

#### Agenda item no. 4 - Questions from members of the public

Question No.	Questioner	Question	Question to
PQ 1.	Mrs E Morawiecka, Hereford	<p>It has been reported that other councils, like neighbouring Shropshire, are facing bankruptcy as they recognise that delivery of “relief road” schemes are unaffordable and they seek to write off millions of public money invested in developing these road schemes.</p> <p>The Corporate Risk Register identifies capital projects among the number of high-level risks to 30.09.2025 where risks have increased since 30.06.2025. The Leader of Herefordshire Council has written to government highlighting that prudential borrowing will significantly impact the revenue Budget of this Council.</p> <p>As this administration spend £10.3million of capital receipts working up the Southern Link Road scheme, what actions are being taken by the Cabinet and Council Leadership Team to monitor and mitigate the identified risks of the capital road scheme, in particular those posed from borrowing over £30Million and risking the revenue budget of the Council?</p>	Cllr Stoddart

#### Response:

Control measures and mitigating actions to respond to Council’s Corporate Risks are identified in the Corporate Risk Register. The Corporate Risk Register is monitored and updated by the Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet on quarterly basis.

Item 9 of the Agenda presents an update on the status of corporate risks at Quarter 2 2025/26. This includes:

**Corporate Risk ref. R4: Failure to deliver capital and major projects within identified resources and planned timeframes resulting in significant overspend and reduced project outcomes.** The controls and actions to manage and mitigate this risk are included at Appendix A, of the report and set out below.

Each major project has an assigned Senior Responsible Officer, a dedicated Project Management Officer Project Manager and a Project Board of relevant representatives from across the council (relevant service area, legal, finance, property services etc) to lead delivery.

Additional controls are in place to monitor expenditure in respect of capital and major projects linked to cashflow requirements via monthly Directorate Budget Boards.

A review of the council's Capital Programme is currently underway to identify opportunities to maximise resources and funding to prioritise delivery of capital projects and minimise risks to delivery and budget

**Corporate Risk ref. R5: Failure to deliver a sustainable financial strategy that supports delivery of the Council Plan priorities.** The controls and actions to manage and mitigate this risk are included at Appendix A, of the report and set out below.

Effective budget monitoring arrangements are in place via Directorate Budget Boards to monitor delivery of services against agreed budget, achievement of savings and delivery of capital and major projects. Expenditure controls have continued in 25/26 via Directorate Control Panels to challenge and reduce, defer or stop spend above £500. High quality financial reporting is achieved through additional controls to ensure forecasting is informed by reliable, timely activity data.

Additional controls are in place to monitor expenditure in respect of capital and major projects linked to cashflow requirements via monthly Directorate Budget Boards.

**Supplementary question:**

**Supplementary response:**

<b>PQ 2.</b>	<b>Amanda Martin, Hereford</b>	<b>There is no mention of Active Travel England in the list of stakeholders consulted. When Active Travel England provide significant resources to Local Authorities and grant funding for delivering active travel schemes why were they not consulted on a transport plan to cover the County for the period 2025-2041, when there is increased pressure to deliver additional housing in a sustainable way, improve health outcomes for all residents and reduce carbon emissions, and given that transport is the largest carbon emitter in the county?</b>	<b>Cllr Price</b>
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**Response:**

I can confirm that Active Travel England (ATE) were consulted during the development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP). They attended the stakeholder workshops held in November 2024, where their input helped shape the plan's approach to active travel and sustainable transport. In

addition, ATE was provided with links to the public consultation when it went live, ensuring they had the opportunity to review and comment on the draft plan.

LTP Policy TN10 regarding design standard ensures the LTP reflects use of ATE's Design Tools, their priorities and national guidance, including the Healthy Street principles and the Department for Transport's Gear Change strategy. These underpin our commitments to improving health outcomes, reducing carbon emissions, and supporting sustainable housing growth. Transport remains the largest carbon emitter in the county, and active travel is central to addressing this challenge.

We will continue to work closely with ATE during the implementation phase and future reviews of the LTP to ensure alignment with their funding and delivery priorities, and we will include ATE in the final version of the LTP before it is published for Council.

**Supplementary question:**

**Supplementary response:**

<b>PQ 3.</b>	<b>Will Frecknall, Hereford</b>	<b>I understand the Local Transport Plan for the period 2025 to 2041 has reached final draft and will shortly be put before full Council for approval. Can Cabinet confirm that that document has been reviewed by the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee? And if it has, why have that committee's comments not been published?</b>	<b>Cllr Price</b>
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**Response:**

The draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) for 2025-2041 was considered by the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee on [3 June 2025](#). In addition the committee considered a report that outlined the council's approach to producing the plan on [8 November 2023](#).

Following its scrutiny on 3 June 2025, the committee made the following recommendations:

- That the draft Local Transport Plan is reviewed to ensure alignment with existing council plans and strategies.
- That the Local Transport Plan gives particular consideration to the needs of children and young people

- The duration of the Local Transport Plan is kept in alignment with the Local Plan and Transport Strategy to which it applies - namely 2016-2031.
- Herefordshire Council work to increase the number of residents taking part in the Local Transport Plan consultation as a matter of urgency, extending the consultation deadline to 30 June to all members of the public.
- The policy wording of the Local Transport Plan is tightened to ensure that it is meaningful and capable of being applied.
- The Local Transport Plan recognises the full extent of existing new developments, for example Ledbury, and the infrastructure improvements necessary to accommodate this.
- The Local Transport Plan should include targets for the implementation of active travel measures.
- The Local Transport Plan recognises the inability of the power grid network to meet the needs of fast EV charging point.

The cabinet member responded to these recommendations on 6 June 2025, in doing so, agreed to:

- review the alignment of the transport plan to other key policies
- review engagement with young people in drafting the plan
- extend the consultation period of the plan and
- include targets for implementing active travel measures.

In addition to the engagement with Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee, all members can comment in full at council on 5<sup>th</sup> December. An all-member briefing took place on 18<sup>th</sup> November and additional feedback was received which is being shared with the Cabinet member.

**Supplementary question:**

**Supplementary response:**

<b>PQ 4.</b>	<b>Nigel Shaw, Bromyard</b>	<b>On 07/07/25 you published a decision to expend up to £1.5m of capital to develop and build workspace units on the former Council Depot Site in Bromyard. The published risk considerations make no reference to the content of the memorandum</b>	<b>Cllr Biggs</b>
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		<p>sent to the Economic Development Manager by Planning Services on 31/07/18 (Ref 182239). vis:-</p> <p>“A redevelopment of the site for employment purposes would very likely increase the density of development and radically alter the appearance of the site, at this stage it is unknown what impact this would have on neighbouring uses, access arrangements, or use restrictions on the site. Consequently it is not certain at this stage whether the site would be an appropriate location for future employment use.”</p> <p>What has now changed that enables these industrial units to be built cheek by jowl with existing dwellings?</p>	
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>The Bromyard Town Investment Plan and the Employment Land Study (completed in 2022) in support of the development of the new Local Plan indicates that there is a need for 4ha of employment land within Bromyard. The Cabinet Member decision taken on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025 (<a href="#">Decision - Bromyard Employment Land and Leominster Business Hub Development - Herefordshire Council</a>) initially provides access to the funding required to appoint a design team to fully explore the potential business case for development of the site to meet this need. We are currently undertaking further work to clarify demand for the proposed business units, and gathering further evidence to support the assessment of the financial viability, prior to taking forward the design stage which will include further engagement with the planning service.</p>			
<p><b>Supplementary question:</b></p>			
<p><b>Supplementary response:</b></p>			
PQ 5.	Jeremy Milln, Hereford	<p>The Herefordshire Local Transport Plan 5 (2025-41) at agenda item 10 contains scant reference to 20mph speed limits, believing them only narrowly applicable, e.g. around certain schools. In this respect the LTP as drafted fails to meet the ambition set by Herefordshire when it agreed to progress area-wide 20mph at Full Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Yet 20mph is now universally accepted as a defining feature of safer, more liveable streets across the UK adopted by more and more local authorities.</p>	Cllr Price

		<b>What does the Cabinet member propose to do, so as not to be left behind with his stance on the matter where denial of the facts will not do?</b>	
<b>Response:</b>  <p>The Local Transport Plan (LTP) does reference 20mph speed limits and focuses on their application in locations where they deliver the greatest safety and environmental benefits, such as around schools and residential areas. This reflects current Department for Transport guidance and the evidence base for effective speed management.</p> <p>The Council's resolution in March 2020 to progress area-wide 20mph limits remains an important commitment, and the LTP does not preclude wider implementation. Rather, it sets the strategic framework within which detailed policies and schemes will be developed. The next stage will involve reviewing how 20mph limits can be expanded in a way that is consistent with national standards, local priorities, and available funding. It is important to emphasise that our approach to road safety is not limited to speed limits alone. We are focused on a comprehensive package of measures including improved crossings, traffic calming, enforcement and active travel infrastructure to create safer, more liveable streets. This ensures that we address road safety holistically rather than relying on a single intervention.</p> <p>We will continue to monitor best practice and evidence from across the UK to ensure Herefordshire delivers safer streets while balancing enforcement, community support, and integration with wider transport objectives</p>			
<b>Supplementary question:</b>  			
<b>Supplementary response:</b>  			