

2. Supplement to the agenda for

Cabinet

Thursday 26 March 2026

2.30 pm

**Conference Room 1 - Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane
Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE**

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

Question No.	Questioner	Question	Question to
PQ 1.	Mr Emil Morfett, Hereford	<p>The Hereford Bypass is to support the Western Urban Expansion of Hereford City adding 14,000 new houses. Thousands more houses will add 30-50% more traffic to and from Hereford on existing roads. This will also necessitate destruction of extensive natural capital and greatly expand the County carbon footprint.</p> <p>Unlike all new UK infrastructure plans, no foundational evidence-based analysis was presented by this Council to show the environmental and emissions impact of both Phases, no evidence on lifetime carbon budgets and none on easing congestion. Answers to public questions continue to lack any analysis of an evidence-base for this infrastructure development.</p> <p>Where are the missing keystone, foundation documents, to justify development on the environmental impacts of Phase I and congestion relief of Phase I and II?</p>	Councillor Price, Transport and Infrastructure

Response:

The Hereford Bypass will support the building of homes and creation of employment sites. In July 2024 all Council's in England were given new and increased mandatory targets by the Government. These new homes will of course require supporting infrastructure. It is right that the Council has infrastructure being delivered alongside the building out of these sites. The Council response to the challenge provided by the increased homes target will be guided through the emerging local plan and recently published Local Transport Plan (LTP 5).

It is accepted that development at the levels proposed will have an impact on the natural environment. The Council will continue to work on schemes that it develops itself and with developers on their projects they deliver to manage these impacts fully in line with current and future regulations.

In common with all UK Infrastructure that is being progressed, Phase One of the bypass has been through a full planning process and produced all necessary environmental information to support that application. The publication, in the coming days, of the Scheme Information Report, which provides a technical overview of context, impacts and assessment work will provide sufficient information in the development of the Full Business Case. This will be further substantiated with the publication of the Full Business Case which will be presented to cabinet in July 2026.

Supplementary Question:			
Supplementary Response:			
PQ 2.	Rhys Griffiths, Hereford	In the December meeting the council said the Whitehouse community hub building would be repaired so my question is have the council made any provision of funds in this years budget for the work to be done and what is the approximate time line for the work to begin, thank you.	Councillor Bramer, Community Services and Assets
<p>Response: There is currently an allocation of £184,000 within the 2026–2029 capital programme for the Whitehouse community hub building. This is intended to support works to the building, either through making good the existing facility or forming part of a wider redevelopment approach. At this stage, the position remains under review. We are continuing to investigate the condition of the building and develop options to ensure the most appropriate long-term solution is delivered. This includes considering how the asset could be improved and potentially enhanced, while maintaining its community function. Any wider redevelopment options, and associated funding beyond the current allocation, are still to be confirmed.</p> <p>In terms of programme, no fixed start date has been agreed at this point. The immediate focus is on feasibility and option development, which will then inform scope, funding, and delivery timescales. Which we will confirm with the Whitehouse community hub group.</p> <p>Alongside this, we are continuing to engage with local community groups and partners to understand how the space could best be used in future to support local needs and activities. This will help ensure that future plans for the building support a sustainable, community-led offer and make the best use of the space for local residents.</p>			
Supplementary Question:			
Supplementary Response:			
PQ 3.	Maggie, Setterfield Hereford	The LCWWIP shifts down cycling in priority by explicitly increasing other active travel measures and by putting the LTP literally in front of Cycle planning.	Councillor Price, Transport and Infrastructure

		<p>Given projected increases in fuel costs we need good cycling and walking provision in place as we are nudged heavily towards active travel.</p> <p>Many question recent decisions to spend ear-marked cycle infrastructure funding where seemingly convenient to work rather than where most needed – eg the closure of Gt Western way causes inconvenience and real safety issues for hundreds of daily users, with poor signage of alternative routes and the frustration of seeing little progress.</p> <p>To minimise the use of expensive outside consultants would Cabinet please consider appointing a dedicated Cycling Officer for Herefordshire with appropriate infrastructure design experience & capable of working well with users to ensure active travel moneys are more efficiently applied?</p>	
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Response:
Thank you for your question and for emphasising the importance of high-quality cycling and walking infrastructure in Herefordshire’s approach to active travel.

The Local Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan (LCWWIP) does not reduce the priority of cycling within the Council’s long-term transport strategy. Instead, it supports the Local Transport Plan (LTP) by ensuring active travel is consistently considered in future transport decisions. The LCWWIP firmly places active travel within a balanced package of measures that support sustainable travel, climate commitments, health outcomes, and value for money.

We recognise that rising transport costs make the provision of safe, attractive routes for cycling and walking more important than ever and we are committed to delivering improvements that enable more people to make everyday journeys by active modes. Regarding recent works on Great Western Way, we acknowledge the disruption caused by temporary closures. Safety and essential maintenance required these measures and we appreciate the feedback regarding signage and communication. Lessons from this scheme are already informing better management and public information for future works.

On the suggestion of appointing a dedicated Cycling Officer, the Council agrees that strong in-house expertise is vital. A new Principal Integrated Transport Officer post has already been approved to lead delivery of LCWWIP priorities. Further strengthening cycling and active travel expertise. We value the contribution of cycling groups, local campaigners, and everyday users in shaping this work. Ongoing engagement will continue to shape our active travel programme to benefit Herefordshire’s communities

Supplementary Question:

Supplementary Response:

PQ 4.	Mrs Morawiecka, Breinton	I was advised in answer to my question at the last full council meeting re HGVs coming into Hereford from South Wales that "Initial analysis of draft traffic data modelling indicates immediate benefits in relation to HGVs in this area by delivering phase one of the Hereford bypass" . The data on which this answer was provided had incorrectly included all daily buses travelling back & forth on the Belmont Road in the HGV count & assumed, without evidence, that these would be rerouted onto the new Southern Link Road & the A49. With public help, the traffic count data from Sept 2025 has now been corrected, so would the Cabinet member review his previous answer and, using origin & destination traffic data, explain the claimed benefits of the £45million Southern Link Road?"	Councillor Price, Transport and Infrastructure
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Response:

Thank you for your question and for highlighting the corrected HGV data. As noted, the figures have now been updated, and we will continue to strengthen our quality assurance processes to ensure buses are not incorrectly counted within HGV classifications in future surveys. However, this does not change our analysis of the challenge and the benefits that the road will bring. The survey data shows that 435 HGVs still travel on Belmont Road.

Phase One alone provides a strong case for investment. Early indications assess the Benefit–Cost Ratio (BCR) at between 1.8 and 2.5, which represents medium to high value for money. Across the standard 60-year appraisal period, total monetised benefits are estimated at between £53.9 million and £77.4 million, including:

Around £47 million in travel-time savings, improving journey reliability for residents, businesses and visitors.

Improved access to the Hereford Enterprise Zone, enhancing its attractiveness to investors and supporting new jobs and economic growth.

Health and environmental benefits, including reduced traffic volumes through residential areas such as Belmont, Hunderton, Red Hill, Putson and Lower Bullingham—improving daily conditions for local communities.

Noise reductions for properties along key corridors, including more than 450 homes along the A465, as well as parts of Holme Lacy Road.

An estimated 18 accidents avoided, including 11 slight-casualty reductions.

A reduction of approximately 4,285 tCO₂e, equivalent to around £0.95 million in greenhouse-gas benefits (2023 prices).

Further information and data will be provided at the Full Business Case stage later this year.

Supplementary Question:

Supplementary Response:

PQ 5.	Mrs Jackie Morris, Hereford	The LCWWIP on page 135 highlights that routes with close proximity to schools can play an important part in enabling children & parents/guardians to walk, cycle or wheel. After much work with Council Officers for over 25 years, a proposed cycle route connecting Whitecross High & Stretton Sugwas Primary along the length of Kings Acre Road, away from the 40 mph road was ranked 4th in the council cycling infrastructure plan for funding, that was never forthcoming. Despite requested from Breinton Parish councillors during the LCWWIP consultation why has this route not been included in the LCWWIP for funding?	Councillor Price, Transport and Infrastructure
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Response:

Thank you for your question.

Feedback submitted during the LCWWIP consultation—including from Breinton Parish councillors—was considered by the project team, and the final plan was updated where evidence supported doing so. In this instance, although the route is recognised as a desire line, it did not meet the threshold for inclusion in the first phase of LCWWIP priority corridors; the threshold assessment looks at viability, modal shift opportunities and cost/funding opportunities.

Importantly, the LCWWIP is a live document intended to support ongoing development of the network over time. The Council will continue to review opportunities for school-focused improvements through future updates, design development work, and as external funding becomes available.

We remain committed to working with local communities, schools and parish councils to ensure that opportunities for improving safe access to education facilities are considered as part of future programme development.

Supplementary Question:

Supplementary Response:

<p>PQ 6.</p>	<p>Mr. Jeremy Milln, Hereford</p>	<p>It is appreciated that the LCWWIP public consultation at item 7 on today's agenda attracted 1648 visits and a healthy 760 contributions</p> <p>Westco's 40 page feedback report of February 2023 on the 2022/23 Hereford City Masterplan consultation, also using the Commonplace platform and interactive map, showed that 393 people responded to the survey and 627 to the interactive map with more than 2000 comments and suggestions helping to shape the final draft Plan published in March 2023 shortly before the new administration scrapped it.</p> <p>How many responses were received by the end of the latest Hereford City 2050 Masterplan consultation run over the Christmas/New Year period and why was the City Council, as the chief stakeholder, not consulted or even notified?</p>	<p>Councillor Biggs, Economy and Growth</p>
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Response:

The Council is in the early stages of developing the Hereford City Masterplan 2050, which reflects a renewed strategic approach shaped by the current administration's Council Plan, updated transport plan and wider policy framework, including a commitment to develop the Hereford Bypass. This sets out a vision for an economically stronger, healthier and better connected Hereford, enhancing the historic centre, maximising green space, supporting local businesses and improving how people travel into, across and around the city - whether by foot, bike, bus, car or train. It also aligns with commitments to improve air quality, reduce carbon emissions and plan for future homes and infrastructure needs. In developing the outline framework for the Masterplan 2050 some initial engagement was undertaken, including via the council website as well as face to face conversations. This occurred in Hereford City Centre and at local colleges, inviting residents, businesses and partners to share their views on key themes including culture, education, health, homes, movement and potential development areas across the city. In terms of responses received, the online questionnaire returned 11 submissions. The in-person drop-in sessions generated approximately 80 suggestion slips. Full consultation will take place once Cabinet has reviewed the draft and any amendments have been made. This will include meaningful engagement with key stakeholders, such as the City Council, Hereford City BID, businesses, public bodies, and further public engagement, and we look forward to hearing their views.

Supplementary Question:

Supplementary Response:



Title of report: Political Group Consultation of Delivery Plan 2026/27

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: 26th March 2026

Cabinet member: Cabinet member, Finance and Corporate Services

Report by: Director of Finance

Report author: Head of Corporate Performance and Intelligence

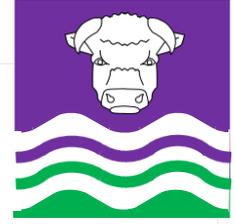
Supplement to report - Political Group Consultation Comments

A political group consultation was held on 25th March 2026. The consultation was attended by 16 councillors from across the Conservative Party, Green Party, Independents for Herefordshire, True Independents and Liberal Democrats groups.

The following discussion/feedback was noted:

- Independents for Herefordshire has provided their written feedback attached in Appendix A.
- Liberal Democrats welcomed the proposed Outcomes Framework which will evidence impact for residents; they also highlighted that the Delivery Plan 2026/27 did not include all planned activities to address affordable housing needs in the county; and they challenged the transformation section of the plan and requested assurance of transformation activities.
- Green party identified an opportunity to engage further with children and young people to share planned activities that impact their future.

Independents *for* Herefordshire



Date: 25 March 2026

Political Group Consultation Response on behalf of Independents for Herefordshire regarding Herefordshire Council's 2026-27 Delivery Plan

1. Overview

The Draft Delivery Plan 2026–27 is intended to operationalise the third year of the *Herefordshire Council Plan 2024–2028*. It outlines actions under four themes – **People, Place, Growth and Transformation** – and claims to connect these to measurable outcomes.

The document's structure is clear and visually consistent, but its content is largely procedural. It lists activities rather than specifying *performance improvement or resident impact*.

In short: it describes tasks, not transformation.

2. Format and Structure

Strengths

- **Clarity and consistency:** The table format and colour-coded RAG ratings make the document easy to navigate.
- **Continuity:** Actions carried forward from 2025–26 are tagged, which helps trace ongoing commitments.
- **Alignment:** It systematically follows the four pillars of the Council Plan, ensuring policy coherence.

Weaknesses

1. Lack of measurable outcomes.

Most milestones use verbs such as *develop, launch, review, or commence*, leaving no quantifiable result against which success can be assessed. There are almost no numeric targets, and baselines are absent.

2. Process bias over results.

The plan effectively measures *activity completion* (“develop a strategy”) instead of *impact* (“improve X% of children achieving a good level of development”).

3. Limited accountability.

No individual officers, service leads, or portfolio holders are listed as responsible for delivery. Without ownership there can be little assurance.

4. Unclear sequencing and dependency management.

Milestones are described in isolation; dependencies and timelines are not shown, so it is impossible to judge deliverability or cumulative impact.

Conclusion: Structurally tidy but strategically superficial – the plan looks organised yet offers *limited assurance on performance outcomes*.

3. Thematic Examination

3.1 People

Positive aspects:

- Continuity of work on Family Help reforms and restorative practice.
- Focus on SEN sufficiency and support for carers.

Concerns:

- Actions overwhelmingly describe “reviews”, “plans”, and “evaluations” rather than specifying measurable service improvement.
- Absent data on social-care waiting times, foster-care recruitment targets, or reductions in out-of-county placements.

Verdict: *Still in planning mode, not delivery mode*. The People section is well-intentioned but fails to show how residents’ lives will be better by March 2027.

3.2 Place

Positive aspects:

- Strong continuity on capital projects: Transport Hub, roads investment, flood-mitigation wetlands, Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Collaboration with statutory partners—theoretically sound governance.

Concerns:

- “Delivery” statements lack quantification: no targets for kilometres resurfaced, CO₂ reduction, biodiversity gain, or improved public-transport use.
- Climate-adaptation and behavioural-change interventions (e.g., retrofit education, active-travel promotion) are missing.

Verdict: An infrastructure plan, not a *sustainability or outcomes plan*. Residents will find it hard to see how physical investment translates into environmental improvement.

3.3 Growth

Positive aspects:

- Mentions partnerships with NMITE and continuation of Shared Prosperity Fund projects.

Concerns:

- No figures for job creation, business start-ups, housing completions, or local-procurement increases.
- Relies on phrases such as “continue engagement”, “explore options”, “develop partnerships”.
- Fails to address county productivity gap or low wage levels.

Verdict: Weakest section—reads more as a grant-administration log than an economic-development strategy. Residents cannot trace how growth activities will raise incomes or cut deprivation.

3.4 Transformation

Positive aspects:

- Delivery of Microsoft 365, revised Customer-Service model, and workforce programme continues.
- Structure shows some maturity compared to earlier years.

Concerns:

- Lacks measure of efficiency improvement (e.g., savings, satisfaction, or speed).
- No external assurance mechanism or audit track on claimed digital benefits.

Verdict: Organisational development well underway, but progress remains internally assessed. Outcomes for residents—notably faster response times or simplified transactions—are not evidenced.

4. Understandability and Public Accessibility

Language and tone:

- The document is internally oriented and bureaucratic. Sentences are dense with managerial verbs and acronyms. Phrases such as *“Develop options appraisal for future delivery models”* or *“align cross-directorate dependencies to assure transformation coherence”* are not easily understood by the general public.
- There is minimal use of plain English or examples that illustrate real impact (“what this means for you”).
- The absence of visual summaries or infographics makes it inaccessible to non-specialists.

Readability metrics:

Applying standard readability tests (Flesch-Kincaid) to sample sections returns a reading grade of roughly **college-level**, far above the “Year 9 or below” best practice recommended for public-sector documents.

Implications:

Residents reading the Plan would struggle to understand what will actually change and when. Accessibility regulations under the Public Sector Bodies (Website and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 expect councils to make strategic documents understandable for all users, but this plan falls short.

Recommendation:

Each deliverable should include a short plain-English summary such as:

“We will provide 200 additional special-school places by July 2027 so that more children can attend school close to home.”

This type of phrasing would make the plan meaningful to residents and measurable to scrutiny committees.

5. Assurance and Deliverability

Criterion	Finding
Ownership	Absent—no named officers or portfolio leads per objective.
Financial linkage	No reference to budgets or funding sources.
Outcome measurability	Weak—virtually no quantified indicators.
Dependency management	Minimal evidence; risk management not integrated.
External validation/audit	None stated.
Public intelligibility	Low—language complex, lacking clear purpose statements.

Overall assurance level: Low.

6. Comparative Examples of Best Practice

The plan’s shortcomings stand out when contrasted with more advanced delivery plans from other unitary authorities:

Council	Example Document	Why It Excels	Lessons for Herefordshire
Wiltshire Council – <i>Business Plan 2022–27 Delivery Framework</i>	Presents 10 headline missions, each with quantifiable KPIs (e.g., number of new homes, reduction in carbon tonnes). Progress dashboards published quarterly for scrutiny.	Links each action to metrics and budget lines; easy for public to follow.	Integrate headline KPI dashboards with quarterly reporting.
Cornwall Council – <i>Council Plan Delivery Plan 2025–26</i>	Includes outcome measures such as “Households in temporary accommodation – target < 500”; uses plain English and accessible infographics.	Combines clarity of language with measurable goals and responsible Cabinet members.	Adopt numerical targets and plain-English sidebars.
Nottingham City Council – <i>One Nottingham Performance Framework</i>	Built around thematic KPIs tied to wider civic partnerships;	Residents can see how city-wide goals	Convert themes into measurable

Council	Example Document	Why It Excels	Lessons for Herefordshire
	community-friendly summaries for each theme.	(jobs, emissions, child health) link to council actions.	partnership outcomes.
Leeds City Council – Best Council Plan Delivery Plan (2025/26)	Integrates equality impact, risk, and performance indicators for every workstream; formally reviewed by Scrutiny Boards quarterly.	Clear accountability and published metrics with historic trend data.	Add risk and equality columns to strengthen assurance.
Plymouth City Council – Corporate Plan Performance Report (2024)	Combines text narrative with visual trend graphs for every KPI; uses simple “you said – we did – outcome” format.	Extremely readable; shows tangible results.	Simplify tone and use “what this means for you” summaries.

These councils translate strategic aims into **quantifiable, time-bound public deliverables**, often featured on live dashboards. That level of clarity and accessibility is missing from Herefordshire’s draft.

7. Recommendations for Improvement

1. Embed clear KPIs and baselines.

Every objective should be paired with a quantifiable measure and a baseline year, e.g., *“Reduce average pothole repair time from 15 to 10 days.”*

2. Name accountable officers and portfolio leads.

Responsibility should be visible; residents and scrutiny committees must know who holds delivery power.

3. Link to budgets and funding streams.

Present each deliverable with an indicative cost or capital line from the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

4. Simplify and humanise language.

Use plain English, active verbs, and explain impact on everyday life. Include at least one sentence per objective starting “This means...”.

5. **Publish quarterly scorecards.**

Replace static RAG boxes with measurable trend data published online.

6. **Introduce independent validation.**

Adopt external review by peer councils or local audit/network partnerships, to verify progress claims.

7. **Connect to the county's evidence base.**

Align indicators with those on *Understanding Herefordshire* and ONS datasets to demonstrate real-world change.

8. Conclusion

The **Draft Delivery Plan 2026–27** presents a set of intentions aligned with the Council Plan but **does not yet operate as a credible delivery framework**.

It lacks:

- quantitative performance targets,
- explicit accountability,
- financial transparency, and
- accessible public language.

As a result, there is **low assurance** that these actions will produce measurable improvements for residents within the next twelve months.

Other unitary authorities demonstrate that effective delivery plans can be plain, measurable, resident-focused, and transparent. If Herefordshire's plan adopted those principles, it could progress from *a comfortable management list* to a *genuine instrument of public accountability and change*.

Independents for Herefordshire Group Assessment

The draft plan captures intentions but not outcomes. It is organisationally tidy but democratically opaque. Without quantified targets, clear ownership, and resident-friendly language, the administration cannot credibly claim that this document assures progress toward the Council Plan 2024-28. Scrutiny members and residents deserve a plan that tells them, in plain English, what will be achieved, by whom, by when — and how success will be proved.

Councillor Liz Harvey
Group Leader – Independents for Herefordshire
Herefordshire Council

Date: 25 March 2026

Submitted on behalf of the Independents for Herefordshire