

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2013
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Question from Mr P McKay, Herefordshire

Question 1

May I ask if Council has accepted my representation that having complete and correct highway records is a fundamental requirement for a Local Development Framework and incorporated policies to identify the shortfalls with actions to address them to achieve this?

Question from Mrs E Morawiecka, Breinton, Hereford

Question 2

The draft Core Strategy stated “Local authorities should have clear evidence about planned infrastructure, its cost, timing and other likely sources of funding to underpin their development strategies. This will be provided through an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which will sit alongside the Core Strategy”. The IDP presented as background evidence for the consultation on the draft Core Strategy omitted many cost figures; had no schedule of timings of delivery and did not identify likely sources of funding, where shortfalls were indicated. No infrastructure was included in the IDP to underpin the housing growth planned for rural areas in the draft Core Strategy.

As a result of the consultation on the draft Core Strategy and the responses received, what amendments have been made to correct the omissions identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan?

Question from Mr F Clark, Bromyard and Winslow Town Council, Herefordshire

Question 3

With all your planned development for Bromyard, how will you manage to get all the extra volume and size of road vehicles over Petite Bridge? It is not wide enough now, for two lanes of HGV and pedestrians at the same time, and when flooded will close the bypass to all.

Question from Mr R Oliver, Leominster

Question 4

Why was there the assumption that everyone uses the Herefordshire Council website to get information about the Core Strategy?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2013
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Question from Professor A Fisher, Hereford

Question 5

What current and emerging plans of Herefordshire Council would be treated or are being treated as material considerations at planning inquiries in the County?

Question from Mr J Verity, Leominster

Question 6

Residential growth can only be achieved if new well paid employment can be generated. Leominster is at a disadvantage compared with Ledbury and Ross -on-Wye being further from motorways. Granted Leominster has a railway station but the services are limited - no direct connection to London or Birmingham and there is no freight facility. Earmarking 10 hectares of employment land will not bring jobs to Leominster. How do you propose to overcome this problem?

Question from Mrs M Burns, Hereford

Question 7

According to the most recent sustainability appraisal of the draft Local Plan, the only wholly negative impacts of the Spatial Strategy arise from Policy SS4, 'Movement and Transportation'.

What changes to the Plan does the Council propose to address this finding of unsustainability?

Question from Ms M Albright, Herefordshire

Question 8

Please reconsider the Affordable Housing contributions starting at 1 dwelling in rural areas - most plots will be unviable with this, on top of the CIL and s106 obligations. Is it better to look at primarily using exception sites for Affordable Housing (which Housing Associations and communities prefer) such as recent schemes in Lyonshall, Leintwardine, Orleton Weobley etc , and then to start contributions on schemes of 6 or more dwellings. This would be more acceptable to Housing Association, developers and communities. Please also reconsider the wide ranging and punishing commercial practicalities (by speaking to

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2013

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

those actively involved in the provision of Affordable Housing such as developers and Housing Associations) of policy H1. It is so unworkable that it puts the provision of both market housing and affordable housing in serious jeopardy and doesn't reflect the wishes of rural communities. The whole issue and complexities of Affordable/Social Housing in Herefordshire needs much more discussion from all sectors.

Do other local plans from other areas have this much emphasis on Affordable Housing above all other housing types?

Question from Mr J Farrar, Leominster

Question 9

Residential growth can only be achieved if new employment (in the region of at least 5000 new jobs) can be generated. Unless, of course, the new occupants are all retired people for which there are very limited resources in terms of social care.

Leominster is at a disadvantage compared with Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye in being further from motorways which is a critical factor in generating new business. The A49 and A44 are both roads with considerable problems for commercial transport. Although Leominster is on the railway, there are no freight facilities and the services are limited.

Acquiring 10 hectares of employment land is no incentive to create the necessary employment.

How do you propose to overcome this problem?

Question from Mrs P Churchward, Breinton

Question 10

Monitoring Reports

The monitoring of the Core Strategy is to be via the Annual Monitoring Report.

The last report published by the Council became available in June, 2012...for the year ended 31st March, 2011.

As you know, for monitoring to be effective, reports must timely and up to date.

What improvements are being put in place to ensure Annual Monitoring Reports are not published more than a year in arrears?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2013
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Question from Ms S Bound, Herefordshire

Question 11

Why do Affordable Housing obligations start at 1 dwelling in rural areas but 15 units in urban areas? This seems unfair considering most Housing Associations feel urban areas best meet the needs of their clients and are most in demand.

Question from Mr B Albright, Herefordshire

Question 12

The high percentage provision (35- 40%) of Affordable Housing in rural areas will definitely negatively impact upon the viability and end cost of all open market housing - artificially widening the gap between social housing and market housing. The cost of providing AH, paying s106 and the high cost of CIL will render most rural sites impossible to develop. What provision to the council have in place to adapt these targets if it is shown that the external obligations are too costly?

Question from Mr S Robinson, Herefordshire

Question 13

Replacement dwellings represent an excellent opportunity to upgrade the existing housing stock and so would it be more sensible to offer a percentage size increase (30 - 50%?) and ask a developer to justify changes in location, scale, orientation and appearance rather than try to force the dwelling to remain in the small, low cost sector. Replacement dwellings are rarely a low cost option and could offer a wide range of benefits. Surely this should be encouraged?

Question from Ms C Speke, Eardisland

Question 14

Can the council provide actual figures (or approximate guidelines) for 'Affordable Housing contributions' per dwelling? Does the council accept that single or small rural schemes cannot afford to pay AH contributions, provision, s106 agreements and the wildly excessive CIL on top of locally distinctive, sustainable and high quality construction?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2013
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Question from Ms N Eyles, Breinton

Question 15

The Draft Core Strategy that went to Cabinet stated (page 200) “A list of prioritised Infrastructure Projects, which the Council have committed to, will be advertised on the Council’s website in the form of a Regulation 123 list. This list will have been verified in terms of achievability and phasing of delivery through the Economic Viability Study which will ensure that a balance is struck between the required infrastructure projects and the ability of the strategic sites to be delivered by the development industry”. Where is the Regulation 123 List which full council have prioritised and committed to and which needs to accompany the Core Strategy for the EIP?

Question from Mr S Wegg-Prosser, Herefordshire

Question 16

The debate on the Core Strategy has been removed from the agreed timetable of ordinary Council meetings, and rescheduled as an Extraordinary meeting. Supplementary questions from members of the public are not being allowed, apparently to shorten proceedings. The Core Strategy is being pushed through Council with unseemly haste. Work on the Nutrient Management Plan, transport modelling and realistic infrastructure proposals has been delayed. These vital elements of the Core Strategy will not now be ready until the autumn. The implementation of the CIL Charging Schedule has been delayed to April 2015, giving the Council valuable further planning time. Given all these circumstances, why was the debate on the Core Strategy not postponed to the autumn as well?

Question from Ms L Lewis, Breinton

Question 17

With the current financial pressures on Herefordshire Council, the low level of reserves, cuts to public services and the need to raise in excess of £500 million to fund the necessary infrastructure to support the Core Strategy, how much is Herefordshire Council planning to borrow to make up the funding shortfall?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2013
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Question from Mr F Ware, Leominster

Question 18

How can it be possible for developers to progress the Leominster strategic urban expansion without exacerbating the air pollution at Bargates, unless the proposed link road is first constructed to a sufficient extent to provide new accesses to the site for builders' supplies and equipment, so that they can be delivered without going through Bargates, Ryelands Road or Barons Cross?

Question from Mr T Geeson, Hereford

Question 19

The Core Strategy includes policies on movement in Hereford City. One of the arguments for relocating the cattle market to the edge of Hereford was to make it more easily accessible for the majority of farmers and reduce city centre congestion, particularly around the Edgar Street roundabout. Was any work of any sort carried out before and after the re-location to assess its impact on congestion, when was this work done and what were the results?

Question from Mr M Bound, Herefordshire

Question 20

Why is there so much emphasis on Affordable Housing which is an important but minority need? We all understand the need to provide social housing, but the point is over stressed in the Core Strategy, at the expense of other housing types. Over allocating or over prioritising Affordable Housing cannot sustain a vibrant, diverse and economically prosperous county, especially if private market housing has to pay for social housing, therefore making an open market housing/development more expensive?

Question from Ms R Roseff, Herefordshire

Question 21

In developing the Core Strategy, what modelling of sustainable transport modes for Hereford was carried out in the initial 2009 Multi-Modal Model Forecasting Report by JMP and what were the results?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2013
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Question from Mr B Kuegler, Herefordshire

Question 22

Can self build be more explicitly supported? Herefordshire has an excellent history of self built houses and a wide range of nationally renowned self build providers and experts but the passing mention of Self build in the Core Strategy doesn't actually 'support' this sector - merely states it can be facilitated. Self build often provides homes that are:

- *Better build quality*
 - *More ecological/sustainable*
 - *Built to meet an identified need*
 - *More acceptable/desirable to communities*
 - *Less expensive/more cost effective*
 - *More likely to be locally produced and using local skills and materials*
 - *Locally distinctive*
-

Question from Ms P Mitchell, Herefordshire

Question 23

Sustainability appraisal of sustainable transport measures without relief road for Hereford

Figure 3.2 of the Local Plan Core Strategy indicates that a 'no relief road' alternative to a western relief road was considered either at the Preferred Option or the Revised Preferred Option stage of Core Strategy production and refers to p17 of the Preferred Option SA/SEA Note for Hereford and to p13 of the Revised preferred Option SA Note.

P17 of the Preferred Option Final Sustainability Appraisal shows Table 5: Appraisal Findings for Relief Road Options. The table compares Western relief road (favoured inner corridor) and Eastern relief road (favoured inner corridor). There is no sustainability appraisal of a discounted 'No Road' alternative.

P13 of the Revised Preferred Options SA Note discusses only the option to 'Build a partial eastern relief road' (para 7), under 'Discounted options for overall spatial strategy'.

Where is the sustainability appraisal of an option of sustainable transport measures without a relief road for Hereford which justified discounting this option in the development of the Core Strategy?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2013
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Question from Mr R Stow, Rowlestone

Question 24

The Council is being asked to approve the Core Strategy without proper information on the requirements, costs and funding of necessary and major infrastructure. Does the Council accept that making such a strategic decision, with wholly inadequate information, may be in breach of the authority's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers and potentially unlawful?

Question from Mr D Neades, Herefordshire

Question 25

Isn't it fairer and more viable to suggest that Affordable Housing contributions only start at 6 units in rural areas, providing an exception site for Affordable Housing has been identified by a Neighbourhood development Plan?

Question from Mr E Brechtmann, Hereford

Question 26

Why are the RA villages restricted by size and occupancy? This is unfair to local people, especially young families which will need more space than 100m²? Why are Herefordshire Council encouraging 'rabbit hutch' sized homes when we could be fostering good quality housing and we don't have a shortage of land? Value can be capped in other ways.

Question from Ms S Bell, Rowlestone

Question 27

The results of the March-April 2013 consultation show significant public opposition to all 6 of the county-wide over-arching policies, which constitute the "spatial strategy". For three of these 6 policies – Housing Land, Housing Distribution and Transportation - the percentage disagreeing was over 50%. Even after seven "consultations" the strategy does not have public support. Will the Council now admit that their Core Strategy is not acceptable to the people of Herefordshire, because it consists only of massive house building and massive road building, with no imagination or compelling vision for the future of the County?

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 19 JULY 2013
EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Question from Mrs V Wegg-Prosser, Breinton

Question 28

Cabinet members claim to be concerned about the vulnerable in our society. They have endorsed proposals to increase charges for community services such as school transport and care home occupancy, and reduce services such as public libraries and public conveniences. Is it not time now for this Administration to reconsider its priorities and explain how it can contemplate funding through public borrowing (involving payback over many years out of ordinary income) an Outer Distributor Road round Hereford whose offered savings in journey time (if at all) are only about two minutes, at the expense of using money from this same income to help the vulnerable and economically disadvantaged, many of whom cannot afford private car usage and rely on community assistance to maintain a meaningful quality of life and seek to improve their life chances?

Question from Mr T Smith, Bromyard

Question 29

Please explain the contradiction between p.193 of the Core Strategy where you state "no primary or secondary shop frontages are included for Bromyard and Kington" and figures 4.7 on p104 and figure 4.9 on p.110 which show all shopping frontage in Bromyard as secondary and all shopping frontage in Kington as primary?

Question from Mrs TA Macklin

Question 30

What makes housing generally affordable is a large increase in the number of houses built. We have, over the past few years, seen sites with planning for hundreds of houses mothballed as developments are considered not economically viable. This Core Strategy continues to add excessive costs to development. Land prices and build costs will only rise, so please can the council advise what the "Plan B" is if the Core Strategy fails to deliver the housing numbers required and the housing shortage we are currently experience continues? The identified 20% variation in targets over 3-5 years as suggested doesn't allow enough scope for responsive measures.