

Minutes of the meeting of Council held at Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Friday 21 October 2022 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor Sebastian Bowen (chairperson)
Councillor Kema Guthrie (vice-chairperson)

Councillors: Paul Andrews, Jenny Bartlett, Chris Bartrum, Christy Bolderson, Dave Boulter, Ellie Chowns, Clare Davies, Gemma Davies, Barry Durkin, Elizabeth Foxton, Carole Gandy, John Hardwick, John Harrington, Liz Harvey, Jennie Hewitt, Phillip Howells, Helen I'Anson, Terry James, Tony Johnson, Graham Jones, Mike Jones, Jim Kenyon, Jonathan Lester, Trish Marsh, Bob Matthews, Mark Millmore, Felicity Norman, Roger Phillips, Tim Price, Ann-Marie Probert, Paul Rone, Nigel Shaw, Louis Stark, John Stone, David Summers, Elissa Swinglehurst, Paul Symonds, Kevin Tillett, Diana Toynbee, Ange Tyler, Yolande Watson and William Wilding

Officers: Chief Executive, Corporate Director - Economy and Environment*,
Corporate Director - Community Wellbeing*, Solicitor to the Council,
Director Resources and Assurance, Democratic Services Officer, and Senior
Solicitor, Governance and Major Projects

*denotes virtual attendance.

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Graham Andrews, Polly Andrews, Bowes, Crockett, Fagan, Hey, Jinman, Hitchiner and Milln.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

30. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 29 July 2022 and the extraordinary meeting held on 30 September, subject to the updated appendix of public questions, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

31. CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council noted the Chairman and Chief Executive's announcements as printed in the agenda papers.

32. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Pages 5 - 8)

A copy of the public questions and written answers, together with supplementary questions asked at the meeting and their answers, is attached to the Minutes at Appendix 1.

33. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

There were no questions from members of the Council.

34. APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Council considered a report by the Director of Governance and Law to make appointments to the committees of the Council and outside bodies in line with the rules of political proportionality.

Councillor Sebastian Bowen proposed the recommendations in the report. Councillor Liz Harvey seconded the recommendations in the report.

The recommendations in the report were put to the vote and were carried by a simple majority.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the allocation of seats on each committee to political groups as set out at paragraph 8 be approved; and**
- b) the number of seats on the scrutiny management board and the allocation of those seats to political groups as set out at paragraph 9 be approved.**

35. LEADER'S REPORT

Council received and noted the Leader's Report which provided an update on the work of the cabinet since the previous ordinary meeting of Council on 29 July 2022. The Deputy Leader presented the report to Council.

Council questioned the Deputy Leader and the following actions were raised:

- To investigate whether there is an organisation to which the winter fuel allowance could be donated for distribution to people struggling with energy costs. If there was no such organisation the feasibility of the council establishing such a body was queried.
- To investigate the claim that 10% of the social housing stock in Herefordshire was proposed for disposal.
- To update members once the Luston wetlands site was functional.
- To provide a written response providing detail of the current position of the phosphate credit trading scheme.
- It was proposed that joint scrutiny, with other local authorities, of the Cabinet Commission – restoring the River Wye catchment – occurs.
- To provide a written response providing detail of the specific number of subsidised properties, listed as 'Ready for Service', under the Gigaclear scheme and a list of the communities in which future builds were planned and the timescales for those builds.
- To provide detail of the roll-out of the Fastershire programme in the Golden Valley North electoral division.
- To provide a written response concerning the Gigaclear grant and whether it will be rolled forward into the next financial year.
- To provide a written response with details of the conditions for the dispersal of the rural prosperity fund and what it would be used to support e.g. small business, villages halls.
- To provide a written response on why capital receipt reserves had been used in preference to prudential borrowing to fund the Maylords Centre.

- To provide a statement on the outcome of the review of the number of fabricated or induced illness (FII) cases in Herefordshire.
- Regarding the absence of a mention of 'signs of safety' from the delivery plan, to update members if there was to be any change to the use of the single practice approach used in Herefordshire.
- To provide a written response to answer questions regarding the process that is followed by the Council (to meet its responsibilities to safeguarding children) in cases of peer on peer abuse where there is no police involvement.
- Regarding the eastern river crossing, to provide an update to all members on the commissioning of the second stage, strategic outline business case.
- To provide an update to all members on progress to clear the traffic regulation order (TRO) backlog.
- To look into the cost of school transport of pupils from Hereford and Credenhill to Weobley High School.
- To provide a written response detailing the stability of the households and placements in which Ukrainian refugees have been accommodated.
- To provide a briefing note to members regarding funding available to support the housing of Ukrainian refugees and co-ordination with third sector organisations.
- To raise with the Cost of Living Commission the importance of undertaking an holistic view of the support that was required by families affected by the cost of living crisis.

36. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDERS

Motion – Cost of living crisis and energy efficiency

Councillor Ellie Chowns proposed the motion.

Council debated the motion.

In summary there was wide support for the elements of the motion concerning energy efficiency, particularly support for the insulation of homes and new homes building standards. There was however division across the Council for the areas of motion which related to the future use of fossil fuels.

Councillor Yolande Watson seconded the motion.

Councillor Chowns closed the debate.

The motion was put to the recorded vote and was carried by a simple majority of Council.

FOR (24): Councillors Paul Andrews, Bartlett, Bartrum, Boulter, Chowns, Clare Davies, Gemma Davies, Harrington, Harvey, Hewitt, Howells, James, Marsh, Matthews, Norman, Price, Stark, Summers, Symonds, Tillett, Toynbee, Tyler, Watson and Wilding.

AGAINST (6): Councillors Johnson, Mike Jones, Kenyon, Lester, Rone and Shaw.

ABSTENTIONS (11): Councillors Bolderson, Bowen, Durkin, Foxton, Gandy, Guthrie, l'Anson, Graham Jones, Probert, Stone and Swinglehurst.

RESOLVED – That:

This council believes that:

- **Everyone has the right to a warm home that is affordable to heat;**

- Improving energy efficiency is central to tackling the energy crisis and cost of living crisis;
- Fossil fuels should be left in the ground, and investment in energy supply should instead be targeted at renewables
- All new homes and workplaces should be built to the highest possible energy efficiency standards.

This council notes that:

- Herefordshire Council unanimously declared a climate emergency on 8 March 2019.
- Buildings account for 23% of UK greenhouse gas emissions
- Herefordshire Council has made significant commitments to supporting energy efficiency for homes and businesses in the county, but needs far more support from central government
- Current UK government investment in energy efficiency is nowhere near the level required to address fuel poverty or meet our legally binding UK climate targets.

The council therefore calls on the executive to write to the Prime Minister and to the Herefordshire MPs to call for:

- Immediate further direct financial support to help people to manage the cost of living crisis, with most support provided to low income households;
- A fully funded nationwide action plan to insulate all homes and businesses as quickly as possible to improve energy efficiency and reduce bills;
- A commitment to keep fossil fuels in the ground, and to invest instead in developing the renewable energy technologies and businesses that are essential for our future energy security;
- Immediate introduction of significantly improved energy efficiency standards for new buildings.

Motion – Proportional Representation

Councillor Nigel Shaw proposed and Councillor Barry Durkin seconded a motion under section 4.1.92 of the constitution to adjourn the debate on the motion on notice concerning proportional representation to the next meeting of the Council. The motion to adjourn the debate was carried by a simple majority of Council.

It was requested that the monitoring officer circulate clarification regarding the relevance of the proportional representation motion to the functions of the Council ahead of the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the debate on the proportional representation motion on notice be adjourned to the next meeting of the Council.

The meeting ended at 1.12 pm

Chairperson

Agenda item no. 5 - Questions from members of the public

Question Number	Questioner	Question	Question to
PQ 1	Ms Reid, Hereford	<p>I refer to Appendix 2 – Improvement Board Membership of the Children and Families Strategic Improvement Plan which was endorsed by the Cabinet at the 28 October 2021 meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please provide a complete (eg if employed by Herefordshire Council), accurate (eg if “Interim” or not) and up-to-date version detailing the current membership of the Improvement Board. • Please provide a complete, accurate and up-to-date version of the “Structure Chart” and “Senior Leadership Team Details” or confirm that the most-recent version on the council’s webpage: <p>https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/8213/senior-management-structure-and-contact-details-june-2022</p> <p>is complete, accurate and up-to-date including for the Children and Young People Directorate.</p> <p>If necessary, I suggest you update the council’s website with the up-to-date information as soon as possible.</p>	Cabinet member children and families

Response:

Please find attached (below) the membership details for the Improvement Board.

The website is in the process of being updated with an updated structure chart but will be available at [Senior management team – Herefordshire Council](#)

Role	Name	Designation	Comment
Chair	Gladys Rhodes White	Chair and DfE Improvement Advisor	
Note Taker:	Sarah Morris	Programme Coordinator, Corporate Services	Herefordshire Council Permanent
Board members:	Eleanor Brazil	Children's Commissioner, Children and Young People	
	Paul Walker	Chief Executive	Herefordshire Council Permanent
	Cllr Diana Toynbee	Cabinet Member, Children & Families	

	Cllr Philip Howells	Chairperson, Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee	
	Cllr Jennie Hewitt	Vice-chairperson, Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee	
	Cllr David Hitchiner	Leader to the Council	
	Darryl Freeman	Corporate Director, Children and Young People	Herefordshire Council Permanent
	John Bostock	Regional Advisor, Department for Education (DfE)	
	Alexandra Floyd	Head of Communications	Herefordshire Council Permanent
	Claire Porter	Director of Governance and Legal Services	Herefordshire Council Permanent
	Edd Williams	West Mercia Police	
	Kevin Crompton	Independent Scrutineer	
	Matt Pearce	Director of Public Health	Herefordshire Council Permanent
	Claire Burgess	Local Government Association	
Social Care	Gail Hancock	Service Director Improvement, Children and Young People	Herefordshire Council Interim
	Rachel Gillott	Service Director, Safeguarding and Family Support	Herefordshire Council Permanent
	Phil Bullingham	Service Director, Safeguarding, QA and Improvement	Herefordshire Council Permanent
	Kerry Oddy	Principal Social Worker	Herefordshire Council Permanent (starts 24/10/2022)
Staff reference group rep	Rob Kyle	Independent Reviewing Officer	Herefordshire Council Permanent
Schools rep	Nicki Gilbert	Special School Representation, Westfield School	
	Emma Shearer	Primary School Representation, Riverside Primary School	
	Sue Gaston	Secondary School Representative, Fairfield High School	
Health rep	Mari Gay	Chief Executive, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group	
	Heather Manning	NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group	
	Maria Hardy	CCG Commissioning & Transformation Lead CYP & Maternity	
	Kathryn Cobain	Chief Nursing Officer, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board	
Healthwatch rep	Jane Ellis	Lead for Children and Young People, Healthwatch Herefordshire	

Supplementary Question

Please **fully** answer my public question (eg updated structure chart).

I note that the Improvement Board has **29** members from various organisations and professions including **three** school representatives. However, it does **not** include any representative of families who have experience of receiving Children's Services support (eg whose child is a "child in need").

It is regarded as good practice to include those with "lived experience" of personally using services to be involved in improving them, eg the government-commissioned Independent Review of Children's Social Care.

As time is of the essence, there could be co-optees to the Improvement Board from:

- Representative of Families Co-optee, Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
- Support group A Common Bond
- Parent Carer Voice (SEND)

Do you recommend that three co-optees are appointed to the Improvement Board as soon as possible to voice the perspective of families?

Response to supplementary question (cabinet member children and families)

The Director of Children's Services, the Children's Commissioner and the Department for Education advisor are reviewing the membership of the improvement board and the suggestions from the supplementary question would be passed on. It was pleasing that Gladys White and Eleanor Brazil were engaging with a wide range of people in Herefordshire. It was confirmed that the council must work meaningfully with families receiving children's services in order for those services to improve.

