

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR**

# **Council**

**Friday 8 March 2013**

**10.00 am**

**Council Chamber - Brockington**

**SUPPLEMENT – ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS  
OF THE PUBLIC AND FORMAL QUESTIONS FROM  
COUNCILLORS**



**PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 MARCH 2013**

**Question from Ms C Protherough, Herefordshire**

Question 1

*Population Increase and Demographic Change by 2030*

*A recent report in Hereford Times (14 Jan) recorded that Hereford County hospital had to postpone some operations to cope with the continuing high demands of emergency care through the Accident and Emergency department, which was seeing a higher numbers of patients than expected, the majority with serious illnesses or injury*

*An increasing population, particularly of older people, is likely to result in more essential services for both emergencies and elective surgery, which have to be provided by a hospital based service*

*Councillor Jarvis asserted on 20 July 2012 that the existing hospital services will be able to cope with a population increase caused by the provision of 16,500 new homes, as proposed in the Local Development Framework, solely by reliance on the health and social care model of treatment of more people in the community.*

*What statistical evidence has been provided of likely projected need for emergency hospital beds, elective surgery and hospital births, taking into account overall population increase and demographic change by 2030, in further dialogue, if it has taken place since July 2012, between Herefordshire Council and the Health services on the implications of large scale population expansion on current hospital provision?*

**Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 1

During a career spanning 30 years as a professional in health care including a deep knowledge and understanding of primary, emergency and elective care, I rarely experienced a time when resources were not under pressure because of increasing demand and expectation. No matter what we do I do not envisage a time when services will not be under pressure for one reason or another.

The hypothesis put forward by the question is based on an article in the Hereford Times and a rather simplistic assumption i.e. based on “an increasing population, particularly of older people” and that as a community we will continue to do more of the same, which is not the case.

It does not recognise some of the key aims described in the draft Core Strategy which are supported by the evidence base, such as the proposals to increase the number of young people who remain in, or return to the county, to increase the number of people of working age who are economically active, or the Health & Wellbeing Strategy shared by both health and local government to increase people’s health & wellbeing, support independence into older age, and increase the number of care based services provided in the home and community.

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All the evidence base for the Local Plan, including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment the production of which is overseen by the Health & Wellbeing Board, is now available for inspection on a dedicated website accessible through the planning policy pages of the Council's website (link <https://beta.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/>).

In addition to this I would make the point that whilst I cannot speak for the NHS I anticipate that it will respond to the ongoing consultation should it feel the need and that any such feedback, as with all, will be welcomed.

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### **Question from Mrs E Morawiecka, Breinton, Hereford**

Question 2

#### *The draft Local Plan Core Strategy*

*The draft document currently available refers on a number of occasions to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. (i.e Page 60 draft Core Strategy to Cabinet 27.2.13 – particular transport proposals necessary to bring forward the Core strategy proposals are detailed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan).*

*So that I, and members of the public, can understand the financial implications of the proposed Core Strategy, due to go to consultation on 4th March 2013, would the Cabinet Member responsible please advise me as to where I can find this Infrastructure Delivery Plan referred to in the draft Core Strategy and the Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule?*

### **Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 2

As Mrs Morawiecka is aware, the public consultation commenced in accordance with our timetable on 4 March and will run until 22 April 2013.

I refer to my answer to public question number 1; the evidence base for the Local Plan, including the document referred to by Mrs Morawiecka is now available for inspection.

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### **Question from Mr D Morawiecki, Breinton, Hereford**

Question 3

#### *s106 Agreements – Affordable Housing*

*The Department of Communities and Local Government in Dec 2012 gave new guidance on the financing of growth plans. Paragraph 22 states:*

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*“the charging authority should also prepare and provide information about the amounts raised in recent years through s106 agreements. This should include the extent to which affordable housing and other targets have been met”.*

*Would the Cabinet member please advise me where I can find this report on s106 funding in recent years and delivery of affordable housing?*

### **Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 3

Although the advice from the Department of Communities and Local Government is relatively recent, Herefordshire Council already has in place a detailed set of monitoring arrangements in relation to Section 106 Agreements, and makes this information available through Annual Monitoring Reports which are published on planning policy pages of the council's website (Link: <https://beta.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/monitoring/> ).

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### **Question from Ms J Debbage, Hereford**

Question 4

#### Northern Relief Road

*With 500 new homes planned at Holmer West and most of the employment land being south of Roman Road, in the City or in the 'prime employment location' of Rotherwas, who is the Northern relief road being built to benefit considering that sustainable transport links across the City are planned as part of the Local Transport Plan and the problem of 'severance' across three parishes will be created?*

### **Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 4

There is not a Northern relief road. Any new road infrastructure provided to the north of Hereford will form an element of a relief road to the west of the city.

The road is described as a relief road in recognition of its important role for the county as a whole in relieving the centre of Hereford of traffic. This is in the context of housing and employment land growth proposals for Hereford. The additional capacity provided by the relief road, supported by other improvements such as the city Link Road for which we already have planning approval, will enable the council to allocate further road space to more sustainable forms of transport in the centre of Hereford as part of its transport plan.

However the benefits of this development for the county's roads network go far beyond improved traffic management and are fundamental to realising the ambition for the county to develop and maintain a successful economy as a whole. To achieve this we need more

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and better paid local jobs with good quality housing that meets everyone's needs. An improved roads and transport system, which includes greater use of sustainable transport options such as cycling, walking and public transport, is an essential piece in the overall jigsaw.

The aim of the relief road is to provide better links and increased connectivity rather than create severance; detailed design work will be undertaken as the project is advanced in order to identify and mitigate against any risks at a local level.

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### **Question from Dr DA Penny, Hereford**

Question 5

#### Relief Road

*What are the costings for a proposed "relief" road for Hereford? What is any such road designed to relieve from, and who will benefit from the relief?*

### **Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 5

Preliminary cost estimates for a Relief Road were included in the 'Hereford Relief Road Study of Options', September 2010, available as part of the evidence base referred to in the answer provided to Public Question number 1.

For an outline of the reasons why the road is proposed within the draft Core Strategy, I refer to my answer to public question number 4 above, and emphasise again that the whole county will benefit from this improvement.

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### **Question from Mr N O'Neil, Hereford**

Question 6

*Why strategically is the Northern Relief Road planned for construction before a river crossing that would serve the employment area of Rotherwas?*

### **Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 6

It is not; the draft Core Strategy promotes a western relief road in support of housing and employment land proposals for Hereford. This will include a river crossing and, with the Rotherwas Access Road already constructed, will provide access to Rotherwas. No decisions have been taken on the phasing of the links of the western relief road.

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In addition to this it would be remiss of me not to mention the Connect 2 cycleway bridge that is currently under construction.

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### **Question from Mr T Geeson, Chair of Breinton Parish Council**

Question 7

#### Draft Core Strategy questionnaire

*The last consultation Herefordshire Council undertook on the Local Development Framework resisted using a questionnaire. Therefore I welcome that the Council have decided to once again provide questionnaires for members of the public to respond to the new consultation on the Draft Core Strategy starting on 4<sup>th</sup> March. Bearing in mind the way Herefordshire Council segregated questionnaire responses from written responses during the previous consultation, how will the Council be treating questionnaire responses versus written responses on this occasion?*

### **Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 7

I am pleased that Mr Geeson welcomes the decision to provide a questionnaire for the current Local Plan consultation exercise. This is in harmony with my determination to use this approach having listened to feedback, both positive and not so positive, on a range of consultations on differing subjects. I also sought the views of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in this regard for which I thank it. I would encourage him and others to use the questionnaire, which has been developed with support from both the Plain English Campaign and the Consultation Society. In the event that some respondents submit supplementary comments by way of written responses - these will be read, analysed and reported by assimilating the feedback under the most appropriate heading in the questionnaire.

As indicated during debate at Cabinet on 27 February 2013, a detailed analysis of the questionnaire responses, together with any other representations received will be presented to Cabinet to enable these views to be considered in formulating the Cabinet's recommendation to Council.

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### Question from Mrs V Wegg-Prosser, Breinton

Question 8

#### Local Plan Core Strategy – Economic Viability Assessment

*Reference background papers for the Agenda Item on the Local Plan Core Strategy, The Three Dragons report (February 2013) is a detailed assessment of various development sites' potential to pay the Community Infrastructure Levy which will help to fund necessary infrastructure to deliver the Council's Local Plan Core strategy.*

*However, the report does not update the Three Dragons and Roger Tymes Report (June 2011) which provided an Economic Viability Assessment of the deliverability of the whole Local Plan Core Strategy.*

*I should be grateful if the Cabinet member responsible for the Local Plan Core Strategy could advise me where I can find the full Economic Viability Assessment (EVA) of the Local Plan Core Strategy intended for dissemination as part of the consultation process due to commence on March 4th 2013.*

### **Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 8

Both reports are available on the website referred to in my answer to Public Question 1 above. The two reports need to be read in conjunction; the second report tests the delivery of a range of development types and sizes which are comparative to the sites identified in the draft Core Strategy.

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### Question from Professor A Fisher, Hereford

Question 9

#### Strategic Housing Locations, Provision of Infrastructure and Conservation of Nature

*The draft local plan warns that:*

*'The achievement of the housing target for the plan period will be challenging'*

*and that:*

*'there may be a need to phase the release of new development in specific instances in order to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is provided either prior to, or co-ordinated with, the development. This will be particularly the case in*



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*respect of major elements of infrastructure such as the Hereford Relief Road.' (p 36 of the draft Plan discussed by Cabinet on 27th February)*

*Conservation of critically important natural habitat in Herefordshire (specifically, the River Wye Special Area of Conservation) will also potentially affect the ultimate numbers of houses that can be delivered up to 2031:*

*'the requirements of the NMP [Nutrient Management Plan] may include the need to phase or delay the release of housing during the plan period.'* (p36)

*Which of the proposed Strategic Housing Locations are dependent on 'major elements of infrastructure' and/or the successful operation of the Nutrient Management Plan (please indicate what sort of infrastructure they are dependent on) and what is the maximum number of houses that could be brought forward at each of these strategic housing locations if either the necessary major infrastructure is not forthcoming or the NMP requires delayed release of housing during the plan period or if both conditions apply?*

### **Answer from Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 9

Each strategic housing site will require differing degrees of infrastructure development, and individual policies for the strategic sites set out criteria identifying key development requirements in each case. All those that feed into the areas of the Rivers Wye and Lugg covered by the Special Area of Conservation designation will ultimately be affected by the provisions of the Nutrient Management Plan. These matters will be ultimately decided and assessed through the determination of individual planning applications.

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### **Question from Mrs P Churchward, Hereford**

Question 10

#### Community Infrastructure Levy

*DCLG Guidance for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Dec 2012, and Herefordshire Council's own draft charging schedule (March 2013 appendix C) states at paragraph 1.6:*

*"development should be supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, including the likely cost of providing that infrastructure. This plan should demonstrate the inability to provide the infrastructure through existing funding sources, hence the requirement to charge CIL".*

*Given that a Community Infrastructure Levy can only be charged when there is a shortfall between the total infrastructure costs of the plan (see above), would the Cabinet Member please provide the calculations regarding the shortfall that arises in Herefordshire resulting in the need for a CIL to be charged?*

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### **Answer from Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 10.

The relevant information is contained within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) that is part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy and can be found on the website referred to in my answer to Public Question number 1. It should be noted that the IDP is a 'live' document and projects can be added/deleted at any point.

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### **Question from Ms P Mitchell, Hereford**

Question 11

#### *Soundness of the Core Strategy: Influence of Public Consultations*

*The Planning Advisory Service is part of the Local Government Association and is directly funded by the Department of Communities and Local Government. It has produced a Soundness Checklist to help local authorities ensure that their Local Plans will comply with the Soundness Test required by the National Planning Policy Framework.*

*The Checklist makes it clear that to demonstrate that a plan is justified, the local planning authority must provide evidence of participation and the testing of alternatives. The Checklist advises that the evidence for both of these tests should include showing how consultation has influenced the plan.*

*The consultation report for the 2010 Hereford Preferred Option showed that 86% of consultees rejected the Hereford Movement Policy with the most frequent comment being 'disagree with need for relief road'*

*In spite of this, for the Revised Preferred Option consultation the Council simply restated that 'we will continue to propose a western relief road'. Despite not being provided with a revised option with respect to the road, the August 2012 report on the Revised Preferred Option consultation shows that the proposal remained very contentious:*

*'3.19 The biggest response to a single issue was the 650 written responses which commented upon the Hereford Relief Road. Around 53% of responses were either supportive of a relief road or had some limited concerns while 47% were undecided or disagree with the principle of a road. A wide range of issues were raised including concerns about the need for a road and the supporting evidence to finance and environmental issues. A significant number of responses expressed a preference for an eastern route while others did not consider that alternatives to a road through sustainable transport measures have not [sic] been fully explored.'*

*How will the Council demonstrate at the Examination in Public that its many consultations have influenced the current plan with respect to its most controversial element, the Hereford relief road?*

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### **Answer from Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

Answer to question 11

I recognise that the issue of a Hereford Relief Road remains a matter of public interest. This should be expected on a plan of this scale and magnitude. The eventual examination of the Plan will consider many factors including the evidence base, detailed studies assessing the environment and economic impacts of different route options and the results of the final round of comments received by the Inspector following approval of the Plan by Council later this year. In this respect it would be usual for an Inspector to be considering a proposal supported by a raft of evidence and which itself is the subject of objection. Indeed it would be unusual for a proposal of this scale to reach examination/inquiry without a degree of objection.



## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 MARCH 2013

## Question from Councillor DC Taylor

## Parish precepts

- 1 *Please can I be advised of the names and the number of Parish Councils that are increasing their precept for 2013/14 and also of those Parish Councils whereby the precept is to remain the same or is reducing in 2013/14.*

## Answer from Councillor AW Johnson, Cabinet Member Financial Management

## Answer to question 1

The table below identifies those 68 local councils that have increased their precepts, those 64 that have remained static, and those 8 that have decreased their precept together with the level of change for each.

It should be emphasised that through the use of local precepts local councils are able to help meet the needs of their communities, supporting much valued local facilities and services.

Parish Council Meeting	Precept required 2013/14	Last year's precept (2012/13)	Increase
<b>Increased Precept</b>			
Abbeydore & Bacton Group Parish Council	£7,200	£4,750	51.58%
Aconbury Parish Meeting	£120	£100	20.00%
Allensmore Parish Council	£2,000	£1,500	33.33%
Almeley Parish Council	£7,500	£7,250	3.45%
Aston Ingham Parish Council	£2,500	£2,200	13.64%
Aymestrey Parish Council	£2,876	£2,739	5.00%
Bartestree & Lugwardine Group Parish Council	£23,700	£23,000	3.04%
Belmont Rural Parish Council	£50,000	£45,000	11.11%
Bishop's Frome Parish Council	£22,000	£20,000	10.00%
Bodenham Parish Council	£9,945	£9,780	1.69%
Bredenbury & District Group Parish Council	£5,360	£4,250	26.12%
Breinton Parish Council	£8,200	£7,020	16.81%
Brilley Parish Council	£4,750	£4,000	18.75%
Bromyard & Winslow Town Council	£171,000	£168,000	1.79%
Burghill Parish Council	£13,977	£10,200	37.03%
Clehonger Parish Council	£12,000	£11,000	9.09%
Colwall Parish Council	£58,010	£56,873	2.00%
Malvern Hills Conservators (Colwall Parish Council)	£33,770	£33,040	2.21%
Cradley Parish Council	£25,000	£24,000	4.17%
Cusop Parish Council	£7,500	£6,500	15.38%
Dinedor Parish Council	£5,800	£5,600	3.57%
Dormington & Mordiford Group Parish Council	£12,945	£10,945	18.27%

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Parish Council Meeting	Precept required 2013/14	Last year's precept (2012/13)	Increase
Dorstone Parish Council	£2,600	£2,300	13.04%
Eardisley Group Parish Council	£8,700	£7,700	12.99%
Eastnor & Donnington Parish Council	£3,600	£3,500	2.86%
Fownhope Parish Council	£20,000	£16,000	25.00%
Garway Parish Council	£10,574	£4,724	123.84%
Holme Lacy Parish Council	£15,000	£11,400	31.58%
Holmer & Shelwick Parish Council	£6,954	£6,575	5.76%
Hope Mansell Parish Council	£1,450	£1,000	45.00%
Hope under Dinmore Group Parish Council	£3,500	£3,300	6.06%
Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council	£3,850	£3,500	10.00%
Kentchurch Parish Council	£6,500	£5,400	20.37%
Kilpeck Group Parish Council	£10,750	£7,750	38.71%
Kimbolton Parish Council	£5,500	£5,000	10.00%
Kington Rural and Lower Harpton Group Parish Council	£4,000	£2,200	81.82%
Kington Town Council	£64,000	£60,900	5.09%
Kinnersley and District Group Parish Council	£3,200	£3,000	6.67%
Lea Parish Council	£9,850	£9,600	2.60%
Leominster Town Council	£241,098	£229,011	5.28%
Llanwarne & District Group Parish Council	£2,000	£1,400	42.86%
Lower Bullingham Parish Council	£18,817	£10,639	76.87%
Luston Group Parish Council	£10,000	£9,000	11.11%
Lyonshall Parish Council	£10,000	£5,000	100.00%
Marstow Parish Council	£5,500	£5,000	10.00%
Mathon Parish Council	£6,442	£6,392	0.78%
Malvern Hills Conservators (Mathon)	£4,500	£4,400	2.27%
Monkland and Stretford Parish Council	£3,500	£2,900	20.69%
Moreton on Lugg Parish Council	£14,000	£11,000	27.27%
Much Marcle Parish Council	£4,919	£4,685	4.99%
Orcop Parish Council	£7,000	£5,000	40.00%
Orleton Parish Council	£15,300	£14,300	6.99%
Pencombe Group Parish Council	£8,500	£6,500	30.77%
Pixley & District Parish Council	£5,500	£5,000	10.00%
Putley Parish Council	£5,000	£4,500	11.11%
Pyons Group Parish Council	£6,195	£5,895	5.09%
Richard's Castle (Herefordshire) Parish Council	£3,150	£3,000	5.00%
Sellack Parish Council	£2,000	£1,750	14.29%
Shobdon Parish Council	£13,900	£9,950	39.70%
St. Weonards Parish Council	£3,630	£3,300	10.00%
Staunton-on-Wye and District Group Parish Council	£2,675	£2,500	7.00%

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Parish Council Meeting	Precept required 2013/14	Last year's precept (2012/13)	Increase
Stretton Sugwas Parish Council	£4,200	£3,500	20.00%
Sutton Parish Council	£18,870	£18,500	2.00%
Titley and District Group Parish Council	£4,336	£3,921	10.58%
Upton Bishop Parish Council	£8,864	£8,364	5.98%
Weston-under-Penyard Parish Council	£7,000	£6,300	11.11%
Whitchurch & Ganarew Group Parish Council	£15,000	£9,000	66.67%
Wyeside Group Parish Council	£6,500	£4,200	54.76%
<b>Static Precept</b>			
Acton Beauchamp Group Parish Council	£2,800	£2,800	0.00%
Ashperton Parish Council	£3,150	£3,150	0.00%
Avenbury Parish Council	£3,500	£3,500	0.00%
Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Group Parish Council	£4,000	£4,000	0.00%
Birley with Upper Hill Parish Council	£2,000	£2,000	0.00%
Bishopstone Group Parish Council	£4,174	£4,174	0.00%
Border Group Parish Council	£7,500	£7,500	0.00%
Bosbury and Coddington Parish Council	£10,000	£10,000	0.00%
Brampton Abbots & Foy Group Parish Council	£2,000	£2,000	0.00%
Bridstow Parish Council	£5,225	£5,225	0.00%
Brimfield and Little Hereford Group Parish Council	£9,500	£9,500	0.00%
Brockhampton with Much Fawley Parish Council	£3,600	£3,600	0.00%
Callow & Haywood Group Parish Council	£5,500	£5,500	0.00%
Clifford Parish Council	£4,000	£4,000	0.00%
Credenhill Parish Council	£16,800	£16,800	0.00%
Dilwyn Parish Council	£11,545	£11,545	0.00%
Dinmore Parish Meeting	£0	£0	0.00%
Eardisland Parish Council	£15,750	£15,750	0.00%
Eaton Bishop Parish Council	£5,000	£5,000	0.00%
Foxley Group Parish Council	£1,750	£1,750	0.00%
Goodrich & Welsh Bicknor Group Parish Council	£5,600	£5,600	0.00%
Hampton Bishop Parish Council	£10,000	£10,000	0.00%
Hampton Charles Parish Meeting	£0	£0	0.00%
Hatfield and District Group Parish Council	£2,500	£2,500	0.00%
How Caple, Sollershope & Yatton Group Parish Council	£5,000	£5,000	0.00%
Huntington Parish Council	£650	£650	0.00%
Kingsland Parish Council	£10,000	£10,000	0.00%
Kingstone & Thruxton Group Parish Council	£8,000	£8,000	0.00%
Ledbury Town Council	£266,596	£266,596	0.00%
Leintwardine Group Parish Council	£15,000	£15,000	0.00%
Linton Parish Council	£6,000	£6,000	0.00%

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Parish Council Meeting	Precept required 2013/14	Last year's precept (2012/13)	Increase
Little Birch Parish Council	£2,700	£2,700	0.00%
Little Dewchurch Parish Council	£7,500	£7,500	0.00%
Llangarron Parish Council	£5,000	£5,000	0.00%
Longtown Group Parish Council	£5,530	£5,530	0.00%
Madley Parish Council	£9,000	£9,000	0.00%
Marden Parish Council	£17,500	£17,500	0.00%
Middleton-on-the-Hill and Leysters Group Parish Council	£3,500	£3,500	0.00%
Much Birch Parish Council	£6,000	£6,000	0.00%
Much Cowarne Group Parish Council	£3,600	£3,600	0.00%
Much Dewchurch Parish Council	£3,500	£3,500	0.00%
North Bromyard Group Parish Council	£4,000	£4,000	0.00%
Ocle Pychard Parish Council	£2,850	£2,850	0.00%
Pembridge Parish Council	£18,000	£18,000	0.00%
Peterchurch Parish Council	£13,560	£13,560	0.00%
Peterstow Parish Council	£3,500	£3,500	0.00%
Pipe and Lyde Parish Council	£2,330	£2,330	0.00%
Ross Rural Parish Council	£3,000	£3,000	0.00%
Stapleton Group Parish Council	£5,000	£5,000	0.00%
Stoke Edith Parish Meeting (Chairman)	£0	£0	0.00%
Stoke Lacy Parish Council	£5,000	£5,000	0.00%
Tarrington Parish Council	£10,000	£10,000	0.00%
Thornbury Group Parish Council	£3,300	£3,300	0.00%
Walford Parish Council	£16,000	£16,000	0.00%
Wellington Parish Council	£21,500	£21,500	0.00%
Wellington Heath Parish Council	£7,400	£7,400	0.00%
Welsh Newton & Llanrothal Group Parish Council	£6,530	£6,530	0.00%
Weobley Parish Council	£10,555	£10,555	0.00%
Weston Beggard Parish Council	£1,000	£1,000	0.00%
Whitbourne Parish Council	£9,000	£9,000	0.00%
Withington Group Parish Council	£15,000	£15,000	0.00%
Woolhope Parish Council	£5,150	£5,150	0.00%
Yarkhill Parish Council	£4,000	£4,000	0.00%
Yarpole Group Parish Council	£10,385	£10,385	0.00%
<b>Reduced Precept</b>			
Brockhampton Group Parish Council	£8,000	£8,885	-9.96%
Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council	£16,590	£16,651	-0.37%
Hereford City Council	£724,960	£734,960	-1.36%
Kings Capse Parish Council	£6,680	£6,688	-0.12%
Ross on Wye Town Council	£196,500	£200,000	-1.75%
Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council	£1,750	£2,000	-12.50%



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Parish Council Meeting	Precept required 2013/14	Last year's precept (2012/13)	Increase
Vowchurch & District Group Parish Council	£6,000	£6,200	-3.23%
Wigmore Group Parish Council	£15,000	£17,000	-11.76%

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### Question from Councillor DC Taylor

#### Financial Hit on Schools

- 2 *With the recent settlement from the Department for Education and the reduction in 2013/14 budget, can the Cabinet Member advise how this is going to impact on all the schools in the County and is the Cabinet Member aware of any redundancies needing to be made within the teaching staff at County schools?*

#### Answer from Councillor GJ Powell, Cabinet Member Education and Infrastructure

Answer to question 2

The schools funding picture is an increasingly complicated one as the educational landscape changes in line with national policies. It is worth noting that the Department for Education retain £33m from Herefordshire's 2013/14 Dedicated Schools Grant to support academy schools, which receive their funding direct through the Education Funding Agency.

For locally maintained schools, the overall schools budget in 2013/14 will stay at the same level on a per pupil basis before the addition of the pupil premium, although the actual level of each school's individual budget will vary according to pupil numbers on roll at the school. From 1 April 2013 the government has introduced a new national schools funding formula which, were it to have full immediate effect, may have significant impact on some individual schools. To protect schools from significant budget reductions, the government's Minimum Funding Guarantee is in place to ensure no school sees more than a 1.5% reduction in per pupil funding in 2013/14 budgets (excluding sixth form funding) compared to the 2012/13 school budget and before the pupil premium is added.

In addition to this change, and as in previous years, changes in pupil numbers will vary from school to school and since 88% of school funding is pupil related, schools that lose pupils will lose funding and will need to adjust their staffing appropriately. The council provides advice and support to locally maintained schools to help manage any necessary reduction in staff, which may include reductions through natural wastage, voluntary reductions in hours and redundancies are only as a last resort. This process is currently in hand with a very small number of school governing bodies and the final outcome is unlikely to be known until after Easter.

The council has no responsibility for, and does not collect data in relation to, staff reductions in academy schools.

## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 MARCH 2013

### Question from Councillor DC Taylor

#### Potholes

- 3 *Due to the funding problem to repair the potholes in the roads of Herefordshire, could the Cabinet Member please advise me of the cost to the Council of insurance claims to repair vehicles that have been damaged as a result of inability to repair the roads.*

#### Answer from Councillor G J Powell, Cabinet Member Education and Infrastructure:

Answer to question 3

For incidents reported and registered between 1st April 2012 and 10th January 2013, there were 146 claims for pothole damage. Of these, 3 claims have been settled, 40 claims have been repudiated and 103 claims registered and are still being investigated. The cost of the three claims settled was £6,693.91; this figure includes one claim with an element of payment for personal injury in addition to vehicle damage.

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### Question from Councillor R I Matthews

#### Hereford Enterprise Zone Company

- 4 *I understand that it is the Council's intention to set up a company to oversee the management of the Hereford Enterprise Zone.*

*Can Members be assured that if such arrangements are put in place, that from Day One the minutes of the Board's meetings are made public, and that we look at the possibility of a small, cross-party group being formed, with an agreement in place that they be briefed by the full board on a regular basis?*

#### Answer from Councillor RJ Phillips, Cabinet Member Enterprise and Culture

Answer to question 4

From the first meeting of the newly formed Enterprise Zone Company minutes of Board meetings (subject to any commercially confidential elements) will be made publically available on the Enterprise Zone website.

It is vitally important that all Councillors are aware of progress being made on this project that will have a beneficial impact across the county; as I have done to date, I will continue to keep all 58 members briefed on progress through the usual member briefing channels.

I would also wish members to be aware that the Enterprise Zone has established an Enterprise Zone Stakeholder Group to assist transparency and local engagement in the project. Chaired by the local Ward Member this group brings together businesses from within Rotherwas, the local Parish Council's, and other interested parties in a forum which encourages feedback on proposals and shares information for further dissemination.

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## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 MARCH 2013

### Question from Councillor FM Norman

#### Consultation on Herefordshire Local Plan

5 *If the Council's consultation process on the Core Strategy is to have credibility, it must engage with, and be seen to engage with, all parts of the community, including those who are hard to reach.*

*How should people without access to, or understanding of, the Internet respond to the consultation in hard-copy questionnaire or freeform letter format – when an informed response requires access to the policy documents - which are only supplied singly to parish councils and information points; and may also require access to the supporting evidence base which is only accessible online?*

#### Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton, Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning

Answer to question 5

In addition to the Hereford, market towns and rural members' workshops, we held member briefing sessions on 28 February and 1 March 2013. Members were provided with information packs at these events; any members who did not attend an event will have received the information packs separately. These were designed to assist members in fulfilling their community leadership role in relation to the Local Plan in their wards, both generally and during the consultation period in particular. In addition to this we have taken on board suggestions e.g. to let members have copies of a presentation, and copies of questionnaires for distribution if they request them where there is a specific need.

As you will be aware, drop in sessions have been arranged for parish councils one of which took place on 6 March and a further one is scheduled for 20 March 2013; ward members were able to attend these events should they so choose.

As well as being available electronically, paper copies of the draft Core Strategy have been sent to all parish clerks; in addition the documents re available at all Customer Contact Centres, Libraries and Community Libraries.

Paper copies of the draft Core Strategy have already been sent to members of the general public who have requested it; the extensive evidence base is available on-line, which is the most accessible and cost efficient way of making information widely available, however hard copies can be provided on request.

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## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 MARCH 2013

### Question from SJ Robertson

#### Consultation on Herefordshire Local Plan

- 6 *With reference to the Core Strategy Consultation, I understand that there will be no officer support at Public Meetings throughout the 6 week period. At the Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday, 27th February 2013, the Cabinet Member agreed that the process was complicated, particularly with regard to the Community Infrastructure Levy, and that resources would be made available to the general public to help them understand the consultation process. Therefore,*
- (a) *Who made the decision not to allow officers to attend Public Meetings, particularly as there have been changes to the Core Strategy since the Revised Preferred Option was published in 2011?*
  - (b) *Burghill, Holmer and Lyde parishes have been targeted for housing, a northern relief road and park and ride which will have a significant impact on the people residing in the parishes. Why have the residents, therefore, been denied their democratic right to have access to professional Officers at Public Meetings?*
  - (c) *Are you happy that the Core Strategy will not be judged unsound as the wishes of local communities for officer representation at Public Meetings have been ignored?*

#### **Answer from Councillor RB Hamilton, Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

##### Answer to question 6

- (a) Following discussions with managers I have agreed that council staff will not be accepting invitations to attend public meetings or other similar events organised during the consultation exercise on the draft Core Strategy. Instead, staff will devote their time to the events directly organised by the council throughout the county. This approach reflects the mature phase that the Local Plan has now reached and that we are inviting specific comments on a draft proposal rather than developing a range of options as has previously been the case.
  - (b) I refer to the answer I have given to Member question number 5.
  - (c) Yes. I am satisfied that the Core Strategy will not be judged unsound and that the ability of local communities to engage with the consultation process is not prejudiced.
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## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 MARCH 2013

### Question from SJ Robertson

#### Sale of Lion Farm

7 *Lion Farm, one of the Council's smallholdings, has recently been sold. I understand the barn conversions which the Council obtained planning consent for have not been sold as Property Services omitted to ensure that the Purchaser's Solicitors were made aware of a right of access.*

(a) *How did this error occur and is the Council financially liable on the grounds of negligence?*

(b) *If so, for how much?*

### Answer from Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services

Answer to question 7

It would appear that a technical error has occurred in the contractual process and not as a result of any omission or negligence by the council; as a consequence the council carries no financial liability.

Negotiations are ongoing to remedy the situation and whilst these continue it would be inappropriate to comment further.

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### Question from JLV Kenyon

#### Cabinet Members skills

8 *Given that we are nearly two years into a four year cycle I would like to know what skill sets and experience each Cabinet Member and Cabinet Support Member has in the roles they are carrying out so as a Council we can have confidence that those duties they are responsible for are carried out to their full potential.*

### Answer from Councillor J G Jarvis Leader of the Council

Answer to question 8

As I am sure Cllr Kenyon will be aware from his two years as a ward member and through his membership of the Health & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee, there isn't a 'person specification' for these roles. Members must draw on their experience and must continually develop their knowledge and skills to enable them to be effective whether in representing their constituents, or fulfilling any of a wide range of member roles within the council, from one we all hold as Corporate Parent to our looked after children through to membership of various committees or as an executive member. A skills audit is undertaken early in each administration to help inform the matching process.

We are extremely fortunate in being able to benefit from the contribution made by all members of the Cabinet Team who collectively bring a range of backgrounds, skills and

## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 MARCH 2013

experience that encompass the private sector, self-employment, the public sector as well as a wealth of voluntary activity. Underlying all this is the essential element of an absolute commitment to the future of this county and the people within it.

Whilst I cannot detail here the personal histories of each of my Cabinet Team, we are publishing on the 'Your Councillor' pages of the council website details of our own attendance record at training and development events, and I would encourage all members to get involved in these sessions.

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### Question from EPJ Harvey

#### Consultation on Local Plan Core Strategy

9 *At Cabinet on 27<sup>th</sup> Feb Cllr Hamilton stated that he was genuinely listening to people's comments and concerns throughout the Core Strategy consultation, and fully expected that the draft Local Plan would change as a result. At that same meeting Mr Ashcroft said he was confident that the final version of the plan to be published in August/September of this year would be broadly the same as the draft being consulted upon now.*

*I ask the following question in four parts:*

- 9.1 *Who is correct?*
- 9.2. *What advice has this council received from the Planning Inspectorate concerning how much a Local Plan Core Strategy may change between final consultation and publication without risking the charge that the consultation is invalid or that the plan is unsound?*
- 9.3 *How does the council propose: to record the changes made as a result of this round of consultation; and, to assess their significance in the light of Planning Inspectorate advice?*
- 9.4 *What would be the impact on the Council's ability to secure developer funding for affordable homes and infrastructure, through S106 and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy, of a delay in progressing the Core Strategy - should this be found to be unsound at Examination in Public?*

### Answer from Councillor R B Hamilton Cabinet Member

Answer to question 9

- 9.1 The comments are not contradictory. The draft Core Strategy is now well-advanced and reflects the outcomes of several rounds of consultation and wider debate since 2007. The draft that is now available for consultation is under-pinned by a very significant raft of information and evidence that has been informed by feedback from a wide range of stakeholders. Nonetheless the ambition and approach is very much to be responsive to comments that either add value to the Plan or propose more appropriate policies that are supported by the necessary evidence.

## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 MARCH 2013

- 9.2 The council has neither received nor sought advice from the Inspectorate on this point as appropriate guidance is already available in published documents, and has been followed. There is nothing unusual about this at this stage in the process.
- 9.3 Any changes proposed to the draft Core Strategy, resulting from consultation responses and/or new evidence will be published and reported to Cabinet when the plan is next considered. Should significant changes to the strategy be proposed at that time a judgement will be required to determine whether further consultation on the changes is necessary.

In addition to this Cllr Harvey will be aware that during my visit to the General Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 11 February 2013 when I assisted the committee with its work on the draft Core Strategy, I offered to return following the close of the consultation, once the results had been analysed and we had formed views regarding how these would influence the proposals to be put to the Cabinet and Council in July. I wish to again make it plain that all responses to the ongoing consultation will be welcomed and will help to shape the final proposals. Let us be under no illusion that we live in the real world and that it may not be possible to agree with all submissions; however, any suggestion that comments are a waste of time are not worthy of further comment.

- 9.4 The ability of the council to pool Section 106 agreement monies for wider projects ends on 31 March 2014. From this point onwards Section 106 agreements will relate only to site specific matters.

As Members will be aware the council has been pressing ahead with parallel work on the preparation of a Community Infrastructure Levy charging levy. Whilst that levy cannot be adopted until a Core Strategy has been adopted, I do not anticipate the Core Strategy being found unsound.

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### Question from EPJ Harvey

#### Neighbourhood Planning

- 10 *IOC welcomes the Cabinet's eagerness to 'shift the balance of power' in terms of the driving force for future development in this county away from Herefordshire Council and towards local communities, through the significant role now proposed to be fulfilled by Neighbourhood Plans in the delivery of the Local Plan. We also welcome the increased share of 25% of monies generated through Community Infrastructure Levy which will remain with the parishes that have adopted Neighbourhood Plans which support development.*

*Please will the cabinet Member clarify the following with regard to the role of Neighbourhood Plans:*

- 10.1 *Will communities already targeted to receive strategic housing sites in the core strategy need only to endorse these proposals in their Neighbourhood Plans; or must they propose additional housing on top before they qualify for retention of 25% of their CIL?*

## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 8 MARCH 2013

- 10.2 *Will any level of support for development in a Neighbourhood Plan for an area without a strategic housing site quality that parish to retain 25% of the CIL?*
- 10.3 *How will the 5,300 houses proposed in the plan to be sited in the rural areas be apportioned against communities – both those committing to a Neighbourhood Plans and those not.*
- 10.4 *Since the core strategy identifies this as the means by which the county shall to continue to deliver housing in the event that its preferred approach, of large strategic housing sites, fails to deliver housing fast enough to meet the build trajectory predicted in the plan? How it is proposed to use the Neighbourhood Planning process to agree what fraction of the 30,000 additional sites, identified across the county in the SHLAA as developable and deliverable, that are located within each particular community, should be deemed to be part of the strategic rural housing allocation (the 5,300) and which be new and additional?*

### Answer from Councillor R B Hamilton Cabinet Member

Answer to question 10

- 10.1 I am pleased that my colleague Cllr Harvey recognises and welcomes our support and determination to implement government policy to “shift the balance of power” from Herefordshire Council to local communities including through, among other things, neighbourhood planning where Herefordshire has already received national recognition for its proactive approach to this.

The 25% Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) levy will apply in respect of any development where there is an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan. This will include strategic and non-strategic sites within the Core Strategy and Neighbourhood Development Plan, together with any windfall development.

- 10.2 Yes.
- 10.3 Housing development within the rural areas will be delivered through a combination of existing commitments, windfall development and sites enabled through Neighbourhood Development Plans. The levels of growth within Neighbourhood Development Plans will be determined via local evidence, specific environmental characteristics, local needs and minded to the targets for proportionate growth within the Core Strategy. 122 villages have been identified within Policy RA1 to be the main focus for proportionate housing growth within the rural area.
- 10.4 Neighbourhood Development Plans will need to be based on evidence and the capacity highlighted with Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) will form part of that evidence. Local communities will also be encouraged, together with the assistance of the Neighbourhood Planning team, to undertake site assessments and selection in order to allocate land within their plan.
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