

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE – TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2026

Question 1

Mrs Morawiecka, Hereford

To: Chair of Audit and Governance

“The summary SWAP report for March 2026 to this committee was titled "Transport Hub - Final Report - January 2026”.

A Freedom of Information request to Herefordshire Council to see the detailed, internal audit report and any independent expert reviews on the Hereford Transport Hub capital project received the response that the information can't be released as the internal audit reports are ongoing and that the requested information is “material in the course of completion, unfinished documents and incomplete data”.

However, the Summary of the Internal Audit work 2025/26 for this meeting again says that the Transport Hub report is final, contrary to what has been said to the public.

Officers appear to be contradicting information made in independent reports to this committee. Why has the Transport Hub internal audit and any expert reports not yet been finalised? “

Response

The SWAP audit report was marked as 'final' as it was the last version issued by SWAP to the Council. However, it is still an internal council document as it has not been through our internal governance approval processes yet. It has been seen by the Audit and Governance Committee but has not yet been to Cabinet for review or determination of actions. Following comments from Audit and Governance Committee it was determined that officers would engage with SWAP to complete a follow up review of the audit to see what progress had been made against the audit recommendations and for this report to be provided to Cabinet alongside the original audit as it would provide Cabinet with further context before making any recommendations regarding the audit. Once the document has been to Cabinet for this review it will then be released as a public document. This work is almost completed, and the item will be scheduled for review by Cabinet before the end of September.

Question 2

Ms Seekings, Hereford

To: Chair of Audit and Governance

“I note that the Council's Risk Register under Capital projects says that “It has ambitious plans to deliver learning and culture projects...”

However, despite Stronger Towns Funding awarded in 2022 to deliver a new museum space and public library in Hereford (due to be opened in 2026) neither of these major projects are mentioned in the Council's Draft Statement of Accounts 2025/26 or in the work programme for 2026/27 or in any report to this committee.

These 2 key projects are funded by the Stronger Towns Fund and so should have been completed by March 2026.

Why is there no reference to these 2 capital projects in the various agenda papers?”

Response

The [Corporate Risk Register](#) at Agenda item 9 includes Risk R4: Failure to deliver capital and major projects within identified resources and planned timeframes resulting in significant overspend and reduced project outcomes. Individual risks are managed through Directorate, Service and Project level risk registers. It is not the function of the Audit & Governance Committee to examine specific risks in detail but to ensure that the council's risk management process is adequate and effective.

The [Draft Statement of Accounts](#) and [Annual Governance Statement](#) are statutory documents prepared and reported in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the 2025/26 Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). The accounts include transactions in respect of expenditure incurred in the year ended 31 March 2026 for all capital projects.

Revised guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in September 2025, confirms that Stronger Towns funding must be spent by 31 March 2028.