

AGENDA

General Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 14 November 2016**

Time: **11.00 am**

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

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

For any further information please contact:

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Agenda for the meeting of the General Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chairman **Councillor WLS Bowen**
Vice-Chairman **Councillor CA Gandy**

Councillor JM Bartlett
Councillor MJK Cooper
Councillor J Hardwick
Councillor EPJ Harvey
Councillor JF Johnson
Councillor MT McEvelly
Councillor AJW Powers
Councillor NE Shaw
Councillor EJ Swinglehurst
Councillor A Warmington
Councillor SD Williams

Co-optees (education issues)

Mr P Burbidge
Mrs A Fisher

Mr P Sell

Roman Catholic Church
Parent Governor Representative:
Primary Schools
Church of England

AGENDA

		Pages
1.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>To receive apologies for absence.</p>	
2.	<p>NAMED SUBSTITUTES</p> <p>To receive details of members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a member of the committee.</p>	
3.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>To receive any declarations of interest by members.</p>	
4.	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2016.</p>	7 - 14
5.	<p>SUGGESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</p> <p>To consider suggestions from the public on issues the committee could scrutinise in the future.</p> <p>(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.)</p>	
6.	<p>QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC</p> <p>To note questions received from the public and the items to which they relate.</p> <p>(Questions are welcomed for consideration at a scrutiny committee meeting subject to the question being directly relevant 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 5.00 pm on Wednesday 9 November to councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk.)</p>	
7.	<p>DRAFT 2017/18 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE</p> <p>To seek the committee's views on the budget proposals for 2017-18 and updated medium term financial strategy (MTFS).</p>	15 - 116
8.	<p>PROPOSED 2017/18 CAPITAL BUDGET</p> <p>To provide Cabinet with comments on the proposed capital budget for 2017/18 onwards for recommendation to Council on 16 December 2016.</p>	117 - 126
9.	<p>EDGAR STREET STADIUM, HEREFORD - LEASE PROPOSALS</p> <p>To enable the committee to consider the options available to the council prior to entering into longer term arrangements on the stadium premises.</p>	127 - 134
10.	<p>PASSENGER TRANSPORT REVIEW CONSULTATION</p> <p>To seek the committee's views on the options under consideration as part of the passenger transport review and seek comments on the outputs of the bus service consultation.</p>	135 - 210
11.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME</p> <p>To consider the committee's work programme.</p>	211 - 230

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is Tuesday 17 January 2017 at 10.00 am.

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- 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.
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The Chairman or an attendee at 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 Council Chamber, The Shire Hall, St Peter's Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX on Tuesday 27 September 2016 at 9.30 am

Present: Councillor WLS Bowen (Chairman)
Councillor CA Gandy (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: BA Baker, MJK Cooper, J Hardwick, EPJ Harvey, EL Holton, FM Norman, GJ Powell, AJW Powers, NE Shaw, EJ Swinglehurst and A Warmington

In attendance: Councillors JM Bartlett, H Bramer, DG Harlow and AW Johnson – leader of the council.

Officers: G Hughes – director economy, communities and corporate, N Silver – assistant director communities, J Chedgzoy – library service manager, M Coldman - customer service area manager, M Samuels – director for adults and wellbeing

29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors JM Bartlett, JF Johnson, MT McEvelly and SD Williams. Apologies were also received from the statutory consultees: Mr P Burbidge, Mrs A Fisher and Mr P Sell.

30. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Councillor BC Baker substituted for Councillor JF Johnson, Councillor EL Holton for Councillor SD Williams, Councillor FM Norman for Councillor JM Bartlett and Councillor GJ Powell for Councillor MT McEvelly.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

32. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2016 be approved as a correct record.

33. SUGGESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were none.

34. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were none.

35. CUSTOMER SERVICES AND LIBRARIES

The Committee's views were sought on the model for future operation of customer services and libraries across the county considering the budget pressures on the local authority.

The Assistant Director communities gave a presentation. The presentation slides had been circulated with the agenda papers.

Clare Llewellyn West, Chair of Joint Action for Herefordshire Libraries (J AHL), also gave a presentation. A document produced by J AHL had been circulated to the Committee as a supplement. She made the following principal points:

- Libraries supported the four main objectives of the Council. Their positive effect included savings in mental health provision, avoiding damage to literacy of children and young adults; increased footfall for local retailers, benefits to small businesses in terms of research via the library and internet access. National and international research showed that a healthy library service contributed to prosperity and quality of life.
- Libraries were excellent value for money and also the Council's presence in each community, providing the access point to most Council services and being a key factor in the county's economy.
- To meet the required savings the choice was to cut expenditure or increase income. There was little left to cut without fatally damaging the service.
- Income could be increased indirectly by continuing to develop libraries as multi service hubs. Libraries were safe and welcoming places, and provided access to Council & government services which were increasingly online. More directly there were opportunities for hiring out space/meeting areas, running events, and merchandising.
- The Group did not believe that there could be a cost free library service, but did believe it represented a genuine investment in the future of the county.
- The Group's work had led it to the following conclusions:
 - volunteer libraries can work – but only when the community has the capacity to take on the role, and the volunteers are fully trained and continuously supported by professionals. Increasing the number of libraries run by volunteers may reduce the number of library assistants but the size of the core library team would need to increase.
 - investment in the fabric of the library, as achieved in Ledbury, leads to an increase in library use.
 - partnerships work when there is a synergy between the traditional role of the library and the partner services.
 - library culture can have a positive and beneficial effect on other services, the move of the Ross jobcentre to the library being an example.
 - exploring new opportunities and investing in both premises and, most importantly, in professional staff would bring real benefits and enable the Library Service to have a key role in the future prosperity and well-being of Herefordshire. A new library in Hereford would need to be supported by a county network to serve the dispersed and often geographically disadvantaged population.

- The council's role was to make savings whilst mitigating the impact on the community. An intelligent and strategic approach to libraries and customer services as an investment, fulfilled that role.

In summary, J AHL asked the Committee to recommend that savings were made by continuing to combine council services using libraries as multi service hubs and by identifying more opportunities to generate income.

In discussion the following principal points were made:

- The council was part way through a 10 year savings programme. It was important to secure a long term, deliverable solution for customer services and the library service that was viable and sustainable and would amongst other things provide certainty for staff and volunteers
- Multi-functional hubs in communities would have a significant role to play in delivering a range of services.
- Library services would have to be provided by communities themselves, noting, as an example, the way in which provision had been grown locally following the withdrawal of the mobile library service.
- A significant amount of the customer services queries related to council tax and benefits. The providers of these services should be made responsible for answering questions from the public. This might provide an incentive to them to ensure that the service was delivered in a better way by improving the quality of the information provided to the public in the first place including clearer and easier to use forms.
- A note of caution was expressed that whilst there was an attraction in the argument that providers should be made to deal with the queries their service generated, many people who sought assistance through customer services had multiple issues to be addressed. It was better for the individual to have their issues addressed in the round and staff could assist in identifying needs a person may have.
- Some Members considered Option 3 to be the best option, providing an element of savings, whilst retaining support for community and voluntary links and being deliverable.
- Other members considered that option 3 would remove substantial parts of the library service and, whilst seeking to ensure compliance with the council's legal responsibilities, sought to centralise the service as much as possible in Hereford. Option 4, providing an enhanced service was the preferable option. Studies had shown that learning to read for pleasure at an early age was important in helping children escape from poverty. Libraries played an important role in society.
- It was noted that it was not straightforward to make comparisons based on the statistics in the report because like was not being compared with like. Belmont and Hereford libraries, for example, were solely libraries, without a customer services presence. Footfall in Ledbury included attendance at a range of events held in the library accounting for the fact that fewer visits resulted in a book being borrowed.
- It was questioned whether the library service could continue to be free to all.
- It was asked whether the council could allow discounts to people who paid bills by direct debit.
- There were opportunities to generate income from libraries. Examples given included leasing out space to a coffee shop.

- The role of the local councillor as a source of information to residents should not be overlooked.
- The loss of customer services centres could have many expensive consequences.
- Account should be taken of the social role Libraries fulfilled.
- There was support for expanding the service.
- There was much more scope to explore funding that could be provided by Parish and Town Councils to support services. Good communication was essential. It was important that discussions took place at an early stage. However, it was also observed that a number of Parish and Town councils had already taken on responsibilities from the Council and there was a limit to their resources.
- The retention of professionally qualified library staff to support volunteer staff was essential.
- Provision continued to need to be made for face to face contact for those who would not or could not access services online. Improving the quality of the provision of services online might over time provide an incentive to more people to make the transition to that method of accessing services.
- Consideration should be given to how the delivery of other services such as some adult wellbeing services might be delivered.
- Innovation should be constantly sought and encouraged.
- The running costs of some buildings appeared high. It was asked whether there was scope for invest to save work to reduce energy costs.
- It would have been helpful to the Committee to have been presented with the results of the libraries and customer services research consultation. It was premature to recommend an option without access to this information. In response the assistant director commented that the information was to be released shortly. There were some 1,500 comments to assess. However, the main headline findings had been outlined in her presentation.
- A concern was expressed that limiting the focus on savings to within the economy, communities and corporate directorate prevented the development of a more strategic approach to facilitating change in service delivery and in the community. Customer Services staff had an important role to play in providing access to information informing people of the choices available to them and encouraging people to make the changes that the Council wanted them to make.
- The leader of council commented that directorates were working collaboratively.
- The evidence showed that different age groups used the county's libraries in different ways and the council needed to have regard to this.
- The proposed reductions in service sat awkwardly with the bid for Hereford to be the City of Culture 2021.
- In response to questions the Assistant Director commented as follows:
 - Hereford library was scheduled to reopen in January 2017, in line with the plan set out in the report to Cabinet in May 2016.
 - The planned savings would be phased over 2 years. Some actions could be implemented right away. The timing would also be influenced by the mitigation in the needs and impact assessment. Scheduling the change in services would allow time to discuss with Parish and Town Councils whether they would be interested in providing support for services.

- She confirmed that even though there had been a national decline in library use research showed that social economic groups on lower incomes continued to use libraries. This together with geographical factors was taken into account in the impact assessment.
- She confirmed that staffing costs in Leominster appeared higher because of the proportion of supervisor costs. She would seek clarification of when rating valuations were last reviewed, noting concerns about the business rates paid by some libraries.
- It was proposed that cabinet should be recommended to support option 3 – retained libraries and central service with an emphasis on making best use of them as contact points for council services, extending service options and exploring new ways of working, and the report to cabinet should include a delivery plan.
- An amendment was proposed, but not seconded, that Cabinet should be recommended to consider savings programme option 3 in preference to all others and also that Cabinet reflect most on the impacts of all planned and future changes as affect defined areas of deprivation in the County.
- Improvements to the council website and software would help to improve the delivery of services online.
- A member cautioned against making assumptions about affluence in parts of the county and developing a disproportionate settlement, noting that there were pockets of deprivation in all areas and a wish for face to face contact.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet be recommended to support option 3 – retained libraries and central service with an emphasis on making best use of them and community libraries as contact points for council services, extending service options and exploring new ways of working, and the report to cabinet should include a delivery plan.

36. ECONOMIC MASTER PLAN

The Committee's views were sought on the draft Economic Master Plan for 2017-2031 and it was invited to consider whether to make any recommendations to inform cabinet's consideration of the plan.

The cabinet member – economy and corporate services introduced the report. He commented that the draft plan represented the start of a conversation. The projects within it would be regularly refreshed. He sought ongoing engagement and intended to submit further reports to the Committee.

The economic development manager gave a presentation. The presentation slides had been circulated with the agenda papers.

The following is a summary of the principal points identified for consideration:

- The plan should strive to address the major constraints that were inhibiting plans for growth and seek to make the county more marketable, mindful of what it was within the council's own powers to influence and effect.
- It was important to be clear who the audience for the document was.
- It was suggested the document should include a section on the history and geography of the county, and why the county was a good place to live and work, and set out the opportunities and attractions for people who were thinking of moving to

the county, set out the objectives and ambitions so that people could judge whether they wished to be associated with them.

- Clear timelines were needed. It was suggested that the plan should be in chunks recognising that changes would inevitably take place over the life of the plan and ensuring that it remained adaptable.
- Pitch documents were a good idea, possibly split into geographical or industry sectors and so targeting potential investors.
- The case studies provided were helpful.
- Account should be taken of the links with planning policy and the need to identify where policy could be improved.
- The importance of tourism to the County's growth and sustainability needed to be recognised. Maintaining the county's roads was important to the tourist industry.
- Promoting the County as a setting for film and tv locations would be advantageous.
- The possibility of businesses using underused council property should be explored.
- The Church Commissioners should be approached about scope for public use of their property.
- Communication and marketing were key.
- The Plan needed to consider the needs of the whole County. At the moment it was dominated by projects within the city.
- Regard should be had to the horticultural sector within the county.
- The tensions between preserving the county and growth and development needed to be recognised.
- There should be a focus on celebrating what was unique in the county and protecting that. An audit of the county's strengths had been proposed at the Committee's meeting in July but nothing appeared to have happened as a result.
- The photograph on the front cover should be replaced with a more distinctive image relating to the county.
- An implementation plan was needed.
- Having identified needs in the county there could be an opportunity to explore ways of meeting these needs, adopting a market led approach.
- Consideration should be given to seeking a view from external consultants on the plan.
- Clarification should be provided on the consultation process. In addition, including a section on those who had been consulted on the plan's development would lend it credibility.
- There seemed to be no reference to the small and medium enterprises that formed the majority of the county's businesses.
- The wording in relation to Cargills (p120 of the agenda papers) and to phosphate pollution (p59) needed to be revisited.
- It was questioned whether the proposals for the river quarter took account of the National Planning Policy Framework and the core strategy.
- The leader commented that the plan was essential to the county's financial security and it would be important to ensure the implementation of the approved plan.

The cabinet member – economy and corporate services commented that the intention was that the plan would be a marketing tool and people would not have to read the document as a whole but could turn to relevant sections. He outlined a number of actions being undertaken and invited members to help bring forward projects from the market towns and elsewhere of which they were aware.

The economic development manager thanked the committee for its comments.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member be recommended to have regard to the points raised by the Committee in discussion and in particular the summary of the principal points set out above.

37. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its work programme and related scrutiny activities.

The Chairman highlighted a number of revisions to the work programme set out at paragraph 5 of the report. He also mentioned that a seminar with the Police and Crime commissioner and the chief constable was to be held on morning of 21 November.

In discussing the proposed task and finish group on devolution a number of amendments were suggested to the scoping statement: the addition of neighbouring authorities as witnesses, the addition of the Chief Executive as a consultee, the addition of the West Midlands Combined Authority's strategy to the research required, amendment of the section on publicity requirements, and revision of the timetable.

The Chairman also proposed that, following the recent nutrient management seminar, the cabinet member – infrastructure be asked to ensure that the Nutrient Management Board submit a monitoring report to Members on an annual basis, with consideration also given to a further seminar.

In addition a proposal was made that Welsh Water should be invited to attend the Committee in the New Year to comment on its infrastructure plans and how these would support the council's growth plans, and also provide an update on the effectiveness of measures to reduce phosphate levels in the county's rivers and the operation of sewage treatment plants in the County.

RESOLVED:

- That:**
- (a) the draft work programme as set out at appendix 1 to the report be approved, with the addition of an invitation to Welsh Water to attend the Committee in the New Year;**
 - (b) a task and finish group on devolution be established to undertake the work outlined in the scoping statement (Appendix 2 to the report, as amended, and the membership be confirmed as Councillors JM Bartlett (tbc), WLS Bowen (Chairman), ACR Chappell, RJ Phillips, and GJ Powell; and**
 - (c) the cabinet member – infrastructure be asked to ensure that the Nutrient Management Board submits a monitoring report to Members on an annual basis, with consideration also given to a further seminar.**

38. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 14 November 2015 from 9.30am.

The meeting ended at 1.23 pm

CHAIRMAN



MEETING:	General overview and scrutiny committee
MEETING DATE:	14 November 2016
TITLE OF REPORT:	Draft 2017/18 budget and medium term financial strategy (MTFS) update
REPORT BY:	Interim director of resources

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

County-wide

Purpose

To seek the committee's views on the budget proposals for 2017-18 and updated medium term financial strategy (MTFS).

Recommendation

THAT: the committee determines if it wishes to make any additional recommendations or recommend consideration of any alternative options in relation to the draft 2017-18 budget proposals and updated MTFS, to inform the cabinet's recommendations to full Council.

Alternative options

- 1 It is open to the committee to recommend alternative spending proposals or strategies; however, given the legal requirement to set a balanced budget should additional expenditure be proposed compensatory savings proposals must also be identified.

Reasons for recommendations

- 2 The council's budget and policy framework rules require that cabinet has regard to the views of overview and scrutiny in developing their recommendations to Council on budget and policy framework items.

Key considerations

- 3 The MTFS has been updated to reflect current spending, a review of savings plans, treasury management costs, contingencies and demographic pressures. It assumes a 1.9% general increase in council tax plus an increase of 2% in relation to the adult care precept, a total increase of 3.9%. Central government funding is included as proposed in the four year funding settlement. This draft is being shared ahead of the autumn statement that will be delivered on 23 November, any impact of this will be reflected in the updated report to cabinet in January.
- 4 Herefordshire has accepted the four year funding settlement, this forms the basis of the MTFS update, summarised below. The draft budget is proposed in recognition of managing need and the council's relationship with communities.

Funding	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
Revenue Support Grant	17,470	10,090	5,370	620
Rural Services Delivery Grant	5,069	4,093	3,149	4,093
Transitional Grant	572	576	0	0
Total	23,111	14,759	8,519	4,713

- 5 Council will be asked to approve the 2017-18 budget on 3 February 2017. It will also be invited to approve the MTFS and the treasury management strategy.

Adult care precept

- 6 The council has a number of cost pressures in adult social care, including cost pressures in the adult social care market. Therefore it is proposed that the 2% adult social care levy will be applied to council tax charges in 2017/18. This funding will be specifically ring-fenced to support existing and anticipated cost pressures within services for vulnerable adults and older people, including increasing demand. The precept will raise £1.8m and will be used to protect services, continue to further transform our local health and social care system, reduce demand and ensure improved services for some of the most vulnerable citizens now and in the future. Increases in the adults and wellbeing budget are shown below:

Adults and wellbeing pressures and inflation	2017/18 £000
Demographic growth	874
Legislative changes	618

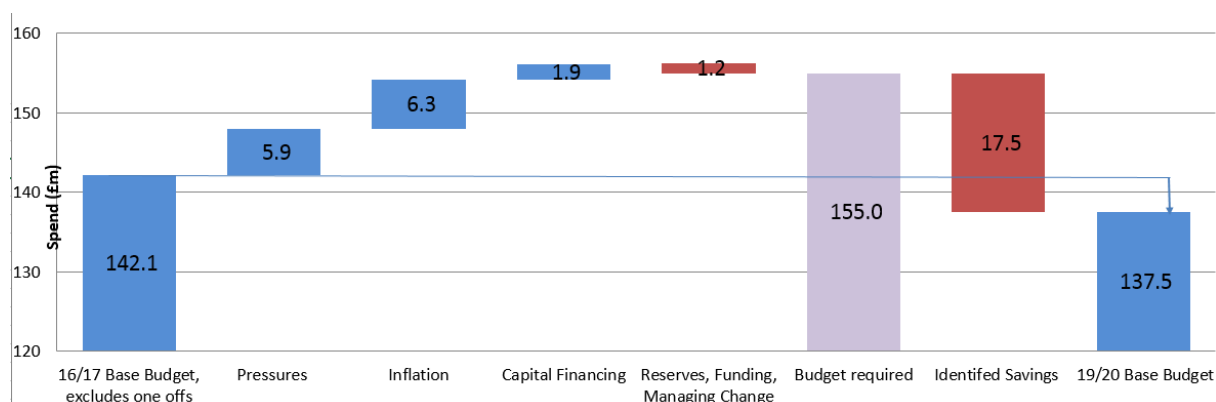
Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Josie Rushgrove, head of corporate finance on tel (01432) 261867

Inflation and apprenticeship levy	679
Total	2,171

- 7 The 2% will increase a band D council tax charge by a further £26.50 per annum and provide £1.8m of additional funding in 2017/18 as a contribution to the £2.2m of additional costs set out above and will become part of the base budget for future years.

Current savings plan 2017-18 to 2019-20

- 8 The current savings plans require £17.5m of savings in the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2020, this represents the funding gap arising from increased costs and reduced funding, as shown below.



- 9 The council delivered £59m of savings in the financial years 2010-11 to 2015-16, with an additional £10.9m required in the current financial year, 2016-17. Looking forward an additional £17.5m of savings in the financial period 2017-18 to 2019-20 is needed. This gives total savings for the financial period 2010-11 to 2019-20 of £87m.
- 10 Savings have been reviewed as part of the budget setting process, these are attached as appendix 1 and are summarised in the table below. The ongoing review has highlighted some savings will be delayed, where this has occurred replacement savings have been identified. Work continues on ensuring the deliverability of the savings plan.

Directorate	2017-18 £m	2018-19 £m	2019-20 £m	Total 17-20 £m
Adults and wellbeing	2.4	1.8	1.7	5.9
Children's wellbeing	1.3	1.4	1.0	3.7
Economy, communities and corporate	3.3	2.3	2.3	7.9
Total	7.0	5.5	5.0	17.5

- 11 The majority of savings relate to continued efficiency improvements and changes to service delivery and have been referred to in the public budget consultation. The implementation of individual savings proposals will follow further consultation and be subject to specific consultation as necessary, prior to their implementation.

Base budget 2017-18

- 12 The draft budget for 2017-18 is set out below and detailed in appendix 2. This reflects increases in inflation, pressures, savings and other adjustments.

Draft revenue budget summary 2017-18

Directorate	Current net budget 2016/17 £000	Net changes £000	Draft net budget 2017/18 £000
Adults and wellbeing	51,243	(251)	50,992
Children's wellbeing	20,875	293	21,168
Economies, communities and corporate (ECC)	46,540	(1,800)	44,740
Total directorate net budget	118,658	(1,758)	116,900
Centralised corporate costs			5,849
Capital financing - debt repayments			11,074
Capital financing - interest			6,785
Government grants			(5,323)
Other central budgets			1,810
One off funding			2,600
Total net spend (budget requirement)			139,695
Financed by			
Council tax			92,861
Locally retained business rates			20,279
Revenue support grant			10,090
Business rates top up grant			7,010
New homes bonus			4,651
Rural services delivery grant			4,093
Transitional grant			576
Reserves			135
			139,695

Financing

- 13 The 2017-18 net budget requirement is financed by retained funding from council tax (£93m) and business rates (£20m). Assumptions include a 3.9% increase in council tax and business rate reliefs being funded via a central government grant (£3m). Central government funding is included as accepted in the four year funding settlement.
- 14 Future year funding assumptions are also based on a 3.9% council tax increase, 1.5% inflationary increase in business rates and the central government four year funding settlement. The net budget requirement excludes specific grant allocations.

Better Care Fund

- 15 The draft budget currently assumes the level of protection for adults social care from the Better Care Fund (BCF) in 2016/17 continues unchanged for 2017/18 (being £4.5m and £0.5m Care Act funding). Internal planning on the allocation of the protection of social care funding for 2017/18 has started. BCF planning guidance for 2017/18 is due to be published by NHS England in November ahead of the financial settlement details that are expected in December. Herefordshire is working closely with the health sector in developing the sustainability and transformation plan with the aims of improving the health and wellbeing of the local population, improving the quality and safety of care delivery, and securing ongoing financial sustainability. The plan shares the pathway for the full integration of health and social care by 2020.

2016/17 budget monitoring

- 16 The draft budget for 2017/18 has been updated in recognition of spending to September 2016. It is anticipated that the council will spend within its overall 2016/17 budget, however, there are continuing pressures being faced in adults and wellbeing and children's wellbeing directorates. These directorates are currently projecting an overspend of £1.2m, mitigated by underspend in ECC, corporate budgets and contingency. This is detailed in the budget monitoring report to cabinet (<http://hc-modgov:9070/documents/s50041520/End%20of%20September%20corporate%20performance%20and%20budget%20report.pdf>)

<http://hc-modgov:9070/documents/s50041520/End%20of%20September%20corporate%20performance%20and%20budget%20report.pdf>)

Current pressures included in MTFS

- 17 The MTFS approved in February 2016 included funding the following pressures:

Pressure	2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	Total 17-20 £000
Legislative changes	618	492	540	1,650
Adults demographic pressures	850	926	945	2,721
Adults preventative measures	(600)			(600)
Contract and pay inflation and other pressures	1,891	2,154	2,277	6,322
Apprenticeship levy	200			200
Total pressures	2,959	3,572	3,762	10,293

New pressures included in draft budget

- 18 Additional pressures have been identified that were not anticipated in the MTFS approved in February 2016, these are set out below:

	2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	Total 17-20 £000
Unaccompanied asylum seeking children	100			100
Childrens services pressures	425			425
Adults contractual inflation	356	508	529	1,393
TOTAL	881	508	529	1,918

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Josie Rushgrove, head of corporate finance on tel (01432) 261867

- 19 A new pressure for funding unaccompanied asylum seeking children anticipated costs has been included following Cabinet approval on 28 July.
- 20 Children’s services pressures reflect anticipated reductions in the education support grant in 2017/18, alongside the review of service delivery pressures.
- 21 Adults contractual inflation pressures represent spot purchases in residential and domiciliary care uplifts, new contracts, adjusted for living wage and preventative measures. A three year settlement with providers is being explored with profiled, capped increases to reach an average uplift in year three.

Reserves and balances

- 22 The projected general fund working balance is as follows, currently being 5% of net budget, increased by the one off additional rural grant funding which is currently providing a one off contingency fund for slippage in savings plans over the term of the MTFS. These funds are expected to be applied in 2018/19 when the rural sparsity delivery grant decreases.

Year ending	£m
31 March 15	7.1
31 March 16	7.3
31 March 17 estimate	10.9
31 March 18 estimate	11.1
31 March 19 estimate	6.8

- 23 In addition the council has a number of revenue reserves which are earmarked for specific purposes, for example specific grant funding and ring-fenced school balances. Including these reserves total reserves going forward are estimated to be as follows:

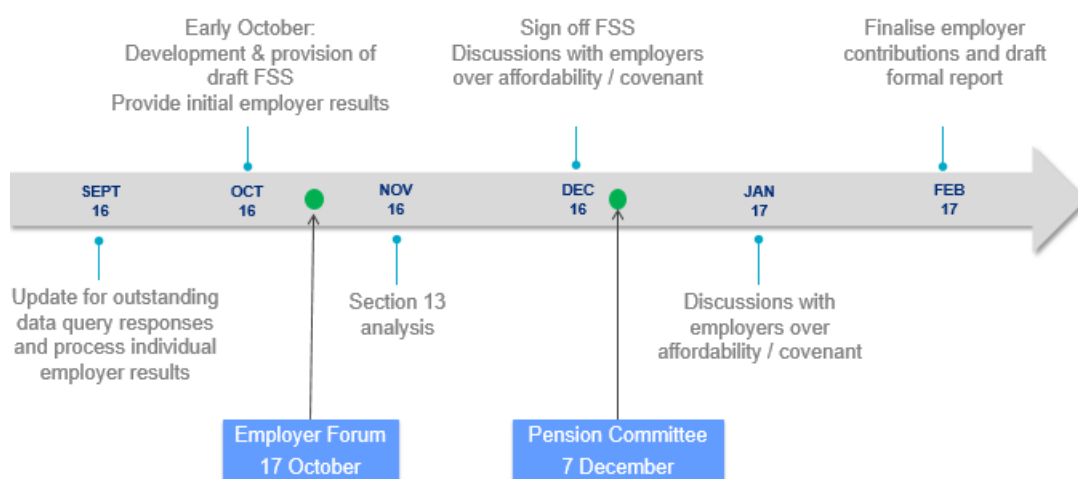
Balance as at:	General fund £m	Specific reserves		Total £m
		Schools	Other	
31 March 15	7.1	6.2	20.5	33.8
31 March 16	7.3	9.4	19.1	35.8
31 March 17 estimate	10.9	7.2	18.0	36.1

- 24 The level of general fund reserves retained increase is in recognition of the possibility of increased difficulty in achieving the savings plans going forward and provides the ability to fund one-off investment costs to pump prime invest to save initiatives in addition to providing a more prudent level of contingency for risks.

Pension deficit

- 25 The pension fund is being revalued as at 31 March 2016. Early indications are that the total fund revaluation has had a minimal overall impact on existing budget modelling. There has been a reduction in the pension deficit but this liability reduction is negated by changes in demographic and underlying financial assumptions, the impact resulting in an increase in the future, in service, contribution rate. The indicative timetable for finalising the Herefordshire pension fund assumptions is shown below.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Josie Rushgrove, head of corporate finance on tel (01432) 261867



Budget setting timetable

26 The draft budget will be updated and reported as follows:

Date	Action
1 December	Cabinet to review capital programme proposals
16 December	Council to approve 2017/18 capital programme
19 January	Cabinet to review updated budget, MTFS and treasury management strategy
3 February	Council to approve 2017/18 budget, updated MTFS and treasury management strategy
3 March	Council to approve council tax amounts for 2017/18

Community impact

27 The MTFS and budget demonstrate how the council is using its financial resources to deliver the priorities within the agreed corporate plan.

Equality duty

28 The Public Sector Equality Duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying “due regard” in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.

29 We are currently carrying out a number of service specific equality impact assessments for the service specific budget proposals to assess the impact on the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

30 The duty means that the potential impact of a decision on people with different protected characteristics is always taken into account. When these assessments have been completed then we will consider mitigating against any adverse impact identified.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Josie Rushgrove, head of corporate finance on tel (01432) 261867

Financial implications

31 As set out in the report.

Legal implications

- 32 When setting the budget it is important that councillors are aware of the legal requirements and obligations. Councillors are required to act prudently when setting the budget and council tax so that they act in a way that considers local taxpayers. This also covers the impact on future taxpayers.
- 33 The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires a council to set a balanced budget. To do this the council must prepare a budget that covers not only the expenditure but also the funding to meet the proposed budget. The budget has to be fully funded and the income from all sources must meet the expenditure. The act also covers the legal issues around council tax setting.
- 34 Best estimates have to be employed so that all anticipated expenditure and resources are identified. If the budget includes unallocated savings or unidentified income then these have to be carefully handled to demonstrate that these do not create a deficit budget. An intention to set a deficit budget is not permitted under local government legislation.
- 35 Local authorities must decide every year how much they are going to raise from council tax. They base their decision on a budget that sets out estimates of what they plan to spend on services. Because they decide on the council tax before the year begins and can't increase it during the year, they have to consider risks and uncertainties that might force them to spend more on their services than they planned. Allowance is made for these risks by: making prudent allowance in the estimates for services; and ensuring that there are adequate reserves to draw on if the service estimates turn out to be insufficient.
- 36 Local government legislation requires an authority's S151 officer to make a report to the authority when it is considering its budget and council tax. The report must deal with the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of the reserves allowed for in the budget proposals (the statement is contained within the risk management section of this report). This is done so that members will have authoritative advice available to them when they make their decisions. As part of the Local Government Act 2003 members have a duty to determine whether they agree with the S151 statutory report. If they do not they must provide clear reasons for not following the professional advice put forward by the S151 officer.
- 37 Legal challenges to local authority budget setting processes have tended to turn on whether the authority has complied with its obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 - the public sector equality duty (PSED). This duty imposes a positive obligation on local authorities to promote equality and to reduce discrimination in relation to any of the nine 'protected characteristics' (age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation). In particular, the council must have 'due regard' to the PSED when taking any decisions on service changes. However, the courts also recognise that local authorities have a legal duty to set a balanced budget and that council resources are being reduced by central government.

- 38 Where a decision is likely to result in detrimental impact on any group sharing a protected characteristic it must be justified objectively. This means that attempts to mitigate the harm need to be explored. If the harm cannot be avoided, the decision maker must balance this detrimental impact against the strength of legitimate public need to pursue the service remodelling to deliver savings. The more serious the residual detrimental impact, the greater the financial savings must be to justify the decision. The harm can only be justified if it is proportionate to the financial benefit and if there have been reasonable efforts to mitigate the harm.

Risk management

- 39 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the S151 officer to report to Council when it is setting the budget and precept (council tax). Council is required to take this report into account when making its budget and precept decision. The report must deal with the robustness of the estimates included in the budget and the adequacy of reserves.
- 40 The budget has been updated using the best available information, current spending, anticipated pressures and the four year grant settlement. This draft will be updated following the autumn statement.
- 41 The most substantial risks have been assessed as part of the budget process and reasonable mitigation has been made. Risks will be monitored through the year and reported to cabinet as part of the budget monitoring process.
- 42 There are additional risks to delivery of future budgets including government policy changes and unplanned pressures. We are maintaining a general fund reserve balance above the minimum requirement and an annual contingency budget to manage these risks.
- 43 Demand management in social care continues to be a key issue, against a backdrop of a demographic of older people that is rising faster than the national average, and some specific areas of inequalities amongst families and young people. Focusing public health commissioning and strategy on demand management through disease prevention and behaviour change is critical for medium term change. In addition re-setting our relationship with communities focussing services on areas of greatest professional need will support the MTFS.
- 44 There are on-going difficulties in achieving reductions in children's safeguarding costs, Herefordshire is high spending compared to statistical neighbours and methods of reducing this cost are progressing, however, some delays have been experienced.
- 45 There is a continued risk from on-going litigation claims which may result in one off costs falling due, a risk mitigation reserve of £3.9m has been set aside to fund this.

Consultees

- 46 Consultation on the budget proposals commenced on 29 July and was completed on 7 October. The consultation sought people's views to help us set future budgets and also to understand what residents might be able to do to help support their local communities. Last year the consultation included the four year period that this year's consultation continues to refer to.

- 47 There were a total of 280 standard responses to the consultation, 241 of which were submitted online and 39 were paper copies. These respondents may not necessarily represent the views of the general population, as they were self-selecting and wanted to be consulted. During this consultation period, a number of other budget related consultations have been taking place which have helped to inform our overall thinking on the 2017/18 budget and MTFS. The fact that there have been over 4,300 responses to these service specific consultations demonstrates the clear strength of feeling in these areas. These consultations included: Bus and Community Transport Review, Customer Services and Libraries, Help to Live @ Home (Users), Help to Live @ Home (Providers), Local Plan Traveller Sites and South Wye Transport Package.
- 48 Initial analysis of budget consultation responses shows the following:
- 61 per cent of responses supported an increase in charges for council services above the level of inflation.
 - 53 per cent of responses supported Herefordshire Council in making a further increase in council tax above 3.9 per cent.
 - A number of activities were highlighted by respondents as being suitable for parish councils to carry out and charge for (including maintaining communal areas, grass / hedge cutting, road / footpath maintenance, litter / dog fouling enforcement, winter services).
 - 51 per cent of respondents currently volunteer in Herefordshire.
 - Improve infrastructure and access to funding and business support were highlighted as what the council could do to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses.
- 49 Further information on responses is available within the summary of budget consultation attached at appendix 3.
- 50 This year, the main method for people to give their views was via an online form, with paper copies also made available at libraries and customer service centres. People were also able to print off paper copies from our website. In addition, the communications team published social media updates throughout the consultation period.
- 51 Stakeholder groups were targeted for promotion via email and budget consultation meetings were held with the following stakeholders: parish councils, voluntary and community sector, top 25 businesses. The consultation was also promoted at a number of different events, including: South Wye Transport Package consultation, Business Expo and the Making it Real Board.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - breakdown of savings plans by directorate

Appendix 2 - detail of draft budget

Appendix 3 - summary of budget consultation

Background papers

- None identified.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Josie Rushgrove, head of corporate finance on tel (01432) 261867

Appendix 1

Savings Proposals 2017/18 to 2019/20

	2017-18 £m	2018-19 £m	2019-20 £m	Total 17-20 £m
Adults and wellbeing	2.4	1.8	1.7	5.9
Children's wellbeing	1.3	1.4	1.0	3.7
Economy, communities and corporate	3.3	2.3	2.3	7.9
Total	7.0	5.5	5.0	17.5

Savings Proposals

Adults and Wellbeing Directorate

Savings Proposal	Impact	Savings			
		2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	Total £000
Review, recommissioning and decommissioning of block contracts - including full year impact of 2016/17 savings	Reduction in some council funded services and supported housing by utilising alternative funding streams to increase community capacity, raising expectations and performance of existing information and advice services and enabling access to universal services	560	200		760
Reducing the need for formal care services by utilising strengths based reviews and incorporating informal community based support in care plans	Reduction in demand for formal care services and holding demographic pressures to 80% of expected	350	350	300	1,000
Managing contract inflation and securing contract efficiencies	No impact to service users and analysis of market sustainability undertaken to minimise impact on providers	185	200	200	585
Review of high cost packages to ensure value for money placements through better use of supported living accommodation, community based options and workforce culture change programme resulting in more effective working practices with better outcomes for service users	Reducing costs of learning disability cohort leading to more equitable service provision that meets eligible needs at a reduced average cost in line with comparator authorities	700	700	250	1,650
Maximise income generation through increased telecare sales and client contributions for domiciliary care	The impact of the changes will be affordable as all services will only be charged for following individual financial assessments in line with Care Act requirements	150	100	100	350
Reduction in staffing through partnership working and mobile working	No direct impact on service users due to increased productivity	206	200	650	1,056
Savings still to be identified		144		200	344
Organisational redesign savings	Efficiency savings	106			106
Total		2,401	1,750	1,700	5,851

Savings Proposals

Children's Wellbeing Directorate

Savings Proposal	Impact	Savings			
		2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	Total £000
Manage contract inflation and secure contract efficiencies	The equalities impact of this proposal will be low/negligible. Integral to their contract with the Authority, each contractor has a scheduled expectation to meet the Equalities Act 2010 criteria and is part of the contract monitoring arrangements to ensure that any impact is understood and addressed.	250	250	250	750
Reduction in the number of looked after children	Will provide better long term outcomes for children who are in care and promote families staying together. The equality impact of this proposal will be low and fits in with the government proposal to ensure as many children as possible are cared for safely at home.	566	822	450	1,838
Accessing government grant to focus early help on the most vulnerable families to reduce the need for higher cost services	Improved school attendance, educational achievement, reduced anti-social behaviour, youth offending and increased employment. This targeted programme provides supportive interventions to specific families whatever their background. Under the Equality Act 2010 this work, undertaken by the council and its partners, pays 'due regard' to the need to: - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment - Promote equality with regard to the protective characteristics; although due to the targeted approach not specifically using the Protective characteristics. - Promote good relations.	100	150	150	400
Organisational restructure to reflect the service requirements	Ensuring families benefit from a consistent and established service through a stable and capable social worker workforce.	393	200	200	793
Total		1,309	1,422	1,050	3,781

Savings Proposals

Economy, Communities & Corporate

		Savings			
Savings Proposal	Impact	2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	Total £000
Efficiency savings Initiatives include: Management savings, staff restructures, saving on printing cost, reduction in storage costs at the Modern Records Unit.	No impact - efficiency savings	270	100	180	550
Back Office Services and Corporate Accommodation efficiencies	No impact - efficiency saving	500	450	250	1,200
Car Parking charges increase 28	<p>Increase in fees to support the Council's sustainable transport policies and manage available spaces to support local economy. Potential adverse impact on trade if charges deter visitors. Structure of charges will aim to address local circumstances and encourage visitors and shoppers to visit Hereford and the market towns. Income will be targeted to support transport services in accordance with the Council's Local Transport Plan.</p> <p>Concessions for 'blue badge' holders are not affected by the recommendations, this includes staff parking in council car parks. Any increase in charges will have an impact on all users of the car parks. The impact will naturally vary according to the necessity and frequency of use and what alternative transport arrangements are practicable. Whilst this impact is non-discriminatory in the sense that it applies to all, it is inevitably an impact that is less easily 'absorbed' by those with lower levels of household income. The balance between the impact on individual users and the wider public interest of the council has been considered, and in this context the proposal is considered to be justified.</p>	225	235		460
On-Street Car parking Project	<p>Introduction of on street charges in central Hereford and potential extension of residents parking in surrounding areas which will provide ongoing revenue to support transport services. Proposals will improve traffic circulation, increase turnover and availability of short term parking for shoppers, ensure provision for loading and unloading and improve parking for residents living close to the city centre.</p> <p>The only protected group relevant to this proposal would be disabled people who have a 'blue badge' concession for parking. The introduction of a charge for on street parking cannot be applied to 'blue badge holders' and hence they would not be negatively affected by the proposal. The proposal will be subject to further consultation and any details around location of identified disabled parking bays will be considered in the light of consultation responses.</p>	172			172

Savings Proposals
Economy, Communities & Corporate

Savings Proposal	Impact	Savings			
		2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	Total £000
Reduced cost of Public and School / College Transport and moving public transport information to online only	<p>Reduction in public transport services, increased income from parental contributions and post 16 SEN transport users. Further savings from contract efficiencies.</p> <p>A transport funding review is underway which will explore a range of opportunities to reduce costs across all local passenger transport services and alternative sources of funding to support such service. Savings are likely to be achievable through the integration of passenger transport contracts, service efficiencies, moving more users onto commercial and supported bus services and review of eligibility for services. If this approach does not achieve the full savings target, it may be necessary to further reduce public transport subsidy.</p> <p>Public consultation carried out in autumn 2016 will inform decisions for 2017/18.</p> <p>Decisions have already been taken to withdraw transport services and these were subject to a full consultation and EIA . As future proposals are developed consultation and EIA will be undertaken and will form elements of future reporting and consideration by members.</p>	275	180	150	605
Phased removal of subsidy for Community Transport organisations	<p>The phased reduction in the support to Community Transport (CT) providers commenced in 2015/16 and the exploration of alternative funding sources to support such services. To continue this to full reduction by 2019/20 will have provided a five year transition period for providers to seek opportunities to increase their independent financial viability. Support has been made available for providers to take on more contracted work and also to assist them to increase their capacity. Grants have been available for new fleet and could be made available in future subject to funding being available.</p> <p>CT reductions were considered within the consultation for the transport and travel review 2014 but at that stage there was no proposal to completely withdraw direct council support. If the council wishes to progress full withdrawal of support from 2018/19 then a further consultation and EIA would be required before confirming this decision. Whilst CT provides services for people who are 'disadvantaged' it is noted that this is not in itself a specifically defined protected characteristic within the EIA duty we are aware that the majority of CT users are elderly and/or have a disability which reduces transport options.</p> <p>Consultation in relation to public transport savings will be used to inform this proposal.</p>		60	75	135
Change the Highway Maintenance Plan to allow higher quality planned repairs to be undertaken for significant safety related pothole defects rather than the current temporary fixes required to meet reactive timescales. This will reduce the overall cost and reduce the need for repeat treatments.	<p>Remaining full-year impact of measures implemented during 2016/17.</p> <p>There are approximately 50 potholes a month that were previously filled temporarily in this way and this change has allowed them to form part of a programme of works on the basis of a risk assessment based on location, road type and traffic flow, as occurs with other defects. The new method will be more cost effective.</p>	150			150

Savings Proposals

Economy, Communities & Corporate

		Savings			
Savings Proposal	Impact	2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	Total £000
Phased removal of subsidies to parish councils for the Lengthsman and Parish Paths .	Decision taken to phase funding out over the MTF5 period. The condition of minor roads in Parish areas will be dependent upon whether Parish Councils choose to replace the subsidy with their own resources.	100	100	100	300
Community asset transfer of parks and open spaces	Sports pitch and parks maintenance cost saving through a programme to transfer responsibility for assets to community groups, town and parish councils and others. Impact of this proposal could see communities taking greater care and ownership of their local environment. Positive outcome on communities taking on responsibility for open spaces. If community or interest groups cannot be found and we are unable to continue the current level of maintenance, some users of open spaces may be affected in the reduction of amenity use.	100	90		190
Increased income and efficiency within Public Realm Services	Increase income from increased enforcement in relation to works carried out by utility companies on the highway (NRSWA) - reduction in highway defects. Investment in fleet and plant to reduce ongoing revenue cost and maintenance. No adverse impact upon service. Environmental service redesign Review of service to streamline and reduce cost of cleansing and monitoring of waste/litter related issues. Improved environment through better coordination.	230	25	25	280
Waste & Sustainability Increased income from commercial waste collections.	No further impact. Service changes relating to commercial waste collections and waste treatment savings do not impact on residents but on organisations.	30	30	30	90
Income from Solar Panels and Street Lighting Energy Efficiency Savings Capital investment in solar panels to reduce energy costs and attract Government renewable energy subsidies Expiry of repayments for energy efficiency loan supporting Street Lighting investment	No impact - energy efficiency saving The solar PV procurement process included a mandatory section on Equality and Human Rights, which was developed in conjunction with the Council's Corporate Diversity team.	145			145
Facilities Management Service	Shire Hall and Town Hall to become appointment based centres e.g. custodians not permanently onsite. Increased income from charging for council civic buildings.	30			30

Savings Proposals

Economy, Communities & Corporate

		Savings			
Savings Proposal	Impact	2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	Total £000
Withdrawal of Museum and Heritage Services subsidy	Income generation through charging at the Old House from April 2017, remodel of the learning offer to schools, volunteers to support the opening of the Museum at Broad Street in Hereford. Limited impact on protected characteristics. Though charging may have an impact across all ages, special free open days will take place to support local people able to visit the Old House without cost. Education events to take place at the Old House as part of a schools programme.	100	150	250	500
Savings in Customer and Library Services	Retained library service across the county, and remodelled customer services following an appointment based approach, a comprehensive digital offer, phone service, and face to face service in Hereford. A full needs and impact assessment completed for October 2016 cabinet. A retained county library services was the key finding of the consultation to mitigate negative impact, along with a delivered service for people who are housebound. For customer services any change to the offer to be delayed until 2018 to understand the impact on people requiring face to face support for benefits.	380	380		760
Organisational redesign savings	Efficiency savings	93			93
Sub Total		2,800	1,800	1,060	5,660
Revisions to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme - as approved by Council on 18 December 2015 the level of subsidy to non protected claimants has been reduced from 84% to 80%, this represents the continued savings expected	The lowest earners in Herefordshire previously paid 16% of their total Council tax bill, for non protected claimants this increased to 20% from April 2016. There is a risk that some claimants may not be able to pay the increased charge this risk has been mitigated via a revised hardship scheme. Pensioners will continue to receive additional discounts and the vulnerable will continue to have access to welfare support to mitigate these changes.	150			150
Removal of the Council Tax Reduction subsidy to parishes - as approved by Cabinet on 3 December 2015 this is the removal of the remaining grant funding to parishes	This saving has no impact on parish percept requirements, the removal of the grant has been phased to limit the potential effect on tax payers	42			42
Asset Review Capital receipts from sale of assets will be used to support delivery of the medium term financial strategy and meet the priorities of the corporate plan in the most cost efficient way	This may effect some tenants of council owned property The programme of asset disposals are largely based upon realising the value of surplus property or land assets which take account of the property rationalisation proposals set out in the Council's Accommodation Strategy. The Asset Review disposals to date are not considered to be carrying any adverse impacts on any of the groups or classifications considered within the Equalities framework.	250	400	1,000	1,650
Organisational redesign savings	Efficiency savings	48	100	200	348
Sub Total		490	500	1,200	2,190
Total		3,290	2,300	2,260	7,850

APPENDIX 2

Draft revenue budget summary 2017-18

Directorate	Current base budget 2016/17 £000	Net changes £000	Proposed base budget 2017/18 £000
Adults and wellbeing	51,243	(251)	50,992
Children's wellbeing	20,875	293	21,168
Economies, communities and corporate	46,540	(1,800)	44,740
Total directorates net budget	118,658	(1,758)	116,900
Centralised corporate costs			5,849
Capital financing - debt repayments			11,074
Capital financing - interest			6,785
Government grants			(5,323)
Other central budgets			1,810
One off funding			2,600
Total net spend (budget requirement)			139,695
Financed by			
Council tax			92,861
Locally retained business rates			20,279
Business rates top up grant			10,090
Revenue support grant			7,010
New homes bonus			4,651
Rural services delivery grant			4,093
Transitional grant			576
Reserves			135
			139,695

PROPOSED REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18

Service	Current 2016/17 base budget	Pensions, pay and Inflation	Pressures	Savings	Other Adjusts	Proposed 2017/18 base budget	Change
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Adults and Wellbeing							
Commissioned Care	45,317	196	1,275	(1,375)	(22)	45,391	0.2%
Adults Operations	11,313	75	34	(487)	0	10,935	(3.3%)
Director and Management	(5,387)	9	582	(538)	0	(5,334)	(1.0%)
Total Adults and Wellbeing	51,243	280	1,891	(2,400)	(22)	50,992	
Children's Wellbeing							
Children's Safeguarding & Early Help	15,939	68	0	(916)	615	15,706	(1.5%)
Statutory Education Services	4,596	69	0	(100)	620	5,185	12.8%
Directorate Management and Grant Income	340	247	0	(293)	(17)	277	(18.5%)
Total Children's Wellbeing	20,875	384	0	(1,309)	1,218	21,168	
Economy, Communities & Corporate							
Highways, Planning, Waste, and Parking	25,502	678	0	(1,524)	(82)	24,574	(3.6%)
Customer, Cultural and Legal Services	6,375	34	0	(491)	6	5,924	(7.1%)
Economic Development and Housing Growth	2,170	10	0	(61)	0	2,119	(2.4%)
Directorate Management	853	3	0	(87)	0	769	(9.8%)
Corporate Resources (Finance, ICT, Property and HR)	11,640	473	(24)	(638)	(97)	11,354	(2.5%)
Total Economy, Community & Corporate	46,540	1,198	(24)	(2,801)	(173)	44,740	
Central Corporate Costs	23,452	111	0	(490)	(2,878)	20,195	(13.9%)
Total Herefordshire Council	142,110	1,973	1,867	(7,000)	(1,855)	137,095	

Revenue Budget 2017/18
Adults and Wellbeing

Service	Current 2016/17 base budget	Pensions and Inflation	Pressures	Savings	Other Adjusts	Proposed 2017/18 base budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Commissioned Care						
Learning Disabilities	17,542	76	393	(712)		17,299
Mental Health	4,436	19	114	(59)		4,510
Physical Disabilities	20,029	87	696	(479)	(22)	20,311
Memory & Cognition	2,944	12	27	(120)		2,863
Sensory Support	366	2	45	(5)		408
Total Commissioned Care	45,317	196	1,275	(1,375)	(22)	45,391
Adults Operations						
Adult Social Care Staffing	5,227	61	20	(11)		5,297
Contracts	4,753	11	6	(487)		4,283
Housing Services	1,333	3	8	11		1,355
Total Adults Operations	11,313	75	34	(487)	0	10,935
Director and Management						
Director and Management	(1,726)		580	(443)		(1,589)
Protection of Social Care Grant	(4,541)					(4,541)
Transformation	769	8	1	(95)		683
Total Public Health	111	1	1			113
Total Director and Management	(5,387)	9	582	(538)	0	(5,334)
Total Adults and Wellbeing	51,243	280	1,891	(2,400)	(22)	50,992

Revenue Budget 2017/18
Childrens Wellbeing

Service	Current 2016/17 base budget	Pensions and Inflation	Pressures	Savings	Other Adjusts	Proposed 2017/18 base budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Safeguarding and Early Help						
Safeguarding Board and Independent Review	630	4	0	0	(13)	621
Early Help and Family Support	875	14	0	0	0	889
Front Line Social Workers	2,442	16	0	0	0	2,458
Looked After Children - Fostering and Adoption	6,567	21	0	0	599	7,187
Looked After Children External Placements	3,492	0	0	(566)	344	3,270
Social Care Training and Development	739	5	0	0	(305)	439
Safeguarding and Early Help Management	1,194	8	0	(350)	(10)	842
Total Safeguarding and Early Help	15,939	68	0	(916)	615	15,706
Statutory Education Services						
Special Educational Needs	2,844	25	0	0	(40)	2,829
Contracts and Commissioning	(239)	7	0	(100)	809	477
Educational Development	1,777	33	0	0	15	1,825
Statutory Education Improvement Services	214	4	0	0	(164)	54
Total Statutory Education Services	4,596	69	0	(100)	620	5,185
Directorate Management and Grant Income						
Directorate Grant Income	0	4	0	0	0	4
Directors Office	(102)	240	0	(293)	0	(155)
Performance and transformation	236	2	0	0	(17)	221
Youth Offending Service	206	1	0	0	0	207
Total Directorate Management and Grant Income	340	247	0	(293)	(17)	277
Total Children's Wellbeing	20,875	384	0	(1,309)	1,218	21,168

Revenue Budget 2017/18
ECC

Service	Current 2016/17 base budget	Pensions and Inflation	Pressures	Savings	Other Adjusts	Proposed 2017/18 base budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Highways, Planning, Waste and Parking						
Directorate Services	477	307				784
Environment and Waste	14,813	141		(297)	64	14,721
Highways and Community Services	1,127	2			32	1,161
Parks and Countryside	170	2				172
Public Realm Annual Plan	6,404	150		(555)	(179)	5,820
Regulatory and Development Management Services	791	(119)				672
Technical and Parking Services	(5,837)	205		(397)	1	(6,028)
Transport and Access Services	7,557	(10)		(275)		7,272
Total Highways, Planning, Waste and Parking	25,502	678	0	(1,524)	(82)	24,574
Customer, Cultural and Legal Services						
Collections, Archives and Leisure	331	2		(88)		245
Communications and Web	302	2				304
Customer and Library Services	1,786	11		(314)	6	1,489
Economic Projects	245	2				247
Equality, Information and Records	702	3		(12)		693
Legal Services and Governance	3,009	14		(77)		2,946
Total Customer, Cultural and Legal Services	6,375	34	0	(491)	6	5,924
Economic Development and Housing Growth						
Community Regeneration	322	2		(50)		274
Economic Development	932	3				935
Neighbourhood Planning	147	1				148
Regeneration	251	2		(11)		242
Strategic Planning	518	2				520
Total Economic Development and Housing Growth	2,170	10	0	(61)	0	2,119
Directorate Management						
Directors	400	3				403
Management	453			(87)		366
Total Directorate Management	853	3	0	(87)	0	769
Corporate Resources (Finance, ICT, Property and HR)						
Asset Management and Property Services	3,043	357	(24)	(279)	(55)	3,042
Finance	5,897	5			(35)	5,867
Insurance	1,149			(49)		1,100
Local Tax, Revenues and Benefits	(1,333)					(1,333)
Internal Audit Services	225				(30)	195
HR, Payroll, Recruitment and Organisational Development	353	1				354
Corporate Management	706	110				816
ICT	1,600			(310)	23	1,313
Total Corporate Resources (Finance, ICT, Property and HR)	11,640	473	(24)	(638)	(97)	11,354
Total Economy, Communities & Corporate	46,540	1,198	(24)	(2,801)	(173)	44,740

Budget consultation questionnaire report 2016

Version 1.0
Strategic intelligence team

October 2016



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If you need help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call the Research Team on 01432 261944 or e-mail researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk.

Executive summary

- The 2016 consultation on Herefordshire Council's priorities and budget for 2017/18 ran from late July to early October 2016. The budget questionnaire was available online and hard copies were distributed at promotion events in the city and market towns.
- There were 280 responses to the questionnaire; 86 per cent of which were submitted online and 14 per cent were completed on paper.
- The majority of respondents (61 per cent) were willing to support an increase in charges for council services above the level of inflation.
- Fifty three (53) per cent would support a further increase in council tax above 3.9 per cent which will require a referendum, to raise additional funds; 28 per cent would support an increase of council tax by 6.1 per cent, 10 per cent of respondents would support an increase of 8.3 per cent and 15 per cent of respondents would support an increase of 11.7 per cent.
- More than forty (40) per cent of respondents thought that their parish council should charge extra in order to carry out 'maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)' and 'grass / hedge cutting', while a third of respondents thought 'road / footpath maintenance', 'winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)' or 'litter / dog fouling enforcement' should be carried out with extra charge by their parish councils
- The most common activities that respondents currently volunteer are 'litter picking', 'helping out in emergencies', the 'good neighbour scheme' and 'supporting libraries / museums / leisure facilities'.
- A large majority of respondents (76 per cent) thought the council could do more to 'improve infrastructure' to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses.

Introduction

The consultation on Herefordshire Council's priorities and budget for 2017/18 began on Friday 29 July 2016 and ended on Friday 7 October 2016. This report presents the key points from the analysis of responses received by 12 October. The consultation was published on the council's website with the following background documents:

- [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#)
- [Directorate savings proposals](#)
- [Capital programme 2016/17](#)
- [Corporate plan 2016-2020](#)

Methodology

The budget consultation questionnaire was constructed and quality assured by a project team. The questionnaire was published on the Herefordshire Council website and residents were invited to complete it online. A printable version was made available on the website for residents who preferred to download, print and complete the questionnaire. Pre-printed questionnaires were also made available in libraries and customer service centres in the county. The consultation was promoted on the council's social media sites (Twitter and Facebook) and at events throughout the county.

This report presents the results of the combined online and paper responses to the questionnaire. The sample base is the number of respondents to the question and is the base from which percentages are calculated. The sample base used is specified for each question. Percentages are presented rounded to the nearest whole number in the tables; however, the charts are based on unrounded percentages.

Note that if respondents could select more than one answer to a particular question, the percentages may add up to more than 100 per cent.

Where comments have been provided these are listed in full but have been anonymised and corrected for spelling where appropriate.

There were a total of 280 responses to the questionnaire, of which 241 were submitted online and 39 were completed paper copies.

Results

The following analysis represents 280 responses received to the consultation questionnaire.

Please see **Appendix A** for all the comments and suggestions received to the questionnaire and **Appendix B** for the responses received as letters and e-mails to the consultation.

Q1. Are you willing to support an increase in charges for council services above the level of inflation?

Sixty one (61) per cent of respondents were willing to support an increase in charges for council services above the level of inflation.

Table 1: responses to question 1

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Yes	164	61%
No	103	39%
Total respondents	267	100%
Not answered	13	

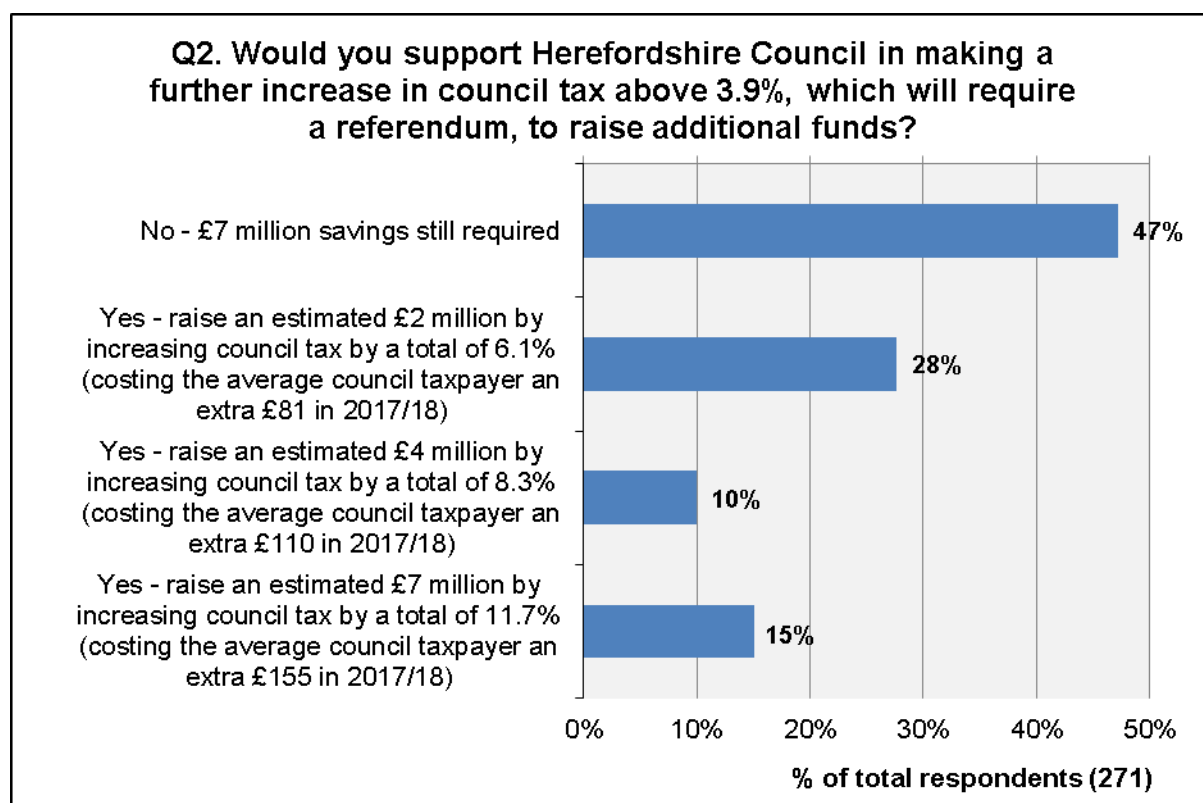
Q2. Would you support Herefordshire Council in making a further increase in council tax above 3.9%, which will require a referendum, to raise additional funds?

Of the 271 respondents to this question, 143 respondents (53 per cent) would support a further increase in council tax above 3.9 per cent, which will require a referendum, to raise additional funds. Forty seven (47) per cent (128 respondents) did not support a further increase in council tax above 3.9 per cent.

Table 2: responses whether supporting for a further increase in council tax above 3.9 per cent

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
No - £7 million savings still required	128	47%
Yes - raise an estimated £2 million by increasing council tax by a total of 6.1% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £81 in 2017/18)	75	28%
Yes - raise an estimated £4 million by increasing council tax by a total of 8.3% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £110 in 2017/18)	27	10%
Yes - raise an estimated £7 million by increasing council tax by a total of 11.7% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £155 in 2017/18)	41	15%
Total respondents	271	100%
Not answered	9	3%

Chart 1: would you support an increase of council tax above 3.9 percent?



Q3. Do you have any suggestions about what other things the council should consider to achieve the required savings?

Analysis of this question indicated that frequently cited suggestions were around five themes:

- **Reduce council expenditures** (e.g. reviewing contracts and contract monitoring).
- **Reduce council in-house spending** (e.g. on salaries, expenses, staffing levels, subsidies, expenses, non-essentials, and improving systems, policies and procedures, and smarter working via technology).
- **Improve council management of assets** (e.g. sale of buildings and farms; reduce accommodation costs; encourage multiple use of buildings).
- **Generate income and increase revenue streams**
- **Merge with other local authorities and/or share design/delivery of front line services and back office functions**

The following word cloud highlights the most common words that featured in the general comments. Please see appendix A-Q3 for full list of comments.

Figure 1: word cloud showing responses to Q3
(size of word relates to the number of times it was mentioned)



Q4. Respondents to last year’s consultation suggested a number of activities that could be undertaken locally. Your parish council has the power to charge an extra amount on top of your council tax. Do you think that they should exercise this power and charge extra in order to carry out any of the following? (please tick all that apply)

Seventy seven (77) per cent of total survey respondents provided answers to question 4. Of these, over 40 per cent of respondents thought that their parish council should charge extra in order to carry out ‘maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)’ and ‘grass / hedge cutting’, while a third of respondents thought ‘road / footpath maintenance’, ‘winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)’ or ‘litter / dog fouling enforcement’ should be carried out through extra charges by their parish councils.

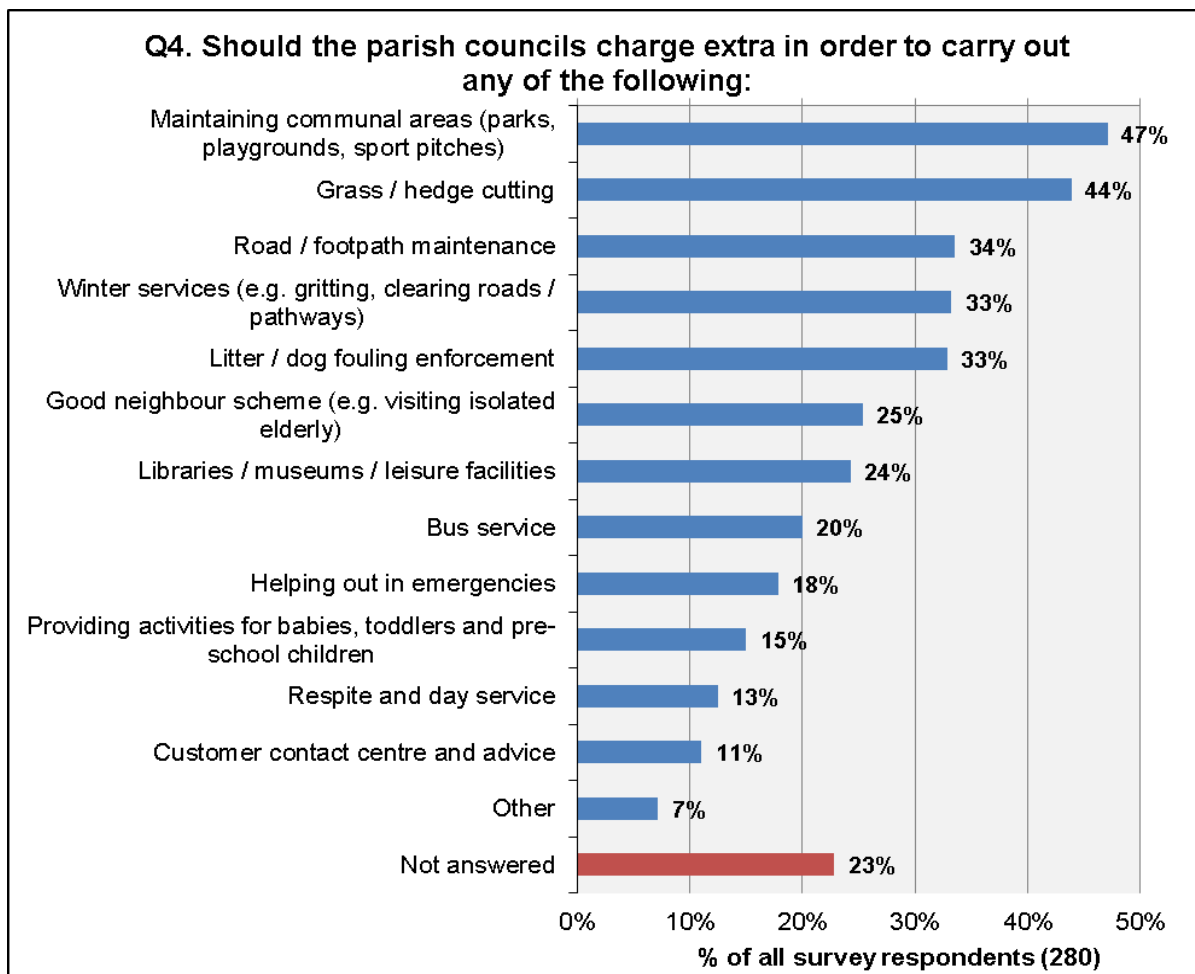
Nearly a quarter of residents (23 per cent) did not answer this question.

Further to question 4, respondents were asked to provide ‘other’ suggestions for activities that could be undertaken locally. There were 57 comments made. Of these, forty eight (48) per cent of respondents suggested that residents should not pay extra amount on top of their council tax because these activities and these are local government responsibilities. Please see appendix A-4a for full list of comments.

Table 3: responses to question 4

	Number of respondents	Per cent of all survey respondents*
Maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)	132	47%
Grass / hedge cutting	123	44%
Road / footpath maintenance	94	34%
Winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)	93	33%
Litter / dog fouling enforcement	92	33%
Good neighbour scheme (e.g. visiting isolated elderly)	71	25%
Libraries / museums / leisure facilities	68	24%
Bus service	56	20%
Helping out in emergencies	50	18%
Providing activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children	42	15%
Respite and day service	35	13%
Customer contact centre and advice	31	11%
Other	20	7%
Not answered	64	23%
Total respondents	216	77%
*Total survey respondents	280	

Chart 2: should parish councils charge extra in order to provide some activities



Q5. Do you currently volunteer in Herefordshire?

Approximately fifty (50) per cent of respondents currently volunteer in Herefordshire.

Table 4: responses to volunteering

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Yes	130	49%
No	134	51%
Total respondents	264	100%
Not answered	16	

Q6. People have previously indicated that they would be willing to help out more in their community. Please indicate whether you currently volunteer or would be interested in volunteering in the following roles. (please tick all that apply)

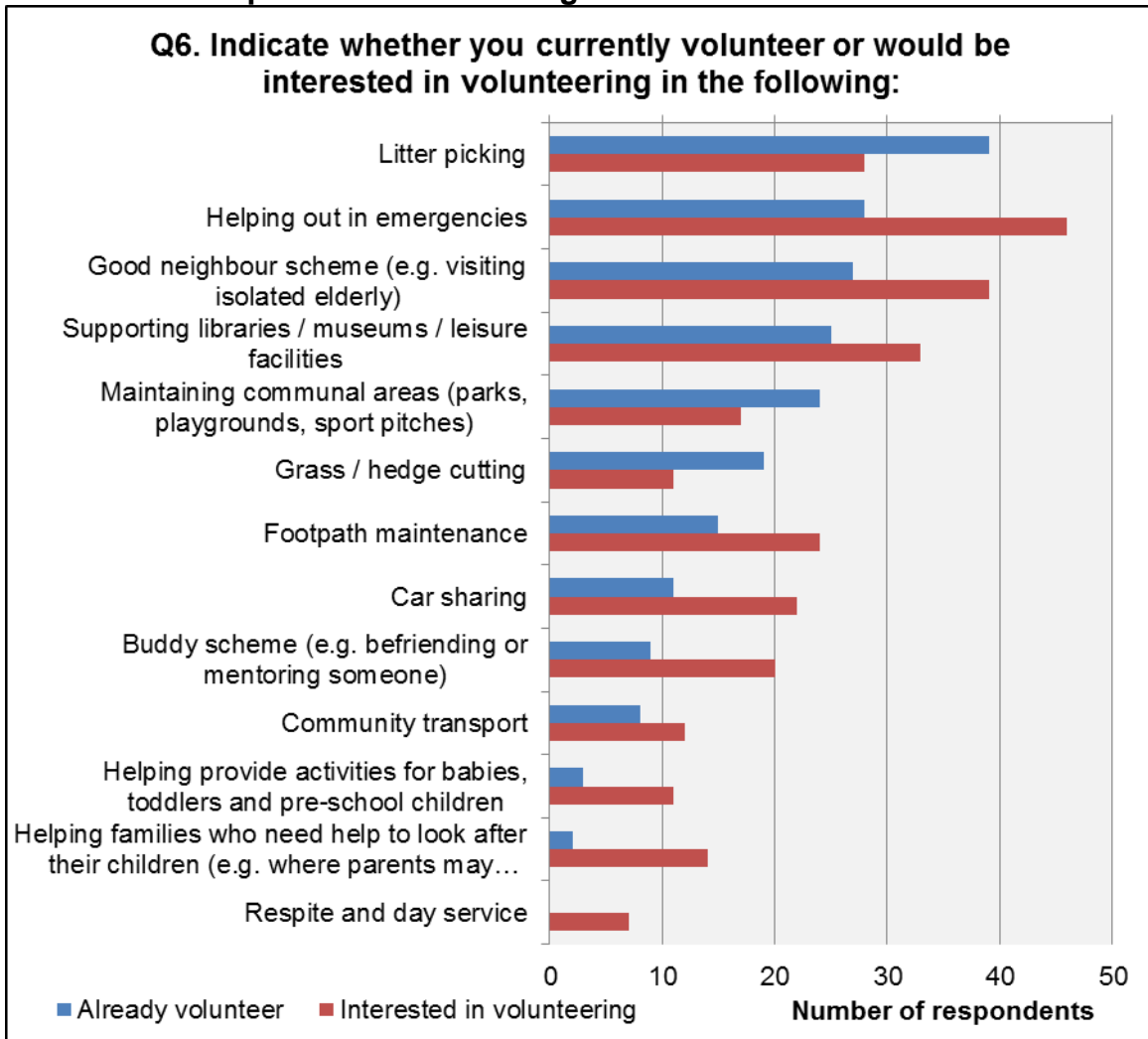
Please note because the numbers of responses are small, percentages have not been provided for this question.

The most common activities that respondents currently volunteer for are 'litter picking', 'helping out in emergencies', 'good neighbour scheme' and 'supporting libraries / museums / leisure facilities'. While there is still a higher demand in volunteering in these activities, people are also interested to volunteer in 'footpath maintenance', 'car sharing' and 'buddy scheme'. According to table 5, 'respite and day service' is lacking in volunteers currently, however, seven respondents showed an interest to volunteering in future.

Table 5: responses to current and potential volunteering activities

	Already volunteer	Interested in volunteering	Not answered	Total respondents
Litter picking	39	28	213	67
Helping out in emergencies	28	46	206	74
Good neighbour scheme (e.g. visiting isolated elderly)	27	39	214	66
Supporting libraries / museums / leisure facilities	25	33	222	58
Maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)	24	17	239	41
Grass / hedge cutting	19	11	250	30
Footpath maintenance	15	24	241	39
Car sharing	11	22	247	33
Buddy scheme (e.g. befriending or mentoring someone)	9	20	251	29
Community transport	8	12	260	20
Helping provide activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children	3	11	266	14
Helping families who need help to look after their children (e.g. where parents may need a lot of medical treatment)	2	14	264	16
Respite and day service	0	7	273	7
Other	34	0	246	34

Chart 3: current and potential volunteering activities



Other (please specify below):

There were 55 comments made to specify other volunteering activities that respondents currently carry out. Among these helping in a ‘community shop/charity organisation (e.g. Hereford Disability United, food bank)’, ‘village hall and church activities ‘ and ‘parish and town council’ were the most common activities that respondents are currently volunteering in. Four respondents suggested that they would be interested in providing ‘home base back office functions’, ‘vocational training’, ‘emergency road clearance’ and ‘work as a granger’.

Q7. What do you think the council could do to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses? (tick all that apply)

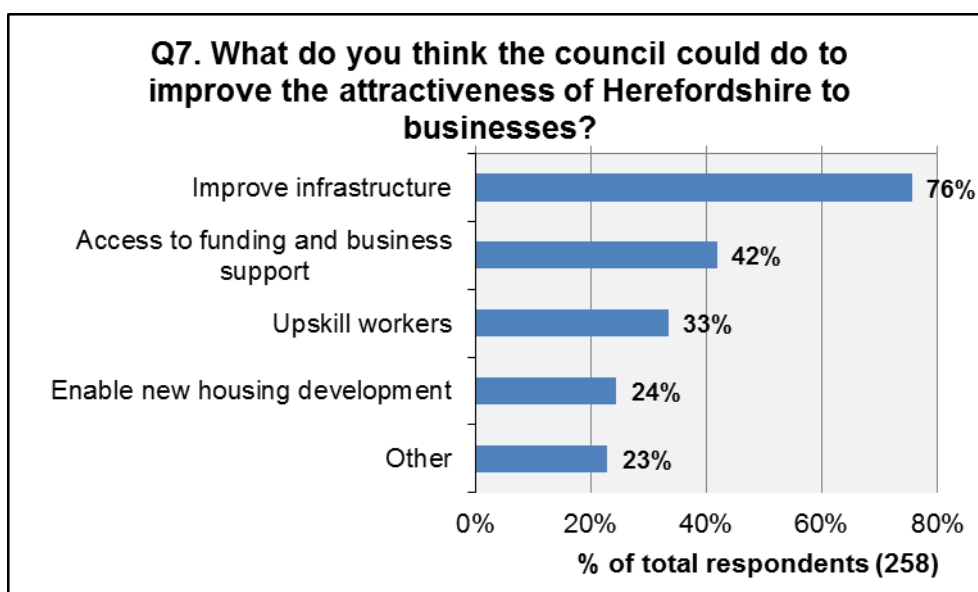
The majority of respondents (76 per cent) thought the council could ‘improve infrastructure’ in order to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses. ‘Access to funding and business support’ and ‘upskill workers’ also ranked highly.

There were 105 comments of ‘other’ suggestions. Among these, ‘better broadband and mobile phone coverage’, ‘improved transport network including better roads and Hereford bypass’ and ‘improved public transport’ were most commonly cited. The full list of comments can be found in appendix A-Q7.

Table 6: responses to question 7

	Number of respondents	Per cent of respondents
Improve infrastructure	195	76%
Access to funding and business support	108	42%
Upskill workers	86	33%
Enable new housing development	63	24%
Other	59	23%
Total respondents	258	100%
Not answered	22	

Chart 4: things that council could do to attract businesses to Herefordshire



The following word cloud highlights the most common words that featured in the ‘other’ suggestions.

Figure 2: word cloud showing responses to Q7a
(size of word relates to the number of times it was mentioned)



Q8. Is there any other capital investment you think the council should make?

Analysis of this question indicated that frequently cited suggestions were around five themes:

- **Invest on sustainable initiatives** (e.g. energy projects, waste water and recycling).
- **Improve Herefordshire’s infrastructure** (transport networks, broadband facilities, public transport).
- **Invest in the county’s key industries** (agriculture, tourism, food and drink), and **create new small businesses in leisure, sports and further education.**
- **Invest in children’s education and unemployed people** (to tackle root causes of problems and enable positive outcomes).
- **Invest in the voluntary sector and social enterprises.**

The following word cloud highlights the most common words given in response to question 8.

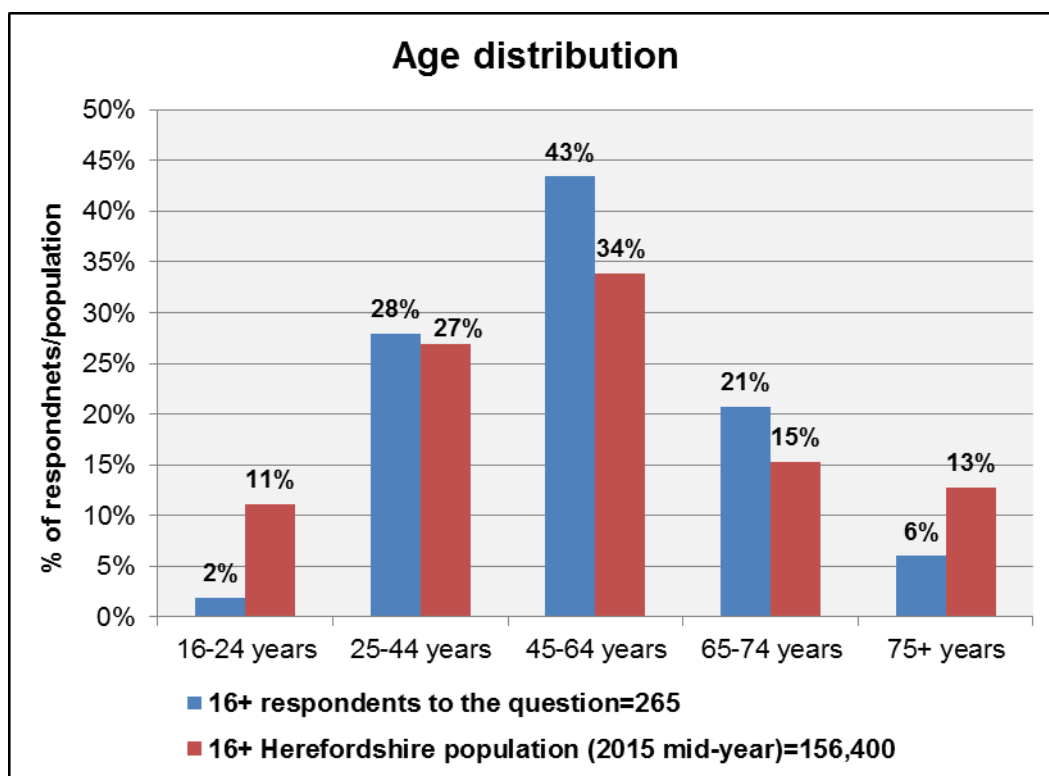
- **Change ways in how services/funding operate to reduce costs but keep services** (e.g. library service; health and social care; use of capital funding not revenue funding).
- **Improve council behaviours** (e.g. transparency of decisions; meaningful consultation with public).

Please see appendix A-Q9 for full list of comments.

Respondent profile

- Two per cent of respondents represented an organisation or a group while 98 per cent were individuals. The organisations that responded to the consultation were:
Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Group Parish Council
Ledbury Town Council
Orleton Parish Council
Richards Castle PC
Rural business organisation and
'Anonymous organisation'
- 52 per cent of respondents to the survey were males and 48 per cent were females (Herefordshire population profile: 51 percent to 49 percent)¹
- 27 per cent were aged 65 years or over, 43 per cent were aged 45-64 years, 28 per cent were aged 25-44 years and two per cent were 24 years or younger. According to chart 5 it is clear that people aged 45-64 years were over represented in the consultation.

Chart 5: age distribution of survey respondents and Herefordshire population



¹ The Population of Herefordshire 2016 (<https://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/48832/population-of-herefordshire-2016-v20.pdf>)

- Twelve (12) per cent of respondents' day-to-day activities were limited a little or limited a lot because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 month.
- Ninety five (95) per cent of respondents identified themselves as English, Scottish, Welsh or British; three per cent identified themselves as another national identity.
- Of the respondents who answered the question about their ethnicity, 98 per cent identified themselves as 'white' and one percent as 'other white'. This composition is slightly different to the adult population ethnicity profile of the county, where five per cent were 'other white' and two per cent were 'non-white' (according to the 2011 Census).
- Six (6) per cent of respondents felt that they had been treated differently (positively or negatively) because of who they are.

End

Appendix A: Full list of comments

Appendix B: Other form of responses to the consultation

Appendix C: The questionnaire

Appendix A-Full list of comments

Introduction

This report shows the comments made by residents to budget consultation 2016 questionnaire. Some of the comments have been edited to preserve anonymity, where this has been done the changes are marked within < >. Any remarks added by data entry personnel are shown in parenthesis, for example [comment illegible].

Note: Some of the comments refer to the statement number in the questionnaire. Where necessary, please refer to the questionnaire in appendix B.

Appendix A-Q3

Q3. Do you have any suggestions about what other things the council should consider to achieve the required savings? There were 140 comments made.

Comments
1. More rigorous and specific requirements when tendering for services and ensuring these are being met. I am amazed at the lack of the above which does not constitute a quality job therefore not cost effective. 2. Reduce expense of county councillors. 3. Stop having a budget for 'entertaining' e.g. complementary food and drink.
A charge made for householders who do not recycle, either at all or correctly. Increase charges for Leisure Centre etc. use. My family and I don't use any of these facilities, and we are fed up with subsidising others. Charge for on road parking in towns such as Ledbury and Leominster. Do we really need the twin town scheme, in the advent of the Brexit vote?
A road sweeper drives up the middle of the white cross terraces, early in the mornings, it does absolutely nothing, cars are parked either side of all the streets and the middle of the road doesn't need sweeping. This is a dreadful waste of resources.
A significant decrease in council staffing levels.
Apply the Spend to Save principal to restore grants to the charity (3rd) sector in particular to Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) which provides a service which by its preventative/advice work saves the council money and brings an extra £3-4 million each year to the benefit of its clients and the general economy of Herefordshire
Be very clear about what can and can't be delivered in council services. Be upfront about the challenges and choices so people really understand why they can't expect to have services previously delivered unless they are comfortable with paying more. Explain which services have had budget cuts and which ones could also contribute more to still enable the council to deliver services considered critical.
Bureaucracy within council departments. Scrap silly schemes like high town improvements
Cancel the Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) contract and bring the work "in house". No private company = no need to make profit. Cut back on services for social care
Capitalise on existing assets, but please don't sell them all off. Farm holdings should not have been sold off. It is not necessary to spend on refurbishing High Town that is a luxury that should not be put ahead of services to Herefordshire residents. Herefordshire is a beautiful county and there are so many tourism opportunities that are being ignored.
Cease work with Hoople, Balfour Beatty.
Change provider Balfour Beatty

Comments

Charge every household some council tax. Single and lower earners and severely disabled could still have the 25% (or more for severely disabled) allowance but not if there is more than one income (to include job seekers etc.) in the household. Charges also to "seasonal workers" on farms where their use of refuse collection etc. and they earning should be taken into account. They are living in accommodation; usually mobile homes rented from the farmer, and should pay something whilst in this country. Otherwise, suggest farmers should be council tax on each mobile home on their land.

Charge more to the owners of stray dogs. £55 plus the cost of kennel isn't even as high as an £80 fixed penalty notice for dropping a cigarette butt and sending people to collect stray dogs takes up a lot more time and effort. Every dog should now be micro-chipped - do the council apply an additional fine if people claim a dog which is also not micro-chipped?

Charge or suggest a charge for people with free bus passes. This could be done by putting a donation box onto each bus and displaying a recommended fair. The money should be used to maintain local bus services.

Check what people quote for and the price. Remember local contractors to the job are a lot cheaper. Check the job is done correct first time and the contractors do not have to go back and repair it a few weeks or months after finished and passed. I saw a job done and I said to the person who I had phoned about the fault, phoned me to ask if finished. I said yes they have finished but it will not pass. It did not pass and I said I hope the council do not have to pay for the second time. That is place money is wasted.

Close final salary pension schemes to further accrual

Consider capital spend more robustly. Be more creative with service provision- e.g. sharing buildings. Support recruit internally- and voluntary cost saving/service redesign could be considered to contribute to savings. Stop subsidies to parish councils. Rationalise the number of councillors. Seek more external third party investment from national scheme.

Consider the asset list and sell any titles (e.g. Lord of the Manor of XXX), works of art, property surplus. Consider reducing the public road network by declassifying roads serving less than (say) three properties and making them unmaintained. Ensure that all businesses especially those registered to residential addresses are considered by valuation office for payment of business rates; initially concentrate on those who are VAT registered.

Comments
<p>Continually making more and more cuts to existing service provision is unsustainable. Continually re-engineering and re-procuring statutory services achieves very little in the long run other than to provide commissioning staff with something to fill their days. The time has come for a step change in the county. It's quite clear that Herefordshire is not large enough to sustain a unitary authority and all the responsibilities that come with that position. The decision to form a unitary authority was taken at a different time when government funding was at a far higher level and the demographic pressures were not as high. The obvious next step is the explore a more regional approach - a re marriage to Worcestershire (or linking up with other neighbouring authorities). Surely that is a no-brainer as it would enable senior management and back office costs to be cut significantly as well as enabling scarce expertise (e.g. social workers) to be shared across the region thereby improving the standard of services and making the available funds go further in terms of supporting essential front line services (social services and waste is about all that's left really...). By reducing the number of councillors and the admin to support them the savings could be re-directed to existing parish councils who could take on responsibility for more local services to improve the quality of life and surroundings. I would be willing to pay more council tax for those sorts of services where I can see and feel the improvement, but I won't pay for lots of service commissioners who are just re-organising the deck chairs on the titanic. Sadly I don't think I could trust Herefordshire Council (HC) to take a leading role in such a change, so I think council tax should be left at the existing level until the council becomes financially unsustainable and central government have no option but to drive through the changes needed.</p>
<p>Continue to fund and support children's health services School Nursing and Health visiting!</p>
<p>Control spending in Adult and Children Directorates.</p>
<p>Cut all expenses to councillor</p>
<p>Cut back on the ridiculous salaries some of the executives are paid.</p>
<p>Cut contracts with lazy 'outsource' suppliers (Balfour Beatty?) Seek sponsorship/advertising revenue from major retailers. Cut council executive pay further. Cut council staffing levels and integrate departments. Re-amalgamate with Worcestershire. Stop spending on 'vanity' projects.</p>
<p>Cut down on councillors expenses</p>
<p>cut librarians and have volunteers in all libraries</p>
<p>Cut salaries at the top. Is <name removed> really worth the money he is being paid?</p>
<p>Cut some of the office jobs and top salaries. They are way over paid.</p>
<p>Cut the pension provision for staff</p>
<p>Defer the renovation and decoration of council buildings until an easier financial time. Combine services into the same venues, where reasonably possible, freeing buildings for rent.</p>
<p>Don't spend money on traveller's sites- they don't pay tax. Don't know enough detailed info on what the council does spend money on to inform this. Only generic areas in the reported accounts.</p>

Comments
<p>Drastically reduce public libraries with a few supervisors and volunteers and no librarians as they cost nearly £250,000, charges for internet access. A reduction in middle management to preserve the essential services that are a life line to so many.</p>
<p>Encourage communities to take on some services or pool resources with the voluntary sector. This could for instance cover Libraries and Advice centres run as part of village halls and their volunteers. Teenagers and young adults, if able, to be asked to run youth services as part of any benefits receivable; that'd enable useful work experience. Lobby to have the Libraries Act 1964 changed to a less prescriptive model more suited to the Web-age for enabling Libraries to be locally run by volunteers.</p>
<p>Ensure all staff retire at 65 or similar levels as in the private sector. to include, police, and fire services. The council pension scheme for all employees to be reduced to a similar level as the average in the private sector. This should be a long term plan to reduce expenditure.</p>
<p>Enter a merger, or strategic partnership, with Shropshire Council on all back office functions. Two councils with one media team, commissioning team, business rates team etc. Both authorities could then have access to an appropriately resourced and sized staff whilst also realising substantial savings.</p>
<p>Further efficiency savings in large service area e.g. adult social care. Whilst appreciate that these services are statutory there should be opportunity to make some efficiency savings.</p>
<p>Generate means to increase revenue on a macro level. Primarily this means encourage business and businesses into the county and look after the ones that are there. There is virtually no support for new businesses / growth businesses available and there is in other areas - how can this be possible?</p>
<p>Get rid of unnecessary staff. Consolidate services, which would improve performance and reduce the need for so many offices. I have seen many council workers doing little to nothing but being paid for the privilege. Start cutting the deadwood by looking at management level employees. Sell off buildings that are no longer needed for offices or turn them into student accommodation for the new university. This way you'd make money for years to come. Also, get a move on with the sale of the Tennant farms. If you are going to sell them, do so. Stop fanning around. Set an achievable value, get the letters sent out and put these poor sods out of their misery. By setting an achievable price, you'll sell them quickly, make your money and not be stuck with land you can't sell or lease. Hanging on for one buyer for the lot is folly. Unless, of course, Prince Charles is waiting in the wings.</p>
<p>Get some better advice on external contracts, e.g. Balfour Beatty. Study your management costs - do you have a regular high-level management review?</p>
<p>Greater delegation to town and parish councils to deliver the most vital services (bus service, libraries, road/footpath maintenance)</p>
<p>Has the council considered sharing the learning from areas of the service that have seen a reduction in budget while service has improved?</p>

Comments
<p>Heating, air conditioning and lighting in the buildings, this is not effective as it can be, some buildings have heating on when some of the rooms are empty and when it is warm outside. Buildings used more effectively outside of normal working hours make them easier to access to allow private organizations to hire. Merge library services and children's centre services and make them community hubs, involve the public in having ownership of the buildings. Revamp the council website and WISH Wellbeing Information and Signposting for Herefordshire) service, WISH to run their 'Shop' from a council building instead of paying for a shop.</p>
<p>Herefordshire council tax rates are the highest among the west of England councils, look to neighbouring councils to see if lessons can be learnt. Consider sharing services with other councils e.g. help desks services.</p>
<p>I am unsure what the financial running costs are of the council, however I am sure that there are cuts that can be made internally.</p>
<p>I don't know enough about how the council spends its money to offer a sensible opinion.</p>
<p>I note the proposals to introduce on street parking charges in central Hereford and to increase parking charges at other public car parks - which I approve of. Does the county have powers:</p> <p>(a) to require supermarkets such as Sainsbury's to levy parking charges (removing the 2/3 hour free parking "privilege" that shoppers currently enjoy), and</p> <p>(b) to benefit from some or all of the resulting revenues, after deduction of costs of collection?</p>
<p>I think it is really important that the council, together with other councils, should lobby central government more effectively to make the point that they are bearing the brunt of the government's austerity measures. We have already lost services that I regard as essential for a civilised, caring society. The voluntary sector is being expected to fill gaps that really should be funded by taxation. The tone of the leaders of government has changed; will this be reflected in a change of strategy?</p>
<p>I think the council should encourage local parish councils to make use of the skills of local residents in running morning coffee or afternoon tea clubs with a theme such as gardening, crafts, photography etc. This would help combat isolation and keep residents more healthy and build up friendships and working relationships with the local population and assist the good neighbour schemes. Encourage those who use sports fields etc. to form a rota to cut the grass and provide help with maintenance of machines.</p>
<p>I work in the private sector and always think there is too much red tape associated with anything the council does. It must be possible to make decisions without loads of consultations etc. etc. taking time and money.</p>

Comments

I would have agreed to increases in council tax if it was a fair tax which quite clearly it is not. The rich in large houses pay little more than the poor in small houses. I would agree to an increase in local taxation if it was progressive e.g. local income tax rather than regressive as it is now. The questions above are pointless because if you think the present council tax system is unfair you have no alternative but to oppose increases that will hurt the poor most while the wealthy won't be affected. I would like to pay more for social services etc. but can't agree to an increase in tax that is regressive where the poor suffer most. The problem is with central government who won't effectively tax large corporations and the wealthy.

In the long-term, I think it makes sense to take a broad look at service delivery, and to think 'outside the box' in terms of how we achieve our aims. In particular, to: - encourage an environment of close co-working between departments, to find 'win-win' situations, and prioritise effectively:

- look at possibilities for the council to be income-generating in its activities (not charging for basic services provided, but for added value - e.g. energy from waste)

- look at council assets, how these can be maintained in partnership with the community, and where the use of these could be maximised either for income generating, or for achieving council aims (assets to be retained where possible, and if transferred, then only with careful prioritisation)

- build up a reputation as a leader in sustainability and the arts - engage with people, and encourage participation in decision-making and community life. In the short term it seems inevitable that there will be cuts to service delivery.

I don't want to be idealistic, but I do think it should be done carefully, particularly bearing in mind how each decision affects the most vulnerable. Services which can be delivered in partnerships with other organisations or communities can and should be explored, but only if done well (i.e. not 'dumped on' people, but with a period of 'hand-holding': sharing visions, communicating well, showing leadership, building capacity... ultimately empowering others).

Instead of cutting, look to expand and grow, providing more services that a fee can be charged for.

Introduce a tax for all vehicles using Hereford city centre. Especially HGV (Heavy Goods Vehicles). Ban HGV traffic from A roads (damage to surface and hedgerows).

Introduce a tax for all vehicles using Hereford city centre. Especially HGV. Ban HGV traffic from A Roads (damage to surface and hedgerows).

It's hard to be involved in the local government. If you had put the council tax up year on year maybe you won't be in such a mess. Work with the government and let's get this sorted!!

Keep parking charges to a minimum. Lack of public transport requires people to drive in to the city. Please remember we live in a rural area.

Ledbury town council suggests that Herefordshire Council re-negotiates the BBLP contract.

Less capital spending which has recurrent spending implications

Comments
Less money spent on constant internal changes dreamt up by people without real jobs serving the residents
Less top level council staff - or take pay cuts like the rest of us. Considerably less independent advisers. Use the surveys you've already got. They seem to have covered everything over the years - just multiply the numbers by some percentage.
Lobby central government for a demographic driven grant, Herefordshire has a very high proportion of over 65's and this puts and disproportionate and unfair burden on council funds.
Lobby government for the cuts from central government not to be made.
Lobby government hard to obtain a higher level of rate support and removal of arbitrary restrictions.
Lobby the conservative government to give more money as we are an agricultural county without the residents to support these increases and cuts. Our rural economy would not support this proposal for increase in council tax.
Look at cutting in-house spending i.e. the need for higher management positions and high salaries for such a small county. The need to keep moving offices every couple of decades. Fill the many empty shops by offering a reduced rent level and encourage people to shop locally by free 2 hour parking. People are reluctant to pay money to spend money i.e. why would I drive past the many DIYs offering free parking to queue and pay to use Phillip Morris for example. Local shops are disadvantaged by being located in town centres.
Look at the salaries that are paid out for higher council executives and managers. They are very high compared to the average wage earned in Herefordshire.
Make all market town car parks free which would increase business takings and increase business tax to a level in excess of the lost income.
Make management cuts and reduce management salaries and create a cap on salaries.
Make parish councils pay more for things that benefit them I.e. local tourism to their area.
Make the website simpler to use for signing up for direct debits. It would not work consequently you had to foot the cost of producing and sending me a pin number. We have to recycle at home, but at the tip in Ross the plastic is mixed in landfill which will cost you money in landfill taxes.
Manage contractors more professionally - noted to be very slack during repairs to council owned buildings. Reduce travel by use of video-conferencing and Skype etc. Review and reduce burdensome paperwork when delivering services. Check eligibility for welfare very carefully (but fairly).
Maybe consider management officials savings?!
More effective working relationships with third sector providers

Comments
<p>More promotion in hiring rooms in council buildings. Stop thinking 'banking hours' and think 24/7. More road shows promoting what we do.</p>
<p>Not at this time. It would help though that devices to repair the atrocious 3rd world state of the roads is addressed or residents might not want to stay here into retirement and beyond.</p>
<p>Only do enough tree cutting, grass cutting, etc. that is really needed for public safety and the safety of road users. A lot of areas can remain uncut - this also assists nature - bees in particular, which Herefordshire relies on for its apples and other pollinator crops. Do not change light bulbs in street lighting - but keep enough changed to ensure safety. A lot of other council actually switch off street lighting during certain hours of the night e.g. from midnight to 5.00 a.m. All of these small amounts of savings add up.</p>
<p>Pay cut for staff</p>
<p>Paying for library requests</p>
<p>Perhaps you could protect essential care services by including a voluntary buy-in for non-essential (premium) services. In effect, you would have a two or three tiered buy-in and run membership systems for libraries, museums, theatres and transport options. Rather like the way supermarkets have three tiers of quality (Basics, everyday and taste the difference). You would still give free or subsidized access for anyone on benefits or below/above a specific age group. You need to phase in digitizing services for elderly people. We are nearly at a point where those becoming pensioners will have the technical knowhow and personal computers to be able to access information online (library services, timetables, tourist information) we're not quite there, but we are only a decade away. You could also include a section on your council tax bill for a voluntary one-off or monthly overpayment for those who feel they can give to the council's charitable and voluntary areas, such as food banks, in bloom etc.</p>
<p>Powys council has had to find a lot more than you. Look at efficiencies in house. Cut number of big wigs earning a lot of money. Look a buying fuel with other councils same for school books etc. Forming buying groups for lorries, fuel cars, stationary, and postage. When highways contract is up for renewal look to a 5 day week but Wednesday - Sunday and Monday - Friday so that all vehicles have no days stood still so less vehicles required</p>
<p>Prevention is key; reduce adult social care expenditure by keeping people living independently for as long as possible. Keep the population healthy, physically active, healthy eating, simple measures we can all achieve but produce massive savings. Preventing the younger population becoming older and dependent, working together across agencies and partners to achieve the same outcomes.</p>

Comments
<p>Prioritise statutory services (libraries, social care) over non-statutory services (tourism). Prioritise transport (roads and busses). Cut back on office accommodation costs (acres of unused space in Plough Lane for example). More home working and hot-desking for officers. Re-locate more functions to cheaper accommodation in the market towns. Use technology more - conference calls, skype meetings etc. Review all private sector contracts, and re-negotiate at lower rates - take it or leave it, most businesses will take it! Use more interns as office assistants - a great training opportunity at minimum wage. Cut the pay of the CEO (Chief executive Officer) and all senior officers by 10%, and ring-fence the savings for top priorities. Launch public fund-raising appeals for key priority areas. Design a structured giving programme to enable the better off to donate on voluntary basis to the priorities of their choice. Challenge the whole bankrupt philosophy of austerity - badger the Chancellor. It hasn't worked, and we have had enough. Talk to local communities more - hear what they are saying and act on it.</p>
<p>Publicly lobby central government for an end to austerity and reduced levels of local government funding, working with other local authorities. Use all of the council's cash reserves before passing on reduced central government funding burden to local residents.</p>
<p>Q2- Use extra to pay down debt. Re-join Worcestershire. High level of elderly & others in need in Herefordshire, but low level of good manners to pay for many on benefits. Tax needs to come from somewhere. Or combine council admin (higher-paid levels) in West Mercia Councils. Too many bosses.</p>
<p>Raise the charges of bus fares but only by 10p or something small but try to put services that have been cut and would be used back into place. Keep the libraries open please</p>
<p>Re evaluate the red tape around some of the council's regulations. A part time employee of the council could be allocated to each parish council whose role it would be to develop a neighbourhood plan and to be constantly identifying areas of financial savings, taking local recommendations for savings back to the council for approval. This way each part of the county could initiate good practice, which is tailor made to the local residents and environment, meanwhile making savings.</p>
<p>Re negotiates or cancels your contract with Balfour Beatty which appears to give them the right to withdraw a service and arbitrarily dump it onto parish councils or local communities. When they test the market to replace BBLP they find local suppliers are less than half the cost of your supposedly competitive contract prices.</p>
<p>Reduce adult care budget and concentrate on getting business rates up.</p>
<p>Reduce cost of adult social care</p>
<p>Reduce costly office moves, sell off old property instead of putting it all in the skip and reduce salary scale for all directors or reduce the number of directors across the council</p>
<p>Reduce costs by reducing HR (Human Resources) costs, appraisals for staff and other staff time wasting measures, get on with delivering services to the public.</p>
<p>Reduce costs by reducing HR costs, appraisals for staff and other staff time wasting measures, get on with delivering services to the public , libraries and bus services etc.</p>

Comments
Reduce executive officers pay scales by 8.3%
Reduce job creation schemes such as appraisals x 4 a year and other wasteful in house corporate nonsense. Staff can then focus on providing services to the public!
Reduce members allowances and IT (Information Technology) allowances. Reduce frequency of refuse and recycling collections
Reduce spending on cycle paths which very few use
Reduce spending on grass cutting by offering inducements to residents to maintain areas outside their properties-such as free swimming or parking vouchers.
Reduce the number of senior managers you employ. Use a different company instead of Hoople who charge a fortune. Merge with Worcestershire council
Reduce the pay of most highly paid executives until it much closer to that of ordinary staff. Rigorously check that private contracting is more cost effective than working in house. If you are being forced to contract out by central government policy, let us know.
Reduce the wages for executives, stop running silly business courses where 'consultants' teach the obvious. Do away with contracts with oversized and out of county organisations take profit on minimum wage jobs.
Reduce unnecessary red tape and process to allow the council to transfer more assets or services to the community or voluntary sector.
Reduce your own offices and wages to higher members!
Remember the smaller towns, for example Ross-on-Wye. The county council seems more concerned with the city of Hereford then what is happening in the smaller towns. We are the only town that has taken on a number of assets so we are saving you thousands. Also planning notices should be advertised with the local paper, the Ross Gazette. This will save you money as Hereford Times is expensive and no one in Ross reads it!
Remuneration of senior staff. Better medium to long term planning. Fund raising amongst wealthier to provide particularly for one off/capital projects. Education/use of PR (Public Relations) and social media to educate people on implications of wastage/misuse of public services esp. in NHS, police services, etc.
Review higher salaries of senior members of council staff and cost of consultants/project managers
Review if all staff is actually required. Reducing staff numbers will generate savings. Review the quality of work by contractors. Too many poor substandard jobs being done which require early repair.
Review salaries, pension provision etc. for council employees.
Sack all cabinet members and let the elected members make the decisions.

Comments
Sell all the farms presently owned by the council. These are not in the interests of the vast majority of Herefordshire's population. The days of smallholding farms have gone and we should not have to subsidise those that farm them.
Share services with other authorities. E.g. Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire Service.
Shared services with other neighbouring authorities, including Wales.
Shelve optional capital schemes.
Spend less on outsourcing/consultancies and private companies - reinvest in local people working for the council not private companies working for themselves.
Stop BBLP wasting our money and do the job that they are being paid for. If they are not going to do what they are being paid for then don't give them the money. That should save quite a bit.
Stop carrying out costly retendering and procurement exercises where existing providers can be re-contracted.
Stop employing 'interims' consultants by any other name. These people are paid high salaries come up with ideas then disappear and leave other staff to deal with the consequences of their schemes.
Stop moving offices. Stop paying for projects that don't work - i.e. IT at Plough Lane.
Stop paying staff, which are suspended, full pay. Reduce the amount paid in sickness to staff - the rest of us get paid nothing when we are ill, and we resent paying people what we do not get ourselves.
Stop spending on a Hereford University - we have sufficiently good further education system, this is an ego-trip. Stop spending on the arts, e.g. Courtyard, they should be self-sufficient Stop spending on unnecessary 'what-ifs' like the westerly by-pass, over the past decade so much money has been mis-spent.
Stop spending on vanity projects in Hereford
Stop trying to increase the size of Hereford, the congestion is through traffic not visitors. Town has nothing to offer as most shops are the same thing (coffee). Ripping up town centre will do nothing for shops unless the rates come down. Bypass should of been done years ago will not get done on time or budget, but should of sorted a bridge crossing first (40 years ago). Trying to draw new businesses into Hereford will not come from all this due to poor connections to motorways, it will still take as long to get through town than Belmont to Aber!
Stop vanity projects like the relief road. Ensure value for money from things like resurfacing high town. Probity of councillors is a major issue - some of the planning decisions recently have looked very like cronyism. Fewer councillors required. Council should be protecting public toilets, libraries, rather than expensive projects / feathering the nests of councillors.

Comments
<p>Stop wasteful spending on new roads i.e. inner 'relief road' and from Ross road to Abergavenny road. Stop wasting money on office moves. Improve general efficiency. Council is very poor value for money. Sell Rotherwas estate to raise capital. Raise rent of new cattle market to yield margin of 3%.</p>
<p>Stop wasting money on re-branding. Stop paying BB too much money for cutting grass, which they never do.</p>
<p>Stop wasting money on silly ideas</p>
<p>Stop wasting public funds on ridiculous schemes that only benefit a few /or are a complete waste. The High Town refurb was a waste. The Inner Link Road is a road to no-where - another waste and already over budget!! The planned SLR (Southern Link Road) is another waste as it won't relieve congestion. You lot can't be trusted to spend our money wisely so why should we give you any more to fritter away on vanity projects?</p>
<p>Support energy efficiency serves, low carbon transportation options etc.</p>
<p>The council should fight their (our corner harder with the government). It is unacceptable that councils like Birmingham, Liverpool, and Tower Hamlets have money thrown at them in the billions, and we are starved of cash to subsidise them.</p>
<p>The council should look at the process it uses to deliver the vital services. Loads of money is wasting not looking at the services it provides to those who actually need adjustments, correspondence out to people who are no longer living at the address and they are aware of this as new info has been given to put on database, they do not send out correct format letters to those who need alternative formats. The money spent on chasing fly tippers should be spent on opening tip hours longer and making one day a day that business can take a small amount of waste for a charge to the tip such as £10 for a small trailer of items of waste. There should be greater integration of service information so that five systems are not being used for services which all use the same information taken by one. The council is then paying five licence fees for the service uses when only one will suffice. Spend less money on the frivolous cafe and perks for the staff at plough lane; spend equal amounts of money giving all staff workable conditions, not palace style facilities making the working conditions too comfy that staff don't work to full potential. Look at the processes used and instead of starting the process for each department from a high level. Why not look at it from a ground level from a resident /user place and build it around them, rather than some fancy expensive system that cost loads of money doesn't meet half the needs required and is then out of date and near useless in 18 months. Bring staff up through the departments encourage growth in staff teams already in council rather than pay stupid money to bring in people only interested in money not the council and area they have been born and bred in and care for. The involvement of young students out of university is good idea but make sure they work with experienced people who know the area and not ready to destroy it by bringing in ideas not relevant to the council surroundings. Basically look at the services that are run from the ground level not from the ivory tower where no one is actually impacted by them. Work from bottom up, experience the services as an individual for a week without being a Cllr or manager, ride the bus first thing in morning or at school home time or workers home time. Talk to the people who use all on daily basis and then look at cuts not from those who have no real use of it and just use occasionally. Speak to people in person on surprise visit on buses do not advertise.</p>

Comments
The council should look to its own processes, costs and inefficiencies before penalising residents.
The council should stop making Voluntary Redundancies and then employing the same staff as 'consultants'. There are staffs that have taken redundancy but are then re-employed. The practice should stop. Stop paying so much 'sick pay'. Six months on full pay then six months half pay based on service is unsustainable. Times are hard and most people under pressure but how many other organisations offer this? Lets look at Franklin House. How often and how much for the several refits? Now all wasted as the council will now spend way too much extending and refitting Blueschool House. Then there is the bad deal with Elgar House, Why after signing a lease is Herefordshire Council now footing the bill for asbestos removal? Another total waste of council tax payer's money. These saving could be made with better judgement and actually paying due diligence.
The infrastructural maintenance in the county is disproportionate to the total population and a one-size-fits all allocation of spend does not treat all people fairly across the country. To address London/southeast cantered bias it is essential the council prevail on the central government to fund Herefordshire take into account the sparseness of the county's population and the undue costs of upkeep to maintain services in such a widely spread community.
The link to budget consultation page does not work so I cannot give an informed opinion.
The parish council is concerned that whilst deep and harmful cuts are being made to all services, there are still numerous examples of wasteful inefficiencies which we see in operations, for example the poor standard of verge-cutting, inefficiencies in how potholes are repaired and to what standard. At this time of crisis, there should also be reductions in the salaries of the very highest-paid staff of the Council, to help contribute to savings and lead by example.
This survey is poorly designed and ultimately will produce results that are little, if any real value. If you want to identify meaningful views from council tax payers you should ask questions about willingness to pay more money for council tax services only once relevant information about implications of different budget choices have been provided. For example, if you are in favour of no current increase in budget above 3.9% then the implications of the likely £7 million of cuts should be explained. What services would be cut? What actions are being taken to examine where administrative savings can be made? If respondents are provided with this information then more realistic responses will be provided. Similarly I might be inclined to register a positive response to increasing the budget above 3.9% if I was given an idea of where this extra money was to be spent. By not providing this information (or at least an indication of where you expect to spend this money) the question is of little value.
Use capital funding wherever possible to fund (e.g.) planned highway maintenance, and scrap controversial vanity projects such as the Hereford bypass
Use of less agency staff by improving conditions for permanent staff
Work closer with the voluntary sector, seeing if positions can be of a voluntary capacity, and pay contracts to not for profit organisations and see if those organisations can get funding support from funding bodies to make them more efficient?

Comments

Yes, put the car park prices down, it's driving people away and for people that work in town it's a tax on the high street worker. In wales where ever they did this car park revenues went up because more people came rather than empty car parks and shops. We are a rural town bike lanes won't help the traffic at all get on and build the link roads bypass as soon as possible creating jobs etc. Stop wasting money redoing high town to match new market, any one I speak to can't believe this huge amount of money as wasted!!

Yes. When observing a pothole that has been advised and needing filling. I understand from Balfour Beatty that if its not of the correct size (depth + width) not considered by someone to meet the criteria then it isn't filled, but is reported and noted. I can't imagine how much this procedure must cost! Why not fill it while someone is there looking at it! The roads are in a dreadful state in Herefordshire and more funding from the budget needs to go towards repairs.

Appendix A-Q4

Q4a. Do you think that they should exercise this power and charge extra in order to carry out any of the following? Other, please specify: There were 57 comments made

Comments
All of the above should be taken care of from our council tax.
All the above are desirable, but it is stopping Herefordshire Council doing its jobs properly. I am a chairman of a parish council, and we should not be doing Herefordshire's job. We already do some of the above.
All the above are the responsibility of government NOT the citizens collection of taxes due from big business should sort out the shortfall here
Although the parishes may have powers they would in most cases not have the available resources to operate what are in most cases county council responsibilities. If a parish does take on these works the county council should restore the parish council tax support scheme.
Citizens advice / advice on council services
Create safe options for cycling
Homeless services
I agree parish councils could do more, but am concerned it could contribute to a 'postcode lottery' in living standards... What parish councils can offer might vary hugely between different areas.
I assume any additional funds raised would be enough to hire somebody to undertake these tasks in the community.
I don't think 'Road / footpath maintenance' and 'Winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)' should be on the list at all. It would fragment services. The town/parish councils could then cross their fingers and hope! And would they hire the machines? And what about the stockpile of material for gritting - who would decide the amount to get (buy)? The Kington Centre already provides a council advice centre and activities for small children - isn't this still part of the library service?
I think these are essentials that should come out of council tax revenue.
If some of the above are going to be charged extra for - why pay council tax?!!
Introduce a local fair taxation system and I would agree to increases
Invest in more bicycle lanes
It will cost each parish more to buy individually as they have no buying power
Keeping drains, ditches etc. clear to reduce risk of flooding and providing activities for older residents like coffee/tea clubs etc.
Keeping the town clean and tidy is important for tourism as well as residents. Many parts of Hereford are disgraceful at the moment and will deter people from returning. Hotspots - Union Walk and Drybridge underpass!!
Local councils do not have the finances to take on these extra services unless more finance is released to make it possible
Make dog fouling charges huge £500 per poo. Ask the community to cut the local grass; we would happily do so close to our house.
No - they should be given the money to deliver these by HC from savings made through the suggestions in my previous comment. Otherwise this is just double taxation HC will put up its council tax and parishes will do so as well.
No - why should we pay for services twice!

Comments
No additional parish council tax. In Ledbury this has been extremely high in increases over the last 3 years. The reason given, less money received from county budget. I would not mind at 1% increase in line/above inflation. Enough is enough.
No I don't. I pay enough now. Start charging them that pay nothing. 10 flats by me pay nothing, not even one off them.
No I don't. I pay enough now. Start charging them that pay nothing. 10 flats by me pay nothing, not even one off them.
no more than many town and parish councils already do
No- some of these thing should be co ordinated, but on a voluntary basis.
No they shouldn't charge more and should manage their budget more efficiently
No, that would be paying twice effectively for the same services. We are already paying enough, to get nothing out of it.
No, that's just another way of putting council tax up.
No. This is a sparsely populated parish with limited resources. It should not have to pay, for example, for highways which have substantial use by heavy traffic (e.g. quarry, farm, commercial lorries) as it is transacted by the A4110 and fringed by the B4362.
No. this is purely passing the buck and is the responsibility of county council.
Not capable of running bus services
Not really, because the Council is being forced to abandon their responsibilities.
Odd question. There is no space to indicate you don't want further taxation at county or local level. My earnings have steadily declined over the years to the point I earn less now than I did 30 years ago. I have to pay more to take care of myself. There is no NHS (National Health Service) dentistry where I live, prescription charges are high, I have to spend more support on my children's education because of cuts and give more to people in need through charitable donations, because the state can't or won't support people in need. I pay more and more to local/county government each year for fewer and fewer, poorer quality services. This points to government cuts and inefficient local management as the problem.
Only applicable in largely populated councils. Small parish councils that are predominantly elderly could not do this
Parish council shouldn't charge extra, all these are local government's responsibilities. Get on with that, deliver the services!
Parish Councillors are volunteers. Most already work hard, so no organisation of these tasks cannot be added to their work load. It is much better and cost-effective to organise these tasks centrally
Parish Councils are not qualified to manage additional activities. They can barely manage the ones they do already.
Parish councils generally do not have the resources, staffing or economies of scale to do these things efficiently. We do some of them (e.g. organising and underwriting a minibus service) purely to replace things when they are cut and we face a crisis as a result.
Please Keep all existing libraries open.
Please remind me what we pay council tax for
Pressing Herefordshire Council to fulfil its responsibilities fully without question.
Provision of community based demand responsive transport schemes to replace bus subsidies.
rest should be delivered by the council (except 'Grass / hedge cutting' and 'Litter / dog fouling enforcement')
Roads in parts of Ledbury are shameful
Save money by allowing locals to be in charge of communal areas

Comments
Some of these tasks could be done as community service by petty offenders
There is not a 'NO' option! We cannot afford to pay more for services we already pay for unless we just pay-as-we-use for all services.
These should all be funded centrally to ensure fair distribution. If parishes wish to do more, that should be voluntary.
This is a simple attempt to push services away from Herefordshire Council as is an attempt to push the burden of the tax rise on to Parish Councils.
This sort of 'saving' is fraudulent - tax-payers pay the same or more - to another recipient!
Those items I have not ticked are the responsibility of the county council!
Try talking to the parishes rather than dumping your unwanted costs onto them using phoney stats from a biased survey
Very few people actively volunteer to provide these services, whatever response they give in a survey.
We already have volunteers to do all of these - and more - at Weobley.
We already pay more as taken on the assets
We pay for all of the above through council tax now

Appendix A-Q6

Q6a. Please indicate whether you currently volunteer or would be interested in volunteering in the following roles. Other, please specify: There were 54 comments made

Already volunteer
Active Charity Trustee
Already do some gardening by Victoria Bridge
Arts and culture event management of free community events; free talking newspaper for visually impaired/blind people
Church
Cooking breakfast for low income and homeless people, looking after clubbers on Saturday nights
Donating my handmade craft items to charities
Driving for outings - old people
Generally being a responsible citizen/good neighbour
Heartstart
Helping families who need help to get their children to school. We are members of a volunteer group that tidies up & plants wild flowers at the top of Tump Lane in Much Birch & keeps footpath clear for the school children & their parents.
I am a town councillor
I am one of the volunteers who run Weobley library. I am treasurer of our local community magazine.

I volunteered at my local Children's Centre from 2011-14, when I had a baby. I worked as a breastfeeding peer supporter, a parent representative on the Advisory Board, and on the Wye Valley NHS Trust's Baby Friendly Initiative strategy group. I have stopped as my child is now in school. I have just joined the school's PTFA, and 'Transition Leominster', and am interested in joining the 'Grangers' too. I think there is a lot of 'volunteering' that we participate in that goes un-noticed, e.g. visiting elderly neighbours, childminding, helping in emergencies, providing emotional support, and participating in community events.. It's very hard to quantify.
Involvement in voluntary organisations - W.E.A. (Workers educational Association), UA3, etc
Junior Bulls, conservation volunteers
Local Council - NDP Steering - other national charity work
Member of the Parish Council
Parish council
Q5) I work more than full time and have a family. I work all the time, have few opportunities for leisure activity and the little spare time I have I spend with my family. I help out an elderly neighbour when I can and have helped out in schools in the past. I would like to help more but I have no spare time.
Riding for the Disabled, Youth Drama Group
School
School events
Sports coaching
Sports coaching
Stewarding in church
Town Councillor
Trustee for a carers' charity
Trustee of charity and also volunteer at HFC (Hereford Football Club)
Village fundraising for the community centre, church, elderly. I also run the library Friends group, and the amateur dramatic society
Village Hall Trustee
Volunteer and Trustee at Riding for Disabled, Volunteer Hereford Disability United & Director despite using wheelchair
Wildlife, footpaths
Work in community shop
Youth club
Interested in volunteering
All such services require public liability insurance and DRB (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks
Already working full time cannot do any more than I currently do
Charity work. Local information (church Magazine)
Currently help with fund raising for charities, running village hall; happy to help in a library or emergency road clearance work.
Helping the youth group
Helping with the community Lander and the 'spin off' breakfast club.
Homeless, addictions, mental health
I cannot volunteer more widely without a better public transport system (not community transport)
I don't live in an area where these things are needed. If I lived in a town I would consider them or I would volunteer for home-based, back office support.
I litter pick every day as people can or won't put litter in the bins. Try fining them for dropping litter - raise money that way
I volunteer on my neighbourhood plan steering group

I'm the Treasurer to the Village Hall and Community Centre
Information and advice, filling in forms which many older people find daunting.
It might be great the people are happy to do free work but if no one volunteers nothing gets sorted
parish councillor isn't on the list; I'm re-joining the evening
Providing skills improvement and class workshops
Provision of local food bank
Shifting the burden of responsibility to the citizenry does not absolve government of its responsibility for citizens' welfare
These are all council tax jobs
Volunteering is fine for people who have time, but for many people, including myself, opportunities are restricted because of work and family commitments. Also, of course, some people are too infirm to be able to volunteer.

Appendix A-Q7a

Q7a. What do you think the council could do to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses? Other, please specify: There were 104 comments made

Comments
Accelerate high speed broadband rollout - this is a huge imperative and everything else pales in comparison
Assign petty offenders to litter picking - community service could also include grass cutting, hedge trimming, clearing drains
Be pragmatic and finally build a city centre bypass; build new direct roads to connect Hereford to regional motorways in Ross on Wye and Worcester
Better broadband
Better internet access
Better public transport
Bold and visionary thinking on a strategic communications strategy to attract global interest in Herefordshire
Broadband!
Build another river crossing, reduce congestion as many people avoid it altogether
Build new housing in larger estates, not small garden grabs and field infills. Leominster in particular this applies to.

Comments
Build on Herefordshire's strengths, in order to install a pride of place in Herefordians as well as attract more people here. We could build up a capacity and reputation as being leaders in certain fields if we build on what the county offers, and assess what it could offer to future generations. I think its natural environment is an obvious asset, which should be protected and enhanced; otherwise Herefordshire's special qualities would be destroyed. We can forge our own development path - a sustainable one - that creates a more resilient, vibrant place & culture. This would attract people and businesses (sustainable ones!) in itself.
Build some houses please, big shortage, young people moving away.
Bypass in Leominster and Hereford required. Establish proposed STEM University. Better road links to rest of UK, including motorways. Improve train services to London and Birmingham. Fast broadband and better mobile coverage. Housing only if new businesses are coming into the county. Important to encourage a mix of businesses.
Clear litter from edge of roads, put up clear signs (many are very dirty or hidden behind hedges) and make the approaches to our county a lot smarter.
Continue expansion at Rotherwas/Skylon Enterprise Zone
Continue to support bus services
Council needs new people to bring new life to a dying county
Deliver high speed broadband is the main priority
Develop further education facilities
Do not know word "upskill"
Don't make everything town-centric. Allow rural development to flourish. Including development.
Enable social housing development
Encourage businesses to develop worthwhile apprenticeships & schools to develop the skills based education we need.
Encourage more skilled folk to settle in Herefordshire with new skills
Get staff back and keep local services open. Why close local services when you have not got money to spend.
Get superfast broadband connection throughout the county
Get the traffic flowing so that visitors and deliveries can drive into Hereford

Comments
Go out and sell it - workforce availability etc.
Help advertise Herefordshire businesses, including shops and tourist attractions.
Housing for rent
Housing should be linked to infrastructure. E.g. developing Hereford as an employment centre
Ignore it, or move county to south east England. Its geographical position means that agriculture and tourism should be its biggest industries. Location means that, beyond agricultural output, only producers of high value, near-nil-volume goods are likely to be attracted to Herefordshire. Grandiose plans for industry and infrastructure should be abandoned and small/shared/incubator business units developed.
Improve accessibility to public transport
Improve broadband - faster.
Improve broadband connectivity
Improve broadband in the county
Improve bus services to reduce congestion and help local economies
Improve city centre and access to city centre
improve environment more sustainable transport
Improve internet access and connections.
Improve passenger transport
Improve public transport access
Improve public transport network, attracts more spend in localities
Improve public transport so that potential employees can travel to and from work easily.
improve roads and get better broadband and mobile phone connections
Improve roads and public transport, increase wages and create affordable housing. Herefordshire is a very expensive area in which to live and work.
Improve sporting facilities
Improve the conditions of existing infrastructure.

Comments
Improve the public realm in our town centres and villages and maintain public services such as buses. Boost the idea of the county being high tech, green and cut down air and other pollution in Hereford.
Improve the road surfaces - there are huge potholes on many roads
Improve the road system by building roads that will have maximum not minimum impact. Despite Fastershire broadband is still very poor around the county
Improve transport hub facilities
Improve transport links, especially public transport
Improve, not cut bus services
Improved broadband is most important as it would allow more people to work from home or rural offices. Please do not build all over the superb landscape and heritage assets of Herefordshire.
Improvement of infrastructure should not be Hereford focussed as it currently is. Housing development appears to only serve to encourage more people to retire to the county.
Improving public transport (buses/rail/trams) and the timing links between all categories.
Improving public transport is key
Improving the road surfaces and filling potholes that need to be filled. Monitoring speeding traffic through villages
Increase spending & enforcement on litter collection and street cleansing.
Inducements for relocation
Insist government meets its responsibilities ... what is the council actually doing in this regard?
Lobby for better road links into and around Hereford
Lower business rates
Lower the rates. Fix the roads.
Make first impression of town's better, need to look attractive and not send visitors around the backstreets as in Ross before they can find their way to the town centre.
Make the river attractive to walkers, cyclists etc. Definitely get rid of litter.
More leisure facilities and visitor attractions needed in the county. Improve the leisure pool as it needs updating. We need to attract more visitors to spend in the county.

Comments
No more houses!!
Not sure
Pressure the utility companies for better supplies especially IT services. Do the rental charges for properties in town really need to be that high?
Promote business opportunity in Herefordshire as below.
Provide excellent industrial units for rent - energy efficient, good transport networks
Provide free workshops on setting up own business
Provide more and support current entertainment opportunities as outlined in the March 2007 report 'How to retain and attract 18 - 35 year olds to the county'
Provide park and ride as city centre car parking is now too expensive
Provide some sort of support in setting up new business, making it easy rather than difficult
Put more public sector jobs into villages.
rail / roads and public transport to key employment areas
Recognise Ross on Wye as the gateway to the county with the best road links, many industrial opportunities have been lost by focussing on Hereford city when the motorway network begins at Ross.
Reduce car parking charges. Herefordshire Council has done its best to destroy the city. Too much ill-judged 'development' for 'prestige'.
Reduce rates for shops in town. Encourage renewable energy.
Reduction in rates and parking = more business and people visiting the city
Reliable mobile phone and internet throughout the county.
Repair the roads properly (not bodge them up) and get proper fibre broadband to rural areas
Restore some funding to The Courtyard
Rising scale of Tax. i.e. 0% 1st year, 40% 2nd year, 75% 3rd year, 100% 4th year. Give the business time to grow.
Sort out the traffic and parking problems
Sort out traffic congestion

Comments
speed up fibre broadband installation
Stop trying to make bigger it only brings more cost to everything around and does not bring more money in. If it did we would not struggle.
Stop wasting public funds and start offering business incentives to come here.
Superfast broadband needs to be a priority across the whole county
Support business via planning for & building live/work units in local communities. Build flexible, clean, and small to medium industrial units that can be used in for lots of different businesses at reasonable rents.
The new university
The road system is appalling and off putting - as well as high car parking charges.
Transport
Transport, transport, transport, and parking. Traffic in Hereford is bad and parking very excessive. I work from home 3 miles from Hereford but now don't go into town unless I really have too. £5 to park on some rough gravel at Edgar Street is a rip off.
Try some real support for tourism, the biggest part of the county economy rather than your infatuation with small numbers of hi tech jobs
try to make the old town centre a little more appealing to businesses aka a clean-up
University/Higher education.
We need good roads and 1st class broadband to attract businesses and keep young people and those with young families in the county
What does upskill workers mean?
Whatever is done needs to be clearly communicated to residents so we all understand what the councils plans are

Appendix A-Q8

Q8. Is there any other capital investment you think the council should make?

There were 111 comments made

Comments
A bypass. Tidy up grotty footpaths. Jet washes high town and Eign gate and the subways.

Comments
A city centre bypass. Build new direct roads to connect Hereford to regional motorways in Ross on Wye and Worcester.
A joined up network of tourist information hubs
A new Library, essential for a beneficial knowledge climate: see Worcester
A proper cycle path scheme instead of pretending to promote cycling, build a Hereford ring road, promote free parking schemes in the market towns
Achieve the above projects and many problems will be solved.
Additional support for families with young children through Home Start etc.
Advice Services - Citizens Advice/Partnership
Become more involved with improving Hereford library (Broad Street). A centre to improve the lives of those in the community.
Better public transport in Hereford - you don't need more roads, just to discourage (by providing a good alternative) the plethora of local cross-city trips that clog the place up, e.g. the school run. Better broadband connectivity helps, too. And finding ways to keep high-value office jobs in the city centre, not shifting them all to Rotherwas will pay massive dividends in city centre regeneration, which begins a virtuous circle of growth and recovery. Sending jobs to Rotherwas so the city becomes an employment wasteland, apart from retail is extremely short sighted. Hereford is your main and only real prospect of securing jobs growth. Everywhere else the costs of making them appealing are simply not worth it.
Better road surfaces
Better roads
Boost existing businesses by ensuring and advertising bus routes to them, e.g. provide bus services from Hereford city centre and Ross to Ross Labels and various tourist attractions within Herefordshire. The Wye Valley is a hotspot for tourism, but more people from within Herefordshire could day trip there with better advertising and transport services. This would encourage people to spend money locally on buses and small local businesses rather than hopping on a train to Barry Island (which is easier than getting to the Wye Valley from Hereford city) and spending their money where we won't benefit.
Build a by-pass round Hereford. Upgrade all A roads Improve bus services. Support village infrastructure - e.g. village hub buildings such as village halls
Build a new library / museum.
Build at least one bridge across the wye in Hereford near the centre - not a by-pass. Traffic wishes to get in and out of Hereford. Park and Ride. Improved cycle lanes and cycle routes - and actually carry these projects through. The St Owen street contraflow has been cancelled at least twice already - will it be 3rd time lucky?
Build council houses. That's it. Build houses for people to live in.
By pass around Ross from Walford to Hildersly!!
By-pass and new river crossing on the west of the city
Bypass in Leominster and Hereford required. Establish proposed STEM University. Better road links to rest of UK, including motorways. Improve train services to London and Birmingham. Fast broadband and better mobile coverage. Vital to invest in tourism. Ideal industry as it will both promote the best assets and retains the values and ethos of the county. Establish a 'Golden Valley' National Park or AONB (Areas of Outstanding natural Beauty) and build appropriate facilities (cycling, footpaths etc.) to make it accessible and enjoyable to visitors.
Children services as it saves money in the long run
Complete Ledbury by-pass, to include access to strategic housing site, North of the Viaduct, from the A438 Hereford Rd, underneath the Viaduct.
Create a by pass for Hereford

Comments
Create a sports park which is state-of-the-art - encouraging a diverse range of activities and sports for all abilities.
Creation of improved public transport facilities in Hereford and market towns.
Cycle paths and bus improvements to help people to travel
deliver high speed broadband is the main priority
Develop further education facilities
Ensure that social care is appropriately funded particularly in rural areas
Ensure that the council considers the artistic, creative and cultural needs of the people both young and old.
Fund and support H.V.O.S.S. (Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service) because if you are needing more volunteers to support the services you are responsible for you will need their experience in co-coordinating efforts to maximum efficiency.
Get moving on the western relief road
Get rid of it's most inefficient buildings and build / buy / refurbish buildings so that it owns and occupies an estate of efficient buildings that cost far less to run, as per the new HARC (Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre)
Hereford bypass
Herefordshire pays some of the lowest wages in the UK, yet it is a very expensive county to live in. A high percentage of workers only earn minimum wage or the National Living Wage. Perhaps the council could spend some money to educate employers to pay better wages. After all, if you pay peanuts - you get monkeys!
How about supporting public transport and not trashing it? Increased investment in sports and fitness - I have never seen so many fat 20-somethings as there are in this county: a long-term cost to the NHS. A water sports centre (sailing/rowing etc.) on the old gravel pits at Marden is a no-brainer. Promotion of cycling is also a no-brainer - a 'tour de Herefordshire'? Our country roads are perfect.
Ignore it, or move county to south east England. Its geographical position means that agriculture and tourism should be its biggest industries. Location means that, beyond agricultural output, only producers of high value, near-nil-volume goods are likely to be attracted to Herefordshire. Grandiose plans for industry and infrastructure should be abandoned and small/shared/incubator business units developed.
Improve Broadband connectivity
Improve city centre and access to city centre
Improve provision of cycle paths-perhaps by encouraging farmers to provide space beside roads and giving them favourable publicity when they do so.
Improve public transport
Improve roads
Improve roads and infrastructure
Improve the roads that we already have. Stop building roads over our beautiful countryside. Work out sustainable transport measures instead. Turn the city into a no car zone and make it a cycling mecca. Look at the visionary tram idea.
Improve tourist infrastructure
Improve traffic congestion
Improve transport infrastructure
Improve transport infrastructure for public transport.

Comments
Improve/provide lighting and cameras on footpaths and cycle lanes.
Improved access/road improvements specifically aimed at rural tourism improvements. E.g. cycle/footpath across Backney bridge that connects rural villages to Ross-on-Wye.
Improved Bus/Rail facilities, bus priority schemes, not just cycle paths!
Increase digital resources - libraries, public space, etc. Use increased analytics to deliver core services more effectively. Increased promotion of how people can use services most effectively.
Increase the amount spent on the county's roads - this will help reduce the spend on remedial works
Intensive support and assessment for children who are failing in education and are excluded from school. This group of children are very expensive, frequently go onto commit crimes and are easily led into taking drugs etc. This could be avoided if their needs were properly assessed whilst in school and if necessary treatment provided. Also if their families were supported during this time, their outcomes are much improved, enhancing the lives of each member of the family, whilst reducing the cost to the tax payer. Resources to fund a team of people to do this work would be at a minimal cost and save money in education, law enforcement, health (better mental health, fewer attendances at A and E (Accidents and Emergency) etc.)
Invest in their local small businesses and help them grow.
Invest in training to up skill council employees and then cut down expensive interim consultants who eats public money.
Invest to save in projects that deliver energy savings and income from renewables - especially council buildings and industrial estate properties
Keep the libraries open, they are a huge source of information and books that would be incredibly difficult to get otherwise! It is vital! Thanks.
Library service
Look to development of its property assets as opposed to selling them for others to develop, so that the council sees the full return or is able to control what is developed based on the county needs.
Lower rates for local shops and garages so that they can stay open and support people who work from home.
Make all new housing developments install Gerry waste water & sewage systems that are cheaper than conventional systems, look attractive and clean more effectively.
Make first impression of town's better, need to look attractive and not send visitors around the backstreets as in Ross before they can find their way to the town centre.
Mental health services. Careers advice/support in school and for adults
More capital investments to create long term savings (if the money stacks up correctly) such as placing solar or other technologies on/in buildings. Or stop using buildings where it would cost too much to retrofit these and work out if getting rid of these buildings and building something new which will save in the future would bring longer term savings. I can't see how selling off assets for other businesses to make profit out of them by converting them is going to benefit the council in the long term.
Need to attract quality employers not just in Hereford itself. Barriers are available buildings and the labour force is not skilled for the 21st century.
New bus station
New transport hubs fit for the 21st century or in Hereford's case even the 20th century!
Next phase of link road?
No. They have more than enough on which most of the time they cannot handle
Not given the current financial climate
Offer more leisure facilities for the County, new cycle track

Comments
Park and ride
Please ensure that the current plans are carried out. Housing is expensive, roads are atrociously maintained. Some council buildings are unfit for purpose - lack of appropriate toilet facilities Tec.
Provide subsidised flats to attract teachers, police, and nurses. Give them priority over non-workers. Build more 1 bedroom flats in 3 storey buildings for young and elderly. Build 2 and 3 bedroom terrace houses (more efficient use of land). Good to build on brown field sites.
Provision of county-wide community transport mini-buses, together with computer facilities to enable sharing of assets/drivers.
Quasi fixed capital investment in human resources to increase skill base.
Repair roads properly and stop wasting money of pointless short term pot hole filling that last no more than weeks and hold infrastructure providers (notably Open reach) to account for their failure to deliver reliable fibre broadband to rural areas
Repairing roads.
Ring road and another bridge over the river to ease traffic traveling into and through town. Stop artic lorry's needing to drive through the centre of Hereford
Ring road needs finishing! Car parking in Hereford needs extending and Kilpeck station would make a good park & ride or parkway. 1) Sustain key local services 2) Create jobs and get local people into work 3) Attract and secure inward investment 4) Improve connectivity through road improvements - ring road needs finishing. Provide better broadband connectivity - not all of us have computers. Enable new housing development - where?
Road and transport improvements to keep the city moving.
Roads, especially ring road to the east
Roads.
Rural cycle paths. I live along the A4110 and you would be mad to cycle along it (though people do), given the heavy lorries and farm machinery that uses the road. There's no pavement either. A cycle path into Leominster from Mortimers Cross would be marvellous - I'd use it for shopping and recreation, as would my husband and children.
Schools need investment - many of them are very shabby. It sets a bad example to our aspirational youngsters.
Small projects that create multiple values for people and the environment (along the principles mentioned in Q.3) decided by a process of shared problem-solving and co-design (elaborated on in Q.9)
Sort out the traffic problems in the city centre
Specific to Ledbury - Connect road underneath viaduct for strategic housing. Improve broadband connectivity
Spend less/much less on wasteful items e.g. most of what is currently being done now and in the past
Stop trying to make bigger it only brings more cost to everything around and does not bring more money in. If it did we would not struggle.
Support for home-workers using the improved broadband connection to make effective use of online workforce and reduce employment related transport difficulties.
Supporting long term unemployed people to get jobs. This would also have the benefit of reducing the financial support the council has to provide to them e.g. Housing benefits etc.
Sustainable transport. investing in tourism focusing on the river Wye
Target attractiveness of market towns for inward investment. Really need a market towns project. Infrastructure investment should consider surgeries etc. in areas of high housing growth

Comments
Target one or two high tech industries that could set-up significant businesses in the area without concern for our relative isolation.
The area is known for a lot of negative things, such as the transport being poor, the roads full of potholes , the buses not running on time, the council has a lot of things that could be promoted and used to its advantage: the blind college produces a lot of talented students, why not try to develop these skills further, promote that as bigger thing create a unique skill set that shows the council is disability aware and promoting it. Which would help to develop staff here and residents to increase knowledge would benefit all the area could be promoted by using its quietness to bring in larger office based business from places like London to have their office here. Need to increase the internet speed but push the business advantage of working here and bringing in new skill to the area is the first to develop a big business here. Bring in someone like Thorne EMI again bring in JCB type business frame to develop a trade framework, investment in the roads and transport links could be vital. Repair them quickly, look at areas such as Sweden where they develop road repair systems which repair stretches by digging up whole patches and then relaying it behind so no patch work roads. Be the first in country to do this. Increase the councils presence with a trade, promote it so brings in more business as there is nothing really that stands out business wise as Bulmer's has been sold off the other companies that used to be a icon of. Herefordshire no longer stand out even the Hereford cattle is no longer unique and stand out for our area. We need to stand out stand up and be proud shout about how good we are as a county as we can be better than the low position we have dropped to in amazing places in the UK.
The bypass is a priority.
The Hereford Enterprise Zone is not as successful as an enterprise zone should be because Hereford is remote, nowhere near the motorway network so not attractive. Time is a big factor. It takes too long to get to Hereford from anywhere. Time is money. New housing is only selling very slowly, so plans to build 1000s more seem misplaced. Much better to invest in tourism, culture and agricultural/horticultural/food/drink excellence to put Herefordshire on the map.
There needs to be some provision for youth, this could reduce damage caused in parks etc.
Trade, Tourism and International Awareness promotion to elevate Herefordshire's visibility in Europe, the United States and other global regions
Traffic calming
Transport Interchange at the Railway Station.
Transport projects such as providing bus real time info, smart ticketing , and transport interchange fit for purpose.
What is Herefordshire's unique selling proposition? Why would businesses want to come any further west than Worcester, Gloucester or Bristol.
Whatever is done needs to be clearly communicated to residents so we all understand what the councils plans are
Widen Belmont road or do something to reduce the traffic, similarly the Newtown road stretch at the end of Edgar street.
Work with the MP and central government. Go approve funding for all things.
Yes, as above. The new university.
You've identified the important areas but Hereford needs a bypass NOW

Appendix A-Q9

Q9. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions how we could deliver services in a different way? There were 119 comments made.

Comments
A clear vision of what Herefordshire Council can actually do - in numbers, not vague aspirational vocabulary - would make an enormous difference.
Access to centralised enquiry team via live video pods in supermarkets/petrol stations/pubs (in rural areas) or by web portal. Production of apps to assist in reporting potholes, blocked gullies etc. via android / apple phones.
As I noted above - scrap BBLP and bring in house. Stop moving offices around the city - don't spend money on a building for offices and then move in a few years It is like deckchairs on the titanic
As stated before, another local government restructure to re-join Worcestershire or link up with Shropshire / Gloucestershire. The traditional 'county' services like social services can be delivered from that regional organisation and parishes do the more local services. But that doesn't mean parishes raising their council tax precept, they should simply get a cut of the massive savings to be made by economies of scale from joining up, so the whole thing is cost neutral and council tax payers see their money go further.
As well as the possible tiring of service buy-in and voluntary charitable giving on the council tax bill, you could consider the idea of rationalizing your benefits/fraud service and switching to a countywide universal living payment. Most research into universal payment schemes show them to be progressive and beneficial with lower running costs. You could merge all your services into one building in each town, so that a library would also contain the TI, CAB, careers advice and other walk-in support services. In Leominster, for instance, you could move the fire station onto the enterprise area and sell off the riverside site. Or sell off (or stop renting) the library, TI and CAB buildings, relocate the fire station and use the riverside site to build this larger central council facility which could include gallery and presentation space, but only if it might give a net capital gain. You could use this investment to build something of real national/international architectural merit and interest to encourage businesses and tourists as well as increase patronage.
Be more efficient - improve council employee's efficiency
Being more creative and valuing staff.
Better access to online services and info via email/web/social media
Better support for carers and young carers
Bring back in house external work such as Highways and Hoople, why pay someone else to earn a profit from the council? Of course we all know the consultation will be ignored as last year with cutting of bus services.
Build flats or house or garages on spare ground in Vicarage St, to stop parking and dumping scrap car. Up to 7 at a time. We who live there have had to get moved. Q1) Paid for my bus pass, paying taxes for 48 years at work
Build flats or house or garages on spare ground in Vicarage St, to stop parking and dumping scrap car. Up to 7 at a time. We who live there have had to get moved. Q1) Paid for my bus pass, paying taxes for 48 years at work
Build the bypass at Hereford and E-W bypass at Leominster.
Build your own care homes for the elderly so that you don't have to pay the huge fees charged by profit making private enterprise care homes.
Bulk buying of everything with other local authorities. Monday - Friday working and Wednesday - Sunday working with Monday/Tuesday off so less Lorries less cost. When recycling contract due do the above so less capital and less cost for company. Cut rights of way budget. Look at in house efficiency and ways to be more effective.

Comments
Challenge the idea that Herefordshire can only survive if it builds a new large-scale business economy. The location is against that, while money is being wasted trying to promote it. Stop wasting money and focus on natural assets.
Communication needs to be better - most people don't know how decisions are made of that we could in fact have a voice - it just seems that decisions are made from top down. Give your people a voice and make it more accessible for them to do so!
Contact with public officers to reduce wasting time trying to source correct department.
Continue to roll out energy saving initiatives and renewable energy options and initiatives around the County.
Customer contact and advice, emergency support and others could benefit, cost wise, from sharing services with other county councils.
Cut Adult care. Sorry but it takes far too much of the budget and frankly we have had it good we baby boomers. It's time to give the youngsters a chance. As for devolving services to parishes What a joke. The councillors are volunteers and the clerks are part time. We have neither the time or expertise to take on these sort of projects. Didn't we get rid of District Councils who did these jobs?
Delegate as much local services to Parish and Town Councils with the funding to deliver it. Taken on as many central government roles as possible that relate to Herefordshire if the funding is available to help deliver them. Don't rely on volunteers delivering services but encourage and support them as much as possible where they do want to take on services.
Delivering services using volunteers is NOT a cost free exercise, especially if delivering services in people's homes. To protect vulnerable children and adults and to deliver a quality service that meets legal requirements and follows good practice guidelines, means forward planning, understanding what is to be delivered and employing a robust volunteer coordinator. Volunteers need to be recruited, trained, and supervised regularly. There needs to be a clear system off discipline and grievance management to support good volunteers and weed out unsuitable ones.
Demand businesses in the new market development and the enterprise zone to pay business rates.
Distribute some funds to Parish Councils to establish Community projects to maintain rural environment and facilities.
Efficient managerial staff - good training for your staff - stops relying on internet for everything as it is too time consuming and causes problems for people which could be solved with the correct face to face contact.
Either commission services on a needs basis, or commission on an economy of scale basis in partnership with Shropshire. Trying to commission on an economy of scale basis for Herefordshire alone does not make good business due to the population size.
Ensuring close continuity between county health & social services so that funding is used as effectively as possible. Consider libraries as an educational & community asset, often the only such asset in small communities, therefore justifying adequate funding.
Explore more business type opportunities. I think much has already been achieved and budget cuts have already been really difficult. Duplication has been reduced, it already seems like the bare minimum / statutory function is delivered.
Filling potholes when first seen buy Balfour Beaty.
Focus on finishing tasks that are started before starting new ones and failing to complete any well.
Funding market town improvements will encourage tourism.
Genuinely work in partnership with parish councils instead of the disdain you have exhibited for years.
Have a more proactive communication with residents. The Cabinet system is extremely undemocratic.

Comments
<p>Have greater consultations with the Market Towns, to demonstrate fairness and equality, services are too City centric. Parish Council's should receive a percentage of Council Tax collected, i.e. 20%, for the local delivery of services that are being devolved by the County to satisfy the short term savings, e.g. grass cutting, toilets, libraries/local services, litter collection, etc. The Parish Councils could probably do it more efficiently and cheaper, but need the funding, we cannot keep raising the precept's, that's double taxation. If you do it for CIL, it can be done for Council Tax.</p>
<p>Having today visiting Ross on Wye customer council services today I was so impressed by the excellent service I received, in every way. I can only say, Ross office should go to the top of the class.</p>
<p>Herefordshire Council has over the last few years completely abdicated its responsibilities to maintaining the health and well being of its citizenry by buying into a system of austerity promulgated by a right wing government that favours the 'haves' over the 'have nots'. It is shameful that the council has not taken any measures to ensure that the vulnerable and the dispossessed are not increasingly side-lined in the face of such greed and, in fact, has assisted in this subjection of its population.</p>
<p>Herefordshire is a beautiful place to live but not a place to grow old in. The council has no money or ideas to improve services, the hospital is in special measures and the infrastructure is at risk of collapse.</p>
<p>I am recently arrived into Herefordshire and will consider ways to improve service delivery during the coming months.</p>

Comments
<p>I care about Herefordshire, and don't want to see services cut to the bone. Services could in fact be delivered in radically different ways, if we could only dare to think differently... (And I hope this message gets to senior managers, executives, and council members). When there are cutbacks, the first casualties are our ability to be creative, innovate, and freely associate ideas - yet these are the very things we need in order to be resilient to change. (And I mean the resilience of the county, and of the Council itself.) Often, we do things 'the way they have always been done', and find it hard to readjust what we do to be fit for purpose, because we can no longer see the woods for the trees. This is exactly when we need a reality check. Here are a few suggestions: - Designing projects and delivering services together. Delivery-level staff across diverse departments can achieve a lot when given the opportunity to put their heads together often, collectively share problems, and come up with ideas that address more than one issue. Not only does this reduce the instances of working at cross-purposes, or duplicating work, but it also generates increased efficiency in that multiple benefits are reaped - i.e. 'win-win' situations. (e.g. a project based on flood-defence issues could also create habitats contributing to ecological resilience, increase access to the outdoors, generate energy, create opportunities for recreation, tourism, etc., etc...) Co-design can be expanded on to include partner organisations. - Taking a long-term approach, and addressing the 'root causes' of problems. It takes guts to take a proactive approach in reactive times, but it is entirely necessary for our efforts to be sustainable. It represents huge savings in the long term, if not the short (e.g. addressing children's health and wellbeing now means healthier adults in the future; creating a true 'pride of place' reduces littering & antisocial behaviour...) - though some interventions would possibly produce short-term benefits too. - Involving people, the Council could be reaping much added value from involving citizens in decision-making, and in contributing to its aims. If people are engaged properly, then they will not feel coerced, but empowered to participate in improving their own communities. This has to be done carefully (as mentioned before), which communicating clearly - in terms that we all understand, through media we access easily (including digital engagement, e.g. twitter opinion polls - but not abandoning other means, e.g. having paper forms at the library, along with a friendly member of staff!), and most importantly in language that emphasises shared ownership and responsibility, and dissolves the boundary between 'authority' and 'service user'. Overwhelmingly, increasing transparency and openness generates goodwill and trust. More events could be held to engage the public with decisions about the things that matter most to them, and involve them in delivery where appropriate (e.g. Sydonia Park, Leominster - first a community meeting was held to find out what people wanted for their local park, then a volunteering day was held to carry out some of the work - having the added benefit of bringing the community together, building social coherence). Also, the Council could be publishing more Open Data, enabling businesses, education establishments, community-builders and interested citizens to engage with the issues we grapple with as a county, and offer solutions. Additional ideas:- Sharing resources with other public services where it makes sense to do so (this is probably already being done) - Offering contracts to local businesses, using local supply chains wherever possible. Encouraging a circular economy. - Income-generating activities, and maximising use of assets, as mentioned before.</p>
<p>I think the Public Realm budget is seen as an easy option for cuts; Herefordshire roads are in dire need of investment and it is extremely short sighted of the Council to neglect investment now for short term budgetary gain.</p>
<p>I think we need to see more community involvement but not have all volunteers who do not cost anything but still have a "hike" in our council tax to keep the middle management in posts.</p>
<p>Implement a can do policy to replace the current you must not policy - move on, make it happen instead of finding reasons not to.</p>
<p>Important to protect services like CAB, social care</p>
<p>Improve back office functions and processes to reduce waste. Re-tender expensive contracts. Merge with neighbouring authorities. Improve Joint working with partnerships. Put social services out to tender.</p>
<p>Improve efficiency within the council. Reduce internal waste within the council</p>
<p>Improve internal communication- council online presence to stimulate innovation.</p>

Comments
Improve key local services. No further cuts in public transport.
In the 14 years I have lived in the county I have seen so much money wasted. Just stop all the foolish spending. Amalgamate with Worcester or Shrewsbury (yes!!) and save a fortune in duplicated administration and services. Abandon corrupt cabinet system.
Invest in turning local assets into Social enterprises and look to see how council smallholdings could become the hub of local community enterprises etc.
It gets frustrating that you cut so many services but raise the council tax!! I don't care about adult social care!!
It is outrageous that the council has overspent and is coming cap in hand to ask us for more money. Who is in charge of the budget? Where are the priorities? There is still no Hereford Library! Why? Who thought it would be better to have some arty crap in the new shopping centre? Why do you keep building roads that don't go anywhere? Look at Hereford's local needs and respond in a sensible manner. I despair at the level of waste and the pie-in-the-sky schemes. What a waste!
It is very important to take into consideration safeguarding of vulnerable people - all volunteers should be vetted to ensure safety and no abuse - they should also receive adequate training for the roles they wish to volunteer for. Many organisations help in Herefordshire to protect the vulnerable - it is important that Herefordshire Council appreciate the work they do with the meagre funding they get - so should spend wisely on continuing to help these charities to continue in operation.
It is vital in this widespread rural County to keep access to Council services in the Market Towns, especially important in ageing communities. It's likely there will be cuts to transport and people will not be able to travel as easily so there will be an increased risk of isolation. Not everyone has the skills/knowledge/capability to go digital. Not everyone can afford to go digital. Not everyone is able to access free online services. Those living in more isolated areas are likely to have problems with network/phone signals. For those who are able to go digital - have the systems and network speeds to support this. Have robust online application forms etc. Have automated phone systems.
Keep bus services open and add later buses so people can get evening jobs if they don't have access to a car.
Keep Libraries and council offices open in Ross and Leominster market towns
Less bureaucracy means more time for staff to deliver services.
Less job-sharing - it is not efficient to have several people doing parts of a job - customers often have to wait till their contact is in before making any progress with a query.
Look at the systems used and ask why we are using so many systems to store people's details on when one will suffice. Why not use the information given to the various officers to actually look at services needed develop these to meet needs. If more people require the social service than need grass cutting why not look at putting more money in to that then looking at bring in teams from colleges such as Holme lacy to cut the grass and give a qualification for doing it. Use groups that would benefit from doing things as well as the county would. Look at the system Ross town council employed to recycle in previous years to get metal items, then they could collect more items for recycling would bring in skills to the charity users as it was people with additional needs who collected items helps with day groups and interaction skills for users. There are lots of things that could be done if people actually looked at the way they share information and asked for help. Use groups in the community as friends and partners not enemies, promote things that benefit the community not fight them speak to people not just other Cllrs and managers get out and about be more approachable. I work with in the council and this council is near impossible to speak to anyone to deliver any ideas to they are all dismissed and blown out of water for pointless groups of meetings that do nothing but waste time and money. The council needs to re-embrace the resident's views and be approachable to new ideas but also old ones. Look at the comments shared by residents not highly paid workers who don't live in the county and barely work from here either speaks to members of staff on front line in person not just by questionnaires.
Look to amalgamate services with Worcestershire.

Comments
Maintenance of roads in the county is clearly a low priority and significantly underfunded with oversight failure. These matters need addressing urgently before minor roads revert to cart tracks.
Make better use of the Children's Centre building, give access to providers to hire rooms in the evenings and weekends.
Make decisions about supporting local charities that deliver services to the vulnerable and needy in a more timely way. Currently it is impossible to plan services more than a few months ahead.
Maximize cost effectiveness of service delivery, ensuring contractors deliver what is required and tightening contracts
More choice
More cost effectively!
More customer facing staff.
More on line services and self help plus a reduction in management
One large state of the art County Library (out of town -Hereford e.g. Rotherwas) with excellent internet connections, skilled qualified Librarians, reading room for reference/Local History study. Plus a book/information delivery/collection (as in Amazon) throughout the county, delivered either by post/courier or drop in to local store, shop, garage, charity shop etc. with delivery van to take out and return. This would save the cost of expensive libraries at Leominster/Ross/Ledbury etc. while still providing books and information for those who need them and provide a good Professional information service to business user. Resurrect a peripatetic Professional children's Librarian to visit schools and advise on children's reading - expensive but still cheaper and more effective than multi-centre static libraries. Sorry, I did not fill in the Library Questionnaire but I missed the date as I was not aware of it.
Outsource/put out for tender council work/projects to enable more competitive pricing and control on spending.
Performance management of 'poor' staff within the council to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
Please save our library. We have a great team of volunteers who staff the community library but understand we may be closed to save money. This would be a huge loss to the community.
Pleased with service that BBLP provide
Positively encourage and offer contracts to non profit making social enterprises who have the interests of the community at their heart and minimise the use of public and private companies who are driven by profit and the bonuses of Directors and have no interest in the needs of the community
Providing services jointly with neighbouring authorities. The only thing that prevents this sort of thing happening is self-interest of senior managers and politicians.
Pushing services down to parish council budgets is hugely unfair. You need to control your costs and not simply move them to other places just because they do not have the budget constraints that you have. Cut your own unnecessary costs, including the ridiculous administration burden of the council.
Radical redesign of rural transport subsidies, to encourage community transport schemes. Protection of library and cultural services and closer integration with education services, at all (primary, secondary and tertiary levels.
Reduce costs by bringing services back in house, such as Hoople and Balfour Beatty, why pay their profit margin?
Reduce money spent on wasteful projects such as creating tree lined boulevards in South Wye and paying for interim staff.
Reduce the number of parish councils (merge smaller ones with neighbouring parishes), thus enabling them to better support Herefordshire Council
Reduce the senior management headcount

Comments
Reinvest in council services rather than lining the pockets of private companies. Support charities and organisations working with young homeless adults - they are our future and should be given as much help as possible at the start of their lives - without a secure housing base we are nothing and can become nothing. Without support they end up costing society more in the long term.
Repairs to the infrastructure please can they be done at night. Hereford was grid locked during August. Better IT services for the public in libraries. I'm helping when/if Hereford re-opens it will be much faster. More displays in council buildings regarding the various aspects the council covers and when they are being promoted.
Retain the core expertise in-house who know the county and how it functions, and review services fully that are being delivered against robust value for money criteria, to ensure that informed decisions are made based on real costs of delivering the service and the community impact.
Return to using Amey, not Balfour Beatty
Run the council as a business
Seamless services. Public services that talk to each other and work together to provide seamless services for the public needing/using them. Systems that are compatible and do the job properly.
See attached <letter attached is included in the appendix A-Q9a>
See no 8 please
Send district nurses and other health care workers to elderly at home more; allow visits to be longer. Give students career advice at age 14 or 15 so they can consider options while there is still a chance to get required courses in school. Make sure all in county speak, read & write English. Translators are an unnecessary expense. Anyone using them should be charged full price.
Share services with neighbouring authorities. More volunteers in more libraries. Insist that government recognises that Herefordshire has particular challenges (sparse population, wide range of small businesses below the rates threshold, few large businesses) and so needs appropriate funding to make up the shortfall that is inevitable if the county is to rely on business rates alone to make up the shortfall from a reducing government contribution.
Sort out the school buses, public buses are dangerous and currently children are standing up on busy routes which is UNSAFE and is leaving some parents worried about their children's safety.
Stop advertising free activities (e.g. visiting the Black & White House or nature trail walks) and start stimulating the local economy by advertising local activities that need to be paid for. Tourist information should inform people of where best to spend their money across Herefordshire, not how best to save it.
Stop letting contracts to the private sector. Properly managed the Council could deliver services for less cost. The profits currently made by the private sector could be used to deliver more services avoiding such severe cuts.
Stop spending on useless projects. Hire some new people with new, better ideas ... too much of the same old stuff and Herefordshire is going nowhere.
Stop the active village grant, no one wants it, its a low take up and costs loads
Support development of professional arts and crafts in Herefordshire Support further education to provide skilled workforce.
Take back control of the 'contracted out' services, and review them as council run activities. Better accountability and control of spending will follow.
The capital projects list makes a depressing litany of projects focused on Hereford city and on Council Officers obsessions. It, with the exception of schools, fails to reflect tax-payers aspirations. There should be no optional capital spending until finances are stable and sustainable - boring and challenging for officers but what residents would wish.
The fact that Hereford has no proper library is appalling

Comments
The highway bridges and roads are declining in condition rapidly due to under investment, they need further maintenance investment to keep them open
The main thing is to lobby central government to stop the austerity budget which is having such a negative impact on our rural economy
The Parish Council considers that Herefordshire Council should be able to increase Council Tax above 2% to counteract cuts in central government funding. However, the requirement to hold a referendum to do this makes this option unavailable in practice, as it is unlikely that a majority of taxpayers would vote in favour for increased taxes, and the cost of such a referendum would therefore be a waste of scarce resources. Central government should be told that these rules are a restriction on the rights of elected councillors to take local decisions on local matters, and a cynical attempt to avoid responsibility for the catastrophic impacts of central government funding cuts. Central government would not seek a referendum on increasing taxes for exactly the same reasons, so why should they impose this requirement on local government?
There is too much expenditure on road building and maintenance rather than on public realm and basic services. If you compare Hereford, which has aspirations to be a university city, with other medium sized cities it looks very car dominated, dirt and threadbare.
Think ahead and not having to be in a 'catch-up' situation all the time i.e. be proactive and not reactive. If this means employing new forward thinking people so be it.
Thinking still seems to be disjointed and there is no focus on maintaining what makes the county so unique. It seems that the Council is actually hell-bent on destroying the character of the county rather than supporting it. In my mind, this hardly qualifies as a consultation - there is no substance to the questions that properly reflects the complex issues that need to be balanced to achieve the necessary savings.
This survey does not let respondents give a view on the full list of proposals for cutting the budget 2017-2020
Try and share with neighbouring authorities. Do not expect parishes to be able to fill the gaps; they are not skilled enough at present and it is very hard to go from a standing start to do new services responsibly.
Undertake meaningful consultation- listen to feedback received.
Use capital funding for planned highway maintenance, and street lighting, thereby reducing pressure on revenue budget. Replacing broken pedestrian and equestrian bridges, and funding small improvements to the rights of way network.
Use online as much as possible and scale back in person and phone services so that those who can use online find it much more attractive rather than queueing or hanging on the phone. Those unable to use the web will then be an ever decreasing minority needing to use expensive in-person or phone services and they can be scaled back then dropped.
Value the existing voluntary organisation that you already support and please don't reduce their funding without serious discussions as to the longer term impact of such decisions. Reducing funding for one will possibly increase pressure on another.
We don't use communal areas, we don't use leisure services, public transport, nurseries, any type of social care etc. I seriously think that the government in general, not just councils, should only make people pay taxes for the services they use. Means test things like bus passes, OAP rates for services etc., television licences, winter fuel allowances. Stop giving high earners free nursery care etc. If we stopped handing out 'freebies' to the people who can easily afford to pay instead, I'm sure everyone, especially the needy would benefit.
What funds does the council get from the EU? If any, we don't know yet how this might/will change.
Work as one team for the good of the people of Herefordshire. If you want to be the best and have a tidy county you must work with all to maintain roads, litter picking, cut hedging, clean road signs, and maintain bins and so on and so on.

Comments
<p>Yes - get rid of Balfour Beatty & its pathetic random pothole patching. Get rid of Balfour Beatty blokes wandering aimlessly with leaf blowers (what job they are doing heaven knows). Get rid of more useless council employees on inflated salaries (£98000+). Revive Hereford old town - currently plagued with dark doors & charity shops. Provide improved public transport links to and from Hereford city. Day and night. PS lastly!! Please stop doing these 'surveys' in summer when everyone is away and parish councils do not meet.</p>
<p>Yes, bring services in house, do not commission profit making companies at councils expense</p>
<p>Yes, by designing consultations that actually work, where are your budget proposals? This exercise is yet another waste of money. Save money by cancelling the High Town upgrade project. Bring back trees into High town and the centre of Hereford.</p>
<p>Yes, stop giving in to certain groups just because they shout the loudest. They certainly do not speak for the majority of the county, but a very tiny proportion. Stand by your convictions, instead of back tracking.</p>
<p>You have to make a stronger case to central Government about the unique challenges of the rural landscape in which we live. At the moment you actively discriminate against people who don't live in towns, but giving them either much poorer services, or none at all. This is unfair. You should strive harder to use the villages as an asset. They offer cheap accommodation for businesses, and a very can-do attitude among their residents. But they also need support. Poor families struggle to find work when there is so little public transport. There are no customer service centres in villages, to help poorer people access services and benefits. Yet people in similar circumstances that happen to live in towns, get access to a wide range of services and help. This is unfair, and needs to be addressed. Village populations are ageing fast, and while volunteers may be able to help now, in the next 5-10 years they will become too old to do so, and will be in need of services themselves. These short-sighted cuts exercises are leaving threadbare services that will not be able to cope in the future. You need to start take a longer-term approach.</p>

Chief Executive's Office

18 AUG 2016

Issued to:

Knownledged:

KINGTON TOWN COUNCIL



QUALITY
TOWN
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Mr. Alistair Neill
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HR4 0LE

Friday 16th January 2015

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL 2017/18 BUDGET CONSULTATION

Dear Mr. Neill,

Kington Town Council wishes to express its concern about the consultation that is being carried out by Herefordshire County Council in relation to its future budget. It will comment specifically on the budget proposals at a later date, but at this point wishes to note some issues in relation to the questionnaire that can be returned both by members of the public and by representatives of organisations.

Whilst the first page of the consultation document does have a side box which gives access to a range of documents, at no point does the main text suggest that people should read the Directorate Savings proposals document nor the other documents before completing the questionnaire. After one brief paragraph, you reach a box which says "Complete the online 2017/18 budget consultation questionnaire". We would suggest that most people are likely to go straight to the questionnaire without reading any of the documentation, which in any case is long and complex. This therefore means that many of the following questions are likely to be answered without due regard for the complex issues which lie behind the questions and the decisions that the council is likely to take in relation to its budget.

We would also like to comment specifically on the questions as asked in the document:

Town Clerk
Gwilym J. Rippon Member ILCM, Cert HE Ceg

Question 1 is about charges for council services – it notes that the council already charges for a number of services, but does not say which ones. The question asks if the respondent is willing to support an increase in charges above the level of inflation – how can you answer this question without more information about what levels of charges are currently levied and which services could see increased charges? To find out this information requires close reading of documentation.

Question 2 asks about increase in council tax – but again, does not say on the form what an increase could fund or protect. Whilst a range of background documents are provided and can be accessed, how many respondents are likely to do this and therefore answer the question in an informed way?

Question 3 is about savings and asks for ideas – a write-in box. It requires the respondent to go back to the first page of the consultation and to know that to see proposed savings, you have to click on Directorate Savings Proposals. You then have to return to the questionnaire to continue. The Directorate Savings Proposals are quite long and complex.

Question 4 is where the problems really start. The question is posed with a lead-in that says that as part of last year’s consultation, over half of respondents thought that town and parish council, community groups or voluntary organisations could do more to help deliver services in their local community if Herefordshire Council reduced or stopped delivering a particular service. As this does not contextualise this with the information that any additional services could have an impact on the uncapped parish precept, nor recognise the services that towns and parishes already provide, this could be very misleading for respondents. Discussions with towns and parishes in advance of this list and this question would have been useful. The list includes many services that could not be undertaken without staffing and funding – such as libraries and leisure facilities, respite and day services, providing activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children, and bus services. Whilst the question as posed does note that “Your parish council has the power to charge an extra amount on top of your council tax. Do you think that they should exercise this power and charge extra in order to carry out any of the following”, there is not sufficient information provided to enable people to know what kind of additional charge, the costs of providing these types of services or the feasibility of town and parish councils providing these. Some services would also cut across town and parish boundaries and funding for service users outside of the town or parish boundary could be declared an ultra vires payment if challenged (for instance with bus services or libraries,) unless all relevant parishes in a locality were willing to increase their precept and contribute. We consider that it is very irresponsible of Herefordshire Council

Town Clerk
Gwilym J. Rippon Member ILCM, Cert HE Ceg

to ask this question in this way without proper advance consultations and discussions with town and parish councils.

Question 5 is a very leading question, asking respondents if they already volunteer in Herefordshire.. Many people are unable to volunteer, for all kinds of reasons. To ask this kind of question in this consultation is potentially discriminatory and should not form part of this consultation. **Question 6** then goes on to ask people if they would be willing to volunteer in a wide variety of roles – including activities where either health and safety or safeguarding would be issues. In addition, as noted for question 4, most of these activities would require volunteers to be properly recruited, screened and vetted, trained and supported by paid staff. Volunteering is not a cost free activity. This could also raise expectations that all of these activities can be undertaken in this way. This again is a complex issue, which requires significant further discussion with town and parish councils, and with relevant organisations, particularly voluntary organisations that are already seeing their budgets cut and grants from various bodies harder to achieve.

The following questions about capital funding and support for business are not in themselves problematic, but in determining a environment for business development and the attraction of new business, the role of culture and the arts and the green environment have been completely overlooked. There are significantly more issues that create a good business and living environment than just those noted in **Question 7**.

As we have noted, Kington Town Council will comment in more detail on the specific budget proposals. We feel, however, that the consultation exercise will do little other than satisfy the requirement that Herefordshire Council has consulted, but as with other recent consultations, this is a meaningless exercise and we would hope that the Council would in future perhaps consult with town and parish councils as to appropriate ways to achieve more effective engagement of local communities in consultation on what are very specific issues that impact on the well-being of the county.

Yours Faithfully



Gwilym J. Rippon MILCM, Cert HE Ceg
Town Clerk

Town Clerk
Gwilym J.Rippon Member ILCM, Cert HE Ceg



2017-18 Budget Consultation Response

Assumptions

We note that the working assumption is that the cap on general council tax uplift remains at 1.9% for 2017-18. We also note that a further 2% budget uplift is included in the budget to be ring-fenced to support the rising cost of Adult Social Care. However, it is not clear in the consultation documentation where this additional funding is represented in the figures. The supporting paperwork appears to be identical to the paperwork approved at last year's budget – to include all the same savings profiles contained in the MTFs at that time.

Grants and Local Government Act (1972) facilities

We are not able to see where the ~£4m of grants, including the Rural Services Support Grant, awarded immediately after approval of the 2016-17 budget and currently held in reserves, are being proposed to be spent. It is disappointing that with 6 months' notice the interim has not been used to make suggestions on how this grant funding might support service delivery into rural areas in time for such suggestions to be consulted upon here.

A significant proportion of last year's consultation respondents were amenable to paying more through their Council Tax to secure or improve services important to them at a local level: albeit that they had reservations regarding how such services would be agreed and their levels assured. This enthusiasm seems well matched to the facility provided by Section 137 of the 1972 Local Government Act: it is disappointing to be unable to find any assessment in the consultation of the parish funding which could be available under the Section 137 provisions for the support of agreed services.

This facility is a funding source that we have brought to officers' attention in previous years, and we would strongly encourage a serious consideration of this facility and the opportunity it presents to enable and encourage closer co-operative working amongst parishes. While central government continues to reduce the amount of national taxation redistributed through the core grants mechanisms, it is perverse to continue to ignore this source of local funding and the improved local government co-operation it could encourage.

Based on the August 2016 population figures for the county we have around 150,000 electors. At the 2016-17 S137 rate of £7.42 per elector, this gives a maximum of some £1.1m of parish funding which could be available for the support of non-statutory services delivered either cooperatively at parish level or cost effectively at county level, whichever is most appropriate. The opportunity has been missed to use 2016-17 to begin the conversation with parishes on the service mix and spread which may be appropriate for such funding support. We urge the administration to make a commitment now to begin this dialogue immediately, so as to explore the possibilities and acquire the consensus needed to make use of this source of funding in 2018-19.

Additional Savings: context and proposals

A savings programme has already been proposed which omits certain funding sources, mentioned above, and which also is behind in its delivery in some areas and overambitious or untargeted in others. IOC has maintained for a number of years that the budget for Herefordshire is, in reality, not balanced; and that savings targets in departments are sufficiently unclear in their detail to create the concern that they are used merely to give the appearance of a balanced budget.

Far from being motivational for staff, unrealistic or unattributed savings targets give the impression that a budget is never truly something on which delivery is expected. Neither is it encouraging for particular areas of the council's business repeatedly to be required to make additional in-year savings to bail out those parts of the council's business which have been assigned unachievable savings at the start of the year: a culture of perennial overspend, and/or perennial plundering in various parts of the council's business, is corrosive and ultimately undermines the necessity for culture and behaviour change.

Elsewhere these in-year unbudgeted savings risk impacting on investment programmes essential to the enablement of new ways of working when these become delayed and cut to compensate in-year pressures. This also risks preventing or delaying the service re-engineering necessary to deliver savings. Projects like Digital Channels and the improvement of the council's website are critical to the delivery of service and behaviour change. Additional savings and increased income could come from the council focussing on information handling and knowledge management for the county, its partners and the voluntary and third sector organisations seen as core to new service models across all departments and stakeholder webs.

Is the council compliant with its own income and charging guidelines, adopted in 2011/12? What priority is being given to creating the understanding of service delivery costs which would enable charging tariffs to be developed for parishes and individual residents to consider? It's hardly surprising that people/parishes are reluctant to commission works which come with unspecified or open-ended liability: re-painting of road markings, traffic regulation orders, gully sucking and drain clearance, residents' parking zones, replacement local/road signage are a few examples of work which could be funded locally if the costs were properly understood.

Other proposals include:

- Using the council tax collection system to enable individuals and/or larger groups of properties to buy additional services and spread their payments.
- Offering a chargeable green/garden waste collection service in urban areas for re-cycling/composting (rather than going to landfill), particularly in the south of the county close to the green waste facility just over the Gloucestershire border.
- Deploying ubiquitous technology and evolving social business networks to change the way in which services are made available (assuming sufficient all-county broadband coverage), for example:
 - Real time GPS on public transport linked to mobile phone apps, showing the exact location of buses (which could be linked to smart messaging signs at bus stops and the opportunity for income from advertising that reacts to and targets users in its Bluetooth bubbles) would negate the need for published bus route timetables. GPS would enable smaller operators to enter the market and to upload their travel route – or even for them to deliver 'doorstep services' in rural areas.

- UBER offers a new model for urban minicabs/taxis: the technology could also enable people, as part of the 'Choose how you move' programme, to register to provide flexible taxi services in rural areas where reduced bus services are expensive and inflexible. The UBER model would enable local people known in their own communities to be paid for transport services as if they were Community Transport drivers.

Further savings could be made from a more joined-up view of how we use the 'assets' the council already has at its disposal.

- Library and Customer Service centres are the ideal points at which to base signposting and wellbeing hubs for Adults' and Children's Wellbeing, and for our healthcare partners. Significant investment is required in these directorates and partner organisations to deliver preventative programmes and behaviour change. Customer Service & Library staff members are good sources of knowledge and data, and are well networked in their local communities. They already have the skills and knowledge to match well with the CWB/ASC messaging and would also be able to deal with the wide range of issues and problems which might involve other advice areas and partner services.
- Cultural centres (theatres/museums) can act similarly as hubs for such service provision and signposting, with advisors doubling up as front desk for these services.
- Most Town Councils already run a reception desk/enquiry point, the cost of which could be shared with Customer Services and a wellbeing hub, offering the potential for space sharing, savings in operating costs and additional revenue from the repurposing of existing office space.

The implementation of advice and signposting services can be flexibly deployed to match the locality need and best options for the physical access points in each community. These Centres can be hubs for Neighbourhood Networks of Community Champions – providing support and contact services in their immediate localities – from good neighbourliness through to regular shopping, prescription or other care services.

All parishes have been challenged to provide these neighbour volunteers, but such support networks will need to include income-generating services in order to be stable and viable. The council should be looking to provide payment or support to enable some of the services to be provided. It is not realistic to expect that these support activities will be sustainable without some element of funding – although this can come in part from the beneficiary through personal budgets etc.

Treating the provision and marketing of excellent and attractive specialist respite care services should be an important part of the council's investment in prevention and pipeline management. Making those services available for part/full payment for non-qualifying families enables the cost to be spread across the year or shared amongst family members, with collection through the council tax system.

Additional Parish Service Delivery

There needs to be fully co-ordinated effort to enable parish dialogue on this matter. Not all of the options offered in Section 4 of the questionnaire seem suitable for parish level delivery.

Activities suitable for wholesale parish devolution would appear to include:

- Maintaining communal green spaces (parks, playgrounds, sports pitches)
- Grass and hedge cutting
- Litter and dog fouling enforcement

- Good Neighbour schemes

Activities which would involve some level of parish action, but which would also require continued county council involvements would appear to include:

- Road/footpath maintenance
- Libraries, museums and leisure facilities
- Customer contact & advice
- Winter services (gritting, clearing roads/pathways)
- Helping out in emergencies

Herefordshire Council should return the ownership of the city and market town car parks to these parishes to create income-generating assets to contribute to the cost of taking on the above services. This would be appropriate since there is a direct correlation between visitor numbers to these urban centres, use of services, and car park usage. If section 137 monies were not to be utilised to spread service delivery costs amongst locality parishes, then return of the car parks to the urban parishes they serve would ensure that the parish carrying their cost would have income derived from visitors, thus ensuring that the entire costs are not borne solely by the residents of the parish.

Activities for which we believe it would be difficult for most parishes to deliver effective action due to the complicated nature of the services involved:

- Respite and Day Care
- Bus Service
- Providing activities for babies and pre-school children

Volunteering

The gaps that open up in Herefordshire's social structure cannot be expected to be plugged solely with volunteers. The council's own Joint Strategic Needs Assessment shows that ~34% of local residents already volunteer on a regular basis: with the percentage of the elderly, infirm, and children in the county, 34% must be close to saturation point for volunteering.

The council could, and should, be providing more support to voluntary and third sector organisations, and to have a policy to look to place contracts for care and support work with local charity-based businesses so that the funding remains focussed on service delivery and not on shareholder profits. Encouraging local employers to implement volunteering programmes and to support local charities and projects with the time their staff donate would also help to expand the voluntary sector into local business, and to extend and focus social responsibility initiatives within the county.

Attracting New Business

The focus should be on building on the county's strengths, on recognising what's special and different about Herefordshire and aligning all the council's resources to maximise the benefits these differences bring. Herefordshire is an attractive location for people who want to balance quality of life with business.

The visitor economy needs focussed support. Budget hotels for business and pleasure should be provided throughout the county so that people can afford to visit and to stay. Business parks should

be invested in to be brought forward in all the market towns. No large-scale housing development should be allowed to come forward without also providing local employment sites.

Other considerations and proposals

The Economic Master Plan for the county should balance emphasis across the city, the market towns and rural areas. Broadband should be implemented to provide excellent upload and download speed in all areas to enable small businesses to operate in village locations and for the growth of the homeworking economy. The creative industries – including IT, computer programming and gaming - should be encouraged to relocate to the county. However the emphasis should be on helping existing businesses to expand while remaining here in Herefordshire.

Our AONBs and the River Wye SAC should be treated with care and sympathy as regards both development and the growth of industrial forms of agriculture. The rivers should be properly strategized as assets and access to them and care of them should be a priority.

Investment in the maintenance of existing road infrastructure should be the priority with the emphasis being on footpath and cycleway development in the rural areas to safely and sustainably link hamlets to villages and villages to towns. Cycle-tracks and bridleways on former railway routes should be instated and the towpath of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal should be re-instated ahead of the canal sections to create the movement route for people to begin to use this asset and to increase visibility of and commitment to the strategic project.

A light rail/maglev/monorail link from Hereford Station to the Enterprise Zone should be committed to in advance of road projects, and alongside a light tram system in the city. Railtrack and Network Rail should be engaged with and encouraged to re-instate the halts and request stops at villages along the railway lines running through the county, thereby encouraging and enabling development along these transport links from the east, southwest and north.

High Schools in the market towns should be encouraged to provide access to out of hours training facilities in half terms and holidays to businesses and link to the NMITE university project in the city to provide satellite resources and training portals to augment university facilities and to strengthen links to the local business community.

Capital Investments

Priorities should include:

- Bringing forward employment sites in the market towns, and enabling road infrastructure, e.g. at Leominster, Ledbury and Bromyard, to serve these sites.
- Developing light rail and tram systems in the city, along with the extension and connection of the cycle and footpath networks throughout the county.
- Enabling pay car parks at schools to generate revenue in holiday periods.
- Extending the electric car charging point network and supporting new car pool/club schemes in towns and villages.
- Investing in GPS bus services, and a 'bus pass with benefits' scheme to encourage use of buses by under- 65s and to generate revenue from business offers and advertising. Investment in, or franchising of, smart signage/advertising at community message boards, hubs and bus stops.
- Providing free Wi-Fi zones in all the town centres – for council and parish notification or messaging and revenue from local business advertising.

October 2016

Bus Services Review Herefordshire 18 July - 16 Oct 2016.

As Most of the Herefordshire Public know all these Council Questionnaires Accomplish NOTHING They are just to make on the Councilors the Council Staff have some thing to do Have any of the matters raised in the many public meeting ever been enacted.

Have Your Say Budget Consultation July 2016 PO Box 4 HR4 0BR

- 1 The people on high Council Tax bands should pay the increases NOT those on Band A and B The public have had more than enough Consultations they only confirm the party political Solve Nothing
- 2 All English Councils can get ALL The Money they need to spend wisely or waste Ask The Commons for some of their unending Quantitative Easing It seems they can help the rich Financiers the Banks lets see them do something likewise for the English Poorer People.
- 3 These services so far Thank God are not applicable to me have to manage on basic state pension with the single Council Tax Deduction They do not say how many respondents there were 50% of what how many grown ups live in the County they don't know like the total amount in England
- 4 No extra charges for any of these listed activities The present high Council Income Tax other taxes are enough see the people employed do the work the public see so many one working others standing watching even enjoy radio entertainment to pass the idle time
- 5 Have one foot in the grave enough on looking after myself others should do the same but they are state Council benefit fed
- 6 Have no time for any of these worthy causes as fully committed seven days a week to stay alive
Supporting growth businesses and employment training The commercial rates overheads are too high most shops have accommodation space above which should be used for domestic life These out of town industrial estates are too far for employees to walk to work too generous in their site areas England cannot afford this ongoing ever increasing loss of productive land.
The boulevards around the old cattle market have not solved the delays when they were held an overhead roadway for the traffic was the correct answer now they have cleared site near Morrison / Rail Stn cut down again Old trees this ring road will only produce more and more killer fumes for the children. When the Councils their planners cannot put in place a simple one way system (half of which has now been enacted possibly by the Greens looking for their votes) for Leominster huge hold ups in this one horse town Can they put Hereford City traffic problems to right like you can catch lines of queues out of the river Severn
- 7 Everyone who has to travel to these new out of town businesses and accommodations should only be allowed to use public transport or their own sweat This is how all Councils MP PS should be made to function Unskilled workers all out of work shall do all the jobs listed to for their benefits Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall showed everyone how 21st domestic accommodations can be built with roads on three levels as it is in Sweden

They stopped the 492 service Leo to had so all who could make other arrangements The service was brought back as 490 but the people who had to make other arrangements never came back Every decent person knows once you loose a customer you very rarely get them back was this service stoppage done in order to kill off it few-needed passengers so close that it was a waste of money.

These buses run miles from the main direct road into villages where mostly they never pick up or drop anyone off These few people should walk to the stop on the main road

This Bus Co claim they carry out the Councils plan but it looks like most drivers run it for themselves especially once they have been here for a while The public do not know what it cost to run the services whether the subsidies cover the cost plus a profit or all the fare payers cash is profit. Did the Council claim they carry out The Government policy so OAP Concession pass use only after 0930 yet apparently Moulton Bucks the time is 0900 the OAP Con Pass should be used from earliest service to last in Rural Areas so less confusion on such as 492 1000 hrs ad bus returning to Ross from Hereford could have a few passengers.

How does The Stage Coach £5 all day anywhere shape up on the subsidy per passenger rates from £1 scale to £10

The Media have never shown these empty near-empty buses which are run at public price costs These buses will ALWAYS run as long as the MPS Councillors can milk the tax payers Christian value of efficiency economy don't enter this country's rules life

In previous consultations some people with OAP Concessionary bus passes they would be prepared to pay a fare rather than travel for free (This for free shows how these Authorities Councillors think The Concess OAP Bus Pass is NOT FREE The public pay Council Tax & other taxes for this then will these people let the TRUTH)

We don't know how many people replied to these reviews 15 out of total population of OAPS in Herefordshire (The Government DO NOT know how many people live in UK) in Q10 of 18 July 16 Oct 2016 subsidy figure £1.00 to £10.00 but they do not say these willing to pay OAP alongside their proposed payment figure how many times per week they are going to use the service. So what true picture can any decent person set from any figures quoted in Q10.

5th Sept 2016 The 490 1242 never came to had Ann Ross Mill St through was there from 1230 Another passenger for Orleton at 1310 said they would have to get a taxi which they did because they had their Mother's lunch part frozen (probably ice cream) We noted (NOT there last week) that some time tables in bus shelters both undated one of these said 490 would leave at 1220 whether this took place of NOT don't know or how many passengers were aboard. The above Orleton passenger said NO new bus times were on display on their bus stop there There was NO such on the buses I used all the time and NO such New Bus Timetable at Leo Bus Stop or in Hereford Do NOT think I will be on the 490 Leo to had from now Most OAPS pay high Council Taxes to subsidies these empty near empty buses their drivers are mostly Polish Are most OAPS subsidising in Polish State are the Police The Fraud Squad goes to find out if the 490 at 1220 and the 1242 that never reached Mill St had ever ran and if public subsidies were paid for this then more service

Copy To. Budget Consultation July 2016 as per 9

Email response from a resident

“With spending cuts the rural appearance is deteriorating.

There is a wealth of people who, if organised, could help in correcting this situation. A constant excuse is Health and Safety and Insurance. Yet the type of person who would volunteer would sign a waiver form to alleviate this problem.

The Council should employ a coordinator of volunteers. Once a requirement is established volunteers should be requested from a pool of established volunteer.

The council would need to remove any waste following the completion of the task.”

<name removed>

Email from Weobley parish council:

Dear Sirs,

In response to your Budget Consultation we note that there appears to be much emphasis on options for service provision through funding via Parish Precepts or volunteering. We would like to point out that a considerable amount of this already takes place on our Parish.

The Parish Council already provides funds via its precept to support;

The Parish Lengthsman Scheme
The Community Library
Maintenance of the village Play Area

in addition our Community volunteers help with:

Litter Picking
Interim grass cutting between scheduled cuts by the Local Authority
Grass cutting and maintenance at the local Play Area
Footpath maintenance
Community Library and Museum
Pre-school activities
Meals on Wheels
Community Wheels
amongst many other community activities.

It's likely that other Parishes could report similarly. We are very fortunate to have such a supportive community but it is concerning that we and they may be expected to contribute much more as suggested by your survey questions.

Regards
Lorraine Anderson, Chair
Weobley Parish Council

Email from Cusop parish council:

“Cusop Parish Council considered the budget consultation at its last meeting and agreed that it valued the public services provided by Herefordshire Council but did not feel able to give a qualified response given the technical complexities of the breakdown of the budget.”

Best wishes

Ian Jardin
Cusop Parish Clerk

Budget Consultation – July 2016

Each year, Herefordshire Council asks residents to help shape the way its budgets are set. We will need to be even more efficient and effective to protect priority services and continue to support our county's vulnerable residents, whilst ensuring that Herefordshire remains a great place to live, work and learn.

Our priorities for Herefordshire are:

- enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives;
- keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life;
- support the growth of our economy; and
- secure better services, quality of life and value for money

Herefordshire Council has saved over £59 million over the past six years. We must deliver further savings in order to balance our budget between now and 2019/20. We are working to develop a one Herefordshire approach with the NHS, Police, Fire and other public sector organisations in the county to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

We want to hear what council services you would want to protect and any ways in which you might be able to help us in enabling community services to continue. We also want to hear ideas on how we can improve – perhaps by using new technology, changing the way we do things, or by working with other organisations, community groups, or charities.

It's quick and easy to fill out online or if you have any more ideas, tweet us at #hfdsbudget or send us a facebook message. You can also share your views with your local councillor or parish council.

We are also running a number of consultations that may be of particular interest to those people who are currently receiving council services. More details can be found at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/consultations/current-consultations. Further and more focused consultation may be required with groups directly affected by any anticipated changes.

The budget consultation runs from Friday 29 July 2016 to Friday 7 October 2016.

All responses will be collated, analysed and published. All individual responses will be anonymised, and responses on behalf of an organisation will have comments attributed to them in the final report. The feedback received will inform Cabinet's decision making on the draft budget. This will be proposed to Full Council in February 2017.

Budget consultation 2016

29 July - 7 October

The council already charges for a number of services. The majority (71%) of respondents to last year's consultation thought that the council should increase service charges to protect current services across the county.

1. Are you willing to support an increase in charges for council services above the level of inflation?

- Yes No

Every additional 1% increase in council tax raises around £0.9 million. We have already factored in a 1.9% increase to take account of general inflation, plus the Government is allowing us to increase council tax by an additional 2% to support the rising cost of social care. Given our ageing population and pressures in this area we intend to take them up on this offer. The current band D charge for Herefordshire Council services is £1,325 and so a 3.9% increase will cost the average council taxpayer an extra £52 per year. If these increases are not levied, additional savings will be required.

Next year our budget plans include £7 million of savings. Increasing council tax could help Herefordshire Council to support its services and reduce the amount of savings required. If we wanted to raise council tax above the 3.9% level, we would be required to hold a countywide referendum (which would cost approximately £300,000), where we ask residents to say whether they're for or against the proposal.

2. Would you support Herefordshire Council in making a further increase in council tax above 3.9%, which will require a referendum, to raise additional funds?

- No - £7 million savings still required
- Yes - raise an estimated £2 million by increasing council tax by a total of 6.1% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £81 in 2017/18)
- Yes - raise an estimated £4 million by increasing council tax by a total of 8.3% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £110 in 2017/18)
- Yes - raise an estimated £7 million by increasing council tax by a total of 11.7% (costing the average council taxpayer an extra £155 in 2017/18)

Herefordshire Council is considering its future plans, along with budget and council tax levels for next year, and would like your views. We remain committed to delivering services you need in a way that offers both value for money and protects services for those who are most in need. The challenge we have is how we can do this with less funding.

Our current savings proposals total £28.4 million between this year and 2019/20. For more detailed information on the savings proposals, medium term financial strategy and Corporate Plan, see www.herefordshire.gov.uk/haveyoursay.

3. Do you have any suggestions about what other things the council should consider to achieve the required savings?

The council provides a wide variety of services to people in Herefordshire, particularly to those who are vulnerable and have complex needs. As more pressure is placed on the council's budget, and on the budgets of partner organisations, different ways of delivering these services need to be developed.

As part of last year's consultation, over half of respondents (58%) thought that town and parish councils, community groups or voluntary organisations could do more to help deliver services in their local community if Herefordshire Council reduces or stops delivering a particular service.

4. Respondents to last year's consultation suggested a number of activities that could be undertaken locally. Your parish council has the power to charge an extra amount on top of your council tax. Do you think that they should exercise this power and charge extra in order to carry out any of the following?

(please tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Good neighbour scheme (e.g. visiting isolated elderly)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Grass / hedge cutting</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Customer contact centre and advice</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Litter / dog fouling enforcement</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Providing activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Road / footpath maintenance</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Winter services (e.g. gritting, clearing roads / pathways)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Bus service</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Helping out in emergencies</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Libraries / museums / leisure facilities</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other (please specify below)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Respite and day service</i> | |

Volunteering means giving unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations. It includes anything that you take part in, support, or help in any way, either on your own or with others. For example, helping at a youth or day centre, helping to run an event, campaigning or doing administrative work. It does not include giving money or anything that is a requirement of your job.

5. Do you currently volunteer in Herefordshire?

Yes

No

6. People have previously indicated that they would be willing to help out more in their community. Please indicate whether you currently volunteer or would be interested in volunteering in the following roles.

(please tick all that apply)

	<i>Already volunteer</i>	<i>Interested in volunteering</i>
<i>Maintaining communal areas (parks, playgrounds, sport pitches)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Grass / hedge cutting</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Litter picking</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Footpath maintenance</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Community transport</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Car sharing</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Supporting libraries / museums / leisure facilities</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Buddy scheme (e.g. befriending or mentoring someone)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Respite and day service</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Good neighbour scheme (e.g. visiting isolated elderly)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Helping families who need help to look after their children (e.g. where parents may need a lot of medical treatment)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Helping provide activities for babies, toddlers and pre-school children</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Helping out in emergencies</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Other (please specify below)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Supporting the growth of our economy is one of the council's strategic priorities. We want Herefordshire to be a place where businesses want to settle and can flourish. We also want our city and town centres to be vibrant and successful and our neighbourhoods to be attractive and sustainable. The county is already home to a wide range of businesses and we will continue to support and encourage the growth of our high value business sector and our small enterprises.

At the same time, we want to encourage a broad mix of businesses that will offer employment and training to local people. We also want to make sure residents, particularly young people, have the right skills needed for local employers. In doing this we want to achieve a sustainable infrastructure that protects and promotes the natural environment, communities and the county's economy.

7. What do you think the council could do to improve the attractiveness of Herefordshire to businesses? (tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Improve infrastructure</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Enable new housing development</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Upskill workers</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other (please specify below)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Access to funding and business support</i> | |

Herefordshire Council has funding which enables us to invest in and maintain assets across the county, as well as deliver new projects and infrastructure which support the local economy and help maintain public services.

The capital programme has an estimated spend of £51 million for 2017/18.

Projects include targeted capital investment to:

- Attract and secure inward investment;
- Create jobs and get local people into work;
- Improve school buildings to help with educational attainment;
- Improve connectivity through road improvements;
- Provide better broadband connectivity;
- Enable new housing development; and
- Sustain key local services.

More detailed information on the capital programme can be found at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/haveyoursay.

Any additional projects will need to be paid for. For example, through an increase in council tax or business rates, the sale of council buildings / land, or grant funding.

8. Is there any other capital investment you think the council should make?

9. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions regarding how we could deliver services in a different way?

About you

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or group, or as an individual?

- Organisation or group Individual

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or group please tell us the name of the organisation/group:

If you are responding as an individual please answer the following questions about yourself. This information helps us to understand the profile of respondents and whether views vary amongst different groups of people across the county. It will only be used for the purpose of statistical monitoring, treated as confidential and not used to identify you.

What is your postcode?

(not including the last 2 letters, e.g. HR4 0)

What is your gender?

- Male Female

What is your age band?

- 0-15 years 25-44 years 65-74 years
 16-24 years 45-64 years 75+ years

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- Yes - limited a little Yes - limited a lot No

How would you describe your national identity? (tick all that apply)

- English Scottish Welsh
 Northern Irish British Irish
 Other

If Other please specify:

How would you describe your ethnic group?

- White British/English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish
 Other White (please specify below)
 Any other ethnic group (please specify below)

If Other White please specify:

If Any other ethnic group please specify:

Do you feel that the council has treated you differently (positively or negatively) because of who you are? (e.g. your gender, age, disability or ethnicity)

- Yes No

If yes, please specify:

Data Protection Act 1998

The data collected in this form will only be used for the purpose of statistical monitoring. This information will only be retained for as long as is considered necessary for monitoring purposes and then it will be destroyed. At all times it will be kept in accordance with the Act.

Thank you for your time

You can complete this questionnaire online at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/haveyoursay, but completed hard copies can be sent to: Herefordshire Council Research Team, Freepost SWC4816, PO Box 4, Hereford, HR4 0BR



MEETING:	General overview and scrutiny committee
MEETING DATE:	14 November 2016
TITLE OF REPORT:	Proposed 2017/18 capital budget
REPORT BY:	Interim director of resources

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

County-wide

Purpose

To provide Cabinet with comments on the proposed capital budget for 2017/18 onwards for recommendation to Council on 16 December 2016.

Recommendation

THAT: the committee determines any recommendations it wishes to make to cabinet in relation to the proposed capital programme.

Alternative options

- 1 The proposed capital schemes will enable the delivery of savings targeted in the medium term financial strategy, are self-funded, grant funded or address critical service needs. There are no alternative options that would not radically affect the provision of services.
- 2 Additional capital spend could be proposed however any proposal must be affordable, deliverable, support the corporate plan objectives and consider the use of alternative solutions.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Josie Rushgrove, head of corporate finance on tel (01432) 261867

Reasons for recommendations

- 3 The council's budget and policy framework rules require that cabinet has regard to the views of overview and scrutiny in developing recommendations to Council on budget and policy framework items; the capital budget forms part of the budget and policy framework.

Key considerations

- 4 The capital programme builds on the council's medium term financial strategy, core strategy and corporate plan priorities.
- 5 The current capital programme and funding sources, originally approved by Council in December 2015 and updated as reported to cabinet through budget monitoring, is provided in appendix 1. Changes reported include the re-phasing of budgets between financial years and the addition of £0.5m Sports England grant funded spend at Halo leisure centres and the inclusion of the approved £2.5m Marches business improvement grants scheme.

Proposed additions to the capital programme

- 6 Proposed additions to the capital programme are provided in appendix 2. If proposals are approved by Council in December then each new scheme will commence following a separate approval detailing the scheme, funding and implications in line with the council's constitutional requirements. The proposals focus on priority schemes, school investment strategy and schemes subject to confirmation of external funding contributions. The additional investment proposed will support the corporate plan priorities by improving schools, infrastructure, housing and the creation of job opportunities.
- 7 Of the £72.5m proposed additions, £62.8m is to be funded by capital grants, redirected funding allocated in prior years, capital receipts or returns on investment. This leaves £9.7m to be financed by prudential borrowing, to be secured over the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) period, 2017/18 through to 2019/20. The revenue implications are detailed in the financial implications section of this report and are supported in the MTFS.
- 8 Of the £9.7m prudential borrowing requirement, detailed in appendix 2, £0.7m will be held as a contingency to fund unforeseen immediate requirements and the remaining sum is proposed to fund the following:
 - £1.2m is required for priority corporate property estate works to ensure continued compliance with health and safety standards.
 - £2.0m is required for the purchase and repair of existing open market properties to house vulnerable young adults, care leavers and those that require assistance to live independently. This scheme will provide match funding to registered social landlords (RSLs) to adapt properties to meet client groups' needs that can be complex. This scheme will reduce revenue budget pressures in adults and wellbeing, including temporary accommodation costs.
 - A further investment of £1.2m is recommended to continue to grow the offering at Herefordshire enterprise zone. The money will be used alongside grant funding (subject to confirmation in the autumn statement) to develop the shell store building to provide space for business start-ups. Public sector led investment for space to rent has proved successful, confirming demand, and

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Josie Rushgrove, head of corporate finance on tel (01432) 261867

by providing this space it is anticipated that more businesses will be attracted to Herefordshire.

- £3.8m funding is proposed to support an application for external capital grant funding towards continued improvements to the county's roads. Non principal roads have benefited from investment in prior years however principal road conditions have deteriorated and require additional investment. The bid will also target investment in the county's bridges. The submission for grant funding will be made in the new year.
- £0.6m is proposed to fund site investigation, feasibility and preparatory works as part of the development partnership project. This project will see the council commission a developer to progress the development of suitable sites in its ownership including the capability to progress development funding and provision of services and to be open for use with other collaboration partners as required. Procurement of a preferred supplier is progressing with appointment expected to be approved in the summer. A number of projects are expected to start post appointment, the affordability of the programme will be assessed at all stages during the process.
- The remaining sum will fund capital equipment costs supporting the delivery of savings in library and customer services, investment in Stretton Sugwas closed landfill site remediation works and corporate funding towards externally funded energy saving schemes.

9 The £4.8m schools capital investment strategy is linked to preliminary works to inform key investment need. It is anticipated that a significant number of schemes will come forward over the next five years to deliver sustainable, high quality education facilities in Herefordshire. Funding for the completion of such schemes will be explored with partners such as the education funding agency, schools, the diocese of Hereford, archdiocese of Cardiff, and local communities as well as opportunities for releasing sites and reinvesting in education.

Borrowing implications

10 The additional borrowing requirement of £9.7m will be included in the treasury management strategy (TMS) reported to February Council which will be updated following approval of this report. Actual borrowing will be secured as cash funding is required at the optimal interest rate available at that time.

11 Total gross outstanding debt was £196.5m as at 31 March 2016, and the 2017/18 operational boundary for borrowing as approved in the TMS is £290.0m. The approval of the proposed additions in this report will remain below this operational limit.

12 Herefordshire has a long term debt to asset ratio of 28% which means just over a quarter of Herefordshire's assets are financed by long term debt, which is in line with the average for all unitary authorities. Herefordshire currently provides 12% of its net revenue budget to cover the repayment cost of debt. This is slightly higher than the all unitary average of 9% and reflects that the council has decided to invest in a number of schemes that will generate returns, for example investment in an energy from waste plant and the county's leisure centres.

Community impact

- 13 The capital programme proposed 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.

Equality duty

- 14 The Public Sector Equality Duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying “due regard” in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
- 15 Following the commencement of a new capital scheme an equality impact assessment is completed to assess any potential impact on the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- 16 The duty means that the potential impact of a decision on people with different protected characteristics is always taken into account. When these assessments have been completed then we will consider mitigating against any adverse impact identified.

Financial implications

- 17 The majority of proposals are funded as detailed in appendix 2. Proposals are subject to the confirmation of external funding sources expected over the coming months.
- 18 It is estimated that the phasing and cost of the £9.7m new prudential borrowing requirement, using the current weighted average cost of capital of 3.42%, will be as follows. Actual borrowing is only secured when cash funds require.

	Capital cost £m	Cost of borrowing per annum £m
2017/18	3.2	0.1
2018/19	3.5	0.1
2019/20	3.0	0.1
	<u>9.7</u>	<u>0.3</u>

- 19 The expected additional borrowing costs will continue for approximately 25 years and comprise both interest and debt repayment. These estimations will be included in the revenue budget proposals for future years.

Legal implications

- 20 The council is under a legal duty to sensibly manage their own capital finance. The council is able to borrow subject to limits set by the council and any nationally imposed limits and it must do so in accordance with the prudential code on borrowing.
- 21 The Local Government Act 2003 allows the council to borrow for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment and for the purposes of the prudent

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Josie Rushgrove, head of corporate finance on tel (01432) 261867

management of its financial affairs. Before approval of any individual scheme it will be necessary to ensure that the need for the scheme arises out of a legal obligation on the council for its provision. Any scheme will need to be procured in accordance with the procurement regulations and the council's own contract procedure rules and appropriate contractual documentation put in place to protect the council's interests.

Risk management

- 22 The level of prudential borrowing required as a result of these proposals is within the existing MTFS. Borrowing is only secured when required as detailed in the TMS. When schemes are approved they are included in the monthly budget control meetings which highlights individual scheme risks and possible mitigation action.

Consultees

- 23 None.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Approved capital programme

Appendix 2 - Proposed additional schemes

Background papers

- None identified.

Approved capital programme

Scheme Name	Spend in prior years £000	Sept 2016/17 budget £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	Total £000
Economy, Communities and Corporate						
Energy from Waste Plant	23,412	16,588				40,000
Hereford City Centre Transport Package (includes Hereford city link road)	17,575	12,124	7,448	3,504		40,651
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	annual plan	11,633	11,313	10,341	10,341	
Fastershire Broadband (excludes Gloucester spend in prior years of £9.7m)	9,003	6,605	9,747	2,845		28,200
Hereford Enterprise Zone	5,071	3,150	7,779			16,000
Leisure Centres	7,268	2,784				10,052
Solar Photovoltaic Panels	463	1,671				2,134
Data Centre Consolidation	-	1,170				1,170
Corporate Accommodation	18	1,082	600			1,700
South Wye Transport Package (total budget of £35m includes £8m funded by LTP, scheme extends into 20/21)	1,983	1,000	9,000	13,000	1,427	26,410
Hereford Library Accommodation Works	91	909				1,000
Marches business improvement grants	-	833	833	834		2,500
Highway Depot Improvements	-	800				800
IT Network Upgrade	-	500				500
Software to Enable Remote Access to Desktops and Automate Upgrades	-	500				500
Property Estate Enhancement Works	-	500	500	500	500	2,000
LED street lighting	4,750	905				5,655
Childrens wellbeing						
Colwall Primary School	33	4,800	1,667			6,500
Schools Capital Maintenance Grant	annual plan	1,205				
Peterchurch Primary School	6	1,000	4,494			5,500
SEN & DDA school improvements			710			710
Schools Basic Need	annual plan	666				
Adults and wellbeing						
Disabled facilities grant	annual plan	1,734	tbc			
<i>Other schemes less than £500k</i>		4,877	1,685	530		
Total		77,036	55,776	31,554	12,268	
Financed by						
Prudential borrowing		44,382	20,892	4,534	500	
Grant and funding contributions		27,388	26,799	27,020	11,768	
Capital receipt funding allocated to approved capital schemes		5,266	8,085			
Total		77,036	55,776	31,554	12,268	

PROPOSED CAPITAL BUDGET ADDITIONS (subject to Cabinet or Cabinet member approval)

Scheme Name	17/18	18/19	19/20	Total Cost	17/18	18/19	19/20	Total Funding	Total net cost
Priority schemes									
Stretton Sugwas closed landfill site gas extraction system	95			95				-	95
Customer services and libraries - investment in equipment	133			133				-	133
Private sector housing improvements - match funding per housing unit to generate savings	800	800	800	2,400	400			400	2,000
Priority corporate property estate works	1,171			1,171				-	1,171
Sub total	2,199	800	800	3,799	400	-	-	400	3,399
Subject to additional funding confirmation									
Herefordshire Enterprise Zone, shell store incubation centre	2,500	3,200	500	6,200	2,500	2,500		5,000	1,200
Development Partnership project mobilisation and investment	600	10,000	10,000	20,600		10,000	10,000	20,000	600
Highway asset management & major infrastructure investment (including Hereford by-pass)	14,543	7,735	7,000	29,278	14,000	6,000	5,523	25,523	3,755
Energy efficiency invest to save programme	100			100	12			12	88
Model Farm, Ross on Wye, new enterprise park	2,520	4,250	300	7,070	2,520	4,250	300	7,070	-
Sub total	20,263	25,185	17,800	63,248	19,032	22,750	15,823	57,605	5,643
School capital investment strategy									
Preliminary works to inform key investment need throughout the county	300	1,774		2,074	300	1,774		2,074	-
Expansion for Marlbrook school to make it full 3 form entry and create an early year's hub.	2,000	726		2,726	2,000	726		2,726	-
	2,300	2,500	-	4,800	2,300	2,500	-	4,800	-
1% contingency	228	278	186	692				-	692
Total	24,990	28,763	18,786	72,539	21,732	25,250	15,823	62,805	9,734

Prudential borrowing required

3,258 3,513 2,963 9,734



Decision maker:	General overview and scrutiny committee
Decision date:	14 November 2016
Title of report:	Edgar Street stadium, Hereford - lease proposals
Report by:	Head of corporate asset management

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not a key decision.

Wards affected

Widemarsh

Purpose

To enable the committee to consider the options available to the council prior to entering into longer term arrangements on the stadium premises.

Recommendations

THAT:

- (a) **the committee determines whether it wishes to make any recommendations to the executive to consider regarding the proposed grant of a new lease to the current tenant for a term of 10 years, commencing at some point prior to the expiry the current lease ; and**
- (b) **a further report is presented to the Committee setting out the long term proposals for the Edgar Street stadium following an appraisal by the football club, council and potential development partners of the options.**

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Tony Featherstone, Head of Corporate Asset Management on Tel (01432) 383368

Alternative options

- 1 Not to extend the existing lease to Hereford Football Club Ltd and on termination obtain vacant possession of the stadium and not provide the club with any alternative premises. This is not recommended because the council is committed to supporting the retention of football in the county and without an alternative location being identified the decision to retain the existing lease period would impact on the ability of the club to meet the tenure requirements of the Football Association.
- 2 Negotiate and agree terms for a short to medium term lease to provide the club and the football association with some medium term certainty while exploring longer term options for the club's premises requirements. This option is recommended as it provides a medium term security for the club whilst maintaining longer term flexibility for the council to explore options to ensure that its assets are being used to best effect.
- 3 Not to extend the existing lease and work with the club to identify and deliver a new site and stadium and release the existing site for redevelopment. This is not recommended given the remaining term of the existing lease and planned timetable for securing a development partner.
- 4 Negotiate and agree terms for a long term lease of the stadium to the club. This is not recommended as it would not provide the council with sufficient flexibility to determine future use of its assets in light of options to be identified through the planned development partnership, and may prevent exploration of the options which may be available to the club to secure improved facilities.

Reasons for recommendations

- 5 To enable any recommendations from the general overview and scrutiny committee to be considered by the executive as previously agreed.

Key considerations

- 6 In June 2015 GOSC made recommendations following a review of the lease restructuring which resulted in the grant of a new lease in 2014. A copy of the recommendations and executive response is attached at appendix 1 for ease of reference.
- 7 The options currently available to the council are set out in paragraphs 1 to 4 above. The committee should give due consideration to these and determine whether to recommend one of these options, or any additional options, to the executive to consider before making any further decisions regarding the council's interest in this asset.
- 8 Following the demise of the previous football club at the end of 2014 a phoenix club was formed with the backing of the supporters trust which has an interest in the ownership and governance of the new club. As a result the council entered into a new five year lease on part of the stadium site.
- 9 To date the tenant has made considerable capital investment in the property asset and before further investment is made the tenant needs to understand the council's medium to long term plans for the stadium and willingness to extend the existing lease term.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Tony Featherstone, Head of Corporate Asset Management on Tel (01432) 383368

- 10 The current lease is scheduled to end on 31 July 2020. The grant of a new lease for a term of ten years, would make it more commercially viable for the club to continue its investment programme to improve the building fabric and facilities. Furthermore it would enable the club to bid for grant funding from the Football Association (FA) for capital works to the ground and meet the tenure requirements of the FA to enable progression up the FA leagues. It is anticipated the ten year lease would commence at some trigger date, prior to the expiry of the current lease, that could either be the point at which grant applications are made; the award or acceptance of FA or other funding; or the promotion to a higher FA league and would replace the current five year lease rather than extend it.
- 11 The site is identified in the draft economic master plan as an opportunity to attract investment leading to the improvement of the county's social, economic and physical characteristics. The council is in the process of selecting a strategic development partner and expects to have a preferred partner appointed in 2017. As part of the bidding process all shortlisted bidders are being invited, in consultation with the football club, to submit outline development proposals for the stadium and these will be worked up in further detail during the bidding process and should form part of any delivery programme that the council and its strategic development partner agree to deliver over the programme period which is anticipated to be a minimum of 10 years. The development options will be the subject of a further future report to the overview and scrutiny committee to inform any further decision about the long term future of this site.

Community impact

- 12 There is no community impact arising directly from this report. However, the club is actively involved in a number of community engagement initiatives such as 'Junior Bulls' encouraging club membership and match attendance by under 16s; a designated family stand; 'Disabulls' providing improved access and facilities for disabled supporters; hospital and school visits. The stadium has also been made available to other organisations for major incident training and fire and rescue training and hosting of business and private functions.
- 13 The proposed grant of a ten year lease, will enable the following corporate plan objectives to be met, as the club will continue with its existing community initiatives:
- Enable residents to live safe healthy and independent lives – providing and encouraging participation in sport.
 - Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life – the various initiatives for engagement with children and young adults.
 - Secure better services – protecting current revenue income and avoiding additional revenue costs on council budgets.

Equality duty

- 14 There are no equality issues arising from this report.

Financial implications

- 15 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However, the preferred option to grant a ten year lease will generate revenue rental income of

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Tony Featherstone, Head of Corporate Asset Management on Tel (01432) 383368

£10,000 per annum. The lease will relieve the council of any costs associated with holding a vacant property.

- 16 The lease will be on the same repairing and maintenance terms where the tenant is required to maintain the premises in no worse a condition and minimise any maintenance costs to the council of the leased area during the period.
- 17 Any financial implications of redevelopment or lease restructuring will be set out in subsequent reports. Any extension of the current lease would ensure that the council retains control over the future development opportunity and income that can be derived from that and decisions as to how the proceeds of any redevelopment are allocated will be considered once detailed and costed proposals have been worked up.

Legal implications

- 18 The council has the powers to enter into a lease for a term of ten years at a market rent. The property was openly marketed prior to the grant of the current lease in 2015 and there has been no significant change in market conditions to result in any increase to the current rent.
- 19 When a decision has been reached regarding the future of the site, and following the settling of heads of terms, the preparation and completion of the lease will be overseen by the council's legal department. It is expected to be in a format very similar to the existing lease which already reflects recommendations made previously by the committee, but incorporating any necessary updates or adjustments to ensure the council's interests remain protected.

Risk management

- 20 The grant of a new ten year lease may delay or prevent short or medium term redevelopment of the leased area although this is partially mitigated by excluding the Blackfriars stand from the leased area.

Consultees

- 21 Hereford Football Club Ltd.
- 22 The ward member has been advised.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary of Recommendations and Executive Response to previous GOSC report.

Background papers

None.

Summary of Recommendations and Executive Responses [Review of Lease Restructuring with Hereford United (1939) Ltd]

Recommendation No. 1	That there should be proper assessment of whether it would be beneficial, in any future leases, for the council to retain a right to exercise a break clause in the event of (1) a change of ownership / change of control; and/or (2) professional football ceases to be played at the ground. And that any lease should include appropriate safeguards in the event of a hostile takeover of a corporate tenant.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – (1) This clause is included in the current five season lease, but such terms do not usually form part of a lease especially when it covers such a short term. It is unusual for such a term to be accepted by the tenant. (2) the lease only permits use of the ground for football with the tenant to be a member of the FA. Breach of these obligations will render the lease liable to forfeiture.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Terms incorporated into current lease	D of ECC	27/03/2015	Completion of lease	Lease completed.

Recommendation No. 2	That the primary objective when considering proposals for the football ground should be to secure the continuation of professional football.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – In relation to existing 5 season lease, However, it is suggested that this proposal be subject to a further report to Cabinet and GOSC in Autumn 2015 as this needs to be considered by a new administration.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Further report in Autumn	D of ECC	TBC	TBC	TBC

Recommendation No. 3	That compelling and exceptional justification should be required to persuade the council to relinquish development rights and that the new lease should only extend to the football pitch with use of the stands and other facilities.			
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – the new lease does not include any development rights for the tenant.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Terms incorporated into current lease	D of ECC	27/03/2015	Completion of lease	Lease completed.

Recommendation No. 4	That any profits generated by the development of the Ground (whether by the Council or another) should be invested for the benefit of the County and, in particular, to support football and sport in the County.				
Executive Response	It is suggested that this proposal be subject to a further report to Cabinet and GOSC in Autumn 2015 as this needs to be considered by a new administration.				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Further report in Autumn	D of ECC	TBC	TBC	TBC	

Recommendation No. 5	That assurance be provided that any new long term tenant would be subject to full and proper due diligence.				
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – further, although the new tenant will only take a short term lease a full due diligence exercise was undertaken.				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Due diligence exercise undertaken	D of ECC	09/03/2015	Club meet criteria issued by Council	Criteria met on 09/03/2015 and lease completed on 27/03/15.	

Recommendation No. 6	That the Executive ensures that any leases relating to football meet Football Association requirements.				
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – the FA has not specified any requirements.				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Incorporated in lease	D of ECC	27/03/2015	Completion of lease	Lease completed.	

Recommendation No. 7	That the Executive look favourably on proposals that include for the provision of education and training for young people.				
Executive Response	PARTIALLY ACCEPTED – This is not a condition that would normally be contained within the provisions of a lease. However this recommendation was adopted by the inclusion of this provision into the selection criteria for a new tenant.				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Incorporate into the selection criteria of a new tenant	D of ECC	19/02/2015	Proposed tenant satisfies selection criteria	Complete	

Recommendation No. 8	That if more than one lease is to be granted that consideration should be given to them all having a consistent end date.				
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – there is only one lease.				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Incorporated within existing five season lease	D of ECC	27/03/2015	Completion of lease	Lease completed.	

Recommendation No. 9	That in advance of any longer term decisions, the scrutiny committee be invited to consider future arrangements as part of its work programme for 2015/16.				
Executive Response	ACCEPTED – Programmed for September 2015				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Further report	D of ECC	Sept 2015	TBC	TBC	



Meeting:	General overview and scrutiny committee
Meeting date:	14 November 2016
Title of report:	Passenger transport review – consultation
Report by:	Head of transportation and access

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To seek the views of the committee on the options under consideration as part of the passenger transport review and seek comments on the outputs of the bus service consultation.

Recommendation(s)

THAT: having regard to the outcome of the consultation on bus services the committee determine any recommendations it wishes to make to cabinet regarding options for reducing subsidy.

Alternative options

- 1 The committee may wish to recommend alternative options for reducing the costs of supporting passenger transport services.

Reasons for recommendations

- 2 To enable the committee to make recommendations for cabinet to consider when it determines which proposals to progress to achieve financial savings for passenger transport services.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Steve Burgess, Head of Transportation and Access on Tel (01432) 260968

Key considerations

Context to the passenger transport review

- 3 The medium term financial strategy (MTFS) has set out savings plans for a wide range of council services and expenditure. The current savings plans require £17.5m of savings for the period 2017/18 to 2019/20. This represents the funding gap arising from increased costs and reduced funding. The majority of savings relate to continued efficiency improvements and changes to service delivery and have been referred to in the public budget consultation. The implementation of individual savings proposals will follow further consultation and be subject to specific consultation as necessary, prior to their implementation.
- 4 The MTFS outlines the savings from passenger transport services over this period, which total £740k, and includes an overview of the areas of provision under review to deliver these savings:
 - a. Increasing income from paid for transport (mainstream school transport, post 16 transport including special educational needs);
 - b. Integration of contracts to reduce costs (typically school and bus network contracts);
 - c. Service efficiencies through review and replanning of services (mainly applying to school transport contracts as service demands reduce in line with the move to nearest school only policy);
 - d. Review of policy and process for determining eligibility for statutory transport services (including school transport and adult social care transport);
 - e. Reducing subsidy for public transport services; and
 - f. Phased reduction in support for community transport schemes.

The services under review

- 5 Council expenditure on passenger transport services comprises subsidy for public bus services not operated on a purely commercial basis by bus operators, provision of the statutory concessionary travel scheme, support to voluntary sector organisation to run community transport, mainstream and college travel, special educational needs (SEN) travel and adult social care (ASC) travel. Total spend is around £8.6m per year which includes around £1.9M of contributions (comprising parental payments for non-entitled transport, payments from other local authorities to cross border transport provision) resulting in a net spend of £6.7m:
 - a. Subsidised bus services - £0.75m
 - b. Concessionary travel - £1.4m
 - c. Support to voluntary sector providers of community transport - £135k
 - d. Mainstream travel including college - £2.7m
 - e. SEN - £1.3m (in house provision and contracts costs)
 - f. ASC - £350k (in house provision and contract costs – its is understood that some clients receive direct funding for transport and these costs are being confirmed)

6 Whilst elements of these services are discretionary, the majority of the expenditure relates directly to statutory services. In summary, the key areas of statutory provision are as follows:

- Subsidised bus services. The council has a duty under the 1985 Transport Act to 'secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as the council consider it appropriate to meet public transport requirements' and to formulate policies which describe the services which it proposes to secure. The local transport plan includes policies which aim to secure the provision of a 'core bus network' which would connect Hereford with market towns and some larger villages with weekday and Saturday services. The subsidy currently required to support the core network is around £520k;
- Concessionary travel. The council has a duty to operate the scheme providing free travel on buses (commercial and subsidised) for older people and those registered disabled. The scheme supports around 1 million journeys each year and costs around £1.4m;
- Entitled transport to school. Currently, the council provides free transport for around 3250 pupils (mainstream and SEN) or 1.25 million passenger journeys each school year with a net cost of £4m; and
- Provision of transport for adult social care clients assessed as eligible by a social worker for transport assistance to a social services facility – the in house service carries direct costs for around 30 clients and around 40 are provided transport through external providers, the number of clients provided with direct funding to contribute to their own transport costs is being investigated in order to capture the whole cost to the council. The known costs relating to those clients provided with transport is around £350k a year.

7 The main areas of discretionary support and/or subsidy are as follows:

- Having regard to the statutory duty to set out policies which describe the bus network which the council should support (the core network) it may be considered that providing subsidy for the non-core network is discretionary. The net cost of subsidising the non-core network is around £230k. The council may redefine the services it considers appropriate for providing financial support but would need to demonstrate that it had undertaken appropriate consultation.
- Support for voluntary sector providers of community transport. Whilst there is no statutory duty to support community transport services a number of other local authorities have sought to demonstrate compliance with the duty set out in the 1985 Transport Act by providing support for community transport services in mitigation for withdrawing subsidy for conventional bus services;
- Vacant seats scheme. The council operates a vacant seats scheme on school transport services with a charge which is approaching full cost recovery. This is a discretionary service which supports around 300 riders a year. The service may be withdrawn with notice if the seat is required by an entitled rider;
- Post 16 SEN transport – a charge was introduced September 2015 which was the equivalent of the vacant seats charge for mainstream transport (£750 for 2016/17). There are around 60 post 16 SEN transport users out of a total of 293 at present and the average cost of transporting these users was around £4.5k per rider in 2015/16. Whilst the costs associated with individual riders will vary this indicates a discretionary subsidy of around £3.75k per rider; and
- Post 16 mainstream transport. The council has no statutory responsibility to

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Steve Burgess, Head of Transportation and Access on Tel (01432) 260968

provide support for transport for college students but typically provides direct support to around 1100 students each year. All students contribute to the costs of the transport and for out of county students colleges provide additional contributions and are charged an administration fee for arranging transport. Work is ongoing to ascertain whether or not this discretionary service operates at full cost recovery.

The context for savings, efficiencies and income generation

- 8 Substantial savings of over £1m have already been delivered from this service over the period 2013/14 to 2015/16. The savings have largely been delivered through the 2014 bus network review which included:
- contracting efficiencies and streamlining of services;
 - commercialisation of some services;
 - service subsidy reductions (Sunday and evening services);
 - integration of service contracts between school transport and public bus services; and
 - limited reduction in the contribution to community transport providers.
- 9 Further contributions to savings have come from implementing the council's policy on income charging (which requires consideration of full cost recovery) and changes to school transport policy to adopt the statutory minimum requirement for eligibility:
- increased charge for vacant seats moving to full cost recovery (from £514 in 2012/13 to £750 in 2016/17);
 - introduction of charges for post 16 SEN transport (as per the vacant seats charge); and
 - Changes to eligibility for free school transport (nearest English school only).
- 10 The changes set out in paragraph 8 and 9 indicate the range of savings already implemented. Some of these changes will provide ongoing cost reductions and/or increase income generation. Additional options to deliver savings/efficiencies are being explored and will support the passenger transport review and savings requirements:
- SEN – review procurement and supplier market, improvements to policy and process for assessing transport needs;
 - Mainstream school transport – contracting improvements, achieving efficiencies through route planning and potential increases in income generation (anticipating long term impacts of nearest school policy/uptake of vacant seats/move to full cost recovery);
 - Support for mainstream post 16 transport – reviewing costs against contributions to consider if full range of support should continue with the aim of making this whole service area full cost recovery; and
 - ASC transport – review of the role of the in house fleet (in coordination with SEN provision) to consider whether or not this approach represents best value for money, supporting AWB review of eligibility policy for access to free transport and role for personalised budgets. This is including dry run of draft policies to

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Steve Burgess, Head of Transportation and Access on Tel (01432) 260968

model impacts on demand and costs.

Consultation on the review of bus services – 18 July to 16 October 2016

- 11 If other options for reducing costs and generating income do not deliver the full savings amount required in the MTFSS savings plan it may be necessary to consider potential reductions to subsidised bus services and financial support for community transport. As indicated at paragraph 7, if the council wishes to reduce subsidy and financial support for these types of services it has a duty to consider its adopted policies and to consult with users such that the impacts of changes are understood and appropriate mitigation can be considered. Best practice and legal precedent indicates that it is sensible and appropriate to undertake consultation in advance of determining any changes to withdraw subsidy and financial support, hence, the council has embarked on a full consultation before determining any changes to current subsidy and financial support. A report of the consultation is included at appendix 1.
- 12 The consultation resulted in a high response rate with over 2000 responses submitted for the general survey and 25 parish council responses to the parish council survey by the deadline of 16 October.
- 13 The consultation provides a wide range of information which would enable the consideration of impacts of service reduction and relative impacts on different users. Analysis of the consultation is continuing and will be used in final reporting on the passenger transport review to inform future decisions by cabinet. Key results include: (numbers in brackets are numbers of responses – not all questions were answered by all respondents):
 - a. Respondents provided feedback on their relative priority for services for which subsidy might be withdrawn. This response is consistent with feedback from consultation in 2014 and suggests that there is a relatively lower priority for subsidy for bus services in urban areas and infrequent market day services with a desire to maintain subsidy for rural services and weekday services (high percentage equates to priority for reducing subsidy)
 1. Town/city – 37% (614)
 2. Market day – 34% (564)
 3. Saturday – 18% (294)
 4. weekday daytime – 7% (109)
 5. rural/village – 5% (79)
 - b. 74% (1248) of respondents agreed with the local transport plan ‘core network of services’ policy should be treated as a priority. The consultation included a map identifying the routes of these services which provide Monday to Saturday access connecting Hereford with market towns and larger villages.
 - c. In previous consultations respondents have indicated that they would like to see a change to the national concessionary fares scheme which entitles older people and disabled people to free bus transport. 53% (982) of respondents want the council to lobby government to allow a charge to be applied to concessionary pass holders
 - d. Respondents were asked to indicate alternative options for supporting bus

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services and/or reducing overall costs of public transport:

1. Increase bus fares - 32% (513)
 2. Parish and town councils fund through higher precept - 29% (456)
 3. Reducing service frequency - 19% (303)
 4. Development of community based self help transport schemes - 16% (247)
 5. Withdrawing financial support for community transport - 5% (73)
- e. Respondents were asked what maximum subsidy per passenger they would consider appropriate for the council to pay noting that the current maximum is at £4.55. A majority of 53% (879) suggested a maximum of £4 or less whilst the biggest single group (29% - 470) suggested £5.
- f. Respondents were asked to indicate if they had alternative transport options if their main bus service was no longer available:
1. Car (driver/passenger) – 34% (743)
 2. Other transport mode – 30% (673)
 3. Community transport – 5% (118)
 4. No alternative – 29% (641)
- g. Respondents were asked to indicate the level of impact if their main bus service was no longer available – 81% (1261) indicate that it would have a high impact and 19% (303) indicated low to no impact.

Options for meeting budget targets

- 14 Work is continuing to actively manage current contracts and drive efficiencies to minimise costs. It is anticipated that this work will deliver a proportion of the savings required by the MTFS. However, in order to meet the full savings requirement, further action may be required. The following table outlines a range of potential options for further reducing spend by the council in relation to the support of passenger transport services. No decision has been taken on progressing any of these options and feedback from the committee will be taken into account in further development of options and any subsequent decision regarding the review of passenger transport.

Table 1: Options for reducing subsidy for public transport and alternative funding options

Ref	Description	Current Spend/scale of saving	Issues to consider	Mitigation
1	Withdraw all subsidy for bus services	£750k (net)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would conflict with policy and potential legal challenge • Likely to significantly reduce the network of publicly available bus services, although the level of service which would remain and continue to be provided commercially by operators is uncertain • 29% respondents indicated they would have no alternative form of transport and 81% indicated high impact • Potential increased pressure/costs on other support services resulting from rural isolation and reduced independence • Whilst 71% of respondents indicated they might have an alternative if service lost likely to result in traffic increases as more people would use car based transport • Possible increased costs for statutory transport (Est £105k) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support for community transport would provide a safety net but limited capacity in this sector • Consultation indicated 71% respondents might have an alternative transport option if main service lost • Costs may reduce for concessionary fares reimbursement if operators do not continue to operate services commercially. • Transport promotions programme in place to support alternative travel and encourage use of remaining commercial bus network
2	Withdraw subsidy for non-core network services	£225K (net)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not conflict with policy and reduce chance of successful legal challenge • Likely to lead to loss of more remote rural services, unless operators continue to provide on commercial basis, potentially impacting smaller number of people but may have limited alternatives • Some impact on cost of school transport (Est £25K) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community transport schemes and local parishes to identify alternatives • Phasing in reduction would allow time for alternatives to be fully assessed and local communities to be engaged • Costs may reduce for concessionary fares reimbursement if operators do not continue to operate services commercially.
3	Withdraw subsidy	£105K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would not conflict with core network policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to have alternative transport options

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	for town/city services (non-core network)	(net)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation indicated lowest priority • Some impacts on access and potential to increase car use for short trips – traffic • Likely to reduce the network of publicly available bus services, although the level of service which would remain and continue to be provided commercially by operators is uncertain • May impact transport costs associated with school transport 	<p>and closer proximity to key services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport promotions programme has focus on supporting short urban trips which could reduce transport impacts and provide alternatives • Potential for community transport schemes and town/city councils to work in partnership to provide local transport
4	Withdraw market day services (non-core network)	£120k (net)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would not conflict with core network policy • Consultation feedback indicated second lowest priority • Tend to be more expensive services per passenger journey • Likely to lead to loss of more remote rural services, unless operators continue to provide on commercial basis, potentially impacting smaller number of people but may have limited alternatives • Regarded as lifeline services or only remaining service for remote locations – potential for high impact on a limited number of people – may increase costs for social care/health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These types of service are potentially easier for community transport schemes to provide due to relative lower capacity requirement • Examples of these types of service being specified and funded by parish councils • Phasing in of reduction would allow time for alternative local provision to be reviewed and planned • Likely reduction in concessionary fares costs
5	Withdraw subsidy for Saturday services (some part of core network)	£120k (net)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would conflict with core network policy but consultation indicates that these are not highest priority services • May impact on local economies – high proportion of bus journeys are for shopping purposes • Likely to reduce the network of publicly available bus services, although the level of service which would remain and continue to be provided commercially by operators is uncertain • Would not impact transport costs associated with school transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be opportunity for some of the services to operate commercially • Whilst possible impact on some workers other users likely to have services at other time during the week • May be limited opportunity for local community provision

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6	Withdraw subsidy for Monday to Friday Services (some part of core network)	£405k (net)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would conflict with policy and potential legal challenge • Likely to significantly reduce the network of publicly available bus services, although the level of service which would remain and continue to be provided commercially by operators is uncertain • High priority for respondents for these service to be retained • Potential increased pressure/costs on other support services resulting from rural isolation and reduced independence • Possible increased costs for statutory transport (Est £80k) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support for community transport would provide a safety net but limited capacity in this sector • Costs likely to reduce for concessionary fares reimbursement in light of possible service reduction • Transport promotions programme in place to support alternative travel
7	Reduce maximum cost per passenger limit on subsidised services	£4 = £31K, £3 = £105K, £2 = £115K, £1 = £435K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in net spend if maximum subsidy per journey figures adopted • Consultation indicated majority in favour of reducing to maximum of £4 (53%), • Maximum subsidy per passenger would need to reduce by a significant amount to achieve greater levels of savings • Likely to impact more remote, less frequent services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More expensive services (cost per passenger journey) likely to be types of service which community transport and local communities could take up • Would enable prioritisation based on value for money/affordability • Would protect most well used services
8	Withdraw support for community transport schemes	£135k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some schemes might cease to operate due to fragile funding position • Possibly reduce capacity to support safety net services • High proportion of CT journeys (59% of all journeys in consultation) are to access health service so may be increased costs for other service areas • Could damage opportunities for local transport solutions where CT can play a coordinating role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some schemes likely to be able to continue due to stronger financial sustainability • Encourage schemes to secure funding through contracted work • Opportunity for funding through local parish council support (examples of this already in place) • In view of high level of health related journeys explore funding options from CCG/NHS Trust • Support fewer journeys compared with bus services but similar level to market day

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				services
9	Community and Parish Council direct subsidy of locally important services	£low?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal well supported in bus consultation, but not in consultation with parish councils • Lack of certainty around which parishes would take up the opportunity • Take time to plan and support transition to parish directly supporting services • Parish councils facing range of new demands in relation to devolved services and financial support • Complicated to arrange for longer distance services requiring buy in from multiple parish councils • Role of Herefordshire Council to coordinate services and support the commissioning process would be necessary. • Likely to be a time delay for the communities to prepare and put in place funding arrangements. Unless phased in, it is likely that services would be reduced for a period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users support the approach (456 respondents) • Some parishes already support timetabled services and support from council has been effective • Phasing in of proposal would allow time for planning and transition • Could improve service planning and meeting local needs due to closer relationship with local communities
10	Increase ticket prices	£low?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most popular alternative indicated in the consultation • The council can only stipulate fares on a very limited number of services – analysis indicates that this might only apply to around 135 bus users • General increases in fares (including commercial and subsidy based contracts) would have to be agreed by operators and would potentially increase costs on concessionary fares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle of paying more for a service (income generation) in line with income charging policy
11	Reduce service frequencies	£low-medium?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The review in 2014 resulted in service frequency reductions and reduction some early/late services so there is only a limited amount of further frequency reduction feasible • Can impact attractiveness of services such that passenger numbers drop to less flexibility in journey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well supported proposal in the consultation • Might enable framework of services to be retained whilst contributing some savings • Increasing efficiency of services and reducing contract costs is in line with councils overall approach to value for

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			<p>options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of early and later services can impact work opportunities 	money
12	Development of community based self help schemes	£low?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlikely to provide equivalent of bus service • Resource required to provide support for communities and local organisations • Would need to respond to specific demand from local communities – not clear how well focused this demand is at present • Existing community transport schemes indicate capacity issues and shortages of volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal had some support in consultation • A phased approach would allow time for communities to develop specific proposals in advance of reductions • Ongoing support to CT schemes could focus on encouraging sharing of resources and functions to release capacity
13	Lobby government to allow charging for use of bus pass	£significant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would require government to change legislation Scheme • Already at statutory minimum in county following reduction in 2011 to use after 9.30 am and up to 11pm • Scheme does not apply to CT schemes unlike in other counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong support from users with over 50% agreeing • Users could voluntarily pay fares on services if they wished • Information from the consultation will be provided to government with a request for a formal response

Ongoing support for transport

- 15 Whilst it is important that we gather information on potential impacts of service reductions, in the event that subsidy is reduced, there is a risk that there will be a reduction in the bus network unless operators choose to provide services on a commercial basis. The following have been identified as potential activities and measures which would help mitigate impacts.

Encourage operators to continue to run services commercially

- 16 Through active engagement with operators, the transport team would seek to encourage operators to consider the commercial opportunities for the ongoing provision of services. This would include the sharing of passenger information and provision of service information to passengers.

Sustainable transport and support for access

- 17 The council is continuing to introduce and support measures which will maintain and improve access for residents. Funding has been secured to support the destination Hereford project in 2016/17. A bid has been submitted to DfT for the period 2017/18 to 2019/20. If funds are secured through this bid it will help support countywide access through initiatives such as car sharing, business travel plan support, working with schools and colleges and direct promotions of public transport and active travel modes. It is anticipated that government will announce successful bids in the autumn statement. schools and colleges and direct promotions of public transport and active travel modes. Increased use of bus services directly improves the potential for their continued operation on a commercial basis.

Supporting communities and a role for parish councils

- 18 Professional advice and commissioning support will be provided to local communities to help them review, design and commission transport services. There are examples of a number of services which are already operating through this approach including:
- a. Fownhope and Mordiford parish council have designed services in discussion with their local community which provides a timetabled bus service to Ledbury (455) and Ross on Wye (458) after trials funded by DfT grant;
 - b. Following the 2014 passenger transport review Hereford City Council commissioned a bespoke transport service from Hereford Dial a Ride to replace a timetabled service (the Hereford Access Bus) which was withdrawn by the operator; and
 - c. Luston, Orleton and Yarpole group parish are currently contributing towards the costs of the 490 timetabled service to support additional journeys into Ludlow.
- 19 Advice on funding for local communities is also available and would be coordinated with support for commissioning of services.
- 20 The council supports 7 community transport schemes which provide countywide coverage for county residents. This comprises annual funding which was reviewed 2014 to encourage and reward diversification and capacity building. All of the schemes have been supported to join the council's passenger transport framework which enables them to tender for contracted services and support their financial sustainability. All 7 schemes are now on the framework and some have begun tendering for contracted work. Support has also been provided to the schemes to access department for transport funding. Additional financial support has been

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secured from DfT funds in recent years. £130k additional funds were secured through the DfT community transport fund 2013-15 supporting community led initiatives such as a car club, wheels to work activity, the Bromyard 'wiggly' bus and IT investment. In 2015/16 3 schemes have also been supported in bidding for funds to acquire new vehicles.

Supporting access to education

- 21 Outside of the council's statutory responsibilities to provide transport for entitled riders discretionary support is provided for non-entitled riders and for college students. This support helps sustain local bus and rail services. This includes:
- a. Arranging for use of vacant seats on contracted services (over 100,000 journeys in 2015/16); and
 - b. Arranging for transport by bus or rail for college students (over 445,000 journeys in 2015/16 – 200,000 of these were for students from out of county supported to access colleges in Herefordshire).
- 22 Consultation has been carried out directly with county schools to develop a best practice guide, sharing information on the types of transport solutions which schools are able to implement directly. The consultation identified a wide range of innovative measures which schools are already leading on including;
- i. Operating their own fleet vehicles;
 - ii. Sharing vehicles between schools;
 - iii. Commissioning local transport providers;
 - iv. Promoting car sharing amongst parents;
 - v. Promoting and advising prospective parents of the existing transport services in their area; and
 - vi. Developing travel plans for the school which promote sustainable transport solutions.

Next steps

- 23 Option development will continue over, taking into account the consultation feedback and the detailed assessment of cost reduction and income generation measures as outlined in this report. Feedback and recommendations from committee will be taken into account in developing options and will be incorporated into future reporting.
- 24 Cabinet is due to receive a report early in 2017 identifying options for passenger transport over the period 2017-20.

Community impact

- 25 This consultation will enable the assessment of options for progressing savings in respect of bus services supported through a subsidy and financial support provided to third sector transport organisations. These are services which are of importance to all of the council's strategic priorities. Key areas of relevance include enabling residents to lead independent lives (particularly elderly and disabled people), supporting access for younger people, and enabling people to access work and supporting retailing activity. In line with the corporate plan's priority to provide value for money these services are included within the longer term savings proposals to achieve savings of £28M 2016-20.

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Equality duty

- 26 The consultation has provided detailed information on the potential impacts of reducing subsidy for bus services and support for community transport. A full equality impact assessment will be undertaken and included in a future report to the executive such that any decisions can be made with regard to the council's public sector equalities duty.

Financial implications

- 27 The medium term financial strategy (MTFS) has confirmed a savings plan which sets out detailed savings required from specific council services for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. This includes the following savings plan for passenger transport services:
- a. 2016/17 - £150k
 - b. 2017/18 - £275k
 - c. 2018/19 - £240k
 - d. 2019/20 - £225k
- 28 Savings for 2016/17 have been achieved and the development of proposals for meeting the savings plan is now focused on the period 2017/18 to 2019/20.

Legal implications

- 29 Whilst there are no legal implications arising from this report it should be noted that when the council is seeking to make changes to a service which may impact upon the community, there may be a duty to consult that is imposed upon the council by statute. In those instances the procedure to be adopted is also likely to be prescribed by the legislation.
- 30 Guidance as to how those issues should be addressed can be found in the cabinet office consultation principles and relevant case law. Both the cabinet office consultation principles and recent case law have emphasised that consultation requirements will vary from one context to another and should be assessed on an individual basis. However consultation should comply with the Sedley principles namely; that the consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage; that the proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit of intelligent consideration and response; that adequate time is given for consideration and response; and that the product of consultation is conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision. The burden is on the council to decide how, when, with whom and how widely to consult. But, the underlying principle of fairness should be at the forefront of the process.

Risk management

- 31 There are risks associated with the review of passenger transport services. Any proposals which might result in a reduction in service and impact on individuals and/or communities are likely to require risk management. Undertaking the consultation as set out in this report will enable the council to take into account potential impacts as it takes forward proposals. The high level of response to the consultation illustrates the importance of these services to the community. Work is ongoing to ascertain all viable alternatives to reduce costs, increase income such that the need for savings through service subsidy cuts is minimised.

Consultees

32 As set out in this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Herefordshire Bus Services Consultation, Survey Analysis, October 2016.

Background papers

None identified.



Herefordshire Bus Services Consultation

Survey Analysis

October 2016

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1 Executive summary

A consultation on bus services and community transport was undertaken by Herefordshire Council between 18th July and 16th October 2016. The survey was available in hard copy format and online. A total of 2,011 responses were received. This followed consultations that were undertaken in 2011 and 2014 to establish bus service priorities following significant financial pressures on local authorities.

In progressing its review of passenger transport services the Council needs to take into account the priorities for transport users and have regard to potential impacts in the event that changes in subsidy and financial support for transport need to be considered in the future.

Compared with the population profile of Herefordshire as a whole, the consultation saw higher response rates from people over 65 and from people with a disability or long-term illness. The response rate amongst people with access to a car was lower than the proportion of those people in the overall population. These outcomes are not surprising given that older and disabled people are more likely to rely on bus and community transport services and car users are less likely to be regular bus users.

Most people who responded (90%) used buses in Herefordshire. 80% of respondents travelled by bus at least once per week. 60% of journeys made by respondents were for shopping purposes.

When asked what alternative mode of transport they would use if their main bus was no longer available, 34% of respondents said they would travel by car, either driving or as a passenger. 29% said they would have no alternative. When asked how much impact the withdrawal of their bus service would have, 81% of respondents indicated that it would have a high impact.

74% of respondents considered that priority should be given to maintaining a network of core services on Monday to Saturday during the daytime period. 37% of respondents suggested that savings should be achieved through a reduction or withdrawal of funding for town and city services.

Many respondents took the opportunity to make comments covering many topics. The most common comments related to requests for the maintenance of particular bus services. 28% of those providing additional comments fell into this category. Other common comments related to access to essential services.

2 Survey Representation

POPULATION DENSITY

- 2.1 By mapping the postcodes of respondents, the geographical density of respondents could be compared with the overall population of Herefordshire (as given by the 2011 Census). Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show the two sets of data.
- 2.2 Overall, there is a general correlation between the two, suggesting that the distribution of respondents is in line with the general distribution of the population. It also demonstrates that the consultation reached people spread across Herefordshire.
- 2.3 Some of the rural areas did attract higher proportionate response rates. These included the Bromyard area, Golden Valley and Kington areas. This might reflect the concerns about the potential loss of bus services in these areas, many of which are partially or fully supported by the Council, and the impact that this could have on access to services and facilities located some distance away.

Figure 2-1: Map of Population Density in Herefordshire (Census 2011)

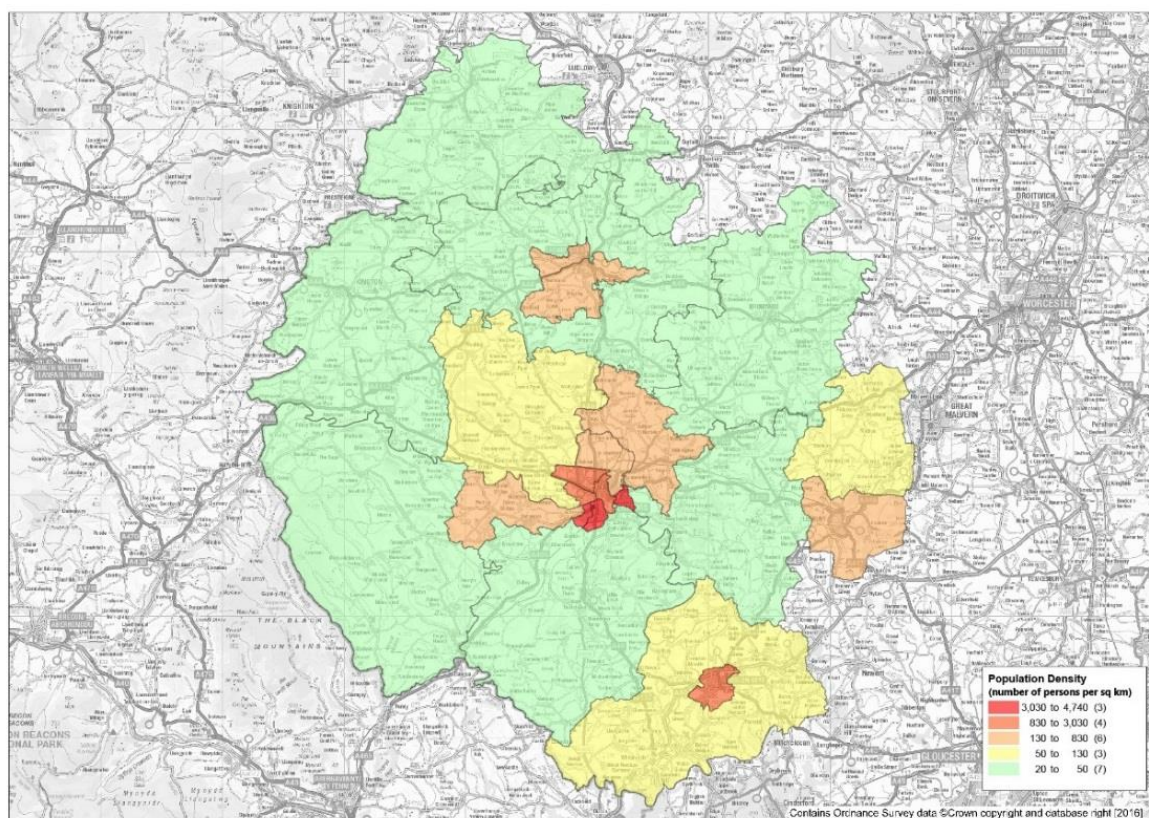
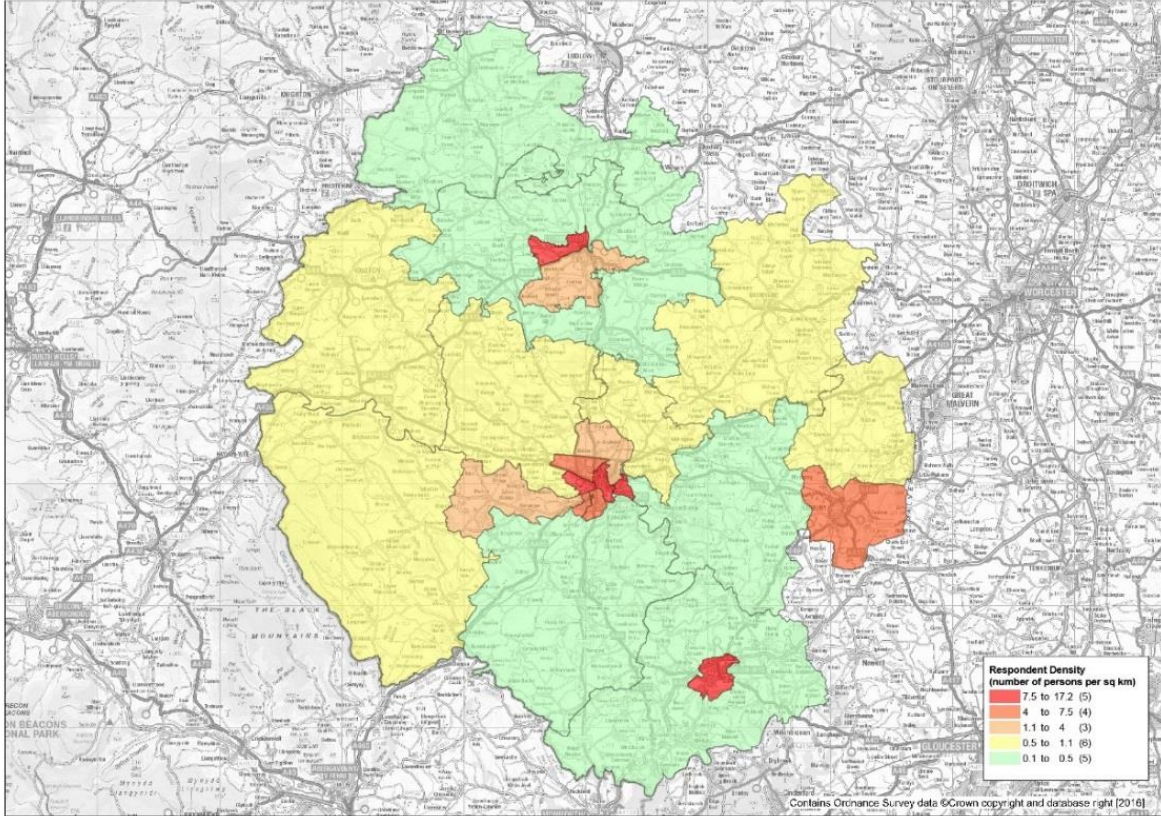


Figure 2-2: Map of Population Density by Respondent Postcode



3 Respondent Information

Are you completing this form for yourself, on behalf of someone else, or on behalf of an organisation?

- 3.1 The table below sets out the number of responses that were made by the individual themselves or someone on their behalf.

Response	Number	%
Myself	1595	79
For someone else	340	17
For an organisation	21	1
No answer	55	3
Total	2011	100

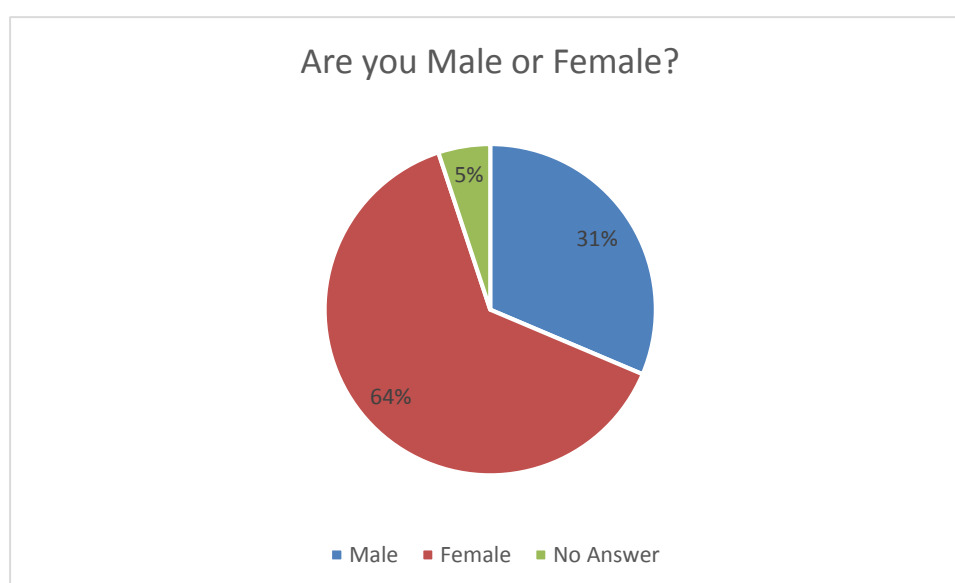
- 3.2 The table shows that the majority of respondents completed the consultation response themselves.

4 Demographics

- 4.1 The first group of questions relate to the demographics of consultation respondents. The results are set out below and are compared to the 2011 Census data for Herefordshire.

GENDER

Are you Male or Female?



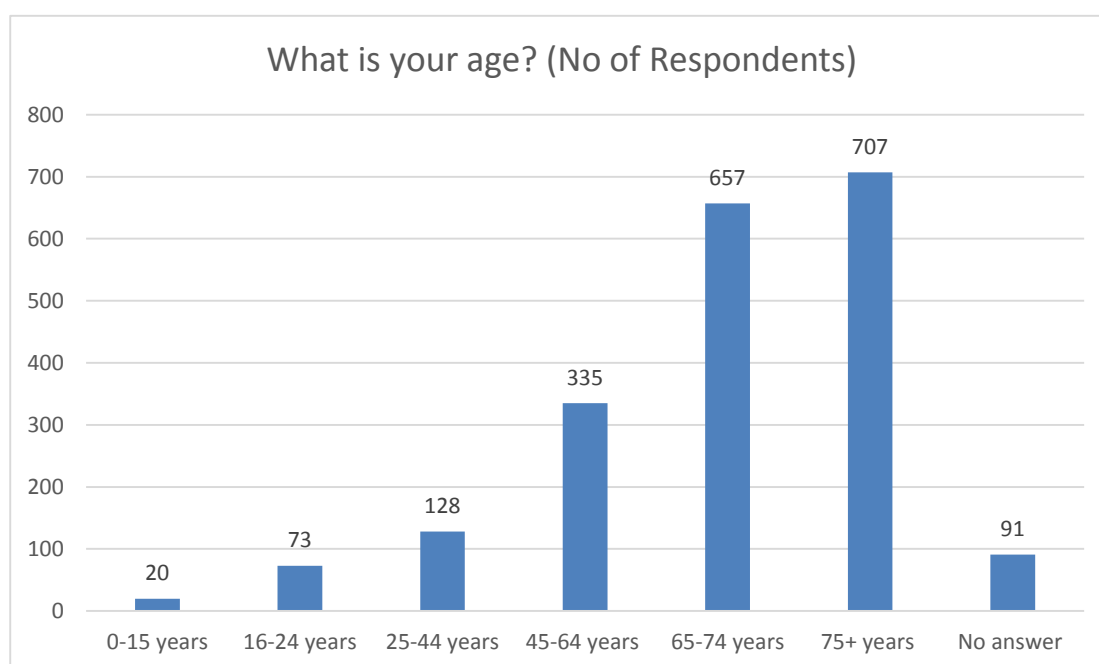
Gender	Number	%
Male	631	31
Female	1278	64
No answer	102	5
Total	2011	100

- 4.2 There were a higher proportion of female respondents (64%) to male respondents (31%). Census data from 2011 shows in Herefordshire, there is a more even split of gender with 51% of residents being female and 49% male.

AGE

What is your age?

Age	Number	%
0-15 years	20	1
16-24 years	73	4
25-44 years	128	6
45-64 years	335	17
65-74 years	657	33
75+ years	707	35
No answer	91	5
Total	2011	100

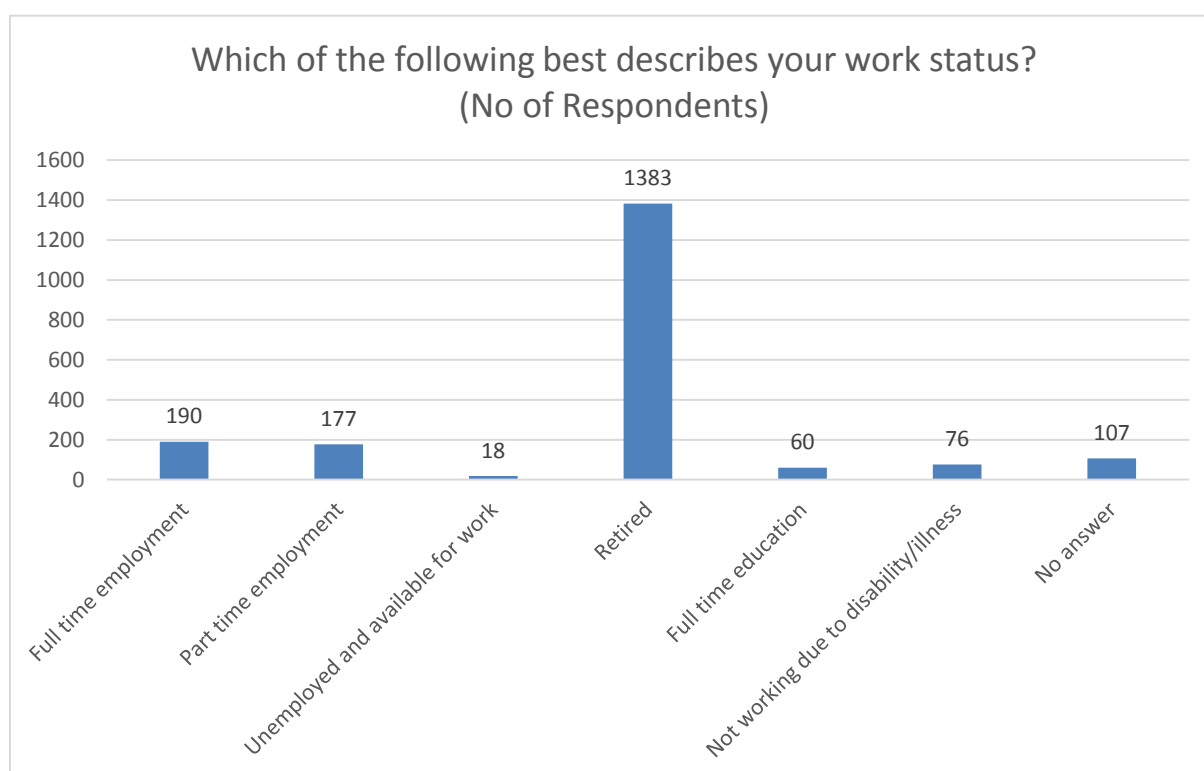


- 4.3 Of all respondents, 68% were over the age of 65. Comparing this to the Census, only 21% were over the age of 65. With regards to younger people, only 5% of survey respondents were under 25 years old, compared to 27% of Herefordshire residents. Respondents to the consultation were therefore generally older when compared to Herefordshire residents as a whole.

WORK STATUS

Which of the following best describes your work status?

Work Status	Number	%
Full time employment	190	9
Part time employment	177	9
Unemployed and available for work	18	1
Retired	1383	69
Full time education	60	3
Not working due to disability/illness	76	4
No answer	107	5
Total	2011	100

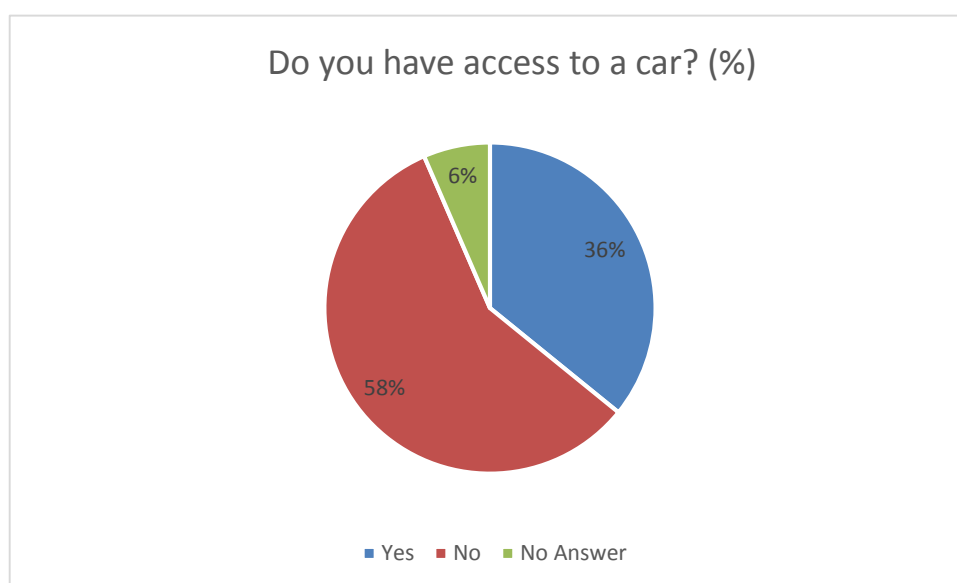


- 4.4 The majority of respondents (69%) were retired, which supports the age profile of survey respondents. Only 1% (18) of respondents were unemployed and unavailable for work and only 3% (60) were in full time education.

CAR AVAILABILITY

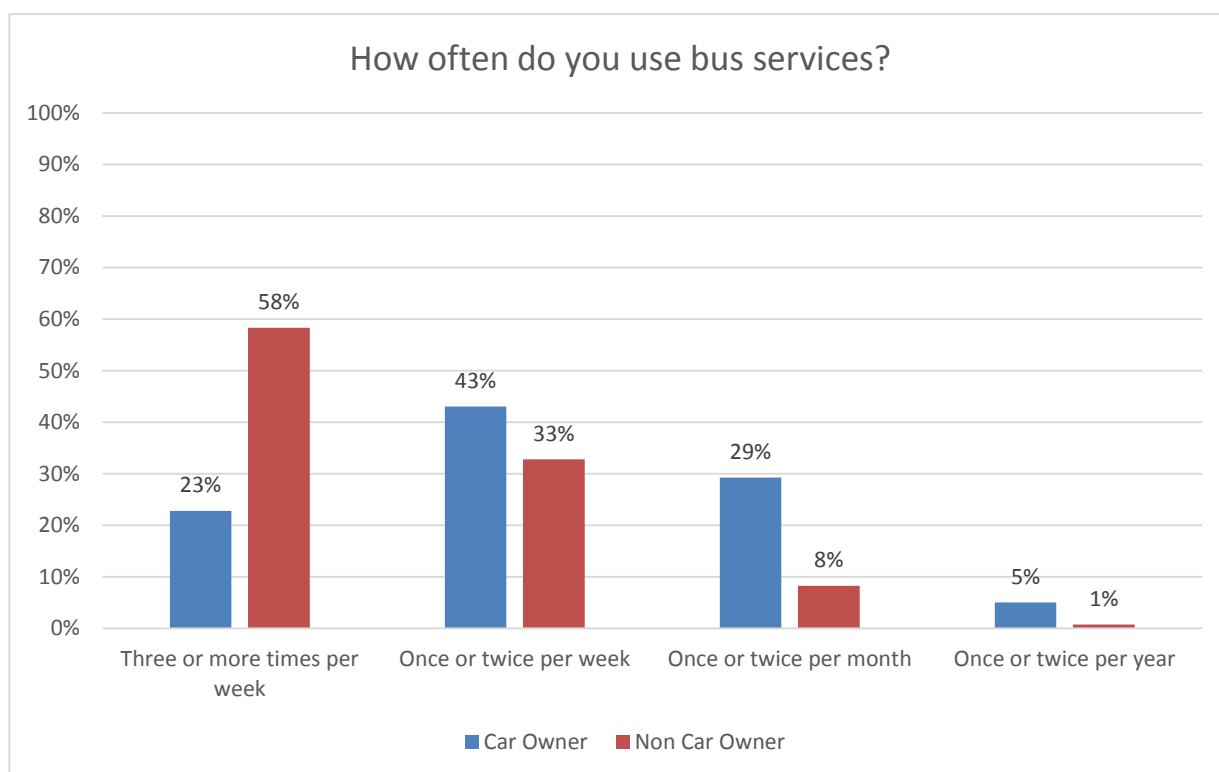
Do you have access to a car?

Car Availability	Number	%
Yes	721	36
No	1159	58
No answer	131	6
Total	2011	100



- 4.5 The results show that 36% of respondents to the survey had access to a car. Across Herefordshire, 84% of residents own a car/van. The lower percentage of people with access to a car observed in this survey is expected as bus users, constituting most of the respondents, are less likely to have access to a car than non-bus users.

Car Availability by Level of Bus Use

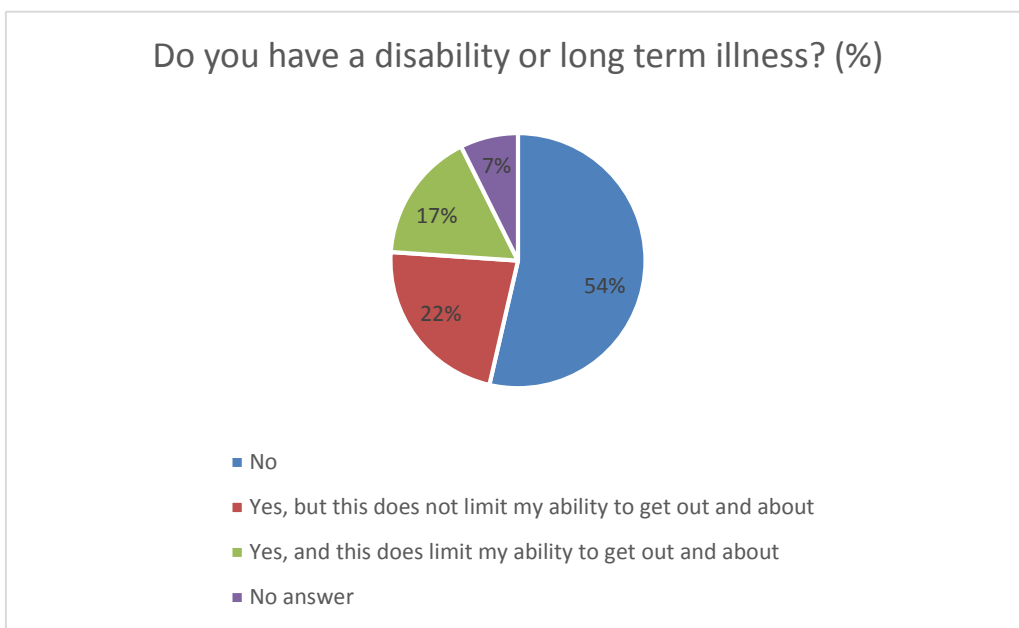


- 4.6 The above graph shows a correlation between the two sets of data. 58% of those people that use the buses three or more times a week are non-car-owners but interestingly 23% of people who use the buses for the same frequency are car owners.

DISABILITY/ILLNESS

Do you have a disability or long term illness?

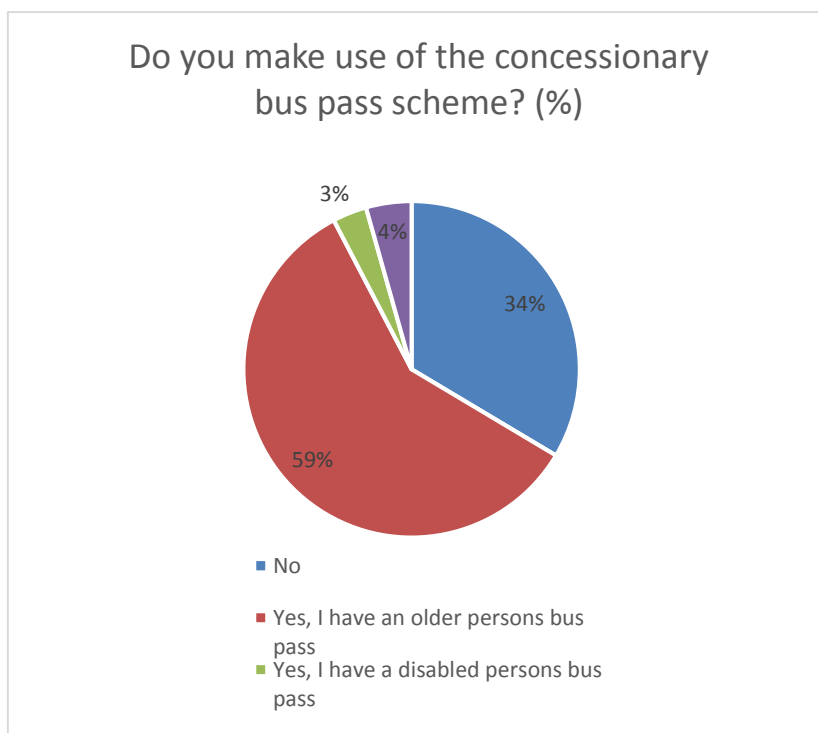
Disability	Number	%
No	1078	54
Yes, but this does not limit my ability to get out and about	452	22
Yes, and this does limit my ability to get out and about	333	17
No answer	148	7
Total	2011	100



4.7 Most people who responded (54%) did not have a disability or long-term illness. This compares to 66% of all Herefordshire residents from the Census data. 22% of survey respondents had a disability that did not limit their ability to get out and about, 17% percent of respondents had a disability that did affect their ability to get out and about.

CONCESSIONARY FARES SCHEME

Do you make use of the concessionary bus pass scheme?

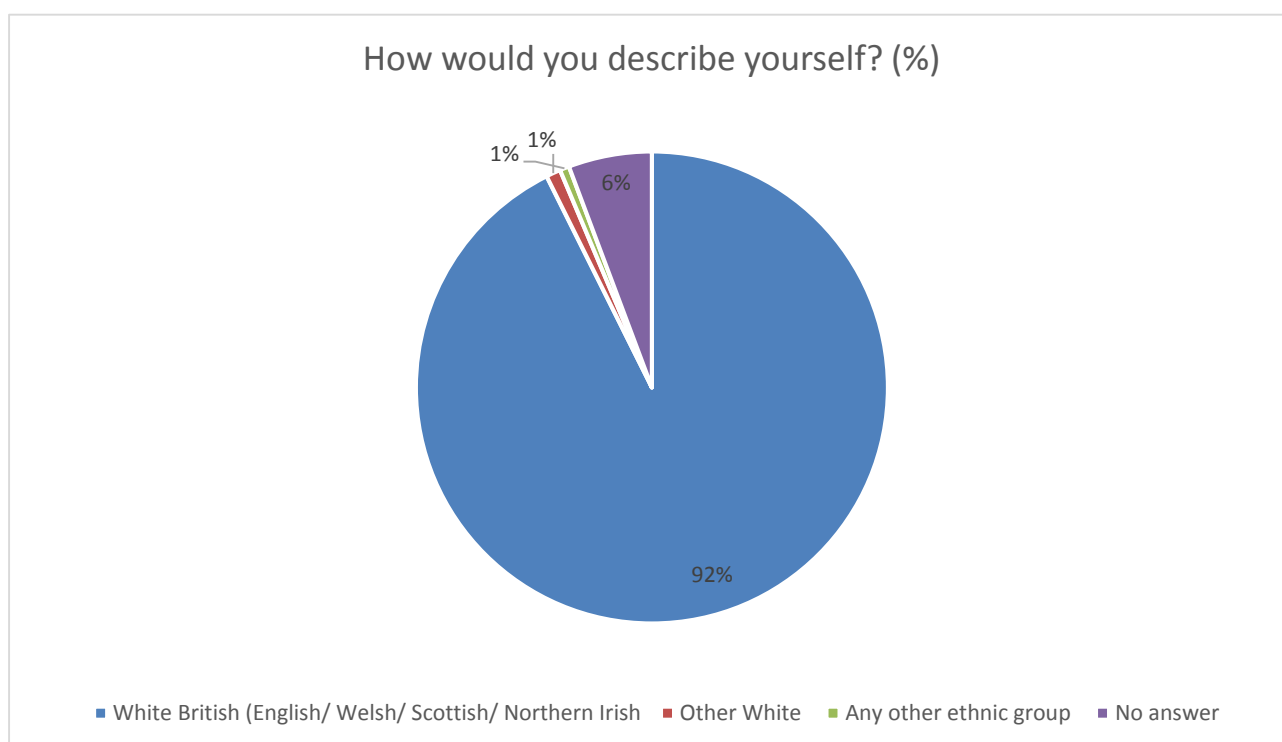


4.8 A high percentage of those who responded (62%) have, and use, a concessionary fares bus pass. This is reflective of the age profile of the respondents. 59% of concessionary pass users were older people and 3% disabled people.

ETHNICITY

How would you describe yourself?

Ethnicity	Number	%
White British (English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish)	1863	92
Other White	20	1
Any other ethnic group	13	1
No answer	115	6
Total	2011	100



4.9 The large majority of respondents were white British (92%) which is reflective of the demographics of Herefordshire. In the 2011 Census, 94% of the population of Herefordshire was recorded as white British.

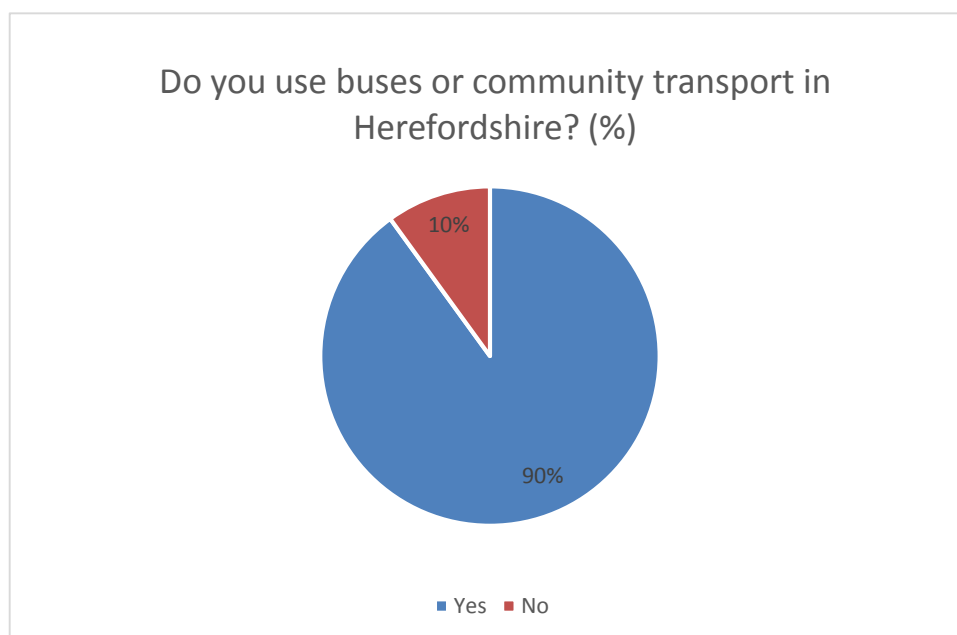
5 Travel Patterns

The survey questioned people on how they travel, how often they travel and where they travel. The results of these questions are set out below.

BUS USE

Do you use buses or community transport in Herefordshire?

Bus Use	Number	%
Yes	1697	90
No	198	10
Total	1895	100



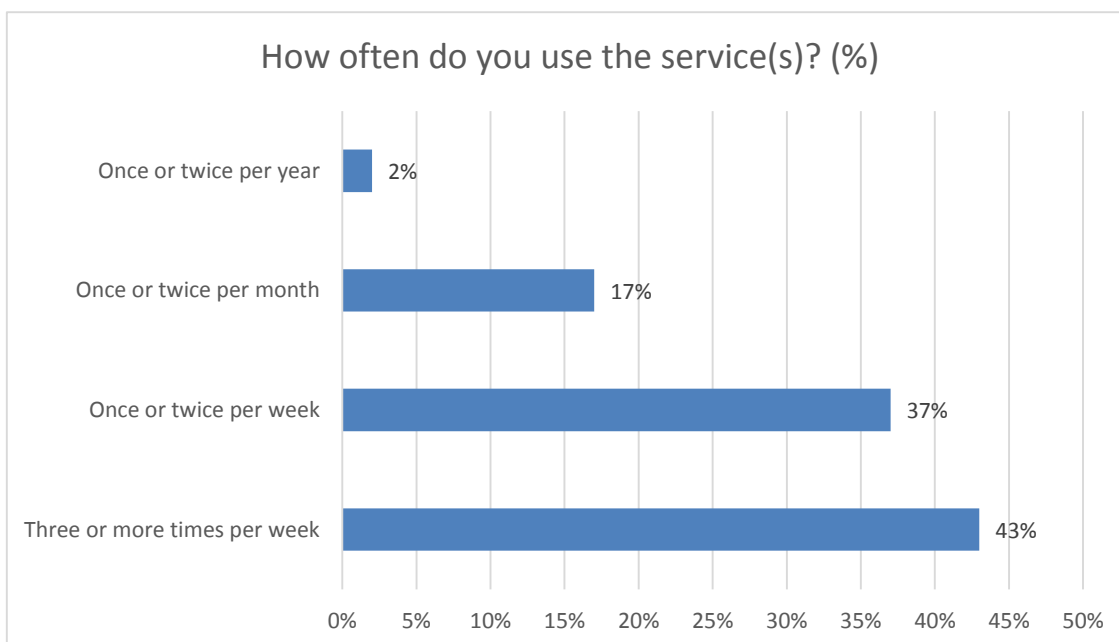
- 5.1 Most of the 1895 people that responded to this question are Herefordshire bus users (90%). This is expected given the nature of the questionnaire.

Which bus service(s) do you use mainly (services number(s))?

5.2 The respondents mentioned a total of 3084 services which they travelled on between them, some travelled on one service, others travelled on many. There were 96 different services mentioned. The services on which most respondents travelled were the 461 (230 respondents), 476 (219 respondents), 492 (211 respondents) and 33 (174 respondents).

How often do you use the service(s)?

Frequency	Number	%
Three or more times per week	688	43
Once or twice per week	593	37
Once or twice per month	265	17
Once or twice per year	37	2
Total	1583	100



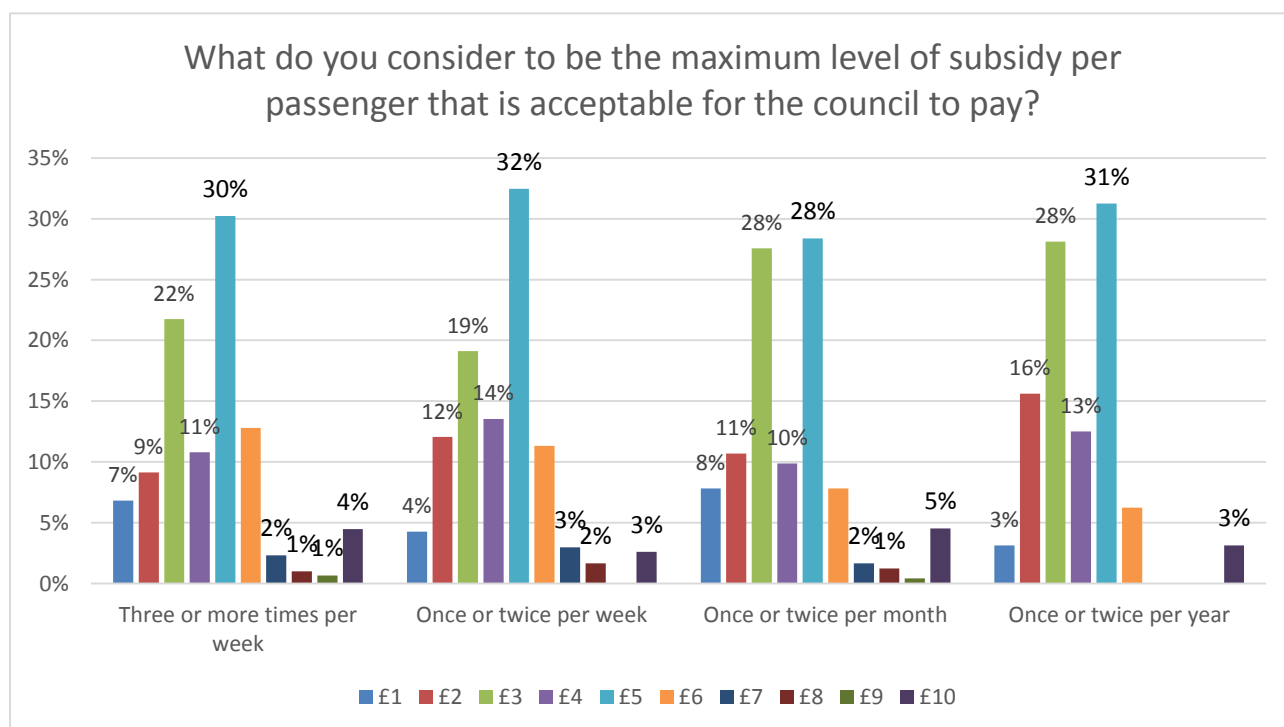
5.3 80% of respondents to this question used bus services at least once per week, with 43% of bus users using the services three times per week or more.

What do you consider to be the maximum level of subsidy per passenger that is acceptable for the council to pay?

Maximum level of subsidy?	Number	%
£1	98	6
£2	177	11
£3	367	22
£4	237	14
£5	470	29
£6	178	11
£7	40	2
£8	19	1
£9	5	0
£10	57	3
Total	1648	100

5.4 The results show that the most popular response (29%) was that £5 should be the maximum level of subsidy per passenger paid by the Council. 39% considered that it should be £3 or less.

Bus Use vs Level of Subsidy

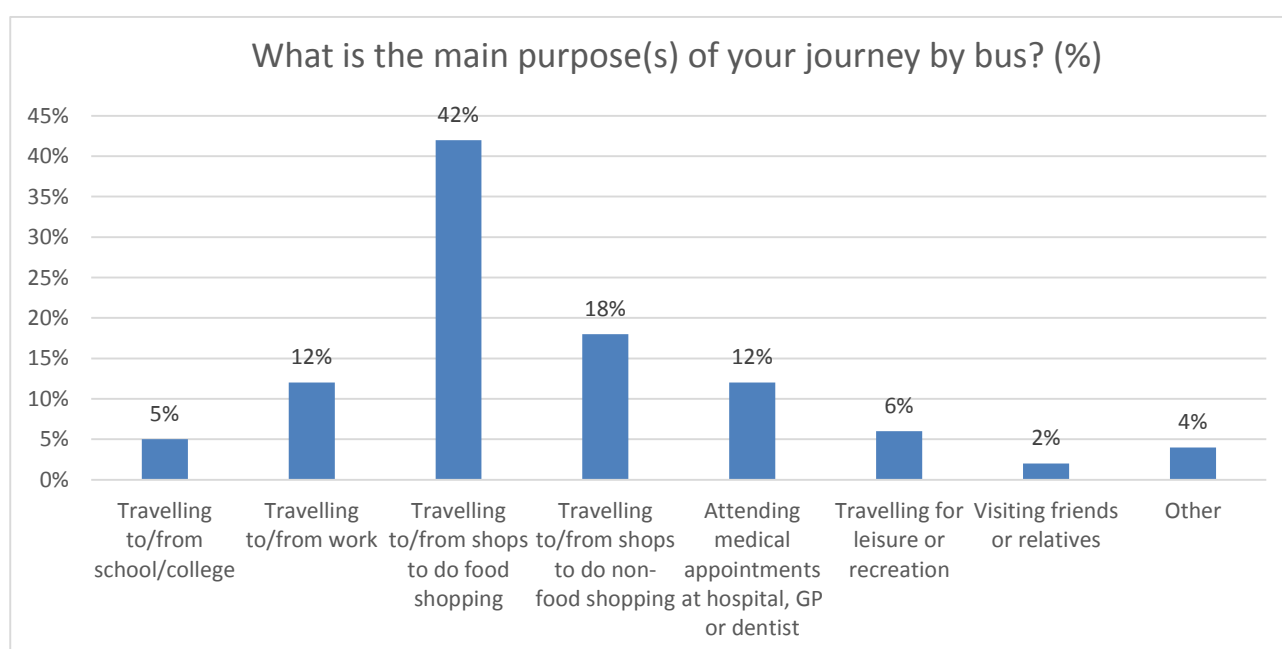


5.5 The chart above shows that across all levels of bus use the most common subsidy considered to be acceptable is £5 per passenger journey, closely followed by £3 maximum across all groups.

JOURNEY PURPOSE

What is the main purpose of your journey by bus? (tick up to two answers)

Main purpose of journey	Number	%
School / College	72	5
Work	186	12
Food shopping	668	42
Non-food shopping	276	18
Medical appointments	186	12
Leisure / recreation	89	6
Visiting friends or relatives	37	2
Other	62	4
Total	1576	100



- 5.6 Most journey purposes were for shopping (42%) followed by travelling to/ from shops for non-food shopping (18%). The relatively low percentages for education and work are reflective of the age profile of respondents.

6 Impact of Service Cuts

TRAVEL ALTERNATIVES

If your main bus service was no longer available, what alternative(s) would you use?

What alternative would you use?	Number	%
Walking	220	10
Cycling	52	2
Car (as driver)	406	19
Lift with friend or relative	337	15
Taxi	277	13
Train	118	5
Motorcycle / Moped	6	0
Community transport	118	5
No alternative	641	29
Total	2175	100

- 6.1 The most common form of alternative transport was the car, with 34% that would resort to this mode, be it as a driver or a passenger. 29% of the answers given were that no alternative modes of travel would be available to the respondent should the main bus service be no longer available.

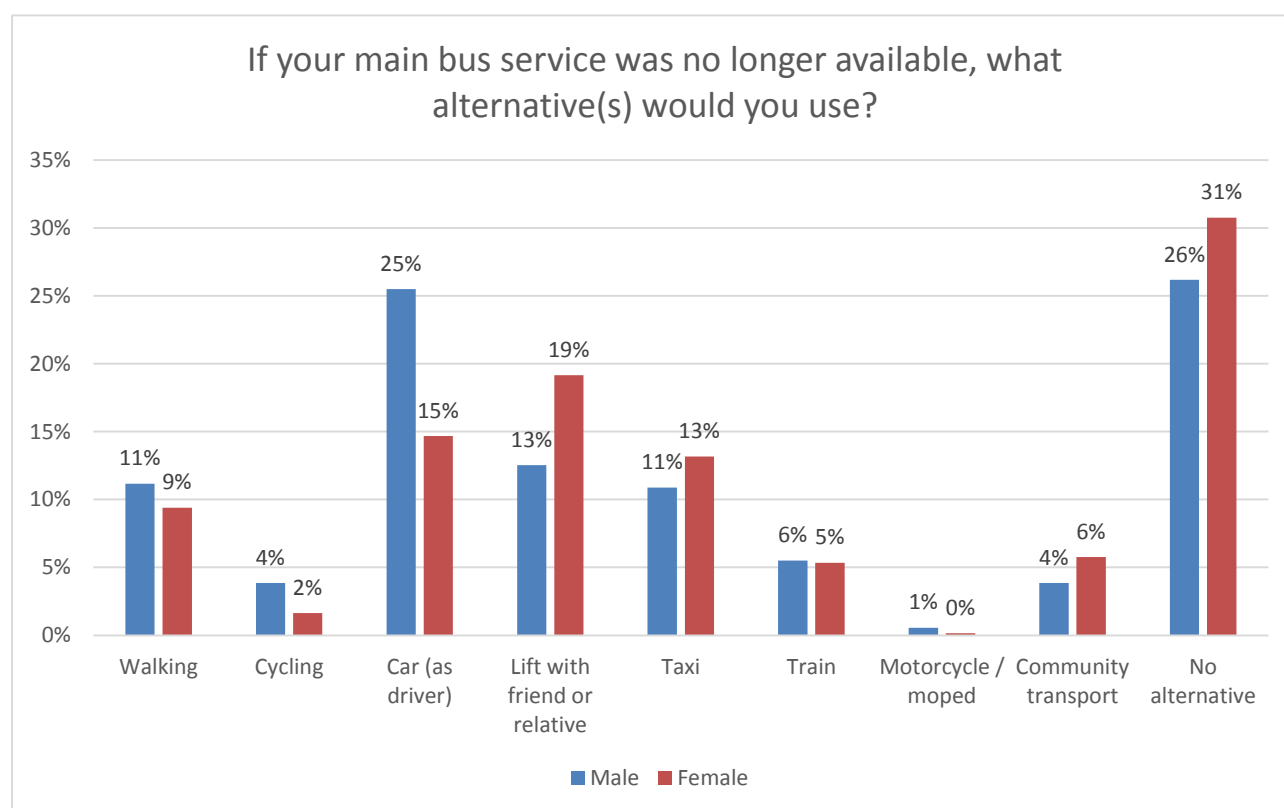
Travel Alternatives by Work Status Group

Alternative Mode	Full/Part Time Employed	Full Time Education	Unemployed	Retired	Disabled and not able to work
Walking	21 (10%)	2 (3%)	1 (6%)	152 (10%)	8 (10%)
Cycling	16 (4%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	30 (2%)	1 (1%)
Car (as driver)	87 (21%)	2 (3%)	1 (6%)	301 (20%)	2 (3%)
Lift with friend or relative	52 (13%)	19 (27%)	1 (6%)	283 (19%)	10 (13%)
Taxi	42 (10%)	1 (1%)	1 (6%)	204 (13%)	15 (19%)
Train	18 (4%)	2 (3%)	2 (12%)	85 (6%)	6 (8%)
Motorcycle / moped	2 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	2 (0%)	0 (0%)
Community transport	6 (1%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	95 (6%)	7 (9%)
No alternative	161 (40%)	42 (59%)	11 (65%)	377(25%)	31 (39%)
Total	405 (100%)	71 (100%)	17 (100%)	1529 (100%)	80 (100%)

Travel Alternatives by Disability

Alternative Mode	No disability	Yes but this does not limit my ability to get out and about	Yes and this does limit my ability to get out and about
Walking	136 (11%)	60 (11%)	14 (5%)
Cycling	38 (3%)	11 (2%)	3 (1%)
Car (as driver)	289 (83%)	83 (15%)	16 (6%)
Lift with friend or relative	218 (17%)	97(17%)	44 (17%)
Taxi	124 (10%)	87 (16%)	46 (18%)
Train	62 (5%)	31 (6%)	12 (5%)
Motorcycle / moped	1 (0%)	1 (0%)	0 (0%)
Community Transport	52 (4%)	37 (7%)	20 (8%)
No Alternative	351 (28%)	154 (27%)	100 (39%)
Total	1271 (100%)	561 (100%)	255 (100%)

Travel Alternatives by Gender



If your main bus service was no longer available, what would be the impact on you?

Impact if no bus service was available	Number	%
High Impact	1261	81
Low Impact	90	6
Some Impact	204	13
No Impact	10	1
Total	1565	100

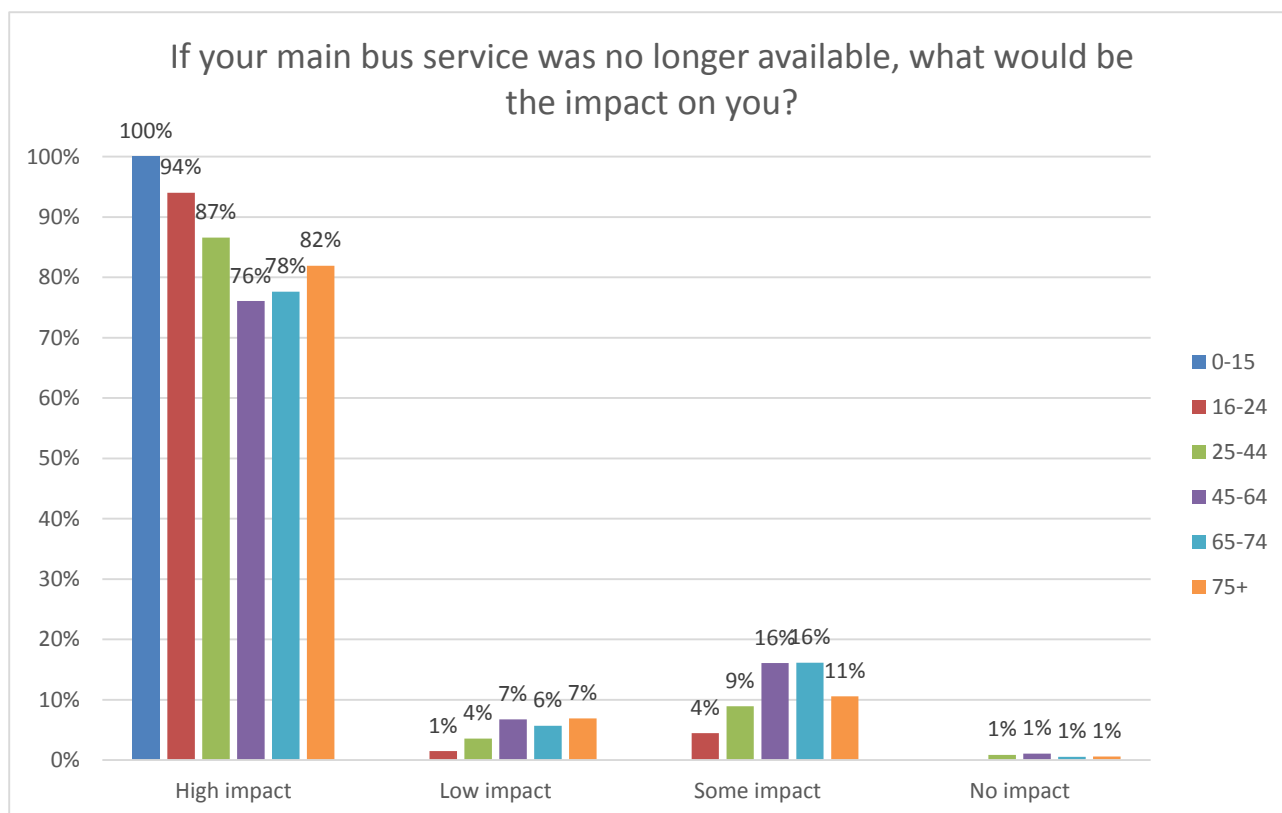
- 6.2 81% of respondents said that if their bus service was no longer available this would have a high impact on them.

Impact of Loss of Service by Work Status Group

If your main bus service was no longer available, what would be the impact on you?	Full/Part Time Employed	Full Time Education	Unemployed	Retired	Disabled and not able to work
High impact	251 (81%)	54 (95%)	13 (87%)	834 (78%)	59 (97%)
Low impact	19 (6%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	68 (6%)	1 (2%)
Some impact	38 (12%)	2 (4%)	1 (7%)	153 (14%)	1 (2%)
No impact	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	8 (1%)	0 (0%)
Total	308 (100%)	57 (100%)	15 (100%)	1063 (100%)	61 (100%)

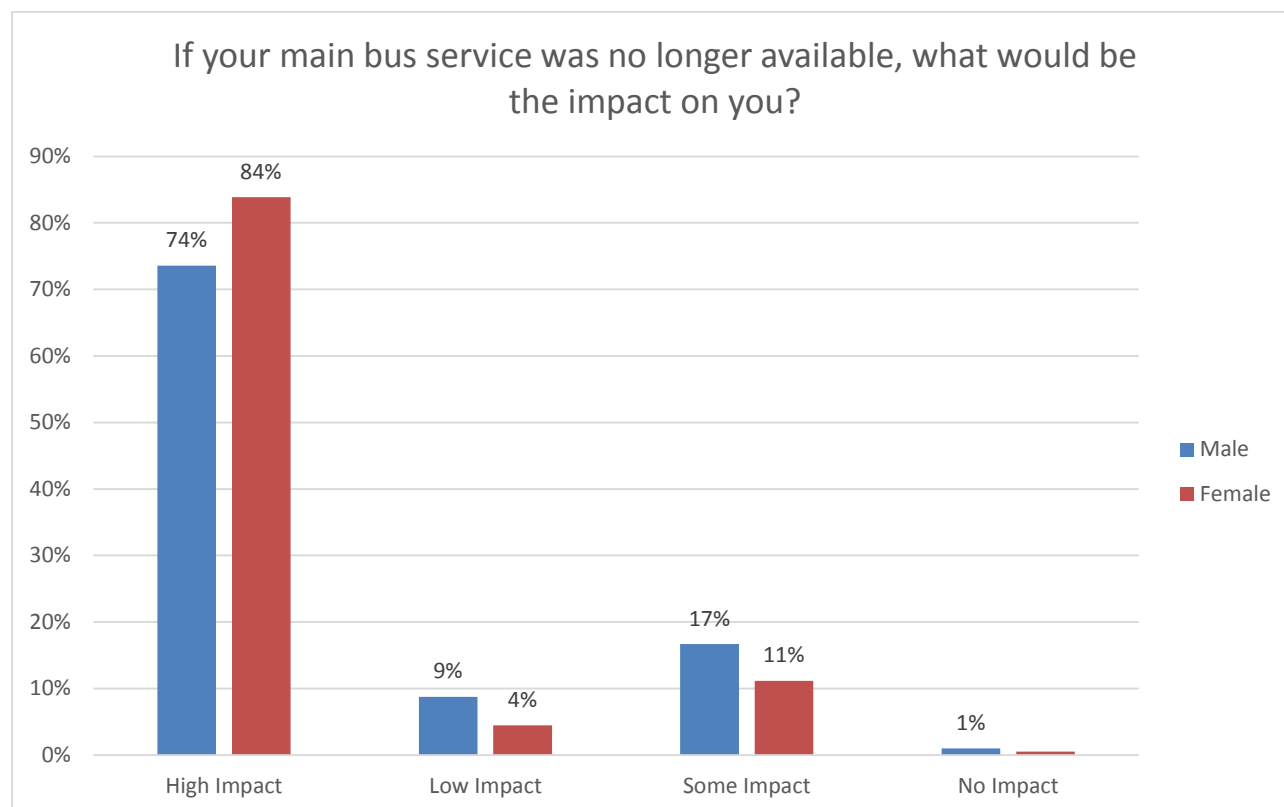
- 6.3 The majority of the 1261 respondents that would be highly impacted by a loss of service, would be retired people with 834 people (66%). Interestingly, 95% of all respondents who were in education said they would be highly impacted (an indication of the lack of alternative travel options for young people), as would 81% of employed people.

Impact of Loss of Service by Age



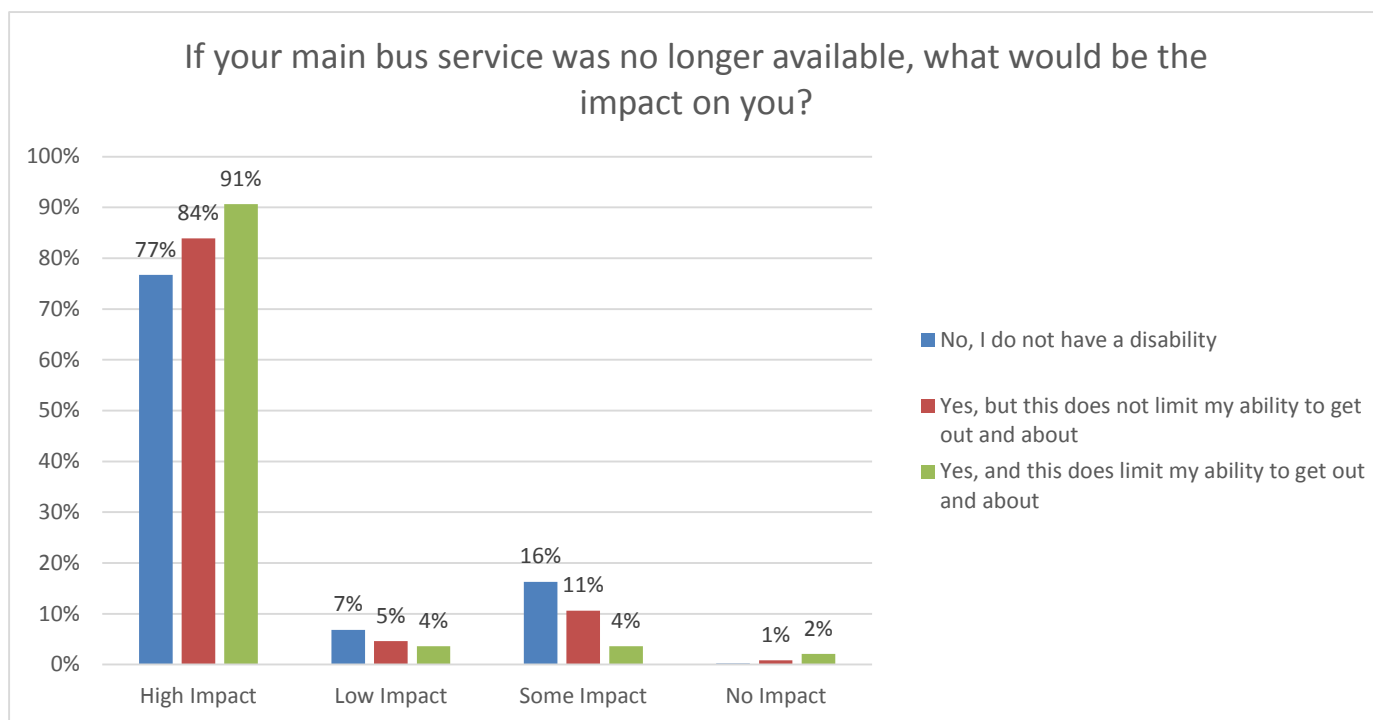
6.4 All of the respondents in the age group 0-15 (17 people) stated that there would be a high impact if their bus service was no longer available. 94% of those aged 16-24 said it would have a high impact, closely followed by 87% of those in the 25-44 age group. The highest proportion of people in the 75+ (34 people) and 45-64 (19 people) age groups said that the changes would have a low impact both at 7% of respondents in these age groups.

Impact of Loss of Service by Gender



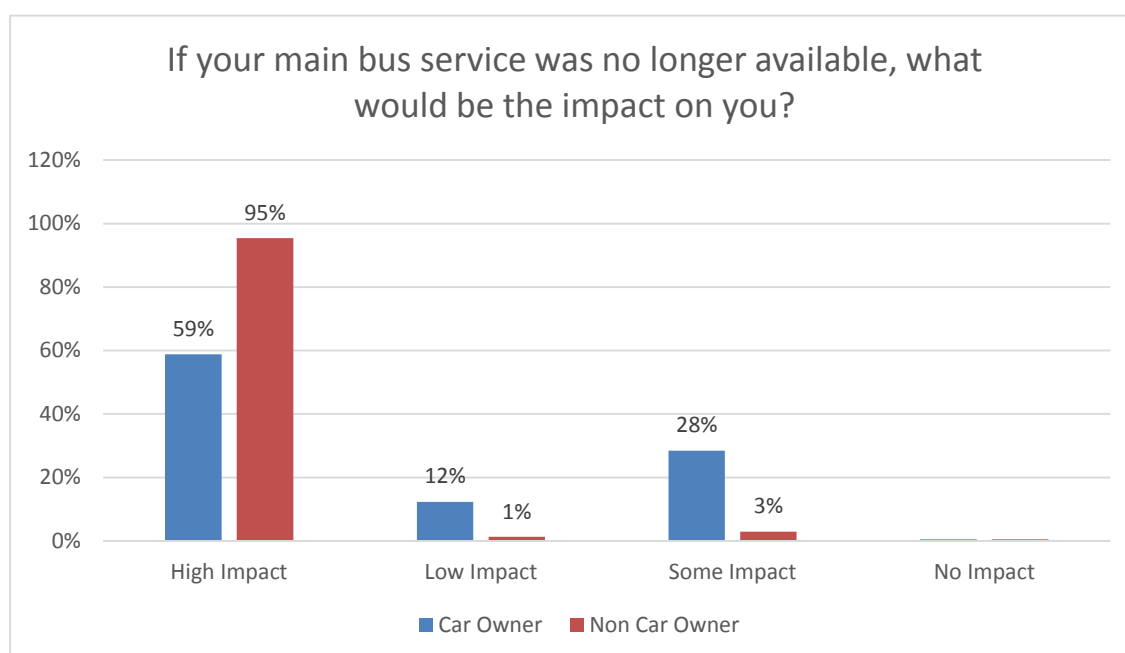
6.5 The results show that 84% of female respondents said withdrawal of their main bus service would have a high impact on them compared with 74% of males. 9% of males said it would result in a low impact and 4% of females.

Impact of Loss of Service by Disability



6.6 91% of respondents (175 people) that had a disability that limited their ability to get out and about said they would be highly impacted. 84% (308 people) of those who have a disability that doesn't limit their ability to get out and about and 77% (698 people) without a disability said they would be highly impacted.

Impact vs Car Availability



Impact vs Alternative Available

- 6.7 35% (594 people) of respondents who would be highly impacted said they would have no alternative available to them
- 6.8 17% (288 people) of those highly impacted would get a lift with a friend or relative which was the second most popular answer after no alternative
- 6.9 This is closely followed by 14% (240 people) of people would get a taxi.

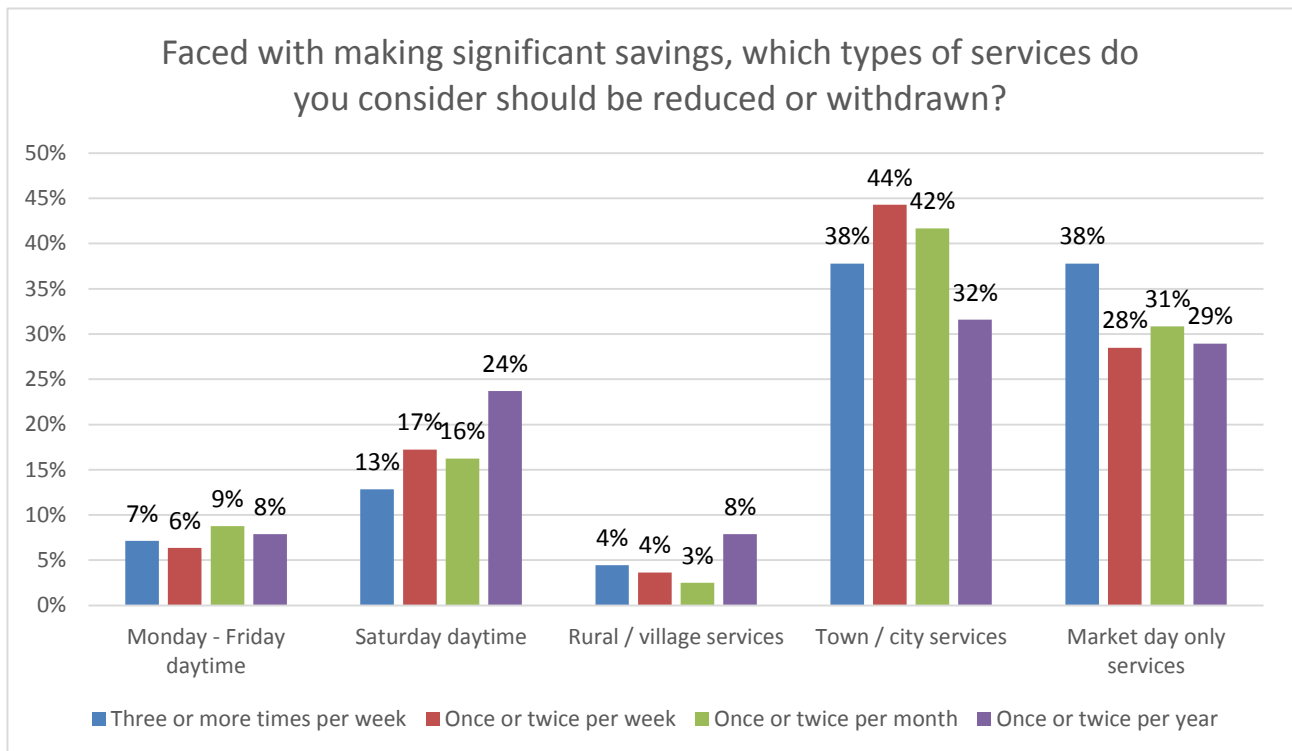
Faced with making significant savings, which types of services do you consider should be reduced or withdrawn?

Which types of services should be reduced?	Number	%
Mon - Fri day	109	7
Sat day	294	18
Rural / village	79	5
Town / city	614	37
Market day	564	34
Total	1660	100

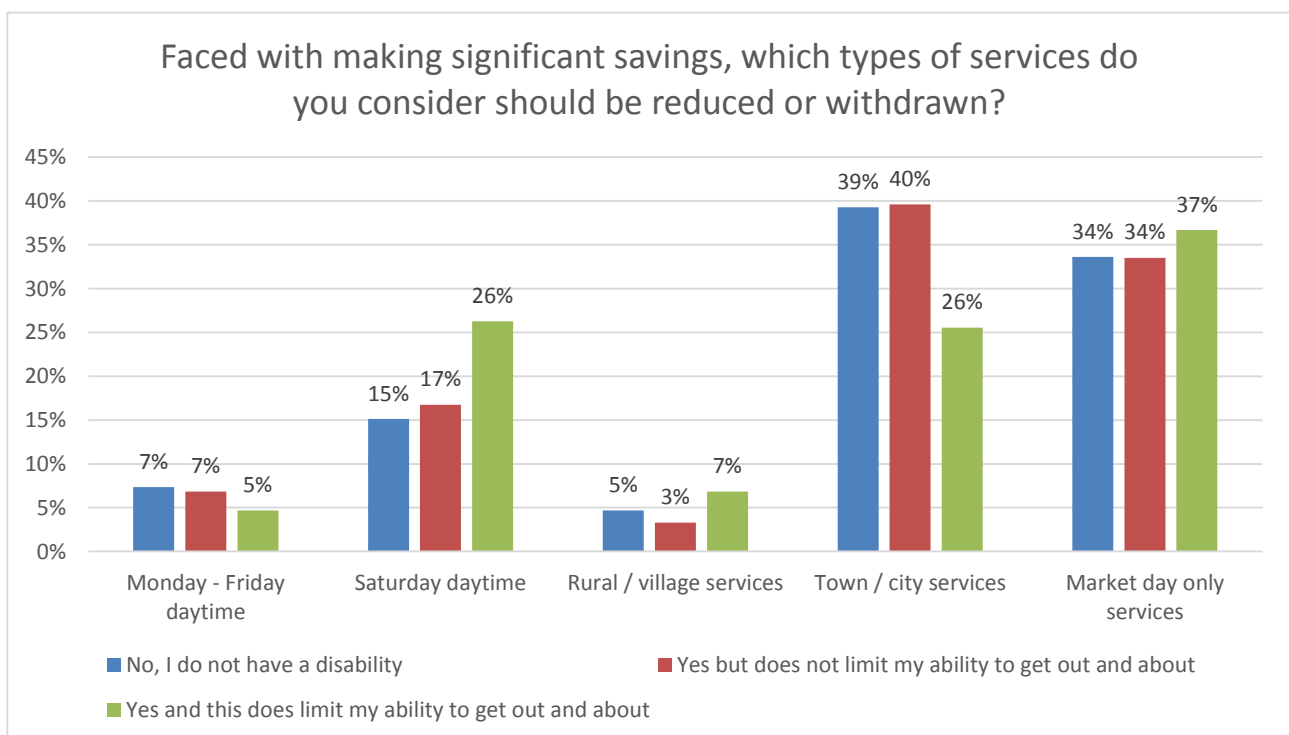
Priority Order for Making Savings by Work Status Group

Priority order of cuts	Full/Part Time Employed	Full Time Education	Unemployed	Retired	Disabled and not able to work
Monday - Friday daytime	21 (7%)	4 (8%)	0 (0%)	76 (7%)	2 (3%)
Saturday daytime	41 (13%)	4 (8%)	2 (17%)	226 (19%)	10 (17%)
Rural / village services	18 (6%)	3 (6%)	0 (0%)	52 (4%)	4 (7%)
Town / city services	113 (36%)	22 (42%)	7 (58%)	426 (37%)	18 (31%)
Market day only services	118 (38%)	20 (38%)	3 (25%)	380 (33%)	24 (41%)
Total	311 (100%)	53 (100%)	12 (100%)	1160 (100%)	58 (100%)

Priority Order for Making Savings by Bus Use



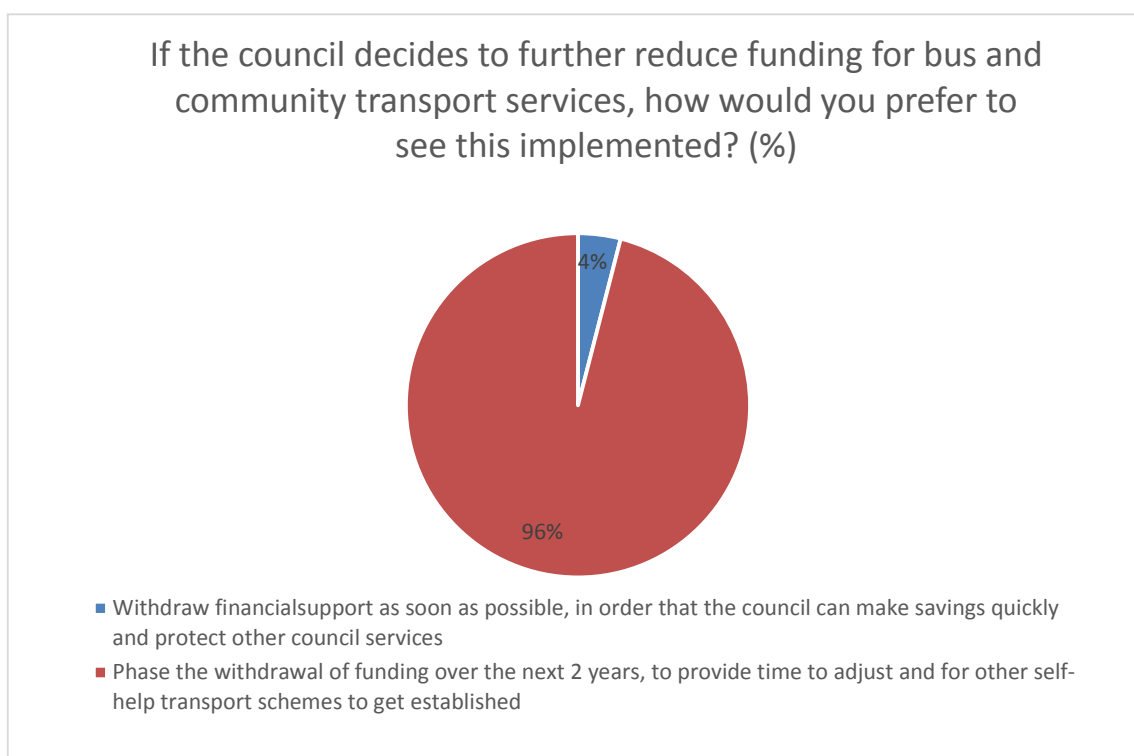
Priority Order by Disability



Priority Order for Making Savings by Age and Gender

- The priority order of making savings across gender was an even split for all services
- The order across age groups also showed a fairly even split, most of note was 49% (29) of 16-24 year olds and 43% (231) of 65-74 year olds that thought town/city services should be reduced or withdrawn. A larger proportion of 25 -44 year olds, (44%/ 45 people) thought that market day only services should be reduced.

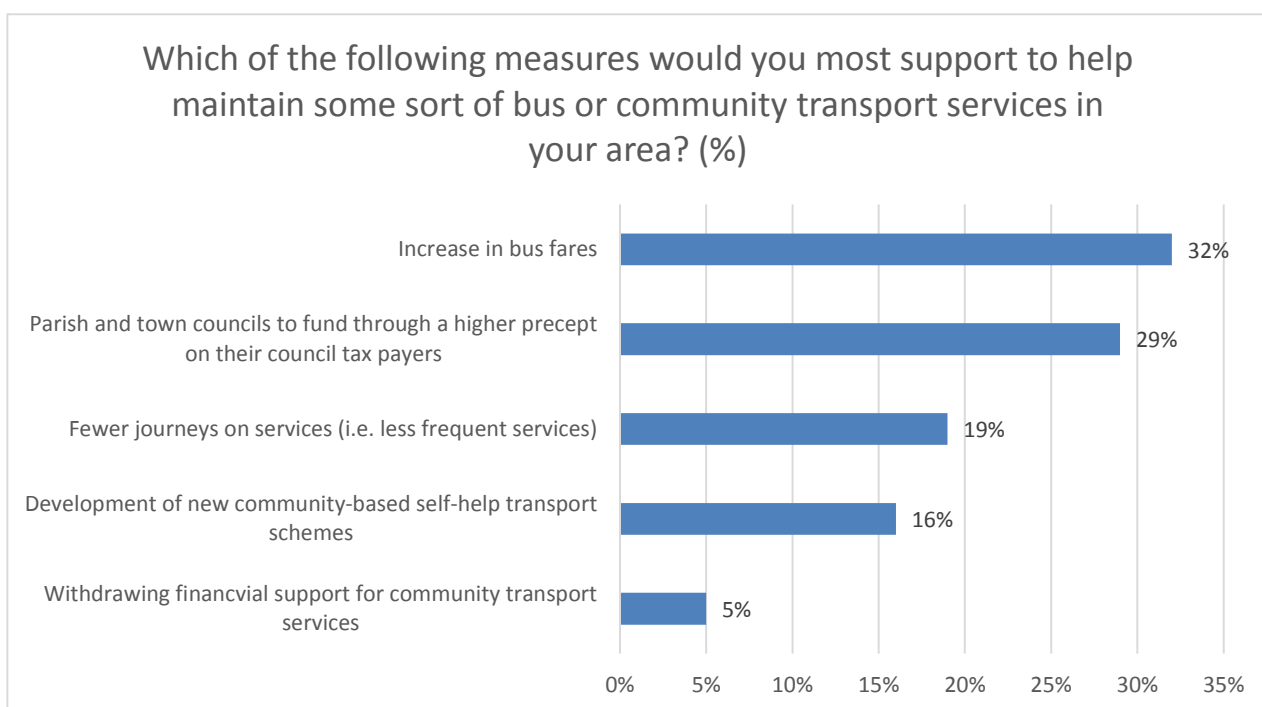
If the council decides to further reduce funding for bus and community transport services, how would you prefer to see this implemented?



6.10 Results show that 96% of respondents to this question would like to see a phased withdrawal of funding over the next 2 years, to provide time to adjust and for other self-help transport schemes get established.

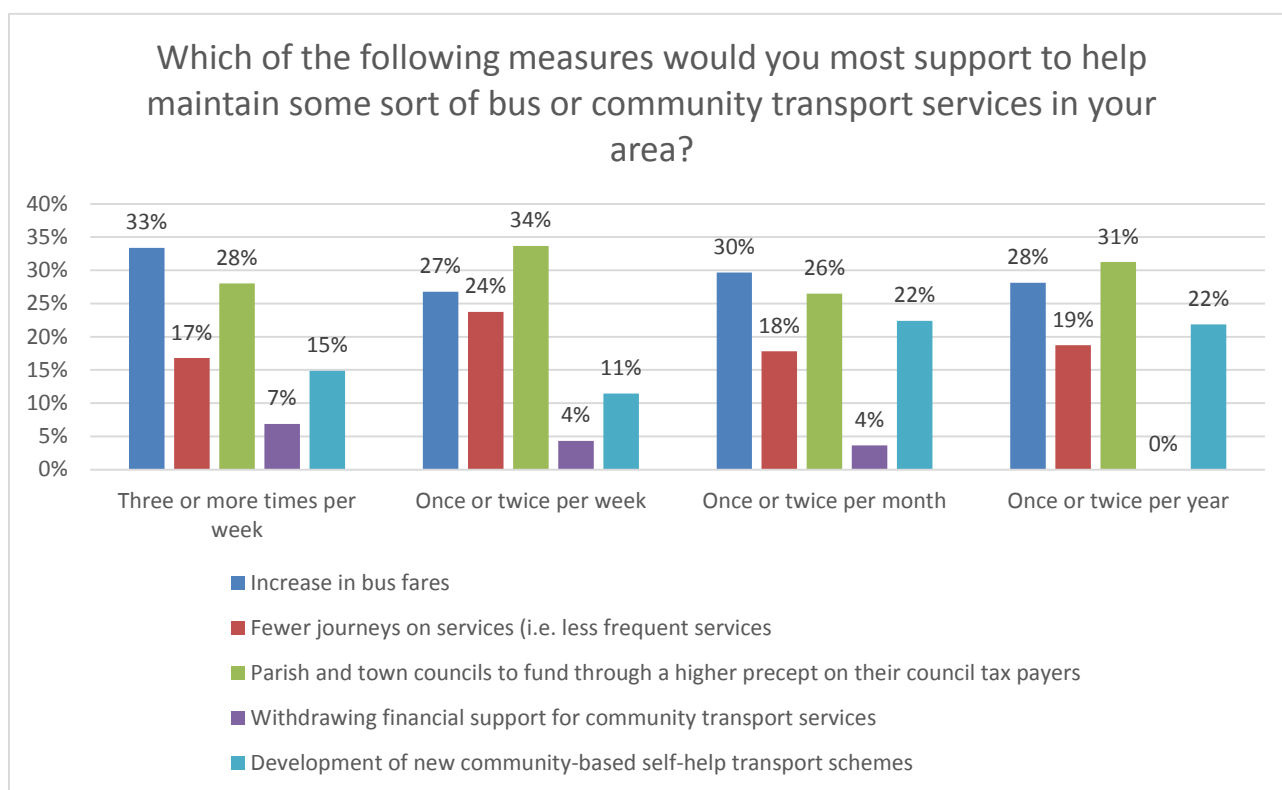
Which of the following measures would you most support to help maintain some sort of bus or community transport services in your area?

Measures	Number	%
Increase in bus fares	513	32
Fewer journeys on services (i.e. less frequent services)	303	19
Parish and town councils to fund through a higher precept on their council tax payers	456	29
Withdrawing financial support for community transport services	73	5
Development of new community-based self-help transport schemes	247	16
Total	1592	100



6.11 The highest proportion of respondents (32%) would support an increase in bus fares to help maintain some sort of bus services and community transport. The second most supported measure was for parish and town councils to fund some sort of bus service/ CT through a higher precept on their council tax payers (29%).

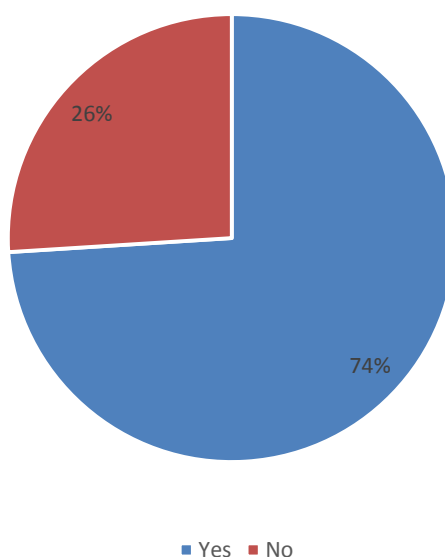
Bus Use vs Measures to Support Bus/Community Transport



7 Policy

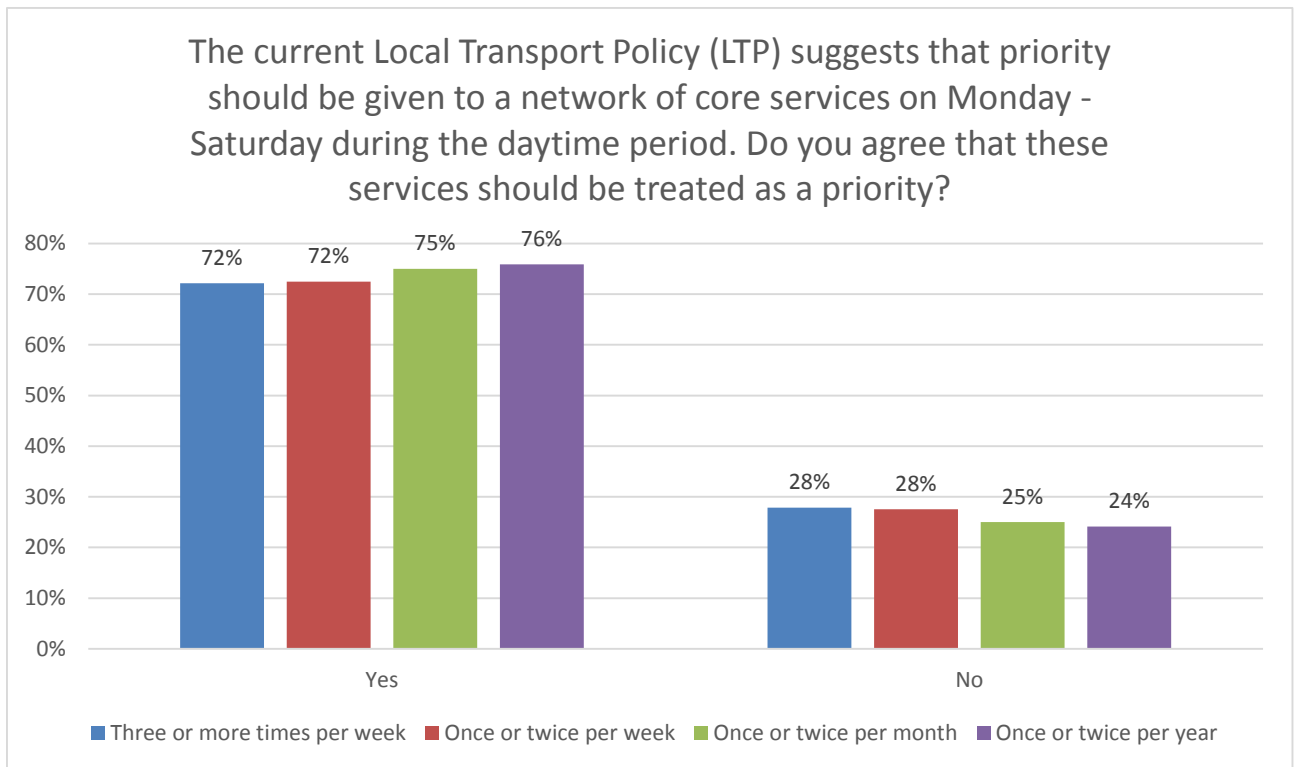
The current Local Transport Policy (LTP) suggests that priority should be given to a network of core services on Monday to Saturday during the daytime period (as shown on the map). Do you agree that these services should be treated as a priority?

The current Local Transport Policy (LTP) suggests that priority should be given to a network of core services Monday to Saturday during the daytime period. Do you agree the services shown should be treated as a priority? (%)



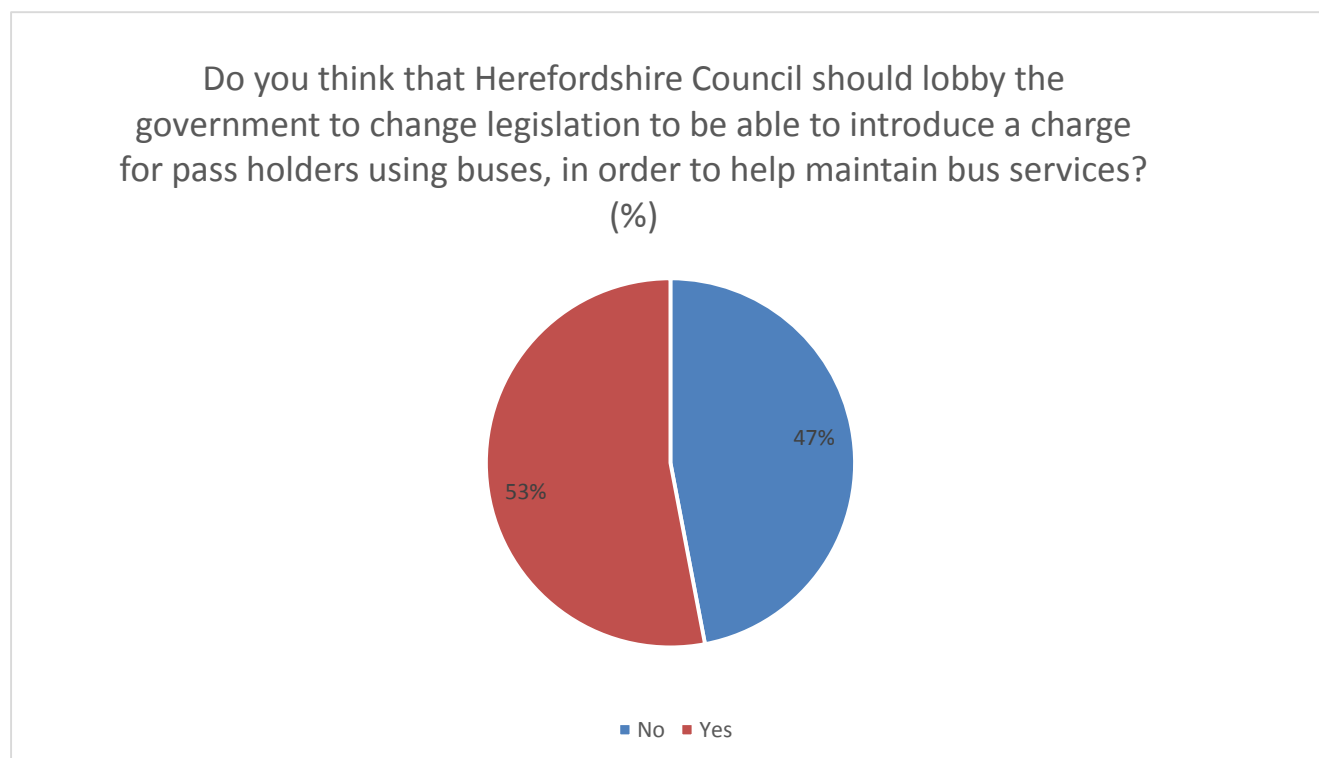
- 7.1 Results show that 74% of respondents to this question think that priority should be given to a network of core services Monday to Saturday during the daytime period.

Bus Use vs Support for Core Network



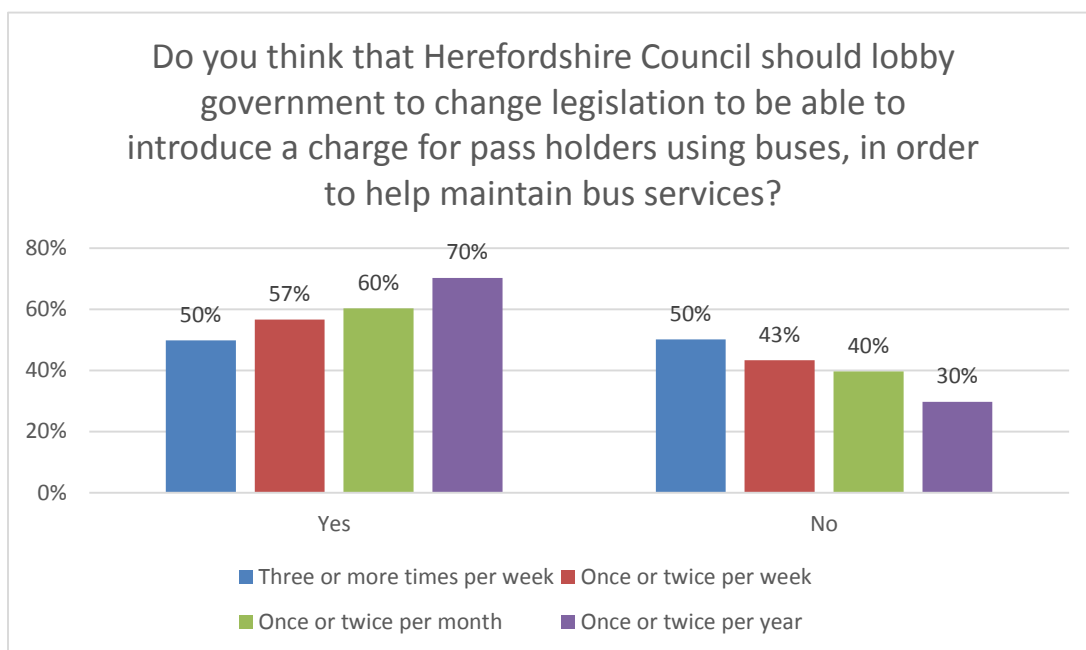
7.2 Results show an even spread of Yes and No answers across all levels of bus use.

Do you think that Herefordshire Council should lobby the government to change the legislation to be able to introduce a charge for pass holders using buses, in order to maintain bus services?



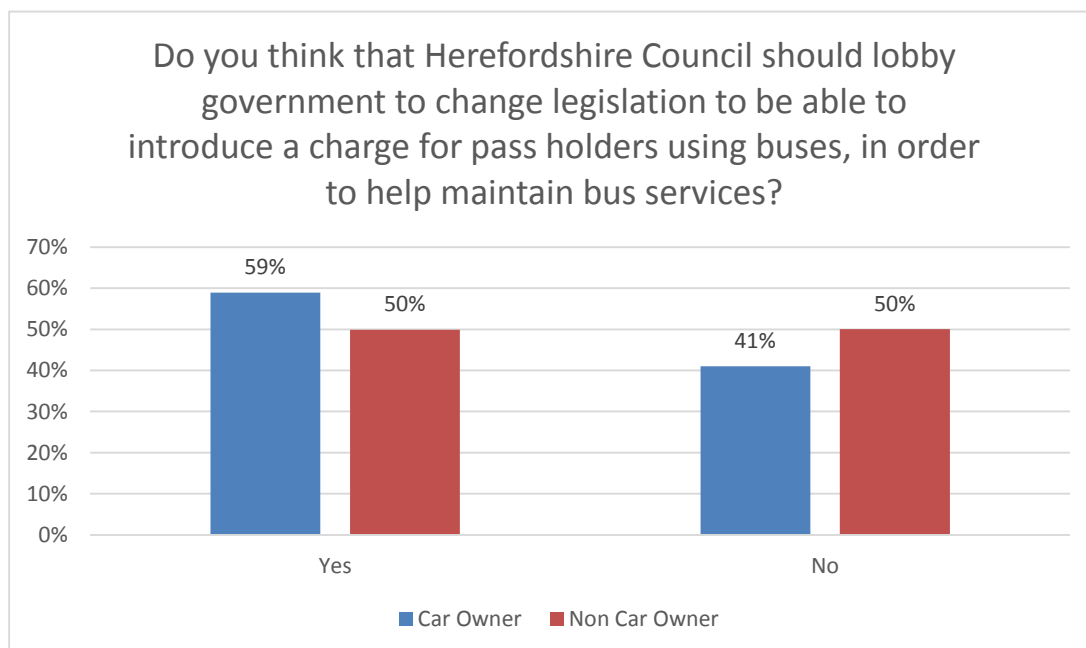
7.3 Results show in the above pie chart that 53% of respondents to this question think that Herefordshire Council should lobby the government to change the legislation to be able to introduce a charge for pass holders using buses. There were also 47% that stated that they shouldn't.

Bus Use vs Lobbying the Government



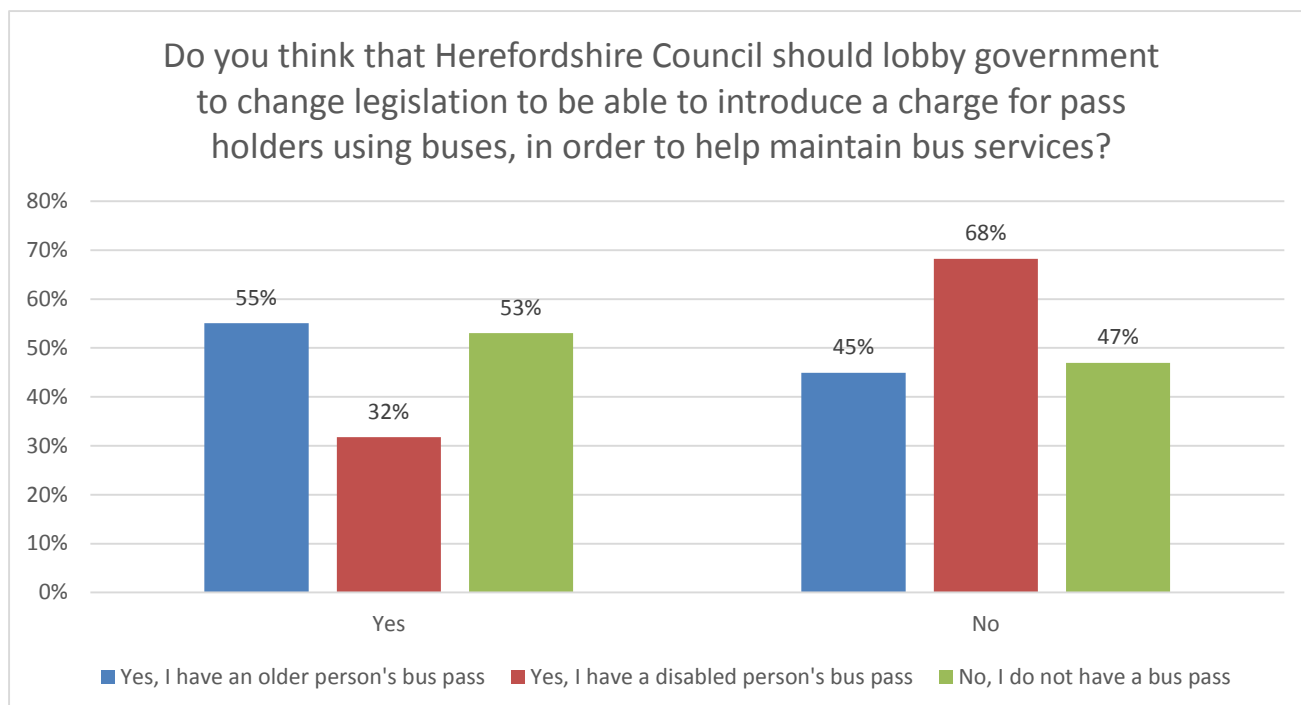
7.4 Those respondents who use the buses less frequently, as shown in the chart, were more inclined to favour the Council lobbying the government to help maintain bus services.

Car Ownership vs Lobbying the Government



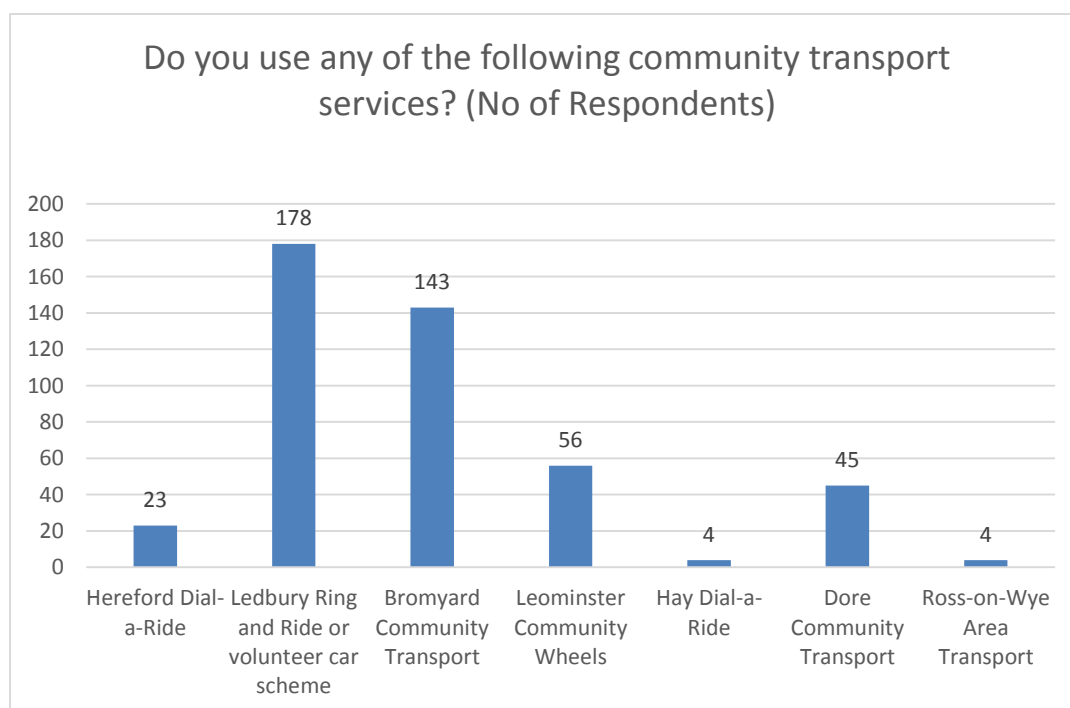
7.5 The bar chart above shows a fairly even split of yes and no answers between car and non-car owners.

Bus Pass Holders vs Lobbying the Government



8 Community Transport

Do you use any of the following community transport services?



Do you use any of the following community transport services?	Number	%
Hereford Dial-a-Ride	23	5
Ledbury Ring and Ride or volunteer car scheme	178	39
Bromyard Community Transport	143	32
Leominster Community Wheels	56	12
Hay Dial-a-Ride	4	1
Dore Community Transport	45	10
Ross-on-Wye Area Transport	4	1
Total	453	100

- 8.1 The survey showed that 22% of the 2011 respondents (453) that answered do use community transport services. The most used community transport service in the survey was Ledbury Dial-a-ride with 178 respondents using the service. The second most used community transport service was Bromyard Community Transport with 143 respondents using this service.

How often do you use community transport?

How often do you use community transport?	Number	%
Three or more times per week	49	10
Once or twice per week	138	28
Once or twice per month	188	38
Once or twice per year	115	23
Total	490	100

How often do you use CT?	Bromyard	Hereford Dial-a-Ride	Ledbury Dial-a-Ride	Leominster Community Wheels	Hay Dial-a-Ride	Dore Community Transport	RVS Ross-on-wye
3 or more times per week	6 (4%)	4 (20%)	4 (2%)	5 (10%)	0 (0%)	6 (15%)	3 (75%)
Once or twice per week	38 (27%)	5 (25%)	57 (33%)	6 (12%)	1 (33%)	10 (26%)	0 (0%)
Once or twice per month	61 (43%)	9 (45%)	78 (46%)	20 (41%)	1 (33%)	7 (18%)	1 (25%)
Once or twice per year	36 (26%)	2 (10%)	32 (19%)	18 (37%)	1 (33%)	16 (41%)	0 (0%)
Total of Respondents to this Question	141(100%)	20 (100%)	171 (100%)	49 (100%)	3 (100%)	39 (100%)	4 (100%)

8.2 The above table shows that usage varies greatly between the 7 community transport services that respondents were surveyed on. Across all services most people (38%) used the service once or twice per month. For Bromyard, Hereford Dial-a-Ride, Ledbury Dial-a-Ride and Leominster Community Wheels this was representative of how often most of their users used the service.

What is the main purpose of your journey by community transport?

What is the main purpose of your journey by community transport?	Number	%
School/College	6	1
Work	8	2
Food shopping	87	18
Non-food shopping	26	5
Medical appointments	295	59
Leisure/Recreation	52	10
Visiting friends/relatives	23	5
Total	497	100

Purpose of the Journey	Bromyard	Hereford Dial-a-Ride	Ledbury Dial-a-Ride	Leominster Community Wheels	Hay Dial-a-Ride	Dore Community Transport	RVS Ross-on-ye
Travelling to/from school	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)
Travelling to/from work	2 (1%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
Travelling to/from shops to do food shopping	15 (11%)	11 (55%)	18 (11%)	4 (8%)	2 (67%)	9 (23%)	3 (75%)
Travelling to/from shops to do non-food shopping	6 (4%)	1 (5%)	5 (3%)	3 (6%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)
Attending medical appointments at hospital, GP or dentist	103 (73%)	3 (15%)	103 (62%)	45 (85%)	0 (0%)	22 (55%)	0 (0%)
Travelling for leisure or recreation	9 (6%)	2 (10%)	27 (16%)	1 (2%)	1 (33%)	6 (15%)	0 (0%)
Visiting friends or relatives	4 (3%)	2 (10%)	12 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total of Respondents to this Question	141 (100%)	20 (100%)	166 (100%)	53 (100%)	3 (100%)	40 (100%)	4 (100%)

- 8.3 Results show that most respondents (59%) use community transport for medical appointments followed by 23% who use the services for shopping (both non-food and food). The journey purpose with fewest responses was to travel to school or college, with just 1%, and travel to work at just 1%. This is reflective of the age profile of respondents to this survey and the regular nature of these journeys.
- 8.4 For Bromyard, Ledbury Dial-a-Ride, Leominster Community Wheels and Dore Community Transport this is reflective in how their service users responded for what the main purpose of using their service was.

9 Comments

Please provide any other comments about bus or community transport services in Herefordshire.

Comments	Number	%
Pleas to keep services/journeys	103	28
Access to essential services	48	13
Other e.g. marketing, environment, Saturday services, health, tourism	42	11
General praise for services	38	10
General comments relating to transport in rural areas	34	9
Suggestions on which services/journeys could be reduced	27	7
Availability for work and leisure	18	5
Increase or decrease the frequency of services	16	4
Cost or payment towards concessions	14	4
Connecting with other services to serve other places	8	2
Suggestions/requests to change routes	7	2
Type, size and quality of buses	3	1
Good/bad comments for drivers	4	1
Comments on unreliable services/journeys	4	1
Suggestions to change the times of journeys	3	1
Overcrowding	1	0
General comments relating to transport on Sundays	1	0
Total	371	100%

- 9.1 There was a wide range of comments received covering many topics. By far the most common was relating to requests to maintain certain services/routes; 28% of those providing additional comment on the survey raised this as an issue. Other common comments related to access to essential services and other comments regarding marketing, Saturday services, health and tourism.

10 Town and Parish Council Responses

10.1 Herefordshire Council received 25 responses to the consultation from Parish, Town and City Councils as follows:

- Ashperton
- Bishops Frome
- Kinnersley & District
- Eardisland
- Fownhope
- Ewyas Harold
- Hereford City
- Luston
- Pencombe (2 respondents from the Same PC)
- Pixley & District
- Sutton St Nicholas
- Tarrington
- Whitbourne
- Wellington
- Marden
- Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor
- Shelwick
- Llangarron
- Richards Castle
- Cusop
- Sellack
- Eardisley
- Orleton
- Weobley

Summary of Parish Council Survey Results

- 18 responses said that bus services were very important and that the impact of their withdrawal would have a high impact.
- 14 agreed that Mon-Sat daytime was the priority for provision, although 2 suggested that secondary routes were important too.
- There was variation in which types of services they would prefer to see cut – 6 said market day only, 10 said town/city, and 4 said Saturday daytime.
- 5 councils suggested £5 should be the maximum subsidy per head; one said £4, three said £3, and two indicated £2.
- 11 councils indicated that residents did use community transport, 3 said they didn't, 6 didn't know and 5 didn't answer the question
- Three councils indicated that it provided funding for community transport and two for bus services.
- Those who indicated, 17 parish councils favoured a phased approach to any funding withdrawals, to allow community initiatives to be developed.
- 11 indicated they would support moves to develop community-based initiatives, although not with funding.

10.2 The full Parish Council consultation data is included in Appendix C.

10.3 The following table shows a summary of the further comments made by parish councils as part of Q15 of the survey:

Parish Council	Points raised
Pencombe	As we already only have one bus service a week it is hard to see how this could be cut further without causing real problems to those who live here and have no other means of transport. Other villages have a comprehensive daily service that should be considered for reduction before we lose our only very well supported lifeline
Orleton	Propose mobile lift sharing app which acts as a real-time county-wide online collection centre for people to post their request for a lift and for drivers to indicate trips where a lift is possible. Should operate on a self-service basis but to subscribers only, and cost could be funded via a small annual subscription.
Tarrington	Rural bus services are vital for residents to enable them to attend Dr's appointments, hospital and shops etc.
Weobley	We are aware that our own bus service also serves residents in neighbouring parishes. Having already lost our evening services we would not like to see this provision reduced further. Members of the section of our community benefitting from these concessions have indicated that they would be willing to pay a nominal sum towards the cost of their travel. We understand that the concessionary fares scheme is statutory but with many local authorities facing similar

	<p>funding issues we wonder that they cannot lobby government for a change to this.</p> <p>We are also served by a non-core route bus service to Leominster. Although this does not operate as frequently as that on the primary route we feel it is important to retain our historical public transport links with this market town.</p>
Cusop	<p>The Council considers there is a contradiction between Herefordshire Council encouraging more non-car travel into Hereford and reducing support for non-car travel</p>
Eardisley	<p>The 446 Almeley-Eardisley-Hereford bus is a vital service for this part of Herefordshire, especially as it also serves the villages of Staunton-on-Wye and Bishopstone. The buses are used by a wide range of the population, from Schoolchildren, College students and people accessing medical services- the hospital in Hereford or the doctor's surgery in Staunton and of course people travelling to Hereford to shop etc. It seems unfair that it is not classed as a core service. Rural residents already pay Council tax, they are entitled to a level of service comparable to town residents. Further suggestions included:</p> <p>Use smaller buses on routes at times that are less busy.</p> <p>Hereford needs a 'Park and Ride' scheme with nippy hopper buses.</p>
Wellington	<p>Wellington Parish Council feels that transport is an extremely important issue in all rural areas and to reduce or withdraw it would have a devastating effect on people's quality of life and potential to remain independent.</p> <p>However the Councillors felt that this consultation was not meaningful in that it did not have enough information to allow them to make informed decisions about what part the Parish Council could play in helping to maintain services in rural areas.</p>
Hereford City	<p>Hereford City Council Parish felt that the questionnaire was geared only to undesirable outcomes, and pointed to the importance of bus services in supporting economic activity and community cohesion. It also noted that one of HC's policies was to reduce car use.</p>
Marden	<p>The parish only has 1 bus service, which is deemed vital for sustainability of the parish. The questionnaire does not give enough data for reasonably considered answers to be given</p>
Sutton St Nicholas	<p>Petition central government to make a change for pensioner bus passes for pensioners to make a contribution to their travel costs. Process to be subject to means testing.</p>

Fownhope	Herefordshire should make every effort to maintain a network of bus services. Any moves to alternative transport need to be established before conventional services are withdrawn.
Llangarron	Old age pensioners and disabled persons are the two most critical groups likely to be affected. They are the least likely to have access to private transport.
Whitbourne	Reduce size of vehicles – save fuel and reduce costs (vehicles are often less than half full)
Ewyas Harold	Remain an important part of retaining a rural structure

11 Summary

11.1 The analysis of the survey can be summarised by the following points.

11.2 Demographics

- There were a higher proportion of female (64%) respondents to male respondents compared to Herefordshire (31%).
- The age profile is much higher than Herefordshire with 68% being over 65 years old compared to 21% in Herefordshire; 69% were retired and 62% made use of the concessionary travel scheme.
- 58% of respondents did not have access to a car compared to 84% car ownership across Herefordshire.
- 17% of respondents had a disability or illness that affects their ability to get out and about.
- The ethnicity of respondents was 92% White British which is reflective of the population of Herefordshire; 90% in total.

11.3 Travel patterns

- 90% of respondents use buses in Herefordshire with a variety of services being used, the most common were 461, 476, 492 and 33.
- Most people (80%) travelled more than once a week.
- The most common journey purpose was for food shopping (42%) followed by non-food shopping (18%) and then medical appointments and work (both 12%)

11.4 Impact of service cuts

- If their main bus service was no longer available, 34% would travel by car, 13% would travel by taxi and 10% would walk. 29% said they would have no other alternative.
- Those with no alternative are the younger age groups and those that have a disability and say the withdrawal of bus services would have a high impact on them.
- 81% of respondents said it would have a high impact on them if their main bus service was no longer available. 95% of non-car owners indicated it would have a high impact upon them.
- 66% of respondents said the bus services would affect certain groups of people in particular. By far the most common group of people affected was said to be the elderly followed by people with a disability.

11.5 Policy and Priorities

- 74% of those who answered agreed with the council's priorities on transport provision.
- When faced with making significant savings, 37% of answers were to withdraw or reduce Town/City services and 34% to withdraw or reduce Market Day services. Saturday daytime services (18%), Monday to Friday daytime services (7%) and rural/village services (5%) were considered to be least priority for withdrawal.

11.6 Comments

- There were a wide range of comments received covering many topics. By far the most common topic was that relating to requests to maintain certain services/routes, 28% of those providing additional comment on the survey raising this as an issue. Other common comments related to access to essential services and other comments regarding marketing, Saturday services, health and tourism.

Appendix A

FULL LIST OF BUS SERVICES

Service	Route	Number	%	* Subsidised services
461	Llandrindod Wells-Kington-Hereford	230	7%	*
476	Ledbury - Hereford	219	7%	*
492	Hereford - Leominster	211	7%	
33	Hereford-Ross-on-Wye-Gloucester	174	6%	*
462	Llandrindod Wells-Kington-Hereford	125	4%	*
417	Worcester - Cradley - Ledbury	99	3%	*
490	Leominster - Orleton - Ludlow	84	3%	*
675	Ledbury - Colwall - Great Malvern	80	3%	*
X4	Abergavenny - Pontrilas-Hereford	79	3%	
426	Bodenham - Marden - Hereford	73	2%	*
420	Hereford -Bromyard - Worcester	72	2%	
32	Hereford/Ross-on Wye -Gloucester	66	2%	
34	Ross-on-Wye-Whitchurch-Monmouth	66	2%	*
440	Abbeydore-Pontrilas (Hereford via x4)	60	2%	*
446	Almeley - Eardisley - Hereford	59	2%	*
36	Hereford - Wormelow - Monmouth	57	2%	*
75	Belmont - City Centre - Hampton Park	57	2%	
501	Leominster -Cannon Pyon - Hereford	57	2%	*
132	Ledbury - Gloucester	56	2%	
39	Brecon/Hay-on-Wye - Hereford	54	2%	
401	Leominster - Barons Cross Circular	54	2%	*
406	Leominster - Barons Cross Circular	44	1%	
71	Hereford - Credenhill	43	1%	
449	Hereford - Clehonger - Madley	42	1%	
71A	Hereford - Credenhill	42	1%	
448	Bredwardine-Shenmore-Hereford	41	1%	*
76	Bartonsham circular	38	1%	*
76A	Bartonsham circular	33	1%	*
442	Clehonger -Pontilas -Abergavenny	30	1%	*
496	Leominster - Pembridge- Shobdon	29	1%	*
413	Garway - Hereford	27	1%	*
39A	Hay-on-Wye-Golden Valley-Hereford	24	1%	*
40A	Ross-on-Wye - Town service	23	1%	*
72	Hereford City -Bobblestock	23	1%	
441	Longtown - Hereford	22	1%	*
469	Bromyard -Bishops Frome-Hereford	22	1%	
35	Ross-on-Wye - Coleford - Monmouth	21	1%	

44	Ross-on-Wye-Kings Thorn (for Hereford)	21	1%	*
491	Leintwardine - Hereford	21	1%	*
437	Tillington-Burghill-Hereford	20	1%	*
74	Hereford City -Newton Farm	20	1%	
411	Ross - Llangarron - Hereford	19	1%	*
405	Bromyard-Pencombe-Hereford	18	1%	*
495	Leominster - Pembridge- Shobdon	17	1%	*
600	Ledbury Town Service	17	1%	*
498	Bucknell - Leintwardine - Hereford	16	1%	*
31	Ross-on-Wye- Llangarron -Whitchurch	18	1%	*
459	Ledbury - Much Marcle - Ross-on-Wye	15	0%	*
489	Wigmore-Yarpole-Leominster	15	0%	*
504	Leominster - Dilwyn -Hereford	15	0%	*
460	Kington Town Bus	14	0%	*
478	Much Marcle-Putley-Hereford	14	0%	*
494	Leominster - Pembridge- Shobdon	14	0%	*
482	Bromyard - Leominster	13	0%	*
40	Ross-on-Wye Town service	12	0%	*
402	Leominster - Ridgemore -The Meadows	12	0%	*
507	Weobley-Dilwyn-Monkland-Leominster	12	0%	*
672	Bromyard -Bishops Frome-Ledbury	14	0%	*
41	Kington - Knighton	11	0%	
79	Hereford City - Redhill	11	0%	
509	Kinnersley - Dilwyn - Hereford	10	0%	*
81	Hereford City -College Green	9	0%	
454	Woolhope-Holme Lacey - Hereford	9	0%	*
479	Much Marcle - Putley -Ledbury	9	0%	*
412	Garway-Kings Thorn (for Hereford via 33)	8	0%	*
447	Bredwardine - Hereford	8	0%	
453	Fownhope - Mordiford - Hereford	8	0%	*
463	Llandrindod Wells-Kington-Hereford	8	0%	*
81A	Hereford City -College Green	8	0%	
77	Hereford City - Holmer - Bobblestock	8	0%	
88	Hereford City - The Pastures	7	0%	
400	Bromyard Town Service	7	0%	*
71B	Hereford - Credenhill (Sundays)	7	0%	
502	Leominster - Dilwyn -Hereford	6	0%	*
33A	Ross-on-Wye - Gloucester	6	0%	

54	Bridstow - Welsh Newton - Monmouth	5	0%	*
78	Hereford City - Rotherwas	5	0%	
674	Bromyard -Bishops Frome-Ledbury	5	0%	*
740	Ludlow-Leintwardine-Knighton	5	0%	
44B	Malvern - Ledbury(Summer Saturdays)	5	0%	
77A	Hereford City - Holmer - Bobblestock	5	0%	
403	Leominster - Southern Avenue	4	0%	*
477	Tillington-Burghill-Hereford	4	0%	*
79A	Hereford City Hinton - Redhill	4	0%	
436	Breinton -Hereford	3	0%	*
456	Newent-Much Marcle-Hereford	3	0%	*
488	Woofferton -Brimfield-Ashton-Leominster	3	0%	*
676	Wyche Cutting- Ledbury	3	0%	*
738	Ludlow-Leintwardine-Knighton	3	0%	
75A	Belmont - City Centre - Hampton Park	3	0%	
88A	Hereford City - Saxon Gate	3	0%	
457	Newent-Kings Caple - Hereford	2	0%	*
X15	Builth Wells -Hay-on-Wye - Hereford	2	0%	
677	Much Marcle - Gloucester	2	0%	*
782	Ross-on-Wye - Cinderford	1	0%	
802	Leintwardine Hereford	1	0%	
Total		3084	100%	

Appendix B

EQUALITY IMPACT AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Potential changes to the supported bus network

Herefordshire Council supports bus services across the county that would not otherwise be operated commercially by local bus operators. These tend to be services with lower usage and in areas where demand is more dispersed. If further savings from the transport budget are required, a reduction in subsidies would be necessary, which would result in the part or full withdrawal of some or all supported services.

The recent consultation exercise suggests that higher priority should be given to daytime services and rural and village services. Town / city services, along with those on market day only, were considered to have a lower priority for support.

Who benefits from the provision of supported bus services?

Bus services operate across Herefordshire and into neighbouring areas, providing access to facilities and services for all members of the community. Anyone can use a bus, regardless of age, gender or circumstance. Equally, most buses are fully accessible and available to be used by people with disabilities or parents with buggies. Bus services are mainly used by people who either have no access to a car, or who choose to use this mode for reason of cost, convenience or personal preference. Those people who have no access to a car tend to be either young (who haven't yet learned to drive), older people (who perhaps have given up driving and have free travel under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme), or disabled people. Therefore, any reductions or withdrawal of bus services will impact disproportionately more on these people.

Public consultation

An extensive consultation exercise took place during August and October 2016 which was made available via a link on the Council's website and in hard copy format distributed through Council offices, libraries, parish councils and through bus companies. The consultation particularly sought the views of users of supported bus services and looked to establish the likely impact of service reductions or withdrawals. 2011 responses were received.

What does the consultation tell us?

- Of the 2011 responses, 31% were male and 62% female.
- 68% of respondents were over 65 years of age (35% 75+).
- 39% of respondents considered that they had a disability or long term illness. Of the 785 respondents who indicated this, 42% suggested that their disability or illness limited their ability to get out and about.
- The majority of respondents are reliant on bus services, and 80% use the bus at least once per week.
- The main use of supported bus services is for shopping (60%), medical appointments (12%) and Work (12%).
- 641 people (29% of the total) claimed to have no alternative to the bus.
- 35% (594 people) of all respondents who would be highly impacted said they would have no alternative available to them.
- Across all respondents, 81% (1261) said that service withdrawals would have a high impact on them. Of these
- 832 (66%) had no access to a car.
- 100% of respondents in the age group 0-15 (17 people) stated that there would be a high impact if their bus service was no longer available. 94% of those aged 16-24 said it would have a high impact, closely followed by 87% of those in the 25-44 age group.

- 91% of respondents (175 people) that had a disability that limited their ability to get out and about said they would be highly impacted. 84% (308 people) of those who have a disability that doesn't limit their ability to get out and about said they would be highly impacted.

Appendix C

PARISH COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS

1. How important are bus services to your parish / town?

Very important	18
Reasonably important	2
Not important	0
Not answered	5

2. Who do you consider are the main beneficiaries of the bus services that serve your Parish or Town? (tick as many as apply)

Young people	19
Older people with bus passes	20
Disabled people	12
Children attending school	16
People going to work	16
People who don't want to use their car all the time	15

3. If bus services didn't exist in your parish / town, what alternatives would people look to?

Walking	3
Cycling	3
Car (as driver)	19
Lift with friend or relative	19
Taxi	15
Train	1
Motorcycle / moped	7
Community transport	6
No alternative	7

4. If your parish / town was no longer served by bus, what would be the impact on your community? (*tick one*)

High impact	18
Some impact	3
Low impact	1
No impact	0
Not answered	3

5. The current Local Transport Policy (LTP) suggests that priority should be given to a network of core services on Monday to Saturday during the daytime period (as shown on the map in this document). Do you agree that these services should be treated as a priority?

Not answered	5
Yes	14
No	6

If no, please say what you think should be the priority for Council support:

- No, there will be many people outside these core services who will be without access to public transport
- No. priority needs to be given to secondary services required for travel to work. The only service to Bishops Cleeve is non-core
- No, include secondary network in primary network. Links to Ludlow and Worcester are important.
- Cusop PC argued in its response to the Local Transport Plan consultation earlier this year that the priority network of core bus services should extend the Hereford-to-Madley route as far as Hay-on-Wye, with its continuation to Brecon also indicated. This route is as important as the core routes to other market towns such as Kington and Bromyard. Although Hay is just outside the county, it is a major tourist destination and its prosperity is as important to Herefordshire as to Powys. Indeed, Herefordshire Council markets our county as the "gateway to the Hay Festival".
- It is difficult to understand how the core services have been decided. Why is the 453/454 a core service serving the villages of Fownhope and Woolhope when the 446 is not. The 446 serves the villages of Almeley, Eardisley, Staunton-on-Wye and Bishopstone.
- No, Local bus services to and from small villages and market towns will help overcome the isolation felt by residents in the rural parts of Herefordshire, many of whom have no access to a car.

Other comments:

- Yes, but need to find ways to link in communities and time periods that are not within the core network.

6. Faced with making significant savings, which types of services do you consider should be reduced or withdrawn? (tick one or more)

Monday – Friday daytime	0
Saturday daytime	4
Rural / village services	0
Town / city services	10
Market day only services	6

7. The amount of subsidy per passenger varies between services, ranging from £0.79 to £4.55. What do you consider to be the maximum level of subsidy per passenger that is acceptable for the Council to pay?

£1	0
£2	2
£3	3
£4	1
£5	3
£6	0
£7	0
£8	0
£9	0
£10	0
Not answered	14

- There was 1 comment that there was not enough information in order to provide an answer
- 1 comment it should be appropriate to the route.
- One answer didn't specify an number, but said 50% of the regular fare

8. Do your residents use one of the county's community transport services? (tick one answer)

Yes	11
No	3
Don't know	6
Not answered	4

9. Does your town / parish council provide any funding to community transport?

Yes	3
No	16
Not answered	5

10. Which of the following measures would your Council most support to help maintain some sort of bus or community transport services in your area (tick one only)

Increase in bus fares	5
Fewer journeys on services (i.e. less frequent services)	0
Parish & Town Councils to fund through a higher precept on their Council Tax payers	2
Withdrawing financial support for community transport services	0
Development of new community-based self-help transport schemes	11

11. Would you be willing to fund/contribute directly to the costs of continuing any of the bus services in your area?

Yes	3
No	14
Not answered	7

- One comment that there wasn't enough provided in order to answer

If yes which ones and what level of contribution would be prepared to consider?

- Yes. Luston Group PC has agreed to contribute £500 during 2016-17 to support the 490 service to Ludlow.
- Yes. Orleton PC has agreed to contribute £2,000 during 2016-17 to support the 490 service to Ludlow.
- Yes. We already support and will continue to support two local services that are not included in the HC core network. These services run through a dozen parishes but only one other council has been prepared to share the costs with us. We would anticipate similar reluctance were we to be invited to manage and fund the 454 service which currently costs some £60k pa, ie 3 times our total precept. Our core network service is part of a contract that spreads over a large area

12. Do you already help fund community transport?

Yes	2
No	18
Not answered	4

If not would you be willing to contribute to CT costs? If yes what level of contribution would you be prepared to consider?

- Not willing to contribute while there is a bus service.
- We do not fund community transport although we are aware of the Community Wheels service operating within our community. This is a supplementary service enabling travel outside of bus operating times and to other destinations.
- More relevant to neighbouring parishes. However if feeder services were to be provided to serve neighbouring parishes, and if these services were of some benefit to our own residents then we might be prepared to help fund on a very modest basis.
- Yes, as per precept

13. Are there alternative approaches to providing transport and access for residents in your area that you consider would be beneficial?

Yes	8
No	10
Not answered	6

If yes, please indicate which approaches and the role the parish/town council would have in taking these forward? Examples you might consider would be to promote lift sharing, direct commissioning of transport services (such as by Fownhope Parish Council and Hereford City Council), working directly with service providers to consider making services more accessible.

- Yes. Use school buses better, so that they can collect fares.
- Yes. Lift Sharing
- Re-opening of stoke Edith train station
- Yes. The Council would be willing to help promote lift sharing.
- Potential community “good neighbour” scheme where volunteers may offer lifts to users for mileage cost cover. Parish Council may consider contribution to cover set up costs of meetings, minor admin costs.
- Yes, promote lift sharing
- Yes. Reinstate rail station at Pontrilas

Other comments:

- No. More dialogue between HC and parish councils about alternative approaches would be helpful. It is difficult to comment when PCs are given no indications of costs.
- None at the moment. Self-help options such as lift sharing do not currently exist formally.
- We already run two local services

14. If Herefordshire Council decides to further reduce funding for bus and community transport services, how would you prefer to see this implemented? (tick one only)

Withdraw financial support as soon as possible, in order that the Council can make savings quickly and protect other Council services	1
Phase the withdrawal of funding over the next 2 years, to provide time to adjust and for other self-help transport schemes get established	17
Not answered	7



Meeting:	General overview and scrutiny committee
Meeting date:	14 November 2016
Title of report:	Draft work programme and task and finish groups
Report by:	Governance services

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To consider the committee's work programme and related scrutiny activities.

Recommendation

That: the draft work programme as set out at appendix 1 to the report be approved, subject to any amendments the committee wishes to make.

Alternative options

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

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 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.
- 4 Should committee members become aware of any issue they think should be considered by the Committee they are invited to discuss the matter with the Chairman and the statutory scrutiny officer.

Executive responses

- 5 An executive response is awaited to the report on the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Tracking of Recommendations Made by the Committee

- 6 A Schedule of Recommendations made and action in response to date is attached at appendix 2.

Forward plan

- 7 On a number of occasions in discussing the work programme Members have referred to the desirability of having the Forward Plan available to inform that discussion. The current Forward plan is available to Members through the Councillors' handbook intranet site. Forthcoming key decisions are also available to the public under the Forward plan link on the council's website:

<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?RP=0&K=0&DM=0&HD=0&DS=1&Next=true&H=1&META=mgforthcomingdecisions&V=1>

Community impact

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

Equality duty

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

Financial implications

- 10 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

- 11 The council is required to deliver an overview and scrutiny function.

Risk management

- 12 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

- 13 The Chairman and Statutory scrutiny officer meet on a regular basis to review the work programme.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Work Programme

Appendix 2 – Schedule of general overview and scrutiny committee recommendations made and action in response

Background papers

None identified.

General Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Draft Work Programme 2016/17

Tuesday 17 January 2017 at 10.00 am	
Community safety update	To consider current community safety issues in Herefordshire.
School Transport Update	To receive an update as requested on 19 January 2016.
Task and Finish Group Review - Devolution	To make recommendations to Cabinet following the task and finish review.
Scrutiny Recommendation Tracking	

Tuesday 7 March 2017 at 10.00 am	
School examination performance	To consider school performance for summer 2015.
Discussion with Welsh Water	To discuss a range of issues (minute 37 “7 September 2016 refers)

April 2017	
Annual Work Programme Workshop	

Tuesday 9 May 2016 at 10.00 am	

Task and Finish Groups

It is suggested that the following task and finish groups be considered:	Status:
Devolution	Scoping statement presented 27 September 2017. Review underway.
Community infrastructure levy	Executive response awaited

Briefing Notes

The following topics shall be dealt with via briefing notes for committee members:	issue	Status:
Planning / Enforcement	Briefing note on current approach, with a view to a possible spotlight review later in the year.	
Culture and tourism	Briefing note to be produced on Town and Parish Council roles, role of Chamber of Commerce in producing destination management strategy and the work of the Courtyard partnership group.	

Seminars / Workshops

It is suggested that the following be dealt with in the form of a seminar or workshop for committee members:	Status:
Community Safety	
At the January 2016 meeting of GOSC it was agreed that the CSP, Superintendent Sue Thomas, the Chief Constable, and the PCC would give a joint briefing on the activity of the CSP in Herefordshire. The main reason for this was to ensure that funding currently provided by the PCC for the CSP would continue after the election.	Seminar to be held on morning of 21 November 2016.
Phosphates issues e.g. levels in water courses and impact	Invitation to Weslh Water to be issued for March 2017. Further seminar with Powys also to be requested.

Future matters	
Annual Review of Economic master plan - September 2017?	(see gosc decision 26/7/16)
Minerals and waste policy	Consider after consultation on draft plan has been received and plan revised.
Travellers' Sites Development Plan " .	To be considered prior to consideration by Cabinet and Council.

Schedule of General Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations made and action in response

Meeting	item	Recommendations	Action	Status
10 June 15	Executive Response – Review of lease restructuring with Hereford United	RESOLVED: That (a) the Executive’s responses be noted;		Completed
	Executive Response – Balfour Beatty Living Places – Public Realm Services	RESOLVED: That (a) the Executive’s responses be noted; and (b) a briefing note on progress with the responses to the task and finish group report on Balfour Beatty Living Places - Public Realm Services be provided within six months.	Briefing note on customer contact statistics issued 8 September 2015. Briefing note on highway maintenance plan issued September 2016. A further update on the Public Realm actions potentially required	Completed ongoing
	Task and Finish Group Report – Development Management Planning	RESOLVED: That (a) Subject to the amendments to recommendations 1, 12 and 18 above, the report of the task and finish group on Development Management (Planning) be agreed for submission to the Executive; and (b) The Executive’s response to the review be reported to the first available meeting of the committee after the Executive has approved its	Submitted to executive Reported to Committee 21 July 2015. Update	

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		response.	issued via briefing note on 18 December 2015. Further update to be issued for 26 July 2016.	Completed
	Work Programme	RESOLVED: That (a) the draft work programme, as amended, be noted; (b) a task and finish group on the smallholdings estate be established to undertake the work outlined in the draft scoping statement; and (c) scrutiny activity on football provision be considered at a future meeting.	Group established and work completed. Report scheduled for November 2016	Completed ongoing
21 July 2015	Executive Response to Committee Recommendations on School Examination Performance	RESOLVED: That (a) the Executive response be noted; and (b) a briefing note be prepared on the Herefordshire Food Strategy and its linkages to schools.	Briefing note issued 18 December 2015	Completed
	Executive Response to the Task and Finish Group Report on Development	RESOLVED: That (a) the draft Executive response be noted; and (b) a briefing note on progress with the response		Completed

	Management (Planning)	be provided within six months.	Update issued 18 December 2015	
30 September 2015	The Development of a Schools Capital Investment Strategy	<p>RESOLVED: That it be recommended to the executive that the Schools capital investment strategy principles:</p> <p>1. include reference to the need to be responsive to anticipated growth and reductions in communities, including the key role of local schools in the sustainability of growth villages in Core Strategy policies RA1 and RA2;</p> <p>2. (within principle 8) take school journey distance, mode and time into account, not only in terms of environmental and transportation impacts but also the effect of journey times on pupils, with schools encouraged to keep school travel plans up-to-date;</p> <p>3. recognise what schools can and should offer, outside school hours, to local communities – such as libraries, information hubs, meeting venues, open space etc.;</p> <p>4. provide assurance that the authority would provide backing and support for academies to make bids for central funding to improve infrastructure;</p> <p>5. include consideration of county boundary transitions, including dialogue with adjoining authorities to ensure that provision was not</p>	<p>Incorporated into strategy and being taken forward in its implementation on a local area basis.</p> <p>Briefing note issued 18 December giving further information on school places and travel plans.</p>	Completed

		<p>considered in isolation;</p> <p>6. clarify how the authority would assure itself that 'There would be an appropriate number of faith places' (principle 3); and</p> <p>7. revise principle 11 e. to 'Participatory budgeting as a means of enabling local communities to assist in supporting a local school'.</p>		
	Work Programme	A briefing note be prepared on digital issues.	Issued September 2016.	Completed
27 October 2015	Task and Finish Group Report – Smallholdings Estate (County Farms)	<p>RESOLVED: That</p> <p>(a) That the report and recommendations of the task and finish group: smallholdings estate (county farms) be agreed for submission to the executive subject to:</p> <p>i. the removal of Councillor Harvey's name from the group's composition (page 3 of the report);</p> <p>ii. the deletion of option b) from recommendation 1 (page 13); and</p> <p>iii. the removal of the words 'on the remaining estate should be let' from recommendation 5 (page 14).</p> <p>(b) The executive's response to the review be reported to the first available meeting of the committee after the executive has approved its response.</p>	<p>Submitted to the Executive</p> <p>Briefing note including response issued 18 December 2015</p>	Completed

17 November 2015	Budget and medium Term Financial Strategy – Draft prior to Funding Announcement	RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet that consideration be given to the merits of a rise in council tax of more than the 1.9% cap, with consideration given to the best mechanism for advancing this should Council agree to this measure reflecting the wishes of the significant response to the priorities and budget consultation, particularly in relation to retention of specific non-statutory services.	Council did levy an additional 2% precept at in respect of adult social care in response to a Government initiative.	Completed
19 January 2016 (am)	Update on home to School Transport Provision	Resolved That: A) The relevant officers work to produce a briefing note on home to school transport to present to the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee for July 2016 B) The item be returned to the scrutiny committee for another annual review in January 2017 C) It be investigated what other scrutiny activity would be of benefit regarding home to school transport	Briefing note issued July 2016. Listed in Work programme. To be reviewed in January 2017.	Completed Completed ongoing
	Local Transport Plan	Resolved that: The following recommendations be put to cabinet regarding the Local Transport Plan: A) A recommendation be made that the Local Transport Plan (LTP) be subject to a review every five years in accordance with Department for Transport guidance B) LTP4 Vision to be amended to include the objective “and reduce congestion and increase	Reported To Cabinet. Confirmed at Council on 20 May that recommendations would be reflected in Plan.	Completed

		accessibility by less polluting and healthier forms of transport than the private car.”		
19 January 2016 (pm)	Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership Strategy and Related Performance	RESOLVED: a) it be recommend that an all member briefing be arranged on the CSP and related matters including the office and Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable, the Superintendent of Herefordshire and other CSP partners. b) that the chair and vice chair investigate what areas of the CSP it may be of benefit to conduct further scrutiny work.	Seminar scheduled for 21 November 2016	Ongoing
8 March 2016	School Examination Performance	Resolved that: a) The committee makes recommendations to cabinet on how they might improve the efficiency of the school improvement framework and strategy, especially in relation to governance in light of likely reduced resourcing in future. b) Council responsibilities for education are clarified and sufficiently resourced. Additionally, that the monitoring of governing bodies in meeting performance standards also be sufficiently resourced. Should the Director at any time find that resources are not sufficient, this must be reported to Cabinet and the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee at once.	The council responsibilities form part of the Herefordshire School Improvement Framework and are based on statutory duties. Further consideration of the role and resourcing of the local authority will form part of the local authority's response to the national consultation on	ongoing

		<p>c) A briefing note be produced in regard to authorised absences to inform future recommendations of the committee.</p> <p>d) The committee consider the findings of the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee's early years provision task and finish group in relation to referral rates for speech and language development.</p> <p>e) The committee's suggestions in regard to the teaching of phonics be brought to the attention of the early years task and finish group reporting the health and social care overview and scrutiny committee.</p>	<p>schools funding formula 2016 and the further national work on the roles and responsibilities of councils in relation to education</p> <p>(d and e have been done)</p>	
	<p>Marches Local Enterprise Partnership</p>	<p>Resolved: That</p> <p>(a) the committee commend and encourage further the engagement of small businesses within the activity of the Marches LEP.</p> <p>b) The work of the Marches LEP in cooperation with neighbouring and other Local Enterprise Partnerships, in particular the equivalent bodies across national borders be encouraged.</p> <p>c) That the Marches LEP ensure that the delivery of accounts and reporting is made more clear and the availability of such documentation to the public is ensured.</p> <p>d) That the committee recommend to the board of the Marches LEP that a</p>	<p>2015/16 accounts are in process of being completed and will be placed on the LEP website. Draft accounts will be going to the LEP</p>	<p>completed</p>

		summary of accounts be published in conjunction with the annual report on the activity of the Marches LEP.	Board on 3 August. Annual report published with Marches Enterprise joint Committee papers on 31 May 2016.	
4 May 16	Suggestions from the public	RESOLVED: That a working party be set up by officers to discuss the detail of the issues surrounding the definitive Map	Working party established.	ongoing
	Task and Finish Group Report – Community Infrastructure Levy	RESOLVED that: (a) the report of the task and finish group: community infrastructure levy be approved and the findings be submitted to the executive (b) the recommendations of the task and finish group: community infrastructure levy be approved as follows: Recommendation 1: The ‘Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule’ be carried forward unchanged as the ‘Draft Charging Schedule’; Recommendation 2: Urgent consideration be given to the need for a robust governance structure to be developed for the administration of CIL in advance of CIL being adopted; Recommendation 3: That Parish Councils be supported by clear advice to assist with the implementation of the CIL charging process prior to any collected CIL monies being spent; Recommendation 4: That the CIL charging schedule and its implementation be kept under review.	Submitted to Executive.	Response awaited from the executive.

		(c) subject to the review being approved, the executive’s response to the review be reported to the first available meeting of the committee after the executive has approved its response.		
26 July 2016	Economic Master Plan	<p>the cabinet member–economy and corporate services be invited to consider the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration be given to ways of pooling ideas for economic development through less structured approaches such as a think tank. • An inventory should be made of the County’s strengths and opportunities for synergy be then identified. • Clarity should be sought as to how the planning framework accommodates farm diversity proposals, for example in relation to semi-permanent structures such as log cabins and whether that framework is appropriate. • The invitation to a GOSC member to participate in meetings with chief executive, director and cabinet member on the development of the Masterplan be accepted. • The further report proposed to be submitted to the committee in September 2016 should include highlights of lessons learned in relation to the implementation of the 2011-16 economic development plan and how these might inform the development of the new Masterplan. • There should be cross-party engagement and engagement with all Members in developing the Plan. 	Submitted to the executive for consideration.	ongoing

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An alternative word to masterplan should be found to describe the plan. • The plan should take account of the value of the arts and tourism to the County's economy. • Consideration should be given to how best to maximise the promotional opportunities for Herefordshire. and <p>(b) consideration of the draft economic masterplan be added to the committee's work programme for September 2016 together with an annual review of the effectiveness of the plan thereafter.</p>	Report considered on 27 September 2016	
	Communication Strategy	<p>RESOLVED: That (a) the communication protocols be subject to further clarification and consideration and a further report on them made to the Committee; and (b) that, subject to a above, the following recommendations be made to inform cabinet's consideration of the strategy communication strategy with associated communication protocols for the period 2016-2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of a chat facility on the website should be pursued taking into account how an operator's time can most effectively be used; • the opportunity for the community to interact on-line quickly and easily should be fully explored; • clarification be provided as to how it is intended to implement the "spend within our means" approach outlined in section 3 of the 	<p>Report made to Committee on 5 September.</p> <p>Matters referred to Cabinet for consideration.</p>	Completed

		<p>strategy at appendix 1 to the report at p41 of the agenda papers: “making tough but necessary choices which will include ceasing to provide some services and working with communities to help them run services important to them”;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the wording of paragraph 5.13 of appendix 2 to the report relating to the access of the press to premises be reviewed and clarified. 		
5 September 2016	Four Year Financial Settlement	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That</p> <p>(a) in order to make a recommendation on whether or not to accept the 4 year funding settlement a further meeting should be convened to consider alternative options including information from comparator authorities; and</p> <p>(b) Cabinet be recommended to consider the points made by the Committee and the further information the Committee considered was required in order to make a recommendation to full Council on whether or not to accept the four year funding deal.</p>	<p>Further meeting arranged for 19 September.</p> <p>Report made to Cabinet on 21 September.</p>	Completed
	Statement of community involvement consultation, communications and programme to adoption	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet be recommended to consider amending the revised draft statement of community involvement to take account of the amendments proposed in the above table.</p>	<p>Considered by Cabinet on 3 November.</p>	Completed
	Communication Protocol for Members	<p>RESOLVED: That cabinet be recommended that further consideration be given to the following matters in relation to the communication protocol for members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In relation to paragraph 3.1 of the protocol 	<p>Report on Cabinet agenda for 21 September.</p>	Completed

		<p>further clarification was needed on when it was appropriate to use the word “Council” in communications when referring to such matters as Council policy and when further distinction was needed between a decision taken at full Council and a decision taken by an individual cabinet member or an officer.</p>		
27 September 2016	Customer Services and Libraries	<p>RESOLVED: That Cabinet be recommended to support option 3 – retained libraries and central service with an emphasis on making best use of them and community libraries as contact points for council services, extending service options and exploring new ways of working, and the report to cabinet should include a delivery plan.</p>	Considered by Cabinet 13 October 2016	Completed
	Economic Master Plan	<p>RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member be recommended to have regard to the points raised by the Committee in discussion and in particular the summary of the principal points set out above.</p>	To be reported to cabinet.	ongoing