

3. Supplement to the agenda for

Cabinet

Thursday 27 June 2024

2.30 pm

**Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4
0LE**

| | Pages |
|--|--------------|
| 4. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC | 3 - 4 |
| Responses to questions | |
| 5. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS | 5 - 6 |
| Response to question | |

Agenda item no. 4 - Questions from members of the public

| Question Number | Questioner | Question | Question to |
|---|-----------------|---|------------------------------|
| PQ 1 | Gill Jinman | Can the Cabinet provide an update on the plans for the Parkway station at Pontrilas and what progress is being made? | Cllr Phillip Price/Ross Cook |
| <p>Response:</p> <p>At its meeting on March 28, 2024, Cabinet approved a budget of £50,000 for developing a new Strategic Outline Business Case for the new station. This work will be driven by a task force headed up by the council that includes key partners from the rail industry. The study will seek to build upon previous feasibility work and address comments from the Department for Transport.</p> <p>We are currently developing a project brief for this work and, once the individual members of the task force are confirmed, we expect consultants to be appointed and the study to start. In recognition of the wider benefits to the community of a new station, the scheme will be known as the Golden Valley Parkway</p> | | | |
| PQ 2 | Charlotte Eynon | <p>In the newly adopted Council Plan 2024 to 2025, it commits the council to <i>providing more homes, reduce congestion and increase employment opportunities. We will work with others to create the transport network that the county needs. This will include active travel, rail connectivity and improved road infrastructure.</i></p> <p>Can the Cabinet confirm that it is committed to fully opening Pontrilas Station and what timescale is envisaged for this to happen? And can Cabinet explain, as part of its plans, how it is seeking to create future career opportunities for the rural communities and also help traffic congestion?</p> | Cllr Phillip Price/Ross Cook |
| <p>Response:</p> <p>We are committed to developing proposals for a new Golden Valley Parkway station and have allocated £50,000 towards the development of the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC). The plans are at a very early stage and new stations typically take several years to reach the operational stage. Until the SOBC is complete and there is the support of partners in the rail industry to take the scheme forward, it is not possible to commit to a timescale for station opening.</p> | | | |

3

The council is currently developing a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) that will be subject to public consultation later in the year. The LTP will comprise a wide range of measures, from the Herford Western Bypass to local projects to encourage more walking and cycling, to improve traffic congestion.

In relation to how the Council is seeking to create future career opportunities for the rural communities, this is an ongoing part of the role of the Economy and Regeneration service, which has the objective of more, better paid jobs. Through our Herefordshire Growth Hub, the Council supports any local business to grow and become sustainable, and clearly a key part of this is through increasing and improving the range of job opportunities they offer. Specific examples of how the Council are supporting job creation in rural areas, include through the allocation of UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity funding to support business growth and job creation; working with the Herefordshire Skills Board to encourage businesses to create and take on more apprenticeships; organising the annual Herefordshire Skills Show, which showcases career opportunities to over 1,200 year 10 school pupils, and working with local businesses which are looking to expand.

Agenda item no. 5 - Questions from members of the Council

| Question Number | Questioner | Question | Question to |
|--|------------------|---|--|
| PQ 1 | Cllr Ben Proctor | "In response to a question I asked to Cabinet on 25 th April Cllr Gandy informed me that the Housing Solutions phone line should be moved to an improved system within a couple of weeks. Can the Cabinet confirm that this has now been done and advise what information is now collected on call volumes, call patterns, failure demand, rework and latent demand for this service?" | Cllr Carole Gandy/Hilary Hall/Hayley Crane |
| <p>Response: The response I provided in April was on the basis of information made available at the time that the pilot scheme would be trialled by Housing in about two weeks following the Cabinet meeting. Since then, the Housing Solutions Team has been in dialogue with Hoople to implement the new telephone system. Unfortunately, due to annual leave and other diary commitments, the implementation has been delayed. As originally stated, Housing Solutions is piloting the new system and as a result, a number of teething problems have been identified which have needed to be worked through. For example, one issue was the system struggling to link with mobile phones which the outreach workers use as they are frequently away from the office working with individuals.</p> <p>I am pleased to confirm that all these issues have been resolved and the work has been agreed and signed off by the Housing Solutions Team. It is estimated that the setup will take around two weeks to put in place and I am assured that it will be operational by the end of July. If, for any reason the project is further delayed, I will update Cllr Proctor accordingly.</p> | | | |

5

