

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 13 December 2018**Question 1****Mr J Milln, Hereford****To: cabinet member, infrastructure**

Years ago Herefordshire Council promised a Transport Hub by the railway station, its forecourt area becoming a boulevard with seats and trees so as to provide a proper sense of arrival, something it was reminded of when Historic England's Urban Panel visited in October 2017. Gloucester has just completed a superb transport hub. Why then is Herefordshire Council now proposing to compromise this by promoting large and unsympathetic developments by the station instead, leaving only the cramped forecourt area to be congested by taxis, buses and coaches and their tawdry shelters, further damaging the setting of the listed building?

Response

The council is not proposing to compromise its plans for a Transport Hub at Hereford railway station. The space required to enable the delivery of a Transport Hub has been reserved for this purpose in front of the station buildings including part of the Royal Mail car park. The design of the transport hub is currently underway and proposals will be the subject of public consultation during 2019.

Sites either side of a Transport Hub were identified for development as part of the original masterplan for the area. Proposals for these sites are now coming forward providing for a GP healthcare centre to the west of the station and student accommodation to the east. Each of these developments should be welcomed. The healthcare centre will bring together five existing GP surgeries in a purpose built efficient and accessible building; the student accommodation will support the county's higher education providers to attract students to the county, and support achievement of the economic vision for the county.

Supplementary Question

The capital programme forecast as table C shows prior spend on the Hereford City Centre Transport Package of £32.32m, spend of £1.4m this year and £7m spend over the next two financial years. How much of the £7m budgeted is expected to be spent on the transport hub?

Response to supplementary

The transport hub project is under development at this time. When the project is finalised we will be able to give a full answer as to the cost expectations.

Question 2

Mr R Palgrave, How Caple

To: cabinet member, infrastructure

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned in October that unless immediate effective action is taken to reduce carbon emissions, global warming would reach 2 degrees by 2030, significantly worsening the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people. The IPCC called for global carbon emissions to be cut by 45% by 2030 in an attempt to limit warming to 1.5 degrees.

Given this, how can the Council continue to develop proposals for the Hereford Southern Link Road and the Hereford Bypass when its consultants have reported that both roads will result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions due to vehicles travelling further and faster?

Response

The issue of greenhouse gas emissions has been considered carefully in the development of the SLR and the bypass. The environmental impact of each scheme has been considered in detail and this has been set out in route selection reports and planning documents for the bypass and Southern Link Road respectively. It is important to note that both schemes would actually result in **both** adverse and beneficial air impacts. This is a result of the redistribution of traffic from roads within urban areas (where beneficial impacts are predicted) to the SLR and bypass (where adverse impacts would occur). It is also important to note that the maximum impacts of the proposed schemes have been assessed as small in magnitude which supports the delivery of these schemes.

The council is not complacent about the need overall to reduce greenhouse gases and has a number of initiatives (completed and planned) that will assist in carbon reduction. These include the replacement of all streetlights with low energy LED lighting; securing funding to improve home insulation; supporting electric car use by providing charging points in public car parks and investing in low energy pool cars for use by staff when carrying out council business.

Supplementary Question

It is not acceptable to increase greenhouse gases by even a small amount. Would the council consider a joint community council business approach to collaborate on this emergency? Would you consider setting up such a working group or open forum in 2019?

Response

I am sympathetic to your view and will take up whether the council could take part in any such project.

Question 3

Mrs V Wegg-Prosser, Breinton

To: cabinet member, economy and communications

If approved in Cabinet today, the Hereford Enterprise Zone will include from June 2020 a £9M Centre for Cyber Security with joint funding from the University of Wolverhampton and Herefordshire Council (Agenda Item 9). What estimates have been made of the number of new jobs this Centre will house, given that the aspiration was for the Zone to attract 4,200 new jobs by 2022, but the numbers employed (according to the Marches LEP Growth Fund 3 fact sheet) by March 2017 only totalled 350?

Response

As set out at paragraph 15 of the report at agenda item 9, the Cyber Centre project is expected to generate 190 new jobs. 665 people already work in the businesses on the Zone. The future growth of these businesses, together with other approved projects such as the Centre for Cyber Security, is anticipated to create an additional 1000 jobs. Further development land remains available within the zone, allowing for more job creation opportunities.

Question 4

Dr N Geeson, Hereford

To: cabinet member, infrastructure

Regarding the Active Travel measures forming part of the South Wye Transport Package. The Minutes of Cabinet 14th December 2017 state, "The head of infrastructure delivery responded that a number of the measures consulted on did not rely on the SLR for implementation such as a wider implementation of 20mph limits in residential zones, improvements along Holme Lacy Road and some other routes remote from Belmont Road. The analysis needed to move forward these schemes could be completed within a 12 month period." Has that analysis been completed and when will the results be made public?

Response

Analysis of the active travel measures that will be delivered as part of the South Wye Transport Package will conclude shortly and the preferred package of measures that will accompany the Southern Link Road will be set out in the final full business case which will be submitted to the Department for Transport in the spring 2019 following its completion and appropriate governance decision. It will be made available to view on the council's website at that time.

Question 5**Mrs C Protherough, Birch Hill****To: cabinet member, infrastructure**

Table C of the Capital Forecast (Agenda Item 10 Appendix B) shows a prior-year spend of £32321k for the Hereford City Centre Transport Package, a spend of £1342k this year and further expenditure of approximately £7000k in the next 2 financial years. How much of the £7m budgeted for April 2019 onwards is expected to be spent on the Transport Hub in 2019-20 and 2020-21?

Response

Of the £40.650m budgeted for the Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP) £6.490m has been allocated to deliver the transport hub and public realm improvements on Commercial Road and Blueschool Street. As the detailed design of the transport hub and public realm progresses the costs of each of these schemes will be developed further and reported in project decision reports. It is expected to undertake consultation on the design of the Transport Hub in the summer 2019 and the detailed profile of expenditure will then be confirmed as part of the programme for implementation.

Supplementary Question

When is the Transport Hub expected to be completed?

Response to supplementary

The consultation will inform the timeline. Many things have changed in relation to the economic plan since the idea of the transport hub was first put forward and the consultation may throw up new ideas that require further consideration.