

# AGENDA

## General Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Tuesday 4 November 2014**

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Time: **10.00 am**

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Place: **The Shire Hall, St. Peter's Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX**

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Notes: Please note the time, date and venue of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

**Ben Baugh, Governance Services**

Tel: 01432 261882

Email: [bbaugh@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:bbaugh@herefordshire.gov.uk)

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If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format, please call Ben Baugh, Governance Services on 01432 261882 or e-mail [bbaugh@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:bbaugh@herefordshire.gov.uk) in advance of the meeting.

# Agenda for the Meeting of the General Overview & Scrutiny Committee

## Membership

**Chairman**

**Councillor WLS Bowen**

**Vice-Chairman**

**Councillor BA Durkin**

Councillor AM Atkinson  
Councillor AJM Blackshaw  
Councillor ACR Chappell  
Councillor DW Greenow  
Councillor EPJ Harvey  
Councillor TM James  
Councillor JG Jarvis  
Councillor RL Mayo  
Councillor PJ McCaull  
Councillor AJW Powers  
Councillor A Seldon  
Councillor DB Wilcox

**Co-optees**

(education items)

Mr P Burbidge  
Miss E Lowenstein  
Mr P Sell

Roman Catholic Church  
Secondary School Governor  
Church of England

## AGENDA

	Pages
<p><b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>To receive apologies for absence.</p>	
<p><b>2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)</b></p> <p>To receive details of members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a member of the committee.</p>	
<p><b>3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>To receive any declarations of interest by members.</p>	
<p><b>4. MINUTES</b></p> <p>To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2014.</p>	9 - 18
<p><b>5. SUGGESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY</b></p> <p>To consider suggestions from members of the public on issues the committee could scrutinise in the future.</p> <p><i>(There will be no discussion of the issue at the time when the matter is raised. Consideration will be given to whether it should form part of the committee's work programme when compared with other competing priorities.)</i></p>	
<p><b>6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</b></p> <p>To note questions received from the public and the items to which they relate.</p> <p><i>(Questions are welcomed for consideration at a scrutiny committee meeting so long as the question is directly related to an item listed on the agenda below. If you have a question you would like to ask then please submit it no later than two working days before the meeting to the officer named on the cover of this agenda).</i></p>	
<p><b>7. PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16 TO 2017/18</b></p> <p>To provide Cabinet with comments on the proposed additional capital investment programme for 2015/16 to 2017/18 inclusive for recommendation to Council on 12 December 2014.</p>	19 - 26
<p><b>8. PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2015/16</b></p> <p>To seek the views of the committee regarding proposed revisions to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.</p>	27 - 50
<p><b>9. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME AND TASK AND FINISH GROUPS</b></p> <p>To consider the committee's work programme and to receive verbal updates on task and finish groups in progress.</p>	51 - 70
<p><b>10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>The next scheduled meeting is <b>Monday 24 November 2014</b>; scrutiny members are advised to attend from 10.00am with the presentation of the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy at the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>	



# PUBLIC INFORMATION

## Public Involvement at Scrutiny Committee Meetings

You can contact Councillors and Officers at any time about Scrutiny Committee matters and issues which you would like the Scrutiny Committee to investigate.

There are also two other ways in which you can directly contribute at Herefordshire Council's Scrutiny Committee meetings.

### 1. Identifying Areas for Scrutiny

At the meeting the Chairman will ask the members of the public present if they have any issues which they would like the Scrutiny Committee to investigate, however, there will be no discussion of the issue at the time when the matter is raised. Councillors will research the issue and consider whether it should form part of the Committee's work programme when compared with other competing priorities.

### 2. Questions from Members of the Public for Consideration at Scrutiny Committee Meetings and Participation at Meetings

You can submit a question for consideration at a Scrutiny Committee meeting so long as the question you are asking is directly related to an item listed on the agenda. If you have a question you would like to ask then please submit it **no later than two working days before the meeting** to the Democratic Services Officer. This will help to ensure that an answer can be provided at the meeting. Contact details can be found on the front page of this agenda.

Generally, members of the public will also be able to contribute to the discussion at the meeting. This will be at the Chairman's discretion.

(Please note that the Scrutiny Committee is not able to discuss questions relating to personal or confidential issues.)

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### **You have a right to: -**

- Attend all Council, Cabinet, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings unless the business to be transacted would disclose 'confidential' or 'exempt' information.
- Inspect agenda and public reports at least five clear days before the date of the meeting.
- Inspect minutes of the Council and all Committees and Sub-Committees and written statements of decisions taken by the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members for up to six years following a meeting.
- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
- Access to a public register stating the names, addresses and wards of all Councillors with details of the membership of Cabinet and of all Committees and Sub-Committees.
- Have a reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports (relating to items to be considered in public) made available to the public attending meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees.
- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the Council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title.
- Copy any of the documents mentioned above to which you have a right of access, subject to a reasonable charge (20p per sheet subject to a maximum of £5.00 per agenda plus a nominal fee of £1.50 for postage).
- Access to this summary of your rights as members of the public to attend meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees and to inspect and copy documents.

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Please do not allow any items of clothing, etc. to obstruct any of the exits.

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The Chairman or an attendee of the meeting must take the signing in sheet so it can be checked when everyone is at the assembly point.





HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the meeting of General Overview & Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 1, Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX on Monday 8 September 2014 at 10.00 am**

**Present:** Councillor WLS Bowen (Chairman)  
Councillor BA Durkin (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: ACR Chappell, DW Greenow, EPJ Harvey, TM James, RL Mayo, PJ McCaull, AJW Powers and A Seldon

**In attendance:** Councillors AW Johnson, JLV Kenyon, MD Lloyd-Hayes and TL Widdows

**11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Blackshaw, Jarvis and Wilcox.

**12. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)**

Councillor Nenadich substituted for Councillor Wilcox.

**13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**14. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2014 were received.

Although correct in the minutes, Councillor Powers should be omitted from the list of members identified for involvement in the Balfour Beatty Living Places Task and Finish Group (see Appendix 2 of agenda item 7).

The Chairman said a response had been received from the Ministry of Justice in relation to Transforming Rehabilitation (minute 84 of 2013/14, Community Safety Update, refers); the response would be copied to committee members.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2014 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

**15. SUGGESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY**

No suggestions had been received from members of the public.

**16. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

No questions had been received from members of the public.

**17. PUBLIC REALM SERVICES - BALFOUR BEATTY LIVING PLACES UPDATE**

The Assistant Director Place Based Commissioning introduced the report, his comments included:

- i. The Public Realm Services Contract (the contract) was the council's largest service delivery contract by value and scope, with annual expenditure expected to be in excess of £20 million.
- ii. Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) was awarded the contract following a major procurement exercise. The contract had commenced on 1 September 2013 for an initial period of ten years, with options to extend for up to ten further years.
- iii. It was a high profile area of work and it was essential that service delivery and management of the contract was correct and value for money obtained. Therefore, the Assistant Director welcomed the opportunity to reflect on the first twelve months and to consider opportunities for improvement.
- iv. Council and BBLP staff involved in the contract were introduced.
- v. Attention was drawn to the following points:
  - The contract was designed to focus upon the delivery of highways and directly related services. The contract was based on the industry standard, New Engineering Contract (NEC), used by many councils.
  - The governance and contract management arrangements were outlined which sought to ensure the appropriate level of management overview and to build a strong partnership that was outcomes focused.
  - The relatively rapid mobilisation period was followed by some of the worst winter weather on record. It was commented that the winter response and subsequent highway maintenance improvements had made a real difference to road conditions across the county.
  - It was commented that the level of response to reductions in service in terms grounds maintenance had been misjudged. The position had been reviewed during the summer and resources had been increased to respond to public concerns.

Mr. Andy Williams, Contract Director at BBLP presented the company's update document (this was appended to the report), the principal points included:

#### Contract start

1. It was considered that the six week mobilisation had been undertaken effectively, with BBLP operating from the start with full emergency response teams.
2. Further to the positive severe weather response, BBLP had helped the council team to secure £3.3 million from the Bellwin scheme and £3.5 million from the severe weather recovery scheme.

#### Rethinking the way we deliver the service

3. The budgets had changed significantly from the previous financial year, with reductions in revenue budgets but increases in capital budgets.
4. BBLP had completed Herefordshire's first Annual Plan for public realm services, setting out the services that would be delivered and the outcomes that communities should expect.

## Starting the process of culture change

5. A full organisational restructure had been undertaken, resulting in five new teams: Commercial and Finance; Design and Build; Operations; Knowledge Centre; and Locality Team.
6. Although some positions in the new structure had yet to be filled, a full set of thirteen locality stewards were now in place.

## What have we achieved in the year

7. The severe weather had an impact upon roads already in poor condition, with over 67,000 defect reports identified from inspections and customer reports since the start of the contract. Response times to Category 1 defects had been very good but performance in terms of Category 2 had not been as consistent but there were plans to address this.
8. Winter temperatures had been relatively mild, with the number grit runs down to around two-thirds of normal levels.
9. There had been a reduction in the street cleansing budget and resources had to be moved to a needs based approach.
10. The spend on grounds maintenance initially went down by about half, resulting in a much reduced service and significant public reaction. It was acknowledged that service changes had not been communicated early enough and better information could have been provided about the revised schedules. A consultation was to be undertaken on future grounds maintenance plans.
11. One of the biggest successes had been in delivering the investment and improvement programme. The programme had included engagement with local stakeholders and parish councils on the proposed schemes, with many of the 85 responses directly resulting in refinements to the plans. It was noted that the surface dressing programme had received a lot of positive feedback.
12. Positive feedback had also been received about the locality stewards. Recognising the importance of effective communications, locality stewards were regularly providing updates and issuing newsletters for each area.
13. BBLP was working actively with a number of local organisations and groups.
14. The lengthsman scheme had been reviewed and was being developed to enable more work to be undertaken on the local network. Brian Barrett, clerk to Foxley Group Parish Council, provided an overview of enhanced lengthsman scheme trial in his area:
  - A pothole problem had been largely eradicated, with 53 defects repaired on 17km of carriageway in the last three months.
  - The appointment of the locality steward had been a catalyst for change and the start of genuine two way dialogue between the community and BBLP.
  - Previously, Category 1 and 2 defects had been dealt with but smaller potholes were left unattended and would degrade subsequently. The lengthsman could target these emerging defects and this might result in savings in the longer term.

- A number of issues had been identified during the pilots which would inform the wider roll out of the scheme across the county, including: administrative challenges; safety requirements; and durability of materials.
  - The scheme was described as a 'win-win' for all: for the council, an obvious issue was being tackled effectively; for residents, it was clear that action was being taken; and for BBLP, defects were being repaired and drains were being cleared before becoming more serious problems.
15. BBLP was committed to contributing towards the regeneration of the local economy, for example: it had supported the council in its successful bid to the Construction Industry Training Board for National Skills Academy status; local sub-contractors were used where possible, current spend excluding surfacing was over 50%; and volunteering opportunities were available for its employees to support community activities.

What next?

16. The key drivers included culture change, to be more responsive and customer friendly, and improved processes, to become more effective and efficient.
17. Mr. Williams commented that the contract was flexible and 'open book', so it was incumbent on BBLP to demonstrate continually that it was providing value for money and that this was being obtained from sub-contractors. He added that performance indicators were also visible and transparent.

The committee asked BBLP representatives and council officers to respond to a number of questions, the main points arising included:

- a. Mr. Williams said that a merger proposed by Carillion had been withdrawn, nevertheless it was not considered that any change of ownership of BBLP's parent company, Balfour Beatty, would affect local contract management and service delivery; it was noted that BBLP's partner consultants, Parsons Brinckerhoff, was to be sold.

The Head of Highways and Community Services explained that the contract contained mechanisms to manage performance and sanctions could be applied if necessary. The Assistant Director added that the current contract was very different to previous public realm services arrangements.

- b. The Assistant Director confirmed that the scoping statement for the proposed task and finish group (appendix 2 to the report) was an initial draft and members could decide to include consideration of the procurement process.
- c. The Assistant Director said that the enhanced lengthsman scheme had been for a trial period during the summer and feedback on the scheme would be welcomed. It was reported that a Cabinet Member decision was due to be taken in autumn 2014 on the potential extension of the scheme for the next financial year; some of the issues to be considered included the resources that could be committed, both by the council and parish councils, and the scope of activities that could be undertaken.

The Chairman said that, from his perspective, the lengthsman scheme had been very successful in providing greater local control and speedier responses. He felt that wider implementation should be pursued, subject to satisfactorily addressing the finance issues.

- d. Mr. Williams advised that sub-contractors were required to go through a stringent process to ensure that they had the right procedures and approach to health and safety; assistance was provided to smaller operators and individuals to enable them to become part of the supply chain. Whilst supportive of local contractors, BBLP had to be mindful of costs and in some instances had introduced out-of-county contractors to bring rates down to acceptable levels.
- e. In view of the significant increases in capital budgets, it was questioned what assurance could be provided to the public that value for money was being achieved on all schemes. In response, Mr. Williams advised that most of the work was sub-contracted and, therefore, put out to tender. BBLP sought to balance the best of the supply chain prices; for example, road resurfacing work was split geographically to reflect the competitive rates obtained for different parts of the county. Using the example of the street lighting project, BBLP worked closely with council officers to get the right balance of specification and prices.

The Interim Procurement Manager gave an overview of the range of activity undertaken by the council to monitor BBLP's approach to delivering programmes of work, including: a target cost mechanism; assessments of the risks that needed to be managed; examination of invoices and works being undertaken, with the support of internal engineers; access to BBLP's computer systems; and external benchmarking with other organisations. Further to this, an external resource was about to supplement the team to examine costs independently and forensically.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Interim Procurement Manager confirmed that BBLP received a standard management fee of 9.83%.

- f. The Head of Highways and Community Services briefly explained the processes for the adoption of new highways and open spaces and how these were introduced into the forward programme and included in the contract.
- g. The Assistant Director advised that the telephone call centre remained with the council and the customer services team were aware of feedback about out-of-hours provision. It was reported that the council and BBLP were exploring different ways of managing queries and had undertaken a lot of work to improve system connections and information available on the council's website.
- h. A member in attendance commented on: negative public perceptions resulting from the use of out-of-county grounds maintenance sub-contractors; the need for greater local involvement in prioritising grounds maintenance, perhaps through the locality stewards; the duties undertaken by locality stewards needed to be appropriate to the role; the potential for grass cutting teams to deal with issues simultaneously, such as tree trimming, weeding, and cleaning gullies; it was questioned whether insurance claims had reduced as a consequence of investment in fixing the roads; and it was suggested that a different approach be taken to Category 1 defects to enable higher levels of response to Category 2 and other defects.

Mr. Williams advised that: the subsequent demand for additional capacity for grounds maintenance could not be met entirely within the local supply chain given availability and pricing issues; locality stewards would only fill potholes in exceptional circumstances; he would take on board the issue of the multi-skilling staff but this needed to be balanced with other competing demands; and revisits to potholes was understood to be in a low percentage.

- i. Mr. Williams said that, to maximise corporate learning, the company held operational and business improvement meetings for the entire business, and

design team staff moved across areas to gain experience in different environments. He added that, when the local supply chain became constrained, BBLP had utilised contractors from other areas. It was reported that there was dialogue between teams about improving highways maintenance delivery. The committee was advised that the Herefordshire contract was one of the more progressive contracts in the country, especially around local engagement.

- j. Mr. Williams advised that locality working in Wiltshire was very different to that in Herefordshire, nevertheless it was understood that lessons learned from the mobilisation in Wiltshire had informed the mobilisation in Herefordshire.
- k. It was recognised that slippage and changes to grounds maintenance schedules had to be communicated properly in order to maintain credibility.
- l. The Assistant Director said that officers would ensure that the schedules appended to the BBLP Public Realm Annual Plan were available on the council's website.
- m. The Assistant Director reported that the savings arising from grounds maintenance reductions had initially been projected to be around 50% but, with spend subsequently increased, this was now likely to be in the region of 25%.
- n. The Interim Procurement Manager advised that the contract monitoring team was having conversations with BBLP about grass cutting performance and schedules. It was noted that the Annual Plan would clearly define the performance indicators going forward.
- o. The Assistant Director explained the background to the grounds maintenance reductions and the circumstances which prompted a revised approach.
- p. The Assistant Director acknowledged that the mobilisation period of six weeks might seem a relatively short but essential services had been delivered from day one. Although he had not been involved in the mobilisation himself, Mr. Williams understood that BBLP had achieved what could be reasonably expected within the six weeks. An overview was provided of the 'Confirm' software used by BBLP to manage and maintain the highways assets of the contract and potential future functionality.

A committee member suggested that it would be important for the task and finish group to hear the experiences of operatives, in addition to management representatives.

- q. In response to comments about flood prevention, Mr. Williams said that there were programmes for drain and gully clearing and street cleansing but re-iterated that, as budgets would be more restricted than in previous years, a needs based approach would have to be taken.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Mr. Williams confirmed that the recording of drains and gullies was a work in progress.

A member commented on the importance of local knowledge and said that engagement with landowners was essential. The Chairman noted that guidance notes on landowner responsibilities and on ditch and drainage clearance were to be issued shortly.

- r. The Assistant Director said that CITB accreditation was a major achievement which would require all the council's main contractors to deliver training and employment opportunities.

- s. In terms of managing public expectations, Mr. Williams re-iterated the consultation to be undertaken and the Cabinet Member Transport and Roads said that historic levels of service could not be maintained and communities needed to be empowered to be less reliant on the local authority. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that good communication was vital and, whilst the council and BBLP were working together on this, all councillors had a role to play in raising public awareness.
- t. The Assistant Director noted that highways maintenance was an important issue, both nationally and locally, and would remain a priority.

A committee member welcomed the enhancement of the lengthsman scheme and suggested that this could include grounds maintenance activities for those local councils willing to participate, subject to appropriate funding arrangements.

The Chairman said that a number of the issues raised would be examined in greater detail by the task and finish group. The committee agreed the following addition to the scoping statement recommended by Councillor Wilcox: 'To determine compliance, or otherwise, with the council's requirements in relation to responding to complaints and queries and to determine the accountability and contact arrangements of management at Balfour Beatty.'

The Chairman thanked the representatives of BBLP, council officers and members for their contributions to the debate.

**RESOLVED: That**

- (a) **The report be noted; and**
- (b) **Subject to the additions identified above, the draft scoping statement for the task and finish group be agreed and the group be established to examine this area of service.**

**18. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT ON HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRES**

Further to minute 9 of 30 June 2014, the Waste Disposal Team Leader presented the Executive response to the Task and Finish Group review on Household Recycling Centres (HRCs); the Summary of Recommendations and Response was appended to the report. An overview was provided of the recommendations that had been 'accepted' (11), 'accepted in part' (1), 'to be investigated' (7), and 'not accepted' (4).

The Waste Disposal Team Leader said that the recommendations in relation to improved information sharing, advertising and signage, targeted enforcement activity, and site user surveys were particularly welcomed.

In terms of the 'not accepted' recommendations, the committee was advised:

**Recommendation 11, 'That the number of permits per user is increased to 14 a year':** The Commercial Vehicle and Trailer (CVT) permit scheme sought to restrict waste input, particularly from traders and the current 12 permit limit had been arrived at after careful consideration of usage statistics. An increase to 14 permits could increase levels of waste and associated costs.

**Recommendation 19, 'That consideration should be given to allowing one-off emergency permits to be issued on site':** Emergency permits were provided under a

previous scheme but the system had been difficult to administer and had been exploited by some traders wishing to dispose of commercial waste unlawfully. Site operatives had the discretion to allow entry in exceptional circumstances.

**Recommendation 21, 'That research should be undertaken to determine the viability of a north Hereford HRC in view of the increased housing numbers coming forward':** It was estimated that the development of a new site could cost in the region of £1.5 million and, with the six existing HRCs and one due to be constructed in Kington in 2015, it was considered that there was good coverage.

**Recommendation 23, 'That where Herefordshire Council are able to make identified changes to service, especially unilaterally, that these be carried out':** The partnership arrangements with Worcestershire County Council were paramount and any changes would need to be discussed and agreed jointly. However, some local elements, such as promotion of composting, could be considered.

The Vice-Chairman, who had chaired the group, broadly welcomed the response but was disappointed about the number of recommendations that were either 'not accepted' or 'to be investigated' and he made a number of observations, including:

- i. An IT solution could be found to control and monitor emergency permits, whilst improving the service for users. He added that there was no visibility of the database at the HRCs currently.
- ii. The group had heard evidence that there was a degree of confusion about the allocation of 12 permits, as many people believed incorrectly that only one could be used per month. Although home composting should be encouraged, the group had also heard evidence that the 12 permit limit was not sufficient for people with large gardens.
- iii. Many people had commented that double-axle trailers of reasonable dimensions should be permitted at the HRCs, especially as such trailers were often considered a safer option compared to single-axle versions.
- iv. Changes to operating hours could provide an opportunity for residents, on certain days, to access HRCs with vehicles and trailers that were normally prohibited. It was considered that a more proactive approach was needed to limit the potential for fly-tipping and a joint enforcement team with Worcestershire could command greater resources to target unlawful activity even more effectively.
- v. The significant response to the site user survey (343 received) had demonstrated the level of interest in this service and a briefing note on progress within six months would be helpful.
- vi. Thanks were recorded to Kenton Vigus and Alex Nicholas for their professional support and to Councillors SJ Robertson and J Stone for their input into the group's report.

Committee members discussed the executive response, the principal points included:

- a) With reductions in the frequency of municipal grass cuts, community groups were making additional cuts but the resulting green waste was being turned away at the HRCs. Therefore, consideration needed to be given to the options available to help these groups to dispose of green waste in a responsible manner.



The Vice-Chairman said that the group had considered it nonsensical that residents, even if authorised by a relevant local body, could not carry community green waste without a Waste Carriers Licence.

The Waste Disposal Team Leader commented that the waste accepted at HRCs could be reviewed but there would be cost implications. He said that alternative arrangements could be considered; transfer stations received waste from St. Michael's Hospice and other charities. The Assistant Director Place Based Commissioning suggested that potential solutions could be considered by the Balfour Beatty Living Places Task and Finish Group.

- b) It was commented that some site operatives maintained that only one permit could be used per month and this misconception needed to be corrected, along with clearer instructions for service users.
- c) The increasing popularity of double-axle trailers was noted and it was considered that provision should be made for smaller trailers of this type.

The Vice-Chairman said that the list of permitted vehicles also needed to be reviewed, especially where restrictions might prevent hard-to-reach groups from using HRCs.

The Waste Disposal Team Leader advised that Worcestershire County Council had commenced its own review following receipt of the group's findings and the various issues would be discussed by the two councils.

- d) Some members felt it unfortunate that the Cabinet Member Contracts and Assets or another Cabinet Member could not be present for this item.
- e) In response to a question, the Waste Disposal Team Leader advised that there was a small budget to support community composting schemes and specialist knowledge was available from 'master composters'; it was noted that the composting facility near to the Leominster HRC had closed recently.
- f) The Waste Disposal Team Leader commented on the chargeable garden waste collection service operated by some Worcestershire district councils and noted that Herefordshire, as a unitary authority, would need to recover both collection and treatment costs if a similar scheme was adopted locally.
- g) A member considered it unfortunate that research into the viability of a north Hereford HRC was not being progressed at this time. It was noted that, upon the completion of Kington, approximately 120,000 residents would be served by six HRCs, whereas the growing population of Hereford city of around 60,000 would only be served by a single HRC.

The Waste Disposal Team Leader said that the review of operating hours could take this into account.

- h) A member commented that there seemed to be a gap in the market for composting facilities in Herefordshire and suggested that this need could be met by social enterprises involving learning disability groups, thereby providing gainful employment for people traditionally excluded from the labour market. The Chairman suggested that the member meet with the Waste Disposal Team Leader to explore this further.

**RESOLVED: That**

- (a) the Executive response to the findings of the review be noted; and**
- (b) a briefing note on progress be provided within six months.**

**19. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME AND TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

The committee considered the work programme, the main points included:

- i. Referring to the item on smallholdings, scheduled for 4 November 2014, the Director of Economy, Communities and Corporate advised that there was a lot of work to be undertaken on the various options before a report was submitted to Cabinet. The committee would receive an update presentation at the earliest opportunity. The Chairman noted that the matter needed to be examined properly and it appeared likely that a decision would not be taken before the next municipal year.
- ii. It was noted that three meetings of the Community Infrastructure Levy Task and Finish Group were scheduled in coming weeks to progress phase three of its work. It was also noted that arrangements were being made for task and finish groups in relation to Balfour Beatty Living Places, Development Management (Planning), and Digital Strategy. The scoping statement for the Development Management (Planning) group was appended to the report; it was suggested that the Chairman of the Planning Committee be included as a potential witness.
- iii. Briefing papers had been issued to members of the committee on: Education Strategy for Herefordshire; Early Years, Schools, Free Schools, Academies, Colleges and the Relationship with Herefordshire Council Update; and Update on Home to School Transport.
- iv. Outline scoping statements on Pupil Premium and Hidden / Actual Costs of Education were appended to the report. The Chairman requested that Education officers prepare further background information on these topics. Comments from committee members included: faith schools should be invited to contribute to the research; it was important to understand how Pupil Premium was being used; and, as eligibility for free school meals was used as the main measure of deprivation at pupil level, the introduction of universal infant free school meals could have consequential impacts upon Pupil Premium.

**RESOLVED: That**

- (a) the work programme be noted;**
- (b) a Development Control (Planning) Task and Finish Group be established to undertake the work outlined in the scoping statement; and**
- (c) Education officers be requested to prepare further background information on Pupil Premium and the Hidden / Actual Costs of Education to inform potential future scrutiny work.**

**20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 4 November 2014 at 10.00am

The meeting ended at 1.13 pm

**CHAIRMAN**



<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>GENERAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>4 NOVEMBER 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16 TO 2017/18</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER</b>

### **Classification**

Open

### **Key Decision**

This is not an executive decision.

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

To provide Cabinet with comments on the proposed additional capital investment programme for 2015/16 to 2017/18 inclusive for recommendation to Council on 12 December 2014.

### **Recommendation**

**THAT the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee provide comments on the capital proposals outlined in the report, for consideration by Cabinet**

## Alternative Options

- 1 The capital schemes detailed below address critical needs and there are no alternative options that do not radically effect the provision of services.

## Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 The schemes summarised in this report, and detailed in Appendix 1, are recommended for approval in order to support council priorities, the realisation of savings or the mitigation of corporate risk.

## Key Considerations

- 3 The current capital programme approved by Council in February 2014 is as summarised below.

Total 3 year budget 2014/15 to 2016/17						
Scheme	Spend in prior years £'000	14/15 Budget £'000	15/16 Budget £'000	16/17 Budget £'000	Sub Total £'000	Total Budget £'000
Fastershire Broadband	4,000	7,600	6,200	2,400	16,200	20,200
Local Transport Plan	n/a	10,645	-	-	10,645	10,645
Corporate Accommodation	9,673	6,211	976	-	7,187	16,860
Link Road	9,064	10,708	7,228	-	17,936	27,000
Leominster Primary School	4,451	5,729	437	-	6,166	10,617
LED Street Lighting	-	5,655	-	-	5,655	5,655
Hereford Enterprise Zone	n/a	1,967	1,467	-	3,434	3,434
Others	n/a	2,090	667	-	2,757	2,757
Schools Basic Need	n/a	1,008	634	666	2,308	2,308
Solar photovoltaic panels	293	1,841	-	-	1,841	2,134
Destination Hereford	2,207	1,054	-	-	1,054	3,261
Masters House, Ledbury	3,419	606	-	-	606	4,025
Hereford City Surface Car Parking	434	566	-	-	566	1,000
Community Capacity Grant	n/a	483	-	-	483	483
Disabled Facilities Grant	n/a	462	-	-	462	462
Yazor Brook Flood Alleviation	4,426	450	-	-	450	4,876
Energy from Waste Plant	-	11,000	14,000	15,000	40,000	40,000
Road Infrastructure	-	15,000	5,000	-	20,000	20,000
Leisure Centres	330	2,000	3,300	3,370	8,670	9,000
Disabled Facilities Grant	-	200	-	-	200	200
Closed Landfill Sites	-	76	-	-	76	76
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>85,351</b>	<b>39,909</b>	<b>21,436</b>	<b>146,696</b>	

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Peter Robinson, Chief Financial Officer on Tel (01432) 383519

<i>Financed by;-</i>						
<i>Prudential Borrowing</i>		57,237	37,371	20,770	115,378	
<i>Local Transport Plan Grant</i>		10,645	-	-	10,645	
<i>Fastershire BDUK Grant</i>		6,100	-	-	6,100	
<i>Standards Fund Grant</i>		5,205	-	-	5,205	
<i>Destination Hereford Grant</i>		1,054	-	-	1,054	
<i>Schools Basic Need Grant</i>		1,008	634	666	2,308	
<i>Community Capacity Grant</i>		483	-	-	483	
<i>Other Capital Grants</i>		410	-	-	410	
<i>Capital Receipts Reserve</i>		3,209	1,904	-	5,113	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>85,351</b>	<b>39,909</b>	<b>21,436</b>	<b>146,696</b>	

- 4 Proposed additions to this capital programme are summarised below and detailed in Appendix 1. The bulk of schemes represent investment to improve infrastructure, supporting the local economy, housing development and the creation of job opportunities.

	<b>Cost £000</b>	<b>Funding £000</b>	<b>Net Cost £000</b>
<b>Funded Schemes</b>			
Economic Investment:			
- South Wye Transport Package	27,000	(27,000)	-
- Hereford Enterprise Zone	16,000	(16,000)	-
- Three Elms Trading Estate	2,600	(2,600)	-
Schools	1,280	(1,280)	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,880</b>	<b>(46,880)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Essential Works (corporately funded)</b>			
Schools	7,230	(1,612)	5,618
Other Properties	1,098	(130)	968
Cemeteries	100	-	100
Vehicles and Equipment	768	-	768
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,196</b>	<b>(1,742)</b>	<b>7,454</b>
Contingency (1% of programme)	1,467	-	1,467
<b>Total Additional Expenditure</b>	<b>57,543</b>	<b>(48,622)</b>	<b>8,921</b>

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- 5 Additions to the capital programme will total £57.5m of which £48.6m is funded by capital grants or revenue savings already identified. This leaves a balance of £8.9m to be financed by prudential borrowing. This will be added to our borrowing levels within our Treasury Management Strategy. The revenue implications are detailed in the financial implications section and are indicated as pressures in our current future year's budget forecasting.
- 6 Of the £8.9m additional corporate investment need:
- £4.5m relates to Colwall School and covers the additional contribution to the cost of a new school should it not be possible to rectify the ongoing damp problems affecting the current school. Alternative grant funding has been sought and, if successful, will reduce this borrowing.
  - £0.8m relates to borrowing for vehicles and equipment where the cost of borrowing will be funded by the service areas concerned.
  - The remainder relates to property enhancements which are needed due to structural deterioration threatening closure or litigation.

#### *Overall borrowing implications*

- 7 The inclusion of the additional borrowing requirement is in accordance with our current Treasury Management Strategy which will be updated following approval to include the additional schemes.
- 8 Total outstanding debt was £168m as at 31/03/14. This is being repaid at £10m pa, being more than the investment recommended for approval in this report. Additional investment has already been approved in respect of the energy from waste plant, leisure centre improvements, road investment and Hereford link road which are all self-financing schemes.
- 9 Assuming the new investment need is approved and including all other capital investment approved to date would see an increase in our debt requirement from £168m as at 31/03/14 to £200m as at 31/03/18.
- 10 Hereford has a debt to asset percentage of 26%. This means a quarter of Herefordshire's assets are financed by debt, this is the average position for all unitary authorities and when comparing debt balance and cost to net revenue budget Hereford is in the lower (better) half of the comparative authority debt positions.

## **Community Impact**

- 11 The capital investment need supports the overall corporate plan and service delivery strategies in place. The overall aim of capital expenditure is to benefit the community through improved facilities and by promoting economic growth. However, the additional prudential borrowing may impact on other areas where cost savings may have to be made to ensure affordability, this is being considered as part of the budget setting proposals currently being consulted upon.

## Equality and Human Rights

- 12 A full community impact assessment will be carried out prior to any scheme commencing. Current budget proposals are undergoing an Equality Impact assessment; this work will be completed in November.

## Financial Implications

- 13 It is estimated that the phasing and cost of the £8.9m of prudential borrowing will be as follows:

	Capital Cost £m	Cost of Borrowing £m
2015/16	3.5	0.0
2016/17	4.8	0.2
2017/18	0.5	0.5
Future Years	0.1	12.6
	<u>8.9</u>	<u>13.4</u>

The additional borrowing will give rise to borrowing revenue costs of £35k in 2015/16, £210k in 2016/17 and £498k in 2017/18 and will continue for 25 future years. These figures comprise both interest and debt repayment and have been included in the revenue budget proposals for 2015/16 to 2017/18 as a new budget pressure.

## Legal Implications

- 14 Some capital expenditure included above is proposed in order to protect the council's legal interests.
- 15 The chief finance officer of a relevant authority shall make a report under this section if it appears to him that the expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure. 1988 Local Government Finance Act.

## Risk Management

- 16 Monthly budget control meetings are chaired by the Chief Financial Officer to give assurance on the robustness of budget control and monitoring, to highlight key risks and to identify any mitigation to reduce the impact of pressures on the council's overall position.

## **Consultees**

17 None.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Proposed additions to the capital programme 2015/16 to 2017/18.

## **Background Papers**

None identified.



<b>SUMMARY OF CAPITAL SCHEMES 2015/16 - 2017/18</b>						
Scheme Description	Capital Cost of Project			Future Years	Total Funding	Net Cost
	15/16	16/17	17/18			
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>FUNDED SCHEMES:</b>						
<b>Economy - supporting economic growth and connectivity</b>						
South Wye Transport Package - including new link road A49-A465	1,000	1,000	12,300	12,700	(27,000)	-
Hereford Enterprise Zone - intervention works to progress EZ	4,900	7,100	4,000	-	(16,000)	-
Three Elms Trading Estate - purchase from HCA & site improvement works	1,850	400	350	-	(2,600)	-
	<b>7,750</b>	<b>8,500</b>	<b>16,650</b>	<b>12,700</b>	<b>(45,600)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>People - improving outcomes for children and young people</b>						
Westfield Special school - extend to provide nursery education	120	-	-	-	(120)	-
Staunton primary School - additional enclosed teaching/outdoor activities resource	80	-	-	-	(80)	-
Mordiford Primary School - 2 mobile classrooms	80	-	-	-	(80)	-
Marlbrook Primary School - additional reception class space and toilets	80	-	-	-	(80)	-
Relocation of Broadlands School - release current buildings and grounds, modify & adapt Aylestone school building to house extra pupils	800	120	-	-	(920)	-
	<b>1,160</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,280)</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>8,910</b>	<b>8,620</b>	<b>16,650</b>	<b>12,700</b>	<b>(46,880)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL OF FUNDED SCHEMES</b>						
<b>ESSENTIAL SCHEMES:</b>						
<b>People - improving outcomes for children and young people</b>						
Peterchurch Primary School - replace leaking roof & internal remodelling	1,000	-	-	-	(300)	700
Colwall Primary School - build new school (due to water damage)	1,600	3,900	100	-	(1,100)	4,500
Lady Hawkins Sports Hall - roof replacement	130	-	-	-	(52)	78
	<b>2,730</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,452)</b>	<b>5,278</b>
<b>Resources - making the best use of resources available to us in order to meet the council's priorities</b>						
Town hall roof replacement - phases 1 & 2 lead work, joinery & gutters	365	-	-	-	365	-
Lease dilapidations	430	-	-	-	430	-
Courtyard Theatre - replacement of unstable lift shaft	195	-	-	-	(130)	65
Replacement of mechanical and electrical services to Shirehall - replacement to court and public areas	30	-	-	-	30	-

Scheme Description	Capital Cost of Project				Total Funding £'000	Net Cost £'000	Comments
	15/16 £'000	16/17 £'000	17/18 £'000	Future Years £'000			
Hereford, Kington and Leominster Cemeteries - review current ground water levels and impact on burial areas	100	-	-	-	100	100	Risk of closure and income of new burials. Subsidence and collapse risk to both public and contractors. These does not impact on the pricing policy which is to inflate current charges by inflation only to continue providing a cost neutral service.
Pay and Display Machines - replace entire stock of 60 machines (10 per annum over 6 years), implement pay on exit & accommodate the changes to coins	40	41	43	144	268	268	Loss of income due to downtime on old machines around £30k pa. Risk of machine suppliers not providing cover as current machines are no longer manufactured.
<b>INVESTMENT TO SUPPORT COST SAVINGS:</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>1,388</b>	<b>(130)</b>	
<b>People - improving outcomes for children and young people</b>							
Improvement to provision for Social, Emotional and Mental Wellbeing (Brookfield) - extend and improve buildings	200	300	-	-	500	(160)	Part funded from Basic Need Grant. Risk that children would be placed in more expensive out of county places.
<b>People - people are able to take more responsibility for themselves</b>							
Kington Wellbeing Centre - create a rural Hub to accommodate variety of services	78	-	-	-	78	78	This rural hub will accommodate a variety of joined up services to prevent and delay needs ahead of crisis point in support of the Care Act
<b>Resources - making the best use of resources available to us in order to meet the councils priorities</b>							
Purchase of gritters	250	125	125	-	500	500	Borrowing cost to be funded by winter service budget (C07215)
<b>TOTAL OF SCHEMES REQUIRING FINANCE</b>	<b>4,418</b>	<b>4,366</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>9,196</b>	<b>(1,742)</b>	<b>7,454</b>
Contingency for unforeseens - 1% of capital programme	854	399	214	-	1,467	-	1,467 As approved in the councils capital strategy
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL SCHEMES</b>	<b>14,182</b>	<b>13,385</b>	<b>17,132</b>	<b>12,844</b>	<b>57,543</b>	<b>(48,622)</b>	<b>8,921</b>



<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>GENERAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>4 NOVEMBER 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>REVISION TO THE CURRENT COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER</b>

## Classification

Open

## Key Decision

This is not an executive decision.

## Wards Affected

County-wide

## Purpose

To seek the views of the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding proposed revisions to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

## Recommendation

**THAT the committee provide comments on the proposals contained in the report.**

## Alternative Options

1 As set out in appendix A.

## Reasons for Recommendations

2 To provide overview and scrutiny input into the proposals.

## Key Considerations

3 As set out in appendix A.

## **Equality and Human Rights**

4 As set out in appendix A.

## **Financial Implications**

5 As set out in appendix A.

## **Legal Implications**

6 As set out in appendix A.

## **Risk Management**

7 As set out in appendix A.

## **Consultees**

8 As set out in appendix A.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A Draft Cabinet Member Report

## **Background Papers**

None identified.



<b>DECISION MAKER:</b>	<b>CABINET MEMBER CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE</b>
<b>DECISION DATE:</b>	<b>3 DECEMBER 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>REVISION TO THE CURRENT COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER</b>

## Classification

Open

## Key Decision

This is a Key Decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the County, and;

It is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates.

NOTICE has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in connection with key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

## Wards Affected

County-wide

## Purpose

To agree and recommend revisions to the current schemes, following consultation.

## Recommendation

**THAT the following revision to the current Council Tax Reduction scheme be recommended to Council for approval:**

- (a) The Council Tax Reduction Scheme, is revised so that the maximum support rate, for those working age applicants who currently receive 84% council tax support, is reduced to 76% from 1 April 2015.**

## Alternative Options

- 1 Make no changes to the council tax reduction scheme (CTR), retain the maximum subsidy at 84%. The council would need to identify alternative savings of £158k pa.
- 2 Reduce the maximum subsidy to 80% the point at which the budget target is reached. The initial target was a reduction to 76%, collection has improved and the subsidy is still significant. Remaining with the target helps the council achieve its overall budget target
- 3 Alternatively a number of local authorities have put in place other restrictions which are summarised below. These could be used in addition or instead of a liability reduction in the CTR calculation:
  - **Taper Adjustment** - which alters the current CTR calculation element that focuses on weekly excess income (current 20% we could increase to 25%)
  - **Band C Restriction** - amend our scheme from a Band D restriction to any claimant who lives in a property above Band C having their CTR based on a maximum level of Band C
  - **£5 Minimum CTR Award** - if the claimant qualified for less than £5 per week they would not receive any CTR
  - **Reduce the Capital Limit** - currently the capital limit for CTR is £16k below which CTR can be given, this could be reduced to £8k and those above would not receive any entitlement
- 4 The other restrictions are complex and require a significant amount of analysis to fully understand the implications. There would also need to be full consultation with clear explanation of the consequences. All of which are not possible within this years timelines, but they could be options to consider if further changes to the scheme are to be made in 2016-17.

## Reasons for Recommendations

- 5 To agree a reduction to the level of subsidy provided through the CTR scheme. The proposal will increase the scheme by £369k per annum which will achieve the savings target of £308k and allow additional funding of £211k that can be used to deliver services to the public.

## Key Considerations

### Options for 2015-16

- 6 Appendix 1 provides a background summary that provides context about the scheme and the collection statistics to date.
  - a) The council through its Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has anticipated phased reductions in CTR support, moving to 76% in 2015-16. This proposal was originally expected to deliver £308k savings.
  - b) The table below sets out the level of CTR collected against the target since the scheme commenced. For 2015-16 the level of subsidy will reduce to 76% thus increasing the maximum liability payable by the claimant. This has been modelled on the existing working age benefit caseload.

Actual and Projected Income	Payable by claimant - £'000			Scheme
	8%	16%	24%	Total
	2013-14 Scheme	2014-15 Budget	2015-16 Proposal	
Budget target in MTFS	330	292	308	930
Collected through the scheme each year	400	372	369	1,141
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>61</b>	
<b>Cumulative surplus delivered against the plan</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>211</b>	

- c) To deliver the budget target of £308k a subsidy level of 80% is needed. If the subsidy target of 76% is implemented it will achieve the budget target and additional funding of £211k that can be used to deliver services to the public.
- d) The table shows the benefit attributable to the council, but the full savings will also be beneficial to its preceptors, including parish and town councils, West Mercia Police and Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service. Approximately 83% of the council tax bill is due to Herefordshire Council.
- e) Appendix 3 provides a table to show the amount of council tax claimants would have to pay, depending on their council tax band their house is valued at.
- 7 The corporate plan 2013/15 agreed by Council has two broad priorities; supporting the development of a successful economy, and improving quality of life for the people of Herefordshire.
- 8 The lowest earners in Herefordshire, approximately 5,000 claimants, currently pay 16% of their total council tax bill, with a further 2,034 claimants having financial circumstances that means they pay less. This report supports a reduction in the discount awarded for some council tax payers in receipt of welfare benefits. Pensioners will continue to receive additional discounts and the vulnerable will continue to have access to welfare support to mitigate these changes.
- 9 The decisions in this report link to key elements of the council's corporate plan and demonstrate the effective management of resources to help secure a balanced budget.
- 10 Other local authorities are considering adjustments to the current scheme and have commenced consultation. Benchmarking information is set out at Appendix 2.

## Equality and Human Rights

- 11 A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was carried out on the initial and subsequent revisions to the scheme and has been reviewed in the light of the revised proposals; the latest version is attached at Appendix 4.
- 12 The budget consultation has considered a question that asks should there be a change to the level of subsidy, reducing support to 76%. Further analysis is provided within the Consultee section.
- 13 The proposals set out in this report will have an impact on working age benefit claimants. In addition, there is likely to be an increase in the level of non-payment and

requests for debt advice.

- 14 Access to the Council Tax Discretionary Reduction Funding is available to those facing hardship when paying their council tax. In 2014-15 the council has awarded two claims. The policy sets out that support is available when:
- The taxpayer is facing exceptional and temporary hardship and they do not have access to other funds/assets that could be used to meet their council tax liability;
  - Any reduction made in accordance with this policy is intended as short term assistance rather than a way of reducing council tax liability on a long term basis;
  - The applicant's eligibility to council tax reduction and all other statutory reductions has been determined;
  - There are unusual and unforeseen circumstances which prevent the property from being occupied and this situation cannot be rectified within a reasonable period of time, for example because of flooding;
  - The applicant has taken reasonable steps to resolve their situation prior to making their application;
  - The applicant can demonstrate that their current circumstances are unlikely to improve in the following six months.

## Financial Implications

- 15 The proposal will deliver an additional £369k per annum which will achieve the savings target of £308k and allow additional funding of £211k that can be used to deliver services to the public.

## Legal Implications

- 16 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme is locally determined by each billing authority under section 13A and Schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 17 For each financial year, each billing authority must consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme and this must take place no later than 31 January in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to have effect. If any revision has the effect of reducing or removing a reduction to which any class of persons is entitled, the revision or replacement must include such transitional provision relating to that reduction or removal as the authority thinks fit.
- 18 A statutory procedure is provided for under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 1A which a billing authority must follow when revising its scheme:
- "3(1) Before making a scheme, the authority must (in the following order) –
- (a) consult any major precepting authority which has power to issue a precept to it,
  - (b) publish a draft scheme in such manner as it thinks fit, and
  - (c) consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme



- 19 As well as complying with the statutory consultation scheme the process must also be fair. There are four basic requirements namely -
- (i) be undertaken when proposals are at a formative stage;
  - (ii) include sufficient reasons for particular proposals to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response;
  - (iii) give consultees sufficient time to make a response; and
  - (iv) be conscientiously taken into account when the ultimate decision is taken.

## **Risk Management**

- 20 The scale of the changes is likely to have a significant impact on workloads and ICT systems, as in previous years we have mitigated the impact by planning ahead and communicating with the software supplier and realigning work priorities to ensure we achieve the deadlines within the existing resources.
- 21 Over 30% of our current summons relate to CTR claimants. There is a risk that the claimants may not pay their council tax and move further into debt because of summons charges. This may eventually affect the collection statistics and result in reduced income figures as well as placing the households concerned into further financial hardship. This is further explained at Appendix A.
- 22 It has been suggested that there could be a correlation between the CTR claimants and the service users who access the council's care services. In particular children's services, whereby severe financial hardship could push families into situations that require greater support and cost the council through other budgets. An exercise is underway to understand this suggestion and the magnitude.

## **Consultees**

- 23 In 2013-14 consultation ran from 28 October until 9 December 2013 to seek the views of residents and interested organisations on the proposed changes. The consultation questionnaire was published online on Herefordshire Council's website together with the consultation documents and publicised alongside the council's budget consultation. In addition, approximately 7,000 letters were sent to claimants likely to be affected by any changes to the scheme informing them of the consultation, directing them to the website and giving them a contact number to ring if they would prefer a paper version of the consultation documents to be sent to them.
- 24 There were 108 responses, 106 from individuals and two from organisations. Of those that answered, 59 confirmed they were in receipt of CTR and a further nine had previously been in receipt.
- 25 A summary of the responses to the two questions set out in the consultation in 2013-14 are listed below.

Question	Agree/ Strongly agree	Disagree/ Strongly disagree	Neither agree or disagree
1. All working age will have to pay more than 8.5% of their council tax charge	18	81	8
2. Capping council tax reduction to smaller properties (B and D)	23	67	16

- 26 Noting there were over 7,000 claimants with access to CTR who were consulted, but less than 2% have provided a response to the consultation.
- 27 The general conclusion was that of the 76% that responded to question, one disagreed to a reduction in the discount and 75% also confirmed that if there was a rise in contribution, 16% should be the level of charge a similar conclusion is expected this year.
- 28 As part of the 2015-16 budget consultation, which was undertaken between 22 July 2014 and 10 October 2014 a question was asked about whether to keep the scheme unchanged or reduce the CTR subsidy to 76%. The budget consultation was published online on Herefordshire Council's website.
- 29 The budget consultation had 253 responses to all questions posed. 127 of the responses commented on the CTR scheme and all of those felt the CTR subsidy should be reduced to 76%.
- 30 Direct consultation with our claimants has also commenced and will conclude on the 10 December 2014. Interim results will be published on 25 November with an update on the 3 December 2014.
- 31 A short questionnaire has been published online on Herefordshire Council's website together with the consultation documents. In addition, approximately 5,000 letters have been sent to claimants who are likely to be affected by any changes to the scheme informing them of the consultation, directing them to the website and giving them a contact number to ring if they would prefer a paper version of the consultation documents to be sent to them.
- 32 Other key stakeholders such as welfare groups have been contacted, and encouraged to contribute to the consultation.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 CTR Background Information to provide context
- Appendix 2 Other Local Authority CTR Scheme Changes planned for 2015-16.
- Appendix 3 Examples to Show Potential Amounts Payable by CTR Claimants
- Appendix 4 Equality Impact Assessment

## Background Papers

None identified.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Peter Robinson, Chief Financial Officer on Tel (01432) 383519

## CTR Background Information

The national council tax benefit system was abolished with effect from 1 April 2013. It was replaced with a localised Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme. There was also a 10% reduction in central Government funding for any local scheme as compared with national council tax benefit scheme

The Government protected pensioners so local schemes had to have the same rules for pensioners as the old council tax benefit system. Our only discretion is for working age claimants. In 2013/14, due to national one-off funding, Herefordshire Council set up the local scheme with everyone of working age paying 8.5% of their council tax and they would provide support to a maximum level of 91.5% (subsidisation).

The scheme for 2014/15 is that CTR support by the council is based on 84% of the applicant's council tax charge so everyone of working age has to pay at least 16% of their council tax bill. There is also a Band D restriction which affects working age claimants who live in a property banded above D.

The council are making decisions on year three of their local scheme. The Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council in February 2014 assumed reductions in the level of support to 76% in 2015/16 (saving £308k PA) and 70% in 2016/17 (saving an additional £230k, £538k in total).

The working age claimants in receipt of CTR consist of; single parents, single people and couples who could be unemployed, have limited capability for work on the grounds of ill health including disability, or are working but on a low income. The profile of working age claimants is:-

○ Pensioners fully or partially unaffected by the CTRS scheme	6,878
○ Total working age	7,034
○ Total caseload	13,912

Approximately 5,000 residents are in receipt of CTR at 84%, and therefore, have to pay the full 16% of their council tax liability. These claimants have an income which is at a level that entitles them to the maximum reduction.

2,034 of these claimants have an income which is at a level that means they only qualify for partial reduction.

## Council Tax Collection Rates

Despite the changes to CTR, and more applicants having to pay their own council tax, collection rates have remained consistent through the year, as seen below:

2012/13 - 98.63%

2013/14 - 98.40%

At 1 September 2014 50.23% had already been collected, this compares to 49.54% for the same period last year, whilst the proportion received for CTR applicants is 37.04%. Projections suggest the original bad debt estimate of 25% of all CTR claimants is overstated and is likely to be between 5% and 10%.

This year, to date, 5,255 summonses have been issued for non-payment of council tax. A sample of 500 shows that 63% (313) have been issued to tax payers who are in receipt of CTR. The remaining 37% have been issued to those not in receipt of CTR. See table below:

<b>Circumstances</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
In receipt of Employment & Support Allowance*	158	50
In receipt of Income Support – with no other details known	53	17
In receipt of Jobseekers Allowance	31	10
Pensioners not in receipt of full CTR	4	1
Families with children (lone parents or couples) with low earnings and receiving tax credits	33	11
Single claimants working, with low earnings	30	10
Others	4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>100</b>

\* *Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is a relatively new state benefit which replaced Incapacity Benefit and is for claimants who, through illness or disability, are unable to play a full part in the labour market which prevents them from claiming Jobseekers Allowance. 40% of our working age caseload is made up of claimants in receipt of ESA.*

There are approximately 80,000 properties in Herefordshire of which approximately 7,000 are pensioners who will have no council tax to pay as they are receiving 'full CTR'. The remaining 7,000 claimants in receipt of partial CTR will have to pay some of their council tax. This year, so far, 36% of those will have received a summons for non-payment of council tax.

Of the remaining 66,000 properties, where the occupiers are not in receipt of CTR, 3% have received a summons.

There is a significant workload attached to chasing debt not only staff resources, but also postage and the cost of summonses (£85) which is added to the claimants' debt.

**Other Local Authority CTR Scheme Changes**

Local authorities are considering changes to their CTR schemes and a survey is being undertaken to establish where significant changes being made, the results so far:

Local Authority	Current CTR Scheme	Proposal 2015-16
<b>Worcestershire Districts</b>		
Bromsgrove	0%	0%
Malvern Hills	0% but a £6k capital limit and a £10 per week minimum award	0% as previous year
Worcester City	0% but has £6k capital limit, Band D restriction and £5 per week minimum award	0% as previous year
Redditch	20%	No change
Wyre Forest	10% and current scheme has a £5 minimum payment	No change
Wychavon	20%	No change
<b>Other Local Authorities</b>		
Walsall	0%	25%
Brighton and Hove City Council	8.5%	25%
Peterborough	30%	35% or 40%
Swindon	25%	No change
Thurrock	25%	No change
Stockton	20%	No change
Telford and Wrekin	21%	No change
Reading	15%	No change



## Examples to Show Potential Amounts Payable by CTR Claimants

Band	Annual charge (£)	CTR per band	Based on 76%	CTR Payable		
			Estimated	2014/15	Break Even 2015/16	Proposed 2015/16
			CTR before debt	84%	80%	76%
A	1,037	40%	496,896	166	207	249
B	1,210	37%	537,240	194	242	290
C	1,383	15%	248,940	221	277	332
D	1,555	5%	93,300	249	311	373
E	1,901	2%	78,840	595	657	719
F	2,247	1%	60,180	941	1,003	1,065
G	2,593	0%	-	1,287	1,181	1,411
H	3,111	0%	-	1,805	1,867	1,929
		<b>100%</b>	<b>1,515,396</b>			

The table provides examples of the levels of CTR that claimants currently, and could in future, pay each year. The overall estimate of £1,515k represents the maximum potential collectable from claimants before any bad debt provision.





# **Equality Impact Assessment Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)**

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Revenues &amp; Benefits Service</b>
<b>Policy/Service being assessed</b>	<b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b>
<b>Is this is a new or existing policy/service?</b>  <b>If existing policy/service please state date of last assessment</b>	<b>Existing Policy</b>  <b>24 October 2013</b>
<b>EIA Review team – List of members</b>	<b>Council Tax Reduction Project Group</b>
<b>Date of this assessment</b>	<b>17.10.14</b>
<b>Signature of completing officer (to be signed after the EIA has been completed)</b>	<b>Anne Phillips</b>
<b>Name and signature of Head of Service (to be signed after the EIA has been completed)</b>	<b>Peter Robinson</b>

## Form A1

### INITIAL SCREENING FOR STRATEGIES/POLICIES/FUNCTIONS FOR EQUALITIES RELEVANCE TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTE EQUALITY



High relevance/priority



Medium relevance/priority



Low or no relevance/ priority

**Note:**

1. Tick coloured boxes appropriately, and depending on degree of relevance to each of the equality strands
2. Summaries of the legislation/guidance should be used to assist this screening process

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Policy - CTRS	Relevance/Risk to Equalities																							
	Gender			Race			Disability			Sexual Orientation			Religion/Belief			Age			Socio-economic			Priority status For EIA		
State the Function/Policy /Service/Strategy being assessed:	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CTRS – Maintain the current maximum level of council tax reduction so that taxpayers have to pay at least 16% of the council tax charge.			✓			✓			✓			✓			✓	✓						✓		
CTRS – Reduce the maximum level of council tax reduction so that taxpayers have to pay at least 24% of the council tax charge.			✓			✓			✓			✓			✓	✓						✓		

## **Stage 1 – Scoping and Defining**

### **(1) What are the aims and objectives of policy/service?**

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) has been in place since 01 April 2013 and replaced the National Council Tax Benefit (CTB) scheme. CTRS is a locally determined system of council tax support. The aim of the CTRS scheme is to provide financial assistance to council taxpayers who have low incomes.

Persons who are of state pension age (persons who have reached the qualifying age of State Pension Credit) are protected under the scheme in that the calculation of the reduction they are to receive has been set by Central Government. For working age applicants however the reduction they receive is to be determined by the local authority.

This equality impact assessment looks at the potential for **not only** protecting pensioners (as required under the legislation) **but also** retaining a large amount of the protections already present for working age within the existing CTRS scheme carried forward from the CTB scheme.

Where a **working age claimant** applies or continues to receive Council Tax Reduction, it is proposed that the reduction will be calculated on the same rules as the current CTRS scheme except for the following;

- Maintain the current maximum level of council tax reduction so that taxpayers have to pay at least 16% of the council tax charge
- Reduce the maximum level of council tax reduction so that taxpayers have to pay at least 24% of the council tax charge

These changes will apply from 01 April 2015

Central Government has not been prescriptive in how an authority should protect vulnerable groups, but points to the Council's existing responsibilities including the Child Poverty Act 2010, the Disabled Person Act 1986 and the Housing Act 1996 as well as the public sector equality duty in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

	<p>The current level of assistance (<i>6878 claimants and average amount per week of £18.33 per claimant</i>) is provided for pension age claimants, details for working age claimants is given at the end of this assessment.</p>
<p><b>(2) How does the policy/service fit with the council's wider objectives?</b></p>	<p>All persons within the Council's area who have a low income may apply for support and assistance with their Council Tax.</p> <p>By making an application, providing evidence of their income and household circumstances, their potential entitlement for support will be calculated in line with Central Government prescribed requirements for the Council Tax Reduction scheme.</p> <p>The maintenance of a full reduction scheme, with few changes from the existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme fits with the Corporate objectives in that it meets, as far as possible, equality and sustainability.</p> <p>The reduction scheme assists the local economy and also ensures, as far as possible within the constraints on a reduced budget, that persons on a low income will be able to meet their Council Tax liability.</p> <p>Pension age claimants will not see a reduction in their support however working age cases will see a reduction in the support they currently receive.</p>

**(3) What are the expected outcomes of the policy/service?  
Who is intended to benefit from the policy/service and in  
what way?**

The desired outcomes are as follows;

**Pension Age Claimants**

- That all pensioners receive the level of support required by regulations set by Central Government (Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012);
- That all pensioner claimants or existing working age claimants who rise to pension age are able to receive Council Tax Reduction in line with the regulations; and
- That all pensioner claimants continue to receive the correct level of council tax reduction at all times.

**Working Age Claimants**

- That all working age claimants are still able to receive Council Tax Reduction but the level of reduction payable will **reduce** ; and
- That all working age claimants continue to receive the correct level of council tax reduction at all times.

<p><b>(4) Does this policy/service have the potential to directly or indirectly discriminate against any particular group?</b></p> <p>Please identify all groups that are affected and briefly explain why</p>	<p><b>RACE</b> <b>NO</b></p> <p>The reduction support scheme does not take race into account when calculating the level of support</p>	<p><b>AGE</b> <b>YES</b></p> <p>The reduction support scheme takes into account age when calculating the level of support available. Pensioners will <b>not</b> see any reduction in the support paid (as they are protected under regulations set by central government). Working age claimants <b>will be affected</b> due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction of the maximum level of council tax reduction so that taxpayers have to pay at least 24% of the council tax charge</li> </ul>	<p><b>GENDER</b> <b>NO</b></p> <p>The reduction support scheme does not take gender into account when calculating the level of support</p>
	<p><b>RELIGION/BELIEF</b> <b>NO</b></p> <p>The reduction support scheme does not take religion or belief into account when calculating the level of support</p>	<p><b>DISABILITY</b> <b>NO</b></p> <p>The reduction support scheme continues to have in-built protections for disability in the form of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the award of additional premiums for disablement;</li> <li>disregarding higher levels of income where a claimant is in remunerative work and is disabled; and</li> <li>there is no requirement to have non dependant deductions where a claimant is disabled</li> </ul>	<p><b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b> <b>NO</b></p> <p>The reduction support scheme does not take sexual orientation into account when calculating the level of support</p>

<p><b>(5) Are there any obvious barriers to accessing the service?</b></p>	<p>No – customers will continue to access the reduction scheme in an identical fashion to the existing Council Tax Reduction scheme. The approach of the Council has been to provide a range of options for claiming and customers are encouraged to make a claim at any time.</p>
<p><b>(6) How does the policy/service contribute to promotion of equality?</b></p>	<p>The Council Tax Reduction scheme provides essential help towards the Council Tax liability for all claimants on a low income. By continuing to assess entitlement on a mean tested basis, similar to the national approach to means tested benefits, the scheme is equitable albeit that the level of support overall may be reduced to working age claimants.</p>

<p><b>(7) Does the policy/service have the potential to promote good relations between groups?</b></p>	<p>Due to the nature of the cuts required in the level of council tax reduction, all working age claimants will see a reduction to their current entitlement, however the way that the Council is introducing the changes by maintaining the means test, allows the most vulnerable to receive a relatively higher level of support</p>
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<p><b><u>Stage 2 - Information Gathering</u></b></p>	
<p><b>(1) What type and range of evidence or information have you used to help you make a judgement about the policy or service?</b></p>	<p>Extensive modelling from existing data. The modelling has been based on changes to the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme administered by the Council.</p> <p>Modelling information has included number of working age claimants and amount of council tax benefit paid (<i>7034 claimants and average amount per week of £14.06 per claimant</i>), claim numbers and benefit paid across council tax bands, range of income types and household make-up.</p>
<p><b>(2) What consultation/ information has been used? What new consultation, if any, do you need to undertake?</b></p>	<p>A full consultation with the public has been undertaken as required by the legislation (Local Government Finance Act 2012). Whilst pension age claimants are protected, the authority will still, as part of the consultation process, envisage pension age claimants and pensioners generally to respond to the consultation itself.</p> <p>The consultation process is comprehensive and encourages a full response to the changes to the current reduction scheme, (notwithstanding the fact that the authority is obliged to implement the scheme determined by Central Government for pension age claimants).</p> <p>Interest groups will be directly consulted as part of the process.</p> <p>The public consultation took place during the period 22.07.14 until 10.10.14</p>



<b><u>Stage 3 – Making a Judgement</u></b>	
<b>(1) From your data and consultations is there any adverse or negative impact identified for any particular group?</b>  <b>Is there any evidence of needs not being met?</b> <b>e.g. language or physical access barriers;</b> <b>lack of appropriate resources or facilities</b>	To be completed after consultation is complete
<b>(2) If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?</b>	To be completed after consultation is complete
<b>(3) What actions are going to be taken to reduce or eliminate negative or adverse impact?</b>	To be completed after consultation is complete
<b>(4) Is there any positive impact?</b> <b>Does it promote equality of opportunity between different groups and actively address discrimination?</b>	To be completed after consultation is complete

<b><u>Stage 4 – Action Planning, Review &amp; Monitoring</u></b>	
<p>If No Further Action is required then go to – Review &amp; Monitoring</p> <p>(1) Action Planning – Specify any changes or improvements which can be made to the service or policy to mitigate or eradicate negative or adverse impact on specific groups, including resource implications.</p>	<p>Following consultation, the changes proposed are to be reviewed. The scheme will be reviewed annually thereafter.</p> <p>The Council has established a full project plan to ensure that changes are introduced correctly, accurately and on time</p>
<p>(2) Review and Monitoring State how and when you will monitor policy and EIA Action Plan</p>	<p>Full monitoring of scheme implementation will be undertaken on a monthly basis in line with the accepted project plan.</p> <p>The Revenues and Benefits Service will undertake monthly and quarterly collection of data.</p> <p>The Council will review the policy annually. It is expected that due to changes in legislation and funding, that the level of Council Tax Support available will change annually.</p>

‘An Equality Impact Assessment on this policy was undertaken on 17 October 2014



<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>GENERAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>4 NOVEMBER 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME AND TASK AND FINISH GROUPS</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE SERVICES</b>

### **Classification**

Open

### **Key Decision**

This is not an executive decision.

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

To consider the committee's work programme and to receive updates on work allocated to task and finish groups.

### **Recommendation**

**THAT the work programme (Appendix 1) be noted, subject to any comments the committee wishes to make.**

### **Alternative Options**

- 1 It is for the committee to determine its work programme as it sees fit to reflect the priorities facing Herefordshire. The committee needs to be selective and ensure that the work programme is focused, realistic and deliverable within the existing resources available.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 2 The committee needs to develop a manageable work programme to ensure that scrutiny is focused, effective and produces clear outcomes.

## **Key Considerations**

### **Draft Work Programme**

- 3 An outline work programme is attached at Appendix 1 and it is under continuous review.
- 4 The work programme needs to focus on the key issues of concern and be manageable allowing for urgent items or matters that have been called-in.
- 5 Should committee members become aware of issues please discuss the matter with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Statutory Scrutiny Officer.

### **Task and Finish Groups**

- 6 The committee can allocate tasks drawn from the work programme to a task and finish group. It is for the committee to confirm an outline scope including, as a minimum, the composition of the group, the desired outcomes and what will not be included in the work.
- 7 Four task and finish groups have been commissioned and verbal updates will be invited from the chairmen of the three groups that are currently in progress: Balfour Beatty Living Places - Public Realm Services [Councillor Bowen]; Community Infrastructure Levy [Councillor Harvey]; and Development Management (Planning) [Councillor Durkin].
- 8 In view of the commitments already identified in the work programme and the need to dedicate sufficient time and resources to the topic, it is suggested that the opportunity to progress work on Digital Strategy during the remainder of 2014/15 be reviewed at the conclusion of the other task and finish groups.

### **Member Seminars**

- 9 At the last meeting (minute 19 refers), the committee agreed that education officers be requested to prepare further background information on the topics of Pupil Premium and the Hidden / Actual Costs of Education. To move this forward, officers have been asked to facilitate a scrutiny seminar/workshop on these matters to consider the issues and to identify any specific work where scrutiny can provide added value.
- 10 Further to the 12 May 2014 meeting (minute 84 refers), a member seminar on Community Safety Partnership Workstreams is scheduled for Tuesday 11 November at 2.30pm at the Shire Hall.

## **Community Impact**

- 11 The topics selected for scrutiny should have regard to what matters to residents.

## **Equality and Human Rights**

- 12 The topics selected need to have regard for equality and human rights issues.

## **Financial Implications**

- 13 The costs of the work of the committee will have to be met within existing resources.

It should be noted the costs of running scrutiny will be subject to an assessment to support appropriate processes.

## **Legal Implications**

14 The council is required to deliver an Overview and Scrutiny function.

## **Risk Management**

15 There is a reputational risk to the council if the Overview and Scrutiny function does not operate effectively. The arrangements for the development of the work programme should help mitigate this risk.

## **Consultees**

16 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman meet on a regular basis to consider the work programme.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Draft Work Programme

Appendix 2 Executive Rolling Programme (as at the time of going to print)

## **Background Papers**

None identified.



## General Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Draft Work Programme 2014/15

### Agenda Items

<b>Monday 24 November 2014 (from 10.00am, formally at 11.30 am)</b>	
Budget 2015/16 and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Following a joint briefing for scrutiny members at the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee at 10.00am, to receive and comment on the budget proposals.
<b>Monday 26 January 2015 at 10.00am</b>	
Education Strategy - School Estates	To provide scrutiny input into the development of an estates strategy for schools to meet the council's duties in relation to sufficiency of school places and maintenance of buildings.
Task and Finish Group Reports	To receive reports from any completed task and finish group reviews commissioned by the committee.
<b>Tuesday 10 March 2015 at 10.00 am</b>	
School Attainment Figures	To receive and comment on the school attainment figures for Herefordshire schools.

### Task and Finish Groups

<b>The following Task and Finish Groups have been commissioned:</b>	Status:
Balfour Beatty Living Places - Public Realm Services	Work underway (five meetings held to 16 October 2014)
Community Infrastructure Levy	Phase three work underway (three meetings held to 20 October 2014)
Development Management (Planning)	Work underway (three meetings held to 16 October 2014)
Digital Strategy	To be reviewed at the conclusion of the other Task and Finish Groups.

### Member Seminars

<b>Seminars have been identified for scrutiny members as follows:</b>	Status:
Community Safety Partnership Workstreams	11 November 2014 at 2.30pm, Shire Hall
Pupil Premium and Hidden / Actual Costs of Education and Pupil Premium	Officers have been requested to facilitate a scrutiny seminar/workshop on these matters, likely to be in early 2015.

### **Briefing Notes**

<b>The following topics shall be dealt with via briefing notes for committee members:</b>	Status:
Local Transport Plan	To be prepared by the end of October 2014
Retention of Organisational Memory	To be prepared by the end of October 2014
Waste Management	To be prepared by the end of October 2014
Arm's Length Companies / Wider Commissioning Arrangements	To be prepared by the end of November 2014
Probation Service Performance	To be prepared by the end of November 2014
Update on the Executive Response to the Task and Finish Group Report on Household Recycling Centres	The Executive Response to the report was received by the committee on 8 September 2014 (minute 18 refers). Informed by the findings, Worcestershire County Council is currently undertaking its own review. A briefing note will be prepared by the end of March 2015.



Executive Rolling Programme: October 2014

Executive Decisions to be taken – October 2014

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET MEMBER HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING COUNCILLOR GJ POWELL</b>			
<b>Decision Date (on or after)</b>	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
TBC	<b>Non Key</b>	Harling Court - Housing Support Services  To seek approval to waiver the existing service whilst re-procurement exercise is ongoing	Adults Wellbeing / Richard Gabb
TBC	<b>Non Key</b>	Homelessness Prevention Strategy  To set out the Local Authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness	Adults Wellbeing / Jane Thomas

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET MEMBER CORPORATE STRATEGY &amp; FINANCE: COUNCILLOR AW JOHNSON, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b>			
<b>Decision Date (on or after)</b>	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
TBC	<b>Non Key</b>	Revised Joint Agreement with West Mercia Energy  To consider revision to the joint agreement with West Mercia Energy	E, C & C – Richard Wood, Head of Environment & Waste
TBC Not before 20 October 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Hereford United Football Club (1939) Ltd  To consider future lease arrangements in relation to the Hereford United Football Club ground and of land at ground ends	Economy, Communities and Corporate / Tony Featherstone & Donna Burgess
TBC	<b>Non Key</b>	West Mercia Energy Proposed extension of the West Mercia Energy joint agreement between the council and the Member Authorities	Economy, Communities & Corporate – Richard Wood Head of Environment & Waste Services

15 October 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	Approval of the Procurement Route for Construction of Business Units within the Enterprise Zone To seek approval for the use of a “construction management” approach to the construction of new business units on plot C21 of the Hereford Enterprise Zone, and to appoint HCT Construction Consultants Ltd to manage the construction process.	Economy, Communities and Corporate. Economic Development Manager.
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**DECISION MAKER  
CABINET MEMBER CORPORATE SERVICES  
COUNCILLOR PM MORGAN**

Decision Date (on or after)	Issue Type	Purpose & Report Title	Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker
October 2014 TBC	<b>Non Key</b>	Review of Gypsy and Traveller Policy  To consider implementing new policy	Economy, Communities & Corporate / Claire Corfield
20 October 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	Herefordshire Council Armed Forces Corporate Covenant  To approved the Herefordshire Armed Forces Corporate Covenant	Director for Economy, Communities and Corporate

**DECISION MAKER  
CABINET MEMBER CONTRACTS & ASSETS  
COUNCILLOR H BRAMER**

Decision Date (on or after)	Issue Type	Purpose & Report Title	Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker
15 October 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	Community Asset Transfer – Ledbury Rugby Club & Ross Road Playing Fields, Ledbury to Ledbury Rugby Club <i>To approve the community asset transfer of Ledbury Rugby Club and Ross Road Playing Fields, Ledbury to Ledbury Rugby Club</i>	Economy, Communities & Corporate - Tony Featherstone, Head of Corporate Asset Management
Not before 29 October 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Alternative management arrangements for Council owned parks and open spaces  <i>To obtain cabinet member approval to be seek alternative management arrangement for council owned parks and open spaces</i>	ECC – Steve Burgess, Head of Transport & Access

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET MEMBER YOUNG PEOPLE &amp; CHILDREN'S WELLBEING: COUNCILLOR JW MILLAR</b>			
<b>Decision Date (on or after)</b>	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
TBC	<b>Non Key</b>	The use of Pupil Premium for LAC  Decision on top slice of Pupil Premium for LAC to allow targeted intervention controlled by the Virtual Head for LAC	Children's Wellbeing / Steve Laycock
TBC	<b>Non Key</b>	New Horizons - Post 19 Learners with Learning Difficulties and or Disabilities Pilot Project Report  To give an update on the small pilot for further education, independent living and therapeutic services for young people aged 19-25 who have learning difficulties and disabilities of a profound, multiple or severely complex nature, which commenced on 1 October 2013. As resolved by cabinet on 19 September 2013.  For the Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing to review and agree to the recommendations in the report including that the pilot project continues. As resolved by cabinet on 19 September 2013.	Children's Wellbeing / Alexia Heath

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET MEMBER YOUNG PEOPLE &amp; CHILDREN'S WELLBEING: COUNCILLOR JW MILLAR</b>			
<b>Decision Date (on or after)</b>	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
23 October 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	Nursery Education Funding Policy  <i>To approve the policy for Nursery Education Funding (NEF)</i>	Children's Wellbeing / Andy Hough
16 October 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	CNS/LAC Sufficiency Strategy  <i>To approve the Looked After Children &amp; Complex Needs placements Commissioning &amp; Sufficiency Strategy, 2014/19</i>	Children's Wellbeing Richard Watson

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET MEMBER HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING COUNCILLOR GJ POWELL</b>			
<b>Decision Date (on or after)</b>	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
25 October 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Procurement & Award of new Public Health Contract (Child Health)  <i>To secure approval to start the procurement process and obtain delegated approval for contract award</i>	Adults Wellbeing / Helen Coombes

Executive Rolling Programme: November 2014

Executive Decisions to be taken - November 2014

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET</b>			
<b>Meeting / Decision Date (on or after)</b>	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>
13 November 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	Quarterly Performance Report  <i>To review performance</i>	Economy, Communities and Corporate - Richard Ball
13 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Strategic Plan for Education  To set out the Local Authorities approach to educational improvement	Children's Wellbeing / Chris Baird
13 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Council acquisition of the Three Elms Trading Estate, Hereford HR4 9PU  To seek Cabinet approval to :The Council's purchase of the Three Elms Trading Estate from the Homes and Communities Agency at market value, estimated to be in the region of £1.75 to £1.85m, which will enable the Council to release value from its adjoining land.	Economy, Communities & Corporate Ian Higgs, Development Manager

13 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	South Wye Transport Package To consider consultation responses and confirm prefer package	Economy, Communities & Corporate / Mairead Lane	
13 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Relocation of Customer Services in Hereford <i>To consider the options for the future delivery of Customer Services in Hereford City to meet changing requirements of the customer and synergies between services.</i>		Directorate - ECC; Head of Community and Customer Services – Natalia Silver
13 November 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	Local Account 2013-14 The cabinet approve the publication of the Local Account – a statutory report to the local community re Adult Social Care	Adult & Wellbeing	Head of Performance Adult and Wellbeing Directorate.
13 November 2014	<b>B&amp;PF</b>	* Local Council Tax Support Scheme – 2015/16 Effect On Parish Precepts To recommend to Council continued use of local council tax support scheme grant funding		ECC Peter Robinson
13 November 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	* Herefordshire Safeguarding Adult Board Business Plan To note, consider and comment on Herefordshire Safeguarding Adult Board's assessment of safeguarding in Herefordshire, and its own effectiveness to enable it to undertake its governance role with regard to the Board		Adults Wellbeing / Herefordshire Safeguarding Children and Adult Board Business Unit
13 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Aylestone & Broadlands Report		
13 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Capital programme		

**DECISION MAKER  
CABINET MEMBER YOUNG PEOPLE & CHILDREN'S WELLBEING:  
COUNCILLOR JW MILLAR**

Decision Date (on or after)	Issue Type	Purpose & Report Title	Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker

27 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Regional Residential Children's Home Framework Agreement  To note the joint procurement exercise undertaken with the West Midlands Region and approve the awarding of contracts to preferred providers of residential children's home placements for Herefordshire's framework agreement	Children's Wellbeing
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**DECISION MAKER  
CABINET MEMBER CORPORATE SERVICES  
COUNCILLOR PM MORGAN**

Decision Date (on or after)	Issue Type	Purpose & Report Title	Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker
28 November 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	Consolidation of Market Rights  To consolidate and regularise the position as regards Herefordshire Council's rights to hold certain markets	Economy, Communities & Corporate – Chris Jenner

**DECISION MAKER  
CABINET MEMBER HEALTH & WELLBEING  
COUNCILLOR GJ POWELL**

Decision Date (on or after)	Issue Type	Purpose & Report Title	Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker
12 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Housing related support service (2 x Accommodation based contracts & 1 x floating support contract).  To update members on the strategic review of the service and seek approval to retender or decommission	Adult and Wellbeing Richard Gabb/Laura Lloyd
20 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Rose Garden- Extra Care Support Provision Contract  To agree a time limited extension to the current contract for the provision of care support for residents at <i>Rose Gardens, Hereford</i> currently delivered by <i>Extra Care Charitable Trust</i>	Graham Saveker Commissioning Officer Adult and Wellbeing Directorate

<b>DECISION MAKER</b>		
<b>CABINET MEMBER Transport and Roads:</b>		
<b>COUNCILLOR P Rone</b>		
<b>Decision Date</b> (on or after)	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>
20 November 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Review of Off Street Car Park Charges
		<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>

**Other meetings:**

<b>AUDIT &amp; GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</b>			
<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information</b>
26 November 2014	Progress Report on 2014/15 Internal Audit Plan		Internal Audit SWAP Jacqui Gooding <a href="mailto:Jacqui.Gooding@southwestaudit.co.uk">Jacqui.Gooding@southwestaudit.co.uk</a>
26 November 2014	Annual Audit Letter (External Audit)		External Audit Grant Thornton Terry Tobin <a href="mailto:Terry.P.Tobin@uk.gt.com">Terry.P.Tobin@uk.gt.com</a>
26 November 2014	Budget Monitoring Report		Economy, Community, Corporate Section 151 Officer – Peter Robinson
26 November 2014	Counter-fraud and Corruption Policies – Biennial Review		Economy, Community, Corporate Section 151 Officer – Peter Robinson
26 November 2014	Complaints Statistics		Economy, Community, Corporate Assistant Director Governance – Bill Norman
26 November 2014	What is done differently with major projects within the organisation since the CRM implementation		Economy, Community, Corporate Assistant Director Governance – Bill Norman
26 November 2014	Constitution - Draft protocol on filming and recording public meetings.		Economy, Community, Corporate Assistant Director Governance – Bill Norman

Executive Rolling Programme: December 2014

Executive Decisions to be taken – December 2014

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET MEMBER HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING COUNCILLOR GJ POWELL</b>			
<b>Decision Date (on or after)</b>	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
December TBC 2014  Cllr Powell	<b>Non Key</b>	Housing related support service (Homeless prevention support contract)  To update members on the strategic review of the service and seek approval to retender or decommission	Adult and Wellbeing Richard Gabb/Laura Lloyd
10 December 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Housing Related Support Service (Accommodation based support & floating support).  To update members on the strategic review of the service and seek approval to retender or decommission	Adult and Wellbeing Robert Vickers/Laura Lloyd

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET MEMBER TRANSPORT &amp; ROADS: COUNCILLOR P RONE</b>			
<b>Decision Date (on or after)</b>	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
1 December 2014	<b>KEY</b>	New Lengthsman Scheme  To approve the expenditure of funding covered within the 2015/16 highways budget to launch the new lengthsman scheme to all parish councils in Herefordshire	Economy, Communities & Corporate - Clive Hall Head of Highways & Community Services



<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET</b>				
<b>Meeting / Decision Date</b> (on or after)	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
18 December 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	Budget Monitoring Report  <i>To report the financial position of the Council for both Revenue and Capital</i>	Corporate Strategy & Finance – Councillor AW Johnson, Leader of the Council	Economy, Communities & Corporate / Peter Robinson
18 December 2014	<b>Non Key</b>	Public Health Annual Report	Health & Wellbeing – Councillor GJ Powell	Public Health
18 December 2014	<b>KEY</b>	Rose Garden – Extra Care Support Service  To award the Rose Garden – Extra Care Support Contract following a re-procurement exercise	Health & Wellbeing	Adults Wellbeing / Richard Gabb

<b>DECISION MAKER COUNCIL</b>				
<b>Meeting / Decision Date</b> (on or after)	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
12 December 2014	<b>B&amp;PF</b>	Local Council Tax Support Scheme – 2015/16 Effect on Parish Precepts To agree use of local council tax support scheme grant funding	Peter Robinson – Chief Finance Officer	

Executive Rolling Programme: January 2015

Executive Decisions to be taken – January 2015

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET</b>				
Meeting / Decision Date (on or after)	Issue Type	Purpose & Report Title	Portfolio Holder	Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker
15 January 2015	<b>B&amp;PF</b>	2015/16 Budget Setting	Corporate Strategy & Finance	
15 January 2015	<b>KEY</b>	Herefordshire Domestic Violence and Abuse Support Service Contract	Health & Wellbeing	Adults Wellbeing / Richard Gabb
15 January 2015	<b>KEY</b>	<i>To award the Herefordshire Domestic Violence and Abuse Service Contract</i> Care Act To consider the impacts of the Care Act and to agree actions for implementation		Adults Wellbeing / Alison Hotchen Care Act Project Manager

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET MEMBER CORPORATE STRATEGY &amp; FINANCE: COUNCILLOR AW JOHNSON, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b>		
Decision Date (on or after)	Issue Type	Purpose & Report Title
January 2015	Non Key	Social Value Statement To secure member approval for a council 'Social Value Statement'
		Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker R. Ball – ECC

Other Meetings

<b>AUDIT &amp; GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</b>	
Meeting Date	Purpose & Report Title
	Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information

28 January 2015	Whistle Blowing Policy – Biennial Review		Economy, Community, Corporate Assistant Director Governance – Bill Norman
28 January 2015	VfM or Financial Resilience Report (as required) (External Audit)		External Audit Grant Thornton Terry Tobin <a href="mailto:Terry.P.Tobin@uk.gt.com">Terry.P.Tobin@uk.gt.com</a>
28 January 2015	Report (as required) (External Audit)		External Audit Grant Thornton Terry Tobin <a href="mailto:Terry.P.Tobin@uk.gt.com">Terry.P.Tobin@uk.gt.com</a>

Executive Rolling Programme: February 2015

Executive Decisions to be taken – February 2015

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET</b>			
Meeting / Decision Date (on or after)	Issue Type	Purpose & Report Title	Portfolio Holder
26 February 2015	<b>Non Key</b>	Budget Monitoring Report  <i>To report the financial position of the Council for both Revenue and Capital</i>	Corporate Strategy & Finance – Councillor AW Johnson, Leader of the Council
26 February 2015	<b>Non Key</b>	Quarterly Performance Report  <i>To review performance</i>	Economy, Communities and Corporate - Richard Ball
			Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker  Economy, Communities & Corporate / Peter Robinson

<b>DECISION MAKER COUNCIL</b>			
Meeting / Decision Date (on or after)	Issue Type	Purpose & Report Title	Portfolio Holder
6 February 2015	<b>B&amp;BF</b>	2015/16 Budget Setting	Corporate Strategy & Finance
6 February 2015	<b>B&amp;PF</b>	Local Transport Plan 4  <i>To approve the Local Transport Plan.</i>	Infrastructure / Councillor PD Price  Now Cabinet
			Directorate, Lead Officer & Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker  Economy, Communities & Corporate / Steve Burgess

Executive Rolling Programme: March 2015

Executive Decisions to be taken – March 2015

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET</b>				
<b>Meeting / Decision Date</b> (on or after)	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
26 March 2015		Herefordshire Safeguarding Boards: Interim Safeguarding Assurance Report  <i>To inform Cabinet of progress made towards the implementation of the Safeguarding Boards' Business Plans 2014-2015.</i>	Young People and Children's Wellbeing / Councillor J Millar	Children's Wellbeing, Andy Churcher, HSAB/HSCB Business Manager

<b>DECISION MAKER COUNCIL</b>				
<b>Meeting / Decision Date</b> (on or after)	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
6 March 2015		Setting of Council Tax		

<b>DECISION MAKER CABINET MEMBER HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING COUNCILLOR GJ POWELL</b>				
<b>Decision Date</b> (on or after)	<b>Issue Type</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information for documents/report to be submitted to Decision Maker</b>
31 March 2015	<b>Non Key</b>	Herefordshire Tenancy Strategy 2012 -2015.  <i>To review and update current Strategy in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 (s.150). The Strategy sets out matters to which the registered providers of social housing for its district are to have regard in formulating policies.</i>		Adults Wellbeing / Jane Thomas

**Other Meetings**

<b>AUDIT &amp; GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</b>			
<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Report Title</b>	<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Directorate, Lead Officer &amp; Contact information</b>
March 15	Progress report on 2014/15 Internal Audit Plan		
	Internal Audit Plan for 2015/16		
	External Audit Plan		
	Budget Monitoring Report		
	Counter-fraud and Corruption Policies – Biennial Review		
	Whistle Blowing Policy – Biennial Review		

