

## Agenda item no. 5 - Questions from councillors

Question No.	Questioner	Question	Question to
Q 1.	Cllr Ben Proctor	Can the executive please explain how the mural on the side of the Commercial came to be destroyed?	Cllr Price
<b>Response:</b>  The mural on the side of the Commercial was part of a public art programme delivered in partnership with the property owner. Unfortunately, the external render to which the mural was applied has since failed. The Council is currently in discussion with the building owner to understand the cause of the damage and what remedial steps may be possible. At this stage, no conclusion has been reached.			
<b>Supplementary question:</b>  Thank you for the initial answer, which I have found a little disappointing. The public art commissions have been a rare success and incredibly popular in the city, and presumable in the wider county. The council selected locations, it commissioned the artworks, and it should have taken steps to ensure that the substrate was satisfactory. It's very disappointing that the cabinet member is attempting to shift responsibility onto the building owner. Where we're left is that a piece of artwork has been destroyed and will never be able to be replaced.  Has he apologised to the artist, and would he like to take the opportunity now to do so, and to the people of the city and the county?  Can he assure us that it will be replaced with work of equal quality as soon as possible and what assurance can he give to the other artists involved in the commissioning and the people of the city and the county that the other artworks that were commissioned as part of the scheme are all safe?			
<b>Supplementary response:</b>  Thank you for your supplementary question. I agree with you the murals were very successful and benefitted Hereford substantially in people coming to visit just to see them. I am unable to comment further at this stage as the council is working with the building owner to consider possible options for a way forward.			

Q 2.	Cllr David Hitchiner	<p>The officer responsible has confirmed to Councillors that the roundabout at the A465 end of this road will have four arms and not the five required for the full by pass. Five arms are required if this roundabout is to give access to Phase 2.</p> <p>Not only will the reputation of the Council suffer because the Council seem to be having a lack of foresight and ignoring a logical way to proceed, but the Council must show Value for Money. It would surely be cheaper and less inconvenient for residents for the 5 arm roundabout to be built as part of Phase1. How does building a roundabout you know is going to need to be redesigned fit with Value for Money principles?</p>	Cllr Price
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>The previously proposed design for phase 2 is currently being reviewed to ensure that it is fit for the future needs of the county. With the increased mandatory housing targets imposed on the county and the resultant increase in traffic levels, it is likely that the design of the road and the roundabout between the A465 and phase 2 of the bypass will change from what was previously proposed. Therefore, the roundabout will be constructed to meet current requirements, rather than on assumptions of what the future design might be</p> <p>Had the previous administration not cancelled the Southern Link Road, resulting in £millions of funding being returned to the Local Enterprise Partnership, this roundabout would have already been delivered by now and the council would be further ahead with its designs, planning and funding for the rest of the Hereford Western Bypass.</p>			
<p><b>Supplementary question:</b></p> <p>You have failed to provide a properly reasoned response. There is no doubt whatsoever that the roundabout on the Clehonger Road will require five arms otherwise there will be no link to Phase two. So, a much larger roundabout is going to be required. Isn't the real reason for not having five arms is that, if you need to alter the roundabout at this stage, you will also need to reapply for planning permission which would hold up your plans to get diggers on the ground before the next election.</p> <p>You're clearly determined to get the project over the line, whatever. The failure to provide a business case which satisfies the green book is clear evidence of this. Instead, all we have at the moment is a two-page business case which is based on unsupportable claims. We are now promised something less than green book, but we're not quite sure what.</p>			

Much is made of de-trunking the A49 through the city. In fact, this is a key reason for favouring a western route over an eastern one. Given the undue haste in getting diggers on the ground, can the cabinet member assure the public that the road is being built to a standard that Highways England will accept? And is this assurance from Highways England in written form.

**Supplementary response:**

We have planning permission to build Phase one, when we have the design for Phase two which is being worked on and we'll have the outline case for this middle of next summer, we will know how we will join these two together. At this moment in time, it has always been proposed that we start with the roundabout that is on the design for the previous SLR. As such, the roundabout can be elongated as and when Phase 2 comes on board, which does not have planning permission yet but when it does, we will then know exactly what to build, what land will be needed to come forward.

It is this council's ambition to build the western bypass in total and as we progress, as I've said before earlier today, pressures are now coming in new directions as each year goes by for the economy, housing, road infrastructure and many other infrastructure projects and we just have to keep pace with it.

It is no good going back over the same ground time and time again. The plan is to build a four-arm roundabout that has the capability of expansion. That's where we're at, that's what we intend to deliver and that's what is Phase one, which we are looking at later this afternoon. I can't say anymore, you know the answers, I've answered it before and to be honest I think it's the time we look to move on rather than just go back over old ground.

Highways England will adopt this road, and they are National Highways. Our officers meet regularly, quarterly with their task force, and this is constantly updated as we move forward with the design over the next 12 months. You will find that National Highways will be supportive of the way that Phase one is built and it will be to the adoptable standard for National Highways to take on as the A49 in the future.