

**Supplement to the agenda for**

# **Council**

**Friday 13 October 2023**

**10.00 am**

**Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4  
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**Agenda item no. 5 - Questions from members of the public**

Question Number	Questioner	Question	Question to
PQ 1	Mr Symonds, Ross-on-Wye	A Police traffic survey of the A40 30mph zone in Hildersley showed the 85%ile speed was 39.1mph. With this evidence Herefordshire Council planning officers amended the s106 conditions for the current David Wilson development to include a contribution for a light controlled crossing on the A40 in Hildersley. This money was paid to the Council some months ago so please could you tell me when this important road safety improvement will be implemented?	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>S106 Highways &amp; Transport has a total budget of £373,635.5 with which to deliver these improvements. The budget has now been committed and the scope of works passed onto Principal Designers, AECOM, in September to begin outline draft proposals for a signalised crossing and TRO to move the 30mph limit further east of the David Wilson development, with the potential of a 40mph 'buffer zone' preceding this. The movement is intended to now capture the development within the 30mph limit.</p> <p>Ward Member Cllr O'Driscoll has been briefed prior to these works being commissioned and is in support. Detailed design is expected to be completed this financial year, TRO completion and anticipated delivery around the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 24/25.</p>			
PQ 2	Mr Milln, Hereford	<p>At Council on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019, in answer to my question about reducing road injuries by extending 20 mph limits where people live, Cllr Price confirmed that the Council was committed to deliver further 20 mph schemes as part of the Hereford Transport Package which had been consulted in 2018.</p> <p>On 6th March 2020 Full Council passed a Motion requesting the Executive to investigate area-wide 20 mph speed limits across Herefordshire's towns and major villages.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the Prime Minister's recent pronouncements Cllr Price was kind enough to offer continued support at the 20 mph public meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023.</p> <p>Given that local authorities responsible for more than 20 million people in the UK have now implemented these, what progress has Herefordshire made in the 43 months since the Motion was passed?</p>	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure

**Response:**

The council has been progressing a policy to manage and introduce 20mph speed limits where possible. Work to gather the evidence to support and set the Herefordshire Policy is being undertaken this financial year. The review and recommendations will enable the council to make an informed decision as to how to progress in Herefordshire.

PQ 3	Mrs McGeown, Weobley	<p>It is intended to carry out Flu Vaccination Clinics for High School students in Herefordshire. This program has not previously been applied to this group.</p> <p>An information letter will be provided by each school to the parents to enable them to give fully informed consent for their children to receive the Flu vaccination. This should observe the ethical duties as per the “Montgomery Ruling” to inform parents of all “material risks” (which includes risks considered rare) of the vaccine before seeking their consent:  <a href="https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2013-0136-judgment.pdf">https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2013-0136-judgment.pdf</a></p> <p>A template letter, sourced from a commercial company, targeting younger children resident in metropolitan areas is inappropriate.</p> <p>Please detail contents of the letter that will ensure Herefordshire parents give their fully informed consent and also Identify the Key Potential Benefits and Harms to this group of children living in the healthy Herefordshire environment?</p>	Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing
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**Response:**

NHS England are responsible for the annual flu vaccination programme and commission Vaccination UK to provide the nasal flu programme across numerous counties and boroughs in England, including the Black Country, Hertfordshire, Herefordshire & Worcestershire, Peterborough and 9 Boroughs of North East London. The 2023/24 annual flu vaccination programme includes both pupils attending primary school and those attending high school (also called secondary school) in line with national guidance.

As part of the vaccination programme in schools, Vaccine UK send out a cover letter to parents informing them that the flu vaccine will be offered in their child’s school, should they wish to take it up. This provides brief information about the flu vaccination spray, potential side effects, and directs parents to a consent form online. The same letter is used for the parents of primary and high school pupils. This letter is not the main information source for informed consent, but does signpost parents to publically available sources of information. The cover letter points parents to visit a publicly available online [e-consent form](#) that has more detailed information to better inform consent. This includes a [Frequently Asked Question](#) section, a link to a 12-side [“information for parents and carers”](#) leaflet produced by the UK Health Security Agency, and further links to [www.nhs.uk/child-flu](http://www.nhs.uk/child-flu).

PQ 4	Mr Lister, Ledbury	Why is the council proposing to remove £2 million funding allocated to the above project when there is a clearly identified need for the sort of hubs, identified within the project documentation, within the county's market towns, most of which will be delivered by volunteer led organisations,	Cabinet member
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		<p>such as Ledbury Food Bank, thus adding considerable value to the money invested in the projects?</p> <p>If the funding is removed to what extent will the market towns benefit from the reallocation of the £2 million?</p>	adults, health and wellbeing
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>Thank you for your question. When this capital money was allocated by the previous administration to create Super Hubs, expressions of interest (EOIs) were invited from all local organisations, not just Talk Community Hubs, to deliver a broader range of integrated and co-located services close to local communities, such as health, counselling, midwifery, health visiting, mental health services and physiotherapy and possibly confidential meetings/clinics. In all cases, I recognise the significant amount of work that people have put into developing the expressions of interest for the benefit of local communities.</p> <p>We want to be absolutely sure that any funding will bring a real benefit to communities and that is why we are undertaking a wider, strategic review of the Talk Community approach. The recommendation to take the funding out of the coming year's Capital Programme does not mean that we are dismissing the idea of Super Hubs and I can assure members and those organisations who made their submissions that once we have a better understanding of what is being delivered, how many people it is reaching, where the gaps are etc. we will look again at the Super Hub proposal.</p> <p>This review of the capital programme means that the previously allocated funding will be made available to support the capital projects proposed as additions to the capital programme. These include projects such as Resurfacing Herefordshire Highways and Employment Land and Incubation Space. This funding will benefit the whole county including the market towns.</p>			
PQ 5	Mr McGeown, Weobley	<p>In January 2021, Cllr David Hitchiner, as Leader of Herefordshire Council, made a pledge, interpreted as not personal but representing Herefordshire people, to UK100 CITIES NETWORK LIMITED.</p> <p><a href="https://www.uk100.org/blog/2021/01/road-cop26-january-update-local-net-zero-pledges-hit-50">https://www.uk100.org/blog/2021/01/road-cop26-january-update-local-net-zero-pledges-hit-50</a></p> <p>A £1.3Milion+ annual turnover, Private Company:</p> <p><a href="https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/10515243">https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/10515243</a></p> <p>Even after a number of Freedom of Information Requests, the benefits to Herefordshire Folk of meeting membership criteria of UK100 are unclear.</p> <p>But</p> <p>“members in the network do not need to renew their membership”</p>	Leader

		<p>but</p> <p>“members can withdraw their membership at any time”</p> <p>Such as elected changes in political control.</p> <p><a href="https://www.uk100.org/membership#question16">https://www.uk100.org/membership#question16</a></p> <p>So will Clr Jonathan Lester release Herefordshire from Clr David Hitchiner’s pledge and withdraw membership?</p> <p>Or will he reaffirm the pledge, imposing on Herefordshire Folk the continuing meeting of criteria to UK100 Ltd?</p> <p>“membership can be terminated by UK100 if a local authority no longer meets the membership criteria”.</p>	
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>The Council remains committed to our ambitious targets to achieve both organisational and countywide carbon neutrality by 2030.</p> <p>UK100 is a cross-party membership organisation that supports the most ambitious councils to go further and faster on their Net Zero and Clean Air targets.</p> <p>Our participation in this network does not commit the Council to anything beyond our own commitments and remains a useful tool for networking and sharing best practice.</p> <p>As such the Council is not looking to withdraw from this network.</p>			
PQ 6	Mrs l’Anson, Ledbury	<p>In 2019 Ledbury was designated a Super Hub. Several officer led meetings ensued and suitable venues were considered e.g. St. Katherine’s Hall. This decision was replaced by information that towns could now apply to become Super Hubs. No further information was forthcoming</p> <p>The recent 'expressions of interest 'submitted to Herefordshire Council from LEAF and from the Ledbury Food Bank were not just ideas jotted down on the back of an envelope but long and detailed submissions deserving serious consideration which included rectifying Ledbury's lack of youth facilities.</p> <p>My question:-</p> <p>Will this Administration reconsider their decision to remove funding for Super Hubs so that</p>	Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing

	Ledbury LEAF and Ledbury Food Bank can continue their brilliant work, and also confirm that the money pulled is not going to be swallowed up by road building?	
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**Response:**

Thank you for your question. 43 expressions of interest (EOIs) were submitted for the funding which was to support the delivery of a broader range of integrated and co-located services close to local communities, such as health, counselling, midwifery, health visiting, mental health services and physiotherapy and possibly confidential meetings/clinics.

In all cases, I recognise and appreciate the significant amount of work that people have put into developing the EOIs to benefit their local communities and this has been further complicated by frequent amendments to the Super Hub proposal.

You will appreciate that many of these EOIs would not have gone to the next stage as insufficient money was available to support every bid. In addition, some of the bids were within a stone's throw of each other or did not support a programme to deliver a broader range of services than currently delivered.

However, we want to be absolutely sure that any funding will bring a real benefit to communities and that is why we are undertaking a wider, strategic review of the Talk Community approach. The recommendation to take the funding out of the coming year's Capital Programme does not mean that we are dismissing the idea of Super Hubs and I can assure members and those organisations who made their submissions that once we have a better understanding of what is being delivered, how many people it is reaching, where the gaps are etc. we will look again at the Super Hub proposal.





**Agenda item no. 6 - Questions from members of the Council**

Question Number	Questioner	Question	Question to
MQ 1	Cllr David Hitchiner, Stoney Street	I attended the Cabinet meeting on Thursday 5th October and was pleased to hear Cllr Price confirm that no works will be started on the Southern Relief Road until the money is secured to fund it. This seems to contradict the wording of the papers submitted to Council which state at paragraph 7 (f) that the £12.3m included money to enable “initial works to start”. It is in my view inappropriate for any works to start before a business case is in place and full funding is in place. Would Cllr Price please confirm his intentions? If initial works are excluded what exactly is the £12.3m to be spent on prior to the putting together of a business case – surely not for buying land which might not eventually be needed if the business case does not stand up?	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>The rationale for the Southern Link Road linking the A49 with the A465 is well documented. The planned allocation of £12.3m is to support this work. Governance arrangements will be followed before any decision to incur capital expenditure is made, in line with the council’s Contract Procedure Rules, Finance Procedure Rules and the Scheme of Delegation.</p>			
MQ 2	Cllr Elizabeth Foxton, Eign Hill	<p>I understand the three parish councils promoting the Pontrilas Parkway initiative were advised that Network Rail and DfT expect to see Herefordshire and Monmouthshire Councils’ good faith towards the Pontrilas Station project evidenced by each making provision of at least £2m capital funding towards the scheme.</p> <p>Such provision will go a long way to ensuring the scheme is supported by both national governments - especially as finding time in rail scheduling is not considered a constraint and the Prime Minister seeks smaller, good, alternative railway projects.</p> <p>Given the support from our MP Jesse Norman and the Leader of the Council – and recognising that the business case is more developed than the resurrection of the Southern Link Road – will the Cabinet Member give me, and Golden Valley residents, his commitment to amend the proposed capital programme today to include such provision?</p>	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>I would reiterate my previous comments that as an administration, we support the development of a new station at Pontrilas, however the scheme, and its development, necessarily are the responsibility of Network Rail and Transport for Wales. I have asked officers to organise a round table meeting of all public sector partners that will benefit from this scheme. The administration is working to agree and prioritise which projects to take</p>			

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forward as a part of its transport strategy. I am not aware of any requirement of the Council to use its own resources, but I am happy to follow this up if Councillor Foxton can share further details with me.

MQ 3	Cllr Dave Boulter, Whitecross	Please could Cllr Price or Cllr Stoddart please confirm where the £7,000,000 of capital receipts is planned to come from which they propose to use towards their £12,300,000 funding allocation for the reintroduction of the Southern Link Road to the Capital Programme?	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
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**Response:**

At 1 September 2023, there was an unallocated balance of £14.2m in the council's Capital Receipts Reserve. This balance will be considered to fund any future revisions to the Capital Programme.

MQ 4	Cllr Pauline Crockett, Queenswood	Please would Cllr Price confirm that he has an approved Outline and Full Capital Programme Business Case made out for his proposed introduction of the Southern Link Road to the Capital Programme today, and what the source is of the financial modelling which has been used to evidence the project costs as set out in those business cases?	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
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**Response:**

The rationale for the Southern Link Road linking the A49 with the A465 is well documented. The planned allocation of £12.3m is to support this work. Governance arrangements will be followed before any decision to incur capital expenditure is made, in line with the council's Contract Procedure Rules, Finance Procedure Rules and the Scheme of Delegation.

MQ 5	Cllr Liz Harvey, Ledbury North	Please could Cllr Stoddart explain why he is not continuing the good practice introduced by the Independents for Herefordshire and Green coalition to require that outline and full business cases are developed for all capital programme schemes that are submitted to full council for approval?	Cabinet member finance and corporate services
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**Response:**

For each of the proposed additions, relevant information and evidence has been considered as part of the review undertaken by Cabinet. Governance arrangements will be followed before any decision to incur capital expenditure is made, in line with the council's Contract Procedure Rules, Finance Procedure Rules and the Scheme of Delegation.

In prior years, business cases have not been prepared for all capital programme schemes.

Projects included in the capital programme approved by full Council have been supported by an outline business case where this method has been deemed relevant and, in other instances, the development of detailed information has continued after a project has been added to the programme. This ensures a practical approach; balancing appropriate governance with the ability to make progress on capital projects.

The revised Capital Programme approved for 2021/22 included £20m as a dedicated budget for 'Strategic Housing Development' to cover the initial phases. As such, a business case was not provided at the point of inclusion in the capital programme, recognising that supplementary arrangements were in place to ensure expenditure would be subject to appropriate controls and governance.

Similarly, the purchase of Maylords Shopping Centre in 2020 was not supported by a business case; this purchase formed part of the 'Development Partnership' entry; this being a broader budget allocation in the capital programme.

In July 2020 Cabinet recommended to Council a mid-year revision to the capital programme to support Priority Flood Repair Works and this was not supported by an outline or full business case.

Fully funded grant projects such as Local Transport Plan (LTP), Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), the schools maintenance grant and S106 developer income, do not have business cases as the funding is spent in line with the grant conditions.

The Capital Programme for 2024/25 will be presented to Council in February 2024 for approval. All additions will be supported by an outline business case, where deemed necessary, which will include an analysis of costs and expected benefits, strategic fit, project scope, an assessment of risks as well consideration of dependencies and other options.

For projects included in this revised capital programme for approval by Council in October 2023, a full business case will be prepared where appropriate. As an example, a business case for the Library Project will be published as part of the documents for the Cabinet meeting on 26 October 2023. Where a business case is not prepared, for example the Resurfacing Herefordshire Highways project, this capital work will be informed by other relevant information such as condition surveys.

