

## Agenda item no. 5 - Questions from councillors

Question No.	Questioner	Question	Question to
Q 1.	Cllr Ben Proctor	<p>In the Statutory homelessness in England: October to December 2024 official statistics released in April 2025, Herefordshire Council data was absent from the tables on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial assessment information</li> <li>• Prevention and relief outcomes</li> <li>• Main duty decisions</li> <li>• Main duty outcomes</li> </ul> <p>Why was Herefordshire Council data missing from these tables?</p>	Cllr Gandy
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>H-CLIC, or the Homelessness Case Level Information Collection, is a mandatory data collection for local authorities in England that collects detailed case-level information on households as they move through the statutory homelessness system. This data is used to monitor the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The data is collected quarterly and is used to produce official statistics, published on a quarterly basis with an annual report.</p> <p>After each quarter the Housing Solutions Team upload our data to H-CLIC a system held by DELTA*. The Oct – Dec quarter was the first quarter where the information was provided through the newly procured IT system Home Connections, previously it has been submitted through Abritas Civica.</p> <p>The information was prepared and we had attempted to bulk upload direct from Home Connections but the information was left hanging on the system. We contacted DELTA and an extension was granted whilst investigations were made by Home Connections and DELTA as to why the information could not be imported. On the advice of DELTA we worked with Home Connections to rerun the report and tried uploading the information into a different format, unfortunately by the time the systems were able to talk to each other DELTA had closed and the information was not published. For clarity DELTA do have the information for the Oct – Dec quarter.</p> <p>Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We are happy to share the information directly with you and circulate with all members.</p> <p><i>* Delta is the online system provided by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to facilitate the collection of statistical data and the administration of grant applications including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local government finance statistics</li> <li>• housing and planning statistics</li> <li>• homelessness statistics (e.g. H-CLIC)</li> <li>• other MHCLG data collections</li> </ul>			

- *grant administration*

**Supplementary question:**

Thank you for the answer to my question and I recognise that the missing homelessness statistics are just one of those things. I still don't know what those number are but I know that they are very large because we spent £3.4m on temporary accommodation last year and this seems to me to be an emergency for large parts of the county. I'm aware that some things are happening but they seem to me to be happening at a speed considerably below what you would expect if I was really being treated as an emergency and I'm looking at Councillor Gandy and I recognise that this isn't just Councillor Gandy's problem, in fact reducing homelessness doesn't sit in Councillor Gandy's portfolio, so maybe the Leader could outline what key steps will happen this year that will lead to a significant reduction in the number of people becoming homeless?

**Supplementary response:****Councillor Gandy answered –**

I was going to raise it later in the debate, I can tell you the number of people that we've got in temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast accommodation at the end of the financial year was 156 households. They would mainly be single people or couples in temporary accommodation and on top of that we have 104 households which could be a lot of families in bed and breakfast accommodation. It's not the sort of bed and breakfast accommodation that you would associate with the norm, where you have your bed and breakfast and then you have to be out. They are properties that we own or commission where people can stay most of the time. That amounts to 260 households who at present are living in temporary accommodation.

I do not have responsibility for strategic housing and that is Councillor Bigg's area and the Leader may be able to enlarge on that, all I can is that we have plans in place for more appropriate temporary accommodation going forward which will be brought to cabinet shortly and that will relieve the situation to a degree. Ultimately, we do not have in Herefordshire enough affordable rented accommodation, and we do not have enough affordable houses to buy on the market. We are doing our utmost to try to get as many houses for rent that we possibly can going forward and to try to bring forward as many properties as possible that are discounted to buy but it's a situation which is the same across the whole country.

**The Leader answered –**

I would like to add that we are acutely aware of the problem regarding the provision of temporary accommodation which is why we're just finalising the acquisition of a building in the centre of Hereford where we will be able to provide that facility ourselves. That is taking direct action if I can put it that way to address what is a really serious issue and hopefully that facility will be up and running within the next six months, we'll be able to

provide that type of accommodation. We're also in the process of making sure we can utilise a building in Leominster as well to create four flats so that will be use as well for temporary accommodation. I think that's a clear indication that this administration is taking this matter with the utmost seriousness and investing so we can address this really serious issue and also use our resources wisely to reduce costs as well.

**Councillor Gandy clarified –**

I wanted to clarify that we should have completed the acquisition of the building within the next six months but we will then have to do work on that building so probably talking about a year.

**The Leader further stated –**

The point is this, in our control and we will be in a much better position to address the issue of temporary accommodation and that is something that I think is a clear indication of our commitment to addressing this very serious issue. Thank you for the question Councillor Proctor and your support in making sure we've got our housing obligations and the housing issue on the top of our agenda.

<b>Q2</b>	<b>Cllr Robert Owens</b>	<p><b>Cabinet may be aware that almost all of the fast electric vehicle (EV) charge-points in the City of Hereford are currently inoperable because their fixed cables have been stolen. They have yet to be repaired and the lack of this facility is of concern to many residents.</b></p> <p><b>There is an increasing demand for reliable EV charging infrastructure across the County and Herefordshire Council has an important role to play in providing this, and a responsibility to its residents to facilitate the greater use of zero emissions vehicles. Fast charge-points with tethered cables are a target for thieves.</b></p> <p><b>With more EV charging stations due to be installed, including rapid charge-points, from this Summer what does the Administration intend to do, in collaboration with the Council's Commercial Partner Wenea, the Police and other partners to protect the growing EV charging network from further criminal damage?</b></p>	<b>Cllr Price</b>
<p><b>Response:</b></p> <p>Whilst we are aware that privately owned charge-point location was recently vandalised, we have not experienced any issues of vandalism at any of the Council's EV charge points.</p>			

<p>As part of our ambitious plans to accelerate the roll out of EV charge-points we will continue to work closely with our provider Wenea and we do consider the risk of potential vandalism and the safety of residents using the charge-points as important considerations when assessing the locations of new charge points.</p> <p>If we do experience any instances of vandalism we will work closely with the police and other partners to address this.</p>	
<b>Supplementary question:</b>	
<b>Supplementary response:</b>	