes and the potential for retrofit.

A plan is in early development to consider supporting a 'cluster' of communities in the first instance. Work is underway to develop this programme - options may include **resourcing a retrofit assessor** who could be trained locally and sit within **Saffron Walden Community Energy**, subject to funding.

Inhouse Carbon Saving Initiatives audit of council owned buildings to establish whether there are any suitable for solar panel installations.

Zero Carbon Communities Grant can assist parishes to upgrade community buildings and install EV charging points.

Action 21 CCAP – December 2022 – LULUCF – Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

The national minimum requirement is to achieve **10% Biodiversity Net Gain**. The **Local Plan is aiming for 20%**, subject to further evidence to ensure this is reasonable and achievable.

Biodiversity survey responses are being collated for **Local Plan projects for BNG**. We received 572 responses for this survey. Over 200 people that responded have been emailed to see whether they could be eligible for funding for green projects from our **Zero Carbon Communities Grant**.

An **in-house Ecologist** will be funded from the Climate Budget to assist.

Action 22 CCAP – December 2022 – Waste and Recycling

The Council is participating in the development of a new **Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS)** for Essex. This document will focus on improving recycling performance across the County and will consider a range of environmental measures to assess future service delivery models (including disposal). This work will be managed by the **Waste Strategy Panel** and any decisions required will be sought through the Council's normal governance processes.

Action 23 CCAP – December 2022 – Waste and Recycling

Action plan being produced to reduce food waste and promote food waste recycling.

Plans to **promote reducing waste but specifically food waste** are underway. Efforts will be made to ensure that local DC campaigns also align with national and county level messages to help avoid confusing residents. Various social media campaigns have been run over the year **focusing on food waste and reducing contamination of materials presented for recycling**. The team attended the **Saffron Walden Eco-Fair** in September and focused attention on reducing single use plastics and home composting of food waste through home composting or wormery use. The team also attended the **Gt Dunmow Carnival**. A **comprehensive refresh of the Council's recycling guide has been produced** and is being distributed to all households in the leadup to Christmas. This publication will also be available as a download from the UDC website.

Action 24 CCAP – December 2022 – Waste and Recycling

Conversations have continued with voluntary services in Uttlesford to **investigate potential of linking council led re-use projects and repair cafes**. The Railways Arms PH in Saffron Walden have offered their space to roll the project out. The Climate Change Project Officer confirmed that she was happy to help facilitate this.

This action links to 23 and plans are in place to address these issues over the coming year.

A range of activities have taken place as highlighted in Action 23 which is directly linked. The **Essex Waste Partnership** have undertaken a research project that **focus on environmental awareness** within the general population. This will help steer **where best to target information campaigns going forward** and **highlights current perceived barriers to participating in recycling services**. A revised waste education plan was produced that sets out the issues will be targeted over the year and how engagement will be achieved.

Action 25 – December 2022 – Waste and Recycling

Marketing was being planned to **encourage residents to sort their recycling better**. This action links to 23 and plans are in place to address these issues over the coming year. As above a range of activities have been undertaken over the year to **encourage recycling** and the Council has linked in with national campaigns where possible.

Action 26 -2023- Domestic Energy - Uttlesford's own housing

A **Stock Condition Survey** is due to be carried out by Norse. At present there is no update on when this survey will be completed. The Climate Change, Lead Officer is due to meet with the Housing Partnership Client Manager to review progress and milestones. Note: **68% of Uttlesford Council housing stock** has an **EPC rating of A – C**. **29%** has a rating of **D or below**. Uttlesford Norse are currently **working on a 5 yr. projection** to show where the stock will be if current planned works are delivered. Further updates to follow and verbal update will be provided at the working group meeting. **N.B** Covid caused some delay, due to not being able to enter properties to assess housing.

Action 27 – 2025 – Transport Emissions – Norse`s Vehicles

Norse Fleet scheduled for replacement in 2025. Transition to EVs recommended. An update is outstanding on this action re progress made, though it is understood Norse do already have some EVs in their Fleet. Climate Change, Lead Officer is awaiting meeting with Norse asset manager, with regard to the replacement plan and future milestones.

Action 28 – Ongoing – Transport Emissions – Public Transport

Local Plan to identify services gaps and opportunities for improvements. Sustainable travel and a modal share that leans towards this is a key local plan policy and objective for the Highways Authority. The provisions of a bus route and maintaining a service is dependent on the catchment, subsidy, convenience, modal choice, and behavioural matters.

The aim in planning is to **secure 'walkable neighbourhoods**.

Cost of Living booklet to be published provides details on additional local transport services.

Action 29 – Ongoing – Transport Emissions – Active Travel

Linked to Action 15. **ECC Highways Panel have allocated funding** for the 'Great Chesterford to Saffron Walden – Cycleway' (design) and for 'Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden – new footway'. The Highways panel are also due to deliver **a feasibility study** for several Saffron Walden cycle schemes from requests submitted by the Town Council, to firmly identify viability.

A cycle study has been commissioned to explore options for links between the **Flitch Way** and the south side of Bishop's Stortford, Stansted Airport and Start Hill and improved links into Great Dunmow.

Further work needs to be undertaken and how UDC can leverage through **s106 agreements**. Further update on these initiatives due March 2023.

Action 30 – Ongoing – Transport Emissions – Active Travel

Support for ECC continued through **school travel plans and encouragement of active travel**.

Work continued with clean air strategies in relation to vehicles idling around schools.

Further work needs to be undertaken and how UDC can leverage through **S106 agreements**.

Action 31 – Transport Emissions – UDC/EV Charging

4 x 22kW dual outlet floor standing fast chargers installed at London Road Council Offices, Saffron Walden.

Action 32 – Transport Emissions – EV Charging in Public Car Parks

4 x 7 kW floor/post mounted dual outlet fast charger installed in White Street carpark, Dunmow.

4 x 7 kW wall mounted dual outlet fast charger installed in Chequers Lane carpark, Dunmow.

4 x 7 kW floor/post mounted dual outlet fast charger installed in Crafton Green carpark, Stansted Mountfitchet.

22kW Fast EV dual outlet charging post installed in The Common carpark, Saffron Walden.

50kW rapid charger dual outlet installed at Lord Butler Leisure Centre, Saffron Walden

Action 33 – Ongoing – Domestic Energy – Private Housing

Energy Company Obligation and **government grants for insulation for low-income households** are being **promoted on social media**. Two one week apart full-page **newspaper adverts** will be undertaken in the local press. Six copies of **A4**

posters were delivered to every Member for them to distribute to their local doctors, shops, and community centres to get the message out around the wards. The impact of the **advertisement and marketing will be reviewed** and if deemed necessary community outreach will be undertaken in the spring or early summer.

Action 34 – Ongoing – LULUCF – Tree Planting

Various schemes 2020/21 budget remains for the **tree planting** annual budget **£15k**.

UDC has planted on UDC and Town and Parish Council land since autumn 2020 a total of **524 trees**, and **2,488 hedging plants** at a total cost of **£25,315.86**. Additionally, tree planting will be covered for new development in the **Green Infrastructure Strategy**. An **Ecologist is due to be recruited** to the planning team, at which point further work may be undertaken to validate specific project sites arising from the **biodiversity survey feedback** received in 2021. Projects may also be identified through the **Zero Carbon Communities Grant**.

Other tree planting initiatives are ECC, Stansted Airport and other available funding pots that could be tapped into are Affinity & Anglia Water.

Action 36 – Complete – Transport Emissions – EC Charging at New Properties

Policy on EV charging points agreed at new developments supported by the National Planning Policy Framework.

Action 37 - Complete – Transport Emissions – Pollution Awareness

Air quality is monitored and reported in real time.

2022 Air Quality Annual Status Report has been published.

https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/11646/2022-Air-Quality-Annual-Status-Report-ASR/pdf/Uttlesford_2022_ASR.pdf

LOBBYING, INFLUENCING & RAISING AWARENESS

Monthly reports

Cllr Pepper provides **monthly Environment & Green Issues & Equalities report** updates to Great Dunmow Town and every Public Council meeting.

Simple steps to fight climate change - Cllr Louise Pepper offers advice and updates on climate change, biodiversity and **what the local community can do to reduce our carbon footprint**. To date, we have provided a list of steps **for** individuals, our local community, businesses, schools, and the aviation sector. The last sector will be agriculture. <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/simple-steps-to-fight-climate-change>

Interactive website & media coverage content on Let's Talk platform is out of date and **plan is in place to refresh and develop project pages**. Platform will be

utilised for engagement on **Zero Carbon Communities work programme**, and the **Saffron Walden Clean Air Project**. **Total £22,000**

ECC District Climate Forum quarterly meetings chaired by Cllr Peter Schwier meetings discuss **joint working partnerships within the county** and **joint funding schemes available**.

Strategic Aviation Special Interest (SASIG) Cllr Pepper became a member in July 2021. SASIG is a forum for Local Authorities and other regional representatives to come together to share information and resources on regional aviation issues and government policies. Cllr Pepper's '**How can the aviation sector help fight climate change**', was circulated to all SASIG members in December 2021 and a document regarding **Climate Trace and Airport CO2 emissions** has been forwarded to the chair and Policy Director Chris Cain in December 2022. It was agreed at the last meeting in October 2022, since the High Court ruling on the UK's Net Zero Strategy and the publication of the Climate Change Committee's June 2022 report, this carried more weight in relation to airport expansion and meeting the UK's 78% net zero target by 2035.

Big Green Week – Cllr Pepper attended in September 2021 on **Saffron Walden Common** to **support local eco businesses and raise Climate Change & Biodiversity objectives**, along with Communities Officer John Starr. This year Cllr Pepper was supported by the **Waste Team** who displayed a new refuse vehicle fitted with solar panels. They also **provided food caddies** and **promoted composting, reducing single use plastics with sustainable alternatives**.

Stansted Airport Net Zero – Cllr Pepper will continue to assist whenever possible.

Equalities update this information was published in the latest report (no other updates to report at this stage).

Community Listening Events – A meeting was held on 9th November 2022 with local secondary schools LGBTQ+ Inclusion leads and students to **establish any mileage in holding an event to raise awareness around LGBTQ+ Inclusion**.

We are looking to **host a listening event for new parents** in Uttlesford to build awareness and understanding of the issues affecting those who are pregnant or recently gave birth. We are aware there has not been anything like this done before in Uttlesford, so will be looking to partners who would be up for supporting us through either taking part in the event (format tbc) as a speaker and listener, providing us with any relevant data that can help inform the event, and connect us with our audience for this event.

EqHIA – Equality Health Impact Assessment workshops are to be delivered to senior officers in the New Year, this will enable them to become critical friends to colleagues completing the EqHIA alongside any new or changes to UDC activity, a policy, strategy, procedure, project, new or change in service, initiative or other.

Session aims:

- To have an understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
- To understand better which groups are protected from discrimination and what types of behaviour are unlawful
- To develop an awareness of Equality Analysis as a tool for promoting equality, tackling discrimination and fostering good relations
- To have a better understanding of the different issues and stages of the Equality Analysis process
- To develop some practical skills in how to use Equality Analysis within the organisation

13. Original Question: Councillor Caton to Councillor Lees – the Leader of the Council:

“As Councillor Lees is aware the Senior Management Team (SMT) of officers forecast that any new administration elected at the May 2023 local elections will have to cut expenditure by £5m by the end of their term.

What plan of action does Councillor Lees and the Cabinet have to ensure that any incoming administration has the up to date information to enable it to take informed decisions on their priorities and the Council’s finances by the summer 2023 deadline suggested by the SMT?”

Response from the Leader:

“Please see the response to Question 12.”

Clarification Question asked by Councillor Caton:

“Your standard reply did not answer the question I posed in the second paragraph which was: What plan of action does Councillor Lees and the Cabinet have to ensure that any incoming administration has the up to date information to enable it to take informed decisions on their priorities and the Council’s finances by the summer 2023 deadline suggested by the SMT?”

Response from the Leader:

“The administration will ensure that all budgetary information will be published in accordance with the principles of openness and transparency. Members will note that the budget papers for 2023-24 will be made available to all councillors in the lead up to the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 31 January 2023, Cabinet on 9 February and Council on 21 February 2023, when the budget will be set.”