

Supplement to the agenda for

Cabinet

Thursday 29 July 2021

2.30 pm

**Three Counties Hotel, Belmont Road, Belmont, Hereford, HR2
7BP**

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 29 JULY 2021

Question 1

From: M Burns, Hereford

To: Cabinet member, infrastructure and transport

If the plan for an urban wetland park, (from a consortium led by Herefordshire Wildlife Trust) on the former Essex Arms site by the City Link Road is approved, will the aim to include a pedestrian/cycleway across the park to link the station transport hub and central Hereford and NMITE also be welcomed?

Response

Thank you for your question. Yes, the ambition would be to provide high quality walking and cycling routes whenever possible and although there are no detailed plans for the area you refer to yet, the direction would be to designers to provide such a link here. That link could then join up with the shared footway / cycleway that runs along the City Link Road to the train station.

Question 2

From: A Bridges, Hereford

To: Cabinet member, finance, corporate services and planning

Given the improvements to governance and oversight of capital projects agreed with Audit & Governance by the then Chief Executive back in January 2018, were the then Leader of the Council (Cllr Lester) and the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure (Cllr Price) made aware of the acquisition overspend and financial risk mounting on the City Link Road project?

Response

The cabinet member decision in November 2017 set out the HCCTP cost increases and how these were proposed to be funded utilising the majority of the risk and inflation contingency allocations with in the overall HCCTP – which included all the LEP-funded active travel and public realm projects.

Whilst land costs have increased since that time the detail of increased costs set out in that 2017 cabinet member report were based on the project position and information at that time and were set out in detail in the key considerations and financial implications section of that report.

COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 29 JULY 2021

Question 1

From: Councillor Graham Andrews, Kings Acre Ward

**To: Cabinet member, commissioning, procurement and assets
Cabinet member, finance, corporate services and planning**

The recent weeks has highlighted the large variances in project management control that has been completed on significant high profile projects, that have been late on delivery and over budget.

I see new Senior Project Managers are now in place, however will HC continue to outsource projects to provider such as BBLP who appear have a poor delivery record HC, or will HC engage their own Project Managers for all future projects, where control is more accountable?

Local Project Managers in local projects may provide greater results

Response

Thank you for your question Cllr Andrews. You are correct to highlight that historical project management failures have been a matter of concern in certain areas of the council and that legacy issues continue to come to light.

Since coming into office we have made it a priority to create a Project Management Office (PMO) and to staff it with professional and experienced project managers and now Delivery Directors to lead on the many important projects in which this council is investing.

Our substantial public realm partnership contract with BBLP has been independently examined. The shortcomings to which you refer stem more from the way the contract has historically been operated.

Item 8 on today's agenda is about learning the lessons from how this contract has previously been managed. The recommendations propose the improvements necessary to the way the council operates this contract in the role of 'Customer' which are necessary to derive the full benefit from this partnership arrangement in future. These new contracting and commissioning posts in the PMO will put the checks and balances in place to create and maintain the constructive tension between supplier and customer that are necessary to deliver and demonstrate future value to our residents.

We shall continue to use the flexibility that a mix of in-house and contracted-in project managers provides in order to manage the fluctuations in work flow on the delivery of large and complex projects. Whether the Project Managers are our own permanent staff or are specialists working with us for short periods of time, you can be assured that the culture of professional project management is now with us and is here to stay at Herefordshire Council.



Meeting:	Cabinet
Meeting date:	29 July 2021
Title of report:	Recovery and Investment Fund
Report by:	Cabinet Member, finance, corporate services and planning

Please note that paragraph 22 of the report should be amended to read:

22. The estimated cost of appointing a programme director and the external specialist advisors to enable the further work identified in this report is up to £100k, this will be funded from the recovery and investment earmarked reserve, with the balance of this ear marked reserve, £404k, transferred to the general reserve.

Current wording is:

22. The estimated cost of appointing a programme director and the external specialist advisors to enable the further work identified in this report is up to £100k, this will be funded from the recovery and investment fund earmarked reserve which currently totals £505k. This reserve was established whilst closing the 2020/21 accounts and is funded from a minimum revenue over provision adjustment identified by external audit.

