

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2022

MEMBER QUESTIONS

Cllr Rob Wilson

Q: Later today this Committee is considering the Capital Strategy. I would like to seek clarification of two items, firstly the circa £4m allocated for the purchase of the NCP Car Park on Wyle Cop in Shrewsbury, secondly the £4.5m allocated to the possible construction of a multi-storey car park. How does this square with the aims of the Big Town Plan to place car parking outside of the river loop?

Response

In line with the council's capital strategy, the strategic acquisition of the NCP car park in Shrewsbury has been approved, but negotiations relating to the proposed acquisition are still taking place.

The council's main interest in the NCP car park site in Shrewsbury relates to its future economic regeneration potential being located in a gateway position to the east of the town and within the BTP development area. The council owns land adjacent to this site. Council officers embarked on negotiations with the landowner, following full council approval, via the appointed agent. It appears that the owner no longer wishes to sell at this point in time. It will continue to be used as a car park in this location under current lease arrangements as it remains in private ownership.

An investment of £4.5m to revitalise Bridgnorth's High Street and public realm has been agreed by Cabinet as part of the council's wider financial strategy. This is subject to agreement at Full Council before specific reports on the details of the scheme are considered and agreed, and a public consultation is then carried out.

The money hasn't been allocated to a specific project of piece of work and Council officers are working through the data from the recent public engagement to understand which projects people living and working in Bridgnorth want the council to deliver. Officers are refining and pricing proposed schemes and the options will be presented to Cabinet and to full Council in the new financial year for approval.

While a multi-storey car park is a potential option for Bridgnorth there are a number of other schemes being considered, such as public realm improvements, pedestrianisation, active travel etc.

Cllr Roger Evans

I would like to ask the following please. It is in several parts and is for information concerning the councils finances in readiness for the more general discussion later in the meeting.

Apprenticeship Levy. How much was collected from Schools and Shropshire Council during the last financial year. Was any of this money handed back to Government.

Response:

Apprenticeship Levy payments made into the Council's Apprenticeship Levy fund during 2020/21:

Corporate	£424,969
Schools	£169,881
Total	£594,850

£67,794 funds expired during 2020/21 (and were therefore returned to Central Government). However, no funds have expired at all since July 2020 and no funds are forecast to expire within this financial year.

Government Covid Grants, how much is it expected, forecast we will be carrying over, unspent at the end of March 2022.

Government has asked in the past for details, updates on "**Additional Expenditure Funded by Unringfenced Covid-19 Grant**" This I think covers 3 interconnected worksheets. Can a copy of the latest return be provided please.

Response

Unringfenced Covid-19 grant received £7,632,211. All grant will be utilised this year with no carry forward into next year. The unringfenced grant is being used to cover loss of income and additional expenditure incurred as a result of the pandemic. All costs relating to managing the outbreak itself are being funded from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) grant, which is a ringfenced grant to be used for public health activities such as testing, tracing, containing the outbreak and supporting vulnerable communities. The Council has received £9,424,812 COMF grant in total, £611,337 of which was spent at the end of 2020/21. Forecast expenditure this year is approximately £6.5m. The ringfenced grant remaining at the end of the year will be carried forward into 2022/23.

I understand there is what I think is called a Resilience Index or report on each Principle Council. Can we be told what the latest one for Shropshire is please and when this was issued.

Response

The latest CIPFA Resilience Index was released for 2019/20 Financial Year and is publicly available on the CIPFA website. With the national delays in closing 2020/21 Accounts it is unclear when this index will be updated.