

**Supplement to the agenda for**

# **Cabinet**

**Thursday 30 January 2020**

**6.00 pm**

**The Shire Hall, St. Peter's Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX**

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**PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 30 January 2020**

**Question 1**

**Mr R Palgrave, How Caple**

**To: leader of the council**

I asked at the 8 March 2019 meeting if Council would bring to the attention of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Herefordshire MPs the Council's concern about climate change and the outcome of the Council's climate emergency vote that day. I also asked if Council would request help in developing its climate action plans. My point was that without central government support, Herefordshire Council cannot make sufficient progress on this most important issue. In response, the Leader said that climate change is a national and global issue going beyond the county boundaries, and agreed that we need to call on others to help. He went on to say that he knew that our MPs will be happy to help us address the issues I raised. What response has Council had from our MPs and from MHCLG?

**Response**

I note that the questioner highlights comments made by the previous Leader of the Council in March 2019. In responding to the climate emergency, the support of our MPs and central Government departments such as MHCLG will be important. Whilst I am not aware of any specific response being received, our national government has also declared a climate emergency and is supporting action by local authorities to address the climate emergency. In developing our action plans, officers will be following all appropriate government guidance including that provided by MHCLG. As Leader, I can assure you that the new administration takes the climate emergency very seriously and is committed to developing clear actions to achieve net zero by 2030/31. I will therefore be personally writing to our MPs and the Secretary of State for MHCLG to ask them to confirm what practical support they are able to provide to enable us to deliver our plans.



**COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 30 January 2020**

**Question 1**

**Councillor William Wilding, Penyard Ward**

**To: cabinet member, environment, economy and skills**

Of the 285 councils to declare a climate emergency, only 35 seem to have published 'Action Plans'. Could you tell me when Herefordshire intend to publish a plan, and if the General Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on the Climate Emergency can see whatever plan has so far been prepared?

**Response**

The Council intends to publish its new Carbon Management Plan in April this year. This document will set out the Council's plan to reduce its own carbon emissions over the next 5 years and will set out an interim target on our journey to carbon neutrality by 2030/31.

The Council is also leading the development of a new countywide strategy and action plan which is being developed in partnership by a new carbon reduction steering group. We are currently planning a stakeholder engagement event in March to invite partners to further support the development of this strategy which it is anticipated would be published later this year.

I would also welcome the support of the new climate emergency task and finish group which I understand is currently supporting the development of these plans.

**Question 2**

**Councillor Nigel Shaw, Bromyard Bringsty Ward**

**To: leader of the council**

The Marches LEP Board minutes for 26th November 2019 state that the Leader announced that he was giving an "in principle" agreement from Herefordshire Council to underwrite phase 2 of NMiTE and that he would take this offer to the Cabinet for approval on 19th December. This is now the second Cabinet meeting since the November LEP meeting and no such agenda item has yet been tabled. Following the comments made by Jesse Norman, Conservative MP for South Herefordshire in the House this week, will the Leader confirm that he has changed his mind and will not now be kowtowing to the LEP in that he will now not be asking this Council to further underwrite the LEP's funding to NMiTE by a further £5m?

**Response**

The Council is involved in high level discussions with Government, NMiTE and the Marches LEP and, with the support of our local MP, I am hopeful that the arrangements for releasing the funding of Phase 2 to NMiTE can be agreed in the very near future. I will update Members on this as soon as I am able.

