

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 15 October 2020

Question 1

Mrs Wegg-Prosser, Breinton

To: cabinet member, infrastructure and transport

In answer to a public question in Feb 2020 from Dr. Nichola Geeson, she was told “The total approved budget for the HCCTP project was £40.651m. Of this the budget for the City Link Road (CLR) was £34.160m ... the remaining £6.491m ... allocated for transport hub and public realm improvements...is available to deliver the planned improvements.” The internal audit report highlights issues over capital contract works being treated as an extension of the BBLP public realm contract. In view of the poor quality design of the City Link Road “shared space” for pedestrians & cyclists, roundly condemned by independent road construction engineers, would you please confirm that the design and feasibility work requested for the Transport Hub & Commercial Road cycle schemes has gone out to tender and not treated as ‘inhouse’ via BBLP?

Response

The City Link Road element of the HCCTP includes a shared footway cycleway but does not include shared space where all modes share the same level surface. Shared footway cycleways have been used effectively in Herefordshire as a means to deliver a network of cycle routes and these have achieved an ongoing increase in cycling.

The next stage of the HCCTP to progress the Transport Hub and Public Realm works will be to undertake further stakeholder and public engagement to develop the design for these elements. The procurement of professional services to undertake this will be carried out in line with the council’s contract procedure rules. The public realm services contract with BBLP is one route that can be considered as part of the procurement process, along with other frameworks which the council has access to and an open tender. We realise this needs to be based upon value for money criteria. The procurement route for the next stage will be the subject of a further governance decision.

Question 2

Mr T Tibbits, Clifford

To: cabinet member, infrastructure and transport

At the most recent Marches LEP AGM and also Nutrient Management Board meeting I sought unsuccessfully GBP10000 for a citizens' science pollution monitoring project for phosphates in the river Wye. I tried to ask the full Council meeting (9/10) but find that a deadline has been missed by 24 hours. Will the Cabinet see fit to make a contribution to this project, so that the true extent of diffuse pollution entering the Wye can be measured, with a view to then acting upon its findings? For many years now phosphate pollution has been a problem, and the current moratorium on construction is also damaging local housebuilding and economic prospects. Action is needed, and the public wants to help!

Response

Thank you for this. As I think you know, I took a cabinet member decision on 10th August to allocate up to £3m to purchase land for integrated wetlands and to pay the costs associated with their design, construction and management. This decision also gave us the governance to acquire suitable agricultural land to repurpose and/or re-wild the land to offset phosphates as

well as commission consultants to provide us with an Interim Delivery Plan which will include a phosphate calculator.

Unfortunately this decision does not give us the governance to contribute to the monitoring of water quality, at present. That said, I am aware that the Environment Agency were very interested in collaborating with you on this and suggest that you pursue this with them, with our support, as they are the body responsible for the quality of the water in the River Wye and are also statutorily empowered to monitor the water quality. I am happy to meet with you to discuss this in more detail.