

Supplement 2 to the agenda for

Cabinet

Tuesday 1 December 2020

6.00 pm

online meeting

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 1 December 2020

Question 1

Ms H Hamilton, Leominster

To: cabinet member, infrastructure and transport

Would the cabinet agree with me that policy SP1 is poorly drafted as it fails to incorporate the ambition in 5.5.15 to require a resource audit and does not place any obligation on developers to comply with the audit?

Response

Paragraph 5.5.15 of the MWLP simply identifies those development types that will be required to submit a resource audit, but other types may be asked to do so. It is the policy that states the provision of a Resource Audit and the matters that should be addressed within it. Policy does not place obligation on developers to comply with any approved audit; that is the role of conditions attached to any planning permission that is granted.

Question 2

Ms M Albright

To: cabinet member, infrastructure and transport

Herefordshire's Construction Industry Lobby Group (HCILG) are concerned by the wording and inference of Policy W3.

This policy appears to support livestock intensification if the 'waste' can be managed on and off site - without detailing what 'management' should entail, what 'on or off site' means or without seeking improvements in current management. Given the problem Herefordshire faces with agricultural pollution currently is it possible to make the policy more explicit and to consider revising the wording to facilitate ecological protection and change?

For example:

'Planning permission for livestock units on agricultural holdings will only be supported where an independently commissioned waste management method statement demonstrates that the development will be nutrient neutral ,or represent betterment, when considered singularly and with regard to the cumulative impact of other proposals and existing farm activity'

Response

Policy W3 is a wholly innovative, and potentially unique, policy, addressing a waste stream that is not usually managed through the planning regime. The policy itself neither supports or not agricultural proposals; it is simply providing a framework within which to determine applications. The policy requires relevant information to be submitted and it will then be for the planning officer to determine if the proposed approach is acceptable, or not. It is not appropriate for the policy to be more explicit as the details will be different for each agricultural unit and each proposal.

The method statement does not need to be independently commissioned, and this would be an inappropriate and disproportionate request to make of applicants. Instead, the planning officer will provide the independent review of the detail that is submitted and will gain advice from relevant organisations, which include the Environment Agency, Natural England and the National Farmers Union.

The policy makes clear the requirement for development proposals to demonstrate that the approach undertaken with the unit will contribute to achieving nutrient neutrality or betterment. This is the objective to be met, but how it is met will be dependent on the agricultural unit.

COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 1 December 2020

Question 1

Councillor Nigel Shaw, Bromyard Bringsty Ward

To: leader of the council

I note that the administration is now anticipating a £4m overspend by the end of the year which I presume it will seek to cover from reserves. What confidence can the leader give that his budget will be any more accurate next year, given an anticipated fall in income and current rise in revenue expenditure?

Response

The global pandemic has challenged all of us, Herefordshire Council has intervened in a number of ways to help keep our residents safe and support the businesses in Herefordshire. As has been reported to cabinet and council these interventions have taken a number of different forms. Some of these were time limited, dealing with specific emerging issues, and others such as ensuring the provision of PPE are longer term and are likely to continue for a while longer. The Council has been working with central government, providing evidence of the costs of responding to the challenges of Covid 19. Government have provided a number of grants, and we expect to receive further grants. We expect to deliver more of a balanced out turn at the end of the year as grants are confirmed and new grants agreed. However we recognise that by its very nature of the pandemic it is difficult to forecast the financial outturn with complete accuracy.

I am confident that the process to agree next year's budget is robust and will deliver a balanced budget, we have started the consultation process and it will be presented to the council scrutiny meetings shortly. We welcome the Chancellor's announcement in the recent spending review that Government will continue to fund councils into the future as they deal with the pandemic.

