

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 20 JULY 2012

Question from Mr P McKay, Leominster, Herefordshire

Question 1

Un-adopted Roads

A paper reference SN402 raised to inform MP's about un-adopted roads may be read at www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN00402.pdf and advises that there are 40,000 such roads in England, with councils being the highway authority though they are not maintained at public expense. In Herefordshire some are referred to as being the highway on which footpaths and bridleways terminate on the written statements, others of public interest include those that are through routes or lead to places of public resort. My supplementary question of 25 May asked *"Thank you for advising that highway records will be online by autumn, and asking if you will please check that this will include those un-adopted roads Council is aware of, especially those that connect with public rights of way or are through routes, as required by the 2007 Regulations ?"* and is being responded to by letter, but whether or not the reply is *'yes these un-adopted roads will be included'*, which is reply I predict, as otherwise the online highway records would be littered with gaps, cul-de-sac's, etc., and be a mockery not worthy of our Council, leading to many needless costly and time consuming representations, may I please ask:-

Will Council raise a management policy for un-adopted roads, as being un-adopted they are outside scope of current Highway Maintenance Plan, with this policy covering identification, management, and adoption procedures, etc., recognising the contribution these routes make to countryside access, particularly for equestrians due to the identified lack of recorded bridleways in the county ?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 20 JULY 2012

Question from Mr P Mitchell, Herefordshire

Question 2

Shortfall in proceeds of the sale of Council interest in WMS

Can the Cabinet Member explain the circumstances which led to the sale of the Council's interest in West Mercian Supplies to Hedgeland Ltd a holding or shell company which apparently itself was then sold on only a week later to Smiths News Ltd at more than six times the value the Council was paid for it.

Specifically addressing -:

- *What if any proportion was the pre-existing value of Hedgeland of the sale value to Smiths News*
- *Disclosure of likely under valuation to this Council funds of up to £7.4m on the £1.4m sale share*
- *If the Council's adviser valuation was independently checked or validated before the WMS sale*
- *Why this potential direct sale opportunity to Smiths News had not been identified by its adviser*
- *Explain its validation of Hedgelands claims to independently operate WMS itself*
- *Any sale conditions set for recovery of premature onwards sale proceeds*
- *What steps can and are being taken to recover any shortfall in receipts rightly due to the Council*
- *Demonstrate no impropriety by its agents or any other party involved in the sale*
- *How such potential mistakes will be avoided / prevented in the future*

Question from Mr H Bryant, Herefordshire

Question 3

A49 to A465 Link Road

Can Herefordshire Council give an assurance that, before they spend a large amount of public money on the A49-A465 Link Road, it has thoroughly investigated and shown evidence that all reasonable alternatives for solving Hereford's traffic flow problem have been explored, such as:

- *A new river crossing at Rotherwas*
- *Banning parking on Belmont Road from the Tesco roundabout to the Greyfriars Bridge thus enabling two lanes in in the morning and two lanes out in the afternoon, as has been done successfully in Cardiff*
- *Reopening Pontrilas station as a request stop and a park and rail scheme at Tram Inn*
- *An efficient school bus scheme*
- *A tramway on the Great Western Way*

and state where any such evidence is available?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 20 JULY 2012

Question from Mrs Morawiecka, Brienton, Herefordshire

Question 4

Revised Preferred Option Consultation Results

A consultation was carried out on the Revised Preferred Option of the Local Development Framework from September to November 2011. Whilst all the individual responses have been published on the Herefordshire Council website, an actual summary of the results of the consultation, analysed consistently with previous years, has not been made public. Instead, Here for Hereford have had to provide a total analysis in the absence of the work being done by Council officers. This summary shows that:-

- a. 84% of respondents were against the revised, proposed housing plans for the county;*
- b. 88% against the Western relief road;*
- c. 93% requested plans in place for increased water and sewage treatment prior to the Core Strategy being approved;*
- d. 94% requested that plans be in place to cater for increased demand for hospital beds prior to the Core Strategy being approved.*

Could you please explain how the revised preferred option has been amended to address the concerns raised through the consultation process?

Question from Mrs Corrigan, Holmer, Herefordshire

Question 5

Housing at Holmer

Holmer has been proposed by officers for inclusion within the draft Core Strategy to accommodate 500 homes. However, existing residents in Holmer have not been able to connect to a mains sewerage system in the last 19 years and their soakaways have been compromised by surrounding developments permitted by Herefordshire Council. With sewerage facilities overloading, what is Herefordshire Council proposing to do to remedy this situation, especially before any further developments should be included in the Draft Core Strategy and when is the new main between Cleeve Orchard Pumping Station and Wentworth Park likely to be adopted?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 20 JULY 2012

Question from Mrs Wegg-Prosser, Breinton, Herefordshire

Question 6

Re Bed Shortages in County Hospital

Further to my question raised on 25th May concerning a meeting regarding bed shortages in the County Hospital which meeting has yet to be arranged despite Councillor Jarvis saying then it would be progressed 'in the next few weeks', the Overview & Scrutiny committee heard this month that Herefordshire continues to have the lowest number of hospital beds per head of population in England. Could you please explain how the new housing developments proposed for Herefordshire will help increase hospital bed provision within the plan period 2012 to 2031?

Question from Mrs Churchward, Breinton, Herefordshire

Question 7

Draft Core Strategy

The new National Planning Policy framework reiterates that Local Planning Authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of "the best and most versatile agricultural land" (ie. Grades 1,2 & 3A agricultural land) . Where significant development is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land, in preference to that of higher quality.

Could you please explain how this approach has been applied to the Draft Core Strategy, especially when 3 Strategic Sites for Hereford (namely Holmer, Three Elms and Lower Bullingham) have been proposed, which are on land which falls within this classification?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 20 JULY 2012

Question from Mrs Morris, Hereford

Question 8

Omission from Draft Core Strategy (12 July 2012)

Neither the Edgar Street Retail Development nor the urban housing scheme for 800 homes, has been identified by officers for inclusion within the Draft Core Strategy, according to the report to Cabinet (12th July 2012).

As Herefordshire Council has spent millions on bringing forward these key city centre sites for development, why have they been omitted from the Draft Core Strategy?

Question from Mrs Ferris, Dinedor, Hereford

Question 9

Hereford Broad Street Improvements

Who was responsible for formulating and agreeing the Hereford Broad Street improvements briefing and how was the remit of the briefing decided upon?

Question from Mr Grice, Belmont, Hereford

Question 10

Hereford Relief Road Southern Section

With reference to the proposed Hereford relief road southern section and the introduction of four more routes ie. SC3, SC4 , SC5 & SC6. I was particularly concerned by the limited consultation period previously adopted when the former bypass route was proposed as a preferred option. What is the full process which Herefordshire council are obliged to follow when choosing the route?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 20 JULY 2012

Question from Mr Wallace, Breinton, Hereford

Question 11

Rotherwas Rail

I understand that much of the original rail infrastructure to the Rotherwas area exists and could be reopened for freight and passengers, for much less than any of the new road schemes proposed by Herefordshire Council. What assessments have Herefordshire Council undertaken to determine the role that railways could play in local transport policy?
