

## **Council Meeting**

**23 February 2021**

### **Questions Submitted by Councillors under Question Time (agenda item 14)**

#### **1. Question from Cllr Keating to Cllr Davies, Leader of the Council**

“Will members of the Council be able to see the economic impact assessment that supports North Somerset's decision to support the bid for a Bristol Freeport, particularly around the job creation numbers which have been challenged by independent experts?”

#### **Response from Cllr Davies**

“The Greater Western Freeport proposal was submitted on 5th of February following collaborative work by North Somerset, WECA and the constituent authorities and our neighbours in Sedgemoor. The proposal was supported by the West of England and Heart of South West Local Economic Partnerships. Land within the J21 Enterprise Area in Weston sits at the heart of the proposal and we hope that this could lead to substantial investment in North Somerset.

The forecast gross value added and employment growth assumptions within the Free Port area estimates the direct employment capacity of the identified sites, adjusted for the economic sectors that are promoted. The proposal also used findings from regional economic impact model developed by expert economists at University of Plymouth to estimate the additional indirect and induced economic activity from the impact on the wider supply chain.

If Ministers support the initial proposal, then it will pass through to a detailed business case phase and there will be opportunity for members to engage in more detailed economic modelling as part of this process.”

#### **2. Question from Cllr Keating to Cllr Solomon, Executive Member for Communities, Tourism and Leisure**

“What steps have been taken to ensure a viable future for Churchill Sports Centre? The Council has found funds to support Backwell Leisure Centre, and to dredge the marine lakes in the towns - is it not fair that vital sports facilities in the villages are also supported?”

#### **Response from Cllr Solomon**

“The council is currently looking at the different options for a sustainable way to re-open the sports centre in the future; any costs associated with the options will be explored.

A local working party and other interested partners are working with the council to discuss ideas and opportunities for the centre.”