

COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 28 JULY 2022

Question 1

From: Councillor J Milln, central ward

To: Cabinet Member, infrastructure and transport

I welcome the Council's wetland project at Luston, worthwhile for its own sake to remove P from poorly performing treatment plant, though this is just 40 out of 3 million excess kg overall. If this unlocks the Lugg moratorium, I am delighted for the SME building sector.

Using Luston to excuse P pollution elsewhere (the effect of trading platforms), when we need to drive reduction to 'zero P', and singling out future house-builders to pay for it when the problem is not of their making, are questionable actions.

We need to be bolder. We are all domestic polluters, so can I ask a Cabinet Commission to consider a fairer (and administratively simpler) way of funding this via a precept on the water charge or Council tax according to band or discharge type augmented by s.106 moneys as recommended by EAC?

Response

Thank you for your question, the purpose of the Commission is to look at what further the Council can do to restore the River Wye by addressing the pollution challenges using the tools it has available. There is already a significant work programme envisaged to meet the emerging terms of reference. We are all polluters as you say but the moratorium is current and credits are offered, voluntarily – both in the sense of the developer purchasing them and also the Council doing the work at its own cost to find a mitigation method because of the failure of national government to adequately fund their agencies to do their job adequately. Looking at a retrospective taxation/mitigation payment could be more than a little difficult to progress. That said, I am happy for it to be considered a regulatory and financial impact assessment and will provide this to you.