

## **PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 16 November 2017**

### **Question 1**

Ms K Seekings, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Regarding page 50 para 3.3.7

Please could the Council commission an updated traffic analysis including a mass transit option using modern technology and reducing our dependence on car travel for short journeys asap, and certainly before any further progress on the bypass/southern link road road building?

### **Response**

It is not clear what document the questioner is referring to.

The council has already commissioned detailed surveys and modelling of the transport movements in and around Hereford to update the transport model for the city and assess the transport effects and benefits of the proposed scheme and options, including mass transit options.

There is a need to reduce our dependency on cars for short journeys, however the established case for a city by-pass doesn't rest solely on reduction of city centre congestion, but also on enabling the growth of the city and supporting the economic sustainability of the county. Both the by-pass and other transport options must be progressed.

### **Question 2**

Mr D Pitt, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Why are there no plans to improve buses or mass transit systems as an alternative to short car trips? The last analysis was in 2001 before modern electric systems were developed.

### **Response**

I refer to my response to public question number 1.

### **Question 3**

Prof. R Wise, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

What happens to A49 total traffic volumes if 10% or 20% of M5/M6 traffic uses the improved A49 and have the communities along the route been fully consulted on such an outcome.

### **Response**

The A49 forms part of the strategic road network for the Midlands managed by Highways England, which is responsible for maintaining journey times for longer distance traffic. Modelling of the strategic road network to 2040 identifies increasing congestion on the M5/M6

corridor with only limited deterioration on the A49 corridor, most notably in the vicinity of Hereford city. This modelling information is available on the government's website.

With a bypass for Hereford, the A49 could have an enhanced role and provide an alternative for some traffic on the parallel M5/M6 (although the comments regarding volumes being up to 20% is just speculation). As modelling work is progressed the scale of this will be established and will be made available when it is completed and agreed with Highways England, and will inform future consultation.

#### **Question 4**

Ms J Wise, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

How would the outcome of traffic modelling look if most school traffic (say 90 per cent), were to be replaced by public transport?

#### **Response**

Such a shift would clearly have an effect upon the overall traffic movements. However, given that the choices made by parents in relation to the school their child attends and the way in which they travel to that school are complex across a large rural county, such a target is not feasible.

The reduction in traffic during school holidays is a combined effect of less commuter traffic (as many families take time off work) as well as no school run traffic. Transport modelling work undertaken in relation to the development of major transport projects, in accordance with the Department for Transport's guidance, ensures that options are compared against typical traffic conditions experienced during neutral periods outside of school holiday periods. All schools should have their own travel plans in place.

#### **Question 5**

Mr B Jenkinson, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Please explain how a bypass and southern relief road that constrains access for ten years and draws in more motorway traffic and has no mass transit system for the city can be considered, in any way to minimise adverse economic and environmental impact?

#### **Response**

I am not clear what ten year access 'constraint' is being referred to.

The Hereford Transport Package (bypass plus measures to encourage walking and cycling within Hereford) will provide significant economic benefits through helping to deliver the housing and employment growth identified in the adopted core strategy. It will also help to address the existing environmental problems of noise and air quality along the A49 corridor through the city. The development of the business case in accordance with Department for Transport guidance will establish the benefits and the transport implication of the project.

**Question 6**

Mrs C Protherough, Birch Hill

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Given that transport technology has changed substantially since previous studies, what thought has Herefordshire Council given to improving public transport systems, removing need for school and commuter car journeys, for a future proof pollution free solution to city congestion?

**Response**

The Hereford Area Plan, and the new university project, are considering future design options for the city, including those which make use of new and emerging technologies which are less polluting. We will never be able to remove the need for school car journeys whilst parents have the choice of which school their child attends.

I refer to the response given to public question number 1 and note that the studies referred to in that response will inform future plans for commuter car journeys.

**Supplementary question**

Is Herefordshire council aware that since 2001 modern technology has radically altered the potential cost and energy efficiency of tram routes, that 46 tram systems have been installed in Europe since 2000, not all in big cities, and 268 million passengers a year use tram and light rail systems in the UK and that in combination with electric buses and integrated modern low carbon high frequency sustainable transport system accessible to all would considerably reduce the number of private cars on the road for local journeys in line with your local transport policy and vision for Hereford?

**Response**

Yes I understand your sentiment of trams etc. We have looked at trams for Hereford a number of times and found so far that they would not offer any economic benefit. However we have looked at other means of using new technology and emerging technologies and only in the last week have I met at the highways UK conference and spent a very long time talking about driverless vehicles, autonomous vehicles, electric buses etc. and how we would try to integrate the emerging technologies with the development of the university and the plans to upgrade the city centre that is still to happen as part of the city link road scheme. I take on board your points. We are certainly with you on looking to try to reduce pollution, have better movement of vehicles using new technologies in the city. We hope to achieve that within the timescale of the other things that are happening in and around. I do take on board your point but I am afraid trams are not going to be considered because they are not cost effective and too much capital expense to show a business case return for Hereford.

**Question 7**

Mr A Gilliat, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

If a Bypass is essential, what environmental/conservation considerations ruled out an Eastern Route compared to similar considerations for the proposed Western Route, taking full account of its much higher likely cost and distance from the city's growth areas?

**Response**

The relative merits of western/eastern routes were explored during the development and adoption of the council's core strategy and are available on the council's website. It is acknowledged that there are environmental impacts associated with a western route; these are, however, less significant than those of an eastern route.

**Question 8**

Mr E Morfett, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Should the Cabinet proceed with these CPOs without a comprehensive professional analysis of the increase in HGV and total traffic volumes, safety issues, in health issues and from fine particulate pollution from the relief traffic from the M5/M6 congestion and the traffic from the completion of A465 dual carriageway to Abergavenny?

**Response**

I refer to the response given to public question number 3.

**Supplementary question**

I have looked at the Highways Agency data for traffic volumes for the M5/M6 and A49. The figures for the A49 are 10% of that for motorways. What evidence has been used in terms of pollution and increased traffic volumes?

**Response**

I think I have already made reference to the fact that Highways England are looking out to 2040 on their strategic transport routes and the impact it might have and as such we won't know yet as to what the impact would be on the A49. However it is quite clear that from interventions from Midlands Connect which is the Midlands Engine arm for transport that they see the A49 as being an enabler to allow local traffic from the Marches corridor, South and North Wales as being a necessary part of that strategic route. The impact from the M5/M6 is party to the debate going forward to 2040 so I can't be any more specific than that to answer your specific question but I hope that I have answered at least some of it.

**Question 9**

Dr P Ronan, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Can the Cabinet explain why CPOs are required without a comprehensive professional analysis of the impact from increased fine particulate pollution on Herefordshire's long term healthcare costs and why those costs are not included in the cost benefit analysis?

**Response**

Although negotiations are proceeding well with landowners, the cabinet is considering the making of the orders to ensure progress is maintained.

The option appraisal carried out during the development of the South Wye Transport Package consider the environmental and other factors in the selection of the preferred option. The provision of the southern link road and package of active travel measures is expected to have a positive impact upon air quality within the urban area. These issues and other impacts and benefits of the package will continue to be assessed during the development of the full business case in accordance with Department for Transport guidance.

**Supplementary question**

What then are the total current budget and costs of the CPOs relating to the southern link road and can you give me an included breakdown for the costs of the care of people who will suffer from long term health related conditions?

**Response**

You have made some assumptions that I don't recognise, I can't have a figure for and I don't think anybody can at this moment in time. The cost of the whole CPO process is in the papers at £500,000.

**Question 10**

Mr R Palgrave, How Caple

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

In January 2017 the Southern Link Road had indicative scheme costs of £23Million. If the cost of this road should exceed the provisional budget allocation of £27m like Blueschool House and the City Link Road, how will this cost overrun be funded?

**Response**

I am not clear where the figure of £23m that is quoted is sourced from as the medium term financial strategy considered by cabinet in January 2017 (and subsequently approved by Council) included indicative costs of £27m for the south wye transport package during the medium term financial strategy period within an overall scheme estimate of £35m. There is no cost overrun for the city link road.

As major schemes are developed it is entirely normal for budget estimates to change as scheme details are refined and contracts are procured; any such changes to costs or budgets will be reported and necessary approvals sought openly and transparently.

**Supplementary question**

Can we have an assurance that if there is a shortfall it will not be taken from the budget for the active travel measures in the SWTP?

**Response**

You get my assurance on that. The active travel allowance in the budget that is what we expect to spend on doing exactly the purpose for which it was there for.

**Question 11**

Ms B Johnson, Ledbury

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Traffic-free towns and cities are increasingly the norm in continental Europe. By diverting expenditure from road building to active travel infrastructure and public transport, they demonstrate very significant and enviable commercial, environmental, health and social benefits.

HC's Core Strategy prioritises active travel over private car use. New technologies such as electric bikes have great potential to reduce car dependency. What progress is there with the active travel measures proposed in 2015?

**Response**

I refer to the response given to public question number 1. Cabinet is scheduled to consider a report in December 2017 setting out next steps regarding active travel measures. Hereford cannot deliver a traffic free city centre without a satisfactory strategic network around it; the by-pass will be an essential element of that network.

**Supplementary**

Continuing on this theme of the need to reduce car dependency which is a key objective of the core strategy and it appears in all six of the vision and objectives in the local transport plan, one would expect that the budget priorities should follow policy priorities. Why therefore is Herefordshire Council prioritising expensive road transport infrastructure that will lead inevitably to an increase in car dependency rather than funding much more cost effective car free projects to alleviate Hereford's congestion.

**Response**

The simple answer is that we have to have a strategic network of roads to support car and travel in or around Hereford but to be able to make the environmental wonderland that everybody wishes for the city centre we have to consider a couple of other things. One is that it has been a high priority from many people is that the working population that need to be in Hereford that come from outside the city have to get to the city before they can walk, cycle, use electric buses and all of the other things that we wish to provide. We are in a place whereby some more capital expenditure will be necessary as to parking of vehicles that have to travel 10, 20 miles to be able to come to their place of work. It would be great to be able to think that once they get to Hereford we can walk and cycle and enjoy the city centre in a pollution free atmosphere. I am with you in some ways but I am afraid that the strategic network of roads in and around Hereford are not yet in a place to be able to cope with giving the city centre the space that it needs.

### **Question 12**

Ms K Sharp, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

The Southern Link Road project, like the City Link Road, is now several years behind schedule. DfT recognises that active travel measures such as improved walking & cycling facilities can be delivered much more quickly and cheaply than new road projects. After the success of Destination Hereford & other active travel projects, why is Herefordshire Council delaying implementation of the walking & cycling elements of the South Wye Transport Package?

### **Response**

I refer to the response given to public question number 11. Where improvements can be made to the cycling and walking network in advance of the by-pass these are being progressed, for example the Holme Lacy Road cycle route opened earlier this year, funded through the local transport plan, is part of the network south of the river.

### **Supplementary Question**

What is the budget within the Southern Wye Transport Package for the active travel measures and will this budget be protected against any cost overruns that might occur on the construction of the Southern Link Road?

### **Response**

The budget for the active travel is £8 million and will be used for that purpose. Some of the active travel measures can only be delivered once a weight limit has been placed on the A465. A weight limit cannot be placed on the A465 until the heavy duty vehicles that use it regularly have an alternative route to go on. Until that route has a weight limit on it, the south wye area of Belmont will not be able to have satisfactory arrangements put in place to be able to meet the active travel arrangements that you seek.

### **Question 13**

Ms J Tonge, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Why is the Council debating a compulsory purchase order today when a comprehensive traffic analysis by an independent organisation hasn't yet taken place?

Most traffic entering Hereford will not use a relief road as its local traffic, which drops during school holidays. Provisions need to be made with regard to this. To stop the heavy traffic and lorries from using The Marches as a short cut, so avoiding motorways.

### **Response**

I refer to the response given to public question number 9.

The A49 forms part of the strategic road network for the Midlands managed by Highways England, and as such is an essential element of the region's plans to support economic growth. We cannot implement weight restrictions on heavy vehicles in the city without the bypass.

**Question 14**

Mr T Geeson, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

The Hereford City Centre Transport Package includes delivery of a transport hub, improvements to Commercial Road, Blueschool and Newmarket Street as well as building the new City Link Road. Would the Cabinet member responsible please detail how the £40.6m budget is split between these very different transport elements?

**Response**

The total cost of the package is £40.6m. This is split between the city link road at £34.1m and £6.5m for the package of complementary measures referred to in the question.

The actual construction of the city link road is less than the original forecast with land acquisition and professional fees above forecast. Taking into account the risk and inflation allowance the scheme comes within the business case budget agreed.

Currently it is predicted the total cost to the council of the city centre transport package (estimated at £40.6m), taking account of the LEP growth fund monies is on target to be £2.3m less than the £27m contribution in the capital programme agreed by Council in February 2017.

The remaining elements of the package (the transport hub, Commercial Road, Blueschool Street and Newmarket Street) are being developed within the budgeted figure of £6.5m to inform a report to cabinet in 2018.

**Supplementary question**

Given that the Hereford Transport Package has transport in its title and includes the items I've listed, will the cabinet member agree that this is first and foremost a transport scheme and that its success should be judged on that basis.

**Response**

I take your point. It is a transport scheme and it has been delivered as a transport scheme but it has also been delivered with thinking around the Hereford Area Plan and all of the further capital growth and monies expected in the city to be an area where that capital expenditure incorporates any move for the previous pollution free sustainable travel types I have previously mentioned. Whether it is electric bikes, electric buses, driverless vehicles we will incorporate in the design for the further expansion that type of transport.



**Question 15**

Ms G Parker, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

What basis is the congestion going to decline if the Bypass must accommodate M5/M6 relief traffic and increase freight transport from new enterprise zones along a proposed single carriageway relief road /bypass?

**Response**

I refer to the response given to public question number 3.

**Question 16**

Mrs E Morawiecka, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

The Planning Inspector for the City Link Road Compulsory Purchase Orders said in his 2014 report, "The scheme has been costed following expert advice, and risk adjustments have been made to both income and cost projections to represent a prudent total scheme cost estimate." However, Cllr Price recently claimed that the £27m budgeted cost for the Road had been a "stab in the dark". Can he justify this claim?

**Response**

In my view estimates, however educated and well informed, can be referred to as 'stabs in the dark'.

The total budget for the Hereford City Centre Transport Package is currently £40.6m. This is split between the city link road at £34.1m and complementary measures at £6.5m. I fully expect the final actual figures to differ from these estimates – that is normal and to be expected on a project of this scale being developed over a period of time and in accordance with relevant guidance. Any changes will be authorised and reported as they arise. Please also refer to my response to public question 14.

**Supplementary question**

With the full business case for the Southern Link Road due to be with the Department for Transport in a matter of months, what are the current estimated costs of the Southern Link Road including land purchased under the CPOs and has this been expertly calculated to represent a prudent scheme cost bearing in mind the views of the waste management officer?

**Response**

At this moment in time there is £27m in the budget for delivery of that road. Until we have gone out and got the procurement, which is part of the decision making of today to set a strategy for procuring a contractor, we shan't have an absolute cost for delivery. There is estimated costs done on industry standard specifications. Normal land transaction costs, we would expect the land costs to be slightly higher because there will be some increasing costs which are I think somewhere I've seen in the last days, however we expect it all to be met within the budget that was set that the business case that was put to the LEP in 2015 came up with the figures.

We have got a budget for land purchase and that is going ahead and at this moment in time we are hopeful to conclude within that budget under negotiated powers that the officers have. We are going into the CPO process to align with the negotiations to ensure that we do it in a timely manner and that will be part of the debate on the agenda item shortly to follow.

### **Question 17**

Mr M Harries, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

The report to cabinet refers to the South Wye Transport Package, whose main component is the proposed Southern Link Road. As planned, this has no walking/cycling provision, so where are the transport measures that will promote active travel in South Hereford? This is of particular interest to me as my main mode of travel around Hereford and the local district is bicycle, although I do have access to a car.

### **Response**

The report on today's agenda only addresses one element of the package – namely the road. A further report, scheduled for consideration by Cabinet in December will consider the results of the 2016 consultation on active travel measures which include measures to support and enhance the existing network of cycle and walking routes in the area.

### **Question 18**

Mr A Morawiecki, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

The Council is over £2m overspent on its current revenue budget and over spent on major elements of its capital programme. How much has been spent by Hereford Council so far on the "Western Relief Road" and how has this been funded?

### **Response**

The council is not currently overspent by £2m on its revenue budget; that is our currently predicted end of year outturn and action is being taken to bring this projection into line with the budget.

Whilst one project in the capital programme (Blueschool House) had an overspend, there is no overspend of major elements of the capital programme.

The development of the western relief road has taken place over a period of many years, through a number of options appraisals, strategy development and planning. Since the decision to commence work on the by-pass in 2015/16, the council has progressed the development of the Hereford transport package using transport revenue budgets and external grants from both Highways England and more recently Midlands Connect. To the end of October 2017 £2.6m has been spent on the project, funded by annual revenue budgets, reserve funding of £0.6m and external funding contributions of £0.7m.

From the Leader of the Council: I believe that at about this time last year we were projecting a £1.7m overspend for the end of that year and we finished that year within budget, as we have done in each of the five previous years. It is worth noting that our external auditors,

most unusually, chose to describe the financial performance of this council as outstanding given the circumstances under which we work.

**Question 19**

Mr M Langford, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

If as expected 10% to 20% of the M5/M6 traffic uses the improved A49, what are the human health implications to residents of a fivefold increase in fine particulate pollution volumes?

**Response**

I refer to the response given to public question number 3. There is no evidence to indicate there would be a fivefold increase in fine particulate pollution volumes along the planned A49 route, and government plans to reduce diesel usage will inevitably impact on future modelling.

**Question 20**

Mrs P Churchward, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Herefordshire Council were given an advance of £1.697million by the Marches LEP for the South Wye Transport Package. Repayment of this loan during this financial year was requested in August 2017. When is this going to be repaid?

**Response**

The council has not received a loan from the Marches LEP. At the request of the Marches LEP, the council submitted eligible grant claims against its approved allocation earlier than scheduled. No repayment is required.

**Supplementary question**

What was this funding be spent on?

**Response**

In full detail I can't say exactly but it is on the work leading up to the point of preparation, design and consultation and all of the work that goes along to prepare a project of this nature and it was spent ahead of the schedule that was laid out as the money that was received by the LEP from the Department of Transport.

**Question 21**

Dr N Geeson, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Ancient woodlands provide numerous ecosystem services, but are rare in England. In the business case for the Southern Link Road, what economic value has been given to natural landscapes, and unusual habitats and species (for example in ancient Grafton Wood), including the value of their health and well-being benefits?

**Response**

The business case for the link road is currently being developed in accordance with Department for Transport guidance. Any relevant woodland or landscapes will be valued in accordance with this guidance.

**Supplementary question**

Mitigation for loss of part of ancient Grafton Wood should seek to recreate a similar habit. The proposed eastern building compound for the new road is the proposed site for this, but disturbed, compacted or contaminated soils are not suitable and doomed to failure. So where can satisfactory tree planting be located instead?

**Response**

I am afraid as a lay person and not qualified in environmental issues I would take the view that our experts that will be looking into this and it will be part of the delivery of the project that adequate measures are taken to deal with the points you raise. I do have a question about the authenticity of it being described as ancient woodland. At the time that we were discussing this, this was not described as an ancient woodland, this particular woodland at Grafton, at the time. It has since been in the system to be registered as ancient woodland but it wasn't at the time the decision was taken. I do take on board your points.

**Question 22**

Ms H Vince, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Where are all the new homes being built that the Southern Link Road is supposedly enabling?

**Response**

The strategic housing sites are shown in the core strategy available on the council's website. Development of these sites is contingent on the by-pass being built.

**Question 23**

Mr A Elliott, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

The 'Parsons Brinckerhoff Woodland Botanical Survey Nov 2014', used in all subsequent planning decisions is verifiably inaccurate in its description of Grafton Wood. Mitigation for the destruction of this ancient woodland cannot be proposed until true diversity has been accurately recorded. P.B. ecologists failed even to spot native Bluebells. How can the council proceed with C.P.O when the cost of mitigation and compensation has not been established?

**Response**

I refer to the responses given to public questions number 9 and 21.

We have no evidence to suggest the report referenced is inaccurate; it has been considered by Planning Committee in 2016; Natural England were consulted and offered no objection.

**Supplementary question**

The 2017 report which has only just appeared gives a species count for Grafton Wood of 200 species - this is extremely high, it is not low botanical diversity. They have accepted that there are over 200 species. The two susceptible and local rare species previously unrecorded were important enough to have their own survey. Why did the council not follow its own and national planning guidelines by failing to produce a botanical report at the optimum time of spring and early summer. It has taken three years and decisions were made on false or incorrect information.

**Response**

I do not have an answer to give to you in relation to the process that we followed at the time of planning. I would just ask if any of the officers have specific answers in this context to give it now or if not a written answer will be provided in due course.

Mairead Lane – the 2014 report referred to was considered by planners, was consulted on with Natural England who offered no objection to the report that was produced. The 2017 report and surveys completed and recently submitted to planners for consideration haven't lead the consultants to change their recommendations from that of the 2014 report. That's being considered by planners and will be consulted on with Natural England again.

From the Leader of the Council: We ourselves are not expert in the field that you are describing. We pass this on to professional companies to give us advice on these things. They do take such advice. They pass it also to Natural England and we acted on their advice. I cannot accept that we deliberately avoided our responsibilities.

**Question 24**

Mrs C Palgrave, How Caple

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

The Herefordshire Council Core Strategy Infrastructure delivery plan showed that the South Wye Transport Package would be partially funded by developer contributions. With the road enabling new homes and jobs, what is the value of developer contributions secured to date for this road?

**Response**

As yet no developer contributions have been secured. We will seek such contributions from appropriate developments that may come forward as the project progresses. However the scheme is not dependent on such contributions. An allocation of £27m growth funding has been secured through the Marches LEP and the £8m balance could be met from capital transport allocations; developer contributions secured would reduce the call on those allocations.

**Question 25**

Mr A Sharp, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Despite the claims of Herefordshire Council, the South Wye Transport Package, including the Southern Link Road, is a standalone project and has to be justified as such. Please provide a breakdown of the detailed financial benefits of this road vs the costs of the loss of rare species, ancient woodland & high grade agricultural land?

**Response**

The council recognises the South Wye Transport Package is an integral part of the by-pass; however we have always acknowledged it should be assessed as a standalone project in funding terms.

The full business case for the link road is currently being developed in accordance with Department for Transport guidance. This will provide detail of the benefit cost ratio of the project and will be considered by cabinet when the detailed work is completed.

**Question 26**

Mrs J Priddle, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

In order to avoid further extreme overspending, can the Cabinet confirm that construction work on the SLR will not commence on the basis of an “estimated cost”, as with the City Link Road, but rather on an agreed, fixed price for the work, which is normal, best practice in the case of engineering projects?

**Response**

The city link road construction contract was not let on the basis of an estimate but using the industry standard form of target cost contract. That contract is being delivered within the budget set out in the project business case.

As set out in the report elsewhere on today’s agenda, a procurement strategy will be developed for the southern link road and the most appropriate contract model for the southern link road will form part of that consideration.

**Question 27**

Ms D Toynbee, Hereford

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Despite misleading statements from Herefordshire Council, the South Wye Transport Package is a standalone project and has to be justified as such.

The costs of the project are clear: the loss of rare species, ancient woodland, rural landscape and high grade agricultural land. The benefits are less clear. Please would you now provide a detailed breakdown of the financial benefits of the Southern Link Road?

**Response**

I refer to the response given to public question number 25

I need to consider a written response to your question. I will take on board again and look at your question and give you a fuller answer than what is currently available at this moment in time.

**Supplementary question**

Why are decisions being made now before we have all the necessary evidence and information?

**Response**

The decisions made today have been taken with regards to the delivery of this project. The CPO is just a part of the project to move it along. The decisions today are not relevant to any of the things you ask but I will respond to you in writing to the specific questions you ask. Today is about the CPO and the process for procurement of a contractor.

**Further information provided following the meeting**

The benefits of the South Wye Transport package project have been set out in the strategic outline business case for the scheme. This is available on the council's website by following the link below:

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/13070/south\\_wye\\_transport\\_package\\_strategic\\_outline\\_business\\_case](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/13070/south_wye_transport_package_strategic_outline_business_case)

These benefits were considered strong enough to secure £27m Growth Fund grant from the Department for Transport / Marches LEP to enable the scheme to be progressed including the making of the necessary orders and procurement of contractors to tender for the road scheme. The decision is taken today based on the benefits of the scheme and the full business case will provide further detail of these benefits and the benefit cost ratio of the project.

**Question 28**

Mr P Chapman, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Herefordshire Council claim that the South Wye Transport Package is a standalone project, and is justified as such. In order that can be clarified please provide a breakdown of

1. detailed financial benefits of this road vs risks to the Herefordshire economy
2. quantify costs of the loss of rare species, ancient woodland & high grade agricultural land, including the projected loss to the Herefordshire economy of managed agricultural land.

**Response**

I refer to the response given to public question number 25.

I will provide a written answer.

**Supplementary question**

I am very surprised in the linkage that you have made between this project and the by-pass in general and you have said that detailed work has not yet been completed on these business costs, how can you make a decision today?

**Response**

The issue of the full business case, you or I as lay people we might consider a business case is something you prepare at the start of a project. In the case of major government sponsored and funded capital projects, the full business case is ongoing until the delivery of the project. Within it all of the points you raised will be addressed as that business case goes through. Further details will be included in the written answer.

**Further information provided following the meeting**

The benefits of the South Wye Transport package and the Hereford Transport Package have been set out in the strategic outline business case for each of these projects. These are available on the council's website by following the links below:

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/13070/south\\_wye\\_transport\\_package\\_strategic\\_outline\\_business\\_case](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/13070/south_wye_transport_package_strategic_outline_business_case)

[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/13069/hereford\\_transport\\_package\\_strategic\\_outline\\_business\\_case](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/13069/hereford_transport_package_strategic_outline_business_case)

The benefits of the South Wye Transport package were considered strong enough to secure £27m Growth Fund grant from the Department for Transport / Marches LEP to enable the scheme to be progressed including the making of the necessary orders and procurement of contractors to tender for the road scheme. The decision is taken today based on the benefits of the scheme and the full business case will provide further detail of these benefits and the benefit cost ratio of the project.

The projects must progress to enable the full business case for each of these projects to be developed. The full business case needs to demonstrate that consents are in place to deliver the road and this decision will enable the necessary statutory orders for the SLR to progress.

**Question 29**

Ms H Priday, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

Can the Cabinet explain why CPOs are going ahead when there is no evidence to show that the building of the Southern Link Road will improve the congestion of traffic in Hereford City?

**Response**

I refer to the responses given to public questions numbers 1 and 9.

I would again say that the southern link road is linked to the bypass and the two together will bring a relief to the congestion of traffic in Hereford City.

**Supplementary question**

Presumably as this is ongoing, can the cabinet member please point me to where I will find the evidence either in the outline business case or elsewhere, that the construction of the Southern Link Road will reduce traffic congestion in the city?

**Response**

I will prepare links to places where you will be able to find it and give it to you in a written answer.

**Further information provided following the meeting**

A transport assessment document was one of a suite of documents submitted as part of the planning application for this scheme and this can be found on the council's website by following the link below. This sets out the traffic benefits of the scheme.



[https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning\\_services/planning\\_application\\_search/details?id=151314&search=southern%20link%20road](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=151314&search=southern%20link%20road)

**Question 30**

Mr B Wallace, Breinton

To: cabinet member: infrastructure

By how much will my council tax increase to fund the estimated cost of the South Wye Travel Package Route until its completion and beyond to pay back loans taken out to fund it?

**Response**

I refer to the response given to public question number 24.

No loans have been taken out to date, and it is currently anticipated that no borrowing will be required. It is expected that the scheme will be funded by government grant and developer contributions and in that case there will be no impact on council tax levels arising from this project.