

# Agenda

## Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Thursday 19 January 2023**

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Time: **10.30 am**

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

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Notes: Please note the time, date and venue of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

**Simon Cann, Democratic Services Officer**

Tel: 01432 260667

Email: [simon.cann@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.cann@herefordshire.gov.uk)

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If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format, please call Simon Cann, Democratic Services Officer on 01432 260667 or e-mail [simon.cann@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.cann@herefordshire.gov.uk) in advance of the meeting.

# **Agenda for the meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee**

## **Membership**

**Chairperson**            **Councillor Louis Stark**  
**Vice-chairperson**   **Councillor Trish Marsh**

**Councillor Carole Gandy**  
**Councillor Jennie Hewitt**  
**Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst**  
**Councillor Yolande Watson**  
**Councillor William Wilding**

## Agenda

		Pages
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>To receive apologies for absence.</p>	
2.	<p><b>NAMED SUBSTITUTES</b></p> <p>To receive details of members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a member of the committee.</p>	
3.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>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.</p>	
4.	<p><b>MINUTES</b></p> <p>To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2022.</p>	9 - 12
<p><b>HOW TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS</b></p> <p>The deadline for the submission of questions for this meeting is 9:30am on 16 January 2023.</p> <p>Questions must be submitted to <a href="mailto:councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk">councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>. Questions sent to any other address may not be accepted.</p> <p>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 <a href="http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/getinvolved">www.herefordshire.gov.uk/getinvolved</a></p>		
5.	<p><b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b></p> <p>To receive any written questions from members of the public.</p>	
6.	<p><b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>To receive any written questions from members of the council.</p>	
7.	<p><b>WASTE AND RECYCLING</b></p> <p>An update on the implementation of the Waste Management Review and the Executive Response to the Waste Management Review Scrutiny Report and Recommendations carried out in 2021</p>	13 - 20
8.	<p><b>REVIEW OF THE CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY REVIEW</b></p> <p>An update on the implementation of the Executive Response to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Review Scrutiny Report and Recommendations carried out in 2021.</p>	21 - 46
9.	<p><b>PROGRESS REPORT JANUARY 2023</b></p> <p>This report provides a brief summary update on issues previously considered by the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee, including responses to information requests made by the Committee, updates on</p>	47 - 82

resolutions made by the Committee, including agreeing and signing-off reports and recommendations to the Executive and the Executive response and Executive decision(s) made in respect of scrutiny reports and recommendations.

**10. WORK PROGRAMME**

83 - 90

To consider the work programme for the committee.

**11. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Friday 10 March 2023 10.30am

## The public's rights to information and attendance at meetings

In view of the continued prevalence of Covid, we have introduced changes to our usual procedures for accessing public meetings. These will help to keep our councillors, staff and members of the public safe.

Please take time to read the latest guidance on the council website by following the link at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/meetings](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/meetings) and support us in promoting a safe environment for everyone. If you have any queries please contact the governance support team on 01432 261699 or at [governancesupportteam@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:governancesupportteam@herefordshire.gov.uk)

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

Thank you for your help in keeping Herefordshire Council meetings safe.

### You have a right to:

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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](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/meetings)
- Inspect minutes of the council and all committees and sub-committees and written statements of decisions taken by the cabinet or individual cabinet members for up to six years following a meeting.
- 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.
- Access to a public register stating the names, addresses and wards of all councillors with details of the membership of cabinet and of all committees and sub-committees. Information about councillors is available at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/councillors)
- 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](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution)
- Access to this summary of your rights as members of the public to attend meetings of the council, cabinet, committees and sub-committees and to inspect documents.

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## **Public transport links**

The Herefordshire Council office at Plough Lane is located off Whitecross Road in Hereford, approximately 1 kilometre from the City Bus Station.

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-](http://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.





**Minutes of the meeting of Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee held at Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Friday 18 November 2022 at 2.00 pm**

**Present:** Councillor Louis Stark (chairperson)  
Councillor Trish Marsh (vice-chairperson)

**Councillors:** Jennie Hewitt, Elissa Swinglehurst, David Summers, Roger Phillips and William Wilding

**In attendance:** Councillor John Harrington (Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport and Councillor Ellie Chowns (Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment)  
Jonathon Pryce - Chief Fire Officer, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service  
Ellie Misselbrook - Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service  
Joel Hockenhill - Senior Drainage Engineer at Balfour Beatty  
Martin Quine - Assets and Waterways Manager, Environment Agency  
Dan Trewin – Environment Planning Specialist, Environment Agency

**Officers:** Steve Hodges - Directorate Services Team Leader, Economy and Environment  
Mark Averill – Interim Service Director, Highways and Transport  
Toby Hanham – Emergency Planning Officer  
Ian Baker – Emergency Planning Manager (Remote Attendee)  
Michael Carr – Statutory Scrutiny Officer  
Alfie Rees-Glinos – Technical Support

**21. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Yolande Watson and Cllr Carole Gandy.

**22. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Cllr David Summers substituted for Cllr Yolande Watson  
Cllr Roger Phillips substituted for Cllr Carole Gandy.

**23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Four members declared membership of the River Lugg Drainage Board.

**24. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**25. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions received from members of the public.

## **26. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

There were no questions received from Councillors.

## **27. LOCAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN**

A video recording of the discussion and debate on this item can be found at Herefordshire Council's website:

[Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee, 18th Nov, 2PM - YouTube](#)

commencing at 6:03 minutes into the recording.

Councillor Louis Stark (Committee Chair) outlined how he intended to approach the item, noting that a paper on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan along with 3 appendices had been received by the committee.

The Chair noted that Herefordshire Council was the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and that it was the Council's responsibility to lead in managing local flood risks.

The Chair also gave an overview of the Council's statutory responsibility to publish a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS), which provides a framework to enable the LLFA to lead and co-ordinate flood risk management across Herefordshire.

The Chair then provided a summary of the LFRM's five key objectives for flood risk management:

Objective 1: Understand flood risks throughout Herefordshire.

Objective 2: Manage the likelihood and impacts of flooding.

Objective 3: Help the community help themselves.

Objective 4: Manage flood warning, response and recovery.

Objective 5: Promote sustainable and appropriate development.

The Chair explained that the intention was to use the five objectives to structure the way the committee would scrutinise the action plan.

The committee went through the five objectives and discussed the plan with attendees and officers in great detail. A brief discussion on recommendations arising from the discussion took place, but due to time limitations the committee agreed that the Chair and the Statutory Scrutiny Officer (Michael Carr) would go away and produce a number of recommendations and findings for consideration at the next meeting on 19 January 2023.

**It was resolved that:**

**A set of recommendations and findings relating to the flooding risk action plan be drafted by the Committee Chair and Statutory Scrutiny Officer (with input from the rest of the committee) for approval and submission at the next ESSC meeting of 19 January 2023.**

## **28. PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee gave consideration to the report as set out on pages 29-40 of the agenda, which provided a brief summary update on issues previously considered.

The Committee unanimously took the report as read.

**29. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The Committee gave consideration to its Work Programme as set out on pages 41-48 of the agenda.

The Committee voted unanimously in favour of a circulated amendment to the waste management item scheduled for the Committee meeting of 19 January 2023

**30. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The Committee noted its next meeting date as 19 January 2023.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified

**Chairperson**





# Title of report: Waste and Recycling

**Meeting: Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: Thursday 19 January 2023**

**Report by: Head of environment, climate emergency and waste services,  
Waste Transformation Lead**

## Classification

Open

## Decision type

This is not an executive decision

## Wards affected

(All Wards);

## Purpose

To provide an update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee on the implementation of the Waste Management Review and the Executive Response to the Waste Management Review Scrutiny Report and Recommendations carried out in 2021.

## Recommendation(s)

### That:

- a) **The committee notes the significant progress to date through the Waste Transformation Programme and is assured that the Council is on track for early delivery of the ambitious new targets within the new Integrated Waste Management Strategy, and**
- b) **The committee determines any other actions or recommendations it may seek to make**

## Alternative options

None identified, this report provides an update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

## Key considerations

### Background

1. In 2020 General Scrutiny Committee formed a cross party Waste Task and Finish group to review the waste management collection service across Herefordshire. Through a process of evidence and information gathering, considering the Frith Resource Management (FRM) review, learning from the experience of other local authorities and considering the needs and aspirations of the

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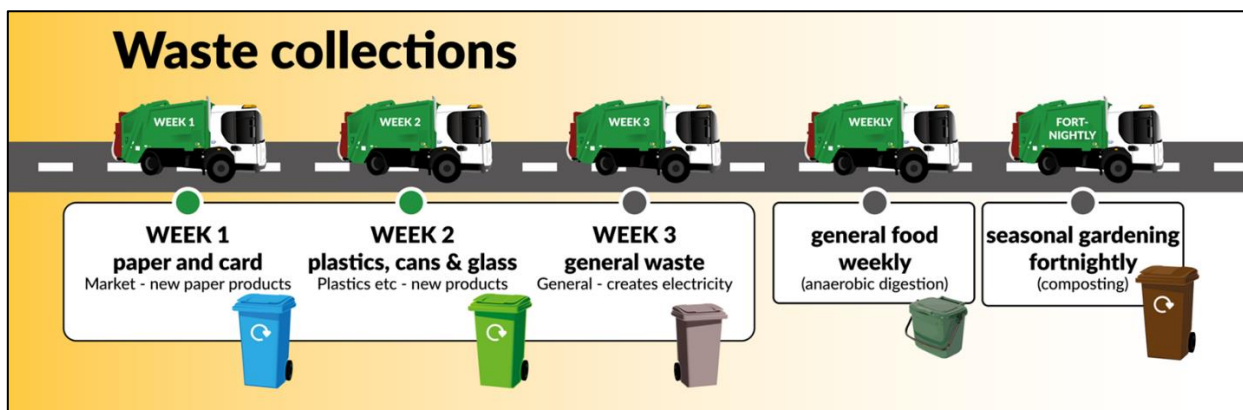
Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Ben Boswell, Sian Peters, Tel: 01432 261930, Tel: 01432 260169, email: [bboswell@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:bboswell@herefordshire.gov.uk),  
[Sian.Peters@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sian.Peters@herefordshire.gov.uk)

council the group considered what the objectives for future improvements should be and different options for providing the service in future.

2. On 28 September 2020 General Scrutiny Committee considered the findings of the Waste Task & Finish group and recommended that a public consultation exercise was undertaken on the two collection models of:
  - a) Option 1 - Three weekly residual collection with twin stream recycling as detailed below
  - b) Option 2 – Kerbside sort collection
3. This recommendation was accepted in November 2020 and between December 2020 and February 2021 MEL Research undertook a public consultation exercise on the two proposed collection service options for both Public and Business Users. The consultation was promoted on the council’s website, social media pages, print media publications and emails were sent to a representative sample of residents with telephone surveys and postal surveys also available. Trade and non-trade waste customers were sent an email to take part in the business survey.
4. Option 1 was supported by a majority of consultee respondents, 53%, whilst 47% of respondents favoured option 2. The survey results were compiled from returns made by 3,498 residents and 181 businesses.

**Progress to date**

5. In July 2021 Cabinet approved an ambitious new Herefordshire Integrated Waste Management Strategy and allocated £1.5m from the council’s waste reserve to progress and implement a number of pilot projects. The pilots include reuse, recycling, collection and disposal methods, composting, carbon reduction opportunities, partnership working across Herefordshire and further exploring potential opportunities for cross border working/project development.
6. On 25 November 2021 Cabinet approved the adoption of the three weekly residual collections with twin stream recycling service, as detailed below, as the new waste collection model to support residents to increase recycling.



7. On 25 November 2021 Cabinet also approved, subject to due diligence, an extension and variation to the current Waste Management Service Contract (WMSC), which manages the disposal of waste after it has been collected, with Mercia Waste Management (Mercia) for a period of five years until 11 January 2029. This was concluded and signed on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 2022.
8. This extension agreed included a number of variations both to:
  - a. Facilitate the new collection model.

- b. Accelerate the reduction of municipal waste to landfill and achieve a maximum of 1% to landfill starting in 2022.
  - c. Introduce new checks and requirements for the downstream processing of our materials to ensure greater visibility and accountability. Here the Council is requiring that Mercia and its subcontractors seek the Council's permission, undertake environmental impact assessments and subsequent auditing of any recycling materials moving beyond the UK and European Economic Area. This will be practically worked through via the 2023/24 service delivery plan and will form part of contract monitoring.
9. Throughout 2022 the Council also commenced a number of innovate new pilot projects to further deliver the aims of the new strategy:
- a. Flats recycling improvement initiative.
    - i. 15 blocks of flats have received new recycling bins with a variety of different style lids, improved signage and direct communication to all residents. Paper and card is being separated from the other recycling items and preliminary results show better quality of this separated material.
    - ii. During quarter1 of 2023 data will be collated as to the impact of the pilot e.g signage use of receptacles, recycling improvements. This will also include surveys. From this information a business case will be developed to look at rolling this approach across the county.
  - b. Re-usable nappies.
    - i. Phase one - 295 vouchers have been issued to parents/guardians and spent on reusable nappies. Following a survey, of those who responded, 35% estimated a waste saving of 2 or more black sacks per week and 65% said they saved 1 black sack a week by using reusable nappies. Based on the success of this initiative a phase 2 is planned during the quarter of 2023. A business case and an option appraisal is in the process of being finalised.
  - c. Repair Cafes grant funding
    - i. We have had 1 successful applicant who are due to launch a new repair café early in 2023. The grant scheme has been extended to allow a longer period for groups to seek advice and experience from others before applying.
    - ii. 14<sup>th</sup> January 2023 a Repair Café showcase event is taking place; working with Ledbury and Malvern Hills successful and established repair cafes, the aim is to reach out further to organisations and volunteers to extend coverage within Herefordshire.
  - d. 'Getting it Right' – 12-month multi-channel campaign designed to increase recycling and reduce contamination
    - i. Website traffic to the Herefordshire Council [recycling](#) home page increased by over 50 % over the first 4 months of the campaign compared to the previous year.
    - ii. All refuse collection vehicles have new signage on them to encourage the correct items to be recycled and to show people from all walks of life 'Getting it Right'.

10. Following the outcome of the public consultation where residents requested more support to increase recycling and to be able to understand the new collection service, additional and targeted communication, engagement and information is being and will continue to be provided to residents through the 'Getting it Right' campaign and other targeted campaigns..
11. This complements the engagement campaigns with flats and housing associations and there will be additional engagement with rural communities with specific collection needs. Countywide communications on the service changes and extended period of Hypercare to support residents for the initial months of the contract and beyond are also being planned.
12. The Council have also been working with The Industry Council for Packaging and the Environment (INCPEN) on behavioural insights into waste and recycling. We will be using the information and experience gathered from this to help develop the future engagement and communications campaigns.
13. In July 2022, and following a successful soft market test in Feb 2022, Cabinet approved the procurement of the new waste collection service. This included the national first for a cargo bike domestic food waste collection service in Hereford City Centre and a number of service improvement schemes as detailed below:
  - a. Upgrading Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCV's) to incorporate weighing and geotagging infrastructure in tandem with bin chips to:
    - i. Modernise the commercial waste and recycling service to a pay by weight model
    - ii. Enhance service monitoring, performance and enable targeted continual improvement and behavioural change projects
  - b. Enhanced requirements for zero carbon collection methods:
    - i. Potential electrification of RCV's and the associated charging infrastructure
    - ii. The requirement for a cargo bike collection model in the historic city centre.

### **Next steps**

14. The procurement of the new waste collection service is currently underway and is the first major contract to utilise the Council's new Social Value Framework.
15. The Council is currently finalising negotiations to extend the existing waste collection service with our current providers FCC Environment until June 2024 when the new service is due to start. This is to help to mitigate the current market uncertainties and supplier lead times for new waste collection vehicles and will ensure a successful mobilisation for the new service at the service commencement date.
16. Development of service policies and customer charter to confirm the criteria and guidelines for household collection container types, the service standards that the council will provide and the expectations of residents and businesses in using the services to ensure these are aligned with the ambitions of the waste management strategy.
17. The due diligence for the extension and variation to the WMSC was completed and signed on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 2022 the Council jointly issued a Voluntary Ex-Ante Transparency Notice (VEAT) with Worcestershire County Council notifying the market of our intention for the extension. Following the completion of the extension it was e agreed to undertake a best practice review of contract management to support the future management of this service.



18. In order to plan for the future beyond the WMSC extension period the Council is currently working with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Local Partnerships to undertake a strategic review of future options beyond 2029.
19. The waste management team has been working to develop a number of possible additional pilots and enhanced work programmes to continue to reduce waste, promote reuse and increase recycling. These include:
  - a. Review of re-use and recycling at HRC's,
    - i. A waste analysis of residual waste has been conducted and we are awaiting the results of this which will show the main materials deposited for general disposal by residents at HRCs. We are developing site layout maps to encourage unloading in the order the containers are laid out on site and hope to encourage further charities to collect items from the reuse containers.
  - b. Paint reuse scheme
  - c. Re-use Pop Up shops
  - d. Mattress recycling and diversion of bulky waste from residual waste stream
  - e. Soft plastics recycling scheme
  - f. Food waste reduction and surplus food redistribution
    - i. Officers have established links with all surplus food redistributors and as a result Ledbury Food Bank have started collecting some surpluses and have identified opportunities for new surplus food redistribution. Work is also underway with the Herefordshire Food Alliance and Public Health to deliver events about food waste reduction and surplus redistribution. This also includes engaging with local farmers, growers and suppliers across Herefordshire.
  - g. Supporting property and facilities management and cross referencing to 20.1, in the reuse and recycling of Herefordshire Council ( as an organisation) items that are no longer in use within Council buildings/ estate.

### **Community impact**

20. The Waste Management Strategy and associated actions strongly support the delivery of the following County Plan (2020-24) priorities:
  - a. Protect and enhance our environment and keep Herefordshire a great place to live
  - b. Minimise waste and increase reuse, repair and recycling
  - c. Build understanding and support for sustainable living
  - d. Invest in low carbon projects
  - e. Identify climate change action in all aspects of council operation
  - f. Support an economy which builds on the county's strengths and resources;
  - g. Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resource

- h. Develop environmentally sound infrastructure that attracts investment
- i. and spend public money in the local economy wherever possible

## **Environmental Impact**

21. The council seeks to treat waste as a resource, supporting a more circular economy for Herefordshire reducing, reusing and recycling materials so that they stay in use for longer, offsetting use of raw materials and reducing carbon emissions.
22. The environmental impact of the Waste Management Review has been integral to the development of the new strategy, new waste collection service, waste disposal extension, pilot schemes and future options review. The associated actions will minimise waste, increase re-use, reduce energy and carbon emissions and consider opportunities to enhance biodiversity.
23. The modelling undertaken by FRM indicates that the new service should:
  - a. Significantly increase recycling levels from ~40% to 63%. This will result in early delivery of target 2 to reuse or recycle 55% of municipal waste by 202560% by 2030 and will significantly move us towards achieving 65% by 2035, which will position Herefordshire as a national leader.
  - b. Significantly increase recycling quality
24. Through the WMSC the Council has reduced the amount of waste to landfill from 20% to less than 1%. This achieves the new strategy target three years early.
25. Through the specific requirements for bidders to include zero carbon collection vehicles, such as both electric RCV's and cargo bikes in the city centre this will further reduce carbon emissions, reduce noise pollution, reduce congestion and improve air quality in the Hereford Air Quality Management Area

## **Equality duty**

26. 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.
27. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute 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.
28. As a committee report this will not have an impact on our equality duty.

### Resource implications

29. There are no resource implications associated with providing this progress update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

### Legal implications

30. There are no direct legal implications from this report.

### Risk management

31. There are no risks associated with providing a progress update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

### Consultees

- None

### Appendices

- None

### Background papers

- None

### Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	John Coleman	Date 20/12/2022
Finance	Louise Devlin	Date 21/12/2022
Legal	Francis Fernandes	Date 22/12/2022
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 22/12/2022
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 22/12/2022
Procurement	Lee Robertson	Date 20/12/2022
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 20/12/2022
Approved by	Ross Cook	Date 22/12/2022

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**



# Title of report: Review of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Review

**Meeting: Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: Thursday 19 January 2023**

**Report by: Head of environment, climate emergency and waste services,  
Sustainability & Climate Change Manager**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose**

To provide an update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee on the implementation of the Executive Response to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Review Scrutiny Report and Recommendations carried out in 2021.

## **Recommendation(s)**

That:

- a) **The Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee note the update provided in Appendix 1 which provides an update on the actions following the executive response to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Task & Finish Group, and**
- b) **The committee determine any recommendations it wishes to make to the executive to consider.**

## **Alternative options**

1. None identified, this report provides an update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

## **Key considerations**

2. On 8 March 2019 Herefordshire Council declared a Climate Emergency following unanimous support for a climate emergency resolution at Full Council.
3. This declaration was updated on 11 December 2020 when Herefordshire Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) following support for a climate and ecological emergency resolution at Full Council.
4. On 26 September 2019, Cabinet approved the executive's response to these resolutions, setting out a number of actions and policy commitments including:
  - a. An accelerated reduction of the Council's own carbon emissions and the aspiration to become net carbon neutral by 2030/31.
  - b. The Council will work with strategic partners, residents and local organisations to develop a revised countywide CO<sub>2</sub> reduction strategy, aspiring for carbon neutral by 2030.
  - c. That the general scrutiny committee is invited to consider building into their work programme and/or establishing a task and finish group to:
    - i. Review the draft carbon management plan;
    - ii. Review partners' plans and strategies to recommend how best to develop a joint countywide strategy;
    - iii. Develop and propose a checklist of criteria for the development of new and review of existing Council strategies to assess their suitability to deliver on carbon reduction.
5. General scrutiny committee established a Task and Finish Group on 20 January 2020 to carry out a climate emergency review. The general scrutiny committee met on 25 January 2021 to agree the report and made 58 recommendations, on 26 April 2021 and made a further 11 recommendations and on 19 July 2021 and made a further 3 recommendations.
6. This report provides an update on the progress against the executive response to the 72(total) recommendations to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.
7. Of the 72 total recommendations 24 are complete, 47 are in progress and one is to commence.
8. Following the Climate Citizens Assembly, which was a direct recommendation of the Task & Finish group, £1.33m has been allocated to deliver the consequential action.

## **Community impact**

9. As a result of the work that has been carried out from the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group the following community impacts can be considered:
  - a. The resulting improvements in local air quality, improved public health and efficiencies from addressing the climate emergency will positively contribute towards the delivery of

the Council's corporate plan objectives of 'Securing better services, quality of life and value for money' and 'Enabling residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives.'

- b. Flooding was a focus of the Task and Finish Groups work throughout the year with recommendations in the report made to lessen the impact of flooding and to support those that have been the victims of flooding in Herefordshire.
- c. As a part of this work, improving the fabric of buildings across the county has been given consideration and the positive impact that plays on both the environment and the health of our residents both for new build and existing properties.

## **Environmental Impact**

10. The objective of the Task and Finish Group was to ensure the Council's operations reflect the ambition set out in the declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency and the setting of the 2030 net zero carbon targets for the Council and county. The work carried out by the Council guided by the Group supports the Council's following priorities:
  - a. Improve and extend active travel options throughout the county (EN2)
  - b. Understand and support sustainable living (EN3)
  - c. Invest in low carbon projects (EN4)
  - d. Identify climate change actions in all aspects of the Council's operations (EN5)
  - e. Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resources (EN6)
  - f. Protect & enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold environmental standards (EN7)
  - g. Develop environmentally sound infrastructure that attracts investment (EC6)
11. The executive response and associated actions also contribute towards the following County Plan ambitions for Herefordshire to:
  - a. Protect and enhance our environment and keep Herefordshire a great place to live
  - b. Support an economy which builds on the county's strengths and resources.

## **Equality duty**

12. 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.

13. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute 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 is a decision on back office functions, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty.

### **Resource implications**

14. There are no resource implications associated with providing this progress update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

### **Legal implications**

15. The Council is required to deliver a scrutiny function. The development of a work programme which is focused and reflects those priorities facing Herefordshire will assist the committee and the Council to deliver a scrutiny function.
16. The Scrutiny Rules in Part 4 Section 5 of the Council's constitution provide for the setting of a work programme, the reporting of recommendations to the executive and the establishment of task and finish groups within the committee's agreed work programme.
17. Whilst this is an update on the work of the scrutiny committees and will in itself have minimal legal implications, consideration has been made in the consideration of Executive decisions and the Executive Responses provided by the Cabinet.

### **Risk management**

18. There are no risks associated with providing a progress update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

### **Consultees**

- None.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1, Implementation update.

### **Background papers**

- The Climate and Ecological Emergency Review report by General Scrutiny Committee, Task and Finish Group.
  - <https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50086309/Appendix%20A%20for%20Climate%20Emergency%20Review.pdf>



## Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

**Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published**

Governance	John Coleman	Date 20/12/2022
Finance	Louise Devlin	Date 19/12/2022
Legal	Sharon Bennett-Matthews	Date 16/12/2022
Communications	Luenne featherstone	Date 19/12/2022
Equality Duty	Carol Trachonitis	Date 16/12/2022
Procurement	Carrie Deeley	Date 19/12/2022
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 19/12/2022

Approved by Ross Cook Date 22/12/2022

**Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.**



Ref. Number	Recommendation	Executive Response	Action	Progress to date	Progress Summary
1	<p>Internal Governance;</p> <p>A The Council should establish a politically proportionate Committee (the Climate and Ecological Emergency Policy Committee) with responsibility for directing the Council's response to the climate and ecological emergency. The Chairperson of that Committee may or may not be a Cabinet Member depending on the precise arrangements adopted by the council, but the Committee is to have primacy.</p> <p>B The Committee should take account of the proposed Future Generations Act.</p> <p>C The Committee should have some form of decision making powers in line with the future hybrid system of governance.</p> <p>D The Committee should have its own budget that facilitates it to fulfil its remit and initiate projects that will enable the council to make progress required with respect to the climate &amp; ecological emergency.</p> <p>E The Committee should be the focal point for all council climate change related work.</p> <p>F The Committee should receive regular reports from bodies charged with directing the countywide response to the climate and ecological emergency. The Committee would not duplicate this work but ensure that the council remained sighted upon it.</p> <p>G Research should be undertaken and consideration given to models adopted by other authorities reflecting these.</p>	<p>Rejected. Recommendations B, E, F and G to be referred to the Rethinking Governance Group.</p> <p>The Council is currently operating its governance arrangements by way of a Leader/Cabinet model ( Local Government Act 2000) which means that the Leader is appointed by Full Council and the leader appoints the Cabinet and the leader decides which executive functions will be carried out by individual Cabinet Members. The constitution sets this out at Part 2 Article 5.</p> <p>This leadership model also has to have at least one overview and scrutiny committee, it currently has three such committees.</p> <p>The proposal to establish a Climate Change Committee, would not fall within the Leader/Cabinet model but instead would be a committee established under a committee system where the council would divide itself into politically balanced committees that make the decisions.</p> <p>Parts A, C and D are not possible under a Hybrid Model of governance, however the proposal will be referred to the Rethinking Governance Group who are considering Hybrid Model governance arrangements for the council. Elements of the recommendation, specifically parts B, E, F and G will be considered as a part of this work.</p>	<p>The recommendation will be considered as a part of the work by the rethinking governance working group.</p>	<p>Review completed by rethinking governance .</p> <p>Following rethinking governance and council decision in May 2022, a new environmental and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee was created. Further constitutional provisions enable power to create standing powers.</p>	Complete
2	<p>The existing county wide steering group was set up in 2019 to create the basis of a net zero, nature rich action plan and set up a new Partnership to adopt and drive forward the action plan. The Group recommends the following approach to a Partnership to deliver a countywide response to the climate and ecological emergency;</p> <p>a. A collaborative, open and transparent partnership body needs to be established to deliver the countywide response to the climate and ecological emergency.</p> <p>b. The Council should be represented on the partnership, should participate in it and make a robust contribution.</p> <p>c. Arrangements should be put in place to ensure regular feedback from the partnership to the Committee.</p> <p>d. Provision should be made for the membership of the partnership to include those who are responsible for the delivery of measures that are likely to be recommended to ensure that they are practical and capable of implementation.</p> <p>e. Provision should be made for the membership of the partnership to include a range of views to promote effective critical friend challenge</p>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>The executive acknowledge the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group were shared with the existing County Steering Group and considered as a part of the drafting of the Terms of Reference for the proposed County Partnership.</p> <p>A forthcoming decision will be made to consider the establishment a new Countywide Partnership to facilitate the aim of achieving countywide carbon neutrality by 2030 and to further protect and enhance local biodiversity. This is a key commitment within the council's corporate delivery plan.</p>	<p>Decision to be taken.</p> <p>Board to meet and take forward action plan.</p>	<p>Terms of reference and application process drafted. Subject to Cabinet approval the invitation to apply to the role of board member will.</p> <p>Board established in November 2022, comprising 15 individuals and chaired by Cllr Chowns. Meets at 6 week intervals. There are five working groups -Farming and Land use, Housing, Transport, Energy and Food. The Board has commenced a number of projects including . 30 farm carbon audits, 20 business energy audits, a renewable mapping project and through it's communications consultant JBP, five carbon workout guides have been published <a href="https://zerocarbon.herefordshire.gov.uk/">https://zerocarbon.herefordshire.gov.uk/</a></p>	Complete
3	<p>On 12 July 2019 a Zero Carbon Citizens Assembly was agreed at Full Council. The executive response 26 September 2019 offered four options to be detailed in a forthcoming report. The Group recommend that the report should be produced and one of these options taken forward as a priority. This option should be delivered and supported by the council and feed into the Committee and Partnership to inform the work regarding the climate and ecological emergency.</p>	<p>Executive Response Accepted, subject to review.</p> <p>As part of the development of a wider engagement framework for the council, considerations are being given to the inclusion of citizen assemblies as a method of engagement with citizens (alongside other tools and approaches). Considerations will include the resources required to deliver the assembly, the method by which citizens are invited and the prioritisation for the area of focus to ensure that they are clearly linked to the County Plan and the council's wider strategic objectives.</p> <p>The council has recently partnered with an external agency (Impact Consultancy) to support the council's engagement with the public and key stakeholders. Impact Consultancy will support the planning and delivery of a citizen's assembly on Zero once the resources have been committed to and timeframes for delivery agreed.</p>	<p>Confirmation of resources to be committed and timeframes agreed.</p>	<p>Climate Citizens Assembly ran from 13th to 30th Jan 2022. It made 35 recommendations under four categories:Buildings, Transport, Land-use, food and farming, and cross cutting</p> <p>At full Council 11th Feb 2022 the new homes bonus grant funding of £1.33m was allocated to managing climate change reserve.</p> <p>Review of 35 recommendations in consultation with teams across the council undertaken and identified priorities.</p>	Complete
4	<p>The executive should ensure that all relevant teams are sufficiently resourced to carry out all recommendations that are accepted.</p>	<p>Executive Response Rejected.</p> <p>Due to the extraordinary financial pressures the council is under and the savings targets required, no additional resource is available to increase resourcing levels. However all relevant heads of services have been consulted during the process and all teams are adequately resourced to carry out the work set out in the executive response.</p>	<p>See executive response.</p>		Complete

5	<p>A mandatory training element should be added to the Herefordshire Council staff online training service regarding the environment and personal responsibility to ensure all staff are clear on their own professional and personal role in the climate and ecological emergency.</p>	<p>Executive Response Rejected.</p> <p>The existing training module on the environment will be updated. The training will make it clear to staff what is expected of them in their professional capacity whilst making them aware of what they can do in their personal life to help the county move towards carbon zero and nature rich by 2030. The training will be engaging and will provide staff with practical steps to help them professionally and personally. This training will be widely advertised to staff.</p> <p>Whilst advisory the module will not be a mandatory module as it is corporate policy that only modules that are required by law.</p>	<p>Existing course to be updated and promoted to all staff.</p>	<p>Course currently being updated by the Sustainability &amp; Climate Change team. It was launched and promoted to staff in June 2022. To date (12/12/22) 657 staff members have completed the course.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
6	<p>Whilst discussing the issues around the climate and ecological emergency the Group felt it was important that the executive commit to work with the Local Government Association to;</p> <p>a. Press for a joined-up regulatory and enforcement framework on Natural Capital.</p> <p>b. Support and encourage behaviour change around reducing unnecessary vehicle use and support sustainable transport.</p> <p>c. Ensure there is no gap between the Shared Prosperity Funding and the existing European Regional Development Fund.</p>	<p>Executive Response Accepted.</p> <p>The council will write to and engage with the Local Government Association (LGA) on these issues as well as raise these issues in the County Council Network (CCN).</p>	<p>Write to the LGA. Table issues at County Council Network.</p>	<p>Officers are actively engaged with the LGA through their Climate Action Group (CAG) which meets regularly to share best practice. Officers have also joined the ADEPT Environment Board which has strong representation from Government Departments and Local Authorities across the country on Climate Change, Natural Environment and Waste.</p> <p>A letter is being drafted to the LGA to respond directly to the recommendation.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
7	<p>A dedicated communications officer in the Communications team is recommended to support environmental communications. Consideration should be given to the website, social media, active and passive promotion and engagement with the public including young people and schools to facilitate behaviour change. The officer should facilitate the following;</p> <p>a. The officer should link with the work of the Partnership to avoid duplication.</p> <p>b. A link to the section on climate and ecological emergency on the council's website should be promoted by a permanent banner at the top of the home page and the website pages relating to the environment should be more interactive to encourage more public involvement.</p> <p>c. The 'Newsroom' should reflect all news relating to the climate and ecological emergency and signpost to other sources of news on the climate and ecological emergency within the County.</p> <p>d. As a way of generating engagement, competitions and awards for innovative approaches to tackle the climate and ecological emergency should be promoted by the council and/or its partners.</p> <p>e. Good farming and land use practice should be actively promoted by the council, supporting existing work by the Wye &amp; Usk foundation and others, engaging in discussion with farming bodies</p>	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>Due to the financial pressures the council is under it is not possible to entirely dedicate the work of a single officer to support environmental communications. The council's corporate approach provides a mix of resource and specialist skills to develop and deliver its corporate campaigns, and environmental aspects are included within this.</p> <p>a. The Council communications team will support the work of the Partnership using our communications channels where the work is in line with the council's zero carbon ambitions for the county and/or has a positive impact on the residents of the county. The team can help promote case stories, news items and examples of commitment to the climate and ecological emergency.</p> <p>b. The home page banners on the council website are used to promote messages as part of the multi-media marketing mix. Banners are changed regularly and permanent banners are not recommended as they lose their effectiveness.</p> <p>There is opportunity for services to develop content to embed and include within council web pages to allow for greater interaction. A climate emergency link has been added into the Community navigation box on the home page to provide easier navigation from the home page.</p> <p>c. The Newsroom provides the latest corporate news for Herefordshire Council and links to relevant content including news stories relating to the climate and ecological emergency and will continue to do so.</p> <p>d. The Council communications team can support any corporate activity that aims to engage and inform local residents.</p> <p>e. Herefordshire Council communications team can help promote case stories and examples of its commitment to the climate and ecological emergency, where it is the lead agency and has had direct involvement. Identification of these stories will need to be undertaken by service lead officers, as the experts on best practice and preferred approach.</p>	<p>To promote work of the partnership when it has formed.</p> <p>b. Climate emergency link has been added into the Community navigation box.</p> <p>c. The newsroom will continue to deliver news relating to the climate and ecological emergency.</p> <p>d. Support corporate activity that aims to engage and inform local residents including competitions and awards</p> <p>e. Promote case stories and examples of its commitment to the climate and ecological emergency, where it is the lead agency and has had direct involvement.</p>	<p>d. Climate emergency link has been added into the Community navigation box on the front page of the council's website. The Communications Team continue to support all Climate Change activity and news.</p> <p>JBP Associates were appointed as the external consultant for climate communications for county wide climate and nature action. Both are supporting work of the countywide board that are working to engage the county in net zero activities.</p>	<p>In progress</p>
8	<p>Full account should be taken of the concept of Natural Capital (including air quality) making it the driver for all council decisions. The concept of Natural Capital could offer a different economic model with weight given to the environment's contribution to economic development;</p> <p>a. The Cabinet consider designating Natural Capital as a separate and distinct policy area in their portfolio of responsibilities and appoint a lead on it.</p> <p>b. The council should incorporate in tender assessment, criteria to take account of Natural Capital and prioritise support for low impact, sustainable local businesses as part of a progressive procurement policy that takes account of social value.</p>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>In 2020 the Council updated the corporate decision making process to require that all new decision reports set out how the decision / proposal seeks to deliver the council's environmental policy commitments, aligns to the Environmental success measures in the County Plan and addresses wider Environmental Impacts. In order to strengthen the consideration for Natural Capital further guidance will be developed for report authors to further inform future decision making.</p> <p>The Council's updated Social Value Policy requires consideration of social, environmental and economic considerations as part of all corporate commissioning.</p> <p>The key objective of the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan is the development of a new Nature Strategy which will include further consideration of Natural Capital.</p>	<p>Updated guidance on Natural Capital to be developed to inform future decision making and future commissioning.</p> <p>Development of a Nature Strategy.</p>	<p>A review is due to commence in the new year of the current guidance in the corporate decision making template to provide additional consideration of environmental impacts including natural capital and phosphates.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

9	<p>The Group recognises and endorses the continued focus on broadband infrastructure and recommends that hard to reach areas that are not possible to reach with cable services are provided impartial advice regarding mobile network solutions.</p>	<p>Executive Response Rejected.</p> <p>The current Fastershire strategy is not to give up and deem any premise 'not possible to reach with fibre optic' until the council have exhausted all other opportunities to find fixed broadband solutions.</p> <p>As well as its various strategic contract, the council is utilising a number of grant schemes to implement this strategy. This current strategy is in effect until the end of 2022. If a premise is not in one of Fastershire's contracts, residents can express an interest via the Fastershire website in developing a community project which Fastershire will fund and support. This will only fund Gigabit Capable fixed broadband infrastructure. Businesses have access to the Marches and Gloucestershire Business Broadband Grant, which is also administered by Herefordshire Council and provides Gigabit Capable Services. It would only be when these approaches have failed to deliver a fixed broadband solution that the project would look to advise people to consider mobile network solutions as the two are not comparable. It is important to note that access to 4G home broadband packages are available already to most people in the county.</p>	<p>Continue to support the deployment of fibre optic broadband to rural properties until the end of 2022 utilising grant funding.</p>	<p>Today, Superfast is 94.25% for Herefordshire (Speeds between 30Mbps and 100Mbps download). 97% by 2023 is highly unlikely to occur as Superfast is not being deployed and all broadband is now being switched to a new full fibre network. Importantly Herefordshire is at 60.79% for full fibre – 1000Mbps capable fibre) of which 44.04% is attributed to alternative network providers and 25.23% via BT Openreach. This stands out from a full fibre perspective as better than most rural areas UK Government has changed the targets so that the desired speed is Gigabit (100-1000Mbps plus) with a target of 99% coverage by 2030.</p> <p>Whilst we are still promoting full fibre across Herefordshire trying to get to all premises we as a stated aim changes have occurred that means UK Government via BDUK (Building Digital UK) have introduced Project Gigabit with £5BN of spending specifically to address those premises left behind with high intervention costs per premise. This fits into the 99% by 2030 target.</p> <p>Recognising that the potential delays will still leave harder to reach premises without any decent broadband for many years the Council has embarked on looking at rural capable or appropriate 4G and Satellite solutions or possible community alternatives over fixed wireless. In a recent pilot we were able to see an average of 42Mbps increase over 4G on a baseline of 5.5mbps being delivered by old copper lines. This may offer an interim that enables residents and businesses to enjoy useable internet service. This approach has not been adopted across all of Herefordshire area but is one that may enable those in very hard to reach areas.</p>	In progress
10	<p>The Group recognises the importance of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the role they have to play in making progress with regards to the climate and ecological emergency. The Group recommends;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Natural Capital partnership with Marches authorities and the LEP should be explored.</li> <li>The executive should request that the LEP publically commit to support all three authorities to deliver on the net zero carbon targets.</li> <li>The executive should request the LEP review assessment criteria and consider taking account of Natural Capital. Support for low impact, sustainable local businesses could be prioritised as part of a progressive procurement policy that takes account of social value.</li> <li>The executive should raise with the LEP the issue of maize used as a feedstock for anaerobic digestion which causes environmental damage and request it reflects on the damage to Natural Capital as well as the road network.</li> </ol>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The council will write to and engage with the Marches LEP regarding the issues outlined in the recommendation.</p>	<p>Explore with the Marches LEP the possibilities around a Marches Natural Capital partnership.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request the LEP publically commit to support all Marches authorities and their net zero carbon ambitions by 2030.</li> <li>Request the LEP review their assessment criteria for support and consider taking account of Natural Capital.</li> <li>Request the LEP support for low impact, sustainable local businesses could be prioritised as part of a progressive procurement policy that takes account of social value.</li> <li>Raise with the LEP the issue of maize used as a feedstock for anaerobic digestion and discuss a joined up approach to tackling the issue, although this will be governed by national policy.</li> </ol>	<p>The council continues to work with the LEP to deliver the Marches Energy Strategy through the Steering Group which has included in its remit carbon and net zero as well as energy. The LEP has also declared its support for the local authorities Climate Emergency and it will be embedded in its next Strategic Economic Plan update. In addition the LEP is a funding partner for the integrated wetlands project.</p> <p>As work commences on the development of the local nature recovery strategy we will ensure the LEP is a key stakeholder in its development.</p>	In progress

11	The Committee be consultees under the Core Strategy review.	Accepted. All members will be consulted as a part of the Local Plan update via Members briefing sessions.	Ensure appropriate member/committee engagement during the plan making process.	Members of the Committee has been consulted under the Local Plan Update. Which is an ongoing process through to 2024.	In progress
12	Biodiversity net gain should be a consideration in future planning applications through the Core Strategy review.	Accepted. There will be a requirement to achieve biodiversity net gain of 10% introduced into the planning system through the forth coming Environment Bill. However the Local Plan update will be able to consider the scope for requirements above the national target.	Local Plan update will be able to consider the scope for requirements above the national target.	Natural Environment and the Viability Assessment work have been commissioned. These will inform the policy of the Local Plan is due course and its ability to set higher targets.	In progress
13	Under the Core Strategy review the development of a new truly sustainable town to meet housing targets should be considered preferable to incremental growth. The town would include biodiversity net gain, sustainable transport links and local renewable energy generation including a heat network. This should prevent broad countryside loss across the county and protect the historic nature of existing settlements	Accepted in part, the proposal will be reviewed as a part of the Local Plan update process. There is a requirement that the Local Plan update will need to demonstrate that reasonable alternatives are considered during the plan making process. The executive will consider whether one of the appropriate alternatives developed for the new spatial strategy for the County could be a new settlement or settlements.	Consideration given to appropriate alternatives developed for the new spatial strategy for the County could be a new settlement or settlements.	Work is continuing to establish potential locational options for a new settlement as part of the emerging spatial strategy. Consultation undertaken in Jan/ Feb included the option of a new settlement and a 'call for sites' requested any suggestions for locations.	In progress
14	The group recognises there is a definition of sustainability in the NPPF; "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". However given the environmental and ecological emergency the group recommends that greater weight is given to "the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" through the Core Strategy review.	Accepted. As part of the Local Plan update how sustainable development can be better defined and prioritised will be considered.		The spatial strategy is currently being drafted and will have sections on 'meeting the climate change emergency' and 'meeting the ecological' emergency. The intention is to give a brief background and how future planning policy will seek to address these.	In progress
15	Good clear environmental policies should be developed, demonstrably supported by the evidence base, containing specific minimum standards that could then be enforced. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should be produced to address the climate & ecological emergency.	Executive Response Accepted.	An SPD on Environmental Building standards is being developed and will encourage new buildings built to a higher standard and therefore reduce the amount of heat and energy required to run them. An SPD on Intensive Livestock Units and River Quality will look to produce policy guidance, primarily for agricultural development to reduce pollution into the rivers. Particular focus will be on the reduction of phosphate into the River Wye SAC. The Local Plan update will enable further policy development in support of the climate & ecological emergency.	SPDs on building standards and river quality are currently underway. Agricultural SPD is currently on public consultation and the Environmental Building Standards SPD has undertaken public consultation and moving towards Cabinet sign off in Jan/Feb.	In progress
16	Local planning strategy to include nature recovery networks through the Core Strategy review.	Accepted, in part, this will be considered as a part of the Local Plan review. It is understood that local planning strategy will likely be required to include nature recover networks following the enactment of the Environment Bill. In any event the preparation of the new local plan will enable consideration of nature recovery networks to be integrated into the policies of the new local plan.	Review opportunity for a local list. Statutory consultation on local list.	Natural Environment evidence base work have been commissioned. The Local Plan team and the Natural Environment team are working together to ensure policies of Local Plan reflect the work on Nature Recovery.	In progress
17	The existing environmental and forthcoming ecology compliance checklists should sit in the pre validation stage of a planning applications where they will form part of our local list.	Accepted in part. The council does not currently have a local list, so this is something that is being explored although the last local list was disbanded to make the planning service more efficient so that it could validate applications more quickly. Currently the checklists are held on the planning pages of the website and all applicants are encouraged to use them. All applications are validated using national standards (in lieu of a local list). Applications without a checklist are informed the checklists are required. Should the decision be made to move forward with a local list, then this will be incorporated in accordance with any other recommendations made by the recent Planning Advisory Service (PAS) review of the planning service.	Review opportunity for a local list. Statutory consultation on local list.	Planning department currently in process of restructure, which will take responsibility for this going forwards.	In progress

18	<p>The executive should ensure that existing provisions and policies on climate change and ecology are given their maximum possible weight in the planning balance and consider whether consolidating these provisions would assist in providing a stronger focus on the issues and weight to be attributed to them.</p> <p>Executive Response Accepted.</p> <p>In respect of existing policies the forthcoming SPDs on Environmental Building standards and Intensive Livestock Units and River Quality will provide additional context and help inform the decision making of planning officers regarding climate change and ecology.</p> <p>Ultimately this is a matter of planning judgement for the professional officer in the processing of the application and conclusions within the planning balance.</p> <p>The Local Plan update will provide the opportunity to strengthen existing and/or introduce new planning policies in respect of climate change and ecology.</p>	<p>Executive Response Accepted.</p> <p>In respect of existing policies the forthcoming SPDs on Environmental Building standards and Intensive Livestock Units and River Quality will provide additional context and help inform the decision making of planning officers regarding climate change and ecology.</p> <p>Ultimately this is a matter of planning judgement for the professional officer in the processing of the application and conclusions within the planning balance.</p> <p>The Local Plan update will provide the opportunity to strengthen existing and/or introduce new planning policies in respect of climate change and ecology.</p>	<p>Enactment of SPD on Environmental Building standards.</p> <p>Enactment of SPD on Intensive Livestock Units and River Quality.</p> <p>Incorporate up-to-date policies to strengthen the response to the climate and ecological emergency are incorporated where possible within the Local Plan update</p>	<p>Both SPD's are currently underway.</p> <p>Agricultural SPD is currently on public consultation and the Environmental Building Standards SPD has undertaken public consultation and moving towards Cabinet sign off in Jan/Feb.</p>	In progress
19	<p>Working in conjunction with the Environment Agency, manure management plans which have been used as mitigation in planning applications should be mapped and cross referenced and existing plans should be reviewed before new plans are issued to ensure land is not under multiple plans which would mean an exceedance would exist. Any exceedances should be reported to the Environment Agency.</p>	<p>Executive Response Rejected.</p> <p>We do not have the capabilities to monitor this action as the Environment Agency enforce this. However, when manure management plans are submitted to the planning service as part of an application they will be assessed.</p>	<p>Manure management plans are reviewed before new plans are issued to ensure land is not under multiple plans.</p>	<p>Presently reviewing Court Decision on this matter.</p>	In progress
20	<p>A greater focus must be given within neighbourhood development plans (NDPs) to low carbon policies and green neighbourhood planning team to provide greater encouragement to and support for such policies. A guidance note should be produced setting out the council's expectations for provision of green space. This could include a checklist. The provision of green space as a condition for planning as well as retaining wildlife corridors, preventing the breaking up of wildlife corridors for individual plots and ensuring biodiversity net gain should be included.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>There are currently 37 Guidance notes which have been produced to assist parish councils producing neighbourhood development plans. Three of these currently cover topics on 'Conservation Issues (Guidance Note 23)', 'Recreation Areas (Guidance Note 24)' and 'Renewable Energy (Guidance Note 25)'. These three Guidance Notes can be reviewed, recast and broadened to cover a greater focus on low carbon policies, carbon reduction, green space and biodiversity. Checklists can be included within the notes to help guide those parishes whilst producing their revised NDPs</p>	<p>To revise and recast the current NDP Guidance Notes 23, 24 and 25 to include a wider scope of green spaces and low carbon.</p>	<p>Due to capacity and the timeframes for the Local Plan the team have been concentrating on the strategic policy development. Many NDPs are currently awaiting the update of the Local Plan before commencing their reviews so it is appropriate for any updated NDP guidance to be responsive to the updated strategic policies of the Local Plan than the outdated Core Strategy policies.</p>	To commence
21	<p>Consideration should be given to an SPD for new anaerobic digesters should prioritise feedstock which supports the circular economy and where it can be shown there will be no adverse effects on water quality.</p>	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>The Minerals and Waste Local Plan sets out an emerging policy (M3) which would carry greater weight than an SPD. The draft policy supports anaerobic digestion where its use is to manage only natural wastes generated primarily on the agricultural unit within which it is located. The policy would also require development proposals to demonstrate delivery of a net reduction in nutrient discharges contributing to nutrient neutrality, or betterment, within the River Wye SAC.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.</p>	<p>The Examination of the Minerals and Waste Plan has recently concluded its hearing sessions. Inspectors modifications will be consulted upon in the New Year.</p>	In progress
22	<p>With respect to flooding:</p> <p>a. No future development sites should be brought forward in Environment Agency designated flood zones 2 and 3 in order to allow these areas to sequester carbon, improve biodiversity and resilience.</p> <p>b. Actively investigate the causes of pluvial flooding and the discharge of water and sediments onto the public highway and carry out enforcement.</p> <p>c. Discussions take place with the LGA/EA/local and national drainage authorities and other appropriate bodies to see how flooding issues can be addressed at a national level.</p> <p>d. That there be a focus on actions that can be taken locally by council and partners.</p> <p>e. Work with landowners from whose land flooding onto the highway is known to occur reminding them of their responsibilities.</p>	<p>a. Rejected.</p> <p>b. Accepted.</p> <p>c. Accepted.</p> <p>d. Accepted.</p> <p>e. Accepted.</p> <p>The full response can be found here: <a href="https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50088132/Appendix%201%20for%20Executive%20response%20to%20the%20Climate%20and%20Ecological%20Emergency%20Task%20and%20Finish%20Group%20Revi.pdf">https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50088132/Appendix%201%20for%20Executive%20response%20to%20the%20Climate%20and%20Ecological%20Emergency%20Task%20and%20Finish%20Group%20Revi.pdf</a></p>	<p>Continued working with the EA, BBLP to investigate flooding and identify mitigation.</p> <p>Conduct Section 19 investigations into significant flood events.</p> <p>c. Continued working with the EA, BBLP and regional flood committees</p> <p>d. Support local Flood Groups through the Talk Communities project.</p> <p>e. Council website to be updated regarding guidance on riparian responsibilities.</p>	<p>b. Ongoing. Under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, Herefordshire Council as the lead local flood authority (LLFA), has a duty to investigate incidents of flooding. There were a number of flood incidents in 2019/20 that passed our significant event threshold and these have been published on <a href="http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/floods">www.herefordshire.gov.uk/floods</a>. Further investigations will be carried out as and when they meet our thresholds.</p> <p>c. Ongoing. We continue to be represented at the English Severn and Wye Regional Flood &amp; Coastal Committee (RFCC) by Cllr Harrington.</p> <p>The council has secured Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGIA) and Local Levy funding which will enable us to build upon our previously successful Natural Flood Management (NFM) pilot project until 31 March 2027.</p> <p>d. Ongoing. Funding is allocated within the annual plan for the public realm services contract with BBLP for supporting local flood groups and communities - this point of contact has engaged with several communities. We hope to resume community engagement within seven priority sub-catchments as part of the Herefordshire NFM project.</p> <p>e. Complete. Processes have been consolidated and formalised in a Riparian Drainage Process which has been published on the council website.</p>	In progress

23	<p>Recommendation 23 Where sites have already been identified for development, the council should be supporting local house builders to build sustainable housing.</p>	<p>Executive Response Rejected.</p> <p>With regards to housing sites, the council will not be able to direct that local house builders build out development sites. It could, by virtue of the review of the Local Plan, allocate a range of sizes of development sites that would assist both small scale local house builders and national house builders in delivering sites in Herefordshire.</p> <p>In the review of the Local Plan the council will investigate whether section 106 agreements can be used to facilitate the use of local employment and training clauses to encourage creation of sustainable jobs and training. This will require an understanding of the needs of the construction industry, and the local context in terms of the availability of skilled, trained and experienced workers.</p> <p>Implementing the recommendation will be dependent on how the Government responds to the consultation responses received on their proposals to abolish the use of section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy and the replacement with a national Infrastructure Levy.</p>	<p>Recommendation to be captured and explored in the review of the Local Plan.</p>	<p>Recommendation to be captured and explored in the review of the Local Plan. Work on the Local Plan policies are ongoing.</p>	In progress
24	<p>The council assess the potential for using s.106 monies to retrofit existing poorly performing housing stock in the county to improve thermal efficiency (Milton Keynes as an example).</p>	<p>Executive Response Accepted.</p> <p>Carbon offsetting can operate as a planning policy that requires a reduction in carbon emissions beyond that required by Building Regulations. The offset payments pay for carbon saving projects to go ahead elsewhere, to make up for the carbon savings not achieved within developments. Carbon offsets are collected through section 106 legal agreements.</p> <p>In the review of the Local Plan the council will investigate how a carbon offset regime could operate, the risks and benefits of using carbon offsetting, the price that developers could be charged per tonne of carbon to achieve carbon abatement offsite, the type of measures that might be eligible and how a carbon offset fund might be managed.</p> <p>Implementing the recommendation will be dependent on how the Government responds to the consultation responses received on their proposals to abolish the use of section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy and the replacement with a national Infrastructure Levy.</p>	<p>To consider as a part of the Local Plan review.</p>	<p>Viability assessment work has been commissioned and this will help to inform future S106 considerations</p>	In progress
25	<p>The Group recognises the good work of officers in signposting community groups to grant funding and recommends the council increases resources so it is able to support bids through the application process and proactively drive bids in support of environmental projects with significant positive environmental outcomes</p>	<p>Rejected. Due to the financial pressures the council is under it is not possible to increase resources in further support of this work.</p> <p>The operational services provided by the Talk Community Division are currently being developed and redesigned with the aim to increase reach and impact for all the services. The Talk Community division have been supporting Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) to fund activities, services and projects and the redesign aims to increase this reach by offering community support and advice through a model of self-help tools, as well as upskilling those supporting community groups and organisations so that there is wider access to funding advice.</p> <p>Officers from the Talk Community Division support Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations seeking to fund activities, services and projects. The service is available to all such organisations including those developing environmental projects. In support of environmental projects the Sustainability &amp; Climate Change team will provide technical advice and support wherever necessary/possible. So far in 2020/21 the Talk Community Division have supported VCSE organisations to secure £1,253,620 for environmental projects and activities.</p>	<p>Continue to actively promote the support available to VCSE organisations seeking to fund environmental projects.</p>	<p>Talk Community officers provide funding and grant support based on Primary Care Network areas.</p> <p>All community groups will have free access to the online funding resource Grant Finder from 14/12/22</p>	In progress
26	<p>The council should continue to support and promote Keep Herefordshire Warm (KHW) having regard to the importance of addressing fuel poverty and provide incentives and support to individuals to make behaviour changes to reduce carbon emissions.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The current Keep Herefordshire Warm (KHW) contract, run by Severn Wye Energy Agency will run until 2022, when the contract will be reviewed and either extended or re-tendered. KHW has supported over 900 households through the course of 2020/21, however energy efficiency measure installs and physical home visits are down on previous years as a result of the pandemic. Activity is on-going to promote the service and associated schemes and funding through a suite of tools including targeted social media, e-learning delivery and the website.</p>	<p>Continue to promote KHW using a variety of methods in 2021/22;      ☑ Increase uptake of energy efficiency measures and home visits as County transitions out of the pandemic.</p>	<p>In 2021/22 a total of 1,035 households received advice.      In quarters 1 and 2 of 22/23: 748 households have received advice through KHW (target 1000); grants totalling £377K provided to households, engaged with 41 member sof the public and 75 frontline staff at events; delivered three fuel poverty training sessions to 72 people. 38 energy efficiency measures installed; 5 home visits completed; 15,011 'hits' to KHW website; 63 separate marketing activities completed and 75 staff/stakeholders engaged for fuel poverty training and affordable warmth network facilitation.</p>	In progress



27	<p>The council should have sufficient expertise and resource to carry out proactive works to protect the natural environment with a focus on wider ecological concerns in addition to responding to planning applications. The council should therefore appoint a dedicated officer to carry out proactive works</p>	<p>Accepted, in part.          In addition to providing ecological advice for planning consults the Council's recently appointed Principal Ecologist will also take a leading role engaging in strategic and proactive work including the development of a new Nature Strategy, addressing the recently declared ecological emergency, and further supporting work to address water quality and phosphate pollution within the Rivers Lugg and Wye.          We do also require sufficient ecology expertise to carry out our statutory duty in terms of providing ecological advice for planning consults and processing HRA, in order to avoid legal challenge. This would require an additional full time planning ecologist.          In order to consider the increasing complexity and work load for the natural environment team a strategic review is proposed to consider the current and future resource requirements to deliver the statutory planning function, to meet the Council's commitments on the climate and ecological emergency and also to consider the future implications of the forthcoming Environment Bill.</p>	<p>Strategic review of the Built &amp; Natural Environment service to consider current and future resource requirements.</p>	<p>An ecology recovery plan was developed in early 2022 which both addressed the backlog in ecology consults through short term use of consultants. In addition the team structure was reviewed and we have successfully recruited a new Principal Ecologist, Senior Ecologist, Graduate Ecologist and we are currently recruiting an apprentice.</p>	Complete
28	<p>To immediately resource an update of the Biological Records, making the data contained therein an up to date and accurate benchmark from which to understand and enhance biodiversity in the County.</p>	<p>Rejected, due to resource constraints it is not possible to immediately resource an update to the Biological records, however we are proactively working with partners and looking to make a funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund which will help to update the records Herefordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC) was established in 2001 as a 'not for profit' organisation run for the public benefit. It has been hosted from the outset by Herefordshire Council, operates on a self-financing model and works with partners and volunteers to provide a central database for environmental data in the county          The HBRC is proactively working with partners to develop data sharing agreements with recording groups across the county in order to expand and update the Biological Records.          HBRC officers are also seeking alternative funding opportunities and are developing external grant applications in order to further develop the website, to enable online data requests and to free up officer time to input and improve data.          The service is also working in partnership with Herefordshire Wildlife Trust (HWT) to review the current criterion for the designation of Local Wildlife Sites, to resurvey the existing sites is to be undertaken this year in partnership and new sites identified next year, which will enable HBRC to update this dataset.          HBRC &amp; the council are also working in partnership with Malvern Hills AONB to share data for the Nature Recovery Network pilot scheme which is currently underway.          The Wye Valley AONB have carried out more up to date survey work of habitats in AONB through a project in 2017 with trainee ecologists, HBRC will contact both AONBs to investigate data sharing agreement (this year)</p>	<p>Funding application developed and submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.           Partnership working with the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust to resurvey the Local Wildlife Sites.</p>	<p>As part of the Climate Assembly Action Plan, additional resourcing has been allocated to develop a Herefordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Additional resourcing has also been allocated to develop the Nature Recovery Mapping which would underpin this work and will enable the updating of the current biological records, local wildlife sites and other data sets. This work is due to commence in early 2023 after the publication of the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy guidance which is overdue from central government.</p>	In progress
29	<p>A soil strategy for the County should be produced as a matter of urgency.</p>	<p>Accepted.          It is envisaged that the proposed nature strategy will encompass all areas of the natural environment including air, water, green infrastructure and soil. It will set out good practice in terms of soil management in order to address soil erosion and nutrient leaching in line with Defra guidance on Catchment Sensitive Farming Measures and Farming Rules for Water          This will also link with the existing partnership work on soils through the Herefordshire and Marches Nature Partnerships and the delivery of the Marches Environment Strategy 2020-2023 which includes agriculture, soils and woodland as a key strategic priority.</p>	<p>Soils to be included within the development of the proposed Nature Strategy</p>	<p>The draft nature strategy has been shared with the Local Nature Partnership and the Herefordshire Climate and Nature Partnership Board and is due for adoption in early 2023.</p>	In progress

30	<p>Improving biodiversity of hedgerows and trees;</p> <p>a. Review the approach by statutory undertakers to rewinding verges.</p> <p>b. The council should adopt a Hedgerow Manifesto as part of the emerging tree strategy including ancient and semi natural woodland.</p> <p>c. That the business case for another cut and collect machine is developed.</p> <p>d. That training be provided on sustainable verge management as part of a Parish Summit meeting inviting other key stakeholders who look after green open spaces including lengthsman.</p> <p>e. Recognise the importance of effective communication in advance of any changes to explain them fully to the public</p>	<p>a. Accepted in part, subject to Nature Strategy review.</p> <p>b. Accepted in part, subject to Nature Strategy review.</p> <p>c. Accepted in part, subject to development of business case.</p> <p>d. Accepted.</p> <p>e. Accepted.</p> <p>Within the recently approved capital budget for 2021/22 the Council has allocated £2.299m for the new Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance &amp; Biodiversity Net Gain project. This innovative new project seeks to mitigate carbon emissions and to deliver biodiversity net gain as part of highway maintenance and will include enhancements to verges and increased tree coverage. The consideration of a business case for a new cut and collect machine will be included within this project.</p> <p>The proposed Nature Strategy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and key to this will be consideration of hedgerows and trees. As such the proposed response is to include consideration of a Hedgerow Manifesto through the development of this strategy.</p> <p>This work will also be informed through the recent purchase of new mapping software for Hereford city that enables us to calculate percentage of canopy coverage in the urban area. Officers will also explore the potential to broaden the use of this mapping to consider hedgerows</p> <p>Further opportunities for partnership working will also be considered, for example working with tree wardens and members of public to identify species of trees within settlements and include this within the Council's mapping. This would enable us to address the ecological emergency through increased diversity of species. For example the Council has begun to plant different species at the King George playing fields as these are likely to be more flood tolerant.</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of effective communication in advance of any changes which will be promoted through the corporate communications channels</p>	<p>Consideration of a Hedgerow Manifesto and approach to rewinding verges to be considered through the development of the Nature Strategy.</p> <p>Development of business case for additional cut and collect machine to be included within the Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance &amp; Biodiversity Net Gain project.</p>	<p>As part of the Annual Plan 21/22 and subsequent years – Balfour Beatty are committed to working with 'Verging on Wild' and other community groups to increase wildflower areas on Highway Verges in Herefordshire where suitable. Currently over 50 sites have been identified and assessed. Additionally, further to contacting all Parish Councils 19 responded this year identifying roads within their Parish which would be suitable for a reduced maintenance regime which would promote the growth of wild flowers and biodiversity. Verging on Wild, supported by Balfour Beatty can offer training on maintenance, identification and management of wildflower verges on the Highway Network to Parish/Town Councils and lengthsman.</p> <p>BBLP are working with Verging on Wild to alter their verge maintenance schedules to encourage and promote the identified species that have been identified.</p> <p>To date 45 verges have been designated and allowed to rewild.</p> <p>Additional formal wildflower verges were installed in 2020 by BBLP at Rotherwas Relief Road, Aylestone Hill Verge, Stretton Sugwas Roman Road.</p> <p>BBLP canvassed all Parish Councils for their views on omitting the first of two verge cuts on C&amp;U class routes to promote biodiversity. 39 Parishes responded with 11 parishes going forward with this trial. This will be offered to all Parishes for 22/23.</p> <p>Features in the Annual Plan 2023-24. BBLP will again write to all Parishes to agree 1 cut regime on Highway Verges if they do not impact on the Highway Safety.</p>	Complete
31	<p>The council should, in consultation with Highways England, explore getting local authority verges in Herefordshire registered under Tier 3 for Environmental Land Management Schemes.</p>	<p>Executive Response Accepted</p> <p>The council is currently working with numerous partners including Balfour Beatty Living Place, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and several other wildlife organisations on the 'Verging on Wild' project. This partnership activity has identified 10 sites to undertake this activity which is currently being reviewed by the officers with BBLP.</p> <p>Officers can make contact with Verging on the Wild to investigate this further and can also obtain mapping of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) to assist with identifying further sites for possible intervention.</p> <p>BBLP also offered parish councils the opportunity to change to their mowing regime to promote wildlife although this has had limited take up.</p>	<p>Consider opportunity for local authority verges to become registered as part of Environmental Land Management Schemes.</p> <p>Continuation of partnership working on the Verging on Wild project.</p> <p>Further promotion to Parish Councils to enhance wildlife through changes to mowing regime.</p>	<p>BBLP are working with Verging on Wild to alter their verge maintenance schedules to encourage and promote the identified species that have been identified.</p> <p>To date 45 verges have been designated and allowed to rewild.</p> <p>Additional formal wildflower verges were installed in 2020 by BBLP at Rotherwas Relief Road, Aylestone Hill Verge, Stretton Sugwas Roman Road.</p> <p>BBLP canvassed all Parish Councils for their views on omitting the first of two verge cuts on C&amp;U class routes to promote biodiversity. 39 Parishes responded with 11 parishes going forward with this trial. This will be offered to all Parishes for 22/23.</p> <p>Features in the Annual Plan 2023-24. BBLP will again write to all Parishes to agree 1 cut regime on Highway Verges if they do not impact on the Highway Safety.</p>	In progress

32	<p>A strategic approach to biodiversity net gain should be established, working alongside partners to aggregate biodiversity net gain across the County and maximise the benefit. Carbon sequestration and offsetting should be pursued together with the scope for the County to benefit economically from these actions through the development of a business case. The Council should engage with other landowners highlighting the potential gain to them of tree planting and offer support to owners in growing;</p> <p>a. A record should be kept of number of trees planted, and felled, their age, location and regrowth plan for example a running counter on the website since the declaration of the climate and ecological emergency.</p> <p>b. The council should explore options for an open market trading platform for biodiversity and carbon.</p> <p>c. The council should take every opportunity to expedite tree planting on council owned land where appropriate, including closed landfill sites.</p>	<p>Accepted in part, a record of tree planting facilitated, enabled and delivered by the Council to be maintained.</p> <p>b. Accepted in part, phosphate trading platform is currently being explored.</p> <p>c. Accepted.</p> <p>The County Plan sets out a strong commitment to 'Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold environmental standards' and the Nature Strategy proposed within the Corporate Delivery Plan will further develop the Council's strategic approach to biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>As a committed member of the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership the council will continue to work with partners to maximise biodiversity net gain across the County.</p> <p>Offsetting will also come forward as part of the Environment Bill. The delivery of biodiversity net gain where it cannot be achieved on site therefore needs to be incorporated into section 106 contributions as part of the planning process. This will also be guided by the timescales of the Bill and the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS).</p> <p>Further examples of existing activity and partnership working include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☒ Partnership with Natural England and Herefordshire Wildlife Trust to develop Nature Recovery Networks (NRNs) for the county which will help to identify opportunities for offsetting. Officers are also on the steering group for the NRN pilot scheme in the Malvern Hills AONB which is trialling the Gloucestershire model.</li> <li>☒ The Council is investigating the opportunities to utilise s.106 contributions for phosphate credits through the development of a new phosphate trading platform which could then be used to fund projects to improve water quality such as wetlands</li> </ul> <p>The Council has also commissioned the Wye &amp; Usk Foundation to identify areas of land at risk of a higher degree of phosphate leaching as well as projects to address the pollution. This will allow the council to identify further strategic projects to improve water quality and rewilding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☒ Through the Green Space Enhancement Project as part of the Towns Fund accelerated funding programme the Council is providing 519 trees free of charge to residents and organisations in Hereford City, ~80 new landmark trees in self watering planters and planting ~90 large trees across the Hereford Enterprise Zone.</li> <li>☒ The Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance &amp; Biodiversity Net Gain project will also include significant tree planting across the public realm.</li> </ul>	<p>Record of tree planting facilitated, enabled and delivered by the Council to be maintained.</p> <p>Tree planting enabled through the Towns Fund Green Space Enhancement Project to be mapped on the Council's website.</p> <p>Completion of phosphate trading platform.</p>	<p>Natural Environment will be leading on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Nature Recovery Network Mapping. We have already reached out to local nature partnership and other environmental groups to run a series of workshops establishing our knowledge around datasets held within the county and developing a terms of reference for partnership working. We are also working with LUC consultants to develop an update to our natural environment evidence base which will provide a baseline for the strategy. We are now awaiting detailed guidance from Defra.</p>	In progress
33	<p>The council should urgently seek counsel advice regarding the implementation of a water protection zone to protect the special area of conservation (SAC) from diffuse agricultural pollution (Wye and tributaries).</p>	<p>Accepted in part.</p> <p>The council has been in discussion with the Environment Agency and other Nutrient Management Board partners to understand the process behind this. The first stage would be detailed modelling to demonstrate the need for a Water Protection Zone (WPZ), in order to put a business case to DEFRA should the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales wish to proceed. Councillors and officers have met with local MPs to request intervention and a list of proposals for funding is being put forward, with the alternative being to lobby the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales to press for a WPZ. The process of seeking a WPZ can take up to 10 years, with only one so far in the UK</p>	<p>A list of actions for DEFRA shall be presented to the local MPs through a working group which is coordinated by the Environment Agency.</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council lobbied government for a water protection zone however this was rejected. As a result however a Cabinet Commission has been established to undertake a more strategic and systems led review of river quality and in particular to consider how the council can use all the powers and influence available to it to progress the restoration of the Wye and Lugg.</p>	Complete
34	<p>The council should explore the use of council land for solar farms and where appropriate council car parks linked with EV charging points.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The Sustainability &amp; Climate Change team have previously carried out a scoping exercise for solar farms with the ex-landfill site at Stretton Sugwas identified as a potential location, however after investigation with an installer and community support the site was not deemed suitable. The Sustainability &amp; Climate Change team will identify council owned car parks with sufficient electrical demand for solar photovoltaic (PV) installations</p>	<p>Review electricity demand of council car parks. Carry out a feasibility study on Garrick Multi-storey car park.</p>	<p>A provisional survey has revealed that Garrick Multi-storey car park has enough energy consumption to support installation of a solar PV canopy. Team will further explore feasibility of install on this site in 2023.</p>	Complete

35	Should a Climate and Ecological Emergency Policy Committee not be agreed or established the following recommendations should be made to the executive. Recommendation 35 The Committee should review all elements of the work so far on the climate and ecological emergency to ensure progress and avoid duplication of work. a. Specifically the Committee should review the SPD and environmental and ecological checklists produced. b. The work of the Committee and others should guide the council's actions to ensure it is moving in the right direction.	The rethinking governance working group will consider these recommendations as a part of their work.	With reference to the response to recommendation 1, the rethinking governance working group will consider these recommendations as a part of their work.	Review completed by rethinking governance. Following rethinking governance and council decision in May 2022, a new environmental and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee was created. Further constitutional provisions enable power to create standing powers.	Complete
36	There is a need to explore where the council can support the work of the Environment Agency and work more closely together on mutual targets and ambitions regarding enforcement.	Accepted. The council chairs regular meetings with the Environment Agency for the purpose of identifying opportunities to reduce flood risk in a collaborative manner. In addition both the council and the Environment Agency are committed members of both the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership and Nutrient Management Board. These groups work across a number of issues including land use, water quality and reducing phosphate levels in the River Wye catchment area.	Continue to meet and work with the Environment Agency for the purpose of identifying opportunities to reduce flood risk in a collaborative manner and reduce phosphate levels.	The council still chairs meetings every month with BBLP and the EA in order to identify opportunities to reduce flood risk in a collaborative manner.	In progress
37	Good farming and land use practice should be actively promoted by the Committee, supporting existing work by the Wye & Usk foundation and others, with a view to setting up a Herefordshire local seal of quality. The produce should be promoted for example in a food festival, local farm shop or farmers market.	Rejected. Currently the council does not have the resource or expertise to set up a local seal of quality for produce. Through the delivery of the Sustainable Food Places SFP framework we aim to tackle 6 key areas: 1. 'Take a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action', 2. 'Build public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement', 3. 'Tackle food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food', 4. 'Create a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy', 5. 'Transform catering and procurement and revitalise local sustainable food chains' 6. 'Tackle the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste'. More specifically under key area 2 'inspire and engage the public about good local food' and 'foster food citizenship and a local. As part of the climate action plan development work, the council are working closely with the NFU, Farm Herefordshire and the Wildlife Trust to promote good farming and land use practice.	Continue to work with landowners and promote best practice on NFM. SFP co-ordinator grant application Expansion in membership of Food alliance (leading SFP) SFP criteria gap analysis & initial action plan development July 2020 SFP 6 month action plan	Co-ordinator in post Jan 2021 Additional members have joined the Alliance; Mapping ongoing. We will continue to work with landowners in the seven priority sub-catchments as part of the Herefordshire NFM project. SFP Coordinator in post, Hereford Food Alliance continued expansion, Herefordshire food charter developed and promotion ongoing, collaborative food hub feasibility activity across Marches area under development.	In progress
38	The council should work with Parish Councils and partners such as Sustrans and the Local Access Forum to map potential cycle and walking route extensions.	Accepted. The council is planning to progress development of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). In progressing the LCWIP over the next year it will engage with key stakeholders including parish councils, Local Access Forum and other relevant consultees. This will include review of rural cycle routes which are already identified and consideration of new routes and extensions to routes. It is likely that some of the rural routes will present opportunities for leisure cycling and will help.	Subject to cabinet confirming next steps in development of transport strategy and agreement to allocate appropriate resource, progress LCWIP during 2021/22.	Development of the City masterplan will deliver an LCWIP for Hereford. The draft plan will be considered by Cabinet in February 2023 before wider public consultation in summer 2023. Consultants will be appointed in early 2023 to extend the LCWIP to cover the whole of the county in one plan. Consultation with stakeholders and the public will be undertaken in developing the countywide LCWIP.	In progress
39	Strips of land alongside rural roads should be investigated to create cycle ways with a view to purchase or lease the land.	Accepted. The development of the LCWIP described in recommendation 38 would allow for consideration of rural cycle routes adjacent to existing highways. Any assessment of these routes would need to consider the appropriate design including if land was required and the potential costs of schemes. As per recommendation 31 it is important to recognise that 'strips of land alongside rural roads' may well provide an important wildlife asset and any proposals to identify these for cycle routes would need to consider how this would impact a wildlife asset.	Subject to cabinet confirming next steps in development of transport strategy and agreement to allocate appropriate resource progress LCWIP during 2021/22.	This recommendation will be considered as part of developing the City Masterplan, LCWIP and the new Local Transport Plan.	In progress
40	20 mph zones should be implemented across Hereford, the market towns and around schools, countywide.	Accepted, subject to funding. Whilst the Local Transport Plan includes general policies supporting the introduction of residential 20mph zones, 20mph zones designed within public realm projects and 20mph zones for schools these can only be implemented subject to securing sufficient capital funds and meeting the requirements through the Traffic Regulation Order process. Following the motion by council that 'this Council requests that the executive undertakes an investigation concerning the introduction of area-wide 20mph speed limits across Herefordshire's towns and major villages.' Officers confirmed that an investigation would be undertaken subject to securing government funding in the summer of 2020. Some funding for temporary 20mph limits was secured in 2020 through the Emergency Active Travel scheme, but no funding has yet been secured for the investigation of area-wide 20mph speed limits across Herefordshire's towns and major villages so this has not yet been progressed. A capital funding business case is to be developed to undertake an investigation of 20 mph limits across the county and to develop a programme to implement these.	Subject to securing funding, commission an investigation of 20mph zones for Herefordshire's towns and major villages. The outcome of this investigation to form funding submissions to progress the implementation of limits prioritised around those which would provide the most significant benefits in terms of safety, modal shift and with greatest level of community support.	£1.2m of funding was agreed by Cabinet in October 2022 to fund the development of policies and strategies for the roll out of 20mph zones. Consultants with widespread experience of 20mph zones elsewhere in the UK will be appointed by January 2023. Priorities will be data and evidence analysis, policy development, pilot scheme identification and consultation. Implementation of pilots is expected to start in autumn 2023 and be completed by spring 2024, to be followed by monitoring and a policy/strategy review before any further roll out.	In progress

41	<p>Opportunities to support all schools in developing school travel plans noting the link to changing travel to school behaviour and wider travel behaviour of children and parents should be explored.</p>	<p>Accepted. Support for school travel planning has focused on Hereford schools in recent years through the Destination Hereford programme which has been funded via external revenue grant (local sustainable transport fund and in more recent years Access Fund). A review of approaches and preferred model for delivering countywide school travel plan will be progressed to determine the opportunities for providing countywide support and how this would be funded.</p>	<p>Review countywide school travel plan support and identify preferred approach, resource requirements and funding sources.</p>	<p>School Travel plan support was delivered by consultants Mosodi Ltd from November 2021 - September 2022. 24 travel plans have been completed and direct engagement with 63 schools since December 2021 to present. There is a School Travel Plan Toolkit which has gone out to all schools. There is Schools Travel Plan Network including 4 travel plan network meetings hosted.  Full time School Travel Plan Officer to continue this work - about to go out to recruit ( Nov 2022) with associated budget to support school in delivering the plans.</p>	Complete
42	<p>To address the issues of rural transport the council should pursue funding to support innovative transport schemes within the community sector including demand responsive transport (DRT), car clubs and low traffic neighbourhoods ADDITIONAL FROM APRIL 22 (42) work is undertaken in conjunction with the transport team to undertake surveys with schools, to identify barriers and opportunities for active travel. A full survey to commence and report back with opportunities and recommendations by November 2021;</p>	<p>Accepted. Opportunities to pursue funding to support innovative transport schemes (including those described in the recommendation) will be progressed as and when such opportunities are identified. For example during 2020/21 an expression of interest was submitted to the DfT's Rural Mobility Fund to support a trial DRT scheme in the county. Unfortunately, DfT did not prioritise this submission but officers will continue to develop funding submissions as the opportunities arise. DfT has announced some potential future funding sources in its Gear Change policy statement including trials for mini Holland schemes outside of London and is also committed to produce a National Bus Strategy in 2021 which could also set out new funding opportunities.</p>	<p>Monitor opportunities to pursue funding for innovative transport schemes to support transport for rural areas as well as urban locations. Any funding submission will need to be in accordance with the council's financial procedures rules.</p>	<p>6 zones for potential DRT have been established. A case has been put forward to introduce such a service in the Leominster area. Leominster, as a rural network, would see the benefit of such a service that would improve accessibility and also combine with existing services. The Strategic Plan sets out that the Council purchase 3 minibuses which could be booked via a telephony service. Funding has yet to be sourced for the scheme. The DfT are expected to offer further funding which will be applied for when it's made public. Car Clubs: an 18 month Community car club pilot ran from September 2021 - March 2023, facilitated by Malvern Hills Car Club. Five car clubs were established in The Birches, Leominster, Kington, Fownhope and South Hereford. A transport survey was undertaken from the 27th April 2022 until 31st May 2022. Of the 540 who responded, 71 respondents had school-age children. The most common means of transport for school / education is also as driver of a car with a passenger but followed by walking and then driving alone in a car (but note no under-18s completed the survey). There is a mixed picture of travel to school patterns: of those who indicated they have primary age children the most common mode of travel for child 1 is 'car / van', closely followed by 'walking / scooter' but for child 2 it's the other way round. For those with secondary age children, it is 'walking / scooter', followed by 'car / van' and then 'school bus' for child 1, and 'school bus', followed by 'car / van' and 'walking / scooter' for child 2.</p>	Complete
43	<p>A 'shop drop' scheme should be considered to support car-free city and town centres to enable shoppers to park on the outskirts and have shopping sustainably transported to their car, choose how you move location or bus stop. This should support existing 'first mile last mile' schemes. And investigate alternative delivery modes.</p>	<p>Accepted, in part. The development of mobility hubs will form part of the active travel component of the further work developing the Hereford Transport Strategy which will consider this opportunity for both the city and market towns</p>	<p>Develop concept designs for mobility hubs as part of the development of the package of active travel improvements.</p>	<p>There are 15 park and choose sites established around the county, focused on the city, offering users the choice to continue their journey on foot, by bike or on the bus. The City Masterplan is looking at ways to improve these sites, including their size and location, in order to encourage and incentivise more people to use them.</p>	In progress

44	<p>Demand management should be further implemented, supported by robust communications and used to increase the provision of infrastructure to support active travel e.g.:</p> <p>a. Reduce on street parking and replace with infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians.</p> <p>b. Work place levy operated by the council with funds used to increase uptake of active travel.</p> <p>c. Car parking charges to be based on emissions.</p>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>Options for car parking management including those set out in the recommendation will be reviewed during 2021/22 to identify preferred solutions which will help manage demand particularly for shorter distance trips made by car. Options will need to consider the important role parking plays in providing access to key services (particularly for rural residents, elderly people and people with disabilities) and supporting vibrant local economies as well as the important contribution which parking income makes to supporting transport services including subsidised buses.</p>	<p>Undertake parking review as part of the local transport plan update.</p>	<p>A review of the current tariff offer was completed, with a new charging regime implemented on May 2021, this delivered stronger focus on driver awareness of the parking location they use with car parks zoned in accordance to their proximity to the centre. Charges were simplified so that drivers can easily understand how these tariffs indicate the preference for them to park further away from core areas with increases applied in these most central car parks to displace this demand. Some reductions of on street parking capacities have taken place with the implementation of the St Owens Street contraflow cycle lane.</p> <p>Measures are being considered as part of the draft City Masterplan. The draft plan will be considered by Cabinet in February 2023 before wider public consultation in summer 2023.</p> <p>In December 2022 work was started on developing the new Local Transport Plan (LTP). DfT guidance is expected in Spring 2023 but it is widely anticipated that the LTP will need to focus on decarbonising transport in the county. It is anticipated that development work will include an assessment of current carbon emissions and the reduction necessary to achieve the government's target of net zero by 2050. A wide range of measures will be necessary to achieve the target and consideration of demand management initiatives such as those recommended will be necessary.</p>	In progress
45	<p>The Group recognises the existing work by officers to support the retrofit of fuel poor households. It recommends an investigation into the potential for a local 'green deal' option potentially through the establishment of a social enterprise to support the retrofit of the largest domestic users of energy in the County</p>	<p>Accepted, subject to further decision.</p> <p>The council is committed to the continuation of the support provided by the Keeping Herefordshire Warm service. The council also aims to support the development of domestic building retrofit programmes to further improve the energy efficiency of Herefordshire's housing stock, reducing carbon emissions, improving wellbeing and tackling fuel poverty.</p> <p>Subject to governance and funding, the council will develop a long term countywide retrofit strategy that seeks to facilitate the retrofit of buildings to a much higher standard, help to reduce environmental impact, fuel poverty and improve the quality of life for residents. The study will provide a robust business case to be made to the capital programme in September 2021.</p> <p>In addition to the strategy the council will support fuel poor households to install energy efficiency measures through the upcoming Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (GHG LAD) Phase 2</p>	<p>To prepare a cabinet member report to consider the development of a Herefordshire Retrofit strategy.</p> <p>Develop a business case to apply to the Council's capital programme for a domestic energy efficiency programme to deliver countywide retrofit.</p> <p>Submit informed proposal to Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (GHG LAD) Phase 2 project in order to support fuel poor households to install energy efficiency measures.</p>	<p>Report drafted. Specification of works for the county strategy currently being drafted.</p> <p>Retrofit strategy has been commissioned and completed by consultants WSP nd delivered draft business case and help inform bid to capital programmed hase bid for council capital which will be funded by external grants. This will most likely come from Sustainable Warmth Competition. Council currently liaising with MNZH regarding allocation for 2023/24 and 2024/25</p> <p>In addition to support development of supply chain, training programme etc. tecAdded to BCL PAS 2035 retrofit.</p> <p>Additional BCL in development to deliver retrofit training across the county - training package</p> <p>Currently securing Phase 3 of Sustainable Warmth funding: and currently delivering: In this reporting period we have- Been in contact with 304 households to form an initial project pipeline - 125 deemed eligible</p> <p>- Various comms activities- Retrofit assessments and technical surveys carried out on 95 and 72 properties respectively with 63 quotes approved -Reached capacity for D rated properties and have a reserve list of a further 41 applications in total of which 15 having passed eligibility checks</p>	In progress

46	<p>Consideration should be given to use of alternative fuel market for council fleet and contractors when vehicles/contractors are commissioned.</p>	<p>Accepted.          In 2020 the council undertook a green fleet review and re-procured its fleet of vehicles. Included within this six hybrid electric cars and six fully electric cars were purchased for use as pool vehicles or as service vehicles for council teams. The fleet is due to be replaced in 2026 when a further green fleet review will be undertaken to ensure that alternate powered vehicles will be considered before fossil fuel powered vehicles.          Through the recently updated decision making process all new decisions must consider their environmental impact as part of their consideration, as such all decisions relating to the purchase of new vehicles will take this into account as a part of the business case development.</p>	<p>In 2026 when the corporate fleet is reproduced non fossil fuel powered vehicles will be considered before fossil fuel powered vehicles.</p>	<p>Thirteen vehicles to date are electric hybrid or fully electric representing 29% of the fleet and 31% of fleet mileage.          Thirteen vehicles 15.1 % of fleet mileage.</p>	Complete
47	<p>The use of hydrogen as an alternative fuel for long range vehicles or HGVs across the County should be explored</p>	<p>Accepted.          This recommendation aligns well with one of the 6 strategic priorities set out by government in its Decarbonising Transport – Setting the Challenge Paper: Decarbonisation of Road Vehicles. This will be a government led approach which would enable local authorities to identify how they could support this priority as and when government sets out its Decarbonising Transport Plan (this was due end of 2020 but has been delayed by government until spring 2021). Government announced that it will be funding research and development into a number of areas of interest to support decarbonisation of transport and this included hydrogen battery technology stating:          "Hydrogen: Electric batteries are a viable technology for smaller vehicles today, but the fuel for delivering a solution for larger road, marine and rail vehicles is not yet clear. Hydrogen is a potential solution, and the UK has a number of world leading centres that could readily test the viability of the hydrogen economy for transport.</p>	<p>Review government's Decarbonising Transport Plan and promised accompanying Science Plan which are due spring 2021, following Decarbonising Transport, and clarify further actions the council might take in supporting hydrogen as an alternative fuel option for road vehicles in the county.</p>	<p>As part of the new waste collection contract we are strongly seeking for our new provider to provide ultra low emission vehicles. We have not over specified a fuel type, this enables the potential providers to bring innovation and the most appropriate technology to Herefordshire to deliver the contract.          This will also be considered as a part of the refresh of the Local Transport Plan in 2023.</p>	In progress
48	<p>A Natural Capital management plan should be drawn up with partners. A baseline should be established and the plan should;          a. Ensure that its preservation and restoration are given equal weight to economic growth and development in the allocation of funding (particularly capital) and in the decision making process.          b. Be used as a framework for positive and collaborative engagement with key partners to achieve a unified approach to remedy damage done to Natural Capital across the County          ☐</p>	<p>Accepted, in part.          As the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) is the overarching strategic partnership for the environment and natural capital, the proposed response is to formally invite the LNP to consider the development of a Natural Capital management plan as part of its future work programme. This will also be a recommendation to the emerging Herefordshire Climate &amp; Nature Partnership.          An initial step for the council would be to identify this approach taken elsewhere. For example, the Warwickshire model is up and running which may also assist with the scope of the proposed Nature Strategy.          This could also include consideration of the new Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services (MAES) which is likely to come forward as part of the Environment Bill. This will also assist in the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain and as a tool for establishing baseline of development sites and ensuring the development proposal delivers the min 10% biodiversity net gain as currently proposed in the Environment Bill.</p>	<p>Best practice review of Natural Capital management plans.          Proposal to Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership to develop Herefordshire Natural Capital management plan.</p>	<p>First phase is the update to the NE evidence base and progress LNRS, mapping. If Natural Capital Plan is required we would need to consider timescales and resource for this.</p>	In progress

49	<p>A fund to be established to support businesses to contribute to carbon reduction or ecological restoration</p>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The council does not have funds available to it to provide business grants, but aims to support businesses with existing national grants through local grant schemes.</p> <p>The council currently manages a European funded grant scheme called Marches Renewable Energy (MarRE) that supports business uptake of renewable energy across the Marches. Up to 50% grant is available to eligible businesses to install a renewable energy installation to reduce carbon emissions and improve business efficiency. This scheme has been a great success in Herefordshire and is currently closed to applications in Herefordshire ahead of project completion at the end of 2021.</p> <p>In addition to this Herefordshire Council is a partner in the Business Energy Efficiency Programme (BEEP) which similarly is a European funded grant scheme that operates across the Marches and Worcester. Assessments of improvements that can be made with respect to energy and resource usage are carried out before grants of up to 40% are made available to help implement the recommendations.</p> <p>Through the Accelerated Towns Fund, 520 trees have been given out to residents and local businesses in Hereford City to increase tree coverage and improve local biodiversity. In addition to this c.80 large 'feature' trees will be located in self watering planters in Hereford City centre and a further 88 large trees will be planted at the Hereford Enterprise Zone.</p> <p>As part of the Covid-19 support for businesses government allocated each local authority an Additional Restrictions Grant fund</p> <p>– On the 3rd March government announced the Community Renewal Fund, with Herefordshire identified as one of one hundred priority local authority areas with an opportunity to receive up to £3m of funding support. The fund can support investment in skills, investment in local business, investment in community and place, and supporting people into employment. The prospectus states 'proposals should demonstrate the extent of contribution to net zero objectives or wider environmental considerations. Projects should be based on low or zero carbon best practice, adopt and support innovative clean tech where possible and support the growing skills and supply chains in support of Net Zero where possible'. In taking forward this fund the council will seek project proposals that support businesses to contribute to carbon reduction, as well as developing retrofit skills and green building skills development programme.</p> <p>In addition to grant schemes administered by the council the Marches Growth Hub developed by the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) act as a single point of contact and signpost businesses to available loans, support and advice including support for business to reduce their carbon and ecological impact.</p>	<p>Through the Community Renewal Fund seek project proposals that will support businesses to contribute to carbon reduction, and develop retrofit and green building skill</p> <p>Subject to government approval, contract and manage the delivery of the proposed projects.</p> <p>Evaluate uptake/ impact and feedback on the schemes offered to inform future schemes by end of May 2022</p> <p>Continue to support BEEP in Herefordshire</p>	<p>Awaiting further guidance on the fund from government, prior to seeking project proposals.</p> <p>Unfortunately, no decarbonisation projects were selected by Government to go forward for CRF. We appointed Chamberlain Walker to carry out an objective appraisal on the CRF submissions we received and applications were assessed against the government scoring criteria under the following: deliverability, strategic fit and viability. Of the projects we put forward, only two were selected by government, but these did not include decarbonisation projects. Fortunately, since then, the Government has issued UKSPF calls and Herefordshire has been provisionally awarded £7.6m based on the submission of a successful Investment Plan. The Investment Plan does include a number decarbonisation interventions but unfortunately, we are still awaiting the outcome of the plan from government before we can implement these. We have also committed to support Worcestershire with the BEEP project - as they were successful with their bid to the Marches LEP low carbon call to repeat BEEP for the next two years (including Herefordshire), but again, we are awaiting the outcome of the investment plans before we can commit to and provide the match funding they require to deliver the scheme across partner areas. Finally, we have been allocated £1.7m RPF funding and are awaiting the outcome of our submission. The RPF is an allocation of capital funding to support rural enterprise. In our RPF submission, we included further decarbonisation measures proposed, including capital grants that can support net zero infrastructure. The RPF was submitted in conjunction with rural partners and the HSGSB. Subject to a successful outcome of the bid, and approval at cabinet in December, this scheme will go live in April 2023.</p> <p>87% complete (54 assessments correct end May 21). Grants awarded 25 £225k (92.2% of grant pot)</p>	In progress
50	<p>The Group would recognise the excellent existing work of Talk Community and recommend it explore support and actively engage with single person households to improve or enhance resilience and prepared for the effects of the climate and ecological emergency</p>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>The aim of Talk Community is to bring Herefordshire together encouraging residents, businesses, community leaders and the Council to work together to make our community a better place to live and work. To enable residents to take care of themselves, look out for one another and take pride in the place you live. The scheme is targeted at all residents including single person households.</p> <p>From small acts of kindness such as looking out for a neighbour, to volunteer-run community hubs across the county and partnerships with the Police and NHS – our communities are the beating heart of Herefordshire.</p> <p>A parish summit on community resilience is due in March to further support the excellent work carried out by parishes and communities and to continue working in partnership to build on the excellent work undertaken during floods and Covid-19.</p> <p>The Talk Community team will be working with the Directorate Services and Emergency Planning teams and partners throughout 2021 to build on the resilience gained during the past 18 months.</p>	<p>Opening of 50 Talk Community Hubs across the county to support residents.</p> <p>Host Parish summit on community resilience.</p> <p>Work with Directorate Services team and partners to build on community resilience.</p>	<p>4 Hubs are open, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, information sessions are currently being held online.</p> <p>68 Talk Community hubs now live across the county.</p> <p>Talk Community holding Parish Summits 4 times a year as well as parish reference groups January 22 : Integrated Care Strategy March 22 Waste Strategy June 22 State of the Sector &amp; Volunteer Strategy October 22 Reducing Carbon Together</p> <p>We undertook a survey in April - High Level feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 48 Parish's completed the survey</li> <li>• 77% said that they had attended TP in the last 12 months</li> <li>• 90% find the meeting beneficial for information sharing, joint working and networking</li> <li>• 78% felt that the structure works</li> </ul> <p>Continue working with communities to continue to develop and build resilience: Regular community network meetings (statutory and voluntary sector groups) Debt support: 7 Community debt &amp; money management centres funded by TC; 150 trained volunteers; 550 beneficiaries; £800k debt relief</p> <p>Network of 'Warm Spaces' across the county;</p>	In progress



51	Where the council provides schools meals they must be nutritious, locally sourced, low carbon and ethical	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>The council doesn't currently provide school meals, each school contracts its own service with each governing board responsible for school food provision and school food standards compliance. Historically there have been many small providers across the county rather than a few large caterers which adds to the complexity of the issue but this also provides opportunity.</p> <p>Through the delivery of the SFP model we aim to tackle 6 key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Take a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action',</li> <li>2. 'Build public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement',</li> <li>3. 'Tackle food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food',</li> <li>4. 'Create a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy',</li> <li>5. 'Transform catering and procurement and revitalise local sustainable food chains'</li> <li>6. 'Tackle the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste'.</li> </ol> <p>More specifically under area 3 'Promote the adoption of holistic food culture transformation programmes in a range of settings e.g. schools'</p>	<p>SFP grant application</p> <p>Expansion in membership of Food alliance (leading SFP) Increasing numbers Additional members</p> <p>Mapping of current county-wide food activity</p> <p>Map produced Mapping ongoing SFP criteria gap analysis &amp; initial action plan development SFP 6 month action plan</p> <p>School food project plan</p>	<p>Co-ordinator in post Jan 2021</p> <p>Additional members have joined. Mapping work is ongoing.</p> <p>Sustainable Food Places coordinator in post, Environmental Health &amp; Public Health are delivering the Food standards agency and Department of Education School Food pilot project this academic year, as part of routine food hygiene inspections compliance with the school food standards is noted. Hereford Food Alliance members Growing Local are delivering food &amp; carbon reduction education in schools.</p> <p>Food Charter developed and finalised in March 2022 through Food Alliance, followed by publication and publicity campaign ongoing. Charter agreed, website live <a href="https://herefordshirefoodcharter.org.uk/charter-signees">https://herefordshirefoodcharter.org.uk/charter-signees</a> ongoing promotion planned There are 68 sign-ups to the charter including both individuals and businesses.</p>	In progress
52	In terms of community gardens, the potential for using pockets of green space in the more urban areas for orchards/market gardens should be explored. A scheme be developed to facilitate residents in the countryside who cannot manage their gardens to find someone eager to make productive use of that land.	<p>Accepted in part.</p> <p>In part this will be explored within our approach to implementing the Sustainable Food Place (SFP) model. Through the delivery of the SFP model we aim to tackle 6 key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Take a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action'</li> <li>2. 'Build public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement'</li> <li>3. 'Tackle food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food'</li> <li>4. 'Create a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy'</li> <li>5. 'Transform catering and procurement and revitalise local sustainable food chains'</li> <li>6. 'Tackle the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste'.</li> </ol> <p>In particular area 2 'Foster food citizenship and a local good food movement' by ensuring communities can access and take control of green, brownfield and unused building spaces and increasing participation in food growing by increase in allotment provision, incorporating growing sites into developments and edible landscapes.'</p> <p>In key area 6 'develop &amp; deliver a land use and management strategy that protects and makes land available for community growing and commercial sustainable agriculture'.</p>	<p>SFP grant application.</p> <p>Expansion in membership of Food alliance (leading SFP).</p> <p>Mapping of current county-wide food activity.</p> <p>SFP criteria gap analysis &amp; initial action plan development Lindsay MacHardy.</p>	<p>Public Health supporting planning with the development of the open space policy and other relevant policies within the local are plan.</p> <p>SFP coordinator in post, Environmental Health &amp; Public Health are delivering the Food standards agency and Department of Education School Food pilot project this academic year, as part of routine food hygiene inspections compliance with the school food standards is noted. Hereford Food Alliance members Growing Local are delivering food &amp; carbon reduction education in schools.</p> <p><a href="https://herefordshirefoodcharter.org.uk/">https://herefordshirefoodcharter.org.uk/</a></p>	In progress
53	<p>To recognise and properly protect the natural resource in Herefordshire the Committee should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Consider the creation of additional areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB).</li> <li>b. Support the Wye Valley (including the Monnow Valley) be a national park (see Glover Review) and explore other areas including the Golden Valley as well as link to the other Marches authorities to establish nature recovery networks.</li> <li>c. support protection of the County's SSSIs and SACs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Accepted, in part.</li> <li>b. Accepted, in part.</li> <li>c. Accepted.</li> </ol> <p>SSSI and SACs are the responsibility of Natural England who are consulted on planning applications. The council also have a duty to consider and protect these designations at a planning stage.</p> <p>Officers are currently working in partnership with HWT and HBRC to review Local Wildlife Sites, reviewing their criterion and survey sites.</p> <p>The creation of new AONBs is a decision for Natural England. Some areas in the north of the county adjacent to the Shropshire Hills AONB have been mooted as potential AONBs for a number of years and officers could investigate the process of promoting this further.</p> <p>The Wye Valley AONB could be linked to the Malvern Hills AONB as a national park, although this is also a decision for Natural England and could be promoted following the Glover Report. Officers could speak with the Wye Valley AONB to understand if this is something they would wish and the process timescales etc.</p>	<p>Explore potential to extend Shropshire Hills AONB with colleagues in Shropshire Council.</p> <p>Explore the potential to link up Wye Valley AONB with neighbouring authorities to create a national park.</p> <p>Continue to support protection of SSSIs and SACs by working in partnership with other agencies and through our planning processes.</p> <p>Continued partnership working with our strategic partners through the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership</p>	<p>We have improved joint working across the Wye Valley AONB and Malvern Hills AONB through the creation of a joint Planning Officer post to better resource and coordinate planning consults to better protect and further enhance the AONB areas.</p>	In progress

54	<p>An article 4 suspension of the general permitted development order relating to temporary events of off-road motorsports, to develop a more considered approach to the sport which acknowledges its impact on environment and ecology should be made. (Previously under planning)</p>	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>An article 4 direction can be made under the General Permitted Development Order 2015 ("the Order") to remove permitted development rights ("pd rights"). In the case of off-road motor sports an article 4 direction would need to be made to remove pd rights under Schedule 2 part 4 Class B (b) and Class BA(b) of the Order. The use of article 4 directions to remove pd rights are normally made on a case by case basis where it is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area. There will need to be particularly strong justified reasons for withdrawing pd rights relating to a wide area, such as the entire county of Herefordshire.</p> <p>If an article 4 direction is to be made, consultation will need to be undertaken in line with the legislation. Notice of the making of the article 4 direction will need to specify a period of at least 21 days (stating the date on which that period begins) within which any representations concerning the direction may be made to the Council. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government must also be notified that the direction has been made. Any representations received must be considered in determining whether to confirm the direction. The Council would not be able to confirm the direction until after the expiration of a period of at least 28 days following the latest date on which the direction is served or published. If confirmed, the direction will come into force on the date specified in the notice, and notice must again be served on all persons affected by the order. The Secretary of State must also be notified it has been confirmed. The Secretary of State has the power to modify or cancel article 4 directions at any time before or after they are confirmed.</p> <p>Compensation can be due for abortive expenditure or other loss or damage directly attributable to the withdrawal of pd rights which includes works carried out under the pd rights before they were removed, as well as the preparation of plans for the purposes of any work. Loss or damage directly attributable to the withdrawal of pd rights would include the depreciation in the value of land or buildings, when its value with the permitted development right is compared to its value without the right.</p> <p>As each article 4 direction has to be considered on the merits of each location, the impact of the motorsport has to be considered upon the environment for each bespoke location. It is not therefore possible to categorically state that the planning and legal officers can be supportive of proceeding to an article 4 direction for each and every site in the county, as its success cannot be guaranteed given the other agencies involved and likely legal challenge. That said, it does provide a legal remedy to remove the permitted rights enjoyed by motorsports who would otherwise not need to apply for planning consent if they use the land for less than 28 days a year for a motor sport, of which only 14 days can be for racing or practising for racing.</p>	<p>Planning officers to liaise with the council's legal team to explore the merits in proceeding to an Article 4 Direction in cases where harm can be shown to be caused to the local community or environment.</p>	<p>Rejected, full response is provided to recommendation 69.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
55	<p>The council should make a revolving loan fund available to victims of pluvial flooding caused by human activity, to seek legal redress. Cases and progress should be publicised.</p>	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>Under section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003 a LA may invest: (a) for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment, or (b) for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs. The use of the power is subject to guidance issued by the SoS under section 15. Guidance has been issued entitled Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments for financial years commencing on or after 1 April 2018. The guidance is clear that loans come within the ambit of investments. As such the LA is expected to make a return on its investments and interest will be payable (which will need to be at commercial rates to avoid state subsidy rules). Note the guidance also refers to loans to third parties for economic growth purposes.</p> <p>Section 12 is a pre-commencement power for the purpose of section 2 of Localism Act 2011 (Boundaries of the general power) which is subject to restrictions i.e. the section 15 guidance and therefore also applies to the general power under section 1 of the 2011 Act.</p> <p>The suggested fund is for the purposes of funding litigation by individuals affected by flooding due to the failures of neighbouring landowners. It does not appear that this purpose is related to any of the Council's functions as set out in legislation. As such the requirements of section 12 do not appear to be met and the Council would not appear to have the vires to make loans for this purpose.</p> <p>Advice to residents regarding flooding can be found on the councils website: <a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads/1/flooding?documented=345&amp;categoryId=200196">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads/1/flooding?documented=345&amp;categoryId=200196</a></p> <p>If government considers the severity, duration and extent of reported impact of a flood enough to trigger activation of the Flood Recovery Framework, information regarding any financial support will be published on: <a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/flood">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/flood</a></p>	<p>The council website be kept up to date with the latest information regarding support after flooding.</p>	<p>We continue to keep the council website up to date with information and resources as to what people need to do if it floods.</p>	<p>In progress</p>

56	Proactively protect the ecology of potential development sites prior to planning permission being sought, mindful of implications for biodiversity net gain.	Rejected. Whilst this is delivered to a degree through the existing Hedgerow Regulations and Tree Protection Orders, unfortunately there is no other legislation that is currently in place that the council can utilise in this manner.	Consideration of options to deliver higher level of protection through the development of the proposed Nature Strategy and through recommendations for policy in the Local Plan.  Ongoing review of any new legislation, in particular through the emerging Environment Bill. Liz Duberley Aug 202	At application level ecology already seek to ensure biodiversity enhancement is delivered. With the development of the councils policy around biodiversity net gain this will ensure a strategic approach is taken and that a minimum ten per cent is achieved. Whilst the council is beginning to consider the content of this policy we are still awaiting guidance from Defra.	In progress
57	That this year's mailing of annual Council Tax notices to residents includes a statement from the Leader explaining why the Council has declared the CEE, what goals have been set, and in outline, how can residents and businesses support the Council's efforts to achieve carbon neutrality. And that each subsequent year a statement is sent to residents outlining the progress made in the preceding 12 months.	Rejected. The executive consider that a better use of resource and a more positive engagement message would be to utilise other forms of communications. The launch of the 'Herefordshire Zero Carbon and Nature Rich' website in March is intended to speak to residents in an engaging and interactive way. The website will set out the net zero carbon ambition for the county, our action plans in six key areas (transport, housing and buildings, energy, waste, food and farming and land use) as well as informing residents what they can personally do to make a difference. The website also asks for ideas from residents as to how we can achieve this ambitious goal together. The intention is that the website will be better received, more informative and interactive than a flyer with the council tax letter which may be perceived poorly, especially in relation to the use of paper and ink to disseminate information about climate change or the information lost amongst the other inserts.	Zero Carbon and Nature Rich website launch early March.	Website under development  Website live and phased development underway. It outlines how we plan to get the county to get net zero, with action plans covering food, waste, transport, energy, housing and buildings. It promotes the Greener Footprints campaign, with online pledge form, case studies and mapping activity across the county. <a href="https://zerocarbon.herefordshire.gov.uk/">https://zerocarbon.herefordshire.gov.uk/</a>	Complete
58	Some other local authorities have issued bonds to raise funding for climate-related investments, for example West Berkshire's Community Municipal Investment bond which has reached 50% of its target of £1m and will be used to pay for solar panels on schools. Would the Executive investigate the feasibility of Herefordshire creating a similar investment bond?	Rejected. It is the understanding of the executive that bonds are currently more expensive than the prudential borrowing authorities have access to. West Berkshire pay investors 1.2 percent over a five year term alongside capital repayments. This is a higher cost than the cost of utilising prudential borrowing over the same repayment term, currently 0.8%. There would also be set up costs and the need to generate adequate investor interest. A decision is due to be taken to invest in up to £941,000 of prudential borrowing to install Solar PV where feasible on maintained schools over a three year period. This would offer those schools, a zero cost solar install and discounted energy prices, generated from the solar PV. A decision is due regarding the development of a countywide retrofit strategy. Should the development of the strategy go ahead this strategy will consider the use of Community Municipal Investment bonds as one of the potential funding options to deliver a retrofit programme.	Decision to be made regarding the investment of up to £941k in Solar PV on maintained schools.  To prepare a cabinet member report to consider the development of a Herefordshire Retrofit strategy.	Phase 1 complete led to three solar PV installs Almeley, Blackmarston and Earl Mortimer. Phase 2 contract has been awarded for a further three schools John Masefield, Fairfield and Marlbrook installs before end of FY 22/23. Installs are still subject to the schools passing a structural survey. Phase three is scheduled for mid 2023. -(possible four schools identified with potential of inclusion of faith schools, meeting early January to discuss)	In progress
<b>Further recommendations, 26/04/21</b>					
<b>No</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Exec Response</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>	<b>Progress Summary</b>
59	(a) the Committee requests the executive to reconsider its response to those recommendations that have been rejected or accepted in part and the recommendations made during the debate and an updated response be presented to the Committee's next scheduled meeting, clarifying in particular the misunderstanding that appeared to have been caused by the use of the word "rejected" which in several cases appeared misleading in the context of the detailed response.	Accepted - 17 & 33 to be changed to be Accepted in Part and 14 & 34 to Accepted. 30D has been reconsidered and accepted	N/A	Complete	Complete

60	(b) subject to confirmation from the solicitor to the Council, the committee establish a standing Panel to monitor the executive response to the Committee's recommendations, the members of the former task and finish group being invited to consider if they would wish to serve on this Panel in the first instance, with the Panel's terms of reference to be reported to the Committee's next scheduled meeting;	Solicitor to the Council confirms no objection to this proposal.		Following rethinking governance and council decision in May 2022, a new environmental and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee was created. Further constitutional provisions enable power to create standing powers.	Complete
61	(c) further consideration be given by the executive to whether sufficient resources have been allocated to implement the recommendations of the review, mindful also of the need to manage the workload of officers;	All action owners have been further consulted and the executive can confirm actions are resourced as per the original executive response	N/A		Complete
62	(d) (17) it be noted that this recommendation has not in effect been rejected but partly accepted and particular re-consideration be given to the production of a local list more swiftly than currently proposed;	Accepted in part – it is noted that recommendation 17 is accepted in part. There is currently a significant implication on resources in the planning and built and natural environment teams due to a nationwide uplift in planning application submissions and staff resources. It is therefore not possible for the planning service to introduce a local list at the current time or the date for review to be brought forward.		The planning department is currently in the process of a restructure, which will take responsibility for this going forwards.	In progress
63	(e) consideration be given to the extent to which notes of meetings between the council and the Environment Agency and others can be made public, even if an abbreviated form to avoid disclosure of confidential information and included in the Nutrient Management Board agenda papers;	Accepted - The council will publish abbreviated notes from these meetings within the <a href="http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/floods">www.herefordshire.gov.uk/floods</a> part of our website	Abbreviated notes to be published after each meeting.	Nutrient Management Board put on public footing which will outline the discussions between EA and HC. All details are available on the website <a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/2176/flood-management-meetings-notes">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/2176/flood-management-meetings-notes</a>	Complete
64	(f) (20) consideration be given to introducing a mechanism to seek responses from Parish Councils to measure the effectiveness of the advisory notes issued by the Neighbourhood Planning Team in effecting change;	Accepted - The Neighbourhood Planning team do periodically issue a questionnaire to all parish councils regarding the service they have been provided by the team during the production of their neighbourhood plans. This includes a question about the effectiveness of the current guidance notes. The last questionnaire was sent to parish councils in Autumn 2019. Given that many parishes did not progress their NDPs during the pandemic, the questionnaire was not run in 2020. The team will issue a questionnaire in Autumn this year (2021) which will fit well with the new Planning Bill. It should be noted that changes are expected to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and all the neighbourhood planning guidance notes will need to be updated accordingly in due course. It is the policies of the neighbourhood plans themselves which result in 'effecting change'. The guidance notes are only a small part of this development plan process.	2021 Parish Council questionnaire issued.	Once the guidance has been issued that a request for parish councils to inform of any issues can be made. The survey of parish councils has been delayed for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expected changes to the NPPF and Levelling up Bill and national DM policies will require advice to be updated and amended in due course</li> <li>Emerging Local Plan - again will cause advice to be updated and amended</li> <li>Parish Councils are tending to wait for the emergence of the draft Local Plan and its revised settlement hierarchy so reliance on the current guidance notes has reduced at this time</li> <li>Other Local Planning Authorities and parishes outside of Herefordshire are reporting that Herefordshire's guidance notes are better than others around the country and are using ours to advise their local groups – giving some reassurance that the guidance notes are still 'fit for purpose' in the short term</li> <li>Parish Council consultations on the Local Plan – parishes have received a significant number of consultation regarding the Local Plan and the rural settlement hierarchy within the last 12 months – these were seen as priority</li> <li>Capacity – the team are current assisting in the fast tracking of the Local Plan</li> </ul> Therefore, priority has been given to working on the Local Plan at this time. The more appropriate time to consult will be once the new NPPF and the scope of the national DM policies is understood and the draft Local Plan settlement hierarchy is established. We will be able to consult parish council on the scope and range of the current guidance notes within the knowledge of the national picture.	In progress

65	(g) (30d) this recommendation should be revisited and explored more imaginatively and constructively, for example proactively working with Verging in Wild and any other groups within the County that can promote such schemes;	Accepted - As part of the Annual Plan 21/22 and subsequent years – Balfour Beatty are committed to working with 'Verging on Wild' and other community groups to increase wildflower areas on Highway Verges in Herefordshire where suitable. Currently over 50 sites have been identified and assessed. Additionally, further to contacting all Parish Councils 19 responded this year identifying roads within their Parish which would be suitable for a reduced maintenance regime which would promote the growth of wild flowers and biodiversity. Verging on Wild, supported by Balfour Beatty can offer training on maintenance, identification and management of wildflower verges on the Highway Network to Parish/Town Councils and lengthsman.	Identify number of Parish Councils that would like support with wildflower verge management  Deliver wildflower verge training sessions	See also response to 30 d. BBLP are working with Verging on Wild to alter their verge maintenance schedules to encourage and promote the identified species that have been identified. To date 45 verges have been designated and allowed to rewild. Additional formal wildflower verges were installed in 2020 by BBLP at Rotherwas Relief Road, Aylestone Hill Verge, Stretton Sugwas Roman Road.  BBLP canvassed all Parish Councils for their views on omitting the first of two verge cuts on C&U class routes to promote biodiversity. 39 Parishes responded with 11 parishes going forward with this trial. This will be offered to all Parishes for 22/23. Features in the Annual Plan 2023-24. BBLP will again write to all Parishes to agree 1 cut regime on Highway Verges if they do not impact on the Highway Safety.	Complete
66	(h) (32b) greater clarification be provided on the operation of a phosphate trading platform and what it entails as a briefing to Councillors and the Nutrient Management Board be invited to review the merits of the proposal with a view to information being added to the relevant section of the council's website in due course;	Accepted - The mechanism through which the phosphate trading platform can be secured and delivered is currently being developed by Ricardo consultants, this will be published on the River Lugg catchment area of the website when complete and signed off by the council in collaboration with Natural England. A non-technical summary will also accompany the report in full which can be shared with Councillors and also made publicly available on the website.	Phosphate trading platform, full technical report and non-technical summary to be published on the Council's website.	Following the construction at Luston (in progress) of the worlds first Phosphate reducing integrated wetland, the Council has declared nutrient certainty which enables the commencement of trading phosphate credits from this site. The Herefordshire Phosphate Calculator has been adopted and updated by Natural England as a national tool. The Council is currently operating a first come first served policy on the phosphate credits, whilst the development of a long term policy is developed. Full detail are available on the website.	In progress
67	(i) (33) the committee encourages the executive to continue to explore all solutions to protecting the River Wye SAC catchment including that the possibility for a Water Protection Zone to be proactively discussed with the Environment Agency;	Accepted	Officers to continue exploring all solutions to protecting the River Wye SAC catchment area in partnership with the Nutrient Management Board.  Officers to continue proactive discussions with the Environment Agency to consider a Water Protection Zone	Herefordshire Council lobbied government for a water protection zone however this was rejected. As a result however a Cabinet Commission has been established to undertake a more strategic and systems led review of river quality and in particular to consider how the council can use all the powers and influence available to it to progress the restoration of the Wye and Lugg.	In progress
68	(j) (42) work is undertaken in conjunction with the transport team to undertake surveys with schools, to identify barriers and opportunities for active travel. A full survey to commence and report back with opportunities and recommendations by November 2021;	Report findings to General Scrutiny	The annual tracking study tracks attitudes towards active travel including the following outcomes, further information is available regarding buses and car-sharing. Note this survey is open to all ages and this answer links with the response from recommendation 42 where a specific school focussed survey was carried out.	The ongoing tracking study revealed that 77% of all participants (across a range of age groups) were put off cycling by something, the main reason given was it was too dangerous, not suitable due to disability or old age, were not confident enough, did not have a bike or preferred walking. 43% of respondents were put off walking by something, the main reasons given were distance, not suitable due to disability or poor mobility/health, roads can be dangerous, having heavy things to carry and not having enough time.	In progress
69	(k) (54) that this response be reconsidered with a view to developing a county-wide policy.	Rejected The full response can be found here: <a href="https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50092205/Appendix%201%20for%20Executive%20Response%20to%20General%20Scrutiny%20Recommendations%20Regarding%20the%20Climate%20and%20Ecol.pdf">https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50092205/Appendix%201%20for%20Executive%20Response%20to%20General%20Scrutiny%20Recommendations%20Regarding%20the%20Climate%20and%20Ecol.pdf</a>	N/A	Also links to recommendation 54.	Complete
<b>Further recommendations, 26/04/21</b>					
<b>No</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Exec Response</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>	<b>Progress Summary</b>

70	<p>That, given the pressing and profound challenges facing the County from climate and ecological change, the executive urgently consider setting up a Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) standing advisory panel directly advising and supporting them and ensuring that the executive deliver our commitments to the Council's declared CEE. That this CEE standing advisory panel be responsible for keeping the appropriate scrutiny committee abreast of progress and thus enabling the executive to be held to account on progress on the CEE.</p>	<p>Rejected – the rethinking governance working group have considered this and are instead recommending a separate scrutiny committee Environment &amp; Sustainability Scrutiny Committee that has as one of its functions the climate and ecological emergency.</p>		<p>Links to recommendation 60.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
71	<p>That the general scrutiny committee believes that having signed up to our Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) that further action needs to be taken across Herefordshire to stop activities that are further damaging our environment and ecology and recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. That the executive be invited to explore more fully those permitted development rights which could be subject to Article 4 direction;</li> <li>ii. That the executive be encouraged to write to the government and the Local Government Association to suggest that the General Permitted Development Order should be reviewed in terms of the environmental or ecological damage that some permitted activities can make; and</li> <li>iii. That the standing panel be invited to consider whether the planning system is fit for purpose for dealing with the CEE.</li> </ul>	<p>Accepted in part</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Whilst bound by national legislation, as detailed below, the Council is actively seeking to utilise these powers to protect the natural environment and is currently developing a site specific article 4 direction at the moment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guidance in the National Planning Guidance on the use of article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights states that these should be limited to situations where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area. The potential harm that the direction is intended to address will need to be clearly identified. In addition the Secretary of State has recently confirmed that Article 4's should only cover areas where significant harm to a particular area has been identified. A blanket approach for the whole county would not be confirmed.</li> <li>- As this is also a planning decision the Council's decision to make or confirm the article 4 direction could be challengeable by judicial review. It is therefore necessary to have proper justification to demonstrate that the Council has exercised its powers properly and considered the appropriate balance between landowner's private rights and the rights of residents in taking a decision to make an article 4 direction.</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii. The Secretary of State has the right to call in and modify the article 4 direction and therefore sufficient justification needs to be provided. Therefore the most appropriate approach would be to write to the Secretary of State requesting that certain permitted development rights are reviewed.</li> <li>iii. As per recommendation 1 above, this would also need to be considered following any changes following Rethinking Governance work. It is however noted that significant work is currently underway to enhance the planning consideration for the Climate &amp; Ecological Emergency. For example the recent introduction of new 'climate change' and 'biodiversity and ecology' compliance checklists and new Supplementary Planning Documents on both Environmental Building Standards and Nutrient Impacts on the Natural Environment which are currently in development.</li> </ul>		<p>Herefordshire Council writes to the Secretary of State requesting that certain permitted development rights are reviewed.</p> <p>Email response received. No further action has been taken on this matter.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
72	<p>That it be recommended to the executive that a banner about the Climate and Ecological Emergency, with appropriate links to relevant information, is displayed permanently on the council's webpages.</p>	<p>Accepted - The Council has a scroll through web banner and one space will be dedicated specifically for climate messaging. This recommendation will need to ensure a constant refresh of content to ensure maximum impact.</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council will dedicate one space on the scroll through web banner to include climate messaging. This will be updated as the content should be updated regularly to ensure maximum impact.</p>	<p>Web banner will promote climate messaging and be updated regularly.</p> <p>Banner links to updates. If there no updates, it links to the Zero Carbon Website.</p>	<p>Complete</p>



## Progress Report

**Meeting:** Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee

**Meeting date:** 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**Report by:** Democratic Services

### Classification

Open

### Decision type

This is not an executive decision

### Wards affected

(All Wards);

### Purpose:

This report provides a brief summary update on issues previously considered by the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee, including responses to information requests made by the committee, updates on resolutions made by the committee, including reports and recommendations to the executive and the Executive Repose and executive decision made in respect of scrutiny reports and recommendations.

### Recommendation(s)

That the progress report on scrutiny information requests, scrutiny reports and recommendations and other matters raised by the Committee be noted and endorsed as appropriate.

It is recommended that:

- a) The scrutiny report on the Local Plan; a review of the development of a new Local Plan for Herefordshire, at Appendix 1, is approved by the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee for submission to Cabinet for consideration.
- b) That the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee's findings at Appendix 2 in relation to the [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan](#) be approved and submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

## **Alternative options**

1. The alternative is for the Committee not to receive a Progress Report to update on matters since the last meeting, which would provide less clarity and transparency on the progress of issues since the last meeting.

## **Key considerations**

2. Scrutiny committees have statutory powers to make recommendations to the Executive, as appropriate, and the Cabinet has a statutory duty to respond to scrutiny recommendations. They may also make reports and recommendations to external decision making bodies.
3. In tracking scrutiny recommendations, it is important that it is clear that the recommendations are addressed to the Cabinet, as the Executive decision making body of the council (or, where appropriate, external agency), and to track the decision of the Cabinet and thereafter the implementation status of the Executive Response and Cabinet decisions.
4. Scrutiny committees also have the power to request information from council departments and certain other external organisations, from who they should expect a response. Scrutiny committees should be clear why they are requesting information and when they need the response by. Scrutiny committees may therefore wish to keep track of information requested at the previous meeting and for this to be received at the next ordinary meeting of the committee.

## **Scrutiny Committees at Herefordshire**

5. The council has five scrutiny committees, established by full Council on 20 May 2022;
  - i). Scrutiny Management Board
  - ii). Environment & Sustainability Scrutiny Committee
  - iii). Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee
  - iv). Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee
  - v). Health, Care & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.
6. The general role of the scrutiny committees is set out in Article 6 – Scrutiny of the Herefordshire Council Constitution (the Constitution), in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000. Part 3, Section 4 of the Constitution sets out the specific remits for each of the scrutiny committees. This includes a strategic management and coordination functions for the Scrutiny Management Board, as well as the thematic remits of the four other scrutiny committees. The Scrutiny Management Board is also responsible for the scrutiny of corporate cross cutting functions of the council.
7. Although scrutiny committees do not have any executive decision making powers, they do have statutory powers to make recommendations to Cabinet, as appropriate, and Cabinet has a statutory duty to respond to scrutiny recommendations. They may also make reports and recommendations to external decision making bodies.

## ***Progress from Previous Meetings***

### Scrutiny Review of the Herefordshire Local Plan



On 21 September 2022 the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee (Committee) considered the development of the new Herefordshire Local Plan. The committee considered the extent to which the preparation of the Local Plan aims linked with the objectives for Environment and Sustainability, as outlined in the County Plan 2020-2024, Herefordshire Climate Change Emergency resolutions and Executive Response, and other relevant council strategies and policies, including the Success Measures provided in the council's County Plan 2020-2024. The Committee sought assurance that the Local Plan will help to deliver these, rather than cut across them.

In addition, the Committee considered the initial results which were emerging from the Local Plan Options consultations undertaken during 2022 and details of the scope and methods used during the consultation process.

The Committee has questioned Cabinet Members and planning officers during its inquiry, as follows:-

- Councillor David Hitchiner - Leader of the Council.
- Councillor John Harrington - Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport.
- Councillor Ellie Chowns - Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment.
- Samantha Banks - Neighbourhood Planning Service Manager.

The scrutiny inquiry considered the Herefordshire Local Plan and its overall timeline, the key council priorities for Environment and Sustainability, and the Success Measures provided in the council's County Plan 2020-2024:

- i). Increase flood resilience and reduce levels of phosphate pollution in the county's river*
- ii). Reduce the council's carbon emissions*
- iii). Work in partnership with others to reduce county carbon emissions*
- iv). Improve the air quality within Herefordshire*
- v). Improve residents' access to green space in Herefordshire*
- vi). Improve energy efficiency of homes and build standards for new housing.*

The Committee considered the extent to which the development of the Local Plan appeared to deliver these, in conjunction with the process for development and consultation on the options for the plan. The committee also considered the consultation on the Local Plan and the summary results from the analysis of the consultation on the Local Plan, which are relevant to Environment and Sustainability, may help to inform the development of the new Local Plan, the rationale for the consultation, the main mechanism and methods for the consultation and how representative are, the wider consultation stages and timelines, and how the results of the consultation are being used to inform policy and service development.

The minutes of the meeting are available [here](https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/g8828/Public%20minutes%20Wednesday%2021-Sep-2022%2010.30%20Environment%20and%20Sustainability%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=11):

<https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/g8828/Public%20minutes%20Wednesday%2021-Sep-2022%2010.30%20Environment%20and%20Sustainability%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=11>

At the end of this meeting, the Committee drew together some key points that it would like the Cabinet and the planning team to take into consideration in the ongoing development of the Local Plan proposals. The Committee decided to document its findings and any recommendations in a summary report to be drafted following the meeting, for approval by the committee.

The main evidence considered by the Committee is now summarised in the report at Appendix 1, along with commentary on the Committee's own findings, suggestions and

contribution to the development of the new Local Plan, the consultation and wider community objectives for planning and delivering sustainable development and wellbeing of Herefordshire.

### Scrutiny Findings on the Herefordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

8. On 18 November 2022 the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee considered the development of the [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Action Plan](#), What the Council and its statutory partners are doing to manage flood risk in the county and a review of progress against the five objectives outlined in the current Herefordshire Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.
9. At the end of this meeting, the committee drew together some key findings as detailed at Appendix 2 that it would like the Cabinet and the planning directorate to take into consideration in the ongoing development of the Herefordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy proposals.

### ***Scrutiny Recommendations and Executive Response***

10. In accordance with Part 4 Section 5 of the Constitution, the council's scrutiny committees may make recommendations to Full Council or the Cabinet with respect to any functions which are the responsibility of the executive or of any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive, or on matters which affect the county or its inhabitants. The Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee may also make recommendations to the relevant NHS bodies or relevant health service providers or full Council.
11. Scrutiny committees may not make executive decisions and scrutiny recommendations therefore require consideration and decision by the appropriate decision maker; usually the Cabinet, but also full Council for policy and budgetary decisions and the NHS where it is the decision maker.
12. The Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker table attached at Appendix 1 provides a summary of scrutiny recommendations made during the municipal year, so that the Committee can track the progress of the recommendations made.
13. The Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker table includes each scrutiny recommendation made and the date it was made, (which will be as is recorded in the committee minutes), identification of the decision maker (e.g. Cabinet), the Executive Response (the actual Cabinet decision), which may be different from the scrutiny recommendation and which will be minuted in the Cabinet minutes, the date the Executive Response/decision was made and an implementation review date.
14. The Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker enables the scrutiny committee to track whether their recommendations have been agreed, what actually was agreed (if different) and ask about any outcomes arising from the scrutiny recommendations, for example, service improvements, value for money savings and outcomes for residents.
15. If the relevant respective executive decisions and actions have been implemented, they will not be referred over to the scrutiny recommendation tracker report for the next municipal year,

but that any that have not been implemented may be referred to the scrutiny recommendation tracker for the next Committee cycle.

### Procedure for Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees

16. Where scrutiny committees make reports or recommendations to the Cabinet, as soon as this has been confirmed, these will be referred to the Cabinet requesting an Executive Response and the issue will be published on the council's Forward Plan. This will instigate the preparation of a report to Cabinet and the necessary consideration of the response, the technical feasibility, financial implications, legal implications and equalities implications etc.
17. Where scrutiny committees make reports or recommendations to full Council (e.g. in the case of policy and budgetary decisions), the same process will be followed, with a report to Cabinet to agree its Executive Response, and thereafter, a report will be prepared for council for consideration of the scrutiny report and recommendations along with the Cabinet's Response.
18. Where scrutiny committees have powers under their terms of reference to make reports or recommendations external decision makers (e.g. NHS bodies), where they do this, the relevant external decision maker shall be notified in writing, providing them with a copy of the committee's report and recommendations, and requesting a response.
19. Once the Executive Response has been agreed, the scrutiny committee shall receive a report to receive the response and the committee may review implementation of the executive's decisions after such a period as these may reasonably be implemented (review date).

### **Community Impact**

20. In accordance with the adopted code of corporate governance, the 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**

21. Whilst this is an update on the work of the scrutiny committees and will in itself have minimal environmental impacts, consideration has been made in the consideration of Executive decisions and the Executive Responses provided by the Cabinet.

### **Equality Duty**

22. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:
23. 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.

24. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute 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. Whilst this is an update on the work of the scrutiny committees and will in itself have minimal equalities impacts, consideration has been made in the consideration of Executive decisions and the Executive Responses provided by the Cabinet.

### **Resource Implications**

25. The costs of the work of the Committee will have to be met from existing resources. It should be noted the costs of running scrutiny can be subject to an assessment to support appropriate processes.
26. The councillors' allowance scheme contains provision for co-opted and other non-elected members to claim travel, subsistence and dependant carer's allowances on the same basis as members of the council. If the committee agrees that co-optees should be included in an inquiry they will be entitled to claim allowances.
27. It is suggested that a scrutiny committee should only have one in-depth scrutiny task group inquiry running at a time.
28. Whilst this is an update on the work of the scrutiny committees and will in itself have minimal resource implications, consideration has been made in the consideration of Executive decisions and the Executive Responses provided by the Cabinet.

### **Legal Implications**

29. The council is required to deliver a scrutiny function. The development of a work programme which is focused and reflects those priorities facing Herefordshire will assist the committee and the council to deliver a scrutiny function.
30. The Scrutiny Rules in Part 4 Section 5 of the council's constitution provide for the setting of a work programme, the reporting of recommendations to Cabinet and the establishment of task and finish groups within the committee's agreed work programme.
31. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report which provides a progress update on recommendations made to Cabinet and subsequent Cabinet decision. Any legal implications arising from Cabinet Decisions will be detailed in the relevant Cabinet report.

### **Risk management**

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
There is a reputational risk to the council if the scrutiny function does not operate effectively.	The arrangements for the development of the work programme should help mitigate this risk.

### **Consultees**

The Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 3: The Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker.

**Background papers**

None identified.





Herefordshire Council

Environment and Sustainability  
Scrutiny Committee

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# The Herefordshire Local Plan

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*A review of the development of a new Local Plan for  
Herefordshire.*

***DRAFT*** Report

Published on 19th January 2023  
by Herefordshire Council

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## Executive Summary

On 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022 the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee considered the development of the new Herefordshire Local Plan. As part of this review, the committee considered the extent to which the preparation of the Herefordshire Local Plan aimed to deliver the objectives for Environment and Sustainability, as outlined in the County Plan 2020-2024, Herefordshire Climate Change Emergency resolutions and Executive Response, and other relevant Council strategies and policies, including the Success Measures provided in the Council's County Plan 2020-2024.

In addition, the committee considered the initial results which were emerging from the Local Plan Options consultations undertaken during 2022 and details of the scope and methods used during the consultation process.

At the end of this meeting, the committee drew together some key points that it would like the Cabinet and the planning directorate to take into consideration in the ongoing development of the Local Plan proposals. These are set out here in this report of the committee.

### Witnesses and Scope of Inquiry

The scrutiny committee has questioned Cabinet Members and planning officers during its inquiry, as follows:-

- Councillor David Hitchiner - Leader of the Council.
- Councillor John Harrington - Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport.
- Councillor Ellie Chowns - Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment.
- Samantha Banks - Neighbourhood Planning Service Manager.

The scrutiny inquiry considered the Herefordshire Local Plan and its overall timeline, the key Council priorities for Environment and Sustainability, and the Success Measures provided in the Council's County Plan 2020-2024:

- i). Increase flood resilience and reduce levels of phosphate pollution in the county's river*
- ii). Reduce the council's carbon emissions*
- iii). Work in partnership with others to reduce county carbon emissions*
- iv). Improve the air quality within Herefordshire*
- v). Improve residents' access to green space in Herefordshire*
- vi). Improve energy efficiency of homes and build standards for new housing.*

The committee considered the extent to which the development of the Local Plan appeared to deliver these, in conjunction with the process for development and consultation on the options for the plan. The committee also considered the consultation on the Local Plan and the summary results from the analysis of the consultation on the Local Plan, which are relevant to Environment and Sustainability, may help to inform the development of the new Local Plan, the rationale for the consultation, the main mechanism and methods for the consultation and how representative there are, the wider consultation stages and timelines and how the results of the consultation are being used to inform policy and service development.

The minutes of the meeting is available [here](#):

<https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/g8828/Public%20minutes%20Wednesday%2021-Sep-2022%2010.30%20Environment%20and%20Sustainability%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=11>

The main evidence considered by the committee is summarised in this report, along with commentary on the committee's own findings, suggestions and contribution to the development of the new Local Plan, the consultation and wider community objectives for planning and delivering sustainable development and wellbeing of Herefordshire.

## Main Findings of the Scrutiny Inquiry

In addition, here also, in summary, are the main findings of the scrutiny inquiry, for consideration.

1. There was a lack of supporting evidence to confirm that the five Strategic Spatial Options and the four additional supporting Rural Options initially chosen for the Local Plan consultation, had been thoroughly reviewed against the County Plan and in particular, the success measures under-pinning the key Council priorities for the Environment. In evidence, the committee was given re-assurances on this, but without any evidence that other options had been considered and dismissed, remains sceptical that these initial options were framed against the Environment success measures.
2. During the consultation there were other options offered, particularly around concentrating development along existing rail infrastructure, or around a completely new settlement, which might have had more resonance with the Environment success measures, but again, they seemed to have been dismissed.
3. Consequently, the committee felt that the emerging place setting option was unlikely to meet the Environment success measures due to the limited and unimaginative initial Spatial Options put before consultees.
4. Generally, the committee are concerned about the lack of a joined-up approach with other initiatives (such as on public bus transport), the topic based policies for the Local Plan itself and the key evidence base studies that would be produced to support all of this at the examination stage.
5. In particular, while it might seem obvious to concentrate development around Hereford and the market towns, witnesses were unable to give a guarantee that this approach would lead to less car usage, nor in the medium term help with the aspiration for net zero being attained across the County.
6. As for the rural options, without parallel development of access to local services such as shops, employment, transport and schools, these would simply add to the worsening of the problem over car use.
7. Much has been done around making Hereford more sustainable in terms of active travel measures, but without sustainable travel strategies for the market towns and rural settlements, superimposing development on them would not seem sustainable.
8. Concomitant with this, the committee would like work to be done to see how the options chosen fitted with the existing suite of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) across the County as well as the movement studies that had been carried out for the Market Towns.
9. Whilst the committee understood that, going forward, the reasoning (ongoing white paper reform on planning) behind detaching the topic based policies for the Local Plan from the strategic spatial options, there was a danger that the drive to minimise carbon emissions would be weakened in shaping the latter in isolation.
10. Regarding the success measures on air and river water quality, we believe that more modelling work needs to be done on the place setting option currently on the table to test whether it will cause further deterioration rather than lead to improvements in those areas.
11. On the consultation process itself, the committee are concerned that this was taking place before the key evidence based studies had been completed and therefore would lead to the emerging place setting option not being fully evidenced (justified). When these reports became available,

the place setting option on the table at that time should be fully examined and tested against that portfolio of evidence.

12. The committee noted that responses fell away sharply from the initial spatial options consultation (1,200) to the later policy options consultation (250). Further that, of the 3,700 visitors to the Commonplace website during the place based consultation, only around one third (1,100) submitted a response. Maximising the response rate and hence resident participation in an exercise as important and long-lasting (to 2041) is paramount. The committee is concerned that the evidence from the consultation is less useful as a result of the low response rate.
13. Whilst the committee did not fully examine the capacity for Herefordshire to absorb the number of houses targeted for the period to 2041, it would ask that, in parallel with the work on place setting options, urgent work is done on the ability of the existing infrastructure and services, particularly in Market Towns, to cope with the proposed additional housing.

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1. The Local Plan sets out the local authority's policies and proposals for land use in its area; it sets out the planning framework for the county, including for housing provision, the economy, retail and town centres, infrastructure provision and the environment. It also sets out policies by which planning applications will be determined, in addition to allocation land for housing, employment and other uses.
- 1.2. As such, the plan guides and shapes day-to-day decisions as to whether or not planning permission should be granted, under the system known of planning and development control. Planning decisions must be considered against local development plans and although development plans do not have to be rigidly adhered to, they provide a firm basis for rational and consistent planning decisions<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.3. All councils that are local planning authorities are required to review their Core Strategy and associated Local Plan every five years and Herefordshire Council is now in the process of updating the Herefordshire Core Strategy and Local Plan, which was adopted in October 2015. The Herefordshire Local Plan will set out the Council's land-use policies and proposals for the period up to 2041 and will replace the existing Herefordshire Core Strategy, which was adopted in October 2015.
- 1.4. Local Plans are adopted by the local authority after public consultation and having proper regard for other material factors. It is anticipated that an additional target consultation will take place in the autumn of 2022 on the rural strategy.
- 1.5. The draft part 1 Local Plan is expected to be prepared for February 2023 with the intention of a public consultation under Regulation 18 in June or July 2023. The Local Plan will set out a strategy for the scale and distribution of growth across the County and the policies by which future planning applications will be determined.
- 1.6. When a draft plan has been approved by the Council and formally published, it will be subject to an independent Examination in Public. The draft Local Plan will have to demonstrate that it is:

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<sup>1</sup> Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (replacing Section 25 of Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and Section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) requires that decisions made should be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- *Positively prepared* – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
  - *Justified* – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
  - *Effective* – deliverable over the plan period, and based on joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters as evidenced by statements of common ground; and
  - *Consistent with national policy* – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 and other statements of national planning policy.
- 1.7. The Local Plan must also be made subject to a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitat Regulations Assessment; and include policies designed to ensure that development and use of land in the area contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
- 1.8. The Local Plan should:
- i). be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;
  - ii). be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable;
  - iii). be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;
  - iv). contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals;
  - v). be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and
  - vi). serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area<sup>2</sup>.

### ***The Scrutiny Inquiry***

- 1.9. On 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022, the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee considered the development of the Herefordshire Local Plan and the progress of the Local Plan consultation, with questions to David Hitchiner – the Leader of the Council, Councillor John Harrington - Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport and Councillor Ellie Chowns - Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment.
- 1.10. The committee reviewed the progress in the development of the Local Plan and the extent to which the plan was delivering the Council’s objectives for Environment and Sustainability, including the environmental Success Measures provided in the Council’s County Plan 2020-2024:
- i). Increase flood resilience and reduce levels of phosphate pollution in the county’s river
  - ii). Reduce the Council’s carbon emissions
  - iii). Work in partnership with others to reduce county carbon emissions
  - iv). Improve the air quality within Herefordshire
  - v). Improve residents’ access to green space in Herefordshire
  - vi). Improve energy efficiency of homes and build standards for new housing.

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<sup>2</sup> The National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 11.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1005759/NPPF\\_July\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf)

- 1.11. The committee also reviewed progress and effectiveness of the Local Plan consultation, including its methodology and approach in consulting with stakeholders on the development of the new Local Plan and synthesising the results of the consultation in to the development of the new Local Plan policies and strategies for Herefordshire.

## 2 Environmental Priorities

- 2.1. The County Plan 2020-2024 provides a commitment to updating the Core Strategy (Local Plan) to make sure sustainable development is delivered which meets the needs of local people while respecting the County's heritage and our natural environment.
- 2.2. The committee heard that the Herefordshire Local Plan update will set out the spatial vision and objectives for the county and to establish a planning policy framework necessary to deliver the spatial vision. The new Local Plan will aim to ensure that there are sufficient homes provided for all members of the community, provide employment opportunities, sufficient retail provision and improved infrastructure while, at the same time, providing protection for the wider environment and helping to tackle climate change.
- 2.3. The committee considered how the development of the Local Plan would help to deliver the Council's environmental priorities and aligned to the according success measures in the County Plan.

### ***Flood Risk Management***

- 2.4. This includes the County Plan environment Success Measure to ***increase flood resilience and reduce levels of phosphate pollution in the county's rivers***. The committee heard that National Planning Policy Guidance had recently been strengthened and that any new Local Plan policies need to comply with the Guidance and employ a particular required order and approach in its development.
- 2.5. In accordance with the Guidance, a countywide Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was undertaken in 2020, this is likely to require an update prior to the Local Plan being submitted for Environmental Impact Assessment<sup>3</sup>. Some development sites are likely to require a more detailed Level 2 SFRA to help determine the suitability of the site and whether mitigation development is required to enable development on the site.

### ***Water Quality***

- 2.6. There is an acknowledged concern that the phosphates levels in the counties main rivers, the River Wye and Lugg are too high and this has raised concerns about the impact this may have on the natural environment and public health. This is something that the committee has also considered this year.
- 2.7. In addition to these concerns, the committee heard in evidence that the need to reduce levels of phosphate pollution in the county's rivers has the potential to limit the ability of the Council to meet its development requirements and that there was a need to develop robust policies to ensure new development is phosphate nutrient neutral.

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<sup>3</sup> The process of Environmental Impact Assessment in the context of town and country planning in England is governed by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the '2017 Regulations'). These regulations apply to development which is given planning permission under Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- 2.8. To this end, a Cabinet Commission has been established to undertake a more strategic and systems led review of river quality and in particular to consider how the Council can use all the powers and influence available to it to progress the restoration of the Wye and Lugg. There is also in operation the Nutrient Management Board, which is a Technical Advisory Group to the Cabinet, made up of practitioner staff from partner agencies, which has been undertaking work to review the situation and coalition of regional partners to investigate incremental improvements and approaches within current governance and institutional systems.
- 2.9. The committee has already made recommendations to Cabinet on this and without duplicating the work of the Commission, the committee has agreed to keep this matter under review with oversight of the Commissions work and findings arising from this.

## **Carbon Emissions**

- 2.10. The committee considered the County Plan environment Success Measures to **reduce the council's carbon emissions** and to **work in partnership with others to reduce county carbon emissions** and heard that the Local Plan policies and strategy are seeking to locate development in sustainable locations and reduce the need to travel by focusing the majority of growth in Hereford and the market towns. The rural spatial strategy options are also proposing to provide for a reduced spread of particular identified villages in rural areas, including 215 identified within the current Core Strategy.
- 2.11. The committee also heard that the policy options included increasing cycling and walking opportunities, seeking to identify potential local distance greenway routes, green infrastructure and reviewing the potential for a "Fifteen Minute Neighbourhoods" concept to be used when planning strategic sites. [www.smarttransport.org.uk/insight-and-policy/latest-insight-and-policy/what-is-a-15-minute-neighbourhood](http://www.smarttransport.org.uk/insight-and-policy/latest-insight-and-policy/what-is-a-15-minute-neighbourhood)
- 2.12. The committee has concerns that the current plans to allow substantial development in Hereford and the market towns, without the required increased capacity and infrastructure in public transport and local amenities envisaged in the fifteen minute neighbours model will inevitably result in increased car usage and thereby increased carbon emissions.
- 2.13. In questioning, the committee pressed the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport on whether he could guarantee that the emerging place setting option from the third consultative stage would lead to reduced car usage. If not, it appears that a central plank of the Environmental section of the County Plan would not be met.
- 2.14. There remains a question about how the Local Plan will deliver a guaranteed reduction in car emissions, consistent with the County Plan objectives to reduce carbon emission and car usage, and at the same time permit the envisaged housing development in areas which have insufficient public transport infrastructure. It may be useful to consider modelling in greater detail of the estimated car usage with the anticipated developments and scale of growth with currently known public transport capacity.

## **Air Quality**

- 2.15. The County Plan includes a Success Measure to **improve the air quality within Herefordshire**. The committee heard that specific Local Plan option proposals are seeking to address air quality issues where there are current air quality issues identified such as at Bargates in Leominster.
- 2.16. It may be useful to undertake further scrutiny and feasibility studies on the specific Local Plan option proposals to address air quality issues in Leominster against the impact of projected future population growth and development envisaged.

- 2.17. Notwithstanding the specific Local Plan option proposals being considered, there remains a question about how the Local Plan will deliver the improvement in air quality as well as the envisaged population growth and development without a significant improvement in the County strategic public transport infrastructure. It may be useful to consider modelling in greater detail of the estimated car usage and impact on air quality with the anticipated developments and scale of growth assuming currently known public transport capacity.

## **Green Spaces**

- 2.18. The County Plan includes a Success Measure to **improve residents' access to green space in Herefordshire**. The committee heard that policies will be included within the Local Plan to protect and enhance open spaces and continue to protect Local Green Space currently allocated with Neighbourhood Development Plans. Strategic planning of larger allocation sites will also seek to include new and connective green and open spaces as part of larger developments. The committee heard that a consultation was being undertaken on the green infrastructure and open space evidence base. This consultation, involving town and parish councils, is seeking to provide an audit of current open space and potential improvements.
- 2.19. The committee welcomed the commitment to protect and enhance open spaces, but also noted that the envisaged population growth and developments focused around market towns will inevitably impact on green and open spaces and that the strategic planning of larger allocation sites will also seek to include new and connective green and open spaces as part of larger developments. It may be useful to consider modelling in greater detail of the impact on access to green open spaces within the anticipated developments and scale of growth.

## **Energy Efficiency Standards**

- 2.20. The County Plan includes a Success Measure to **improve energy efficiency of homes and build standards for new housing** and the committee heard that the Environmental Building Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was being developed and would provide important evidence for development of policy framework.
- 2.21. The SPD contains supplementary planning guidance to existing policy, which will be a material consideration for planning applications. It was developed within the context of national and local Net Zero Carbon targets and provides detail on what is required to deliver high quality construction that is ready to meet those goals. It will also address other environmental issues which construction has a big impact on, such as biodiversity and resilience to climate change.

## **Transport**

- 2.22. The County Plan includes a Success Measure to **increase the number of short distance trips being done by sustainable modes of travel – walking, cycling, public transport**. The committee heard that a review of the local scope of transport infrastructure, modes of transport and updated modelling will review the measures needed to facilitate modal shift<sup>4</sup>, to be incorporated into the strategic proposals.
- 2.23. The committee has concerns that the current and planned transport infrastructure may be insufficient to facilitate true modal shift on a scale that will meet the Council's targets to

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<sup>4</sup> Modal Shift means an increase in the proportion of persons travelling to and from the Site using more sustainable modes of transport

Modal Shift means a change (shift) in transportation system (mode) through utilization of railway freight transport and domestic shipping, which is the mass transit systems with a small environmental burden, for freight transport.

increase the number of number of short distance trips being done by sustainable modes of travel, to reduce carbon emissions to net zero and to improve air quality.

- 2.24. Given the concerns expressed by the committee about the feasibility of the anticipated population growth and development without the sufficient transport capacity and infrastructure, the location of new development in areas where there is likely to be a choice of transport modes other than the private car will be particularly important.
- 2.25. Policy options have been included to increase cycling and walking opportunities, seeking potential local distance greenway routes, green infrastructure and reviewing the potential for the [Fifteen Minute Neighbourhoods](#) concept to be used when planning strategic sites.
- 2.26. The strategy is seeking to locate development in sustainable locations and reduce the need to travel by focusing the majority of growth in Hereford and the market towns. The rural spatial strategy options are also suggesting reduced spread of identified villages in rural areas for the 215 identified within the current Core Strategy.
- 2.27. The committee expressed some concern at the prospect of development being focussed around market towns in the County, given that three of the towns have no railway stations. Should development take place in market town site with a lack of alternative transport infrastructure and opportunities, the expectation would be further car use and pressure on existing road infrastructure, thereby increasing pollution, in contravention of the Council's stated carbon reduction and air quality priorities and ambitions set out in the County Plan.
- 2.28. The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport told the committee in evidence that the objectives of the County Plan had been fully considered as part of the formulation of options and that whilst it was acknowledged that rail infrastructure in the County was limited, the market towns were deemed to benefit from other forms of transport infrastructure to a greater extent than the rural settlements in the County, which made them better equipped to accommodate growth.
- 2.29. Some members of the Committee submitted that when the full Council had previously debated and decided against a bypass for Hereford, there was an undertaking made by the administration that money would be invested on transport improvements in rural areas, but it was suggested that this had in fact not materialised, whilst at the same time budget pressures were leading to cuts in rural bus services which were already in short supply. This again raised the concern that developments in rural areas would lead to increased car usage as residents did not have access to reliable alternatives. This may appear to run counter to the Council's environment objectives set out in the County Plan and it raised the question as to what extent the Council's environment objectives had in fact been properly considered and taken into account in the development of the Local Plan consultation options.
- 2.30. The committee questioned the Cabinet Member on the options for development focussed around the existing railway line at Pontrilas and asked if these had now been abandoned. The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport told the committee that the option had not been completely removed from consideration, but that as the Local Plan needed to demonstrate its deliverability up to 2041, there were currently too many uncertainties around the deliverability of such a project to make it viable for inclusion as a leading option.
- 2.31. The Neighbourhood Planning Service Manager advised in evidence that around 120 villages were earmarked for being taken out from the current Core Strategy when the new Local Plan emerged, as it was recognised that many were unsustainable from a transport perspective.
- 2.32. In the further consideration of the prioritisation of possible development sites around the market plan options model, the committee suggests that it is important to prioritise those



existing settlements with the most developed capacity and potential for improved access to local services and facilities, particularly schools, shops and transport. Although this would not in itself answer the question of whether there would be sufficient capacity local amenities and transport capacity for the anticipated growth development to be considered sustainable against the net zero carbon emissions and environmental objectives, but it would appear to be an essential prerequisite to meeting those objectives.

### 3 Local Plan Consultation

- 3.1. As part of the consultation on the Local Plan, the Council has consulted residents for their views on local parks, playgrounds, sports pitches and other open spaces including wilder natural areas, as well as their views on what is important to them in the open spaces near where they live or where they visit. The survey closed on Friday 9 September 2022.
- 3.2. The committee heard that there had been three early consultations on the Local Plan, which have set out a number of different options.

Between 17 January and 28 February 2022 a consultation was undertaken on the overall spatial strategy and growth levels, high level spatial options for rural areas as well as consulting on a draft vision and objectives of the Local Plan.

Between 4 April 2022 until 16 May 2022 a consultation was undertaken to consider possible options for the content of topic based policies across a wide range of subject areas.

Between 13 June and 29 July 2022 a place based options consultation took place and set out possible options and potential strategic development areas for Hereford, each of the County's market towns together with a range of alternative settlement hierarchies for rural parts of Herefordshire.

- 3.3. Key evidence base studies had also been commissioned, which were due to be reported in later in the year. The assessment of the alternative options, together with the development of a comprehensive evidence base, is to be used as evidence that the "justified" test of soundness has been achieved.
- 3.4. The committee heard that the Local Plan will also be subjected to a viability assessment to help demonstrate that its policies and proposals are deliverable and, when submitted, will also be accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which will set out details and costings on funding of infrastructure in order to progress towards a future Infrastructure Levy. The committee heard that the consultations undertaken to date are part of the first stage in a series of consultations that will continue up to and through the Examination in Public. By 2023 it is intended to consult upon a draft plan which will enable representations to be made upon the detail of policies and proposals.
- 3.5. The committee had some concerns that the consultation on the Local Plan was being conducted before a number of the commissioned evidence based reports had been received and it was queried whether the evidence reports should have been commissioned at an earlier stage.
- 3.6. The Neighbourhood Planning Service Manager confirmed to the committee that a number of evidence based reports were in production, which would help to frame the strategy, but that it was a requirement to consult upon options and alternatives in tandem with the commissioning of reports.

- 3.7. The committee was informed that it was important that the reports were as up to date as possible at the time the Local Plan went to examination and it was therefore deemed that commissioning reports too early carried an element of risk, whereby, if the process becomes delayed for any reason, then they may need to be recommissioned and further updated before examination could take place.
- 3.8. The committee was informed that there would be further rounds of consultation to follow, including a further engagement on preferred options and ranking settlements to be undertaken with parish councils and the local community in the autumn of 2022, which would incorporate previously omitted scoring for roads, public transport and flooding, thus taking much greater account of sustainability issues.

### ***Local Plan Options Consultations***

- 3.9. The committee heard that the Spatial Options consultation undertaken in January and February 2022 had set out a draft vision, supplemented by a set of more detailed objectives, which were intended to reflect the County Plan and support the Council's declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency.
- 3.10. The consultation on the emerging Local Plan included the adopted Statement of Community Involvement, which set out how the Council will engage with communities on planning matters, including on the preparation of development plan documents.
- 3.11. The committee heard that the *Commonplace* digital citizen consultation platform was used to publish the consultation and gather consultation responses. The Spatial Options paper and associated documents were also available on the Herefordshire Council website and printed copies were made available on request. Posters and flyers were also provided to all town and parish councils for their noticeboards and local parish magazines. Information points, including Talk Community Hubs and Libraries were used to spread information about the consultation. Media releases were prepared and the Council's social media platforms were used publicise the consultation.
- 3.12. Notice of the consultation was sent to the contacts on a consultation database of specified organisations, other stakeholder organisations and individuals who have indicated they have an interest in the Local Plan process. An on-line event for town and parish councils was undertaken, together with workshops held for Herefordshire Council members during the consultation, which was recorded and published on the digital platform.
- 3.13. Early consultation was also undertaken on the Settlement Hierarchy options. In February 2020, all parish councils were sent the 'Settlement Hierarchy Review Questionnaire', which sought to gather information on the current range of services and facilities within each parish. Parish councils were asked to comment on 'Rural Settlement Hierarchy Services and Environmental Survey' in April 2022 to verify the accuracy of the data prior to being used for ranking settlements as part of the Place Shaping Options consultation in June and July 2022.
- 3.14. The committee heard that over 1,200 responses were received to the Spatial Options consultation and that the consultation responses received during the consultation were broadly in support of the draft vision and objectives with more than 60% agreeing with them. Option 3 of the overall strategy, *Focus Growth across market towns and Hereford*, was the most popular of spatial options, Option 4; focussing on a single market town as a growth centre, was least favourite.
- 3.15. The Policy Options consultation undertaken from 4<sup>th</sup> April and 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022 set out a range of alternative policy approaches for key policy areas, many of which would look to address environmental priorities of the County Plan.

## ***Consultation with the Executive***

- 3.16. The committee sought clarity on how the nine spatial options, which set out the five strategic options and four rural options of the Spatial Options consultation from January 2022 were produced, and what meetings had taken place between Cabinet members and officers to inform the options selected for inclusion in the consultation.
- 3.17. The committee was informed that there had had been established a Local Plan Cabinet working group, which had met a number of times to receive briefings, whilst the options were formulated for the spatial options consultation, taking into account the assessed need for the County. The members of the working group were:
- Councillor Ellie Chowns – Cabinet Members for Environment and Economy,
  - Councillor John Harrington – Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport,
  - Councillor Liz Harvey – Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services and Planning and
  - Councillor Ange Tyler – Cabinet Member for Housing, Regulatory Services and Community Safety.
- 3.18. During the first phase of consultation around the new Local Plan, suggestions were put forward for a spatial option focussed on existing rail infrastructure in the County, as well as an option for a new eco-settlement, but the committee noted that the nine proposed spatial options in place at the beginning of the consultation remained materially unchanged and did not include these suggestions.
- 3.19. A query was therefore raised regarding whether these alternative ideas had been dismissed following meetings of the Cabinet Working Group.
- 3.20. The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport confirmed in evidence that meetings had taken place during which preferred options were discussed, however, options were not excluded from the consultation based on Cabinet Member preferences and the fact that there had been little material change in the options may simply have been reflective of the responses received to date.
- 3.21. The Neighbourhood Planning Service Manager further advised that whilst there were an infinite number of options that could be consulted upon, the Council had to show that it had consulted upon reasonable and different alternatives, and that these were sufficiently scoped to enable the public to understand how they differed.

## ***A New Market Town?***

- 3.22. It was submitted by members of the committee that there had previously been a suggestion for a new market town in Herefordshire, which also appeared to be absent from the emerging proposals.
- 3.23. The Neighbourhood Planning Service Manager advised that this was considered as part of consultation Option 5 and included a 'call for sites'; however, only a small number of potential sites had come forward and these were being assessed for their environmental impact. It was explained that new settlements take on average 15-20 years to come to fruition and this would need to be demonstrated as deliverable within the lifetime of the new Plan.
- 3.24. Notwithstanding the fact that any proposals for a new market town development would go beyond the timeframe of the Local Plan, the committee suggests that such a proposal would be of such strategic significance that, if the Council was minded to proceed with such a proposal in principle, then the consideration and feasibility of such a proposal should at least

feature within the new Local Plan as part of the longer term community planning for Herefordshire. The committee suggests that the Council should come to a view, based on existing evidence, on the feasibility and desirability of a strategic proposal for the development of a new market town in Herefordshire in consideration of the economic, environmental, social evaluation of such a proposal. Such a proposal could at least be considered in terms of whether this may, or may not, be a possible solution to delivering future growth and development in a sustainable way.

- 3.25. Considering this in concept may also provide a view as to whether such a proposal may not be desirable, if this does not appear to deliver probable solutions to longer term development, especially since such a proposal appears to conflict with the current options model to permit development around existing market towns transport and infrastructure nodes, which may be based on the assumption that such pre-existing settlements already have some of the necessary infrastructure in place. Consideration may be made, therefore, as to whether, in principle, building upon existing infrastructure developments might allow for a greater and commensurate expansion in capacity to meet projected population growth, or whether new developments might offer greater opportunities to develop infrastructure capacity more successfully around future population needs through better longer term planning options.

### ***Consultation Responses***

- 3.26. The committee considered the consultation responses and analysis on the Local Plan options to date. The committee heard that only around 250 responses had been received to the policy options consultation, the fewer the response rate to consultations would appear, in principle, to limit the weight that should be afforded to the responses in the overall consideration of the proposals, however, they do provide some feedback.
- 3.27. The committee heard that the responses to the policy options on climate change and environmental policies indicated that 55% of respondents supported an approach that would set out an overarching strategic *climate change policy* and embedding the issue of climate change into other relevant Council policies and strategies. 48% of respondents were in favour of strengthening current policies for *biodiversity*, placing more emphasis on biodiversity improvement and a higher than national improvements in biodiversity. 67% of respondents favoured a new approach with strengthened requirements for Heritage Impact Assessments and understanding of heritage assets to protect and enhance *Herefordshire's historic environment*. 45% of respondents supported separation of policies for *landscape and townscape*, which would link with the emerging approach to design coding nationally. 77% of respondents supported a *new dark skies policy*, which could include policies within the Local Plan to minimise light pollution to protect and enhance both environmental character and benefit wildlife.
- 3.28. There was no clear favoured approach on options *Green Blue Infrastructure*. Green-Blue Infrastructure is a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystems<sup>5</sup>.
- 3.29. 60% of respondents supported specific strategic design policies for *Hereford and Market Towns* supported by design codes in rural areas. 69% of respondents supported a separate *nutrient neutrality policy*. 57% of respondents supported policies promoting the provision of *open spaces* and supported the inclusion of more detailed requirements.
- 3.30. Given the results of this consultation and Herefordshire Council's own aspirations as set out in the County Plan, it is clear that there is a need to develop strategic policies to address the

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<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/index\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/index_en.htm)

response to climate change and environmental protection, covering issues such as water quality.

- 3.31. The Place Based consultation from 13<sup>th</sup> June to 29<sup>th</sup> July 2022, which received around 1,100 responses, included a parish and town council event and a series of “roadshows” in Hereford and each of the market towns and in a number of villages across the County, which provided an opportunity for councillors and residents to meet members of the Strategic Planning and Neighbourhood Planning teams and discuss the options.
- 3.32. *Focus Growth across market towns and Hereford* (Option 3 of the Spatial Options consulted upon) was the most popular of the Spatial Options, indicating potential areas for new housing, employment and mixed use developments in Hereford and the market towns.
- 3.33. The committee noted that there was a steep drop in the number of responses from the initial spatial options consultation (1,200) to the later policy options consultation (250), and queried whether this was an indication that residents were unaware of the staged approach to consultation and considered that having responded to the first exercise there was potentially no purpose to comment further. It was also noted that of the 3,700 visitors to the Commonplace website during the place based consultation, only around one third (1,100) submitted a response.

### ***Preferred Development Sites***

- 3.34. The committee heard that 168 sites have been submitted as part of the ‘call for sites’ which occurred alongside the place based options consultation. The committee also heard that, for Hereford, areas in the centre and to the north of the city were preferred within the responses with the least favoured areas being in the south.
- 3.35. Brownfield land in Bromyard and land to the north was preferred to options on the south side of the town. The committee heard that residents in Kington would prefer a mix of smaller sites than one larger development site, whereas in Leominster there was a preference for a larger strategic site.
- 3.36. For Ledbury, brownfield development was preferred, with the site to the north of the town being the least favoured option. For Ross, brownfield redevelopment was preferred with areas to the south of the town being least favoured.
- 3.37. The committee heard that consultation responses had highlighted a wish to see urban development that had access to medical and educational facilities as important and the availability of green open spaces and leisure related facilities nearby with an enhancement in landscape and ecology provided transport. Connections within the existing town and to any new residential or employment areas were also indicated as essential.

## **4 Conclusion**

- 4.1. The Local Plan is an essential policy and strategic framework to set out the medium term planning and development aspirations for Herefordshire. It is an opportunity to reconcile the aspirations of the Council for economic development and projected population growth and associated housing developments and employment potential, along with social infrastructure such as school, hospitals and local community amenities, with the aspiration for an environmentally sustainable future.

- 4.2. This is a challenging yet crucial challenge which is not only being faced locally but also nationally and internationally.

### ***The Climate Emergency***

- 4.3. The 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27),<sup>[1]</sup> met this month in Egypt to limit global temperature rises and adapt to impacts associated with climate change.<sup>[3]</sup> following a year of climate-related disasters and record temperatures globally.
- 4.4. Despite commitments made at COP to reduce carbon emissions to meet the emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), (a [greenhouse gas that causes climate change](#)<sup>6</sup>) to the atmosphere, to try to keep temperature rises within 1.5C, which scientists say is required to prevent a "climate catastrophe"<sup>7</sup>, Petteri Taalas, secretary general of the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), has warned that the 1.5C target is "barely within reach". Current pledges, if met, will only limit global warming to about 2.4C.
- 4.5. The UN's weather and climate body released a report showing that the rate at which sea levels are rising has doubled since 1993 and the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has described the report as a "chronicle of climate chaos" and urged governments at COP27 to answer the planet's "distress signal" with "ambitious, credible climate action".
- 4.6. Local communities are at the forefront of meeting the challenges of climate change and of meeting local targets to reduce carbon emissions for a sustainable future. This includes ensuring that future development and growth are planned in a sustainable way and that the community infrastructure is resilient enough to meet some of the anticipated impacts of climate change such flooding and drought.
- 4.7. For Herefordshire, the articulation of these plans for environmental sustainability and resilience are provided both with the Council and communities objectives set out in the County Plan and the policy and strategy provisions set out with legal force in the Local Plan Core Strategy.
- 4.8. Whilst the committee has welcomed the overall strategic objectives set out in the County Plan and the work being done to consider the options for future development in consultation with the local community, it has concluded that the Local Plan options needs to be more clearly grounded in the Council's clear statements for environmental sustainability, towards modal shift and net zero ambitions.

### ***Herefordshire Council's Response***

- 4.9. In response to increasing awareness of the impacts of [climate change](#), Herefordshire Council declared a climate emergency on 8 March 2019, Herefordshire Council resolved to set a target of zero carbon by 2030.
- 4.10. Following this, in September 2019, the Council committed to take a major step to minimise the impact of local carbon emissions on the environment, agreeing to accelerate a reduction of emissions and aspire to become carbon neutral by 2030/31 and work with strategic partners, residents and local organisations to develop a revised countywide carbon dioxide reduction strategy aspiring for carbon neutrality by 2030. The Cabinet's Executive Response to the Climate Emergency commits to an accelerated reduction of the Council's own carbon emissions and the aspiration to become carbon neutral by 2030/31<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-24021772>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-56901261#:~:text=It%20was%20agreed,to%20about%202.4C.>

<sup>8</sup> Summary of executive responses to the Climate Emergency and Citizens Assembly resolutions passed by full council. <https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50070235/Appendix%201%20for%20Executive%20Response%20to%20the%20Climate%20Emergency.pdf> See also: Pathway to Carbon Neutral, Carbon Management Plan 2020/21-2025/26, Herefordshire

4.11. On Monday 25 January 2021, the Council’s General Scrutiny Committee made a report General Scrutiny Committee on the Climate and Ecological Emergency following a scrutiny Review on the matter. The scrutiny report can be found here: <https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50086309/Appendix%20A%20for%20Climate%20Emergency%20Review.pdf> The Executive Response to the scrutiny report can be found here: <https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50088132/Appendix%201%20for%20Executive%20response%20to%20the%20Climate%20and%20Ecological%20Emergency%20Task%20and%20Finish%20Group%20Revi.pdf>

4.12. Herefordshire Council aims to accelerate a reduction of emissions across the county by aspiring to be carbon neutral by 2030/31.

4.13. The pie chart in *Figure 1* shows a breakdown of emissions in the county, which illustrates the fact that transport and buildings development impact considerably upon the County’s carbon emissions; the future development and growth of transport and domestic and commercial developments are key aspects of the Local Plan.

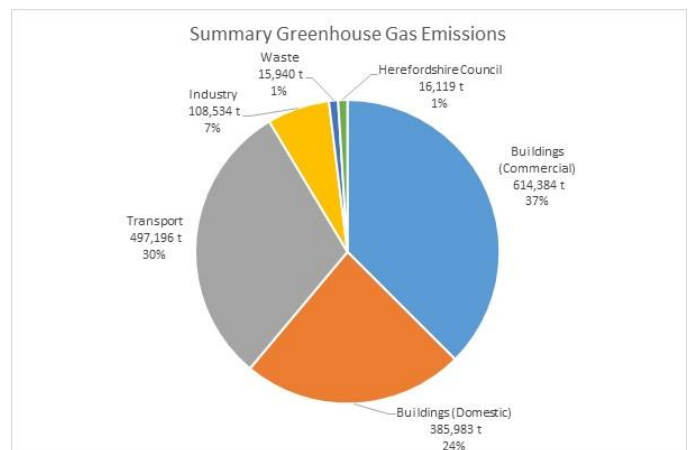


Figure 1 – Percentage contributions Carbon Dioxide emissions in Herefordshire by sector<sup>9</sup>.

4.14. Having received evidence on the progress of the detailed work currently ongoing in the development of the new Local Plan, the committee noted that there was an ongoing risk of changes to planning policy at a national level, and the Neighbourhood Planning Service Manager confirmed that a number of local authorities have currently paused development of their Local Plans due to the continued uncertainty, however the ambition was to continue the process in Herefordshire as it was recognised that a new Plan was both wanted and needed.

4.15. It was acknowledged that there was a balance to be negotiated between pursuing the Council’s environmental and sustainability objectives, whilst at the same time taking into due consideration the evidence base and assessment and responses to public consultation, however, the committee is of the view that the Council must clearly set out the community leadership for providing clear directions on the overall objectives for the Local Plan on achieving environmental sustainability, carbon zero and modal shift. To the extent that these have not been as clearly stated as they might have been at the options consultation stages, it is suggested that these should be clear within the relevant policy documents and further consultations to follow.

### **A Sustainable Community Strategy**

4.16. The committee submits that the Herefordshire Local Plan should deliver the overall Council community economic, social and environmental objectives. As such, these are set out in the County Plan. The Herefordshire Local Plan will set out the Council’s land-use policies and

Council 2021. <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/20530/carbon-management-plan-2020-21-to-2025-26#:~:text=This%20document%20has%20been%20designed,%25%20reduction%20by%202025%2F26>.

<sup>9</sup> Data from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, excluding land use, land use change and forestry. <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/climate-2/climate-change/3> Sourced November 2022.

proposals for the period up to 2041. Yet the County Plan will expire in 2023 and will be renewed with new strategic objectives for the County.

- 4.17. There is, therefore, a need to set out clearly the Council's medium to longer term objectives for Herefordshire, for which there is widespread support from across the Council, community stakeholders and the general public.
- 4.18. Previously, the Council produced a "sustainable community strategy"; a long-term strategy for the economic, social and environmental well-being of the local authority area. However, on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2011, the statutory guidance to local authorities on preparing a community strategy was withdrawn, so removing the duty for local authorities to prepare a community strategy. This was intended to provide local authorities the freedom to decide whether or not a community strategy is needed for their area.
- 4.19. The committee submits that it is desirable for Herefordshire to set out its medium to long term objectives for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of Herefordshire to the achieve of sustainable development and that it should work with the voluntary sector and private sector, as well as local people, to agree these objectives. The committee believes that there is widespread consensus to achieve the longer term strategic environmental sustainability objectives set out in the County Plan, which, if set out as longer term objectives could help to provide clarity and leadership direction to inform community planning strategic options.
- 4.20. The role of the County Plan and higher level strategic objectives, such as a sustainable community strategy, is to set out the strategic vision for a place. It provides a vehicle for considering and deciding how to address difficult cross-cutting issues such as the economic future of an area, social exclusion and climate change. Building these issues into the community's vision in an integrated way is at the heart of creating sustainable development at the local level.
- 4.21. The Local Plan Core Strategy, as part of the Local Development Framework should therefore turn the County's stated sustainable community strategy's strategic vision into policy that guides and shapes development over 15 to 20 years after the plan's adoption and act as the spatial vision of the sustainable community strategy and it should aim to cover a wide range of policies and programmes. The Council should align and coordinate the core strategy of the local development framework with its medium to longer term sustainable community strategy. The core strategy should act as the spatial vision of the wider sustainable community strategy of the Council over its wide range of policies and programmes.
- 4.22. The committee submits that there are, therefore, clear advantages of setting out clearly and integrating the Council's medium to longer term sustainable community strategic objectives into the broader local development framework process, with clearer linkages between the Councils overall strategic objectives founded on the principle of sustainability and the ability to collectively deliver sustainable communities. This integration is key to ensuring that delivery is at the heart of the plan making system.

***"The role of the sustainable community strategy is to set out the strategic vision for a place. It provides a vehicle for considering and deciding how to address difficult cross-cutting issues such as the economic future of an area, social exclusion and climate change. Building these issues into the community's vision in an integrated way is at the heart of creating sustainable development at the local level."*<sup>10</sup>**

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<sup>10</sup> 'Strong and prosperous communities' published in 2008.



## ***Community Infrastructure Investment***

- 4.23. The committee is of the view that, in order to provide for sustainable development and growth, significant further investment will be necessary to provide transport and local community amenity infrastructure to support net zero, modal shift and biodiversity aspirations. There is a question about how such infrastructure could be funded and whether this would be sufficient. The Council uses planning obligations (known as section 106 agreements) to ensure that any new development does not put a strain on existing services and facilities such as roads, schools, open space or other community facilities and/or services and reduce the impacts of the development. The Herefordshire Core Strategy 2011 - 2031 sets out the role of contributions in providing resources to achieve the objectives of the Local Plan and to meet, as far as possible, the infrastructure costs arising from development.
- 4.24. Many local authorities have a Community Infrastructure Levy, which is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool for local authorities to use to help them deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in their area.
- 4.25. The levy only applies in areas where a local authority has consulted on, and approved, a charging schedule which sets out its levy rates and has published the schedule on its website.
- 4.26. Given that the future of Community Infrastructure Levy in its current format is uncertain however, Herefordshire Council has taken the decision to pause progressing the adoption a Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 4.27. Notwithstanding the possible changes in the powers of local authorities under anticipated changes to legislation for local planning and regeneration arrangements, the committee submits that arrangements should be made for instituting a Community Infrastructure Levy, or any future equivalent, to help them deliver the infrastructure needed to support environmental sustainability, modal shift and net zero in Herefordshire.

## **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to all those who have contributed evidence to the Scrutiny Committee Inquiry, namely;- Councillor David Hitchiner - Leader of the Council, Councillor John Harrington - Cabinet Member Infrastructure and Transport, Councillor Ellie Chowns - Cabinet Member for Economy and Environment and the officer, Samantha Banks - Neighbourhood Planning Service Manager.

## **The Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee**

The Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee is appointed by Herefordshire Council to carry out the local authority scrutiny functions relating to its remit.

### **Membership of the Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Louis Stark - Chairperson  
Councillor Trish Marsh - Vice-chairperson  
Councillor Carole Gandy  
Councillor Jennie Hewitt  
Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst  
Councillor Yolande Watson  
Councillor William Wilding

### **Formal Minutes**

Minutes of proceedings are available to view or download from the Council website at [www.Herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.Herefordshire.gov.uk)  
<https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/g8828/Public%20minutes%20Wednesday%2021-Sep-2022%2010.30%20Environment%20and%20Sustainability%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=11>

### **Published Written Evidence**

Published written evidence is available to view or download from the Council website at [www.Herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.Herefordshire.gov.uk) [{WEBLINK}](#)

### **Committee Staff**

The current staff of the committee are:  
Michael Carr – Statutory Scrutiny Officer

### **Contacts**

Email [GovernanceSupportTeam@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:GovernanceSupportTeam@herefordshire.gov.uk)

Herefordshire Council

January 2023

[www.Herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.Herefordshire.gov.uk)

**ESSC Findings on the Herefordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy**

1. That the Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy include flood risk measures and mitigations that are identified as needed even if not resourced.
2. That the Cabinet consider areas where there may be opportunities to “invest to save” (eg investment in drainage and drainage maintenance may save money on road maintenance).
3. That the Council work with parish councils and community groups to engage local communities and neighbourhoods in further initiatives they can do to mitigate and manage flood risk (eg proving local signage, flood risk mapping, local projects etc).
4. That the Cabinet ensure that flood risk modelling information work carried out by the Environment Agency and flood risk mapping information held by the Hereford and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue services is used in the Council's flood risk mapping.
5. That the Cabinet make sure that the Local Plan is integrated and informed by new flood risk management strategy and up to date flood risk mapping data and analysis.
6. That the Council carry out habitat risk assessments for landscape mitigation measures being undertaken to protect wildlife environments and ecosystems.
7. That the Council introduce a forum for people who want to get involved in flood risk management and mitigation and need to know where to go to get involved.
8. That the Cabinet clarify how the Flood Risk Management Strategy will fit in with the new Local Plan.



**Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee  
Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker 2022-23**

*(A key and explanatory note for this tracker table is provided at the end of this report).*

**Tuesday 26th July 2022**

Subject	Scrutiny Recommendation	Decision Maker & Executive Response	Department, Cabinet Member and lead officer	Implementation Status	Review date
<p>Restoration of the River Wye – Options for Public Inquiry and Policy Review.</p>	<p>That the proposed Cabinet Phosphates Commission on the Restoration of the River Wye include in its membership councillors from across the Council who have a particular knowledge of the subject matter.</p>	<p><a href="#">Cabinet 28 July 2022</a></p> <p><b>Cabinet Decision:</b> <i>Partly agreed.</i></p> <p><b>Executive Response:</b></p> <p>The Executive Welcomes the recommendation and partly agrees with the suggestion. The Commission will undertake an independent review of the present mechanisms and arrangements which support the Nutrient Management Plan and will suggest improvements. The Executive recognises and values the expertise that exists both inside and outside the Council. We will therefore find ways to include such expertise appropriately within the Commission processes ensuring that an independent review is</p>	<p>Cabinet Members: Councillor Ellie Chowns – Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy</p> <p>Ross Cook - Corporate Director, Economy and Environment, Economy and Environment</p> <p>Rachael Joy - Interim Delivery Director Waster Transformation &amp; Wetland Project</p>	<p>To be determined.</p>	<p><i>March 2023</i></p>

		<p>undertaken and their expertise is fully considered. The process and means of delivering the commission will be worked up over the summer recess through a detailed delivery plan. As details have not been fixed yet the Executive will actively explore appropriate inclusion for those with important expertise to bring and regards this as essential to the success of the commission. Further details, will be available for the September meeting of the ESSC.</p>			
	<p><b>That the Cabinet ensure that every effort is made to promote active participation from the neighbouring local authorities in the work of the proposed Commission.</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Cabinet 28 July 2022</a></p> <p><b>Cabinet Decision:</b> <i>Agreed.</i></p> <p><b>Executive Response:</b></p> <p>The Executive welcomes and agrees with the recommendation and agrees cross border and cross council cooperation is essential to any lasting solution. Active steps to include participation from neighbouring authorities together with our statutory partners at Natural England, Natural Resources Wales</p>	<p>Cabinet Members: Councillor Ellie Chowns – Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy</p> <p>Ross Cook - Corporate Director, Economy and Environment, Economy and Environment</p> <p>Rachael Joy - Interim Delivery Director Waster Transformation &amp; Wetland Project</p>	To be determined.	<p>March 2023</p>



		and the Environment Agency too, are well underway.			
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Notes

This is a table to track the progress of scrutiny recommendations made by one of the formal scrutiny committees at Herefordshire Council, with details provided by the relevant lead departments. It is a standing item on the Committee’s agenda, so that the Committee can keep track of the recommendations it has made, the decisions made, implementation status and provoke consideration of outcomes that have for residents, the Council and its statutory partners.

The tracker lists the recommendations made by the committee throughout a municipal year and any recommendations still not fully implemented from previous years since June 2022.

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The tracker documents the scrutiny recommendations made, the dates when they were made, the decision maker who can make each decision in respect of the recommendations, the date the decision was made and the actual decision taken. The executive decision taken may be the same as the scrutiny recommendation (e.g. the recommendation was “agreed”) or it may be a different decision, which should be clarified here. The tracker also asks if the respective executive decisions have been implemented and this should be updated accordingly throughout the year.

Scrutiny Task Group report recommendations should be included here but referenced collectively (e.g. the name of the scrutiny inquiry and date of the agreement of the scrutiny report and recommendations by the scrutiny committee, along with the respective dates when the decision maker(s) considered and responded to the report and recommendations. The Committee should generally review the implementation of scrutiny task group report recommendations separately with stand-alone agenda items at relevant junctures – e.g. the Executive Response to a scrutiny report and after six months or a year, or upon expected implementation of the agreed recommendation of report. The “Expected Implementation Date” should provide an indication of a suitable time for review.

**Key:**

**Date of scrutiny committee meeting** - For each table, the date of scrutiny committee meeting when the recommendation was made is provided in the subtitle header.

**Subject** – this is the item title on the committee’s agenda; the subject being considered.

**Scrutiny Recommendation** – This is the text of the scrutiny recommendation as it appears on the minutes – **in bold**.

**Decision Maker** – the decision maker for the recommendation, (**in bold**), eg the Cabinet (for Council executive decisions), full Council (for Council policy and budgetary decisions), or an NHS executive body for recommendations to the NHS. In brackets, (date), the date on which the Executive Response was made.

**Executive Response** – The response of the decision maker (eg Cabinet decision) for the recommendation. This should be the executive decision as recorded in the minutes. The Executive Response should provide details of what, if anything, the executive will do in response to the scrutiny recommendation. Ideally, the Executive Response will include a decision to either agree/reject/or amend the scrutiny recommendation and where the scrutiny recommendation is rejected, provide an explanation of why. In brackets, provide the date of Cabinet/executive meeting that considered the scrutiny recommendation and made the decision.

**Department** – the Council directorate (and/or external agencies) that are responsible for implementation of the agreed executive decision/response. Also provided, for reference only, the relevant Cabinet Member and strategic director.

**Implementation Status** – This is the progress of any implementation of the agreed Executive Response against key milestones. This may cross reference to any specific actions and deadlines that may be provided in the Executive Response. This should be as specific and quantifiable as possible. This should also provide, as far as possible, any evidenced outcomes or improvements resulting from implementation.

**Review Date** - This is the expected date when the agreed Executive Response should be fully implemented and when the scrutiny committee may usefully review the implementation and any evidenced outcomes (eg service improvements). (Note: this is the implementation of the agreed Executive Response, which may not be the same as the scrutiny recommendation).

## Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2022-2023

Agreed by the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Tuesday 26th July 2022

Agenda item	Cabinet Member/s	Officers	External Witnesses
<p><b>Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2022-2023</b> To agree the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2022-2023.</p>	<p>Councillor Ellie Chowns Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy</p>	<p>Ross Cook - Corporate Director, Economy and Environment</p>	
<p><b>Restoration of the River Wye – Options for Public Inquiry and Policy Review</b> To consider the options being considered for Public Inquiry and Policy Review on the Restoration of the River Wye.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Deadline for draft reports: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022</i> <i>Report deadline: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022</i></p>	<p>Councillor Ellie Chowns Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy</p>	<p>Ross Cook - Corporate Director, Economy and Environment</p> <p>Mark Averill, - Interim Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste</p> <p>Rachael Joy - Interim Delivery Director Waste Transformation</p>	

		& Wetland Project	
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**Wednesday 21st September 2022**

<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/s</b>	<b>Officers</b>	<b>External Witnesses</b>
<p><b>The Herefordshire Local Plan</b> To consider the Herefordshire Local Plan 2021- 2041, which includes the planning framework for the county, housing provision, the economy, retail and town centres, infrastructure provision and the environment.</p> <p>Specifically to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Does the preferred spatial option lead to sustainable communities, including promoting active travel and reducing car journeys?</li> <li>b) Is the rural assessment scoring system used for allocating housing development across rural wards robust and supported by evidence?</li> <li>c) To consider the analysis of the public consultation on the Local Plan and the mechanism by which the consultation was undertaken.</li> </ul> <p><a href="http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan-1">www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan-1</a></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Deadline for draft reports: 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022</i> <i>Report deadline:9<sup>th</sup> September 2022</i></p>	<p>Councillor Liz Harvey Finance - Corporate Services and Planning</p> <p>Councillor Ellie Chowns - Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy</p> <p>Councillor John Harrington - Infrastructure and Transport</p>	<p>Ross Cook - Corporate Director, Economy and Environment</p> <p>Tracey Coleman – Service Director, Planning and Regulatory</p>	
<b>Restoration of the River Wye – Options for Public Inquiry and Policy Review</b>	Councillor Ellie Chowns Cabinet	Ross Cook - Corporate	

<p>To consider the options being considered for Public Inquiry and Policy Review on the Restoration of the River Wye.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Deadline for draft reports: 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022</i> <i>Report deadline: 9<sup>th</sup> September 2022</i></p>	<p>Member for Environment and Economy</p>	<p>Director, Economy and Environment</p> <p>Mark Averill, - Interim Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste</p> <p>Rachael Joy - Interim Delivery Director Waste Transformation &amp; Wetland Project</p>	
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### Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Agenda item	Cabinet Member/s	Officers	External Witnesses
<p><b>The Herefordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy</b> To consider the Herefordshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, flood planning and resilience. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the Council and its statutory partners are doing to manage flood risk in the county.</li> <li>• Is there a resilience plan in place covering HCC assets and infrastructure and enabling residents and businesses to adapt to future extreme weather events?</li> <li>• Consideration of the wider emergency planning for drought and fire, in conjunction to flooding.</li> </ul>	<p>Councillor John Harrington - Infrastructure and Transport</p> <p>Councillor Ellie Chowns Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy</p>	<p>Ross Cook - Corporate Director, Economy and Environment</p> <p>Mark Averill, - Interim Service Director Environment,</p>	<p>Welsh Water</p> <p>Severn Trent Water</p> <p>The Environment Agency</p> <p>Internal Drainage Boards:</p>

<p><i>Note:</i> Herefordshire Council is a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and it has the lead role in managing flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses across the county. As part of this role it must develop, maintain, apply and monitor a local flood risk management strategy. This is an important document for the on-going management of flood risk throughout the county. The strategy sets out the framework for how the council will work with other local flood risk management authorities and the general public to better understand and manage existing and future flood risks from all potential sources of flooding.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Deadline for draft reports: 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022</i> <i>Report deadline: 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022</i></p>		<p>Highways and Waste</p> <p>Rachael Joy - Interim Delivery Director Waste Transformation &amp; Wetland Project</p>	<p>The River Lugg IDB The Lower Severn IDB</p> <p>Joel Hockenull - Senior Drainage Engineer, Balfour Beatty Living Places</p> <p>Chief Fire Officer Jonathon Pryce - Herefordshire and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority</p> <p>Parish Councils</p>
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### Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Agenda item	Cabinet Member/s	Officers	External Witnesses
<p><b>Waste and Recycling</b> To review the Waste Strategy and associated Contracts To cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the timeline and key changes that the incoming waste collection strategy will bring in, including the resources that will be deployed</li> </ul>	<p>Councillor Gemma Davies - Commissioning, Procurement and Assets</p>	<p>Ross Cook - Corporate Director, Economy and Environment</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what the current disposal waste contract covers, changes in the parameters and aims for the new contract and the timeline for letting it.</li> <li>• how our waste strategy and contracts (collection and recovery/disposal) will meet the aims of the waste hierarchy, support our environmental goals, help build a circular economy and contribute to adding social value.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Deadline for draft reports: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023</i> <i>Report deadline: 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023</i></p>	<p>Councillor Ellie Chowns Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy</p>	<p>Mark Averill, - Interim Service Director Environment, Highways and Waste</p> <p>Rachael Joy - Interim Delivery Director Waste Transformation &amp; Wetland Project</p> <p>Ben Boswell - Head of Environment Climate Emergency and Waste Services</p>	
<p><b>Review of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Review Scrutiny Report and Recommendations</b></p> <p>To review the implementation of the Executive Response to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Review Scrutiny Report and Recommendations carried out in 2021.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Deadline for draft reports: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023</i> <i>Report deadline: 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023</i></p>	<p>Councillor Ellie Chowns Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy</p>	<p>Ross Cook - Corporate Director, Economy and Environment</p> <p>Mark Averill, - Interim Service Director Environment,</p>	

		Highways and Waste	
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Friday 10th March 2023

Agenda item	Cabinet Member/s	Officers	External Witnesses
<p><b>Herefordshire Farming</b>            To consider the farming industry in Herefordshire. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What plans are in place to promote improved agricultural practices and the planting of buffer vegetation, including trees and hedgerows to reduce the risk of flooding and meet our biodiversity gain requirements?</li> <li>• What plans are in place to promote better land use, including increasing local food production and sufficiency?</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Deadline for draft reports: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023</i>  <i>Report deadline: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023</i></p>	<p>Councillor Ellie Chowns Cabinet Member for Environment and Economy</p> <p>Councillor Liz Harvey Finance - Corporate Services and Planning</p> <p>Councillor John Harrington - Infrastructure and Transport</p>	<p>Ross Cook - Corporate Director, Economy and Environment</p> <p>{Name} - Corporate Head of {Department}</p>	<p>Farm Herefordshire - Farm Herefordshire is a group of organisations that have formed a collaborative partnership to support farming in Herefordshire through the promotion of good practice, training and advice.</p> <p><a href="#">Farm Herefordshire   The Wye and Usk Foundation (wyeuskfoundation.org)</a></p>

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**Reserve Items**

**Energy Security**

In the push for increasing renewables, eg solar farms, are we allowing for the impact on increasing the risk of flooding?

Will the policies and the additional development in the emerging revised local plan exacerbate energy security and how are we going to mitigate that risk through renewables generated locally?

### **The Green Economy**

To consider how Herefordshire Council promotes, develops and supports the green economy.

### **Economy and Environment Organisation and Objectives**

To consider the extent to which the Economy and Environment organisational arrangements are configured to deliver the environment and sustainability objectives set out in the County Plan.