

## CABINET 7 DECEMBER 2020

### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

#### 1. Question from Rob Wilson

For phase 2 of the Government's Active Travel Fund, Shropshire Council was given an indicative allocation of £346,000 to be spent in accordance with the design standards set out in LTN 1/20. Shropshire chose to submit a bid for £1.9m, but was awarded just £259,500 (14%).

- What reasons did the Department for Transport give Shropshire Council for the lower than bid for award?

**The council is still awaiting feedback from Department for Transport on the reasons for Shropshire Councils award being lower than the indicative allocation, particularly as the council had been encouraged by DfT to be ambitious in its bid.**

- How will Shropshire Council now spend the £259,500 that it has been awarded? Will the Council fund more School Streets now that one has been announced in Coleham? Will the Council now consider trial Low Traffic Neighbourhoods which are recommended by the Government, relatively low in cost, and substantial in benefit?

**Highway teams are still reviewing whether there are opportunities for match funding to enable delivery of some of the original proposals or how the reduced sum to derive the greatest impact.**

**A programme of 20mph zones outside all schools in Shropshire is being developed based on the criteria submitted in the report to Council, and these will consider additional measures above and beyond speed limits as needs demonstrate.**

**Teams are already looking at a trial of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in Shrewsbury.**

As the Council voted unanimously to support the Prime Minister's Gear Change policy and adopt LTN 1/20 as the standard for cycling infrastructure in Shropshire:

- What steps are Shropshire Council taking so that it is more successful in future phases of the Active Travel Fund? Is there a senior officer taking charge of Active Travel? If so, who? Is Shropshire Council developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)? If so, when will it be published?

**The council is started work on developing its Local Transport Plan 4, which will include a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan as part of an Active Travel Strategy. The current programme would seek approval for the**

**LTP4 late next year although it is hoped that the Active Travel Strategy can be approved in advance of the wider document.**

## **2. Question from Graham Tate**

Residents were pleased to see the Quarry Pool reopen on 2 December, but are mindful that for much of 2020 and into the future there is no certainty of provision for swimming in this part of Shrewsbury. Can the Council promise future provision on this site, either because of or in spite of a further 375 pages of Council reports on Leisure due to be dealt with at this meeting?

**The Council are committed to retaining swimming provision in the centre of Shrewsbury and officers are currently finalising a report which I will be presenting to Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> December. This follows a detailed feasibility study that has been undertaken which covers deliverability and affordability of preferred options that were discussed at Cabinet in February this year. Both of the preferred options included swimming provision on the Quarry site. It should be noted that the Council spent in the region of £115k on essential repairs and to make the centre Covid-19 compliant and ensure it reopened following the initial lockdown.**

## **3. Question from Stephen Mulloy**

### **Preamble**

Under [regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#) local planning authorities must review local plans, and Statements of Community Involvement at least once every 5 years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community.

### **Question**

The current Shropshire Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was adopted 24th Feb 2011 and the above regulation came in to force on 6th April 2018 so why is Shropshire Council only reviewing the SCI at the end of the local plan partial review...when all the consultation has already taken place?

Does this not invalidate any consultation taken place after 6th April 2018?

**The SCI covers both plan making and development aspects of the planning consultation process. The SCI was updated in 2014 but does need further updating and the document is under consultation now until 1st February so please do let us have any comments in advance of this deadline. The process of local plan review has been legally compliant with each stage of the consultation process, and compliant with the objectives of the current SCI,**

which sets out how the Council will be seeking consultation standards above minimum regulatory requirements. It is therefore not considered consultations held after 6<sup>th</sup> April are invalid.

#### 4. Question from Susan Howle

I was pleased to note that item 108 in "Summary of the Assessment of Garden Village Proposals in Bridgnorth to inform the 'Regulation 19' Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan" acknowledges that there is a conflict of interest between an IPU and TGV going ahead on the same site. Before putting TGV forward as the preferred option in the R19 SLP cabinet need to be certain that this conflict can be resolved. Planning Permission cannot be granted on a temporary basis revokable on a specific future event. Do cabinet agree that without an enforceable legal position to protect the preferred site for residential housing they must reject Tasley as the preferred option; unless they are prepared to first insist that the promoter withdraw their Planning Application for an IPU and second guarantee that should Planning Permission for an IPU be sought within the TGV site, once included in the SLP, it will be rejected?

**The current planning application for poultry units (17/01033/EIA) is being considered separate from the emerging Local Plan process, and is being considered against its compliance with the current Local Plan and any other material planning considerations. However, it is appropriate for the Local Plan to take into account the potential consequences of a grant of approval for the Poultry units in or surrounding the proposed Tasley Garden Village site where the site assessment process has identified a potential conflict with the these uses. On this basis it has been considered appropriate to include specific reference within the developer guidelines of the site that any before occupation of the first dwelling on the site, any poultry units operating on the site or indeed land within the wider site promotion will cease operation.**

#### 5. Question from Lydia Bardsley, Clerk to Clive Parish Council

Clive Parish Council would like to highlight that the current points total for the hierarchy of settlements for Clive is based on facilities that do not exist and will not open again.

The bowling green listed was in a privately-owned garden that is no longer open to the public since a change in ownership two years ago. The village shop was in a privately-owned building and after the tenant surrendered the tenancy in October 2020 the premises will no longer be let as a shop, and will revert to private use by the owner.

Is Shropshire Council cabinet aware that the points allocation is based on historic information that is inaccurate? The Parish Council were consistently assured by Shropshire Planning Officers that if Clive fell below the points threshold, we would drop out of Community Hub status. Can the Cabinet explain why Clive is still allocated as a Community Hub in this version of the Local Plan?

The Parish Council are concerned that the consistent methodology is not being adopted across Shropshire and wonders how many other settlements are affected across the county.

**The Council's approach to the identification of Community Hubs is guided by the application of a methodology contained in the 'Hierarchy of Settlements' document, which assessed the level of available services and facilities in an area. This has been applied on a consistent basis, and where appropriate has responded to changing levels of provision locally.**

**The current scoring for Clive includes the bowling green as an outdoor sports facility and the convenience store.**

**With regard to the bowling green, whilst it is recognised there is no active club currently using this space, this facility remains included within the Council's published Open Space Needs Assessment, and the removal of this facility will therefore need to be tested against either current or emerging Local Plan policy which, amongst other things, needs to show this facility is surplus to requirements. This is in line with general advice from Sport England. To this end, officers feel it continues to be appropriate to include this facility in the assessment.**

**With regard to the convenience store, whilst officers have received recent correspondence from the owner that he is not seeking to re-let following the recent departure of his tenant in October 2021, this has only very recently become the case, and indeed he has also confirmed that until October he was actively seeking to let the facility. Without further evidence of marketing more widely or suitable assurances about the potential future uses for the facility, on the balance of judgement it is felt it would therefore be premature to delete this facility from the assessment.**

**Whilst this is the current position of officers, it is recognised that the Council's methodology does require continued review, especially in light of any potential change to service provision resulting from the Covid 19 pandemic. The proposed consultation on the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan will allow parish councils to indicate if they consider the Council's approach to the**

identification of Community Hubs is ‘sound’. If there are concerns expressed, the Council has the ability to propose minor modifications to the Plan before submitting for Examination in March 2021. More substantial changes to the Plan (known as Main Modifications) can then be considered by the appointed Inspector, who as part of this process will be considering all representations made to the Plan at Regulation 19. It is therefore considered there continues to be suitable opportunities for the Plan to be reviewed in light of any updated evidence before it is adopted – likely to mid-2022. In the case of Clive, until the point of adoption, the settlement continues to be classified as ‘Countryside’ for the purposes of decision taking.

## 6. Question from Les Berryman

re Shropshire Local Plan : Tasley Garden Village

Taylor Wimpey has estimated an additional 600-700 vehicle movements per hour on the A458 Bridgnorth bypass during peak periods. This is a doubling of vehicle movements based on the latest published traffic survey data. Their estimate does not take into account the additional vehicle movements from the planned 500 dwelling SAMDEV development in Tasley.

The assessment of the garden village options for Bridgnorth states that the Tasley Garden Village development “***would have a significant impact on the surrounding highway network and mitigation measures would be required to manage this growth.***”

**What mitigation measures are planned and how much will they cost?**

**Will Shropshire Council be liable for the cost of these mitigation measures?**

**What are the traffic mitigation measure costs for the Stanmore Garden Village option that was originally Shropshire Councils preferred option?**

**As part of the Regulation 18 stage of plan preparation both Taylor Wimpey and the Stanmore Consortium have provided strategic Transport Assessments to support their respective site promotions. Due to the scale of both developments, it is likely that both would have a significant impact on the surrounding highway network and mitigation measures would be required to manage this growth. The conclusions of both proposals’ Transport Assessments would support this conclusion, although it is also considered that either proposal is likely to have the ability to mitigate these impacts.**

**In proposing the Tasley Garden Village proposal for inclusion as an allocation within the Local Plan Review it is accepted that further assessment will be required to identify more precisely specific highway mitigation measures, and this requirement is included within the developer guidelines proposed for the**

site allocation – contained in policy S3.1 (i) of the draft Local Plan, which states

“Any necessary improvements to the A458 Ludlow Road roundabout, the wider highway network and associated infrastructure will be undertaken, informed by Strategic and Local Highway Transport Assessments.” All necessary highway improvements required as result of the development will be funded by the developer.

7. **Malcolm Andrew on behalf of Trefonen Rural Protection Group Management Committee (see also accompanying attachments)**

**‘Soundness’ of the Hierarchy of Settlements**

We fully understand the importance of progressing the Local Plan Review towards Adoption to avoid the current Adopted Plan being considered “out of date”. To that end it is vital that is considered to be ‘sound’ by the Examination Inspector. We would again express our serious concerns that the **Hierarchy of Settlements** is **not** ‘sound’. This is due to the setting of Settlement Thresholds by the use of an imaginary ‘3 point gap’ in the inaccurate initial scoring table, which consequentially lead to additional wording being added into the Settlement requirements to support the outcome of that decision.

We consider that is “**unsound**”. Outcomes must be set by the policy and not the policy rewritten to fit the results. Crucially the relaxation removed the requirement for all Community Hub Settlements to have employment and peak time public transport, which are fundamental criteria in the full Hub definition for sustainability and to meet the Council’s Climate Emergency Policy, NPPF and Government’s Zero Carbon aims.

It is **contrary** to the “*Spatial Vision*” and SP3 Climate Change and Sustainability Objectives SO5, SO6, & SO12 in the ***Pre-submission (Reg 19) Document***, before you for Approval, which seek to minimise car travel and maximise trips by sustainable travel, and to reduce carbon emissions. i.e. it is **contrary** to the document which it is supposed to support. It must be considered “**unsound**” and amended or risk the **whole** Draft Plan being found “**unsound**”.

The relaxation requires an assessment of ‘*compensating*’ factors for the lack of these fundamental criteria. That introduces a **subjective** assessment and decision making into the determination of Settlement status, rather than it being based purely on the **objective** Methodology outcomes.

One of the main factors in undertaking this Local Plan Review was the 2015 SAMDev Examination Inspector’s concerns on the **subjective** ‘opt-in’ decision process by Parish Councils for Hub status; and the need for it to be an **objective** decision based on **set criteria**. The purpose of the Hierarchy of Settlements Methodology was to be

an “*appropriate and robust assessment*” of settlements against the full Community Hub key criteria, but that has been made undermined by the addition of the relaxation based on inaccurate scoring. We have raised this matter with Officers at each stage of ‘Consultation’ and with your Cabinet at previous meetings.

Attached our most recent ‘Consultation’ submission.

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We note in para 5.16 of the Report to this meeting that the Officers say they are confident upon their judgement and have not amended the **Hierarchy of Settlements**. We believe that this carries a significant risk to the ‘soundness’ of this key support document, but that a simple change to **HofS Para 5.41** to remove the relaxation and require the full definition criteria including employment and peak time public transport to be used to determine Hub Settlement status could eliminate that risk.

That minor amendment & review of the Hub Settlement list could be made before issue for Reg19 ‘Consultation’ We would request that you consider the implications of continuing with the current Hierarchy of Settlements to the ‘**soundness**’ of the **Pre-submission (Reg 19) Document**, and that you ask your Officers to amend it before final publication with the Reg19 ‘Consultation’.

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Q1. After consideration of the issues raised, do Cabinet believe that in its current form the Hierarchy of Settlements conforms with the Council’s adopted Climate Change Emergency Policy, and with the Climate Change and Sustainability Objectives of the Draft Local Plan?

Q2. After consideration of the issues raised, are Cabinet certain that in its current form the Hierarchy of Settlements will be found to be ‘sound’ by the Examination Inspector, and will not prejudice the approval and adoption of the Draft Local Plan?

- 1. The Hierarchy of Settlements (HoS) approach specifically seeks to identify those most sustainable and appropriate settlements in the rural area to accept an element of growth commensurate with their scale and level of service provision. It is therefore considered the HoS document in its current form conforms to the Council’s adopted Climate Change Emergency Policy and the Climate Change and Sustainability Objectives of the Draft Local Plan**
- 2. At this stage of plan preparation the Council (nor indeed any Council in the same position) can say with absolute certainty that the Plan will be found ‘sound’ at Examination. However, it is the role of the Council to prepare, consult and submit a Plan for Examination which represents both a positive framework for development, but also which will have the best opportunity for being found ‘sound’ at Examination. If people wish to challenge the Soundness of the Plan the Regulation 19 stage of consultation allows them to do so, and to have their concerns heard by the Inspector at Examination.**

## **8. Question submitted by Bill Griffiths, Clerk to Tasley Parish Council on behalf of that Parish Council**

“Tasley Parish Council (TPC) notes that of the 41 points it submitted in the Regulation 18 consultation on the Shropshire Local Plan (SLP), many relating to the scale of development, not one comment from the local representatives of people already resident within Tasley has been reflected in this latest December 2020 Regulation 19 Pre-submission Draft of the Local Plan.

TPC particularly notes the following relating to the Tasley Garden Village (TGV) proposal preferred by Shropshire Council officers in their latest SLP draft:

- The Appendix 2 document states (on page 21) under the heading Public Protection: *'The land at the proposed 'Garden Village' at Tasley contains the site of a current Planning Application for Poultry Units. It is currently unclear whether this Planning Application would be temporarily implemented if Planning Permission is granted. However, given that the land subject to this Planning Application is within the site promotion, it is considered that this could be appropriately mitigated through inclusion of a guideline stipulating that before occupation of the first dwelling on the site, any poultry units operating on the site or indeed land within the wider site promotion will cease operation'.*
- The Appendix 1 document states (on page 183) under the heading S3.1 Development Strategy: Bridgnorth Principal Centre: *'Before occupation of the first dwelling on the site, any poultry units operating on the site or land within the wider site promotion identified on the Policies Map as a Potential Future Direction of Growth will cease operation'.*

These statements make clear that there is a conflict of interest between the TGV proposal set out in the SLP and the planning application for an intensive poultry unit (IPU) at Footbridge Farm currently being redetermined by Shropshire Council. Furthermore, these statements are an explicit acknowledgment that the operation of an IPU at Footbridge Farm would be detrimental to the residential amenity of nearby dwellings.

Officers are proposing that should Cabinet approve this latest SLP, thereby allowing the TGV proposal to proceed, and should Shropshire Council's South Planning Committee consent the IPU planning application, thereby allowing it to be built and operate on the same site as that of the proposed TGV development, then at some time in the future, Shropshire Council's Public Protection is guaranteeing to stop the IPU operating.

Unfortunately, there are a number of problems with this:

- The first dwellings on the TGV site would most likely be adjacent to the Ludlow Road, approximately 1.3km away from the proposed IPU site; much further away than existing homes on the Wenlock Rise estate, which is spread between 600 to 1,200 metres from the proposed IPU site, with allocated SAMDev housing even closer. It is therefore unclear



how Shropshire Council could possibly guarantee the protection of future TGV housing, whilst at the same time not guaranteeing similar protection for existing homes when consenting the IPU application.

- It is unclear how the IPU owner would be compensated for the significant investment they would have made in their business prior to the first TGV dwelling being ready for occupancy. It is likely the IPU owner would use every means at their disposal, such as invoking the planning regulation '100 metre rule', to argue that if it was ok for the IPU to operate with existing housing 600 metres away, then it must be ok for the IPU to continue to operate when TGV housing is 1,300 metres away, or even just 101 metres away. Any lawyer worth their fee should be able to argue the IPU owner's case and win.
- The guarantee proposed by officers infers, but does not make explicit, that Shropshire Council has any legal precedent on which to grant planning permission that is conditioned to be revoked on a specific future event, and even if such a precedent does exist, again it is not explicit whether it is actually legally enforceable within planning law. These unknowns are risks, so Shropshire Council would be well advised to seriously consider the question of compensation before proceeding.

These material concerns expose a level of uncertainty with the proposal put forward by officers regarding the TGV site's availability, and makes their proposal an unsound basis on which to make a strategic land allocation decision on.

Presumably the promoters of the TGV development are serious, and as there appears to be no practical guarantee that planning permission for the IPU can be revoked once granted, then surely Cabinet should seriously consider requesting the IPU planning application be withdrawn, or if the IPU developer refuses, then invoke Strategic policy No 4 in the SLP, headed Sustainable Development, which states *'Proposed development that conflicts with the development plan will be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise'*, before land allocations supporting the TGV proposal can go through to R19 consultation.

If the IPU planning application is not refused or withdrawn, it puts in doubt the viability of the site for a garden village at Tasley, and gives rise to a sound reason to relocate the garden village development to Stanmore in the R19 LPR instead.

Notwithstanding all this, it is still not clear how the concerns relating to the scale of development in the Bridgnorth area have been addressed in preparing this latest SLP.

Given all this, how can Cabinet be confident that if they approve the draft plan, stipulations set out in the SLP are actually able to guarantee stopping the IPU from operating before the first TGV residence is occupied, particularly as, if passed, planning law would presumably not have allowed Shropshire Council to guarantee similar protection for much closer existing homes, such as those on Wenlock Rise estate, when it consented the IPU?"

The current planning application for poultry units (17/01033/EIA) is being considered separate from the emerging Local Plan process, and is being considered against its compliance with the current Local Plan and any other material planning considerations. However, it is appropriate for the Local Plan to take into account the potential consequences of a grant of approval for the Poultry units in or surrounding the proposed Tasley Garden Village site where the site assessment process has identified a potential conflict with these uses. On this basis it has been considered appropriate to include specific reference within the developer guidelines of the site that any before occupation of the first dwelling on the site, any poultry units operating on the site or indeed land within the wider site promotion will cease operation.

Cabinet is being asked to approve the Regulation 19 version of the draft Local Plan today. The level of information provided to support the Tasley Garden Village proposal is considered to be commensurate with the stage of the proposal in the 'Planning cycle'. It is not the role of the Local Plan to assess proposals as planning applications, but it is appropriate to have a sufficient level of confidence that the proposals included in the Plan are considered sustainable and deliverable, and to establish specific criteria future planning applications will need to meet. Draft policy S3.1(i) seeks to do this. Importantly, Cabinet are not being asked to consider the merits or otherwise of the current planning application for Poultry units at Tasley. It should also be recognised that if approved today for the Regulation 19 consultation, the draft Local Plan will continue to have very limited weight in decision making.

## **9. Clive Dyson on behalf of Bridgnorth Plan Steering Group**

The Regulation 19 draft local plan includes an assertion that all comments made at the Regulation 18 stage have been considered in drafting it. This is reflected in the Cabinet report at 5.5, which states that "*officers have reviewed and considered comments made*" and that "*A detailed summary of all the consultation responses is included as Appendix 4 to this report.*"

Appendix 4 should evidence how the comments made have been reflected in the draft plan, but it has not so far been published and the Cabinet report gives the impression that it will be part of the evidence base for the proposed Regulation 19 consultation.

In its submission to the Regulation 18 consultation, Bridgnorth Plan Steering Group raised questions about the scale of proposed residential and employment development around Bridgnorth, its location, and the infrastructure needed to support it. It is not clear how these issues have been addressed in preparing the Pre-submission Draft of the Local Plan. It appears that few relevant changes have been made.

Paragraph 2.28 of the draft plan refers to an Infrastructure Plan, which might address some of our concerns. However, we are not aware that any such document has been published.

The Settlement Policy for the Bridgnorth Place Plan area states (para 5.62) that “a *strategic assessment of the highway network will be undertaken.*” We do not understand how a final recommendation on the scale of development around Bridgnorth can be made when such a critical assessment is still outstanding. Given the absence of these supporting documents to inform their decision, how can members of the Cabinet be confident that the draft Local Plan is sound and that the scale and location of development proposed around Bridgnorth is sustainable?

**Appendix 4 to the Cabinet report provides a comprehensive and detailed summary of the comments made as part of the Regulation 18 draft local plan consultation. This is intended to provide Cabinet and other interested parties an opportunity to identify the issues raised. Whilst there is no requirement for the council to provide detail of how these comments have been addressed, the Cabinet paper does specifically point to a number of significant changes made to the Plan in paragraphs 5.9-5.15 and the rationale for these. If approved, stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on the soundness of the Plan as part of the consultation at Regulation 19.**

#### **10. Question from Nick Norbury**

In 2015 the Local Plan Inspector reflected local concerns at the amount of development being proposed at Tasley because Bridgnorth was constrained by West Midlands green belt to the east. She recommended the Council should look to green belt land to the east of Bridgnorth at the next Plan review so that housing and jobs would be kept together. Providing 1750 houses (eventually) at Tasley will massively increase traffic passing through the town and eastwards over the Severn to where people will work. Why have your officers recommended dropping the original well contained site at Stanmore (where jobs and housing could be kept together) when Tasley is so obviously the wrong location to expand the town and where there is no limit to future encroachment into open countryside?

**In 2015, as part of her report into the SAMDev Plan, the Inspector identified the need for the Council to undertake a Green Belt Review as part of its next review of the Local Plan. She did not instruct the Council to release land from the Green Belt. The Council have undertaken a Green Belt Assessment and Review as part of the extensive evidence base into the Local Plan, and this has included land at Stanmore and the likely harm of releasing this land from the Green Belt when tested against the objectives of the Green Belt. The release of land from the Green belt continues to be subject to the Council advancing a ‘exceptional circumstances’ argument and this consideration is taken into account as a significant policy consideration as part of the site assessment process for Bridgnorth and in particular the comparison of Garden Village proposals, set out in Appendix 2 to the Cabinet Report.**

## **11. Elle Cass – on behalf of Nurton Developments Limited**

We have now considered those Cabinet Report Papers which are currently available on your web site and have the following questions which we formally request be presented to Members at Monday's meeting.

1. It is stated in the Agenda Report that you have revisited the options for Bridgnorth in view of the level of comments received about the proposals for the town. Can you please confirm whether or not you fully reviewed ALL the comments received for the Shifnal options and did you review the options, if not, why not?

**All comments received as part of the Regulation 18 Draft Local plan consultation have been reviewed, and changes to the Plan have been recommended where considered appropriate**

2. Why has a comprehensive summary of the comments regarding the Shifnal options not been published for consideration by Cabinet to allow them to make an informed decision as to whether the plan could progress to Regulation 19 re-consultation or whether it would be necessary to re-consult on the basis of a Regulation 18?

**A comprehensive summary of the consultation responses has been published as Appendix 4 to the Cabinet Report**

3. It is noted that you propose to undertake public consultation over the period mid-December to late January. This is a most unusual period to undertake such consultation as it is widely recognised that public consultations should not be undertaken during major public holidays. Why are you proposing the public consultation during this period? Why is the consultation period only 6 weeks in the light of this?

**A comprehensive summary of the consultation responses has been published as Appendix 4 to the Cabinet Report**

4. You have asked for questions by 1pm today, however we have not been able to review Cabinet Report Appendix 4, as this has not been published which does not appear to accord with due process?

**A comprehensive summary of the consultation responses has been published as Appendix 4 to the Cabinet Report**

5. Similarly the Cabinet Report refers to a review of the Site Assessment Process where consultation responses have raised new material considerations. However,

you have not published this and do not intend to until the Regulation 19 consultation commences. This makes it impossible for Cabinet to consider whether due process has been followed in assessing all new material? We consider that Cabinet should have had sight of this information in order to make a fully informed decision on the recommendations?

**Cabinet are being asked to approve the Regulation 19 version of the Plan for consultation and it is considered the level of information provided is sufficient for Members to take this decision**

6. We understand that you are now accepting ‘an element of unmet employment land need from the Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA), and for this employment need to be incorporated into the overall employment requirement for Shropshire to 2038,’ however it does not appear that any additional sites have been identified to meet this new requirement?

**Cabinet are being asked to approve the Regulation 19 version of the Plan for consultation and it is considered the level of information provided is sufficient for Members to take this decision**

7. We note that your Report to Cabinet does not detail the implications of the White Paper, particularly should the local plan’s preparation timeline slip. This could have significant implications for the Local Plan as a whole if it is delayed and we consider that Cabinet should be fully informed of these implication in order to make an informed decision at the Cabinet Meeting? We look forward to the Cabinet’s responses and will be listening into the proceedings. Please can you confirm receipt of these questions and that they will be presented to Cabinet accordingly.

**Cabinet members were made aware of the implications of the Planning White Paper, and the Council’s response, including to the proposed transitional arrangements at the Cabinet meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> October.**

## **12. Charles Green on behalf of CPRE**

***Questions for Cabinet meeting on 7th December 2020, submitted by Charles Green acting for CPRE Shropshire, concerning Agenda item 7: Shropshire Local Plan - Pre Submission (Regulation 19) version.***

These questions are as much for members of Cabinet as they are for officers. For that reason we request that the whole of this document is read out for members to hear on 7 December.

The imminent Regulation 19 consultation on the Pre-submission version of the Draft Local Plan will have a very different format to the previous five Regulation 18 consultations held whilst the plan was taking shape. This Regulation 19 consultation is the only one that carries weight in the eyes of the Inspector who will be examining it in public and who will not see any of the responses made to any of the earlier consultations. Everything that people want to say has to be said afresh.

Seasoned planning consultants expect there to be a delay of several months between a final Regulation 18 consultation and the formal Regulation 19 consultation. In this case there has been less than two months to assess the 2,500 or so responses to the last consultation, decide what should be changed as a result, implement those changes, and then produce a thoroughly checked final document.

This has put immense pressure on officers and there is evidence within the documents that things have been rushed. Errors and inconsistencies that we have already pointed out have not been corrected. The Cabinet report before you mistakes Kinnerley Parish for Knockin Parish. The Local Development Scheme has blatant mistakes within it. The Statement of Community Involvement that is only recently out for consultation but which should determine how the Council's consultations are run, is riddled with errors and refers to legislation that has long since been repealed. Documents said to have been Key at the last consultation stage have yet to be published. Appendix 4 to the Cabinet report for this agenda item (the Summary of Responses to the last consultation) has not yet been published on the website for this agenda item.

With this in mind, Question 1 relates to Recommendation A before you today, namely that the Pre-Submission Version of the Plan as currently presented be put to consultation for seven weeks from 16th December 2020 to 3rd February 2021.

**Question 1, in two related parts:**

- i) Are members sure that the Pre-Submission Version of the Plan as currently presented has been prepared to the standards expected, and not unduly rushed in its preparation?**
- ii) Are members content that a consultation period for as little as seven-weeks at this final, crucial and different stage, beginning the week before Christmas, during a time when council offices and libraries will be closed, during continued Covid-19 restrictions, and for a period that seems designed to be the minimum period that can be justifiably got away with, will cast the Council in a good light during the supposed season of goodwill?**

Question 2 relates to recommendation C before you today, namely the approval of the updated Local Development Scheme, which is at Appendix 3 to the papers for this Agenda item. The LDS document as tabled shows the date December 2020 in the box at the top right of its pages 1 to 6. However on the remaining pages 7 to 22 the date is given as February 2020. This is presumably a hangover from an earlier unpublished draft of February 2020 (the last previously published version of the LDS on the council's website is dated June 2019 on pages 1 to 15, and May 2018 on pages 16 to 22).

This error in updating the various preceding versions of the LDS might not matter except that there is now a disparity within the document between the dates shown

for submission of the Draft Plan to the Secretary of State, which is one of the key reasons for being obliged to update the LDS in the first place. On page 12 this date is shown as April 2021, whereas on page 14 it is shown as October 2020.

**Question 2, again in two related parts:**

- i) Do members think that the Local Development Scheme as currently tabled should be sent back for correction before approval?***
- ii) In view of Question 1 about the rushed nature of things and the length and timing of the imminent Regulation 19 consultation do members consider it prudent to put back the submission of the Draft Plan to the Secretary of State from April 2021 to a later month?***

**Q1 (i) Cabinet members are content that the Regulation 19 of the Local Plan has met standards expected and has not been a rushed process. We would wish to thank you for pointing out the errors in the Cabinet paper and the LDS, and Recommendation D of the Cabinet paper will allow officers to correct these ahead of publication, however it is proposed that this Recommendation is slightly amended to read:**

**“That authority is delegated to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Strategic Planning Development to make additional minor editorial changes to the Pre-submission Version of the Local Plan, **and the Local Development Scheme...**”**

**Q2 (ii) The consultation period proposed is in excess of the minimum requirements set by national regulations in specifically recognising the Christmas period. Temporary changes due to the current Covid 19 pandemic to Regulation 35 of the Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, which lifts the requirement for the Council to have copies of documents to be made available for inspection, at their principal office and at such other places within their area as the local planning authority consider appropriate, during normal office hours, are to remain in place beyond 31<sup>st</sup> December. However, despite this the Council will continue to seek to do make documents available for inspection wherever possible and safe to do so.**

**Q2 (i) see response to Q1 (i)**

**Q2 (ii) Subject to the agreement of the revised LDS, Cabinet are content as to the future timeframe for the submission of the Local Plan to the Government for Examination in April 2021. However, this can clearly be kept under review and will need to take into account the responses made to the Regulation 19 Plan if approved by Cabinet, as well as any other evidence. The decision to submit in April 2021 is also subject to approval by Full Council, proposed for March 2021.**

### **13. Zoe Turner, on behalf of Shifnal Matters**

I would like to ask a question on behalf of Shifnal Matters . A community group in Shifnal, who represent the local community in the local plan review.

Shifnal Matters would like to know what consideration has been given to development in other countys that border Shropshire to prevent an erosion of green belt as per nation planning policy ?

In the case of Shifnal , which borders onto Telford, if both Shropshire and Telford and Wrekins suggested developments are agreed this greenbelt border will be eroded. How will Shropshire council prevent this from happening when parcels in Shifnals local plan review are directly inline with Telfords planned development.

The T&W Local Plan and the Policies Map indicate that, on the eastern side of Telford there will be the following developments:

- 1.The T54 employment site is to expand by just over 35 hectares.
- 2.The Priorslee Sustainable Urban Extension will occupy just over 57 hectares.
- 3.There are some minor additions to the Halesfield Employment area, but these appear to be within the existing boundaries

**Discussions between Shropshire Council and Telford and Wrekin Planning Officers has been ongoing through the preparation of the Shropshire Local Plan Review as part of the Council's legal obligations under the Duty to Cooperate process. In line with national policy, this has included a specific request made to Telford & Wrekin Council and to other neighbouring authorities regarding their ability to accommodate development as an alternative to releasing land in the Green Belt in Shropshire. Shropshire Council has the ability to respond to the emerging Telford and Wrekin Local Plan as a statutory consultee.**

### **14. Henry Carver, Chairman of Save Bridgnorth Greenbelt**

Below is the question that I am sending to the cabinet in my capacity as Chairman of Save Bridgnorth Greenbelt [www.savebridgnorthgreenbelt.co.uk](http://www.savebridgnorthgreenbelt.co.uk) to the proposals to develop Bridgnorth.

#### Question

Bridgnorth currently has over 45 acres of already allocated industrial land available in 3 Industrial Parks; only 10% has been taken up in the last 15 years: Stanmore has 5 acres already available and many empty units to be re-developed, Chartwell is only



half-developed and Tasley lays completely undeveloped. And yet the Local Plan proposes allocating even more employment land in Bridgnorth, including an unjustified 11.5ha in the greenbelt at Stanmore, contrary to National Policy. Employers have chosen to locate in Telford – just eight miles from Bridgnorth - because it has superior M54 logistics, rail connections, infrastructure, and industrial hubs, plus 400 acres of industrial land ready to go, and a further 350 acres safe-guarded.

Could the cabinet, therefore, explain, in the absence of significant infrastructure investment in Bridgnorth, how they envisage the large residential development proposed for Bridgnorth is going to meet Shropshire Council's policy of one job per household?

**The proposals contained within draft Policy S3.1(i) for future employment provision in Bridgnorth recognise the strategic role of the settlement as Shropshire's third largest town, the opportunity to strengthen the town's economic role, providing sites for existing businesses to expand and to attract new businesses to the town. The sites identified are considered to offer choice and competition to the market. This includes land adjacent to Stanmore Industrial Park, currently in the Green Belt, and in this instance the Council has published an 'exceptional circumstances' case by way of a rationale for this release. The employment proposals identify within their development guidelines the infrastructure improvements necessary, and these will be assessed as part of any future planning application on the site.**