

CABINET 30 JUNE 2021

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1. Question from:	Claire Kirby
Subject:	NWRR
Portfolio Holder:	Steve Charmley
<p>How much of the £87M budget for the road has been spent to date, (including any associated costs such as council officer costs, planning and preparation) and how much more money does SC anticipate spending before the scheme formally comes to the council for approval?</p> <p>Given the recent information regarding significant potential overspend on the road, what other assets is the council proposing to sell to pay for the road and can you give a guarantee that there will be no increases to Council Tax?</p> <p>The project has predicted costs of £5,128,342, of course this is subject to any design changes or issues raised during the planning process</p>	

2. Question from:	Adam Shipp
Subject:	NWRR
Portfolio Holder:	Steve Charmley
<p>The Norwich Western Link (NWL) is a 3.9 mile road with a 720 metre long viaduct over the River Wensum. The North West Road (NWR) is a 4 mile road with a 690 metre long viaduct over the River Severn. The cost of the Norwich Western Link rose last month to a staggering £198 million (in comparison to the North West Road which has been estimated to cost £87 million). Given this cost reality check will Shropshire Council: a) drop this expensive, unpopular road before costs spiral out of control? b) detail where the potential shortfall of £111 million will be found? c) state at what specific cost the NWR becomes financially untenable?</p> <p>The council does not intend to drop the North West Relief Road, which is seen as a critical piece of Infrastructure for the County. The scheme will however continue to be reviewed and developed, in line with the agreed project milestones, to ensure that it delivers affordable and effective outcomes.</p>	

3. Question from:	Jackie Jones
Subject:	NWRR
Portfolio Holder:	Steve Charmley
<p>The North West Road is currently projected to cost £87.2 million. At present Shropshire Council will receive £54.4 million from government, £4.2 million from the Marches LEP. If the Council has promised to only allocate £300,000 of CIL money to the project and to sell 21 hectares of our land for housing developments where will the rest of the money come from? What are the contingencies in the event of a significant overspend and exactly where will this money come from? The Council has already stated that it had spent £5.8 million on designing and planning the NWR up until March 2020. What is the current figure?</p> <p>It is hoped that the road will be fully funded without any contribution from the council, but will the council will underwrite any shortfall from its own capital budget programme as long as the business case continues to show a significant net benefit.</p> <p>The cost, up to March 2021, of the scheme design, development and delivery of the current Planning Application, is £9.1m.</p>	

4. Question from:	Ann Bosket
Subject:	Whitchurch Swimming Pool
Portfolio Holder:	Cecilia Motley
<p>My question is regarding Whitchurch swimming pool:- What provision will be put in place to ensure those people of Whitchurch, who have no means of transport, have access to a public swimming facility, whilst a new pool is being built and time scale for this to be achieved?</p> <p>As with all Shropshire Council capital build projects, there will be a Travel Plan and this will form part of the detailed feasibility study should a decision be made to consider replacing the existing facility. The decision will be made with the long-term benefits for Whitchurch and the surrounding area in mind along with the most effective use of Council resources. We do understand, however, the short-term effects this will have on those residents anxious to maintain a level of physical activity and as such will work closely with Shropshire Community Leisure Trust to provide access to alternative facilities wherever possible.</p> <p>That said, there are public swimming facilities located closer to Whitchurch than those operated by the Trust which are accessible by public transport, namely Wem, but also Nantwich.</p>	

Following any decisions made today I will make it a priority to discuss this situation with Council officers and Shropshire Community Leisure Trust to see what, if any, provisions can be implemented.

Indicative Timescales

Subject to Cabinet agreeing the recommendations the indicative timescales for completing the additional feasibility works and public/stakeholder engagement/consultation exercise is as follows:

- Procurement of external professional support and surveys as required for the feasibility study phase – July to August 2021.
- Feasibility study and public/stakeholder engagement/consultation exercise - September 2021 to February 2022.
- Report back to Cabinet March 2022.