

Agenda

General scrutiny committee

Date: **Monday 21 March 2022**

Time: **10.15 am**

Place: **The Conference Room, Herefordshire Council Offices,
Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE**

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 scrutiny committee

Membership

Chairperson **Councillor Jonathan Lester**
Vice-chairperson **Councillor Tracy Bowes**

Councillor Sebastian Bowen
Councillor Barry Durkin
Councillor Louis Stark
Councillor David Summers
Councillor William Wilding

Agenda

	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive apologies for absence.	
2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES To receive details of members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a member of the committee.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive declarations of interests in respect of Schedule 1, Schedule 2 or Other Interests from members of the committee in respect of items on the agenda.	
4. MINUTES To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2022.	11 - 18
HOW TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS The deadline for the submission of questions for this meeting is 5.00 pm on Tuesday 15 March 2022. Questions must be submitted to councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk . Questions sent to any other address may not be accepted. Accepted questions and the responses will be published as a supplement to the agenda papers prior to the meeting. Further information and guidance is available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/getinvolved	
5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC To receive any written questions from members of the public.	
6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL To receive any written questions from members of the council.	
7. UPDATE ON THE PLANNING SERVICE This item will feature: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An introduction by Ross Cook (Corporate director, economy and environment)• A presentation by Florence Churchill (Interim service director economy and regulatory services) A related paper will be published in a supplement to the agenda, in advance of the meeting.	
8. WORK PROGRAMME To consider potential items for future scrutiny activity.	19 - 30

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We will review and update this guidance in line with Government advice and restrictions.

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- Inspect agenda and public reports at least five clear days before the date of the meeting. Agenda and reports (relating to items to be considered in public) are available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/meetings
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- 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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- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title. The council's constitution is available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution
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The location of the office and details of city bus services can be viewed at:
www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1597/hereford-city-bus-map-local-services-

The seven principles of public life

(Nolan Principles)

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Guide to general scrutiny committee

Scrutiny is a statutory role fulfilled by councillors who are not members of the cabinet.

The role of the scrutiny committees is to help develop policy, to carry out reviews of council and other local services, and to hold decision makers to account for their actions and decisions.

Council has decided that there will be three scrutiny committees. The committees reflect the balance of political groups on the council.

The general scrutiny committee consists of 7 councillors.

Councillor Sebastian Bowen	True Independents
Councillor Tracy Bowes (vice-chairperson)	Independents for Herefordshire
Councillor Barry Durkin	Conservatives
Councillor Jonathan Lester (Chairperson)	Conservatives
Councillor Louis Stark	Liberal Democrats
Councillor David Summers	Independents for Herefordshire
Councillor William Wilding	Independents for Herefordshire

The committees have the power:

- (a) to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive,
- (b) to make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive,
- (c) to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive,
- (d) to make reports or recommendations to council or the cabinet with respect to the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive,
- (e) to make reports or recommendations to council or the cabinet on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area
- (f) to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions and to make reports or recommendations to the council with respect to the discharge of those functions. In this regard crime and disorder functions means:

- (i) a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); and
 - (ii) a strategy for combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area; and
 - (iii) a strategy for the reduction of re-offending in the area
- (g) to review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in its area and make reports and recommendations to a responsible person on any matter it has reviewed or scrutinised or to be consulted by a relevant NHS body or health service provider in accordance with the Regulations (2013/218) as amended. In this regard *health service* includes services designed to secure improvement—
- (i) in the physical and mental health of the people of England, and
 - (ii) in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of physical and mental illness
 - (iii) and any services provided in pursuance of arrangements under section 75 in relation to the exercise of health-related functions of a local authority.
- (h) to review and scrutinise the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management functions or coastal erosion risk management functions which may affect the local authority's area.

The specific remit of the general scrutiny committee includes:

- services within the economy and place directorate and corporate centre
- corporate performance
- budget and policy framework matters
- statutory flood risk management scrutiny powers
- statutory community safety and policing scrutiny powers

Who attends general scrutiny committee meetings?

The following attend the committee:

- Members of the committee, including the chairperson and vice-chairperson.
- Cabinet members, they are not members of the committee but attend principally to answer any questions the committee may have and inform the debate.
- Officers of the council to present reports and give technical advice to the committee.
- People external to the Council invited to provide information to the committee.

(Other councillors may attend as observers but are only entitled to speak at the discretion of the chairman.)

Minutes of the meeting of the General scrutiny committee held at The Conference Room, Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Thursday 27 January 2022 at 10.15 am

Committee Members:

Councillor Jonathan Lester (Chairperson)

Councillors Sebastian Bowen, Barry Durkin, Louis Stark, David Summers and William Wilding.

Substitute member: Councillor Jenny Hewitt*

Officers:

Neil Taylor* (Interim Director for Economy and Place),
 Andrew Lovegrove (Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer)
 Kate Charlton* (Interim Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer),
 Phil Crossland* (Interim Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste)
 Paul Smith* (Interim Director of Adults and Communities)
 Ben Baugh (Democratic Services Officer)
 Jen Preece (Democratic Services Technical Support)

In Attendance:

Councillor Ange Tyler*, Cabinet Member – Housing, Regulatory Services, & Community Safety
 Councillor Liz Harvey*, Cabinet Member - Finance, Corporate Services and Planning
 Councillor Ellie Chowns*, Cabinet Member – Environment and Economy
 Councillor John Harrington*, Cabinet Member – Infrastructure and Transport
 Councillor David Hitchiner* – Leader of the Council
 Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst* – Chairperson of the Adults and Wellbeing Committee

*denotes virtual attendee

47. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tracy Bowes, Vice-Chair of the Committee and from Councillor Philip Howells, Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

48. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Councillor Hewitt was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Bowes.

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

50. MINUTES

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2021, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairperson.

51. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No questions had been received from members of the public.

52. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

No questions had been received from Councillors.

53. 2022/23 BUDGET SETTING

The Chairperson opened this item by reminding members of the Committee of the recommendations that had been made at the initial Budget meeting in December and the responses that had been supplied (as appended to the minutes). During discussion of these the following key points were raised:

- Concerns were voiced that 135 responses to the budget consultation was not a large enough sample to infer any support for the precept increase, and that the consultation needed to be a more meaningful process if it was to be used in any way as a mandate for decisions.
- In contrast, it could be viewed that a lack of response was a tacit approval of the 2.99% rise. Had it been higher, presumably this would have elicited a greater response.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance reminded Members that each percentage rise in Council Tax delivered £1.2m of revenue for the Council, enabling them to maintain services. Consultation responses had shown that most people would prefer this rise rather than a cut in services.
- Although mindful of the statutory obligations that required spend in the other directorates, Councillors were not satisfied that the 16% of the total budget which was spent on the Economy and Place directorate was enough, and requested that some comparisons with appropriate comparator authorities be made and analysed.

The Chief Finance Officer then gave a presentation (Appendix A in the agenda pack) and sought the views of the General Scrutiny Committee on the budget proposals for 2022/23 following the announcement of the provisional financial settlement.

During the debate the following key points were raised:

- Councillors found the slide taken from the Resolution Foundation and titled “Impact of Budget on different income groups” difficult to interpret.
- It would be difficult to unpick spend across the Council to identify exactly where the Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG) had been, or would be, spent as it was used as a revenue support grant. The Portfolio Holder for Finance offered refuse collection as an example of where the RSDG supported rural counties as it was recognised that it was more expensive to collect refuse from isolated rural properties covering a large area compared to more densely populated areas.
- The Chief Finance Officer reassured Councillors however that the conditions of all grants received were reviewed to check if there were restrictions or specific areas

that the monies had to be spent on. An updated paper on proposed investment funded by capital grants would be presented at Cabinet the following week [Agenda for Cabinet on Monday 31 January 2022, 6.30 pm - Herefordshire Council](#)

- The recommendations made by the Adults and Wellbeing, and Children and Young People Scrutiny Committees, as outlined below, were discussed with the Committee. The Chair of the Adults and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee highlighted that her Committee had been at a disadvantage relative to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee as a base budget had not been provided for the meeting, and therefore comments and concerns received subsequently from members of that committee were outlined.

The Chief Finance Officer then handed over to the Interim Director Economy and Place and the Interim Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste to explain the directorate pressures and bids slides. During discussion the following main points were raised:

- The Interim Director Economy and Place felt that there were a number of structural deficits in the Economy and Environment directorate budget and cuts to it had been unrealistic. The other directorates had to deliver statutory services so were protected to a degree.
- The Directorate had refocussed on what monies were coming in although some of this was uncertain as for example planning revenue was dependent on the number of applications received.
- Pressures were defined as additional costs for this year that the Directorate did not have the previous year and most were unavoidable, for example rising fuel costs and the national staff pay ward that had to be funded.
- The Interim Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste outlined the proposal to introduce charges for non-domestic waste at the Household Recycling Centres; many other local authorities already did this and the rates charged were favourable when compared with the hire cost of a mini-skip. In response to Councillors' concerns that this could increase fly-tipping and the cost of addressing this would negate any additional income earned, officers stated that other authorities that had introduced the fees had not seen any unusual variance and increase in their rates of fly-tipping.
- There was a proposal to generate income with moving traffic enforcement by camera. Councillors queried whether offences such as entering one way turns and yellow box junctions were more often than not accidental and therefore fines could be seen as too punitive. Officers felt that it was imperative to improve traffic flow and prevent dangerous driving but clarified that there was a six month introduction and warning period before fining began and even after this time there still was some discretion allowed.
- It was made clear that all revenue from speed cameras went to the Treasury, not the Police or the Council. The Council did however receive revenue from the speeding courses that were offered in some instances instead of a fine.
- A firm of green consultants had been engaged to look at the Council's sustainable transport policy.

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At 1.06pm the Chair called for a 20 minute recess. The meeting resumed at 1.30pm.

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- Councillors raised concerns about the spending on mental health and whether the Council was capitalising on all the grants that were available in this area. The Cabinet Member for Finance reassured Members that the Council went for, and would continue to go after, every grant that the Government opened up, including those for mental health.

- The allocated funds for mental health met the current demand for services and would ebb and flow dependent on demand.
- The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust was a body that the Council engaged with regularly and was one of the main providers of mental health and learning disability services in both counties.
- A plea was made for future budgets to include a program to address rural sustainability.
- Year on year reductions in Government funding meant that there was very little monies available to upgrade roads in the County; the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport described the Council's approach as 'managing a deteriorating network'. Unfortunately, interest rates meant that increased borrowing was not possible at the moment.
- For those parishes with Lengthsmen, a Lengthsmen scheme, allocating £250k a year for five years recurring, was in place which allowed for repairs of minor roads.
- It was hoped that Talk Community would become part of the DNA of the Council and continue as an innovative approach to reducing the numbers using the Council's social care services thereby reducing costs for the Council.
- The Chief Finance Officer was confident that the proposed savings of £500k by efficiencies in treasury management and pensions could be achieved.
- One of the biggest issues the Council had with its own carbon footprint was with its educational estate. Part of the Local Services Grant would be used to hire consultants to identify options and see where business proposals could be put together to bid for funds to put in place decarbon measures for school buildings.
- The Chair queried whether the 1% increase required to balance the budget could be done using the reserves set aside for Adult Social Care. In response the Director for Adults and Communities highlighted that the service had managed to accrue reserves, not only by prudent management but also in part by taking advantage of the many grants that were available during the pandemic. If the grants were no longer available, and it appeared that many would go, then the service would be in the red.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance was also concerned to hear proposals to take money from an area with ballooning costs that would only continue in the foreseeable future.
- The current Executive was proposing a minimum rise to Council Tax with provision being made for the least well off.
- If the proposed 1% rise in Council Tax, which would raise c£1.2m for 2022/23, was not applied, future years would be impacted by that decision, resulting in a 'loss' of revenue of £3m over three years. Council, as well as considering whether to raise Council Tax, would also have to agree its Medium Term Financial Strategy so would have to consider years 2 and 3 because the income figure would be compounded.
- The Bank of England inflation forecast was for 6% by the Spring. The budget had not been subject to this previously and these pressures would have to be mitigated for in this year's budget. The forecast did highlight however that inflation was expected to fall in 2023.
- It was argued that using monies from the Adult Social Care (ASC) reserves to avoid a Council Tax increase would benefit everyone, regardless of need, instead of being used in a much more targeted fashion when needed.
- There was possibly some scope to enlarge the discretionary payment fund so that funding could be targeted to support those most in need.
- It was suggested that 50% of the capital surplus could be used for highway spend in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance had been asking for projections on the delivery of the Children's Services Improvement Plan so that the Council could start to plan for a reduction in spending in this area. It was probably over ambitious to expect to see any budget reductions in the next two years but the Cabinet Member had aspirations

that through better support of families and more preventative work there would be less children in care.

- The projected spend on work to be done on the Town Hall had been covered in the capital projects programme.
- There was an ongoing project scoping the work that was required at Shire Hall which was expected to report back in July with some propositions for the Executive to consider in order to best meet the responsibilities for the building. As decisions on this had yet to be made, the rebuilding costs were not included in the capital programme.

RESOLVED:

Recommendations were proposed and seconded and it was unanimously resolved that it be recommended to the Executive that:

- a) Consideration be given to the main purpose for the consultation on budget setting and that they examine how to make the consultation as effective and engaging as possible, so as to make the results meaningful and usable.
- b) Further analysis be undertaken to compare and contrast the proportionate spend on environment and economy services with relevant comparator authorities.
- c) The Government be asked to look more closely at rural levelling up.
- d) The future presentation of graphs, such as the budget requirement by directorate, include relevant percentages and actual amounts wherever possible.
- e) A written response be provided to the Chairperson of the Adults and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the further comments and concerns from members of that committee as soon as possible and in advance of the budget setting meeting of Council.
- f) The next budget include a programme to respond specifically to issues facing rural communities.
- g) The capital investment in highway maintenance in market towns is welcomed.
- h) Consideration be given to the use of 50% of the capital surplus for highways in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- i) The Council should aim to become more targeted and to give funding support to those most in need.
- j) Consideration be given to the use of the existing earmarked reserves for Adult Services to offset the requirement for the 1% adult social care precept for 2022/23.
- k) The next budget include a programme to respond specifically to the climate and ecological emergency.
- l) The Audit and Governance Committee be invited to consider the use of consultants and information providers.
- m) The following recommendations of the Adults and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee be considered, as appropriate:

Adults and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, 10 January 2022 2022/23 Budget Recommendations

1. A breakdown of the base budget and how much is being spent in each area be provided to the committee. It is further expected that in future there should be consistency in the level of detail contained within the reports produced for each scrutiny committee.
2. Given the importance assigned to Talk Community to manage demand, an element of its budget be skewed towards better communication of its services and access to hubs so that there is more visibility and engagement with the community.
3. The Interim Director of Adult Services investigates the Homeshare programme and its possible benefits and reports back to the committee.

4. The Interim Director of Adult Services provides the committee with more information on the levels of satisfaction with the service generally and also the response raised by care leavers in the budget consultation.
5. The costs involved with All Ages Commissioning, specifically mental health services, be provided to the committee

**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, 11 January 2022
2022/23 Budget Recommendations**

1. The Committee notes and accepts the children and young people services budget for 2022/23;
2. Requests that the Committee be provided with a more detailed breakdown of where money is being spent in the budget on specific service areas; and
3. Recommends that in future budgeting there be an increase in the allocation for early help/early years funding.

54. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is Monday 21 March 2022, 10.15am.

The meeting ended at 3.00pm

Chairperson

General Scrutiny Workshop, Tuesday 14 December 2021

2022/23 budget setting: suggestions and responses

That the Executive be invited to:

- a) Consider the main purpose for the consultation on budget setting and examine how to make the consultation as effective and engaging as possible, so as to make the results meaningful and usable.

This was responded to in the workshop, consultation is a mandatory process and lessons are intended to be used in encouraging greater participation.

- b) Provide more context in the next report in terms of how the 2021 consultation responses have informed the budget proposals.

The consultation section has been updated.

- c) Consider further how directorate savings proposals are formulated to ensure they are realistic and deliverable.

Savings proposals follow an extensive and comprehensive review.

- d) Provide an update on the position with one-off and recurring grants for highway maintenance.

This will be provided.

- e) Provide a breakdown of the elements included in the proposals for the property portfolio.

See appendix C of the January meeting pack

- f) Consider further whether the balance is right in terms of the Economy and Place directorate.

See paragraph 5 of the January meeting paper.



Title of report: Committee work programme

Meeting: General scrutiny committee

Meeting date: Monday 21 March 2022

Report by: Democratic services officer

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

(All wards)

Purpose

To consider potential items for future scrutiny activity.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) The committee considers the prioritisation of potential items for future scrutiny activity.**

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.

Key considerations

2. The work programme needs to focus on the key issues of local concern and be manageable. It must also be ready to accommodate urgent items or matters that have been called-in.

3. During 2021/22, the committee considered the following items of business:

Meeting date and link to the papers:

Agenda items:

[11 June 2021](#)

Herefordshire Council's response to the Covid pandemic

[19 July 2021](#)

Update on executive response clarifications to the committee's Waste Management Strategic Review and the review of the Climate and Ecological Emergency

[10 August 2021](#)

Freehold disposal of the Town Hall, St Owen Street, Hereford

[22 September 2021](#)

Priority flood repair works capital programme: realignment
Development options for the former Holme Lacy School
Maylord Orchard

[15 November 2021](#)

An update from the Police and Crime Commissioner

[27 January 2022](#)

2022/23 budget setting

[21 March 2022](#)

Update on the planning service

(this agenda)

4. During the year, the committee identified the following potential items for future scrutiny activity:

- Digital strategy
- Estate management
- Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP)
- Management of capital projects and contract management
- New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering (NMITE)

5. The committee reviewed a scoping statement for a task and finish group on litter but it was not possible to progress this activity during 2021/22.

6. Suggestions for potential items for future scrutiny have also been made at the following meetings:

Meeting date and link to the minutes:

Suggestions:

[Audit and governance committee, 24 November 2021](#)

Matters pertaining to the delivery of Fastershire

[Council, 28 January 2022](#)

That scrutiny undertake a review of public engagement in respect of the policy update associated with the SCI (Statement of Community Involvement) and whether any improvements to consultation with the local community could be utilised more widely across the council for other consultation exercises.

7. The committee may wish to consider the prioritisation of potential items to inform the work programming for the new scrutiny committees in 2022/23 at this meeting, or to request a separate work programming session for committee members during April 2022.

Constitutional matters

Reorganisation of scrutiny committee functions

8. Informed by the work undertaken by the re-thinking governance working group, Council on [4 March 2022](#) approved a revised constitution, with implementation with effect from 20 May 2022. This includes the reorganisation of scrutiny committee functions into 5 committees, as follows:
 - Children and young people scrutiny committee
 - Connected communities scrutiny committee
 - Environment and sustainability scrutiny committee
 - Health care and wellbeing scrutiny committee
 - Scrutiny management board
9. Details of the new scrutiny committee remits can be found within [Section 4 - Scrutiny functions](#)

Suggestions for scrutiny

10. Members of the public are invited to suggest topics for scrutiny, this link provides further details: [Get involved.](#)

Tracking of recommendations made by the committee

11. A schedule of recommendations made to the executive and the executive responses in relation to the November 2021 and January 2022 meetings is attached at appendix A.

Forward plan

12. The constitution states that scrutiny committees should consider the forward plan as the chief source of information regarding forthcoming decisions. This can be viewed through the forthcoming decisions link on the council's website: [Forthcoming decisions](#)

Community impact

13. In accordance with the adopted code of corporate governance, Herefordshire Council is committed to promoting a positive working culture that accepts and encourages

constructive challenge and recognises that a culture and structure for scrutiny are key elements for accountable decision making, policy development and review. Topics selected for scrutiny should have regard to what matters to residents.

Environmental impact

14. Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
15. The topics selected for scrutiny will take environmental impact into account.

Equality duty

16. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
17. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can contribute positively 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. As this report concerns the administrative function of the committee, it is not considered that it will have an impact on the equality duty.
18. The topics selected for scrutiny need to have regard to equality and human rights issues.

Resource implications

19. The costs of the work of the committee will have to be met within existing resources. It should be noted that the costs of running scrutiny can be subject to an assessment to support appropriate processes.

Legal implications

20. The council is required to deliver an overview and scrutiny function. The development of a work programme that is focused and reflects priorities facing Herefordshire will assist the committee and the council to deliver the scrutiny function.

Risk management

21. 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 to mitigate this risk.

Consultees

22. The work programme is reviewed at committee meetings. The chairperson, vice-chairperson and statutory scrutiny officer also keep the work programme under regular review.

Appendices

- Appendix A Schedule of recommendations made to the executive and the executive responses (November 2021 and January 2022)

Background papers

None identified.

**General scrutiny committee:
Schedule of recommendations made to the executive and the executive responses (November 2021 and January 2022)**

Meeting and agenda item	Recommendations	Response
<p>15 November 2021 An update from the Police and Crime Commissioner</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable be invited to the next appropriate meeting of Full Council to provide an update on the work of the force. 2. Local guidance on the personal security of councillors and how to highlight safety concerns be provided to all councillors. 3. The Neighbourhood Matters messaging service and the Local Policing Charter be brought to the attention of all councillors. 4. Consideration be given to joint communication protocol between the council and the police to ensure that local community safety messages are shared as widely as possible. 5. A bid be made to the Police and Crime Commissioner's initiative to support innovative projects and augment existing activity to reduce fly-tipping. 6. The Herefordshire Superintendent's road safety fund be promoted to all town and parish councils, with attention drawn to the relevant deadline. 7. Consideration be given to the establishment of a local forum for road safety, involving the council, the police, and other relevant partners. 	<p>Accepted The West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable met with councillors following the meeting of Full Council on 4 March 2022.</p> <p>Accepted The West Mercia Police 'Public and personal safety guidance for local and county councillors' document is available here: Public and personal safety guidance</p> <p>Accepted We will add this to a general communique to parish councils.</p> <p>Accepted HC Communications team will consider the practicalities and prepare recommendations.</p> <p>Accepted The Environmental Health team working with Waste Services will prepare a bid.</p> <p>Accepted A communique will be sent to all parish councils.</p> <p>Accepted Community Safety will prepare a briefing for Cabinet members to consider.</p>

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	<p>8. The process for making Traffic Regulation Orders be reviewed to ensure that it is as efficient and effective as possible, including the approach to consultation and messaging with communities and road users, and with discussions with relevant agencies to remove potential barriers to implementation.</p> <p>9. Consideration be given to guidance (including relevant templates) for town and parish councils to support them to develop road safety action plans and related measures, including how to access external funding streams.</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>There is a proposal to repatriate the traffic management team from BBLP and part of that proposal is to facilitate a redesign of the processes involved.</p> <p>Not accepted</p> <p>There is insufficient funding or officer time to provide this service to the parishes. Each parish is able to commission a road safety audit should it wish to do so.</p>
<p>27 January 2022 2022/23 budget setting</p>	<p>a) Consideration be given to the main purpose for the consultation on budget setting and examine how to make the consultation as effective and engaging as possible, so as to make the results meaningful and usable.</p> <p>b) Further analysis be undertaken comparing and contrasting the proportionate spend on environment and economy services with relevant comparator authorities.</p> <p>c) The government be asked to look more closely at rural levelling up.</p> <p>d) The future presentation of graphs, such as the budget requirement by directorate, include relevant percentages and actual amounts wherever possible.</p> <p>e) A written response be provided to the chairperson of the Adults and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the further comments and concerns from members of that committee as</p>	<p>Next year's budget setting process for 2023/2024 will consider further the best use of consultation with all stakeholders. This year, a citizens' assembly was established, to make recommendations for priorities for Cabinet to consider, consultation next year could look to extend this approach.</p> <p>The analysis will be carried out and published prior to Full Council meeting on 11 February 2022.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council will write to the Government on this matter.</p> <p>This will be addressed in the papers for Full Council on 11 February 2022.</p> <p>Please find link to the council tax 2021/22 leaflet: Your Council Tax explained 2021/22 (herefordshire.gov.uk)</p> <p>Agreed. A written response will be provided.</p>

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	<p>soon as possible and in advance of the budget setting meeting of Council.</p> <p>f) The next budget include a programme to respond specifically to issues facing rural communities.</p> <p>g) The capital investment in highway maintenance in market towns is welcomed.</p> <p>h) Consideration be given to the use of 50% of the capital surplus for highways in 2023/24 and 2024/25</p> <p>i) The council should aim to become more targeted and to give funding support to those most in need.</p> <p>j) Consideration be given to the use of the existing earmarked reserves for Adult Services to offset the requirement for the 1% adult social care precept for 2022/23.</p>	<p>Agreed, this will be taken account of in next year's budget setting process for 2023/2024.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Whilst the budget setting process mainly focuses on next year's budget (year 1), we acknowledge that consideration should be given to the use of 50% of the capital surplus for highways in 2023/24 (year 2) and 2024/25 (year 3). We are currently working on the projects for the refurbishment of Shire Hall and HCCTP, city centre transport programme.</p> <p>The council do currently have headroom in the capital programme in future years and we will commit to undertake a value for money (VFM) audit and lessons learned exercise in 2022 on the previous £20m capital injection and the projects it funded. This will inform decisions about how best to improve the condition of our core and non-core road networks.</p> <p>We would welcome scrutiny being involved in that process in the coming year so as to be better placed to understand the options available to us as we enter the budgeting process for the 2023/2024 budget.</p> <p>Yes agreed, the Council should and will work with the General Scrutiny Committee and other political groups to develop an appropriate support scheme.</p> <p>These reserves are necessary to mitigate not only the increasing and largely unpredictable pressures existing in this service area, but also to recognise the risks inherent in the young and still developing Talk Community network and the continued need for that community network to receive pump-priming funding and</p>

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	<p>k) The next budget include a programme to respond specifically to the climate and ecological emergency</p>	<p>possible future funding injections in order for it to develop and grow.</p> <p>Additionally pressures for C&WB for 22/23 are £4.3 million which represent 5% of the overall gross budget, and these pressures do not presently take account of increasing inflation and the uncertainties regarding how sustained higher level of inflation will be in the care sector.</p> <p>The option of using c. £1.2 million of reserves as an alternative to levying the 1% Social Care Precept is a political decision, the consequences of which must be fully understood. The concern with this proposal is that by taking this level of funding for revenue activities from reserves means that £1.2 million of known and understood pressures will not be being funded in the core budget – effectively creating a deficit in the budget put before council.</p> <p>The consequence of this is that the council then enters future years with this deficit being further compounded. This risks continuing government caps on council’s ability to raise income through local taxation will make balancing future budgets even more challenging.</p> <p>As we have only had a one year government settlement, it is not clear how government are proposing to fund social care costs in the future.</p> <p>We already have plans in train to utilise c.£500K of the C&WB reserve to provide hard working and often lower paid care workers in Herefordshire with a £500 bonus (subject to normal tax rules) assistance of funds from Workforce Retention Grant received from Central Govt. We believe that planning for such proposals targeted to support and reward the less well off is a better use of the available reserves than making a change to council tax proposals which will disproportionately reward the better off.</p> <p>Please also see recommendation i above.</p> <p>Agreed. For the 2022/2023 budget, we have a citizens’ assembly up and running looking at these issues, their recommendations will be presented to Cabinet.</p>

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	<p>l) The Audit and Governance Committee be invited to consider the use of consultants and information providers.</p> <p>m) The recommendations of the Adults and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee be considered, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Cabinet will invite the Chair of Audit and Governance Committee to add this to the Committee's work programme.</p> <p>For full details of the recommendations and responses in relation to the other scrutiny committees, please see the following links:</p> <p>Adults and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee recommendations and responses</p> <p>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee recommendations and responses</p>

