

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>16 December 2016</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Motions on notice</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Monitoring officer</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Key decision**

This is not an executive decision.

## **Wards affected**

Countywide

## **Purpose**

To consider motions received on notice.

## **Recommendation**

**THAT: the motion as listed at paragraph 7 is debated and determined by Council.**

## **Alternative options**

- 1 There are no alternative options to the recommendation; the constitution makes provision for motions on notice to be debated and decided by Council.

## **Reasons for recommendations**

- 2 To comply with the provisions of the constitution.

## **Key considerations**

- 3 The constitution provides that members of Council may submit written notice of motions for debate at Council. A motion must be signed by at least one member and submitted not later than midday on the seventh working day before the date of the meeting.
- 4 Motions must be about matters for which the council has a responsibility or which affect the area.
- 5 Motions for which notice has been given will be listed on the agenda in the order in which notice was received, to a maximum of three, unless the member giving notice states, in

writing, that they propose to move it to a later meeting or withdraw it. motions exceeding three are not listed on the agenda and will be held over for listing on the agenda for the next meeting in the order they were received.

- 6 A maximum of 1½ hours will be allocated for dealing with notices of motion but that time may be extended at the discretion of the chairman.
- 7 One notice of motion has been received and is set out below:

**Motion one – Fracking and any associated hydrocarbon extraction processes in or under Herefordshire’s vitally important Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**

(Proposed by Councillor PD Newman OBE)

In August 2015 a license for Fracking in Kerne Bridge was proposed within the Habitats Regulations Assessment 14th Onshore Oil and Gas Licensing Round, block SO51. Kerne Bridge sits in Herefordshire’s Wye Valley AONB, the river itself is an SSSI, this area is a European Special Area of Conservation and there is a protected groundwater aquifer under Ross on Wye. While I personally have nothing against Fracking in principle, I do not believe that Fracking should be permitted in and around our most precious and “protected” environments and landscapes, until its safety has been proven in other areas of our unique and complex UK geology.

A licence has now been granted to South Western Energy Ltd to drill an exploratory well in block SO51 in Kerne Bridge, ostensibly for coal bed methane extraction (subject to planning permission being granted). This is not related to shale gas Fracking but involves “associated hydraulic fracturing” - a regime which uses lower quantities of toxic chemicals and may allow drilling to take place directly within the AONB (ref Surface Development Restrictions for Hydraulic Fracturing dated 4th November 2015).

In October 2015 this Council adopted a core strategy which places a particular reliance on policy E4, tourism. Tourism is more important to this beautiful and rural county than other areas of the UK which may have stronger industrial, financial and other sectors. Nearly 10% of the County’s jobs and over £450m of annual income depends on tourism. Herefordshire’s beautiful AONBs, the Malvern Hills and Wye Valley, are national tourist icons and core to “Brand Herefordshire” and to the attraction of visitors. Oil and gas extraction in and around our AONBs is a threat to our attractiveness as a tourist destination and, given our exceptional reliance on tourism for this County’s income and jobs, it represents a significant threat to the successful delivery of our core plan.

In September 2016 information emerged that some fracking licences may not be taken up as offered. However, it remains unclear as to whether all forms of “fracking”, testing and exploration are affected, whether the licences can be remarketed and when areas in Herefordshire may next be involved in further licencing processes.

**I therefore call upon this Council to resolve that:**

**The Executive be asked to consider the risks of hydraulic fracturing, and the high importance of tourism income to this County and to write accordingly to the Secretary of State to ask the Government to consider withholding any licence which would allow fracking and any associated hydrocarbon extraction processes in or under Herefordshire’s vitally important Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.**

## **Community impact**

- 8 None arising from the recommendation; if any motions results in a request that the executive (cabinet) take some action the implications of such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

## **Equality duty**

- 9 None arising from the recommendation; if any motions results in a request that the executive (cabinet) take some action the implications of such action will inform any decision by cabinet

## **Financial implications**

- 10 None arising from the recommendation; if any motions results in a request that the executive (cabinet) take some action the implications of such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

## **Legal implications**

- 11 None arising from the recommendation; if any motions results in a request that the executive (cabinet) take some action the implications of such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

## **Risk management**

- 12 None arising from the recommendation; if any motions results in a request that the executive (cabinet) take some action the risks associated with such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

## **Consultees**

- 13 None.

## **Appendices**

None.

## **Background papers**

- None identified.