

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at The Council Chamber - The Shire Hall, St. Peter's Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX on Thursday 13 December 2018 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor JG Lester, Leader of the Council (Chairman)
Councillor NE Shaw, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors H Bramer, BA Durkin, DG Harlow, PD Price, P Rone and EJ Swinglehurst

Cabinet support members in attendance Councillors JA Hyde, AW Johnson and RJ Phillips

Group leaders in attendance Councillors TM James, PP Marsh, RI Matthews and A Seldon

Scrutiny chairpersons in attendance Councillors PA Andrews and WLS Bowen

Other councillors in attendance: Councillors PE Crockett, J Hardwick, EPJ Harvey and D Summers

Officers in attendance: Alistair Neill, Richard Ball, Chris Baird, Andrew Lovegrove, Stephen Vickers and Annie Brookes

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies from members of the cabinet.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

26. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

27. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Pages 11 - 14)

Questions received and responses given are attached as appendix 1 to the minutes.

28. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS (Pages 15 - 16)

Questions received and responses given are attached as appendix 2 to the minutes.

29. PETERCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL REBUILD

The cabinet member children and families introduced the item. She highlighted that:

- Peterchurch Primary school occupied a poor set of buildings with significant ongoing maintenance costs and undersized classrooms, the desire to replace the buildings had been recognised for some years;
- a range of options had been explored, including relocation to the nearby high school site, however this option would incur substantial additional costs and was not supported within the community;
- the proposed feasibility study would assess sequencing of the build, requirements for temporary accommodation, options for dealing with the power

- cables that crossed part of the site and options for providing a new roof for the swimming pool;
- the feasibility study would provide a block plan of the proposed layout of the new school, a plan for deliver and set out costs;
- providing these new school buildings would support the council's corporate objective to give children the best start in life.

The councillor in whose ward the school was located (Golden Valley North) commented that there was complete community support for the proposed rebuild. The pool was important to the local community so options to replace the roof would be welcomed. There were also opportunities to look at an environmentally friendly, low maintenance design and incorporate a drop off area for pupils off the road to reduce congestion and improve safety at peak times. The design of the new buildings should take account of potential housing development in the local area and the increase in pupil numbers that this could bring.

In discussion of the item it was noted that:

- the sum of £180k allocated for the feasibility was a maximum and it was expected that the work would cost less than this;
- the work would provide a costed proposal to RIBA stage 2 and procurement would start early in 2019 with the work completed by the summer at the latest;
- investment was required to provide suitable accommodation and help maintain the good results in primary schools as noted recently by Ofsted.

Group leaders were invited to give the views of their groups. There was general support for the proposed rebuild, other the key points raised were:

- a need to consider issues in other schools across the county, a planned review of condition surveys in 2019 was welcomed;
- effective project management structures should be in place to ensure that the project was delivered on time and on budget;
- information should be provided on the level of green certificate that was being sought.

Resolved that:

- (a) the director for children and families be authorised to commission feasibility work and take all other steps necessary to inform a further decision on the replacement of Peterchurch primary school and associated on-site facilities on its current site, and determination of the most appropriate route to procurement, within a budget of not more than £180k.**

30. PURCHASE OF ACCOMMODATION TO MEET STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The cabinet member health and wellbeing introduced the item. Key points highlighted were that:

- there had been a shift in the stance and approach to risk by registered housing providers and as a result it had become more challenging to find appropriate accommodation for certain vulnerable groups of people;
- the proposed acquisition of properties by the council would enable appropriate housing to be provided for care leavers but could also provide support for other vulnerable service users;
- each separate purchase would be subject to its own governance process.

In discussion of the item cabinet members endorsed the need for the council to be able to provide accommodation for these vulnerable groups. It was noted that:

- the change in approach of registered housing providers was seen nationwide, with providers having more independence and focusing on maximising lettings to those who can pay the rent, they had become more risk adverse to poor behaviour and rent arrears;
- the council provided reassurance to housing providers where possible to encourage offers of accommodation but in some cases providers were still unwilling to take the risk;
- properties would be sought in the areas where need was greatest and where people placed would have access to the services and support they needed, however it was likely that as the policy was rolled out properties in the market towns across the county would be considered;
- the policy would help the council to meet its statutory duties to vulnerable residents and also give opportunities for cost avoidance if not actual savings, without suitable accommodation and support over time some of these vulnerable service users would have escalating needs requiring more intensive and expensive intervention;
- there would be a requirement for housing management, including maintenance, and this service was likely to be procured from a registered housing provider, which need not be one of the councils local stock holding providers;
- the supported housing for young people project (SHYPP) was able to accommodate those with moderate support needs but not the kind of provision that would be delivered through this policy.

Group leaders gave the views of their group. There was general support for the policy and the following points were made:

- it was disappointing that housing associations were being risk adverse and not looking after those people they were set up to help;
- if the council were to build properties from scratch as part of this policy it should consider flexible layouts and inclusion of assistive technology to allay concerns of neighbours and provide early warning of problems;
- the council could look at also providing secure accommodation as there was a high demand for this type of accommodation nationally and there could be opportunity to accommodate individuals from outside the county;
- properties should be acquired sensitively in the right location and not clustered too many together;
- the council should ensure value for money in its purchases.

Resolved that:

- (a) the principle of acquisition of properties to meet the needs of care leavers and other people with complex needs be approved,**
- (b) authority be delegated to the director for economy and place, following consultation with relevant cabinet members, the director for children and families and the chief finance officer, to approve acquisition of individual properties including those with a value requiring a key decision, and subject to the usual capital funding approval processes.**

31. DEVELOPMENT REGENERATION PROGRAMME - STATION APPROACH PROJECT APPROVAL

The leader of the council welcomed the principal and the president of the student union from Herefordshire College of Arts (HCA) and the project lead for finance and accommodation from NMiTE.

The cabinet member contracts and assets introduced the item. He noted that:

- the proposed accommodation block would provide for students from HCA and NMiTE;
- the project would be part of the development regeneration programme (DRP) with partner Engie Regeneration Ltd;
- HCA did not currently have a high quality campus where students could live together, this project would address this and support planned growth in student numbers;
- the recommendations in the report supported the September 2020 opening target;
- the level of demand had been validated and feedback from potential investors had been positive, with the approval of cabinet it was intended to move into negotiations with a preferred funding partner early in 2019;
- the preferred route for funding was to have an external partner but the recommendations put forward allowed for the council to provide funding if required.

In discussion of the item it was noted that:

- there had been great interest from potential funding partners with four interested parties to date, due diligence checks would be carried out to confirm whether any or all of these could be taken forward;
- it was possible for the council to deliver the project itself and there was some support for this option but it was acknowledged that the council had finite resources to invest and that attracting external investment would allow the council to recycle its investment into other much needed projects;
- the council should pump prime sites which were not viable for private investors, as there was interest from private investors for this scheme, the council should act as a facilitator only;
- there was support and demand for higher education opportunities in Herefordshire which this project would support;
- the reduction in parking spaces at the front of the train station would be mitigated by ensuring that there were sufficient alternatives within a 5-10 minute walk and in the longer term by a review of parking.

Group leaders were invited to give the views of their group. There was general support for the principle of the project and the educational institutions involved. Other points made were:

- that the building and its setting should be attractive as it was to be located in a prominent site and aim for high environmental standards in its construction;
- the design should be flexible so that the building could be repurposed in future if needed;
- the projected growth in the student population would likely give a boost to the night time economy and it was hoped that this would not lead to tensions;
- the proposed timetable was tight and there might be other constraints on the site not yet identified;
- the project must demonstrate a sound business case and return for the council;
- the council should focus on projects to support vulnerable people such as developing sites for affordable housing.

The ward councillor expressed support for the principle of providing accommodation for students and hoped that this might release accommodation elsewhere which would better suit other users. She expressed concern about the design of the building and stressed the need for a high quality building on this key site.

The leader of the council noted that this was an excellent opportunity to support two important educational organisations.

It was resolved that:

- (a) the council approves the Stage 1 Submission (appendix 1) for the Station Approach student accommodation project, provided by Engie Regeneration Ltd under the development and regeneration programme (DRP), and the project be authorised to proceed into stage 2 of the DRP new project approval process with the Project Criteria, for submission in February 2019, being as follows:**
 - i. A student accommodation block of up to 180 units;**
 - ii. A design and specification in line with normal market practice and demand, subject to other criteria set out here;**
 - iii. A design which is Equality Act compliant and which respects the requirements of students with diverse needs and promotes the wellbeing of all its residents;**
 - iv. To achieve the earliest possible completion date to align with the commencement of an academic year;**
 - v. To develop the project in liaison with higher education and further education providers identified by the council including Hereford College of Arts and NMiTE;**
 - vi. To clarify funding options for the project and recommend a preferred approach;**
 - vii. To identify options for the asset management of the accommodation;**
 - viii. To identify ways to provide active frontage and a commercially viable amenity on the site;**
 - ix. To work with the council to ensure sufficient public parking supply is maintained and that this is clearly identified for potential users;**
 - x. To provide a scheme which meets the requirements of BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) Good or above;**
 - xi. To provide the council with options for the project to make an enhanced contribution to environmental sustainability, over and above that which would be required by relevant law or existing planning policy;**
 - xii. To work with the council to develop the evidential framework by which the Stage 2 Submission can be assessed against the council's requirement to demonstrate best value and meet all other relevant legal obligations.**
- (b) a Stage 2 Development Fee of up to £752,648 be approved for underwriting by the council, subject to the terms of the overarching agreement, with an additional contingency of 20% (£150,530) to be released, if required, by the Director for Economy and Place;**
- (c) the preferred funding model to the project is for a commercial investor to provide funding for the construction and operational phases (the council to act as guarantor during the operational phases)**
- (d) the Chief Finance Officer be authorised to complete legal and financial due diligence on this preferred option during Stage 2, including the selection of a preferred funder and the negotiation of final terms, following consultation with the Cabinet Member Contracts and Assets, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, and the Director for economy and place, and provided that the funding model delivers for the council:**
 - i. a capital receipt for the leasehold interest in the site that reflects the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained; and**
 - ii. a best value solution for the project which meets the Project Criteria.**

- (e) in the event that acceptable terms cannot be agreed with a commercial investor in accordance with item (c) above by 28 February 2019 and subject to the Stage 2 submission having met the Project Criteria, the Chief Finance Officer be authorised, following consultation with the Cabinet Member Contracts and Assets, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, and the Director for economy and place to secure funding for the project up to a maximum sum of £18m from the council's capital allocation for the Development Partnership by using the council's own funds and/or Public Works Loan Board borrowing;
- (f) subject to the Stage 2 Submission meeting the Project Criteria (item a. above) and an acceptable funding model being secured under item (c), (d) or (e) above, authority be delegated to the Director for Economy and Place, following consultation with the Cabinet Member Contracts and Assets and the Chief Financial Officer, to approve the project for immediate implementation;
- (g) authority be delegated to the acting Director for Economy and Place, following consultation with the Cabinet Member Contracts and Assets and the Chief Financial Officer, to enter into all necessary legal agreements including as set out in Financing Options and Project Agreements (appendix 2 to this report) and/or the giving of securities or guarantees and take all operational decisions necessary to implement the above within the approved budget;
- (h) the £35k cost of further services commissioned from Engie on 14 August 2018 to address issues with the Welsh Water sewer crossing the site be capitalised as part of the project; and
- (i) a further capital sum of up to £100k is approved for drawing down from the Development Partnership capital budget for council client support to deliver the project, including staff costs, due diligence and financial and legal support.

32. HEREFORD CENTRE FOR CYBER SECURITY – JOINT VENTURE AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The cabinet member economy and communication introduced the item. He reminded cabinet members that provision had been made in the council's capital programme in July 2018 to deliver the proposed cyber centre. The present report set out the intended terms of the joint venture and financial arrangements between Herefordshire Council and the University of Wolverhampton. The university's representative, Nigel Birch, was welcomed to the meeting.

Key points of the project were noted:

- Herefordshire had a low wage economy and the cyber centre would generate higher paid jobs in the county;
- the cyber security industry was growing and Herefordshire was well placed to form part of the second largest cyber security cluster outside London;
- the University of Wolverhampton had significant experience in this field, the facility would offer training for other companies, incubation space for start-ups and research and development facilities;
- funding would be provided through a loan from the council and a package assembled by the university which included funding from the Marches LEP and European Structural and Investment Fund;
- the proposed shareholding agreement would ensure that the core purpose of the joint venture company would not be changed without the unanimous support of both the council and the university;
- in the event that the council wished to exit the joint venture at some point in the future it could sell its share, this would not impact on the repayment of the council's loan to the company.

In discussion of the item it was confirmed that:

- the proposed lease was part of the package which would result in an asset against which the company could borrow, the permitted use clause would regulate the future usage of the building;
- the advantage of the proposed company structure was that it would bring clarity to transactions and the exit strategy should the council wish to withdraw at any point;
- the structures would be designed so as to future proof the company, with investments made at arm's length as loans and the shareholders agreement ensuring unanimous decision making on key issues;
- it was not expected that the company would return a significant profit to begin with, priority would be servicing the debt but if profits were made then the company could pay a dividend to the shareholders, including the council;
- a business plan had been produced and was being refined, board members would review performance of the company going forward, nomination of board members would be through the outside bodies process.

Group leaders were invited to express the views of their group. There was broad support for the proposal but it was noted that:

- sound business arrangements needed to be in place with clear targets against which success could be measured;
- as this was a growing sector it was possible that there would be a lot of competition from other organisations.

The ward member expressed his support for the project but highlighted concerns about the need for greater security on the site, citing examples of vandalism on the cycle path.

It was resolved that:

- (a) the council establishes, as a private company limited by shares, a joint venture company with the University of Wolverhampton to construct and operate a Cyber Security Centre at Hereford Enterprise Zone;**
- (b) the council acquires, for £1 per share, a shareholding in the new company of 19% with the remaining 81% shareholding to be acquired by the University of Wolverhampton;**
- (c) the council provides a capital loan, on commercial terms, to the new company of £3.5m;**
- (d) the council grants to the new company a long term lease of the site identified on the attached redline plan at the South Magazine in the Hereford Enterprise Zone for best consideration and on commercial terms;**
- (e) The Acting Director of Economy and Place, following consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Cabinet Member Economy and Communications, be authorised to determine, in accordance with the recommendations (a) –(d) above, the terms of the loan, lease, shareholders agreement and other company documents, the extent of the council's representation on the Board of Directors and to approve the name and incorporation of the company;**
- (f) The joint venture company is added to the council's register of strategic partnerships and list of outside bodies; and**
- (g) The Acting Director of Economy and Place be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to implement the recommendations (a) – (f) above.**

33. **END OF SEPTEMBER 2018 CORPORATE BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The cabinet member finance and corporate services introduced the item. Highlights of the quarterly report were noted as:

- a projected overspend of £1.2m for 2018/19 compared to £2.2m at the same point in 2017/18, there was confidence that this could be managed;
- 52% of performance measures were the same or better than at the same point in the previous year;
- Hoople had planned savings of £600k for 2018/19, the company was predominately a council owned subsidiary and not designed to make a profit;
- the re-profiling of capital as set out in appendix B would better profile anticipated expenditure and borrowing for future years;
- debt write offs were low for the first 6 months of the year compared to the previous year;
- the redesign of the Home First service was complete and capacity was being expanded to keep people out of hospital where possible;
- 35 refugees had been welcomed to the county as part of national resettlement schemes;
- the troubled families programme had validated secured change in 299 families, bringing in £239k to the council;
- the Priority Space site opened at the Enterprise Zone in September and would treat material from previous site clearances so that it can be reused elsewhere;
- 68 affordable dwellings had been delivered against a target of 200;
- there had been a reduction in the use of agency staff except for in the children and families directorate, this would be monitored over the following quarter;
- universal credit had been launched in Herefordshire and almost a third of recipients had taken up the offer of support in making a claim and budgeting, the citizen's advice bureau was to take over the support to universal credit claimants from April 2019 as part of a national commissioning exercise.

The cabinet member children and families noted the following in relation to performance in their portfolio area:

- school performance was good, with pupils outperforming national averages;
- the new local Early Help Assessment had replaced the Common Assessment Framework and the number of completed assessments had increased, this early intervention should reduce the need for statutory services in the longer term;
- the number of children subject to a child protection plan had reduced but the number of looked after children had increased overall;
- there was pressure on the availability of placements and therefore on costs;
- improvements continued to be made following the Ofsted inspection;
- recruitment and retention of social workers remained challenging, as all councils were competing for good social work staff.

The cabinet member health and wellbeing noted the following in relation to performance in their portfolio area:

- the £1.5m allocated in the capital programme for the Hillside centre was expected to increase to just over £2m following appraisal;
- the budget for the adults and communities directorate showed a projected £405k overspend, budgets were being managed but with demand led services there was constant challenge.

The cabinet member transport and regulatory services noted the following in relation to performance in their portfolio area:

- additional money had been provided by central government to be used to deal with potholes across the county;

- research had been carried out into the best placement of litter bins, this had shown that removing some bins had actually reduced litter;
- the upgrading of high town in Hereford continued and there had been no complaints regarding access during the works;
- priority parking schemes for residents would be reviewed in February 2019 to see if any further adjustments were required.

Group leaders noted the content of the report. It was stated that the continuing overspend in LAC illustrated the need to set a more realistic budget. The high costs of recovering debt, for example council tax, were also highlighted.

The leader of the council concluded the discussion and thanked officers for their work during 2018.

It was resolved that:

- a) **the projected financial outturn and performance for the first half of 2018/19 are reviewed and cabinet determines any additional actions required to achieve improvement.**

The meeting ended at 12.05 pm

Chairman

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 13 December 2018

Question 1

Mr J Milln, Hereford

To: cabinet member, infrastructure

Years ago Herefordshire Council promised a Transport Hub by the railway station, its forecourt area becoming a boulevard with seats and trees so as to provide a proper sense of arrival, something it was reminded of when Historic England's Urban Panel visited in October 2017. Gloucester has just completed a superb transport hub. Why then is Herefordshire Council now proposing to compromise this by promoting large and unsympathetic developments by the station instead, leaving only the cramped forecourt area to be congested by taxis, buses and coaches and their tawdry shelters, further damaging the setting of the listed building?

Response

The council is not proposing to compromise its plans for a Transport Hub at Hereford railway station. The space required to enable the delivery of a Transport Hub has been reserved for this purpose in front of the station buildings including part of the Royal Mail car park. The design of the transport hub is currently underway and proposals will be the subject of public consultation during 2019.

Sites either side of a Transport Hub were identified for development as part of the original masterplan for the area. Proposals for these sites are now coming forward providing for a GP healthcare centre to the west of the station and student accommodation to the east. Each of these developments should be welcomed. The healthcare centre will bring together five existing GP surgeries in a purpose built efficient and accessible building; the student accommodation will support the county's higher education providers to attract students to the county, and support achievement of the economic vision for the county.

Supplementary Question

The capital programme forecast as table C shows prior spend on the Hereford City Centre Transport Package of £32.32m, spend of £1.4m this year and £7m spend over the next two financial years. How much of the £7m budgeted is expected to be spent on the transport hub?

Response to supplementary

The transport hub project is under development at this time. When the project is finalised we will be able to give a full answer as to the cost expectations.

Question 2**Mr R Palgrave, How Caple****To: cabinet member, infrastructure**

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned in October that unless immediate effective action is taken to reduce carbon emissions, global warming would reach 2 degrees by 2030, significantly worsening the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people. The IPCC called for global carbon emissions to be cut by 45% by 2030 in an attempt to limit warming to 1.5 degrees.

Given this, how can the Council continue to develop proposals for the Hereford Southern Link Road and the Hereford Bypass when its consultants have reported that both roads will result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions due to vehicles travelling further and faster?

Response

The issue of greenhouse gas emissions has been considered carefully in the development of the SLR and the bypass. The environmental impact of each scheme has been considered in detail and this has been set out in route selection reports and planning documents for the bypass and Southern Link Road respectively. It is important to note that both schemes would actually result in **both** adverse and beneficial air impacts. This is a result of the redistribution of traffic from roads within urban areas (where beneficial impacts are predicted) to the SLR and bypass (where adverse impacts would occur). It is also important to note that the maximum impacts of the proposed schemes have been assessed as small in magnitude which supports the delivery of these schemes.

The council is not complacent about the need overall to reduce greenhouse gases and has a number of initiatives (completed and planned) that will assist in carbon reduction. These include the replacement of all streetlights with low energy LED lighting; securing funding to improve home insulation; supporting electric car use by providing charging points in public car parks and investing in low energy pool cars for use by staff when carrying out council business.

Supplementary Question

It is not acceptable to increase greenhouse gases by even a small amount. Would the council consider a joint community council business approach to collaborate on this emergency? Would you consider setting up such a working group or open forum in 2019?

Response

I am sympathetic to your view and will take up whether the council could take part in any such project.

Question 3**Mrs V Wegg-Prosser, Breinton****To: cabinet member, economy and communications**

If approved in Cabinet today, the Hereford Enterprise Zone will include from June 2020 a £9M Centre for Cyber Security with joint funding from the University of Wolverhampton and Herefordshire Council (Agenda Item 9). What estimates have been made of the number of new jobs this Centre will house, given that the aspiration was for the Zone to attract 4,200 new jobs by 2022, but the numbers employed (according to the Marches LEP Growth Fund 3 fact sheet) by March 2017 only totalled 350?

Response

As set out at paragraph 15 of the report at agenda item 9, the Cyber Centre project is expected to generate 190 new jobs. 665 people already work in the businesses on the Zone. The future growth of these businesses, together with other approved projects such as the Centre for Cyber Security, is anticipated to create an additional 1000 jobs. Further development land remains available within the zone, allowing for more job creation opportunities.

Question 4**Dr N Geeson, Hereford****To: cabinet member, infrastructure**

Regarding the Active Travel measures forming part of the South Wye Transport Package. The Minutes of Cabinet 14th December 2017 state, "The head of infrastructure delivery responded that a number of the measures consulted on did not rely on the SLR for implementation such as a wider implementation of 20mph limits in residential zones, improvements along Holme Lacy Road and some other routes remote from Belmont Road. The analysis needed to move forward these schemes could be completed within a 12 month period." Has that analysis been completed and when will the results be made public?

Response

Analysis of the active travel measures that will be delivered as part of the South Wye Transport Package will conclude shortly and the preferred package of measures that will accompany the Southern Link Road will be set out in the final full business case which will be submitted to the Department for Transport in the spring 2019 following its completion and appropriate governance decision. It will be made available to view on the council's website at that time.

Question 5**Mrs C Protherough, Birch Hill****To: cabinet member, infrastructure**

Table C of the Capital Forecast (Agenda Item 10 Appendix B) shows a prior-year spend of £32321k for the Hereford City Centre Transport Package, a spend of £1342k this year and further expenditure of approximately £7000k in the next 2 financial years. How much of the £7m budgeted for April 2019 onwards is expected to be spent on the Transport Hub in 2019-20 and 2020-21?

Response

Of the £40.650m budgeted for the Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) £6.490m has been allocated to deliver the transport hub and public realm improvements on Commercial Road and Blueschool Street. As the detailed design of the transport hub and public realm progresses the costs of each of these schemes will be developed further and reported in project decision reports. It is expected to undertake consultation on the design of the Transport Hub in the summer 2019 and the detailed profile of expenditure will then be confirmed as part of the programme for implementation.

Supplementary Question

When is the Transport Hub expected to be completed?

Response to supplementary

The consultation will inform the timeline. Many things have changed in relation to the economic plan since the idea of the transport hub was first put forward and the consultation may throw up new ideas that require further consideration.

Councillors' questions at Cabinet – 13 December 2018

Councillor RI Matthews, Credenhill Ward

To: cabinet member, infrastructure

A few years ago it was rumoured that Herefordshire Council had purchased Rockfield DIY Limited for the sum of around six million pounds in preparation for the construction of the City Link Road from Edgar Street through to Aylestone Hill.

On completion of the project I requested a detailed breakdown of the full and final cost of this scheme and the report that I received clearly showed the cost of purchasing Rockfield Road DIY store to be £17,977.83.

Can the cabinet member please inform us which of the figures quoted is the correct one in regard to the purchase of these premises?

Response

The project spend report that was provided included both a payment of £17,977.83 to Rockfield DIY Ltd that related to reimbursement of legal fees and associated costs incurred by the seller during the sale, and a payment of £5,620,516.47 to Orme & Slade Ltd that related to the actual land acquisition, giving a total cost of £5,638,494.30.

