

Corporate Support Centre
Paul Walker - Chief Executive

To: All members of the Council

our ref: Council - 7 March 2025
contact: Matthew Evans, Democratic Services
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27 February 2025

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the Herefordshire Council to be held on **Friday 7 March 2025** at the Conference Room 1 - Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE at **10.00 am** at which the business set out in the attached agenda is proposed to be transacted.

Yours sincerely
Claire Porter



Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

Council

Date: **Friday 7 March 2025**

Time: **10.00 am**

Place: **Conference Room 1 - Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane
Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE**

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

For any further information please contact:

Matthew Evans, Democratic Services

Tel: 01432 383690

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If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call Matthew Evans, Democratic Services on 01432 383690 or e-mail matthew.evans@herefordshire.gov.uk in advance of the meeting.

Agenda for the Meeting of the Council

Membership

Chairman
Vice-Chair

Councillor Roger Phillips
Councillor Stef Simmons

Councillor Polly Andrews
Councillor Jenny Bartlett
Councillor Graham Biggs
Councillor Harry Bramer
Councillor Simeon Cole
Councillor Pauline Crockett
Councillor Dave Davies
Councillor Mark Dykes
Councillor Toni Fagan
Councillor Carole Gandy
Councillor Peter Hamblin
Councillor Helen Heathfield
Councillor David Hitchiner
Councillor Terry James
Councillor Jonathan Lester
Councillor Ed O'Driscoll
Councillor Rob Owens
Councillor Daniel Powell
Councillor Philip Price
Councillor Adam Spencer
Councillor Pete Stoddart
Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst
Councillor Richard Thomas
Councillor Diana Toynbee
Councillor Allan Williams
Councillor Mark Woodall

Councillor Bruce Baker
Councillor Chris Bartrum
Councillor Dave Boulter
Councillor Jacqui Carwardine
Councillor Frank Cornthwaite
Councillor Clare Davies
Councillor Barry Durkin
Councillor Matthew Engel
Councillor Elizabeth Foxton
Councillor Catherine Gennard
Councillor Liz Harvey
Councillor Robert Highfield
Councillor Dan Hurcomb
Councillor Jim Kenyon
Councillor Nick Mason
Councillor Aubrey Oliver
Councillor Justine Peberdy
Councillor Ivan Powell
Councillor Ben Proctor
Councillor Louis Stark
Councillor John Stone
Councillor Charlotte Taylor
Councillor Kevin Tillett
Councillor Rebecca Tully
Councillor Rob Williams

Agenda

	Pages
NOLAN PRINCIPLES	9 - 10
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive apologies for absence.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.	
3. MINUTES To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2025.	11 - 26
4. CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS To receive the Chairman and Chief Executive's announcements.	27 - 30
How to submit questions	
<i>The deadline for submission of questions for this meeting is:</i>	
<i>5:00 p.m. on Monday 3 March 2025.</i>	
<i>Questions must be submitted to councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk. Questions sent to any other address may not be accepted.</i>	
<i>Accepted questions and the response to them will be published as a supplement to the agenda papers prior to the meeting. Further information and guidance is available at https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/getinvolved.</i>	
5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC To receive questions from members of the public.	
6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL To receive any written questions from members of the Council.	
7. 2025/26 COUNCIL TAX SETTING REPORT To set the council tax and precepts for 2025/26.	31 - 50
8. CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY 2025-2027 To endorse the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2027.	51 - 108
9. LEADER'S REPORT To receive a report from the leader on the activities of the executive (cabinet) since the meeting of Council on 6 December 2024 .	109 - 130
10. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDERS To consider Notices of Motion.	131 - 138

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO: -

- Attend all Council, Cabinet, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings unless the business to be transacted would disclose 'confidential' or 'exempt' information.
- Inspect agenda and public reports at least five clear days before the date of the meeting.
- 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.
- 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.
- Copy any of the documents mentioned above to which you have a right of access, subject to a reasonable charge (20p per sheet subject to a maximum of £5.00 per agenda plus a nominal fee of £1.50 for postage).
- 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 and copy documents.

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Please note that filming, photography and recording of this meeting is permitted provided that it does not disrupt the business of the meeting.

Members of the public are advised that if you do not wish to be filmed or photographed you should let the governance services team know before the meeting starts so that anyone who intends filming or photographing the meeting can be made aware.

The reporting of meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those doing the reporting to ensure that they comply.

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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:

<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 Council held at Conference Room 1 - Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Friday 7 February 2025 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor Roger Phillips (chairperson)
Councillor Stef Simmons (vice-chairperson)

Councillors: Polly Andrews, Bruce Baker, Jenny Bartlett, Chris Bartrum, Graham Biggs, Dave Boulter, Harry Bramer, Jacqui Carwardine, Simeon Cole, Frank Cornthwaite, Clare Davies, Dave Davies, Barry Durkin, Matthew Engel, Toni Fagan, Elizabeth Foxton, Carole Gandy, Catherine Gennard, Peter Hamblin, Liz Harvey, Helen Heathfield, Robert Highfield, David Hitchiner, Dan Hurcomb, Terry James, Jim Kenyon, Jonathan Lester, Nick Mason, Ed O'Driscoll, Aubrey Oliver, Rob Owens, Justine Peberdy, Dan Powell, Ivan Powell, Philip Price, Ben Proctor, Adam Spencer, Louis Stark, Pete Stoddart, Elissa Swinglehurst, Richard Thomas, Kevin Tillett, Diana Toynbee, Rebecca Tully, Allan Williams, Rob Williams and Mark Woodall

Officers: Chief Finance Officer, Corporate Director - Economy and Environment*, Corporate Director Community Wellbeing*, Director of Governance and Law and Democratic Services Manager

*denotes virtual attendance

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pauline Crockett, Mark Dykes, Charlotte Taylor and John Stone.

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Roger Phillips declared:

i) An interest in agenda item no. 9 – 2025/26 Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy – Revenue – as chairman of the Rural Services Network.

ii) An interest in agenda items no. 10 – Pay Policy Statement – as the vice chairman of the National Joint Council (NJC) – local government, Chief Executives and Chief Officers.

Cllr David Hitchiner declared an interest in agenda item no. 8, 2025/26 Capital Investment Budget and Capital Strategy Update, as a local resident to the proposed Southern Link Road. He explained the dispensation he had received from the monitoring officer.

44. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

45. CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

46. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (PAGES 7 - 16)

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

47. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

There were no questions from members of the Council.

48. 2025/26 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

Council considered a report by the Cabinet Member Finance and Corporate Services to agree the council tax reduction scheme for 2025/26.

The Cabinet Member Finance and Corporate Services proposed the council tax reduction scheme for 2025/26 and introduced the report.

The Leader seconded the council tax reduction scheme for 2025/26 for approval.

Council debated the report.

A named vote was held to agree the council tax reduction scheme set out in the report. The scheme was carried unanimously.

FOR (49): Councillors Andrews, Baker, Bartlett, Bartrum, Biggs, Boulter, Bramer, Carwardine, Cole, Cornthwaite, Clare Davies, Dave Davies, Durkin, Engel, Fagan, Foxton, Gandy, Gennard, Hamblin, Harvey, Heathfield, Highfield, Hitchiner, Hurcomb, James, Kenyon, Lester, Mason, O'Driscoll, Oliver, Owens, Peberdy, Phillips, Dan Powell, Ivan Powell, Price, Proctor, Simmons, Spencer, Stark, Stoddart, Swinglehurst, Thomas, Tillett, Toynbee, Tully, Allan Williams, Robert Williams, and Woodall.

Against (0)

Abstentions (0)

RESOLVED:

That:

- a) **The Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2025/26, with the same parameters as the existing scheme (as set out in Appendix 1), be approved.**

49. 2025/26 CAPITAL INVESTMENT BUDGET AND CAPITAL STRATEGY UPDATE

Council considered a report by the Cabinet Member Finance and Corporate Services to approve the 2025/26 capital investment budget and capital strategy update. Council noted those supplements published following the despatch of the agenda including the Budget Council meeting procedure 2025 and the Section 151 officer's section 25 statement both published on 3 February.

The Cabinet Member Finance and, Corporate Services moved the report and proposed the recommendations.

The Leader seconded the report and the recommendations.

Council debated the report.

The 2025/26 capital investment budget and capital strategy update was put to the recorded vote and carried by a simple majority.

FOR (34): Councillors Andrews, Baker, Bartrum, Biggs, Bramer, Carwardine, Cole, Cornthwaite, Clare Davies, Dave Davies, Durkin, Gandy, Hamblin, Highfield, Hurcomb, James, Kenyon, Lester, Mason, O'Driscoll, Oliver, Owens, Phillips, Dan Powell, Ivan Powell, Price, Proctor, Stark, Stoddart, Swinglehurst, Thomas, Tillett, Allan Williams and Robert Williams.

Against (5): Councillors Foxton, Gennard, Heathfield, Hitchiner and Peberdy.

Abstentions (10): Councillors Bartlett, Boulter, Engel, Fagan, Harvey, Simmons, Spencer, Toynbee, Tully and Woodall.

RESOLVED:

That: Council:

- a) **Approve the revised capital programme for 2025/26 attached at appendix C;**
- b) **Approve the capital strategy at appendix D; and**
- c) **Approve the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts of up to £0.6million in 2024/25 and £0.6million in 2025/26, to support transformation to generate ongoing revenue savings and reduce service delivery costs in future years.**

50. 2025/26 BUDGET, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - REVENUE

Council considered a report from the Leader to set the 2025/26 budget.

The Cabinet Member Finance and Corporate Services introduced the report and moved the budget.

The Leader seconded the report and the budget.

Councillor Terry James, as Group Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group spoke on the budget.

Councillor Diana Toynbee, as Group Leader of The Green Party Group spoke on the budget.

Councillor Liz Harvey, as Group Leader of the Independents for Herefordshire Group spoke on the budget.

Councillor Clare Davies, as Group Leader of the True Independents Group spoke on the budget.

Council debated the budget recommended by the Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member Finance and Corporate Services closed the debate.

The 2025/26 budget, medium term financial strategy and treasury management strategy was put to the recorded vote and was carried by a simple majority.

FOR (48): Councillors Andrews, Baker, Bartlett, Bartrum, Biggs, Boulter Bramer, Carwardine, Cole, Cornthwaite, Clare Davies, Dave Davies, Durkin, Engel, Fagan, Foxton, Gandy, Hamblin, Harvey, Heathfield, Highfield, Hitchiner, Hurcomb, James, Kenyon, Lester, Mason, O'Driscoll, Oliver, Owens, Peberdy, Phillips, Dan Powell, Ivan Powell, Price, Proctor, Simmons, Spencer, Stark, Stoddart, Swinglehurst, Thomas, Tillett, Toynbee, Tully, Allan Williams, Robert Williams and Woodall.

Against (1): Councillor Gennard.

Abstentions (0)

RESOLVED:

That Council approves:

- a) the council tax base of £ 72,816.74 Band D equivalents in 2025/26;
- b) an increase in core council tax for 2025/26 of 2.99%;
- c) an additional precept in respect of adult social care costs of 2% applied to council tax in 2025/26 resulting in a total council tax increase of 4.99%, increasing the band D charge from £1,875.76 to £1,969.36 for Herefordshire Council in 2025/26;
- d) the balanced 2025/26 revenue budget proposal totalling £231.5 million, subject to any amendments approved at the meeting, specifically the net spending limits for each directorate as at appendix C;
- e) delegates to the section 151 officer the power to make necessary changes to the budget arising from any variations in central government funding allocations via general reserves;
- f) the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2025/26 to 2028/29 at appendix A;
- g) the Treasury Management Strategy at appendix D; and
- h) that any further additional funding above that assumed in this revenue budget and received in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement, is allocated:
 - a. firstly to make provision to support the development of the Local Plan and;
 - b. secondly, to be transferred to the Financial Resilience Reserve to mitigate the potential unfavourable outcome of the Fair Funding Review planned in 2025.

51. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Council considered a report by the Chairperson of the Employment Panel to approve the pay policy statement for 2025 – 2026.

The report and recommendation was moved by the Leader (as chairperson of the employment panel) and seconded by Councillor Diana Toynbee (as vice-chairperson of the employment panel).

The pay policy statement was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

RESOLVED – That:

(a) the pay policy statement at appendix A is approved for publication.

52. FULL COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2025/26

Council considered and agreed the following meeting dates of Council in the 2025/26 municipal year:

23 May 2025 – 10:30 a.m.
25 July 2025 – 10:00 a.m.
10 October 2025 – 10:00 a.m.
5 December 2025 – 10:00 a.m.
6 February 2026 – 10:00 a.m.
6 March 2026 – 10:00 a.m.
22 May 2026 – 10:30 a.m.

The meeting ended at 11.50 am

Chairperson

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

Question Number	Questioner	Question	Question to
PQ 1	Mr Mead, Leominster	<p>When the current hospital was built there was concern the number of beds was insufficient being less than the beds available in the existing hospitals. The council answer was that with better facilities patients would be treated quicker and released faster.</p> <p>Since then, together with reduced home care, and thus bed blocking, it has proved the concern right.</p> <p>The population has increased considerably and with the proposed increase of 10,000 new houses to be built together with other thousands built and to be built and now a university, an aging population, considerable Welsh usage, as they have very poor facilities in our border counties, an increase in beds and facilities is necessary with no possibility of a new build on the current hospital site. The current bus station site should be used for this and not a multi-storey car park.</p>	Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing / Cabinet member roads and regulatory services
<p>Response:</p> <p>Thank you for your question. Any consideration of increasing hospital beds and facilities in the county is a matter for Wye Valley Trust and the NHS, as NHS capital monies would be required for any new build. As with any development, in the event that the hospital brought forward proposals, the council would work with the hospital to determine how best it could achieve its objectives.</p> <p>In terms of support for people on discharge from hospital, the council has worked hard over the last 12 months to secure more homecare capacity which is in line with current demand. We continue to keep this under review to ensure that we are meeting people's needs as we recognise that there is increasing demand. The council has staff based in the hospital working with the wards to ensure timely discharge of people.</p>			
PQ 2	Mr McKay, Leominster	Being informed at recent Walkers are Welcome meeting that the delay with proposed footpath diversion DZC135 in Leominster being due to lack of resources, and the walked line now being obstructed, with your "Changes to PROW" webpage highways map showing this proposed diversion for some time, and it not clear which agenda budget heading this comes under, may I ask if this budget covers this, it being part of a popular walk from Leominster, and could you kindly advise when we may expect this diversion to be implemented?	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
<p>Response:</p> <p>Thank you for your question. The relevant team are fully resourced at present. The referred to lines should not be shown on the online map as it is not a current diversion case, they will therefore be removed in due course. If the path is obstructed, it should be reported in the normal way, the Public Rights of Way team will then investigate accordingly.</p>			

PQ3	Ms Furniss,	<p>Cllr Price has said that any proposal for cycling infrastructure alongside the Southern Link Road would have no cycling network to connect to at either end of the road so he is only looking to invest in further active travel infrastructure for the Holme Lacy area and nothing to link cycling networks in the Belmont area to schools, higher education, shops and jobs.</p> <p>The Park and Cycle site located at Belmont Abbey & NHS Trust services, could be linked to the City by upgrading the off-road footpath to a cycle path to link into existing active travel infrastructure in Belmont. Where is the option appraisal and traffic modelling that shows that with minimal funding this footpath upgrade offered poorer value for money and had a lower BCR than investing £40million in a new road?</p>	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
<p>Response:</p> <p>The construction of a new road and active travel measures are not mutually exclusive. The council is committed to the development of a broader by-pass scheme to accommodate required growth in the county and reduce traffic within Hereford to enable roads to be more appealing to active travel users and Phase 1 will be the first step towards this. The council has always seen the new road as part of a broader package of proposals, including active travel measures and to this end, the council will be consulting on its Local Transport Plan and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plans later this year to give a more comprehensive vision of transport infrastructure proposals for the Hereford area.</p>			
<p>Supplementary question:</p> <p>In answer to PQ6 the Cabinet member says that the original South Wye Transport Package (SWTP) had a full business case which demonstrates the viability of the transport scheme.</p> <p>This means that the active travel measures intended for the Belmont area in the SWTP are at the same stage of capital funding approval as the Southern Link Road, for which the Council is seeking to borrow £30Million.</p> <p>If this council is serious about tackling congestion on the Belmont Road, promoting healthier lifestyles and cutting carbon emissions will the Cabinet Member confirm the funding and the amount that is in place in the Capital Strategy to build the safe walking and cycling infrastructure needed in the Belmont area, such as linking the Park & Choose site at Belmont to the City cycling network, ahead of yet more road construction?</p>			
<p>Response from Cabinet Member transport and infrastructure: It was explained that there were a number of schemes for cycling and walking in the south wye which would be forthcoming in the coming years.</p>			
PQ 4	Mrs Morawiecka, Hereford	Cllrs Price & Stoddart told the Connected Communities Scrutiny meeting that “The Council has employed AECOM to undertake work to update the previous business cases for the Western Bypass”.	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure

		However, the Full Western Bypass does not appear as part of the Council's Capital Programme. Would they please confirm the total value of the contract placed with AECOM to do this work and the impact of this expenditure on the Council's budget?	
<p>Response: In the paper to Cabinet in March 2024, titled New Road Strategy for Hereford, Cabinet gave approval for work to progress on both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Hereford Western Bypass. As part of this approval a capital budget of £10.3m was provided for Phase 1 development and a revenue budget of £0.76m for the development of Phase 2 to progress it to business case stage.</p> <p>Contracts for the Phase 2 Options Review and Business Case are not yet finalised but are hoped to be in the coming days. Once sealed, the details of the contracts will be published. The cost of the work will be within the revenue budget made available.</p>			
<p>Supplementary question:</p> <p>Thank you for your response. The S151 officer has said in the report to the Full Council Budget meeting that in respect of pressures on the mainstream home to school transport & SEND transport services, a review has been commissioned "to introduce a new operating model for transport services in 2025/26. The timely delivery of actions to deliver efficiencies in transport services is critical to manage cost pressures in future years."</p> <p>If there are such cost pressures on services vital to ensuring our young people across the whole county can safely access education and services, please confirm how much money, including staff costs, has been spent to date on the Western Bypass Project and what future revenue budget is required to continue to progress this £400million road scheme?</p>			
<p>Response from Cabinet Member transport and infrastructure:</p> <p>A written response would be provided.</p>			
PQ 5	Ms Laan	The Chancellor and the Transport Secretary have both said that new housing should be allocated close to commuter stations to enable sustainable transport links between homes and employment sites. Therefore, to access Government funding to bring forward the increase in homes proposed for Herefordshire why does the Capital Strategy omit capital investment to bring forward business cases to open new train stations to link housing settlements sustainably with new employment opportunities, as well as new GP, dental and hospital facilities to support such housing growth?	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure / Cabinet member Environment
<p>Response:</p> <p>The Council is starting the process of reviewing its Local Plan to accommodate the additional new mandatory housing growth (27,000 new homes) that has been allocated by the government. The new National Planning Policy Framework published in December requires that growth which includes new housing and employment is established in deliverable and sustainable locations, this assessment includes access to transport options. As this plan develops there will be an opportunity for consultation on not only the location of the housing but also the medical, education and transport infrastructure needed to support the growth. This plan will impact on future capital strategies as government and developer investment becomes available.</p>			

PQ 6	Mrs Protherough, Hereford	At cabinet on 13 th January 2025 Cllr Price said that “ <i>The Hereford Western Bypass is at FULL BUSINESS CASE STAGE whereas a potential station at Pontrilas is only at Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC), considering where a scheme is viable.</i> ” However, at subsequent Scrutiny and Cabinet meetings it has been made clear that Cllr Price was wrong. The Western Bypass does not have a Full Business Case and nor does the Southern Link Road. If the Western Bypass is at Outline Business Case, the same as Pontrilas Railway Station (Cllr Price answer 13 th Jan 2025) why has no capital funding been included in the capital budgets for this new station, especially when the Government last week said it is looking for new housing to be delivered near train stations ?	Cabinet member Transport and Infrastructure
<p>Response:</p> <p>The two schemes are at different stages of development. The Western Bypass Phase 1 has planning permission and a former full business case which demonstrates its viability and has provided a Strategic Outline Business Case, therefore as per the council’s Capital Guidance Policy, this means the capital scheme can be added to the Capital programme for approval by full Council. Golden Valley Railway Station and Phase 2 of the Hereford Western Bypass do not yet have a Strategic Outline Business case and therefore cannot be included as proposed additions to the Capital Programme. At its meeting in March 2024 Cabinet allocated a revenue budget to both schemes so that they can be developed to a stage for consideration within the council’s Capital Programme.</p>			
<p>Supplementary question:</p> <p>The former Full Business Case referred to by the Cabinet member in the answer, was for the South Wye Transport Package, which included providing active travel measures & public transport improvements, including across the Belmont area, and not a standalone road scheme. As the Outline Business Case for the Southern Link Road says “the full potential benefits of phase 1 may not be realised should phase 2 not progress”.</p> <p>The Golden Valley Railway station is a priority of this Council and is not dependent on a £350million road scheme. Funding was allocated in June last year to develop an Outline Business Case for the station.</p> <p>As the Council are looking to allocate 27,000 new homes in sustainable locations across the County, would the Cabinet member say when the Station scheme will be developed for consideration within the Capital Programme?</p>			
<p>Response from Cabinet Member transport and infrastructure: It was explained that money had been set aside to look at the project to see if it is viable. All other partners involved were reviewing whether the scheme was viable therefore it was not possible at present to provide a timeframe for the project to appear in the capital programme.</p>			
PQ 7	Mrs Morris, Hereford	The Capital Strategy says the Southern Link Road means Hereford City will have started on its journey to create resilience, better control of its traffic and allow for space within the city centre to be re-purposed, improve customer satisfaction, and a reduction in lost time traversing busy city centre corridors.	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure

		<p>The Roman Road north of Hereford from the A49 to the Worcester Road is currently a single carriageway, dog legged, traffic light-controlled railway bridge crossing, prone to flooding and a risk to large lorries trying to access established businesses on Holmer Road and the city.</p> <p>With 1,000s of new homes at Holmer why has Herefordshire Council not identified this stretch of road and bridge as requiring an urgent upgrade and worthy of any funding in their Capital Strategy?</p>	
<p>Response:</p> <p>The Holmer road railway bridge is owned and managed by Network Rail, and outside of the council's control or direct ability to change. The current bridge does impact access to the north of the city, and we have raised these issues with Network Rail in the past. However, there are no currently known plans for Network Rail to make improvements to the bridge. Future phases of the proposed western bypass include the potential for an extended new connection to the Worcester Road.</p>			
PQ 8	Mr Morfett, Hereford	<p>It has been reported that Herefordshire Council is revisiting its car parking strategy. As the majority of vehicle traffic is seeking to enter Hereford and approximately just 5% is looking to go through Hereford, how can the Council's Capital Strategy allocate capital funds to new road infrastructure to reduce congestion in the City if it does not yet know where those car parks should be located?</p>	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
<p>Response:</p> <p>The Council is currently undertaking a masterplan exercise to investigate the potential redevelopment opportunities around Merton Meadow and deliver a flood alleviation scheme for the area. Any development would likely mean the closure of the Merton car parks. A report has been commissioned to look at the impact of that closure, what alternative mitigation provision may be required, and provide a summary of the current and likely future usage of car parks across the City Centre. The Council recognises the need to provide sufficient parking for City Centre access, the hospital and the Transport Hub and this work will ensure that the council can consider appropriate alternative parking provision. The council has to date only allocated capital funds to the Phase 1 of the Western Bypass, which whilst it is anticipated will reduce traffic in the south of the city, will have limited impact on public parking demand in the city centre and therefore parking locations is not a prerequisite to progressing that proposal. The council is commissioning a masterplan to consider how housing targets and growth can be best be accommodated within the city by the provision of a growth corridor alongside the proposed Phase 2 of the bypass and will include wider infrastructure demands such as parking need and improved active travel measures.</p>			
<p>Supplementary question:</p> <p>There is an urgent need to reduce car dependency in our transport network design for the City, and the substantial increase in local traffic expected from 10,000 new car dependent houses on the west of Hereford will result in daily gridlock.</p> <p>Safe cycling and walking networks are an essential component of modern City design and funds are available to optimise design of sustainable transport systems. Active Travel England is the government's executive agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England. I understand that meetings with Active Travel are low priority, and no minutes are taken. Why has the Council failed to draw on available funds and utilise the extensive expertise of Active Travel England in its strategic long-term decision making?</p>			

Response from Cabinet Member transport and infrastructure:

Officers are engaged with active travel England to design the schemes to be produced this year. A lot of money has been invested in walking and cycling for 2025/26. A written response would be provided.

Written response provided on 26 February:

Officers have a positive working relationship with Active Travel England colleagues meeting with them on a monthly basis. No meetings have ever been refused and I can give assurance that they are prioritised and valued. ATE has been involved in reviewing the plans for schemes where ATE funded has been invested and are supporting the authority as we now move into delivery phases for these schemes. In 2025/26 the authority will be delivering the following schemes which include active travel measures: Holme Lacy Road, Aylestone Hill, Great Western Way Improvements, School Streets, Quiet Routes and the Transport Hub.

PQ 9	Mr Frecknall, Hereford	'It has been reported that Herefordshire Council is to re-examine its car parking strategy. Given that most traffic entering Hereford has business within the city, with less than 10% passing straight through, how can the Council's Capital Strategy allocate funds to building new roads if the distribution of additional car parking is as yet unknown?'	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
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Response:

The Council is currently undertaking a masterplan exercise to investigate the potential redevelopment opportunities around Merton Meadow and deliver a flood alleviation scheme for the area. Any development would likely mean the closure of the Merton car parks. A report has been commissioned to look at the impact of that closure, what alternative mitigation provision may be required, and provide a summary of the current and likely future usage of car parks across the City Centre. The Council recognises the need to provide sufficient parking for City Centre access, the hospital and the Transport Hub and this work will ensure that the council can consider appropriate alternative parking provision. The council has to date only allocated capital funds to the Phase 1 of the Western Bypass, which whilst it is anticipated will reduce traffic in the south of the city, will have limited impact on public parking demand in the city centre and therefore parking locations is not a prerequisite to progressing that proposal. The council is commissioning a masterplan to consider how housing targets and growth can be best be accommodated within the city by the provision of a growth corridor alongside the proposed Phase 2 of the bypass and will include wider infrastructure demands such as parking need and improved active travel measures.

PQ 10	Mr Milln, Hereford	In January 2019 Herefordshire Council consulted on various active travel improvements within the City for the 'Hereford Transport Package'. There was no published report and none of the measures were implemented. Councillor Proctor reminded me recently that among them were works to tackle the barriers caused by the road/rail pinch points which particularly affect his College ward residents. https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/16799/route-1-college-road	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
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		<p>According to its post-opening assessment, the CLR significantly increased traffic on College Road; making the narrow rail over-bridge linking to Widemarsh Street even more hazardous.</p> <p>With simple and effective measures like this still not addressed how will the administration explain why it now wants to borrow a further £30m capital for its SLR with a hugely elevated and expensive bridge across the rail line which lacks active travel provision, business case or design agreement with Network Rail?</p>	
<p>Response:</p> <p>Each scheme in the council's capital programme is considered on its own merits and the value they provide to the county.</p> <p>Phase 1 of the Hereford Western Bypass will enable immediate improved access to and from the Rotherwas estate for both commuter and freight transport and reduce the traffic on other routes, such as Holme Lacy Road, enabling active travel to be a more attractive and convenient option than a route along the proposed new road. Phase 1 of the Hereford Western Bypass will set the foundations for the completion of the wider bypass and once completed, this new bypass connection for the A49, from the south to the north of the city, will deliver the Western Growth Corridor, creating over 10,000 new homes and over 300 acres of employment land. This will result in future recurrent income for the council which is expected to be greater than the cost of borrowing.</p> <p>A business case and design approval from Network Rail were previously in place for this scheme and these are currently being revisited to ensure that they continue to comply with contemporary requirements and standards of both the council and Network Rail.</p>			
<p>Supplementary question:</p> <p>Following concern expressed by Cllr Proctor, I'd asked why the cabinet member resists addressing the existing road/rail pinch points which are chronic barriers to active travel in Hereford, but instead seeks to borrow millions to create another, the SLR; falsely claiming it had a Full Business Case, something the Council had to admit it didn't at the closing statements to the Public Inquiry, and design approval from Network Rail which requires the overbridge from the 2016 planning to be raised by another 0.5m.</p> <p>The response failed to answer the question, but instead pretends the SLR will reduce traffic and enhance active travel on the Holme Lacy Road, both of which had been promised by the Rotherwas Link Road. He misleads himself, but no-one else. Is there anything he can say which might restore confidence in his administration's approach to transport infrastructure and its funding?</p>			
<p>Response from Cabinet Member transport and infrastructure:</p> <p>A written response would be provided.</p> <p><i>Written response provided on 26 February:</i></p> <p><i>The proposed road has always been considered as a package of schemes that complements and enhances active travel rather than an alternative to, and indeed it is considered that the second phase of the bypass will extend these benefits with the potential to de-trunk the A49 through the centre of</i></p>			

the city and removing through traffic from an already congested area that is unappealing to active travel modes, enabling the council to focus on some of the very pinch points the gentleman is seeking to be addressed. The council contests the assertion that the first phase of the Hereford Western Bypass provides a further barrier to active travel, as modelling shows that it will indeed reduce traffic levels around the Holme Lacy Road area enabling the cycling infrastructure along that route, along with further quiet routes, that are all planned to be constructed this year, to become a far more attractive option to less confident active travel users.

A business case showing the benefits of this scheme had been developed to a sufficient stage to enable government to have the confidence in the proposals to allocate £27m of Government Growth Deal funding in 2017 towards the South Wye Transport Package via the Marches LEP and the council had received design approval from Network Rail in 2018.

As a member of the Cabinet elected on a manifesto that included a commitment to start building the by-pass it would seem there is already confidence in this administration's approach to transport infrastructure. Nevertheless, as any prudent administration would do, the council are investing in the development of business cases that reflect the current needs of Hereford and contemporary costs for both phases of the bypass to ensure that the proposals continue to offer value for money and provide assurance that monies are invested wisely.

PQ 11	Ms Seekings, Hereford	In 2019, Herefordians were invited to advise on alternative transport options to solve Hereford's traffic problems and make Hereford a safer, healthier place to move around. Many people spent extensive time making careful submissions. The data was never analysed nor any report published by the then transport councillor, Philip Price. Now that he is again in that role, could he tell us what he intends to do with that 2019 data, so that he might implement the many cost effective measures suggested, before he considers spending millions on transport options for car drivers. I understand that there are Plans for Local Transport, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure currently under development; please can Mr Price assure us that the 2019 data collected, which is still valid, will be taken into consideration and released to the public and by when.	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
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Response:

The Local Transport Plan and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan are being drafted based on all currently available relevant data and will be subject to full consultation. Both of these plans need to consider both the current and future needs of the county, including for example government's new mandatory housing target which will bring over 27,000 new homes over the next 20 years. Therefore, data previously collected in 2019 is now dated. However, all Herefordshire residents will have a chance to comment, and raise any previous suggestions, through the consultation process.

Supplementary question:

In his response to my question Cllr Price states that the information gathered in the 2019 cycling and walking plan is now dated. In 2019 I know of many Herefordians who submitted intelligent, informed and lengthy contributions in the spirit of finally having the opportunity to constructively voice and be heard in the Council plan to make the City a relatively safe place to cycle and to walk which it is not today. In the light of this effort and that the data will not be out of date as very few improvements have been made to cycling and walking infrastructure in the City, I ask again when will the cabinet member

analyse the data, release the results of the analysis and can reassurance be provided that it will be considered in the development of any new ongoing walking and cycling infrastructure projects. If he does not, how can he expect the public to participate in future consultations.

Response from Cabinet Member transport and infrastructure:

It was explained that significant walking and cycling infrastructure was being constructed across Hereford. A written response would be provided.

Written response provided on 27 February:

The council undertook a Walking, Cycling, Bus and Public Space consultation between January and March 2019 as part of the development of the Hereford Transport Package (HTP). All works on the HTP were however put on pause with immediate effect by the previous administration in August 2019 and then taken out of the capital programme in January 2021. As a result, a final report on that consultation was never completed and is not therefore available to be released.

The information gathered by that consultation has however informed the councils development of the Local Transport Plan and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans which will be consulted upon later this year.

PQ 12	Mr Hardy, Hereford	Assuming it cannot be both, is the proposed road to the west of Hereford to be a bypass or a service road for new houses? If it is to be a bypass, and given that past research showed that only 7% of traffic crossing the river is through traffic, why is this administration not prioritizing more productive and far cheaper measures to solve congestion, such as a comprehensive cycle network, and Park and Ride, especially connecting to the NE quarter where peak flow is double that at other times?	Cabinet member transport and infrastructure
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Response:

The Hereford Western Bypass will enable through traffic to be removed from the centre of the city and form part of the Western Growth Corridor to enable government housing targets to be delivered sustainably. The council are working closely with National Highways with regards to the route potentially being adopted as trunk road and a formal diversion of the A49. This will ensure getting the balance of direct access from housing developments onto the proposed route and other urban corridors right to ensure that the new route remains an attractive alternative to travelling through the city.

The council has always seen the new road as part of a wider package of measures and not as a road in isolation. The level of mandatory housing growth that has been allocated to the council will only reinforces the need to have a balance of new roads and other active travel and public transport measures in place to accommodate the additional demand, for which it is very unlikely that active travel measures alone could support.

Supplementary question:

As the Southern Link Road is already included in the capital budget while the rest of the 'bypass' is not, it has to be justified on its own merits as a stand alone scheme in case the rest of the road is not built for whatever reason. The only justification for it seems to be that it would relieve congestion on the Belmont Road.

The vast majority of the congestion on the Belmont Road at peak times is caused by school and commuter traffic. Why does the council not consider that a far cheaper and less environmentally damaging solution would be to expand the park and ride facility in the Belmont Abbey area with suitable incentives to get people out of their cars, and also provide a dedicated cycle track into the city and up to the colleges area, a lot of which already exists in fragments?

Response from Cabinet Member transport and infrastructure:

A written response would be provided.

Written response provided on 26 February:

The council has always seen the new road as part of a wider package of measures and not as a road in isolation. The level of mandatory housing growth that has been allocated to the council only reinforces the need to have a balance of new roads and other active travel and public transport measures in place to accommodate the additional demand. A standalone park and ride site will not solve the problem as the P&R buses will be caught up in the same congestion and there is insufficient space on Belmont Road for the installation of bus lanes or bus priority measures. Historically P&R sites have not proven successful and create additional revenue burdens on local authorities.

PQ 13	Mr Setterfield,	The capital budget line for Council to consider on 7th February includes £260k borrowing for restitution at The Weir following the failure of the Yazor Brook FAS and the damage which resulted in 2012. With the unanticipated post-damage works done at the outfall in 2012 and the £500pw rental payments for the 'temporary' storage area since 2012, what has been the total cost of this scheme?	Cabinet member transport finance and corporate services
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Response:

The £260k in the delivery programme will be used to make good the site, remove the need for materials storage and resolve the need for any rental payments.

Chairman of Council report – Council Meeting **7 March 2025**

The Crown Court returns to Hereford

I was invited on a tour of the new Crown Court in Hereford which opened last week and will see in the first week of March the first jury trials taking place in Herefordshire for several years since the closure of the Shirehall building.

The new court has been created out of two of the old Magistrates Courts with the installation of a jury box and repositioning of the secure dock, with direct access to the cells, and using the existing bench platform with the second court turned into the jury room.

The Justice Centre which is just off the Commercial Road junction in Bath Street was built and opened in 2001 with originally four Magistrates Courts. Today only two courts remain for Adult, Family and Youth Courts due to the apparent decline in crime and the removal of remand hearings from Herefordshire. Conversions of other spaces at the centre has created two further smaller courts for tribunals and district judges hearings.



While the lay out of the courts remain very traditional the use of modern technology has changed the operational aspects of proceedings. TV Screens can be used to show evidence, CCTV, underage witnesses, and in non-trial cases defendants on remand

The new secure dock and folding screen at the new Crown Court



The judges' bench at the new Crown Court

can appear from their prison rather than be transported to court. In the picture next to the dock you can see a folding screen which is used to prevent the defendant seeing a witness when giving their evidence if deemed appropriate. Adult and Crown Courts are public but there is understandably limited space - Family and Youth Courts are not open to the public.

It was important to see the return of the Crown Court to Hereford to ensure that local justice at that level is re-established and the backlog of cases can be tackled.

Last week I was at the Herefordshire Tourism awards celebrating the best of our County's destination business and next week I will be attending the awarding of the Kings Award for voluntary service to the Hub at St. Peters Peterchurch.

Can I remind members of my reception on the 26th March at Plough Lane, and also to ensure communities are aware of commemorations for 80th anniversary for VE day on 8th May and VE day on 15th August.

Cllr Roger Phillips JP

Chief Executive's report to Full Council – March 2025

Our new Herefordshire YEH Youth Employment Hub officially opened in February, offering advice and support to help young people aged 16-24 into work, education and apprenticeships. The hub, which is a partnership between the council and the Department for Work and Pensions, will provide a positive start to the future working lives of many young people in the county. Young people helped co-design and develop the hub and will continue to be involved as the service expands. The YEH Youth Employment Hub opening took place during National Apprenticeship Week. Apprenticeships are an important way we can upskill young people, build their confidence and experience, to help them into work.

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) recently published their findings from the inspection of Herefordshire's SEND Partnership that took place in December 2024. Despite the nationally acknowledged pressures on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services our partnership has been given the middle rating and we have received a very positive report overall. The report recognises a wide range of good practice and strengths within the partnership workforce at both a strategic and operational level. The inspectors noted some inconsistencies in our services experienced by families and have made four recommendations for improvement. This feedback and the priorities will inform the work of the partnership to improve the experiences and outcomes for all children and young people with additional needs and disabilities.

Ofsted held a further monitoring visit during February which focused on the front door into our children's services. We expect to receive the outcome in a few weeks.

Our children's services are currently preparing to host our first awards ceremony for care experienced children, which will be held in April. The event is an important reminder that the young people in our care face challenges every day, and that it is for us to make them feel valued and supported, and that we recognise their achievements, as proud corporate parents.

Following a far-reaching recruitment process at the end of last year, I'm pleased to announce that we've appointed a new Director of Public Health. Zoe Clifford joins us from OHID (Office for Health Improvement and Disparities) and DHSC South West where she is Deputy Director for Population Health and Wellbeing. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Cate Carmichael for filling the DPH role since last June. Zoe will join us at the end of March.

Preparations continue in adult social care for a Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment. This new requirement for local authorities was introduced as part of the Health and Care Act 2022 and places a duty on the CQC to measure how well the council is performing against its statutory duties as set out in Part 1 of the Care Act 2014. The assessment framework comprises four themes: working with people; providing support, ensuring safety and leadership. To date, 24 reports have been [published](#) and assessment activity is underway in a further 63 authorities. The CQC has confirmed the dates on which it will notify local authorities that they will be starting assessments. The next notification date is 10 March and monthly thereafter.

Planned reform of local authority funding has begun with a commitment from Government to provide a multi-year settlement from 2026/27, consolidate multiple funding sources and allocate funding where it is needed most. To inform the local government finance settlement from 2026/27, Government has consulted on its proposed approach to update the existing formulae by which grant funding is allocated and to 'reset' the Business Rates Retention system. Early

notification of updated funding allocations will help the council's medium-term financial planning and service delivery and we look forward to receiving more detail following the outcome of a multi-year spending review in late Spring 2025, including plans for transitional arrangements to manage potential changes in funding. We will continue to engage with Government and input through our professional networks to ensure that the council receives a fair allocation of funding to maintain its strong financial position and support planned improvements.

We are reaching the end of 2022-2025 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme and are pleased with the number of projects and grant schemes that have been delivered. We've directly delivered grant schemes, commissioned contracts and worked with our local partners on a range of projects that have benefitted local residents, communities and businesses. One of the projects, I'd like to highlight is the Halo Cycle Project. Halo secured £19,994, to purchase three side by side trikes which allow for assisted cycling. The bikes are used by people with mobility issues, those with vision impairments, specialist schools, residential homes and also those recovering from head injuries. They already have two of these bikes and had not realised the level of demand they would receive. We're delighted that the new trikes will be available next month to offer more opportunities for those who want to use them.

Planning permission and listed building consent has been given to transform Hereford's Shirehall into a modern community space including a new library and learning centre. Work can now begin on this exciting project. The design has been carefully considered to both complement and revitalise the heritage of the Shirehall, while delivering the much-needed restoration of this key historic building. The main entrance will be transformed into a large, welcoming area with exhibition space and improvements will be made to provide greater accessibility. The Assembly Hall will provide the new home for the library and will offer readers plenty of space to relax, read or browse the collection, and a new learning centre will offer facilities and services for learning, digital literacy and cultural activity. The development of the Library and Learning Centre is supported by £2.6 million from Hereford's Stronger Towns funding.

Following the appointment of specialist support, work has started on the development of detailed plans for the first phase of the Hereford Western Bypass. The planned new route joining the A49 to the A465 will help ease traffic flow in south Hereford, make it easier to access employment land and support growth south of the river. Planning permission is already in place for the new road, and work will now progress, over the next two years, to review and update the plans already in place for the road (previously known as the Southern Link Road) in light of changing regulations, legislation and environment considerations since they were first developed. The final plans, agreements and funding arrangements will then allow for the construction of the new road to proceed.

At the start of February we learnt we've received £380,844 for active travel measures in the county, as part of a £300m national funding package from Government and Active Travel England. As part of our commitment to developing active travel options for our residents, we're always looking at new ways to make it easier and safer to walk or cycle. This additional funding will help towards planning and implementation.



Title of report: 2025/26 Council Tax Setting Report

Meeting: Council

Meeting date: Friday 7 March 2025

Report by: Leader of the council

Classification

Open

Decision type

Budget and policy framework

Wards affected

All Wards

Purpose

To set the council tax and precepts for 2025/26.

At its meeting on 7 February 2025, the council approved the net budget requirement for 2025/26 at £231.5 million and an associated council tax requirement of £146.5 million on a tax base of 72,816.74 band D equivalents.

As the billing authority, this report seeks approval for council tax amounts for each category of dwelling in Herefordshire including precepts from West Mercia Police, Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority and Hereford town and parish councils for the financial year 2025/26.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) The precepting authority details included at appendices 1 to 5, relating to town and parishes, West Mercia Police and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority be approved in accordance with sections 30(2), 34(3), 36(1) and section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and that the following amounts be approved for the year 2025/26 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011); and
 - a. £506,268,582 being the estimated aggregate expenditure of the council in accordance with section 31A (2) of the act, including all precepts issued to it by parish councils;

- b. £356,597,000 being the estimated aggregate income of the council for the items set out in section 31A (3) of the act (including revenue support grant);
 - c. £149,671,582 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) calculated by the council in accordance with section 31A(4) of the act, as its council tax requirement for the year (including parish precepts); [Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act];
 - d. £2,055.45 being the amount at (c) above divided by the amount of the council tax base calculated by the council, in accordance with section 31B of the act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including parish precepts);
 - e. £6,268,582 being the aggregate amount of all special items (parish precepts) referred to in section 34(1) of the act;
 - f. £1,969.36 being the amount at (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (e) above by the amount of the council tax base calculated by the council, in accordance with section 34(2) of the act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no parish precept relates (Herefordshire Council band D council tax, excluding parishes); and
- b) It is agreed that the net tax base of 72,816.74 band D equivalent properties (being the gross tax base adjusted for an assumed collection rate) used for setting the budget requirement for 2025/26;
- a. is allocated to band D equivalent dwellings per precept area as shown in appendix 1; and
 - b. the individual council tax allocations per valuation band of dwelling by parish (including fire and police precepts) as set out in appendix 5.

Alternative options

1. There are no alternative options to setting a council tax. As the billing authority, the council is required to set the overall council tax for the following financial year. Council approved the net tax base on which the precept is in part based at its meeting on 7 February 2025; the remaining precept elements are set by other authorities and the council acts as the collecting agent for those precepted sums.
2. Local government legislation requires the council to set council tax each financial year. It also requires that certain categories of income and expenditure and other financial information are provided in accordance with Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).

Key considerations

3. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) sets out the specific amounts to be calculated and approved. This report enables the council to meet its legislative duty and set the council tax for each category of dwellings, including the council tax requirement of the council.
4. Council approved a council tax increase of 4.99% (inclusive of 2% adult care precept) above the rate of council tax for 2024/25 at its meeting on 7 February 2025. The council's band D council tax for 2025/26 becomes set at £1,969.36.

5. The parish precepts for 2025/26 are attached at appendix 1, total £6,268,582 amounting to an average band D council tax charge of £86.09. This represents an average increase of 8.9% from 2024/25. The charge by each property band, inclusive of the council charge, is set out in appendix 2.
6. The precepts for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia, an increase of 5.05%, and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority, an increase of 5.14%, are shown in appendices 3 and 4.
7. Appendix 5 provides the impact of all precepts on the council tax bill by detailing the total amount of council tax payable in each parish by property band.

Council Tax Calculations

8. The calculation of council tax involves several stages and the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires figures to be calculated including and excluding parish precepts. The table below meets this requirement.

	Herefordshire Council £	Parish Precepts £	Herefordshire incl. parishes (average) £
Estimated gross expenditure	500,000,000	6,268,582	506,268,582
LESS estimated income	(268,492,000)	-	(268,492,000)
Net budget requirement	231,508,000	6,268,582	237,776,582
LESS retained business rates	(47,567,000)	-	(47,567,000)
LESS enterprise zone business rates	(1,282,000)	-	(1,282,000)
LESS collection fund surplus	(2,000,000)	-	(2,000,000)
LESS revenue support grant	(1,422,000)	-	(1,422,000)
LESS social care support grant	(20,336,000)	-	(20,336,000)
LESS adult social care discharge fund	(1,585,000)	-	(1,585,000)
LESS market sustainability/fair cost care	(3,853,000)	-	(3,853,000)
LESS new homes bonus	(1,605,000)	-	(1,605,000)
LESS employers NI impact funding	(1,500,000)	-	(1,500,000)
LESS children's social care prevention	(369,000)	-	(369,000)
LESS extended producer responsibility	(3,538,000)	-	(3,538,000)
Total Council tax requirement	146,451,000	6,268,582	152,719,582
LESS second homes premium	(1,754,000)	-	(1,754,000)
LESS empty properties premium	(1,294,000)	-	(1,294,000)
Council tax requirement	143,403,000	6,268,582	149,671,582
Council net tax base (band D equivalent)	72,816.74	72,816.74	72,816.74
Council tax charge at band D	1,969.36	86.09	2,055.45

Council Tax Calculations

9. Appendices 1 to 5 to this report contain the individual council tax amounts for each category of dwelling as required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and associated regulations.
10. The council's band D council tax for 2025/26 is £1,969.36, which is an increase of £93.60 (4.99%) compared with 2024/25.
11. As part of the process we are required to include precepts from other bodies that will be included on council tax bills.

12. The parish precepts is set out in detail in appendix 1 providing the parish precept requirement and the band D council tax charge for each parish.
13. The charge by each property band, inclusive of the council charge, is set out in appendix 2.
14. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia precept is set out in appendix 3 (£291.50 at band D).
15. The Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority precept is set out in appendix 4 (£102.22 at band D).
16. Appendix 5 provides the impact of all precepts on the council tax bill by detailing the total amount of council tax payable in each parish by property band.

Community impact

17. Council tax is levied to enable the council to resource service delivery in accordance with the corporate plan priorities established by full Council. The proposed increase could result in increasing individuals' financial difficulties; this is mitigated by providing payment options, relevant discounts and reliefs, including the council tax reduction scheme, and local assistance fund. The council provides council tax discount to care leavers and foster carers.

Environmental Impact

18. Whilst this is a decision on back office functions and will have minimal environmental impacts, consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the council's Environmental Policy. All council tax payers are encouraged to manage their account online and to activate electronic billing.

Equality duty

19. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that it is paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
20. An equality impact assessment was completed as part of the 2025/26 Revenue Budget Report approved by Council on 7 February 2025. This can be found online as part of the meeting Agenda pack: [EIA Form](#).

Resource implications

21. The resources required for billing purposes are contained within existing budgets. Customers are encouraged to register online to receive their bill electronically. As in prior years, information relating to council tax, including how the money is spent, will be available online and a weblink will be included on issued bills.

Legal implications

22. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act) places a duty on this council, as a billing authority, to set an amount of council tax for the different categories of dwellings, according to the band in which the dwelling falls before 11 March each year (section 30 (6) of the Act).

23. A notice of the amount set must be published in at least one newspaper circulating in the authority's area within 21 days of the decision.
24. Part 3 Section 1 of the council's constitution confirms that approval of the rate of Council Tax and relevant precepts is a function of full Council.
25. Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 precludes a councillor from voting on this decision as a relevant matter, if he or she has an outstanding council tax debt of over two months. If a councillor is present at this meeting he or she must disclose that section 106 applies and may not vote. Failure to comply is a criminal offence.

Risk management

26. That an incorrect precept is applied, this would result in differences between the amount collected and the amount required. Every effort is made to ensure the correct data is gathered and applied to minimise this risk.

Consultees

27. The council consulted with the public on its proposed budget for 2025/26, the outcome of this was discussed at the council meeting held on 7 February 2025. Precepting authorities conduct their own consultation as they deem appropriate.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Herefordshire Council requirement by parish including band D equivalent

Appendix 2 - Council tax for each valuation band, by parish, without the police and fire precepts

Appendix 3 – The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia precept requirement for each valuation band

Appendix 4 - Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority precept requirement for each valuation band

Appendix 5 - Council tax for each valuation band by parish, including the police and fire precepts

Background papers

None identified.

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	Matthew Evans	Date 25/02/2025
Finance	Judith Tranmer	Date 25/02/2025
Legal	Sean O'Connor	Date 25/02/2025
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 25/02/2025
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 26/02/2025
Procurement	Claire Powell	Date 24/02/2025
Risk	Paige McInerney	Date 26/02/2025
Approved by	Rachael Sanders/Claire Porter	Date 27/02/2025

APPENDIX 1						
Herefordshire Council requirement by Parish, including Band D equivalent						
Parish	Parish Precept (net)	Tax Base (Band D)	2025/26 Parish Precept Basic Tax Rate (Band D)	2024/25 Parish Precept Basic Tax Rate (Band D)	% change from 2024/25 to 2025/26	Band D Charge (Parish and Herefordshire Council's Basic Rate - £1,969.36)
	£		£	£	%	£
Abbeydore & Bacton Group Parish Council	10,200.00	167.44	60.92	56.08	8.6%	2,030.28
Aconbury Parish Meeting	50.00	38.95	1.28	2.22	(42.3%)	1,970.64
Acton Beauchamp Group Parish Council	11,000.00	178.20	61.73	62.41	(1.1%)	2,031.09
Allensmore Parish Council	6,500.00	280.16	23.20	23.42	(0.9%)	1,992.56
Almeley Parish Council	18,778.00	258.90	72.53	67.25	7.9%	2,041.89
Ashperton Parish Council	10,500.00	128.82	81.51	81.56	(0.1%)	2,050.87
Aston Ingham Parish Council	14,695.00	220.88	66.53	65.79	1.1%	2,035.89
Avenbury Parish Council	7,200.00	115.60	62.28	57.40	8.5%	2,031.64
Aymestrey Parish Council	14,070.00	175.09	80.36	79.84	0.7%	2,049.72
Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Group	21,673.00	301.76	71.82	68.92	4.2%	2,041.18
Bartestree & Lugwardine Group Parish Council	99,400.00	981.12	101.31	64.95	56.0%	2,070.67
Belmont Rural Parish Council	60,000.00	1,318.67	45.50	45.90	(0.9%)	2,014.86
Birley with Upper Hill Parish Council	3,000.00	136.49	21.98	21.85	0.6%	1,991.34
Bishop's Frome Parish Council	26,000.00	339.81	76.51	73.51	4.1%	2,045.87
Bishopstone Group Parish Council	11,000.00	208.11	52.86	45.91	15.1%	2,022.22
Bodenham Parish Council	20,500.00	506.67	40.46	34.28	18.0%	2,009.82
Border Group Parish Council	10,000.00	312.99	31.95	25.28	26.4%	2,001.31
Bosbury and Coddington Parish Council	25,000.00	407.90	61.29	52.38	17.0%	2,030.65
Brampton Abbots & Foy Group Parish Council	14,550.00	252.04	57.73	59.19	(2.5%)	2,027.09
Bredenbury & District Group Parish Council	9,000.00	163.93	54.90	53.88	1.9%	2,024.26
Breinton Parish Council	13,220.00	422.66	31.28	31.28	0.0%	2,000.64
Bridstow Parish Council	12,500.00	422.99	29.55	26.92	9.8%	1,998.91
Brilley Parish Council	11,500.00	119.98	95.85	97.52	(1.7%)	2,065.21
Brimfield and Little Hereford Group Parish Council	15,500.00	524.11	29.57	29.54	0.1%	1,998.93
Brockhampton with Much Fawley Parish Council	5,500.00	99.68	55.18	49.02	12.6%	2,024.54
Brockhampton Group Parish Council	11,500.00	340.70	33.75	32.16	4.9%	2,003.11
Bromyard & Winslow Town Council	296,744.00	1,449.72	204.69	175.43	16.7%	2,174.05
Burghill Parish Council	21,893.00	776.38	28.20	28.33	(0.5%)	1,997.56
Callow & Haywood Group Parish Council	13,400.00	226.98	59.04	55.18	7.0%	2,028.40
Cleghonger Parish Council	22,800.00	565.82	40.30	40.04	0.6%	2,009.66
Clifford Parish Council	12,000.00	276.62	43.38	42.19	2.8%	2,012.74
Colwall Parish Council	109,000.00	1,192.58	91.40	83.49	9.5%	2,060.76
Malvern Hills Trust (Colwall Parish Council)	62,100.00		52.07	48.72	6.9%	52.07
Cradley Parish Council	70,000.00	861.66	81.24	76.02	6.9%	2,050.60
Credenhill Parish Council	47,459.00	666.73	71.18	67.11	6.1%	2,040.54
Cusop Parish Council	15,055.00	211.08	71.32	43.08	65.6%	2,040.68
Dilwyn Parish Council	33,000.00	316.57	104.24	97.74	6.7%	2,073.60
Dinedor Parish Council	11,000.00	141.86	77.54	70.06	10.7%	2,046.90
Dinmore Parish Meeting	-	9.65	-	-	0.0%	1,969.36
Dormington & Mordiford Group Parish Council	23,568.00	323.02	72.96	69.43	5.1%	2,042.32
Dorstone Parish Council	6,500.00	187.58	34.65	34.67	(0.1%)	2,004.01
Eardisland Parish Council	42,000.00	247.73	169.54	162.21	4.5%	2,138.90
Eardisley Group Parish Council	25,000.00	531.21	47.06	44.38	6.0%	2,016.42
Eastnor & Donnington Parish Council	7,300.00	151.70	48.12	48.32	(0.4%)	2,017.48
Eaton Bishop Parish Council	13,383.00	199.83	66.97	67.46	(0.7%)	2,036.33
Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council	53,829.00	466.66	115.35	111.89	3.1%	2,084.71
Fownhope Parish Council	40,285.00	461.76	87.24	86.15	1.3%	2,056.60
Foxley Group Parish Council	5,220.00	164.93	31.65	24.29	30.3%	2,001.01
Garway Parish Council	23,649.00	207.48	113.98	81.66	39.6%	2,083.34
Goodrich & Welsh Bicknor Group Parish Council	9,900.00	287.54	34.43	33.34	3.3%	2,003.79
Hampton Bishop Parish Council	22,000.00	307.52	71.54	67.52	6.0%	2,040.90
Hampton Charles Parish Meeting	-	25.53	-	-	0.0%	1,969.36
Hatfield and District Group Parish Council	6,000.00	213.32	28.13	28.05	0.3%	1,997.49
Hereford City Council	1,087,991.00	16,539.92	65.78	56.86	15.7%	2,035.14

Herefordshire Council requirement by Parish, including Band D equivalent

Parish	Parish Precept (net)	Tax Base (Band D)	2025/26 Parish Precept Basic Tax Rate (Band D)	2024/25 Parish Precept Basic Tax Rate (Band D)	% change from 2024/25 to 2025/26	Band D Charge (Parish and Herefordshire Council's Basic Rate - £1,969.36)
	£		£	£	%	£
Holme Lacy Parish Council	21,000.00	199.76	105.13	101.71	3.4%	2,074.49
Holmer & Shelwick Parish Council	28,200.00	1,309.95	21.53	20.21	6.5%	1,990.89
Hope Mansell Parish Council	2,500.00	138.59	18.04	18.28	(1.3%)	1,987.40
Hope under Dinmore Group Parish Council	16,000.00	148.35	107.85	99.04	8.9%	2,077.21
How Caple, Sollershope & Yatton Group Parish Council	10,500.00	161.69	64.94	60.27	7.7%	2,034.30
Humber, Stoke Prior & Ford Group Parish Council	22,696.00	300.75	75.46	50.13	50.5%	2,044.82
Huntington Parish Council	850.00	48.82	17.41	17.62	(1.2%)	1,986.77
Kentchurch Parish Council	9,250.00	126.07	73.37	73.45	(0.1%)	2,042.73
Kilpeck Group Parish Council	21,000.00	202.24	103.84	97.62	6.4%	2,073.20
Kimbolton Parish Council	12,000.00	225.48	53.22	50.22	6.0%	2,022.58
Kings Caple Parish Council	8,400.00	142.14	59.10	53.81	9.8%	2,028.46
Kingsland Parish Council	26,500.00	536.69	49.38	34.49	43.2%	2,018.74
Kingstone & Thruxton Group Parish Council	33,686.00	578.53	58.23	49.20	18.4%	2,027.59
Kington Rural and Lower Harpton Group Parish Council	9,000.00	234.69	38.35	38.68	(0.9%)	2,007.71
Kington Town Council	134,000.00	922.63	145.24	137.92	5.3%	2,114.60
Kinnersley and District Group Parish Council	13,198.66	275.50	47.91	46.60	2.8%	2,017.27
Lea Parish Council	23,000.00	374.41	61.43	61.58	(0.2%)	2,030.79
Ledbury Town Council	734,622.00	3,696.97	198.71	188.80	5.2%	2,168.07
Leintwardine Group Parish Council	45,357.00	472.92	95.91	70.42	36.2%	2,065.27
Leominster Town Council	736,175.00	3,681.18	199.98	190.25	5.1%	2,169.34
Linton Parish Council	14,400.00	551.91	26.09	26.42	(1.2%)	1,995.45
Little Birch Parish Council	8,000.00	109.62	72.98	68.31	6.8%	2,042.34
Little Dewchurch Parish Council	16,424.00	187.37	87.66	73.64	19.0%	2,057.02
Llangarron Parish Council	22,500.00	545.32	41.26	50.60	(18.5%)	2,010.62
Llanwarne & District Group Parish Council	12,000.00	291.50	41.17	37.70	9.2%	2,010.53
Longtown Group Parish Council	17,165.00	422.23	40.65	40.31	0.8%	2,010.01
Lower Bullingham Parish Council	17,000.00	593.14	28.66	27.84	2.9%	1,998.02
Luston Group Parish Council	22,500.00	392.42	57.34	57.13	0.4%	2,026.70
Lyonshall Parish Council	25,000.00	318.02	78.61	75.71	3.8%	2,047.97
Madley Parish Council	23,600.00	462.75	51.00	54.15	(5.8%)	2,020.36
Marden Parish Council	80,000.00	575.24	139.07	98.75	40.8%	2,108.43
Marstow Parish Council	9,500.00	185.51	51.21	52.11	(1.7%)	2,020.57
Mathon Parish Council	9,749.00	164.84	59.14	55.00	7.5%	2,028.50
Malvern Hills Trust (Mathon)	8,300.00		50.35	47.09	6.9%	50.35
Middleton-on-the-Hill and Leysters Group Parish Council	5,000.00	199.90	25.01	24.36	2.7%	1,994.37
Monkland and Stretford Parish Council	11,000.00	81.48	135.00	127.73	5.7%	2,104.36
Moreton on Lugg Parish Council	23,000.00	353.43	65.08	62.06	4.9%	2,034.44
Much Birch Parish Council	6,750.00	435.58	15.50	15.66	(1.0%)	1,984.86
Much Cowarne Group Parish Council	5,100.00	230.95	22.08	21.97	0.5%	1,991.44
Much Dewchurch Parish Council	8,500.00	300.97	28.24	29.70	(4.9%)	1,997.60
Much Marcle Parish Council	11,350.00	311.27	36.46	35.10	3.9%	2,005.82
North Bromyard Group Parish Council	10,000.00	392.49	25.48	25.76	(1.1%)	1,994.84
Ocle Pychard Parish Council	18,500.00	265.17	69.77	68.00	2.6%	2,039.13
Orcop Parish Council	9,200.00	179.74	51.19	51.96	(1.5%)	2,020.55
Orleton Parish Council	37,565.35	397.13	94.59	92.07	2.7%	2,063.95
Pembridge Parish Council	39,000.00	480.05	81.24	78.41	3.6%	2,050.60
Pencombe Group Parish Council	22,000.00	199.26	110.41	93.25	18.4%	2,079.77
Peterchurch Parish Council	21,660.00	386.14	56.09	57.36	(2.2%)	2,025.45
Peterstow Parish council	18,400.00	205.10	89.71	82.58	8.6%	2,059.07
Pipe and Lyde Parish Council	4,850.00	147.15	32.96	26.47	24.5%	2,002.32
Pixley & District Parish Council	10,380.00	232.82	44.58	37.05	20.3%	2,013.94
Putley Parish Council	10,500.00	118.54	88.58	77.67	14.0%	2,057.94
Pyons Group Parish Council	26,595.00	414.34	64.19	45.19	42.0%	2,033.55

Herefordshire Council requirement by Parish, including Band D equivalent

Parish	Parish Precept (net)	Tax Base (Band D)	2025/26 Parish Precept Basic Tax Rate (Band D)	2024/25 Parish Precept Basic Tax Rate (Band D)	% change from 2024/25 to 2025/26	Band D Charge (Parish and Herefordshire Council's Basic Rate - £1,969.36)
	£		£	£	%	£
Richard's Castle (Herefordshire) Parish Council	16,400.00	141.92	115.56	115.94	(0.3%)	2,084.92
Ross-on-Wye Parish Council	633,200.00	4,246.53	149.11	144.77	3.0%	2,118.47
Sellack Parish Council	14,500.00	130.35	111.24	107.39	3.6%	2,080.60
Shobdon Parish Council	40,000.00	337.35	118.57	89.58	32.4%	2,087.93
St. Weonards Parish Council	10,000.00	192.38	51.98	52.28	(0.6%)	2,021.34
Stapleton Group Parish Council	9,800.00	150.42	65.15	64.70	0.7%	2,034.51
Staunton-on-Wye and District Group Parish Council	6,200.00	216.78	28.60	28.00	2.1%	1,997.96
Stoke Edith Parish Meeting (Chairman)	-	44.23	-	-	0.0%	1,969.36
Stoke Lacy Parish Council	13,000.00	173.05	75.12	62.49	20.2%	2,044.48
Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council	14,500.00	225.69	64.25	63.90	0.5%	2,033.61
Stretton Sugwas Parish Council	10,000.00	174.37	57.35	59.35	(3.4%)	2,026.71
Sutton Parish Council	33,500.00	399.11	83.94	83.66	0.3%	2,053.30
Tarrington Parish Council	20,000.00	257.48	77.68	74.39	4.4%	2,047.04
Thornbury Group Parish Council	6,600.00	192.88	34.22	30.76	11.2%	2,003.58
Titley and District Group Parish Council	10,000.00	248.25	40.28	41.60	(3.2%)	2,009.64
Upton Bishop Parish Council	18,626.00	275.87	67.52	70.19	(3.8%)	2,036.88
Vowchurch & District Group Parish Council	18,102.92	333.98	54.20	52.57	3.1%	2,023.56
Walford Parish Council	31,000.00	667.16	46.47	42.19	10.1%	2,015.83
Wellington Parish Council	27,820.00	462.42	60.16	57.86	4.0%	2,029.52
Wellington Heath Parish Council	14,175.00	252.59	56.12	46.03	21.9%	2,025.48
Welsh Newton & Llanrothal Group Parish Council	14,456.50	163.40	88.47	88.47	0.0%	2,057.83
Weobley Parish Council	41,090.00	496.48	82.76	79.80	3.7%	2,052.12
Weston Beggard Parish Council	4,600.00	83.65	54.99	46.05	19.4%	2,024.35
Weston-under-Penyard Parish Council	18,000.00	519.38	34.66	30.86	12.3%	2,004.02
Whitbourne Parish Council	13,000.00	356.14	36.50	36.41	0.2%	2,005.86
Whitchurch & Ganarew Group Parish Council	52,500.00	550.92	95.30	95.15	0.2%	2,064.66
Wigmore Group Parish Council	33,572.00	372.35	90.16	76.05	18.6%	2,059.52
Withington Group Parish Council	38,000.00	751.31	50.58	51.01	(0.8%)	2,019.94
Woolhope Parish Council	18,450.00	216.56	85.20	83.60	1.9%	2,054.56
Wyeside Group Parish Council	10,600.00	312.60	33.91	33.02	2.7%	2,003.27
Yarkhill Parish Council	8,555.00	150.24	56.94	59.16	(3.8%)	2,026.30
Yarpole Group Parish Council	31,000.00	377.13	82.20	76.70	7.2%	2,051.56
Total/Average	6,268,582.43	72,816.74	86.09	79.03	8.9%	2,055.45

Council Tax for each valuation band, by Parish, without the Police & Fire precepts								APPENDIX 2
PARISH	VALUATION BANDS							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Abbeydore & Bacton Group Parish Council	1,353.52	1,579.10	1,804.69	2,030.28	2,481.46	2,932.63	3,383.80	4,060.56
Aconbury Parish Meeting	1,313.76	1,532.72	1,751.68	1,970.64	2,408.56	2,846.48	3,284.40	3,941.28
Acton Beauchamp Group Parish Council	1,354.06	1,579.73	1,805.41	2,031.09	2,482.45	2,933.80	3,385.15	4,062.18
Allensmore Parish Council	1,328.38	1,549.76	1,771.16	1,992.56	2,435.36	2,878.14	3,320.94	3,985.12
Almeley Parish Council	1,361.26	1,588.13	1,815.01	2,041.89	2,495.65	2,949.40	3,403.15	4,083.78
Ashperton Parish Council	1,367.25	1,595.12	1,822.99	2,050.87	2,506.62	2,962.37	3,418.12	4,101.74
Aston Ingham Parish Council	1,357.26	1,583.47	1,809.68	2,035.89	2,488.31	2,940.73	3,393.15	4,071.78
Avenbury Parish Council	1,354.43	1,580.16	1,805.90	2,031.64	2,483.12	2,934.59	3,386.07	4,063.28
Aymestrey Parish Council	1,366.48	1,594.22	1,821.97	2,049.72	2,505.22	2,960.71	3,416.20	4,099.44
Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Group	1,360.79	1,587.58	1,814.38	2,041.18	2,494.78	2,948.37	3,401.97	4,082.36
Bartestree & Lugwardine Group Parish Council	1,380.45	1,610.52	1,840.59	2,070.67	2,530.82	2,990.97	3,451.12	4,141.34
Belmont Rural Parish Council	1,343.24	1,567.11	1,790.98	2,014.86	2,462.61	2,910.35	3,358.10	4,029.72
Birley with Upper Hill Parish Council	1,327.56	1,548.82	1,770.08	1,991.34	2,433.86	2,876.38	3,318.90	3,982.68
Bishop's Frome Parish Council	1,363.92	1,591.23	1,818.55	2,045.87	2,500.51	2,955.14	3,409.79	4,091.74
Bishopstone & District Group Parish Council	1,348.15	1,572.83	1,797.53	2,022.22	2,471.61	2,920.98	3,370.37	4,044.44
Bodenham Parish Council	1,339.88	1,563.19	1,786.50	2,009.82	2,456.45	2,903.07	3,349.70	4,019.64
Border Group Parish Council	1,334.21	1,556.57	1,778.94	2,001.31	2,446.05	2,890.78	3,335.52	4,002.62
Bosbury and Coddington Parish Council	1,353.77	1,579.39	1,805.02	2,030.65	2,481.91	2,933.16	3,384.42	4,061.30
Brampton Abbots & Foy Group Parish Council	1,351.40	1,576.62	1,801.86	2,027.09	2,477.56	2,928.02	3,378.49	4,054.18
Bredenbury & District Group Parish Council	1,349.51	1,574.42	1,799.34	2,024.26	2,474.10	2,923.93	3,373.77	4,048.52
Breinton Parish Council	1,333.76	1,556.05	1,778.34	2,000.64	2,445.23	2,889.81	3,334.40	4,001.28
Bridstow Parish Council	1,332.61	1,554.70	1,776.81	1,998.91	2,443.12	2,887.31	3,331.52	3,997.82
Brilley Parish Council	1,376.81	1,606.27	1,835.74	2,065.21	2,524.15	2,983.08	3,442.02	4,130.42
Brimfield and Little Hereford Group Parish Council	1,332.62	1,554.72	1,776.82	1,998.93	2,443.14	2,887.34	3,331.55	3,997.86
Brockhampton with Much Fawley Parish Council	1,349.70	1,574.64	1,799.59	2,024.54	2,474.44	2,924.33	3,374.24	4,049.08
Brockhampton Group Parish Council	1,335.41	1,557.97	1,780.54	2,003.11	2,448.25	2,893.38	3,338.52	4,006.22
Bromyard & Winslow Town Council	1,449.37	1,690.92	1,932.49	2,174.05	2,657.18	3,140.29	3,623.42	4,348.10
Burghill Parish Council	1,331.71	1,553.65	1,775.61	1,997.56	2,441.47	2,885.36	3,329.27	3,995.12
Callow & Haywood Group Parish Council	1,352.27	1,577.64	1,803.02	2,028.40	2,479.16	2,929.91	3,380.67	4,056.80
Cleghonger Parish Council	1,339.78	1,563.06	1,786.36	2,009.66	2,456.26	2,902.84	3,349.44	4,019.32
Clifford Parish Council	1,341.83	1,565.46	1,789.10	2,012.74	2,460.02	2,907.29	3,354.57	4,025.48
Colwall Parish Council (inc Malvern Hills Trust)	1,408.55	1,643.31	1,878.06	2,112.83	2,582.35	3,051.86	3,521.38	4,225.66
Cradley Parish Council	1,367.07	1,594.91	1,822.75	2,050.60	2,506.29	2,961.98	3,417.67	4,101.20
Credenhill Parish Council	1,360.36	1,587.08	1,813.81	2,040.54	2,494.00	2,947.45	3,400.90	4,081.08
Cusop Parish Council	1,360.46	1,587.19	1,813.94	2,040.68	2,494.17	2,947.65	3,401.14	4,081.36
Dilwyn Parish Council	1,382.40	1,612.80	1,843.20	2,073.60	2,534.40	2,995.20	3,456.00	4,147.20
Dinedor Parish Council	1,364.60	1,592.03	1,819.46	2,046.90	2,501.77	2,956.63	3,411.50	4,093.80
Dinmore Parish Meeting	1,312.91	1,531.72	1,750.54	1,969.36	2,407.00	2,844.63	3,282.27	3,938.72
Dormington & Mordiford Group Parish Council	1,361.55	1,588.47	1,815.39	2,042.32	2,496.17	2,950.02	3,403.87	4,084.64
Dorstone Parish Council	1,336.01	1,558.67	1,781.34	2,004.01	2,449.35	2,894.68	3,340.02	4,008.02
Eardisland Parish Council	1,425.94	1,663.58	1,901.24	2,138.90	2,614.22	3,089.52	3,564.84	4,277.80
Eardisley Group Parish Council	1,344.28	1,568.32	1,792.37	2,016.42	2,464.52	2,912.61	3,360.70	4,032.84
Eastnor & Donnington Parish Council	1,344.99	1,569.15	1,793.31	2,017.48	2,465.81	2,914.14	3,362.47	4,034.96
Eaton Bishop Parish Council	1,357.56	1,583.81	1,810.07	2,036.33	2,488.85	2,941.36	3,393.89	4,072.66
Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council	1,389.81	1,621.44	1,853.07	2,084.71	2,547.98	3,011.25	3,474.52	4,169.42
Fownhope Parish Council	1,371.07	1,599.57	1,828.09	2,056.60	2,513.63	2,970.64	3,427.67	4,113.20
Foxley Group Parish Council	1,334.01	1,556.34	1,778.67	2,001.01	2,445.68	2,890.35	3,335.02	4,002.02
Garway Parish Council	1,388.90	1,620.37	1,851.86	2,083.34	2,546.31	3,009.27	3,472.24	4,166.68
Goodrich & Welsh Bicknor Group Parish Council	1,335.86	1,558.50	1,781.14	2,003.79	2,449.08	2,894.36	3,339.65	4,007.58
Hampton Bishop Parish Council	1,360.60	1,587.36	1,814.13	2,040.90	2,494.44	2,947.97	3,401.50	4,081.80
Hampton Charles Parish Meeting	1,312.91	1,531.72	1,750.54	1,969.36	2,407.00	2,844.63	3,282.27	3,938.72
Hatfield and District Group Parish Council	1,331.66	1,553.60	1,775.54	1,997.49	2,441.38	2,885.26	3,329.15	3,994.98
Hereford City Council	1,356.76	1,582.88	1,809.01	2,035.14	2,487.40	2,939.65	3,391.90	4,070.28
Holme Lacy Parish Council	1,383.00	1,613.49	1,843.99	2,074.49	2,535.49	2,996.48	3,457.49	4,148.98
Holmer & Shelwick Parish Council	1,327.26	1,548.47	1,769.68	1,990.89	2,433.31	2,875.73	3,318.15	3,981.78
Hope Mansell Parish Council	1,324.94	1,545.75	1,766.58	1,987.40	2,429.05	2,870.69	3,312.34	3,974.80
Hope under Dinmore Group Parish Council	1,384.81	1,615.60	1,846.41	2,077.21	2,538.82	3,000.41	3,462.02	4,154.42
How Caple, Sollershope & Yatton Group Parish Council	1,356.20	1,582.23	1,808.26	2,034.30	2,486.37	2,938.43	3,390.50	4,068.60
Humber, Stoke Prior & Ford Group Parish Council	1,363.22	1,590.41	1,817.62	2,044.82	2,499.23	2,953.63	3,408.04	4,089.64
Huntington Parish Council	1,324.52	1,545.26	1,766.02	1,986.77	2,428.28	2,869.78	3,311.29	3,973.54
Kentchurch Parish Council	1,361.82	1,588.79	1,815.76	2,042.73	2,496.67	2,950.61	3,404.55	4,085.46
Kilpeck Group Parish Council	1,382.14	1,612.48	1,842.84	2,073.20	2,533.92	2,994.62	3,455.34	4,146.40
Kimbolton Parish Council	1,348.39	1,573.11	1,797.85	2,022.58	2,472.05	2,921.50	3,370.97	4,045.16
Kings Caple Parish Council	1,352.31	1,577.69	1,803.07	2,028.46	2,479.23	2,930.00	3,380.77	4,056.92
Kingsland Parish Council	1,345.83	1,570.13	1,794.43	2,018.74	2,467.35	2,915.96	3,364.57	4,037.48
Kingstone & Thruxton Group Parish Council	1,351.73	1,577.01	1,802.30	2,027.59	2,478.17	2,928.74	3,379.32	4,055.18
Kington Rural and Lower Harpton Group Parish Council	1,338.48	1,561.55	1,784.63	2,007.71	2,453.87	2,900.02	3,346.19	4,015.42
Kington Town Council	1,409.74	1,644.68	1,879.64	2,114.60	2,584.52	3,054.42	3,524.34	4,229.20
Kinnerley and District Group Parish Council	1,344.85	1,568.98	1,793.13	2,017.27	2,465.56	2,913.83	3,362.12	4,034.54
Lea Parish Council	1,353.86	1,579.50	1,805.14	2,030.79	2,482.08	2,933.36	3,384.65	4,061.58

Council Tax for each valuation band, by Parish, without the Police & Fire precepts									APPENDIX 2
PARISH	VALUATION BANDS								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Ledbury Town Council	1,445.38	1,686.27	1,927.17	2,168.07	2,649.87	3,131.66	3,613.45	4,336.14	
Leintwardine Group Parish Council	1,376.85	1,606.32	1,835.79	2,065.27	2,524.22	2,983.17	3,442.12	4,130.54	
Leominster Town Council	1,446.23	1,687.26	1,928.30	2,169.34	2,651.42	3,133.49	3,615.57	4,338.68	
Linton Parish Council	1,330.30	1,552.01	1,773.73	1,995.45	2,438.89	2,882.32	3,325.75	3,990.90	
Little Birch Parish Council	1,361.56	1,588.48	1,815.41	2,042.34	2,496.20	2,950.05	3,403.90	4,084.68	
Little Dewchurch Parish Council	1,371.35	1,599.90	1,828.46	2,057.02	2,514.14	2,971.25	3,428.37	4,114.04	
Llangarron Parish Council	1,340.42	1,563.81	1,787.22	2,010.62	2,457.43	2,904.23	3,351.04	4,021.24	
Llanwarne & District Group Parish Council	1,340.36	1,563.74	1,787.14	2,010.53	2,457.32	2,904.10	3,350.89	4,021.06	
Longtown Group Parish Council	1,340.01	1,563.34	1,786.67	2,010.01	2,456.68	2,903.35	3,350.02	4,020.02	
Lower Bullingham Parish Council	1,332.02	1,554.01	1,776.02	1,998.02	2,442.03	2,886.03	3,330.04	3,996.04	
Luston Group Parish Council	1,351.14	1,576.32	1,801.51	2,026.70	2,477.08	2,927.45	3,377.84	4,053.40	
Lyonshall Parish Council	1,365.32	1,592.86	1,820.42	2,047.97	2,503.08	2,958.18	3,413.29	4,095.94	
Madley Parish Council	1,346.91	1,571.39	1,795.87	2,020.36	2,469.33	2,918.30	3,367.27	4,040.72	
Marden Parish Council	1,405.62	1,639.89	1,874.16	2,108.43	2,576.97	3,045.51	3,514.05	4,216.86	
Marstow Parish Council	1,347.05	1,571.55	1,796.06	2,020.57	2,469.59	2,918.60	3,367.62	4,041.14	
Mathon Parish Council (inc Malvern Hills Trust)	1,385.91	1,616.88	1,847.87	2,078.85	2,540.82	3,002.78	3,464.76	4,157.70	
Middleton-on-the-Hill and Leysters Group Parish Council	1,329.58	1,551.17	1,772.77	1,994.37	2,437.57	2,880.76	3,323.95	3,988.74	
Monkland and Stretford Parish Council	1,402.91	1,636.72	1,870.54	2,104.36	2,572.00	3,039.63	3,507.27	4,208.72	
Moreton on Lugg Parish Council	1,356.30	1,582.34	1,808.39	2,034.44	2,486.54	2,938.63	3,390.74	4,068.88	
Much Birch Parish Council	1,323.24	1,543.78	1,764.32	1,984.86	2,425.94	2,867.02	3,308.10	3,969.72	
Much Cowarne Group Parish Council	1,327.63	1,548.89	1,770.17	1,991.44	2,433.99	2,876.52	3,319.07	3,982.88	
Much Dewchurch Parish Council	1,331.74	1,553.68	1,775.64	1,997.60	2,441.52	2,885.42	3,329.34	3,995.20	
Much Marcle Parish Council	1,337.22	1,560.08	1,782.95	2,005.82	2,451.56	2,897.29	3,343.04	4,011.64	
North Bromyard Group Parish Council	1,329.90	1,551.54	1,773.19	1,994.84	2,438.14	2,881.43	3,324.74	3,989.68	
Ocle Pychard Parish Council	1,359.42	1,585.99	1,812.56	2,039.13	2,492.27	2,945.41	3,398.55	4,078.26	
Orcop Parish Council	1,347.04	1,571.53	1,796.04	2,020.55	2,469.57	2,918.57	3,367.59	4,041.10	
Orleton Parish Council	1,375.97	1,605.29	1,834.62	2,063.95	2,522.61	2,981.26	3,439.92	4,127.90	
Pembridge Parish Council	1,367.07	1,594.91	1,822.75	2,050.60	2,506.29	2,961.98	3,417.67	4,101.20	
Pencombe Group Parish Council	1,386.52	1,617.59	1,848.68	2,079.77	2,541.95	3,004.11	3,466.29	4,159.54	
Peterchurch Parish Council	1,350.30	1,575.35	1,800.40	2,025.45	2,475.55	2,925.65	3,375.75	4,050.90	
Peterstow Parish Council	1,372.72	1,601.49	1,830.28	2,059.07	2,516.65	2,974.21	3,431.79	4,118.14	
Pipe and Lyde Parish Council	1,334.88	1,557.36	1,779.84	2,002.32	2,447.28	2,892.24	3,337.20	4,004.64	
Pixley & District Parish Council	1,342.63	1,566.39	1,790.17	2,013.94	2,461.49	2,909.02	3,356.57	4,027.88	
Putley Parish Council	1,371.96	1,600.62	1,829.28	2,057.94	2,515.26	2,972.58	3,429.90	4,115.88	
Pyons Group Parish Council	1,355.70	1,581.65	1,807.60	2,033.55	2,485.45	2,937.35	3,389.25	4,067.10	
Richard's Castle (Herefordshire) Parish Council	1,389.95	1,621.60	1,853.26	2,084.92	2,548.24	3,011.55	3,474.87	4,169.84	
Ross-on-Wye Parish Council	1,412.32	1,647.69	1,883.08	2,118.47	2,589.25	3,060.01	3,530.79	4,236.94	
Sellack Parish Council	1,387.07	1,618.24	1,849.42	2,080.60	2,542.96	3,005.31	3,467.67	4,161.20	
Shobdon Parish Council	1,391.96	1,623.94	1,855.94	2,087.93	2,551.92	3,015.90	3,479.89	4,175.86	
St. Leonards Parish Council	1,347.56	1,572.15	1,796.74	2,021.34	2,470.53	2,919.71	3,368.90	4,042.68	
Stapleton Group Parish Council	1,356.34	1,582.39	1,808.45	2,034.51	2,486.63	2,938.74	3,390.85	4,069.02	
Staunton-on-Wye and District Group Parish Council	1,331.98	1,553.96	1,775.96	1,997.96	2,441.96	2,885.94	3,329.94	3,995.92	
Stoke Edith Parish Meeting	1,312.91	1,531.72	1,750.54	1,969.36	2,407.00	2,844.63	3,282.27	3,938.72	
Stoke Lacy Parish Council	1,362.99	1,590.15	1,817.31	2,044.48	2,498.81	2,953.14	3,407.47	4,088.96	
Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council	1,355.74	1,581.69	1,807.65	2,033.61	2,485.53	2,937.44	3,389.35	4,067.22	
Stretton Sugwas Parish Council	1,351.14	1,576.33	1,801.52	2,026.71	2,477.09	2,927.47	3,377.85	4,053.42	
Sutton Parish Council	1,368.87	1,597.01	1,825.15	2,053.30	2,509.59	2,965.88	3,422.17	4,106.60	
Tarrington Parish Council	1,364.70	1,592.14	1,819.59	2,047.04	2,501.94	2,956.83	3,411.74	4,094.08	
Thornbury Group Parish Council	1,335.72	1,558.34	1,780.96	2,003.58	2,448.82	2,894.06	3,339.30	4,007.16	
Titley and District Group Parish Council	1,339.76	1,563.05	1,786.34	2,009.64	2,456.23	2,902.81	3,349.40	4,019.28	
Upton Bishop Parish Council	1,357.92	1,584.24	1,810.56	2,036.88	2,489.52	2,942.16	3,394.80	4,073.76	
Vowchurch & District Group Parish Council	1,349.04	1,573.88	1,798.72	2,023.56	2,473.24	2,922.92	3,372.60	4,047.12	
Walford Parish Council	1,343.89	1,567.86	1,791.85	2,015.83	2,463.80	2,911.75	3,359.72	4,031.66	
Wellington Parish Council	1,353.02	1,578.51	1,804.02	2,029.52	2,480.53	2,931.53	3,382.54	4,059.04	
Wellington Heath Parish Council	1,350.32	1,575.37	1,800.42	2,025.48	2,475.59	2,925.69	3,375.80	4,050.96	
Welsh Newton & Llanrothal Group Parish Council	1,371.89	1,600.53	1,829.18	2,057.83	2,515.13	2,972.42	3,429.72	4,115.66	
Weobley Parish Council	1,368.08	1,596.09	1,824.10	2,052.12	2,508.15	2,964.17	3,420.20	4,104.24	
Weston Beggard Parish Council	1,349.57	1,574.49	1,799.42	2,024.35	2,474.21	2,924.06	3,373.92	4,048.70	
Weston-under-Penyard Parish Council	1,336.02	1,558.68	1,781.35	2,004.02	2,449.36	2,894.69	3,340.04	4,008.04	
Whitbourne Parish Council	1,337.24	1,560.11	1,782.98	2,005.86	2,451.61	2,897.35	3,343.10	4,011.72	
Whitchurch & Ganarew Group Parish Council	1,376.44	1,605.84	1,835.25	2,064.66	2,523.48	2,982.29	3,441.10	4,129.32	
Wigmore Group Parish Council	1,373.02	1,601.84	1,830.68	2,059.52	2,517.20	2,974.86	3,432.54	4,119.04	
Withington Group Parish Council	1,346.63	1,571.06	1,795.50	2,019.94	2,468.82	2,917.69	3,366.57	4,039.88	
Woolhope Parish Council	1,369.71	1,597.99	1,826.27	2,054.56	2,511.13	2,967.70	3,424.27	4,109.12	
Wyeside Group Parish Council	1,335.52	1,558.09	1,780.68	2,003.27	2,448.45	2,893.61	3,338.79	4,006.54	
Yarkhill Parish Council	1,350.87	1,576.01	1,801.15	2,026.30	2,476.59	2,926.88	3,377.17	4,052.60	
Yarpole Group Parish Council	1,367.71	1,595.65	1,823.61	2,051.56	2,507.47	2,963.36	3,419.27	4,103.12	

APPENDIX 3

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia **precept requirement for each valuation band**

	VALUATION BANDS							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	194.33	226.72	259.11	291.50	356.28	421.06	485.83	583.00

A total precept from Herefordshire Council of £21,226,079.71 (2024/25 £19,979,991.68).

The band D council tax charge amounts to £291.50, an increase of £14.00 or 5.05% over the previous year.

APPENDIX 4

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority **precept requirement for each valuation band**

	VALUATION BANDS							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service	68.15	79.50	90.86	102.22	124.94	147.65	170.37	204.44

A 2025/26 total precept from Herefordshire Council of £7,443,327.28 (2024/25 £6,999,838.48).

The band D council tax charge for Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority amounts to £102.22, an increase of £5.00 or 5.14% over the previous year.

Council Tax for each valuation band, by Parish, including the Police & Fire precepts							APPENDIX 5	
PARISH	VALUATION BANDS							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Abbeydore & Bacton Group Parish Council	1,616.00	1,885.32	2,154.66	2,424.00	2,962.68	3,501.34	4,040.00	4,848.00
Aconbury Parish Meeting	1,576.24	1,838.94	2,101.65	2,364.36	2,889.78	3,415.19	3,940.60	4,728.72
Acton Beauchamp Group Parish Council	1,616.54	1,885.95	2,155.38	2,424.81	2,963.67	3,502.51	4,041.35	4,849.62
Allensmore Parish Council	1,590.86	1,855.98	2,121.13	2,386.28	2,916.58	3,446.85	3,977.14	4,772.56
Almeley Parish Council	1,623.74	1,894.35	2,164.98	2,435.61	2,976.87	3,518.11	4,059.35	4,871.22
Ashperton Parish Council	1,629.73	1,901.34	2,172.96	2,444.59	2,987.84	3,531.08	4,074.32	4,889.18
Aston Ingham Parish Council	1,619.74	1,889.69	2,159.65	2,429.61	2,969.53	3,509.44	4,049.35	4,859.22
Avenbury Parish Council	1,616.91	1,886.38	2,155.87	2,425.36	2,964.34	3,503.30	4,042.27	4,850.72
Aymestrey Parish Council	1,628.96	1,900.44	2,171.94	2,443.44	2,986.44	3,529.42	4,072.40	4,886.88
Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Group	1,623.27	1,893.80	2,164.35	2,434.90	2,976.00	3,517.08	4,058.17	4,869.80
Bartestree & Lugwardine Group Parish Council	1,642.93	1,916.74	2,190.56	2,464.39	3,012.04	3,559.68	4,107.32	4,928.78
Belmont Rural Parish Council	1,605.72	1,873.33	2,140.95	2,408.58	2,943.83	3,479.06	4,014.30	4,817.16
Birley with Upper Hill Parish Council	1,590.04	1,855.04	2,120.05	2,385.06	2,915.08	3,445.09	3,975.10	4,770.12
Bishop's Frome Parish Council	1,626.40	1,897.45	2,168.52	2,439.59	2,981.73	3,523.85	4,065.99	4,879.18
Bishopstone Group Parish Council	1,610.63	1,879.05	2,147.50	2,415.94	2,952.83	3,489.69	4,026.57	4,831.88
Bodenham Parish Council	1,602.36	1,869.41	2,136.47	2,403.54	2,937.67	3,471.78	4,005.90	4,807.08
Border Group Parish Council	1,596.69	1,862.79	2,128.91	2,395.03	2,927.27	3,459.49	3,991.72	4,790.06
Bosbury and Coddington Parish Council	1,616.25	1,885.61	2,154.99	2,424.37	2,963.13	3,501.87	4,040.62	4,848.74
Brampton Abbots & Foy Group Parish Council	1,613.88	1,882.84	2,151.83	2,420.81	2,958.78	3,496.73	4,034.69	4,841.62
Bredenbury & District Group Parish Council	1,611.99	1,880.64	2,149.31	2,417.98	2,955.32	3,492.64	4,029.97	4,835.96
Breinton Parish Council	1,596.24	1,862.27	2,128.31	2,394.36	2,926.45	3,458.52	3,990.60	4,788.72
Bridstow Parish Council	1,595.09	1,860.92	2,126.78	2,392.63	2,924.34	3,456.02	3,987.72	4,785.26
Brilley Parish Council	1,639.29	1,912.49	2,185.71	2,458.93	3,005.37	3,551.79	4,098.22	4,917.86
Brimfield and Little Hereford Group Parish Council	1,595.10	1,860.94	2,126.79	2,392.65	2,924.36	3,456.05	3,987.75	4,785.30
Brockhampton with Much Fawley Parish Council	1,612.18	1,880.86	2,149.56	2,418.26	2,955.66	3,493.04	4,030.44	4,836.52
Brockhampton Group Parish Council	1,597.89	1,864.19	2,130.51	2,396.83	2,929.47	3,462.09	3,994.72	4,793.66
Bromyard & Winslow Town Council	1,711.85	1,997.14	2,282.46	2,567.77	3,138.40	3,709.00	4,279.62	5,135.54
Burghill Parish Council	1,594.19	1,859.87	2,125.58	2,391.28	2,922.69	3,454.07	3,985.47	4,782.56
Callow & Haywood Group Parish Council	1,614.75	1,883.86	2,152.99	2,422.12	2,960.38	3,498.62	4,036.87	4,844.24
Cleghonger Parish Council	1,602.26	1,869.28	2,136.33	2,403.38	2,937.48	3,471.55	4,005.64	4,806.76
Clifford Parish Council	1,604.31	1,871.68	2,139.07	2,406.46	2,941.24	3,476.00	4,010.77	4,812.92
Colwall Parish Council (including Malvern Hills Trust (C	1,671.03	1,949.53	2,228.03	2,506.55	3,063.57	3,620.57	4,177.58	5,013.10
Cradley Parish Council	1,629.55	1,901.13	2,172.72	2,444.32	2,987.51	3,530.69	4,073.87	4,888.64
Credenhill Parish Council	1,622.84	1,893.30	2,163.78	2,434.26	2,975.22	3,516.16	4,057.10	4,868.52
Cusop Parish Council	1,622.94	1,893.41	2,163.91	2,434.40	2,975.39	3,516.36	4,057.34	4,868.80
Dilwyn Parish Council	1,644.88	1,919.02	2,193.17	2,467.32	3,015.62	3,563.91	4,112.20	4,934.64
Dinedor Parish Council	1,627.08	1,898.25	2,169.43	2,440.62	2,982.99	3,525.34	4,067.70	4,881.24
Dinmore Parish Meeting	1,575.39	1,837.94	2,100.51	2,363.08	2,888.22	3,413.34	3,938.47	4,726.16
Dormington & Mordiford Group Parish Council	1,624.03	1,894.69	2,165.36	2,436.04	2,977.39	3,518.73	4,060.07	4,872.08
Dorstone Parish Council	1,598.49	1,864.89	2,131.31	2,397.73	2,930.57	3,463.39	3,996.22	4,795.46
Eardisland Parish Council	1,688.42	1,969.80	2,251.21	2,532.62	3,095.44	3,658.23	4,221.04	5,065.24
Eardisley Group Parish Council	1,606.76	1,874.54	2,142.34	2,410.14	2,945.74	3,481.32	4,016.90	4,820.28
Eastnor & Donnington Parish Council	1,607.47	1,875.37	2,143.28	2,411.20	2,947.03	3,482.85	4,018.67	4,822.40
Eaton Bishop Parish Council	1,620.04	1,890.03	2,160.04	2,430.05	2,970.07	3,510.07	4,050.09	4,860.10
Ewyas Harold Group Parish Council	1,652.29	1,927.66	2,203.04	2,478.43	3,029.20	3,579.96	4,130.72	4,956.86
Fownhope Parish Council	1,633.55	1,905.79	2,178.06	2,450.32	2,994.85	3,539.35	4,083.87	4,900.64
Foxley Group Parish Council	1,596.49	1,862.56	2,128.64	2,394.73	2,926.90	3,459.06	3,991.22	4,789.46
Garway Parish Council	1,651.38	1,926.59	2,201.83	2,477.06	3,027.53	3,577.98	4,128.44	4,954.12
Goodrich & Welsh Bicknor Group Parish Council	1,598.34	1,864.72	2,131.11	2,397.51	2,930.30	3,463.07	3,995.85	4,795.02
Hampton Bishop Parish Council	1,623.08	1,893.58	2,164.10	2,434.62	2,975.66	3,516.68	4,057.70	4,869.24

Council Tax for each valuation band, by Parish, including the Police & Fire precepts							APPENDIX 5	
PARISH	VALUATION BANDS							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Hampton Charles Parish Meeting	1,575.39	1,837.94	2,100.51	2,363.08	2,888.22	3,413.34	3,938.47	4,726.16
Hatfield and District Group Parish Council	1,594.14	1,859.82	2,125.51	2,391.21	2,922.60	3,453.97	3,985.35	4,782.42
Hereford City Council	1,619.24	1,889.10	2,158.98	2,428.86	2,968.62	3,508.36	4,048.10	4,857.72
Holme Lacy Parish Council	1,645.48	1,919.71	2,193.96	2,468.21	3,016.71	3,565.19	4,113.69	4,936.42
Holmer & Shelwick Parish Council	1,589.74	1,854.69	2,119.65	2,384.61	2,914.53	3,444.44	3,974.35	4,769.22
Hope Mansell Parish Council	1,587.42	1,851.97	2,116.55	2,381.12	2,910.27	3,439.40	3,968.54	4,762.24
Hope under Dinmore Group Parish Council	1,647.29	1,921.82	2,196.38	2,470.93	3,020.04	3,569.12	4,118.22	4,941.86
How Caple, Sollershope & Yatton Group Parish Council	1,618.68	1,888.45	2,158.23	2,428.02	2,967.59	3,507.14	4,046.70	4,856.04
Humber, Stoke Prior & Ford Group Parish Council	1,625.70	1,896.63	2,167.59	2,438.54	2,980.45	3,522.34	4,064.24	4,877.08
Huntington Parish Council	1,587.00	1,851.48	2,115.99	2,380.49	2,909.50	3,438.49	3,967.49	4,760.98
Kentchurch Parish Council	1,624.30	1,895.01	2,165.73	2,436.45	2,977.89	3,519.32	4,060.75	4,872.90
Kilpeck Group Parish Council	1,644.62	1,918.70	2,192.81	2,466.92	3,015.14	3,563.33	4,111.54	4,933.84
Kimbolton Parish Council	1,610.87	1,879.33	2,147.82	2,416.30	2,953.27	3,490.21	4,027.17	4,832.60
Kings Caple Parish Council	1,614.79	1,883.91	2,153.04	2,422.18	2,960.45	3,498.71	4,036.97	4,844.36
Kingsland Parish Council	1,608.31	1,876.35	2,144.40	2,412.46	2,948.57	3,484.67	4,020.77	4,824.92
Kingstone & Thruxton Group Parish Council	1,614.21	1,883.23	2,152.27	2,421.31	2,959.39	3,497.45	4,035.52	4,842.62
Kington Rural and Lower Harpton Group Parish Council	1,600.96	1,867.77	2,134.60	2,401.43	2,935.09	3,468.73	4,002.39	4,802.86
Kington Town Council	1,672.22	1,950.90	2,229.61	2,508.32	3,065.74	3,623.13	4,180.54	5,016.64
Kinnersley and District Group Parish Council	1,607.33	1,875.20	2,143.10	2,410.99	2,946.78	3,482.54	4,018.32	4,821.98
Lea Parish Council	1,616.34	1,885.72	2,155.11	2,424.51	2,963.30	3,502.07	4,040.85	4,849.02
Ledbury Town Council	1,707.86	1,992.49	2,277.14	2,561.79	3,131.09	3,700.37	4,269.65	5,123.58
Leintwardine Group Parish Council	1,639.33	1,912.54	2,185.76	2,458.99	3,005.44	3,551.88	4,098.32	4,917.98
Leominster Town Council	1,708.71	1,993.48	2,278.27	2,563.06	3,132.64	3,702.20	4,271.77	5,126.12
Linton Parish Council	1,592.78	1,858.23	2,123.70	2,389.17	2,920.11	3,451.03	3,981.95	4,778.34
Little Birch Parish Council	1,624.04	1,894.70	2,165.38	2,436.06	2,977.42	3,518.76	4,060.10	4,872.12
Little Dewchurch Parish Council	1,633.83	1,906.12	2,178.43	2,450.74	2,995.36	3,539.96	4,084.57	4,901.48
Llangarron Parish Council	1,602.90	1,870.03	2,137.19	2,404.34	2,938.65	3,472.94	4,007.24	4,808.68
Llanwarne & District Group Parish Council	1,602.84	1,869.96	2,137.11	2,404.25	2,938.54	3,472.81	4,007.09	4,808.50
Longtown Group Parish Council	1,602.49	1,869.56	2,136.64	2,403.73	2,937.90	3,472.06	4,006.22	4,807.46
Lower Bullingham Parish Council	1,594.50	1,860.23	2,125.99	2,391.74	2,923.25	3,454.74	3,986.24	4,783.48
Luston Group Parish Council	1,613.62	1,882.54	2,151.48	2,420.42	2,958.30	3,496.16	4,034.04	4,840.84
Lyonshall Parish Council	1,627.80	1,899.08	2,170.39	2,441.69	2,984.30	3,526.89	4,069.49	4,883.38
Madley Parish Council	1,609.39	1,877.61	2,145.84	2,414.08	2,950.55	3,487.01	4,023.47	4,828.16
Marden Parish Council	1,668.10	1,946.11	2,224.13	2,502.15	3,058.19	3,614.22	4,170.25	5,004.30
Marstow Parish Council	1,609.53	1,877.77	2,146.03	2,414.29	2,950.81	3,487.31	4,023.82	4,828.58
Mathon Parish Council (includes Malvern Hills Trust (N	1,648.39	1,923.10	2,197.84	2,472.57	3,022.04	3,571.49	4,120.96	4,945.14
Middleton-on-the-Hill and Leysters Group Parish Council	1,592.06	1,857.39	2,122.74	2,388.09	2,918.79	3,449.47	3,980.15	4,776.18
Monkland and Stretford Parish Council	1,665.39	1,942.94	2,220.51	2,498.08	3,053.22	3,608.34	4,163.47	4,996.16
Moreton on Lugg Parish Council	1,618.78	1,888.56	2,158.36	2,428.16	2,967.76	3,507.34	4,046.94	4,856.32
Much Birch Parish Council	1,585.72	1,850.00	2,114.29	2,378.58	2,907.16	3,435.73	3,964.30	4,757.16
Much Cowarne Group Parish Council	1,590.11	1,855.11	2,120.14	2,385.16	2,915.21	3,445.23	3,975.27	4,770.32
Much Dewchurch Parish Council	1,594.22	1,859.90	2,125.61	2,391.32	2,922.74	3,454.13	3,985.54	4,782.64
Much Marcle Parish Council	1,599.70	1,866.30	2,132.92	2,399.54	2,932.78	3,466.00	3,999.24	4,799.08
North Bromyard Group Parish Council	1,592.38	1,857.76	2,123.16	2,388.56	2,919.36	3,450.14	3,980.94	4,777.12
Ocle Pychard Parish Council	1,621.90	1,892.21	2,162.53	2,432.85	2,973.49	3,514.12	4,054.75	4,865.70
Orcop Parish Council	1,609.52	1,877.75	2,146.01	2,414.27	2,950.79	3,487.28	4,023.79	4,828.54
Orleton Parish Council	1,638.45	1,911.51	2,184.59	2,457.67	3,003.83	3,549.97	4,096.12	4,915.34
Pembridge Parish Council	1,629.55	1,901.13	2,172.72	2,444.32	2,987.51	3,530.69	4,073.87	4,888.64
Pencombe Group Parish Council	1,649.00	1,923.81	2,198.65	2,473.49	3,023.17	3,572.82	4,122.49	4,946.98
Peterchurch Parish Council	1,612.78	1,881.57	2,150.37	2,419.17	2,956.77	3,494.36	4,031.95	4,838.34

Council Tax for each valuation band, by Parish, including the Police & Fire precepts							APPENDIX 5	
PARISH	VALUATION BANDS							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Peterstow Parish council	1,635.20	1,907.71	2,180.25	2,452.79	2,997.87	3,542.92	4,087.99	4,905.58
Pipe and Lyde Parish Council	1,597.36	1,863.58	2,129.81	2,396.04	2,928.50	3,460.95	3,993.40	4,792.08
Pixley & District Parish Council	1,605.11	1,872.61	2,140.14	2,407.66	2,942.71	3,477.73	4,012.77	4,815.32
Putley Parish Council	1,634.44	1,906.84	2,179.25	2,451.66	2,996.48	3,541.29	4,086.10	4,903.32
Pyons Group Parish Council	1,618.18	1,887.87	2,157.57	2,427.27	2,966.67	3,506.06	4,045.45	4,854.54
Richard's Castle (Herefordshire) Parish Council	1,652.43	1,927.82	2,203.23	2,478.64	3,029.46	3,580.26	4,131.07	4,957.28
Ross-on-Wye Parish Council	1,674.80	1,953.91	2,233.05	2,512.19	3,070.47	3,628.72	4,186.99	5,024.38
Sellack Parish Council	1,649.55	1,924.46	2,199.39	2,474.32	3,024.18	3,574.02	4,123.87	4,948.64
Shobdon Parish Council	1,654.44	1,930.16	2,205.91	2,481.65	3,033.14	3,584.61	4,136.09	4,963.30
St. Weonards Parish Council	1,610.04	1,878.37	2,146.71	2,415.06	2,951.75	3,488.42	4,025.10	4,830.12
Stapleton Group Parish Council	1,618.82	1,888.61	2,158.42	2,428.23	2,967.85	3,507.45	4,047.05	4,856.46
Staunton-on-Wye and District Group Parish Council	1,594.46	1,860.18	2,125.93	2,391.68	2,923.18	3,454.65	3,986.14	4,783.36
Stoke Edith Parish Meeting (Chairman)	1,575.39	1,837.94	2,100.51	2,363.08	2,888.22	3,413.34	3,938.47	4,726.16
Stoke Lacy Parish Council	1,625.47	1,896.37	2,167.28	2,438.20	2,980.03	3,521.85	4,063.67	4,876.40
Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council	1,618.22	1,887.91	2,157.62	2,427.33	2,966.75	3,506.15	4,045.55	4,854.66
Stretton Sugwas Parish Council	1,613.62	1,882.55	2,151.49	2,420.43	2,958.31	3,496.18	4,034.05	4,840.86
Sutton Parish Council	1,631.35	1,903.23	2,175.12	2,447.02	2,990.81	3,534.59	4,078.37	4,894.04
Tarrington Parish Council	1,627.18	1,898.36	2,169.56	2,440.76	2,983.16	3,525.54	4,067.94	4,881.52
Thornbury Group Parish Council	1,598.20	1,864.56	2,130.93	2,397.30	2,930.04	3,462.77	3,995.50	4,794.60
Titley and District Group Parish Council	1,602.24	1,869.27	2,136.31	2,403.36	2,937.45	3,471.52	4,005.60	4,806.72
Upton Bishop Parish Council	1,620.40	1,890.46	2,160.53	2,430.60	2,970.74	3,510.87	4,051.00	4,861.20
Vowchurch & District Group Parish Council	1,611.52	1,880.10	2,148.69	2,417.28	2,954.46	3,491.63	4,028.80	4,834.56
Walford Parish Council	1,606.37	1,874.08	2,141.82	2,409.55	2,945.02	3,480.46	4,015.92	4,819.10
Wellington Parish Council	1,615.50	1,884.73	2,153.99	2,423.24	2,961.75	3,500.24	4,038.74	4,846.48
Wellington Heath Parish Council	1,612.80	1,881.59	2,150.39	2,419.20	2,956.81	3,494.40	4,032.00	4,838.40
Welsh Newton & Llanrothal Group Parish Council	1,634.37	1,906.75	2,179.15	2,451.55	2,996.35	3,541.13	4,085.92	4,903.10
Weobley Parish Council	1,630.56	1,902.31	2,174.07	2,445.84	2,989.37	3,532.88	4,076.40	4,891.68
Weston Beggard Parish Council	1,612.05	1,880.71	2,149.39	2,418.07	2,955.43	3,492.77	4,030.12	4,836.14
Weston-under-Penyard Parish Council	1,598.50	1,864.90	2,131.32	2,397.74	2,930.58	3,463.40	3,996.24	4,795.48
Whitbourne Parish Council	1,599.72	1,866.33	2,132.95	2,399.58	2,932.83	3,466.06	3,999.30	4,799.16
Whitchurch & Ganarew Group Parish Council	1,638.92	1,912.06	2,185.22	2,458.38	3,004.70	3,551.00	4,097.30	4,916.76
Wigmore Group Parish Council	1,635.50	1,908.06	2,180.65	2,453.24	2,998.42	3,543.57	4,088.74	4,906.48
Withington Group Parish Council	1,609.11	1,877.28	2,145.47	2,413.66	2,950.04	3,486.40	4,022.77	4,827.32
Woolhope Parish Council	1,632.19	1,904.21	2,176.24	2,448.28	2,992.35	3,536.41	4,080.47	4,896.56
Wyeside Group Parish Council	1,598.00	1,864.31	2,130.65	2,396.99	2,929.67	3,462.32	3,994.99	4,793.98
Yarkhill Parish Council	1,613.35	1,882.23	2,151.12	2,420.02	2,957.81	3,495.59	4,033.37	4,840.04
Yarpole Group Parish Council	1,630.19	1,901.87	2,173.58	2,445.28	2,988.69	3,532.07	4,075.47	4,890.56



Title of report: Corporate Parenting Strategy

Meeting: Council

Meeting date: 7 March 2025

Report by: Cabinet member children and young people

Classification

Open

Decision type

Council endorsement

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To endorse the corporate parenting strategy 2025-2027.

Recommendation(s)

That Council

- a) **Endorse the corporate parenting strategy 2025-2027 as approved by the Corporate Parenting Board (appendix 1)**

Alternative options

1. The strategy sets out the ambition, actions and outcomes we, as a local authority, need to achieve for our children and young people as a Corporate Parent. We need to evidence the Council's commitment to corporate parenting, to define what difference it will achieve and to evaluate how outcomes are improved for looked after children and care leavers. The most appropriate way to do this is through a Corporate Parenting Strategy. Not to have such a strategy limits our ability to communicate the commitment and priority we are giving to our Looked After Children, Care Leavers and their carers.

Key considerations

2. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced a duty on councils to have regard to the following corporate parenting principles when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people;
 - I. to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people
 - II. to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
 - III. to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
 - IV. to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
 - V. to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
 - VI. for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
 - VII. to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.
3. To be able to evidence the council's commitment and action in relation to these responsibilities it is necessary to have a strategy. As corporate parents it is the council's responsibility to ensure that every effort is made to enable children and young people in care to succeed. Corporate parenting is a responsibility of all elected members and officers within the council as well as statutory partners. The strategy attached at appendix A, enables the council and its partners to be clear about priorities, what needs to be done and by whom if change is to be achieved.
4. The key priorities of the strategy are: Our children and young people
 - I. Have safe, stable and caring places to live and call home.
 - II. Are emotionally, physically and mentally healthy.
 - III. Have inclusive and enriching environments to learn, develop, have fun, and achieve
 - IV. Are able to build trusted relationships with the people in their lives, are able to be themselves and are free from stigma
 - V. Can make their voice heard and shape how services are designed and delivered.
 - VI. Are safe and protected from harm, abuse and exploitation.
 - VII. Young people leave care and become independent and thriving adults
5. In order to track the progress of the strategy, the Corporate Parenting Board will receive regular progress updates.

Community impact

6. The Council Plan 2024–2028 includes the ambition to support to children and young people to thrive, be safe, and for families to be supported. We believe that children and young people are best supported in their family networks and within highly effective schools and flourishing communities. Our children are the future.
7. The delivery plan 2024/25 includes the ambition to develop and launch an updated corporate parenting strategy, together with an implementation plan.

Environmental Impact

8. There is no direct environmental impact as a result of this strategy.

Equality duty

9. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that it is paying ‘due regard’ in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
10. Due to the broad scope of this strategy and its potential impact on certain protected characteristics, an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is provided at Appendix 2 for the impact on the children and young people. No negative impacts have been identified.
11. The Equality impact Assessment provided will be kept under review, and developed during the course of the strategy and will be further reviewed as part of the development of the next strategy.

Resource implications

12. There are no resource implications as a result of this strategy as it will be delivered through existing resources.

Legal implications

13. As set out within the report above, The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced a duty on councils to have regard to a set of corporate parenting principles when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people. This is found within s(1) of the Children and Social Work Act 2017:-

“s1 Corporate parenting principles

(1) A local authority in England must, in carrying out functions in relation to the children and young people mentioned in subsection (2), have regard to the need—

(a) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;

(b) to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;

(c) to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;

(d) to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;

(e) to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;

(f) for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;

(g) to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

14. As identified within this report it is necessary and appropriate to have a Corporate Parenting Strategy which sets out how the Council will meet its statutory duties to adhere s1 of The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Corporate Parenting Principles contained therein. The Strategy correctly sets out how the Council will meet its statutory duties in this regard.

Risk management

15. There are no risks identified to adopting a clear strategy for Corporate Parenting
16. There are risks associated with having no clear strategy in place. There are expectations upon the Council and its partners to act as responsible and ambitious corporate parents for looked after children and care leavers.

Consultees

17. A consultation has been carried out with our Care Leavers through the participation groups. They provided the open letter to the council which is recorded in the opening pages. Their views continue to be gained to ensure that the process remains connected to the people at the heart of the strategy. All partners have been consulted for them to provide evidence of actions for previous strategy and ambitions moving forward.
18. A Political Group Consultation was also held on 26 November 2024 to discuss the corporate parenting strategy. The session was attended by ten councillors, representing four different political parties

Appendices

Appendix 1 Corporate Parenting Strategy
Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment

Background papers

None

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Governance	John Coleman	Date 21/11/2024
Finance	Judith Tramner	Date 18/11/2024
Legal	Tess Burgess	Date 26/11/2024
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 14/11/2024
Equality Duty	Harriett Yellin	Date 29/11/2024
Procurement	Claire Powell	Date 15/11/2024
Risk	Chris Tindall-Jones	Date 22/11/2024
Approved by	Tina Russell	Date 10/12/2024

Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025-2027



Contents

Contents	3
What is 'Corporate Parenting'?	4
An open letter to children and young people with care experience	6
Our vision for all children and young people in Herefordshire	8
Children and Care Experienced Young People in Herefordshire June 2024	10
Our strategy for our priorities for children and young people with care experience	12
Homes and housing:	14
Appendix 1 - Legislative context	44
Appendix 2 - Using Language that Cares	45
Appendix 3 - The Promise	45
Appendix 4 - How we will check on progress	46
Appendix 5 - Scrutiny	47

What is ‘Corporate Parenting’?

Put simply, Corporate Parenting is a whole council responsibility to be loving, caring and aspirational for all children and young people who have been in our care up to the age of 25.

There is a legal requirements for us to be Corporate Parents, Section 1 of Children and Social Work Act 2017 (Section 1) sets out seven corporate parenting principles which local authorities must have regard to for children looked after or care experienced young people.

The Independent Review of Children’s Social Care was published in May 2022, this looked at the needs, experiences and outcomes of the children supported by social care and put forward recommendations for changes. Josh MacAllister listed his 5 missions for Care Experienced young people he noted that “The disadvantage faced by the care experienced community should be the civil rights issue of our time. Children in care are powerless, are often invisible and they face some of the greatest inequalities that exist in England today. In spite of these injustices so many care experienced people go on to run businesses, start families, earn doctorates, produce drama, write poetry, become government ministers and contribute to the world in countless ways. Five ambitious missions

are needed so that care experienced people secure: loving relationships; quality education; a decent home; fulfilling work and good health as the foundations for a good life. Central government and local authorities, employers, the NHS, schools, colleges and universities must step up to secure these foundations for all care experienced people. This will require a wider range of organisations to act as corporate parents for looked after children, and the UK should be the first country in the world to recognise the care experience as a protected characteristic. In December 2022, Ofsted announced the introduction of a new judgement for care experienced young people to the framework for inspecting local authority children’s services (ILACS). The new judgement will focus on experiences and progress of care experienced young people. This will include consideration of whether local authorities are making good decisions for care experienced young people, and what they are doing to support them into adulthood

In February 2023 the UK government published its implementation strategy and consultation called ‘Stable Homes, Built on Love’. The strategy responded to the independent review and concentrated on how to provide nurturing, stable and loving homes for children in care and care experienced young people.

Above all else, this means protecting our children and young people from harm and keeping them safe. Importantly, we must strive as we do for our own children, to want and act for them to gain the best in life, act to empower them to achieve, protect their interests and nurture their ambitions so that they feel secure and grow into independent and thriving young adults. Our ambition to be good Corporate Parents goes far beyond any laws. Instead, we have a moral, social and economic responsibility, as public services, civil society, local communities and wider society, to work together to equip and empower our care experienced children and young people to succeed and thrive.

At its heart, Corporate Parenting means always asking ourselves “would this be good enough for my child?”

An open letter from children and young people with care experience

We are children and young people who have experience of Herefordshire's care. As our Corporate Parents we want you to think about how you care for us, support us and help us reach our aspirations. We want to be respected for who we are as individuals. This means showing us that you care in every way that you can - by listening to us and hearing us. By making sure that we have the right care and support where and when we need it.

Communication is really important to us. Treat us how you would expect to be treated and don't be patronising. Be honest with us, listen to us, and be open-minded about how best to get to know us. Ask us the best way to work with us e.g. go for a walk when we meet – not always during the day and sometimes at the weekend; go for a coffee. Speak to us informally as this is more natural. Formal conversations/terminology create a hierarchy which can make our voices unclear. And remember you were once a child, a teenager and then a young adult. We won't always get it right but you need to be there to catch us when we fall to make sure we will be okay.

We want you to listen to our views.

This might be about asking how we are and how we are feeling. Make sure you understand what we are really saying and feeling by checking back in with us. It is really important that you show how you respect us and our experience in real ways. Remember, we are all unique individuals, who are children and young people first and foremost. We are not defined by our care experience.

Finally, we expect you to do what you say you will do, stick to your promises and not make excuses. We want to have good relationships with the people who work with us, who are flexible, willing and open-minded to always try and do what is best for us.

An open letter to children and young people with care experience

Dear children and young people who are in our care and those with care experience,

We are your Corporate Parents and our job is to ensure that we keep you safe and well, support you to be the best that you can be and get the very best out of life. We will do this by listening and hearing your voice, supporting you with your education and aspirations for the future, making sure you have a safe home. We will support you to ensure your health needs are met. We will aspire to meet the recommendations of Josh MacAlister's (December 2022) missions to gain equality for care experienced young people and that you secure: loving relationships; quality education; a decent home; fulfilling work and good health as the foundations for a good life.

We are all passionate about making Herefordshire a place where all children and young people have the best possible start in life and are able to access all the things that they need to feel loved, learn, grow and have fun and to reach your aspirations. We want young people to go on to become well-rounded, resilient and independent young adults who are engaged and thriving members of their local communities. We will do this by making sure your social workers and personal advisors meet with you regularly to support you with all of the above to ensure you never feel alone or unsupported. We want you to know that the team around you will be the best Corporate Parents they can be, to ensure we all support you to flourish and thrive in your journey to adulthood.

We will know we have done what we said when you tell us you feel:

- safe, loved and cared for
- accepted for who you are, as unique individuals.
- feel listened to, heard and understood
- and that you believe our relationship is built on trust and respect.

As senior leaders in Herefordshire Council and across partnerships , alongside all our hard-working and dedicated staff and carers, we are committed to being the best possible Corporate Parents we can be.

This is our plan of how we aim to do this together.

Paul Walker
Chief Executive,
Herefordshire
Council

Tina Russell
Corporate
Director
Children's
Services,
Herefordshire
Council

Tori Lynch
Head of Service
for
Corporate
Parenting,
Herefordshire
Council
Councillor

Jonathan Lester
Leader,
Herefordshire
Council

Councillor Ivan
Powell
Elected member
for
Children's
Services
Herefordshire
Council

Our vision for all children and young people in Herefordshire

We believe that every child and young person in Herefordshire should have the best possible start in life and the opportunity to thrive. We want to ensure children and young people receive the right support, at the right time, and in the right place. We want to inspire them, enable and support them to aim high and achieve in their lives. For children and young people with care experience, our vision is no different.

We recognise that children and young people, who have care-experience, can face additional challenges that others their age may not. As their Corporate Parents, and in spite of these obstacles, we will support them to achieve good and better outcomes in all aspects of their lives.

Our seven priority outcomes

- Homes and Housing
- Health and wellbeing
- Learning, developing and having fun
- Relationships, identity and belonging
- Listening, hearing and understanding
- Being safe and protected
- Independence and adulthood

Over the last year, we have listened to our children and young people in Herefordshire about some of the more specific things that they would like to see improve. These have been their access to housing, their physical and mental health and wellbeing, education, relationships, making their voice heard, and gaining independence later in life.

Children and young people have told us that feeling secure in who they are, their identity, and what they want to achieve in life is so important. They want inclusivity and their diversity to be celebrated. They would like to have Corporate Parents who they can turn to and rely on to 'fight their corner', building relationships which have trust, respect and care at the centre. We will be aspirational for them and encourage them to be ambitious. Our care and support will be there for them both in the good times and the bad. It will be unconditional and fair –

regardless of background, experiences or personal choices in life. We may have to have difficult conversations with you where you may not agree but we will listen and ensure that you are treated as an individual with equity, equality and respect.

“Restorative Practice” is our practice model and this focuses upon building relationships that create and inspire positive change. Creating change sometimes requires challenge as well as support. This approach can help build positive, healthy relationships, resolve difficulties and repair harm where there has been conflict. It can remove barriers, proactively promote a sense of community, engender an understanding of social responsibility and shared accountability. Working in ‘restorative’ ways helps us to get to know the children, young people and their families we support better, build on their strengths as individuals and find solutions to problems together.

Working together

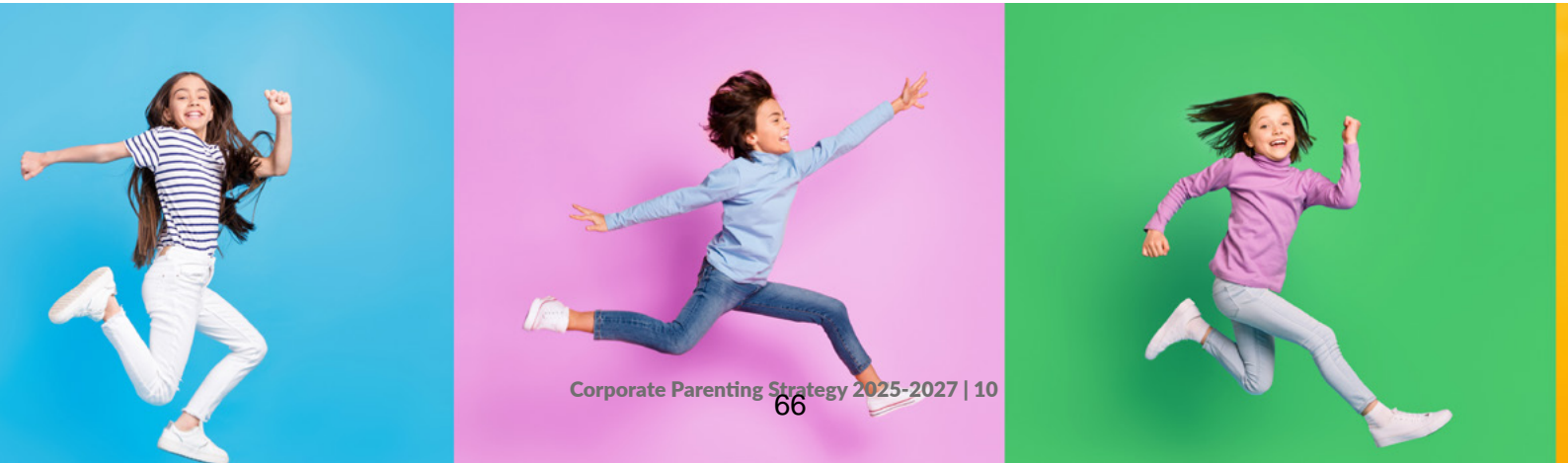
Corporate Parenting is a joint effort. Strategic Leaders through the Herefordshire Children’s Safeguarding Partnership have committed to work together to meet the requirements of Working Together 2023 to have a shared vision, learn from children and young

people and ensure we are ambitious about helping, supporting and protecting children and young people. Together, as Corporate Parents, we will work collaboratively and constructively to enable children and young people to engage, participate and co-produce future changes and services.

Being the best possible Corporate Parents means engaging with children and young people with care experiences and finding out what works for them. The most effective decisions have children’s and young people’s lived experience at their heart. We are committed to co-production and there are a number of groups which support children and young people’s engagement and participation. This includes the new Inspire Change participation groups for care leavers, and the Voice Group.

Children and Care Experienced Young People in Herefordshire June 2024

Children and Care Experienced Young People in Herefordshire June 2024			
85% of our children are from a White background. 15% are from Minority Ethnic Groups (Global Majority Group), an increase from the 2021 census data where Minority Ethnic Groups account for 4.5% of the U18 population.	Children in our care are more likely to have Special Educational Needs (SEN). 30.7% have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and 31.6% have SEN Support. This compares to 4.0% of pupils in all Herefordshire schools with an EHCP and 15.4% with SEN Support.	<p>There were 412 children, including 41 UASC, in our care in March 2023. On the 1st September 24 there were 377.</p> <p>30 children have been reunited with their family and their care order discharged in 23/24</p>	Our Care Leavers Service was supporting 369 care experienced young people in March 2023 (this was 334 at March 2022, a 10.5% increase). In September 24, Care Leavers remain in touch with a contact every eight weeks In September 24, 87% of 18 years olds were in touch and 93% of 19-21



Children and Care Experienced Young People in Herefordshire June 2024			
Age groups for children in our care 0 to 4 years 15%, 5 to 9 years 17%, 41% were aged 10 to 15 and 24% were aged 16 to 17 at March 2023.	Children in our care achieved Attainment 8 scores (GCSE/Key Stage 4) above the national average of 19.1 in 2023 with a figure of 22. 1, an increase of 9.9 when compared to 12.2 in 2022. (The 8 subjects which make up Attainment 8 include English and Maths).	50% of our care leavers were in education, employment or training (EET) in March 2023, an increase from 48% in March 2022. On 1 September 24 67% of 17-18 were EET and 54% of 19-21 year olds	92% of our care leavers were in suitable accommodation in March 2023, above both the national (88%) and Statistical Neighbours rates (89.6%).



Our strategy for our priorities for children and young people with care experience

Homes and housing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support more children and young people where it is safe to be with their family 2. Enable more children and young people in care to live with families in Herefordshire 3. Develop accommodation and early support which helps young people develop their independence 4. Offer earlier and more effective support for children and young people in crisis or at risk of care entry 	Health and wellbeing <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote good holistic health, wellbeing and resilience 2. Improve our understanding of health and wellbeing needs among professionals, carers, and young people 3. Design and deliver services as child-centred, trauma informed and rooted in lived experience 4. Support smooth transitions within and between services 5. Provide timely and effective support for additional health needs
Learning, developing and having fun <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be aspirational for children and young people's education and learning 2. Provide extra support for babies, children and young people with additional needs 3. Support children to remain in school by avoiding exclusions and absences 4. Make sure nurseries, schools and colleges are inclusive spaces for care experienced pupils 5. Encourage young people to get involved in extracurricular activities and follow their interests 	Relationships, identity and belonging <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help children and young people understand their life story, and maintain strong connections with their birth families 2. Support children and young people to build trusted relationships and support networks with the people in their lives 3. Provide wrap-around support for care experienced young people who are new parents 4. Respect children and young people's identity and support them to be proud of who they are

Listening, hearing and understanding	Safe and protected	Independence
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put the voice of children and young people at the centre of all levels of decision-making 2. Provide opportunities so that young people co-produce more services and strategic plans with us 3. Let children and young people know the outcomes of decisions, what is possible to do, what is not, and why 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work together to understand risks, vulnerabilities and needs in the home, in communities and online 2. Respond together to harm, abuse and exploitation early, effectively and in child-centred and trauma-informed ways 3. Work holistically with young people to avoid criminal behaviour and activity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare early for adulthood and independence 2. Offer financial, practical and emotional support for young people who need it in early adulthood 3. Support young people to take up further education, employment and training opportunities

Children and young people have safe, stable and caring places to live and call home. They told us we want :

Stable placements we
can call home

Homes that gives us
independence

Homes that support
us to be better
parents

Homes close to our
friends and family

Tell us what we are
entitled to



We have

- Worked closely with Strategic Housing to support Care Leavers and have now gained higher priority for housing and are now Band A.
- Ensured where challenges occur there is a clear escalation process in place which ensures resolution is swift, at the right level and barriers are challenged.
- Supported 30 young people up to 21 who are living independently.
- Successfully stood as guarantor for 9 young people this year.
- Wherever possible, ensured that children live in family based settings, and we have successfully supported 26 children and young people to return to a family based setting from residential.
- Continued to build services to support the diverse needs of our young people.
- Ensured our home-finding and commissioning teams quality assure placements and have successfully challenged providers to improve where they have not met our standards.
- Reviewed and updated the Individual Placement Agreement to ensure providers are held to account as to what they are expected to provide for the young person.

- Two commissioned supported living accommodations with two planned properties for single gender for 16-18 year olds.
- Ensured that unaccompanied young people where possible, are placed together to build their UK family and relationships. We are building services to meet their cultural and diverse needs within Herefordshire.
- Improved housing by agreeing and implementing a Care Leavers Protocol for Housing and one for 16/17 year old homeless young people.
- Increased choice and capacity to enable more 'short breaks' for children with special needs, with two additional providers.
- Ensured the Local Offer for Care Leavers is now on each Pathway Plan so young people are aware of their options.
- Supported 35 young people to continue living with their foster family beyond the age of 18.

We will :

- Ensure there is greater sufficiency of choice of home for young people and refresh our Sufficiency Strategy.
- Ensure greater representation of views of children and young people to shape our commissioned services, through the reformed Children in Care Council,

Youth Forum and Participation Groups and apprentices.

- Ensure more children gain permanence through Special Guardianship, adoption or child arrangement orders.
- Ensure foster carers have the right training and support to build resilience and improve placement stability.
- Increase the number of foster carer's homes by 20% and ensure we build a specialist scheme to support out children with the most complex needs to remain in family based care.
- Ensure more children and young people are placed within the boundaries of Herefordshire.
- Improve placement stability to reduce the needs for children to change their home.

- Our placement stability will improve with children and young people remaining in their homes , and less placement breakdowns.
- More children and young people are living locally in Herefordshire with Foster carers.
- More children and young people are living in suitable houses after they leave our care.
- More young people will remain living with their former foster carers after leaving care.

How we will know we are making a difference:

- Children and young people will tell us that they are feeling safe, stable and cared for.
- That the people caring for them are ambitious for them and they are supported to follow their interests, hobbies and passions.
- Young people will tell us that, where they are living – the type of place and who they are living with - is helping them be ready to live independently as they get older.

Health and wellbeing: Children and young people are emotionally, physically and mentally healthy. They told us:

Think about our past
and our future

Being Healthy
can be about your
physical, emotional
and mental health

Mental Health
Support during
pregnancy and
early parenting is
important

Going to
Counselling and
having therapy can be
scary

It needs to be easier
to get support after
18



We have:

- Promoted good health and wellbeing in all aspects of children and young people's lives including health centre passes which included gym membership and swimming lessons for our children and young people.
- Given young people a health passport from their 16th birthday, which outlines their health history, and where to access health and dental care if they require it.
- Offered every child and young person the opportunity to have an individual health review annually up to the age of 18.
- Made sure that young people turning 18, who no longer require an annual health assessment, are registered with a GP have been offered a dental check and where possible are dental fit when they turn 18, and have had their eyesight checked.
- Supported young people, wherever possible, to access dental care and eye tests.
- Advocated for improved access to health services, including dental, eye care, and mental health, that takes into account the lived experience of young people.

- Helped young people, their foster carers and PA's, to understand where children and young people can gain support for their mental health and wellbeing.
- Health services have commissioned 'Lumina', a digital programme to support the mental health needs of children aged 7-12.
- Employed a psychologist to work with young people and alongside staff to support young people.
- Recommissioned our services for young people with Meadows (our new provider), who offer direct work with young people. They are supporting 21 young people.
- As of June 2024 all our education, health care plans Education and Health Care Plans are up to date.

We will:

- Make sure, wherever possible and appropriate, that help and support for health and wellbeing is consistent, wherever young people are living, and that it is provided either at home, within the community or at school or college.
- Make sure that, if support is being transferred within and between health services, this will be smooth, and that young people will still get the right level of support at the right time.

- Make sure mental health support continues when young people become an adult if they need it, with clear transition plans so that the right referrals can be made at the right time.
- Provide young people, wherever possible, with flexibility to decide the health and wellbeing support they receive.
- Support young people to be resilient by equipping and empowering them to navigate, overcome and recover from adversity in their lives.
- Provide a wraparound service for foster carers (through Meadows) which will launch in November 20xx to support foster carers to provide step down homes for children in residential.
- Offer our carers a range of training to meet the children's therapeutic needs, where appropriate.
- Meadows will also operate an out of hours service for carers between 5 pm and 8 am together with weekend support.
- Meadows will offer therapeutic based training to internal carers considering specialist fostering.
- Improve our reporting on health appointments to ensure all children have up-to-date health records which will provide assurance that health needs are being met.

How we will know we are making a difference:

- Children and young people will tell us that they feel more emotionally and physically well.
- Children and young people tell us that they know where to access support if they are feeling physically or emotionally unwell.
- Children and young people tell us that they do not feel judged if they choose to have a baby and become a parent.
- Children and young people tell us that the health care and support they receive is joined-up, consistent and is tailored to their needs as an individual.
- Children and young people know who to turn to for support with their health and wellbeing, and that they trust that we will listen and care.
- All children and young people are registered with a GP and a dentist.
- All children and young people are fully up-to-date with all of their immunisations.
- More children and young people have health assessments which are up-to-date and on time.
- Children and young people have better emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- Children and young people are able to access health services in a timelier way.

***Learning, developing and having fun:
Children and young people have inclusive
and enriching environments to learn,
develop, have fun, and achieve. They told
us:***

Our Mental Health
can affect us in school

We need extra
support some times
for groups and
activities

Stability helps us
to engage with our
education

Apprenticeships are
really valuable and
help us take the first
step for work

We like to do
fun things with
our friends outside
school

Some of us don't
like going to school
because of bullying



We have:

- Ensured all our children in care between the ages of 3 and 18 years have an allocated Virtual School Education Officer (VSEO) to support them to succeed with their education and to reach their full potential.
- Revised the Personal Education Plan (PEP) document so that pupil premium funding is closely linked to targets and evidenced based interventions to improve outcomes.
- All children and young people can contribute to the PEP document and are supported to attend their PEP meetings.
- Increased expert advice for schools through two educational psychologists working with the Virtual School to support professionals in reducing suspensions and exclusions.
- Ensured close working arrangements between the Virtual School, Inclusion Service, SEN team and Early Years SEND Inclusion Service manager to ensure early identification of SEND needs and timely completion and reviews of EHCPs.
- Appointed a lead for children with a social worker so that professionals working with children and young people on the edge of care can access education advice and support.
- Appointed a Virtual School Education Officer as a lead for post-16 transitions and commissioned a careers advisor to better support those leaving school including advice on courses and apprenticeships.
- Supported multi-agency meetings where children who are struggling to attend school are discussed and ways forward identified.
- Developed a team of mentors (STEPS team) to support individual children and young people who are experiencing barriers to education to overcome their difficulties and engage with learning.
- Joined a regional network of Virtual Schools to offer a high-quality programme of arts and sports extra-curricular activities open to children and young people placed anywhere in the West Midlands.
- Run a local programme of extra-curricular activities in the school holidays allowing opportunities to socialise with other care experienced young people, improve self-confidence and learn new skills.
- Set up a programme through the Attachment Research Community (ARC) whereby schools are funded for ARC membership and supported by the Virtual School to become trauma-informed and attachment aware in their practice to better support vulnerable children.

We will

- Be ambitious for children and young people's education and learning. This means keeping an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (PEP), which we will develop with the young person that has their personal interests and ambitions represented throughout.
- As of summer term 2024 there are 171 statutory school age children who are identified as having a special educational need; 87 with an EHCP and 84 who are registered as needing SEN support. We will be aspirational for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities and support them to achieve highly through high-quality, up-to-date and ambitious Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and additional support provided by schools.
- Help children and young people feel safe, happy and well at school by working closely with schools. This includes supporting them if they are bullied, as well as working together to prevent bullying in the first place.
- Work with schools to make sure exclusions only happen as a last resort.
- The suspension rate for Herefordshire CLA has been above national comparators for the last three years. We will work with schools to reduce the suspension rate to below national levels for CLA.
- Encourage all Herefordshire schools to join the Attachment Research Community (ARC) scheme funded by the Virtual School to improve their relational practice and reduce their reliance on punitive sanctions, including suspensions.
- Make sure children and young people have the technology they need to access any online learning.
- Support children and young people with transitions from one school to another to ensure their learning is continuous.
- Ensure that all children have the opportunity to see a careers adviser before they leave the Virtual School at 18. Ensure all CLA children and young people have access to high quality sports and arts activities through a programme of funded opportunities throughout the year.
- Gather the views of children and young people through the PEP document to ensure they can access opportunities for extra-curricular activities that reflect their interests and strengths.
- Support babies and young children to grow and develop well in early life. This includes identifying and supporting any additional needs as early as possible when they first come into our care.
- Consulting with young voices about how to progress sensitive conversations about staying put arrangements.

How we will know we are making a difference:

- Children and young people tell us that they are enjoying learning and being at school more and feel able to do the best they possibly can.
- Children and young people tell us that they have times where they can have fun and take part in activities that they want to do.
- Children and young people are changing schools less and are less likely to be excluded or be absent from school.
- Children and young people are achieving highly at school.
- Young children and babies in our care are developing well and are more likely to reach key development goals.
- Outcomes for our children and young people are the same as children who are not in care.

***Relationships, identity and belonging:
Children and young people build trusted
relationships with the people in their lives,
are able to be themselves and are free from
stigma. They told us:***

Changing
placements and
workers makes it hard
to trust and get to
know them

Good to get
advice and support
on healthy sex and
relationships can be
difficult to talk to
foster carers

Staying with our
carers after 18 is good

We can feel singled
out as a child in care

Some of us want
to know who our
birth families are and
see them on our own
terms

We want to be able
to contact our PA
when we really need
to



We have :

- Helped some children and young people know their life-story and understand why they are living in care. We have ensured there are full resources to support this work.
- Supported children and young people to build and maintain good relationships with birth and extended families, wherever possible, to make sure they have strong support networks outside of our care. We have successfully discharged 30 care orders and have 26 children placed with parents.
- Celebrated achievements, events and key milestones. This was evidenced by the Celebration event in August 24.
- We are implementing "Language that cares".
- If English is not a young person's first language, we have worked with interpreters and ensured that their documentation is translated into their language.
- All Personal Advisors are permanent to support consistency and stability of relationships.
- Kept in touch with children and young people, through PA's, after they leave care, if they would like this. We remain in touch with 93% of Care leavers aged up to 21.

We will:

- Follow the recommendations of the Cass Report.
- Train workers across our teams to undertake life story work over the next 12 months.
- Expand the network of support to care leavers by assisting them to develop and maintain key relationships, such as corporate parenting ambassadors and re-linking with key people from a young people's journey.
- Ensure they can follow their faith and connect with others who speak their language.
- Ensure , where possible children and young people have placements with a similar ethnic background
- Offer a range of groups to support young people to develop friendships, interests and sense of belonging.
- Progress language guides to ensure that young people understand and are given an opportunity to be fully involved in the decisions in their lives.
- Help children and young people learn about healthy sex and relationships. Child in care nurses, school nurses, youth services, personal advisors and participation workers will support them with this. We will include sex and relationships in our training and induction for Foster carers to help young people find it easier to talk to them about these things. We will also

explore other options with young people, like apps where they can get support and information online.

- Join up pregnancy support services, and enhance the targeted health visiting offer, so that young people are supporting during pregnancy and early parenthood.
- Make sure, as new parents, young people have opportunities to make their voice heard during pregnancy. This includes opportunities for mutual peer support with other young parents.

How we will know we are making a difference:

- Children and young people tell us that they have stronger and more trustworthy relationships with the adults in their life. Children and young people tell us that they have supportive friendships and healthy romantic relationships (if they are in one).
- Social Workers and Personal Advisors change much less, meaning children and young people are able to build better relationships with them over time.
- Children and young people will keep in touch with us after they leave care, so we can best help and support them if they need and want it.

***Listening, hearing and understanding:
Children and young people make their
voice heard and shape how services are
designed and delivered. They told us:***

We want to make
our voice heard about
the things that affect
us

We should
be listened to
whenever a decision
is being made about
our lives

We
want more
opportunities to
meet up with other
care experienced
young people and
support each
other

We don't want to
be spoken about as
if we weren't there
or as if we were a
statistic



We have

- Introduced children and young people to the Participation Team when they come into our care and let them know how they can make their voice heard.
- Ensured all children and young people are aware of advocacy.
- Set up opportunities for children and young people to meet other care experienced young people.
- Enabled care experienced young people to play an active role in staff recruitment by participating in a panel interview
- Organised opportunities for children and young people to make their voice heard directly with the people who help make the decisions. They have met with key senior leaders.
- Advised through participation with children and young people about what is possible to do and what is not, and why that is.
- Make sure the views, interests and lived experiences of children and young people are listened to and taken into account in all individual plans and reviews.
- Proactively sought the views and experiences of children and young people who we may not hear from as much. For example, through the Youth Offending Service, Police, Youth Services and mental health services. We will make sure all services are informed

and shaped by children and young people.

- Support children and young people to be active and engaged members of their community and wider society.

We Will

- Put the views, interests and lived experience of young people at the heart of how our support services are designed and delivered.
- Be seeking regular feedback from care experienced young people on the service they receive.
- Make sure every child, where appropriate who becomes looked after is contacted by a member of the participation service to tell them what support is on offer to them as a looked after child.
- Ensure more children contribute to their child protection conferences.
- Increase the number of children who chair their looked after reviews.
- Widen the representation of young people who are part of the children in care council (Inspire Change).

How we will know we are making a difference:

- Children and young people tell us that their voice is heard and feel that they have a say in the decisions which affect their life.
- What children and young people tell us about their lives and experiences in care, wherever possible, leads directly to positive changes, and we always let them know when and how that happens.
- We can evidence that the views and interests of children and young people are at the heart all levels of decision-making.
- We are held to account for the things that we agree we will do.

Safe and protected: Children and young people are safe and protected from harm, abuse and exploitation. They told us:

We want to
feel safe in our
neighbourhoods

We want to know our
choices

We want to
keep in touch
with our friends and
family, don't ask us
the same things lots
of different times

We want to feel safe
at home and on line



We have:

- Implemented Get Safe a multi-agency Exploitation Pathway, across our partnership.
- A dedicated team to do individual work where children have missing episodes or need support where there are concerns about exploitation.
- Continued to support children and young people in the youth or criminal justice system, and strive for their best outcomes unconditionally.
- Ensured that young people have had the opportunity to feed back to police with an open forum established.
- Worked together to understand the risks and vulnerabilities that children and young people may experience in life through mapping and joint disruption to support groups of young people.
- Communicated and worked closely between different agencies, at all levels, to share intelligence, knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting children and young people.
- Strengthened our response to Community Safety through the Local Multi Agency Child Exploitation Forums to prevent and disrupt exploitation
- Improved our skill, knowledge and confidence in identifying and responding to child sexual abuse and sexually harmful behaviour to better support children and young people.


We will

- Expand our Multi Agency Get Safe Pathway for young people aged up to 25.
- Review the pathway with children and young people to understand any changes that may be needed.
- Continue to review our services to ensure they meet any changing needs or threats.
- Make sure that children are asked routinely about their views on their safety.

How we will know we are making a difference:

- Children and young people tell us that they feel safer and more protected in their homes and communities.
- Children and young people are better protected from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- Children and young people are less likely to be involved in any criminal activity, either as a victim of crime or as an offender.

Independence: Young people leave care and become independent and thriving adults. They told us:



We want to live in
safe neighbourhoods
and be independent

We want to have
enough money

We want chances to
fail and for you to stay
with us



We have :

- Reviewed 'the care leavers offer' and strengthened the finance support available to children and young people.
- We give young people opportunities to return to more supportive home arrangements, if living with greater independence has been too difficult or risky.
- We have continued to support and advocate for our young people where their choices have meant they may not be able to gain accommodation easily
- Reduced the number of young people who experience eviction.
- We have employed a specialist housing PA to improve knowledge around maintaining a tenancy and prevent homelessness.

We will:

- Support young people to prepare, as early as possible, for adulthood and independence through practical, emotional and some financial support, advice and guidance.
- Enable young people to develop wider support networks, through 'lifelong links' and family group conferencing.
- Help young people save some money regularly while they're in care to set them up for later in life.
- Help young people learn about managing money and living independently through a Tenancy-ready

course.

- Support young people practically, emotionally and financially, if they are in Further or Higher Education, and link them into other forms of funding to make sure there are no barriers to being able to continue learning.
- Provide more apprenticeships, traineeships, work experience and internships, which cover a broader range of organisations and roles.
- Help young people take up education, employment and training opportunities by helping them get support for their mental health and wellbeing and overcome any logistical barriers like transport.
- Work with young people, from an early age, to build up their skills and confidence so that they are ready to take advantage of work and training opportunities.

How we will know we are making a difference:

- Children and young people tell us that they feel able to live independently as a young adult and sort out things like budgeting, paying rent and bills, and claiming financial support.
- Children and young people tell us that their ambitions for life - like jobs, homes, families, and education - feel achievable and that they are motivated to reach them.

- More children and young people have an up-to-date Pathway Plan (meaning it has been reviewed with the young person in the last 6 months) after they turn 16.
- More children and young people are keeping in touch with us after leaving care.
- More children and young people are either studying, working, or on a training scheme or apprenticeship.
- More children and young people are learning to drive, so that they can be more independent in adult life.
- More children and young people are attending university.
- More children and young people benefit from lifelong links and family group conferencing approaches.
- We will work together to deliver a set of strategic actions, which will be outlined in the Corporate Parenting Action Plan and delivered through multi-agency groups.

Engagement and co-production

We will continue to engage closely with care experienced children and young people to understand their experiences, identify where more work still needs to be done and co-develop shared solutions. They will hold us accountable to what we commit to doing.

Being accountable

To make sure we do what we say we will, we will be accountable to children and young people with care experience, to the public (through our elected members), and to each other. We will report to the Corporate Parenting Board.

Appendix 1 - Legislative context

Legislation

- Children Act 1989
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

Statutory guidance

- Applying Corporate Parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

National Strategies

- Keep on Caring: supporting young people from care to independence

National reviews

- The Independent Review of Children's Social Care (The Case for Change)
- National Implementation Advisor for Care Leavers: Second Report

International legislation

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1992

Appendix 2 – Using Language that Cares

To find out more from our young people about the importance of using language that cares. We are working with young people and professionals to make sure we are communicating in the best ways.

Appendix 3 – The Promise

Inform me!	Involve me!	Celebrate me!	Respect me!	Support me!
We will.. Talk to you about why you are in care and help you understand more about your family. Help you understand what happens when you become an adult and leave care. Make sure you know a person you trust who you can speak to for support. Let you know all you need to know. Speak to you in ways you understand and that are caring.	We will.. Include you and listen to you in meetings. Use positive language if we are talking about you. Ask you about which possessions you want to keep and who you want to stay in touch with. Try to let you stay overnight at your new place, to test it out, if you need to move home. Try to give you choices about things, based on your views and wishes. Help you get your voice heard. Do what we say we're going to do. We won't make a promise if we can't keep it. Protect your confidentiality by not telling your foster carers what you tell us unless you are at risk of serious harm. If we need to tell other people, we will explain that to you.	We will.. Celebrate your achievements we will have high ambitions and aspirations for you. Celebrate religious festivals with you, or help you celebrate them with others. Celebrate your 'moving in to foster-family day' each year if you would like that.	We will.. Check your bedrooms sensitively and always ask your consent. We won't intrude on your personal space and belongings. Not make you stand out as being in care. We will have a conversation with you to find out what you prefer. Treat you fairly and equally in the family so that you feel at home. Try to make sure that if you stay over with other people, that you know them and enjoy being with them. Understand what it means to be a teenager and the need to take some controlled risks in life. Understand and respect your identity, including your religion or beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, disabilities or health needs and ethnicity. Help you keep hold of your birth language and culture.	We will.. Help you make happy memories. Support you to make friends and stay in touch with all the people who are important to you. Support you to build your confidence and overcome your fears. Support you to do your best in school-especially if you're having difficulties at school, like with bullying. Help you find work experience opportunities related to what you're interested in. Support you to have a smart phone and use it safely from age 11 onwards. Support you to have a healthy lifestyle in body and mind. Support you with opportunities to try new things and explore your interests, ambitions and aspirations.

Appendix 4 - How we will check on progress

How we will check on progress and make a difference

These are the groups and reporting structures through which we will deliver our strategy, be accountable to what we say we will do, and ultimately make sure we are achieving positive outcomes for care experienced children and young people in Herefordshire.



Appendix 5 – Scrutiny

The role of Elected Members

Councillors play a fundamental role in protecting and supporting care experienced children and young people by advocating for improved services for care experienced young people, as well as scrutinising and challenging services to achieve optimal outcomes.

Elected members will scrutinise the delivery of our aims and principles as set out in this strategy, through the Corporate Parenting Board. Working with children and young people, to act as a 'critical friend', they will check on progress to make sure children and young people with care-experience are seeing improved outcomes in their lives.

Corporate Parenting guide for Councillors

The Local Government Association (LGA) has produced a resource pack for elected Members to support them to be as effective Corporate Parents as possible. The pack contains information on the relevant legislation and policy reviews, local case studies, as well as a set of key lines of enquiry.

www.herefordshire.gov.uk

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

1. Service Area/Directorate

Name of Head of Service for activity being assessed: Rachel Gillott, Service Director, Safeguarding and Family Support

Directorate: Children and Young People

Name of lead person for this activity: Rachel Gillott

Individual(s) completing this assessment: Rachel Gillott

Date assessment completed:

2. What is being assessed

Activity being assessed (eg. policy, procedure, budget, service redesign, strategy etc.)

The corporate parenting strategy

What is the aim, purpose, or intended outcome of this activity?

This is to set out the strategy for the Council to meet their responsibilities as a Corporate Parent. Health and Education as key partners also provided data and information from their respective organisations

Who will be affected by the development and implementation of this activity?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service users | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors to the county |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Patients |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All staff | <input type="checkbox"/> All part-time staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff at a particular location | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Is this:

- ☒ Review of an existing activity/policy
- ☐ New activity/policy
- ☐ Planning to withdraw or reduce a service, activity or presence?

3. Background information and findings

What information and evidence have you reviewed to help inform this assessment? (name your sources, eg. demographic information, usage data, Census data, feedback, complaints, audits, research)

We have used data from the children's system, commissioning strategy and housing information.
We have also gained feedback from children and young people to refresh the strategy

Summary of engagement or consultation undertaken (eg. who you've engaged with, and how, or why do you believe this is not required)

A consultation has been carried out with our Care Leavers through the participation groups. They provided the open letter to the council which is recorded in the opening pages. Their views continue to be gained to ensure that the process remains connected to the people at the heart of the strategy. All partners have been consulted for them to provide evidence of actions for previous strategy and ambitions moving forward.

Summary of relevant findings (it is possible that you will have gaps in your evidence. You must decide whether you need to fill in the gaps now, and if it is feasible to do so. It might be that collecting robust information forms part of your action plan below)

This is a refreshed Strategy to ensure it remains relevant and sets out the steps and vision for the next two years.

4. The Public Sector Equality Duty

Will this activity have a positive, neutral or negative impact on our duty to:

	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advance equality of opportunity between different groups?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foster good relations between different groups?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Explain your rationale here, and include any ways in which you could strengthen the capacity of this activity to promote equality (remember to add anything relevant into your action planning below)

This strategy ensures that our care leavers and children in care are able to expect from us as Corporate Parents. Many care experienced people face discrimination, stigma and prejudice in their daily lives. This Strategy aims to set out ways we can ensure that we as a LA recognise that stigma and that our young people gain the support and that we would want for them all that we would want for our own children a safe happy and fulfilled present and future.

5. The impact of this activity

Consider the potential impact of this activity on each of the equality groups outlined below and explain your rationale. Please note it is possible for the potential impact to be both positive and negative within the same equality group. Remember to consider the impact on staff and service users (current and potential) and partner organisations.

Equality Group	Potential positive impact	Potential neutral impact	Potential negative impact	Rationale
Age (include safeguarding, consent and child welfare)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy is aimed at children in care and care leavers so covers up to 25.
Disability (consider attitudinal, physical, financial and social barriers, neuro-diversity, learning disability, physical and sensory impairment)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The underpinning activity flowing from the strategy will seek to meet the individual needs of a CYP following a social care assessment
Gender Reassignment (include gender identity, and consider privacy of data and harassment)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy confirms that it will follow the outcomes of the Cass review.
Marriage & Civil Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This will not be impacted
Pregnancy & Maternity (consider working arrangements, part-time)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Care Leavers will be offered support through their PA and health colleagues under universal services and specific support.

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Rationale
working, infant caring responsibilities)				
Race (including Travelling Communities and people of other nationalities)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy and underpinning activity will take into account their ethnicity when assessments or placements / accommodation are undertaken. We know that there are gaps but as part of the strategy we will be seeking to close those gaps.
Religion & Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy and underpinning activity will take into account their religion or Belief when assessments or placements / accommodation are undertaken. We know that there are gaps which providing support for our children in care / care leavers but as part of the strategy we will be seeking to close those gaps.
Sex (consider issues of safety and sexual violence, part-time work)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This will ensure that children and young people who may have suffered abuse and harm are given services to support the impact of this
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All children and young people wishes as to their sexual orientation are respected.
Others: carers, care leavers, homeless, social/ economic deprivation (consider shift-patterns, caring responsibilities)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy is aimed at children in care and carers to ensure that their needs are met.
Health Inequalities (any preventable, unfair & unjust differences in health status between groups, populations or individuals that arise from unequal distribution of social, environmental & economic conditions)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy seeks to ensure that children and care and care leavers' health needs are met and they are not put at a disadvantage.

Where a negative impact on any of the equality groups is realised after the implementation of the activity, the activity lead will seek to minimise the impact and carry out a full review of this EIA.

6. Action planning

What actions will you take as a result of this impact assessment? (you will need to include actions to mitigate any potential negative impacts)

Objective	What action will be taken	Who will lead	Timeframe
Progress reports to corporate parenting board	Reports will be taken to the corporate parenting to monitoring the progress of this strategy	Tori Lynch	Between 2025/27

7. Monitoring and review

How will you monitor these actions?

Progress against the corporate parenting strategy will be overseen by the corporate parenting board.

When will you review this EIA?

2026

8. Equality Statement

- All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to give due regard to how they can improve society and promote equality in every aspect of their day-to-day business. This means that they must consider, and keep reviewing, how they are promoting equality in decision-making, policies, services, procurement, staff recruitment and management.
- Herefordshire Council will challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.

Signature of person completing EIA

Rachel Gillott

Date signed

29.11.24

9. Make this EIA available

- Attach your EIA as an appendix to any decision reports so that decision-makers have all the equality data they need in order to make robust and fair decisions.
- Staff, trade unions, service users or members of the public may want to see this EIA, so it must be published on our website along with the decision report.



Title of report: Leader's report to Council

Meeting: Council

Meeting date: Friday 7 March, 2025

Report by: The Leader of the Council

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To provide an update on the work of the Cabinet since the meeting of Council held on 6 December 2024.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) the report be noted.

Alternative options

1. There are no alternative options; the constitution requires the Leader to provide Council with reports on the activities of the executive.

Key considerations

2. It is a constitutional requirement for the Leader of the Council to provide a report to the council meeting, other than the budget and annual meeting, on the work of cabinet since the last meeting. The leaders report is set out in appendix 1.
3. The report includes a summary of the matters decided by the cabinet and the cabinet members, any decisions taken under the urgency provisions and those subject to call in.
4. It is customary for all of the decisions to be listed in an annex to this report (please see appendix 2). These decisions have been made available on the council's website, with the exception of two decisions taken by the Shareholder Committee on [14 October, 2024](#). These reports were restricted by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. All

councillors and members of the public have the opportunity to review all of the executives fully open decisions as they are being made.

5. Of the decisions taken since my last report no decision have been taken under the general exception provisions (giving more than five but less than 28 calendar days' notice) and no decisions were taken under the urgency provisions (less than five days' notice).
6. Included in my report is a summary of what I consider the most significant priorities, as well as some additional subjects that I hope will be of interest.

Community impact

7. The decision taken by the Cabinet and Cabinet Members are guided by the objectives set out in the adopted [Council Plan, 2024 to 2028](#).
 - a. **People** - enabling residents to realise their potential, to be healthy and benefit from communities that help people to feel safe and supported.
 - b. **Place** - Protecting and enhancing our environment and ensure that Herefordshire remains a great place to live. We will support the right housing in the right place and do everything we can to improve the health of our rivers.
 - c. **Growth** - Creating the conditions to deliver sustainable growth across the county; attracting inward investment, building business confidence, creating jobs, enabling housing development along with providing the right infrastructure.
 - d. **Transformation** – an efficient council that embraces best practice, delivers innovation through technology and demonstrates value for money.
8. [The Delivery Plan 2024-2025](#) outlines how the council's priorities and objectives will be achieved and what will be delivered in this 2024/25 municipal year. The Delivery Plan will be reviewed annually and progress will be reported on a regular basis through each directorate's service delivery plans.
9. The community impact of any decisions of the executive have been set out within the relevant decision report and taken into consideration at the time the decision was taken. Reporting to Council the activities of the executive demonstrates the council's commitment to the code of corporate governance principle of implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

Environmental Impact

10. The environmental impacts of any decisions of the executive have been set out within the relevant decision report and taken into consideration at the time the decision was taken. Reporting to Council the activities of the executive demonstrates the council's commitment to the council's [environmental policy commitments](#) and aligns to the objectives set out in the Council Plan (2024 to 2028) which include.
 - a) Valuing nature and upholding environmental standards to minimise pollution and maximise biodiversity;
 - b) Reducing waste, increasing reuse and recycling;
 - c) Working towards reducing county and council carbon emissions, aiming for net zero by 2030/31, and
 - d) Working with partners and communities to make the county more resilient to the effects of climate change.

Equality duty

11. 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.
12. 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 report provides a summary of activity undertaken, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty. These considerations are set out in each of the relevant reports informing the decisions listed at appendix 2 and will inform any future decision making.

Resource implications

13. There are no new resource implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The resource implications of any decisions of the executive listed at appendix 2 have been set out within the relevant decision report and considered at the time the decision was taken and will inform any future decision making.

Legal implications

14. The council and committee, and cabinet rules within the constitution require the Leader to provide a report to Council on the work of the cabinet since the last meeting of Council and, at the first meeting to follow the annual meeting of Council (except in a year when there are ordinary elections), on the priorities of the cabinet and progress made in meeting those priorities. This report ensures these requirements are met.
15. There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The legal implications of any decisions of the executive listed at appendix 1 have been set out within the relevant decision report and taken into consideration at the time the decision was taken.

Risk management

16. There are no risks arising from the recommendations of this report. The risks of any decisions of the executive listed at appendix A have been set out within the relevant decision report and taken into consideration at the time the decision was taken and will inform future decision making.

Consultees

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Leaders report to Council, 6 December 2024

Appendix 2: Executive decisions taken since 29 November 2024 to 27 February 2025

Appendix 3: Cabinet member portfolios

Background papers:

None Identified

Since my last report in December the Cabinet have been principally focussed on preparing and seeking council's agreement on our budget proposals. Those proposals were agreed at the Budget Council meeting on 7 February.

Setting a balanced budget for 2025/26 has been a more challenging undertaking due to the Government's unexpected and complete removal of the Rural Services Delivery Grant. This grant has been essential for sustaining rural services. It represented £7 million to Herefordshire Council in 2024/25. It is being replaced and repurposed into the new Recovery Grant.

The Council is arguing strongly that the new fund unfairly favours urban areas, with urban areas gaining over 7 times more of the share of the £600m recovery grant than predominantly rural authorities. The fund neglects to recognise the unique needs and higher operational costs faced by rural local authorities. Supported by detailed analysis from the Rural Services Network (RSN), we identify a critical funding disparity where Government Funded Spending Power in urban areas is 41 % higher than it is in predominantly rural areas.

Despite this unexpected loss of funding, we have delivered a balanced budget and we continue to deliver the best for Herefordshire in everything we do. Just some examples of this are set out below.

Some of you may have noticed that in early December, as part of a drive to make recycling and waste collections across Herefordshire cleaner and greener, two brand new, state of the art all-electric Collection Vehicles (RCVs) have been procured. Purchased as part of the new recycling and waste collection services contract the two new eCollect vehicles join the 26 new RCV's which will serve residents and businesses alike across the County. All of these vehicles have been chosen to deliver the best solution for the residents of Herefordshire over the next eight years of their service.

As the winter weather continues, it was with great anticipation that the names of the Council's gritters were unveiled. Herefordshire Council ran a special competition for primary school pupils in October and received almost 100 entries. There were so many fantastic and imaginative names submitted. We had a really difficult time deciding the winners - such was the quality of all of the entries, we could have quite happily used them all. However, the winning names selected were:

- **Snow-way!** – named by Theo Bezant, Stretton Sugwas
- **Ice-a-saurus Rex** – named by Harry Attwood, Shobdon
- **Sprinkle** – named by Benji Rowlands, Whitecross Nursery
- **Humpfreeze** – named by Robyn Stevens, Kingsland C of E
- **Sir Grit-a-Lot** – named by Daisy Hardman-McCabe, Trinity Primary
- **Julius Freezer** – named by Lucy Harris, Luston Primary
- **Ready Salted** – named by Eli-Jacob Howard, Walford Primary
- **Taylor Drift** – named by Lottie Wooles, Sutton Academy
- **Who Dares Grits** – named by Sienna Stead, Trinity

Over the winter period additional resurfacing works have continued with over 17km of new and improved road surface being laid so far. The council is investing £8 million into resurfacing on the county's highway network, with £5 million being committed to A and B roads and a further £3 million for C and unclassified roads. Lengths of road have been identified for resurfacing works following detailed and comprehensive surface and structural condition surveys. These surveys help us to objectively prioritise where we need to invest across our highway network.

On a related theme, Herefordshire Council is investing an additional £2 million over the next two years, as well as growing the in-house team, to improve the county's flood resilience. Flooding is increasingly a major issue within the county and it is vital that we intervene. The flooding of properties and roads causes not just enormous emotional duress, but has wide-ranging consequences on emergency services, public services such as schools, and the ability of our economy to plan and prosper; as well as damaging roads, sport grounds, and public assets.

As the lead flood risk authority we will be working with other public or voluntary sector bodies, and indeed central government, to ensure a coordinated approach. The £2 million will be invested in measures including additional community flood support and local flood resilience schemes, building on the already existing drainage grants that help with localised solutions.

But we are not just taking direct local action, we are also looking at global solutions. For example, we held an excellent 'Climate Change' themed event with students from seven local schools organised by the charity InterClimate Network (ICN). The students took on the role of negotiating teams which emulated the real-life COP29 climate talks in Baku, Azerbaijan. The pupils generated joint proposals to speed up climate action and adaptation and set funding goals that reflect just how urgently extra support is needed around the world. The conference provided a welcome chance for young people to put forward their questions to a panel of local decision makers. The summit helped to raise the profile of what's already happening in schools and our local communities inspiring even more ways to work together.

Our road strategy and infrastructure plans are beginning to move forward at pace. We reported in February that detailed plans for the first phase of the Hereford Western Bypass is set to progress following the appointment of specialist support. The first phase of the Hereford Western Bypass will see a new road joining the A49 to the A465. The planned new route will help ease traffic flow in south Hereford, make it easier to access employment land and support growth south of the river.

Planning permission is already in place for this section of the road, and the development of detailed plans will now be progressing at pace following the appointment of specialist support. Global infrastructure consultancy AECOM will be working closely with the council over the next two years to review and update the plans already in place. They will then support the council in consolidating the final plans and finalising the necessary agreements and funding arrangements which will allow for the construction of phase 1.

Improving the local infrastructure has also been continuing to Leominster town centre. The enhancements to the heart of the town include attractive road surfacing, improved paving, wider pavements and major junctions making it safer and easier for pedestrians. The improvements to the public spaces complement the renovation work on a number of shopfronts and buildings including the restoration of facades to reflect the original detail and character of key historic buildings. This major multi-million pound investment funded by Historic England and Herefordshire Council in partnership with Leominster Town Council – is transforming the local historic character and with it making the town an even more vibrant place to live, work and visit.

Following the successful introduction of two new schemes last year, work has also continued with Parish and Town Councils to improve Public Rights of Way and local drainage in their areas.

There's around 1,873 miles of Public Rights of Way (PROW) footpaths and 257 miles of bridleways in the county. Maintaining the PROW network is important so that residents and visitors can access and enjoy the countryside.

£250,000 of the funding will continue to help communities to improve sections of their local PROW network which, for various reasons, may have become inaccessible to some users. £445,000 will be made available via the Local Drainage Fund which gives Parish and Town Councils the chance to request funding for ditching and minor drainage projects which they have identified as a local priority to alleviate flooding. As part of this scheme, Parish and Town Councils are able to request 100% of the funding for a project and appoint local contractors to complete the work on their behalf.

Herefordshire Council is also offering grants of £15,000 to £250,000 to voluntary and community organisations to create or improve multi-purpose spaces that will benefit local residents. The funding demonstrates the council's commitment to building resilient communities by supporting local initiatives that help people access services, connect with others and create vibrant, welcoming spaces.

The grants can only be used to cover capital costs - physical works and professional fees. Eligible items would include equipment, furnishings and other major material purchases, construction of new facilities or the purchase of land. Applicants will need to demonstrate how they plan to transform or improve existing or unused buildings in order to offer opportunities for people to access services or to come together within their local community.

Successful projects will include elements such as IT equipment for statutory service delivery, physical access points for residents to gain information and advice from trained staff or volunteers, community spaces for events, and full accessibility to serve all community members.

Progress is also being made on our plans to transform the Shire Hall into the new library and learning centre for Hereford, which will include further development of the building to create more community space. Planning permission and listed building consent has been given full approval, meaning that work can now begin on this exciting project to deliver a new, state-of-the-art community space and permanent home for Hereford's Public Library.

The initial phases of work will focus on getting the building structurally sound, watertight and safe for public use while repairing and preserving the building's important heritage features. The main entrance will be transformed into a large welcoming area with exhibition space and improvements to provide greater accessibility. The plans have been developed and refined over many months through workshops, consultations and surveys. Public feedback is being analysed and will also inform the design of the new library to ensure best fit to users' needs.

Members will be aware that Herefordshire council has adopted a new cashless parking service, with over 32,400 bookings completed so far. The partnership between Herefordshire Council and JustPark launched in January, and has been used by more than 14,000 individuals, with user ratings averaging 4.55 out of 5 across 390 responses. For those yet to use the app, parking sessions can be booked via the JustPark app, available on iOS and Android, which is free to download and is rated highly for its simplicity and ease of use.

Moving to our work on children's services. Improvements in several areas of the support we provide for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities have been recognised by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Their report noted many areas of good practice across the partnership. Co-production with children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability and their families was recognised as being in a strong position. The inspectorate noting that, 'The development of Herefordshire Helpers has raised the profile of children and young people at the highest levels.' Parent Carer Voice Herefordshire told inspectors that they feel heard and that their views are acted on by the partnership.

Inspectors found that, 'There has been investment in appointing additional staff and improved training and that across the partnership 'professionals know children and young people well' and that 'children and young people with SEND known to early help services access swift support from education, health and social care teams where appropriate.'

The report highlights good practice within Herefordshire mainstream schools where, 'Staff typically spot emerging needs of children and young people quickly and identify whether there is a need for further assessment and provision.' Inspectors also found, 'Specialist settings are innovative in finding appropriate solutions for meeting the most complex learning and health needs.'

We received our sixth monitoring visit on 17 February. Ofsted will publishing their findings shortly and we look forward to their report.

Over the Christmas holidays thousands of Herefordshire children and young people in nurseries, schools and colleges continued to receive free school meals. Over 4,700 primary and secondary school pupils were entitled to benefits related free school meals – they receive a free food voucher up to the value of £30 or equivalent directly through their schools, to cover the cost of a lunchtime meal during the holidays. Children who are eligible for the early year's pupil premium but are not in a school setting, also receive a voucher posted to them direct from the council.

There is, of course, no substitute for seeing at first hand the work of our partners in their support for families and young people. I recently visited the South Meadow Childrens Centre - the base for the Family Links team. This is the main centre used for Supervised Family Time for care experienced children, who are either living with foster carers, extended birth family, kinship or Senior Guardianship Support. The centre provided a warm, inviting space for children to spend time with their birth parents and family in a safe and caring environment. The team work hard to support both the children and parents to ensure that the time they spend together is meaningful and as stress free as possible.

The Family Links team also write Life Story Books and Later Life Letters for children with a care plan of adoption. The books are written in language that children are able to understand whilst still telling the story of their journey through the care system and why decisions were made for them to be adopted. They are told about their birth family and their family history so they have a sense of their own identity

Turning to supporting the career aspirations of the County's younger people. We have recently opened a new hub offering education, employment and training information and advice to young people aged 16 – 24 years. The 'Herefordshire YEH' Youth Employment Hub is a partnership between Herefordshire Council and the Department for Work and Pensions. Young people have been involved in co-designing and developing the hub and will continue to do this as the service expands.

Working in partnership with a range of existing agency and community groups, the hub's principal aims are to upskill, enable and empower young people, building their confidence and experience. Youth Employment Hub support is offered to all young people, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). In addition to the hub, an online service has been launched, offering young people 24/7 access to a wide range of career and employment information and advice on the new [Youth Employment Hub website](#).

I really enjoyed attending a cultural business support event hosted by Mountain Perspective through a UKSPF initiative that is designed to provide tailored business support to improve their business performance or operations. This includes advice, marketing and branding expertise, advice on innovation and the adoption of digital technology to improve operations, help to reach new customers and markets, staff training and support in applying for arts funding to improve future sustainability.

The event was well attended by those entrepreneurs who have benefitted from this initiative. As well as Mountain Perspective, I would like to thank Herefordshire Council colleagues for their help and dedication in also providing necessary support for those businesses.

Finally, with regard to devolution, our current position is that we continue to engage, listen, research and learn about what devolution means for Herefordshire. The Government's focus has been on appointing councils to its devolution priority programme (DPP). The DPP has two tracks to it. One of which is for groups of local authorities who have already established (or are on the way to establishing) outline plans in relation to Strategic Mayoral Authorities. The other track is for unitary councils who need to undergo a programme of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) to enable further devolution opportunities to become available to them.

We are awaiting further announcements to help shape and inform our planning; in the meantime we will continue to proactively engage with key government departments to ensure that we make our position as a council clear. That being; we will not let external influencing factors inhibit our ability to progress with our own ambitions and commitments to deliver the best for Herefordshire in everything that we do. We continue to set out the funding and

strategic support we need to deliver against our growth and wellbeing priorities. We aim to be in the strongest possible position once the opportunity for further discussion and planning with our neighbours opens up.

My formal report to Council

Herefordshire Council Plan – 2024 to 2028. Through the development of the Herefordshire Council Plan, four corporate priorities have been identified. These are:

- I. **People** – We will enable residents to realise their potential, to be healthy and to be part of great communities who support each other. We want all children to have the best start in life.
- II. **Place** – We will protect and enhance our environment and ensure that Herefordshire is a great place to live. We will support the right housing in the right place, we will support access to green spaces and we will do everything we can to recover the health of our rivers.
- III. **Growth** – We will create the conditions to deliver sustainable growth across the county; attracting inward investment, building business confidence, creating jobs, enabling housing development along with providing the right infrastructure, and
- IV. **Transformation** – We will be an efficient council that embraces best practice, delivers innovation through technology and demonstrates value for money.

The Herefordshire Council Plan, alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy, provides the overarching policy framework within which decisions will be taken and resources allocated over the next 4 years.

Delivery Plan 2024 to 2025 – turning the strategic vision in to delivery

Central to the realisation of the Council Plan is the Delivery Plan 2024-25, which sets out the milestones and progress against our priorities of People, Place, Growth and Transformation. As members of this council you will be able to mark our progress through quarterly reporting into Cabinet and routine financial monitoring against the approved revenue budget and capital programme. Alongside this we are developing annual service plans within each of the directorates which will be reporting progress monthly to the corporate leadership team.

In my report below, I have outlined where the cabinet and cabinet members decisions begin the delivery of those stated objectives.

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Theme 1 - People: We will enable residents to realise their potential, to be healthy and to be part of great communities that support each other.
We want all children to have the best start in life.

1: Recommissioning of the stop smoking strategy

Stated Delivery Plan Objective: Support all residents to live healthy lives within their communities.

This year we will: Increase capacity and capability of addiction programmes to reduce harm from smoking, alcohol and drugs. We will increase capacity of the Herefordshire Stop Smoking Service by recruiting additional Stop Smoking Advisors and increase smoking quit rates amongst smokers by 25% aligned to the Smoke Free Generation Funding targets.

In December, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing approved the decision to recommission the pharmacotherapy function of the Herefordshire Stop Smoking Service. These include services for the early identification, treatment, and interventions to prevent the onset of avoidable disease and development of long-term conditions caused by smoking. Without these services the council would see much higher levels of demand being placed on health and social care resources.

The existing contract is due to expire in March 2025. This decision enables the procurement of a number of targeted pharmacies across Herefordshire to provide stop smoking behavioural support to complement the community stop smoking service offer. It will be effective from 1 April 2025 up until 31 March 2029.

Councils have, since 1 April 2013, been responsible for improving the health of their local population and for commissioning the range of public health services transferred to them from the NHS, by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. An increasing proportion of ill health, and consequential expenditure on health and social care, derives from lifestyle factors rather than communicable diseases. Smoking is one of the most significant risk factors across England contributing to premature deaths and it remains the leading risk factor for mortality, with 15% of all deaths attributable to it, which is down from 18% in 2018.

Smoking rates in the county have fallen from 13% in 2020 to 10.1% in 2023. This can be linked to an increase year on year of smokers accessing the service. Smoking, however, remains a leading cause of health inequalities and there are certain population groups who are much more likely to smoke in Herefordshire than the general population. Specifically, 20.5% of routine and manual workers, 40% of adults with severe mental illness, 27.8% of adults with long-term mental health conditions, and 8.3% of pregnant women, smoke. These groups require a more targeted approach to support them to quit smoking.

Upskilling and training staff will enhance existing support, extend reach, and explore additional interventions, providing greater choice and treatment options for the smoking population. The behavioural support service delivered by the pharmacy will involve one-to-one advice and counselling about why or how to stop smoking, or a combination of the two. Pharmacies will be commissioned via a procurement framework and reimbursed for the pharmacotherapy supplied to people engaging with stop smoking service support.

2: Corporate Parenting Strategy

Stated Delivery Plan Objective: Support all children to have the best start in life.

This year we will: Develop, approve and launch the updated Corporate Parenting Strategy and produce an implementation plan.

In December, Cabinet approved the new corporate parenting strategy 2025-2027. The strategy sets out the ambition, actions and outcomes we, as a local authority, need to achieve for our children and young people as a Corporate Parent. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduced a duty on councils to have regard to the following corporate parenting principles when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people to;

- I. act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people
- II. encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- III. take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
- IV. help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
- V. promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
- VI. for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
- VII. prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The key priorities of the strategy are that our children and young people have safe, stable and caring places to live and call home. That they are emotionally, physically and mentally healthy; have inclusive and enriching environments to learn, develop, have fun, and achieve and able to build trusted relationships with the people in their lives. We want all children and young people to be able to make their voice heard and shape how services are designed and delivered.

A central aim of the strategy is to enable young people to leave care and become independent and thriving adults; able to live rich and fulfilling lives that are safe and protected from harm, abuse and exploitation. We will look to report and track the progress of the strategy in to the Corporate Parenting Board who will receive regular progress updates.

3: Ofsted Monitoring Visit - Feedback.

Contributes to Delivery Plan Objective: Support all children to have the best start in life.

On 19 December, Cabinet noted Ofsted's fifth monitoring visit which had taken place on 22nd and 23rd of October. It's focus was on children at risk of extra familial harm.

Inspectors reported a wide range of positive findings, including effective and timely multi-agency working to identify, support and protect children at risk from experiencing extra familial harm and exploitation.

Of principal interest to members will be the progress reported around the Get Safe specialist team. Ofsted found that "Children at risk of extra familial harm in Herefordshire benefit from a committed specialist team, which reduces risk for many of these vulnerable children". They

found the Get Safe team to “work effectively to reduce risks for children and young people and their work to be “timely and well structured”.

Early Help, support, and identification of risk; Ofsted found that a range of early help services were available to support children at risk of exploitation and that for most children who come to the attention of children services, their needs and risks are promptly identified through effective systems in place in MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub).

Partnership Working; Ofsted found the external partnership collaboration is helping to protect vulnerable children through targeted interventions and/or disruption activity and that this collaboration and information sharing between partners was improved since previous visits.

Quality of practice; Ofsted found that the child and family assessments that they had reviewed in other parts of the service, from front door to children in care, to care leavers in recent months, were “an improved quality” to those they have historically observed. Ofsted found these assessments as being “detailed and reflecting overarching needs, with an exploration of risks to the child”.

Cabinet are pleased that the report acknowledges positive signs of improvement. We recognise that we have some work to do but we are in a considerably better place than we were two years ago.

Theme 2: Growth - We will create the conditions to deliver sustainable growth across the county; attracting inward investment, building business confidence, creating jobs, enabling housing development along with providing the right infrastructure.

4: Council requested update: Strategic Housing Provision

Stated Delivery Plan Objective: Work with partners to provide high quality and affordable housing to meet all needs.

This year we will: Enable the delivery of affordable properties in the county, including council owned land, through registered providers and developers

Herefordshire is seeing increased applications for ‘Home Point’. The waiting list for affordable rented accommodation with numbers currently in excess of 2,100 households with 156 households being accommodated in temporary accommodation. The gap in provision grows significantly year on year.

The county also has an increasingly ageing population, driven by demographic changes including increasing life expectancy. This is a key driver of the need for housing which is capable of meeting the needs of older people. The total number of people aged 65 and over projected to increase by 42% over the next 16 years, this equates to an increase in the population aged 65 and over of 20,400 people.

The Housing Market Area Needs Assessment, updated in July 2021 is a countywide assessment of all housing needs,(open market and rental) projected need for 2011-2031 to meet demand identified that 846 dwellings are required annually in the County. For the period 2011 – 2020 total net completions equated to 4,725 dwellings (525 per annum). This equating to a demand increase from 2020 – 2030 to 1,070 dwellings per annum.

In addition to the social and affordable housing needs, through the revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) government has assigned a mandatory housing growth

target to the county of 27,260 over the next 20 years compared to 16,100 previously. To meet this increased target the current private sector build out rate will need to double each year.

The private sector and Registered Providers have and continue to play a critical role in the delivery of affordable and social housing across Herefordshire. However, they are not in position to meet all of the need outlined above on their own. Therefore, like other councils across the country, the council will need some direct interventions over some elements of housing development and delivery.

There are three options as to how this can be achieved;

- I. Housing Revenue Account – the council directly develops, owns and manages council housing.
- II. Establishing a joint venture (s) with the private sector as a route to controlling the type and the location of accommodation to be developed (in agreement with the private sector).
- III. Council Owned Housing Delivery Vehicle - a company would be owned and directly controlled by the council, enabling delivery in priority locations, and the range of type accommodation to meet resident needs.

The Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee (CCSC) considered the findings with one of their recommendations being to 'Identify and begin the process of setting up a development company, using the lessons learned from other local authorities. The Cross Party Housing Working Group, also supported the recommendation that the council should progress the development of a housing development company.

On Thursday 6 March Cabinet considered the proposed decision to explore the development of a council-owned housing development company.

Theme 3: Place - We will protect and enhance our environment and ensure that Herefordshire is a great place to live. We will support the right housing in the right place, and do everything we can to improve the health of our rivers.

5: Value nature and uphold environmental standards to minimise pollution and maximise biodiversity.

At the point of drafting, £1,351,198.52 (up by £52,904 since my last report in December) in phosphate income has been received. To date these actions have released planning permissions for 794 dwellings (an increase of 43 dwellings since December). The Council will receive a further £268,956 on commencement of development on these sites.

6: 2025/26 Capital Investment in Existing Highway Infrastructure

Stated Delivery Plan Objective: Expand and maintain the transport infrastructure network in a sustainable way and improve connectivity across the county.

This year we will: Deliver the highways maintenance investment programme across the county utilising Department for Transport (DfT) Highways Maintenance additional funding to deliver the Resurfacing Herefordshire Highways scheme

In December, the Cabinet Member for Roads and Regulatory Services authorised the ongoing 2025/26 capital investment in existing highway infrastructure. The programme of works will complement the Council's Public Realm Contract and is in addition to the Department for Transport's Highways Maintenance and Integrated Transport Block Funding. Our investment (£1M) in carriageways is focussed on delivering resurfacing schemes on C and Unclassified roads across the County.

A further £1M investment in 'structures' (such as bridges, walls, culverts) will slow further deterioration, helping to avoid the risk of closure and associated disruption across the highway network.

We are also working with local Town and Parish Councils, to direct investment of £250K for enhancement schemes to improve safety. This will address defined instances of inappropriate driving behaviour within local communities. Our investment of £250K in street lighting and traffic signals will also ensure that safety is maintained on the highway network.

Budget and Performance reporting

Annual Review of Earmarked Reserves - A balanced draft revenue budget which totals £231.5 million was proposed for 2025/26. The draft 2025/26 revenue budget assumed a total council tax increase of 4.99%: 2.99% increase in core council tax and a 2% adult social care precept. This increases the band D equivalent charge to £1,969.36, representing an increase of £7.80 per month (£1.80 per week). The 2% adult social care precept will generate approximately £2.7 million of additional income to contribute to continuing adult social care pressures: reflecting increases in demand, complexity of need and cost for services to support the county's residents.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2024/25 to 2027/28 published as part of the 2024/25 revenue budget includes a planned reduction in the increase in council tax in 2025/26 to 3.99% (1.99% increase in core council tax and a 2% adult social care precept).

As a result of unexpected reductions in the funding provided by Central Government following the Local Government Policy Statement in November 2024, the council is increasingly reliant on funding raised locally through council tax. Whilst this planned reduction has not been possible in 2025/26, the revised MTFS for 2025/26 to 2028/29 assumes the rate of increase in future years will be at the reduced level of 3.99%.

An increase to the base budget for 2025/26 will fund identified budget pressures of £25.7 million. Savings and efficiencies of £6.9 million are proposed to mitigate these pressures to deliver a balanced budget. Nationally, local authorities continue to face significant financial pressures whilst demand and cost of statutory services continues to rise; increasing the challenge of delivering transformation and improvements in the delivery of services.

The budget and strategy for 2025/26 builds on the prudent approach and robust financial management exercised in 2024/25 and prior years. This will mitigate and protect the council's future financial resilience and sustainability at a time of increasing cost pressures, reduced Central Government grants, uncertainty over future funding arrangements and planned reorganisation of the local government framework. As a result of the robust management of the revenue budget and responsible stewardship of the council's financial resources, the council is able to evidence that it is in a strong and resilient position to respond to and withstand future financial pressures.

Also in January, Cabinet set out its proposed capital programme for onward consideration by Council. The agreed programme, by Council in February, for 2025/26 presents an ambitious programme of capital investment aligned to the priorities of the Council Plan across People, Place, Growth and Transformation. This includes projects to:

- I. mitigate key revenue budget pressures;
- II. improve the use of technology to deliver efficiencies and innovation in services;
- III. deliver new infrastructure to support growth opportunities for housing and businesses;
- IV. encourage active lifestyles for children and young people through a £1million investment in play areas;
- V. develop cultural and community spaces for residence and visitors;
- VI. strengthen resilience and reduce the impact of flooding with investment of £2million;
- VII. improve road safety across the county; and
- VIII. provide continued investment in the county's road network.

Council Tax reduction scheme:

In February, Council agreed the Cabinet's proposed Council Tax Reduction scheme (CTR). CTR is available to working age and pensioner claimants. More than 11,000 bill payers in Herefordshire are currently in receipt of CTR, with over 6,000 claims from working age applicants.

A 100% discount is awarded under CTR (unless income breaches the threshold) irrespective of the council tax band the property falls into. During recent years, the number of working age CTR claimants has increased; reflecting the national picture and the impact of increases in the cost of living and inflation on working age residents.

Q3 2024/25 Budget Report

Revenue Outturn

The council's approved net revenue budget for 2024/25 is £212.8 million which includes planned savings of £19.5 million comprising £11.6 million of Directorate Savings and £7.9 million of Council-wide budget savings. The forecast outturn position for 2024/25 at Quarter 3 (December 2024) highlights continuing in-year cost pressures to support increases in demand across social care budgets, temporary accommodation and Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport services.

The Quarter 3 revenue outturn position for 2024/25 shows a forecast variance from budget of £7.0 million (3.3% of net budget), an improvement of £3.2 million compared with the position reported at Quarter 2. Whilst underlying cost pressures in demand-led budgets remain, the successful delivery of management actions identified at Quarter 2 has had a positive impact on the overall outturn position.

Of the £8.2 million of management actions and planned mitigations reported at Quarter 2, £4.9 million have been delivered in the period from October to December 2024. It is expected that further planned activity in Quarter 4 (January to March 2025) will reduce the forecast overspend to £1.1 million (0.5% of budget) by 31 March 2025.

Delivery of Savings

Council approved a total of £19.5 million of savings for 2024/25 comprising Directorate Savings of £11.6 million and £7.9 million of Council-wide Savings. At Quarter 3, the revised assessment reflects robust challenge of savings targets previously assessed as

'in progress' and the deliverability of these savings over the remainder of the financial year.

This review confirms delivery of £10.2 million (52%) of the total savings target for 2024/25 at Quarter 3. A further £1.1 million are expected to be delivered by 31 March 2025 to bring the total savings delivered in year to £11.3 million (58% of the full year target).

Capital Outturn The 2024/25 approved capital budget of £160.0 million has been revised to £96.7 million. The revised capital budget includes £15.3 million of unspent project budgets brought forward from 2023/24, approved movements of £0.3 million, £3.8 million additional grants and a reduction of £82.7 million reprofiled into future years.

Q3 Performance Report

This headline summary of the activities demonstrates that 140 out of 179 milestones (78%) that were due to be in progress by Q3 under the new Delivery Plan for 2024/25 were completed or are on track to be delivered by the end of the financial year. The full and detailed performance position across each of the four directorates of the council can be viewed here [Q3 Performance Report](#)

Appendix 2: Decisions – taken between 29 November, 2024 to 6 March, 2025			Date Taken	Effective From
Cabinet Decisions				
Send Inspection Update		6 March, 2025	13 March, 2025	
Education Strategy		6 March, 2025	13 March, 2025	
Housing Development Company		6 March, 2025	13 March, 2025 <i>(Implementation date is subject to the 4 clear working day call-in period)</i>	
Q3 Performance Report		6 March, 2025	13 March, 2025	
Q3 Budget Report		6 March, 2025	13 March, 2025	
2025/2026 Council Tax Reduction Scheme		23 January, 2025	7 February, 2025	
2025/26 Budget, Medium Term Financial and Treasury Management Strategy		23 January, 2025	7 February, 2025	
2025/26 Capital Investment Budget and Capital Strategy Update		23 January, 2025	7 February, 2025	
Annual review of Earmarked Reserves – 2024/25		23 January, 2025	7 February, 2025	
2025/26 Draft Budget- Revenue		13 January, 2025	N/A	
2025/26 Draft Capital Investment Budget and Capital Strategy Update		13 January, 2025	N/A	
Ofsted Monitoring Visit Feedback		19 December, 2024	28 December, 2024	
Corporate Parenting Strategy		19 December, 2024	28 December, 2024	

Cabinet Member Decisions		
Cabinet Member: Adult Health and Wellbeing	Date Taken	Effective From
Recommissioning of Stop Smoking Services	27/11/2024	06/12/2024
Cabinet member: Roads and Regulatory Services		
2025/26 Capital Investment in Existing Highway Infrastructure	19/12/2024	28/12/2024

Section1 - Cabinet member portfolios

Leader (corporate strategy and budget): Councillor Jonathan Lester

Cabinet Support Members: Councillors Dan Hurcomb and Nick Mason

- Corporate policy and strategy
- Corporate budget
- Represent the Council on various business and economy organisations including the Marches LEP, Herefordshire Business Board and the Enterprise Zone Board. Working with the Portfolio holder for the Economy.
- Governance of external arrangements with companies, outside bodies and partnerships
- Member of the Council's Shareholder Committee
- External liaison and relationships
 - Local Government Association (LGA)/County Councils' Network (CCN)
 - European and national matters
 - Regional matters
 - Marches Local Enterprise Partnership
- Policy development, quality assurance, external liaison, performance improvement and risk assurance relevant to the portfolio at all times having regard to the cross cutting priorities of the council
- Any initiative not specifically allocated to any other portfolio

Environment (Deputy Leader): Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst

Cabinet Support Members: Councillors Dan Hurcomb and Nick Mason

- Deputise for the Leader in their absence.
- Waste Management Strategy
- Waste collection and disposal
- Cabinet Commission on Phosphates
- Planning services, land use strategies including Core Strategy
- Environmental and conservation promotion, protection and sustainability including response to climate emergency.
- Policy development, quality assurance, external liaison, performance improvement and risk assurance relevant to the portfolio at all times having regard to the cross cutting priorities of the council
- Any other specific responsibilities as allocated by the leader

Community Services and Assets: Councillor Harry Bramer

- Council asset, investment property strategies and property strategies
- Council property services including facilities management
- Major Contracts
- Commissioning and procurement strategy and policy
- Community services:
 - Parks and countryside
 - Leisure Services
 - Cultural services
 - Libraries
 - Heritage Services
 - Archives
 - Public conveniences
- Policy development, quality assurance, external liaison, performance improvement and risk assurance relevant to the portfolio at all times having regard to the cross cutting priorities of the council
- Any other specific responsibilities as allocated by the leader

Children and Young People : Councillor Ivan Powell

- To provide leadership and ensure coordination across the range of council children's services, and through engagement with partners, with a particular focus on children and young people's health & wellbeing and safeguarding
- Services for vulnerable young people/children/families
- Lead member for children's services in accordance with the Children's Act 2004
- Corporate parenting
- Children and young people's education and attainment
- Post 16 education, training and skills development, including NMiTE
- Policy development, quality assurance, external liaison, performance improvement and risk assurance relevant to the portfolio at all times having regard to the cross cutting priorities of the council
- Any other specific responsibilities as allocated by the leader

Finance and Corporate Services: Councillor Pete Stoddart

- Agreeing and leading the process for developing revenue and capital budgets, medium term financial strategy, council tax and NNDR
- Financial policy, fees and charging policy, financial control and reporting
- Council tax benefits
- Council ICT services and digital strategy
- Human Resources
- Health and safety
- Performance, improvement, risk management, research and intelligence
- Services under Governance and Legal Services
- Registrars and Coroner Services
- Communications, and social media including website
- Digital Connectivity
- Policy development, quality assurance, external liaison, performance improvement and risk assurance relevant to the portfolio at all times having regard to the cross cutting priorities of the council
- Any other specific responsibilities as allocated by the leader

Adults, Health and Wellbeing: Councillor Carole Gandy

- Provide leadership and ensure coordination across the range of council adult social care services, and through engagement with partners
- Services for vulnerable adults
- Adult safeguarding
- Homelessness, housing allocation and condition
- Leadership of Health and Wellbeing Board and partnership working with health
- Co-chair of the Integrated Care Partnership Assembly
- Member of the Council's Shareholder Committee for Hoople
- Public Health Strategy
- Emergency planning and business continuity
- Community engagement and development, encompassing Talk Community, Talk Parish Summits and Parish Shared Services
- Customer services
- Policy development, quality assurance, external liaison, performance improvement and risk assurance relevant to the portfolio at all times having regard to the cross cutting priorities of the council
- Community Safety including the Community Safety Partnership
- Bereavement services
- Any other specific responsibilities as allocated by the leader

Economy and Growth: Councillor Graham Biggs

- Economic development and regeneration
- Strategic Housing
- Tourism strategy
- Policy development, quality assurance, external liaison, performance improvement and risk assurance relevant to the portfolio at all times having regard to the cross cutting priorities of the council
- Any other specific responsibilities as allocated by the leader.

Roads and Regulatory Services: Cllr Barry Durkin

- Animal health and welfare
- Environmental health and trading standards
- Markets and fairs
- Licensing
- Car parking policy and services
- Public realm contract management
- Gypsy and traveller services
- Policy development, quality assurance, external liaison, performance improvement and risk assurance relevant to the portfolio at all times having regard to the cross cutting priorities of the council
- Any other specific responsibilities as allocated by the leader

Transport and Infrastructure: Councillor Philip Price

- Transport and highways policy and strategy
- Public Transport and active travel measures
- Land drainage, flood alleviation, rivers and waterways
- Public Rights of Way
- Street scene design, policy and delivery
- Traffic Management
- Policy development, quality assurance, external liaison, performance improvement and risk assurance relevant to the portfolio at all times having regard to the cross cutting priorities of the council
- Any other specific responsibilities as allocated by the leader



Title of report: Motions on notice

Meeting: Council

Meeting date: Friday 7 March 2025

Report by: Director of Governance and Law

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To consider motions received on notice.

Recommendation

THAT: the motions listed at paragraph 6 are debated and determined by Council.

Alternative options

- 1 There are no alternative options to the recommendation; the constitution makes provision for motions on notice to be debated and decided by Council.

Key considerations

- 2 The constitution provides that members of Council may submit written notice of motions for debate at Council. A motion must be signed by the proposer and seconder and submitted not later than midday on the seventh working day before the date of the meeting. A member cannot propose more than one motion on notice per meeting and a maximum of three motions will be debated at meetings of full Council.
- 3 Motions must be about matters for which the council has a responsibility or which affect Herefordshire.
- 4 Motions for which notice has been given will be listed on the agenda in the order in which notice was received unless the member giving notice states, in writing, that they propose to move it to a later meeting or withdraw it.
- 5 Up to one and a half hours will be allocated to debate motions on notice but that time may

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Matthew Evans, democratic services officer on Tel (01432) 383690

be varied at the discretion of the chairman.

- 6 Two motions have been received and will be debated at the meeting. The motions for debate are set out below:

Motion 1 – Minor Injury Units

(Proposed by Councillor Ed O'Driscoll, Seconded by Councillor Ben Proctor)

Hereford County Hospital continues to experience unacceptable A&E waiting times, with NHS England data showing that between 25th November 2024 and 16th February 2025, 25% of ambulances waited over an hour before being able to hand over their patients to the Emergency Department.

All services at the County Hospital are under immense pressure, as are many primary care services across Herefordshire.

Historically, community hospitals in Herefordshire's market towns successfully operated Minor Injuries Units (MIUs), providing accessible and efficient urgent care to local residents. These units reduced strain on the County Hospital, ensured faster treatment for minor injuries, and allowed patients to receive care closer to home.

Minor Injury Units (MIUs) are still successfully operating in Gloucestershire, Powys, Shropshire, and Worcestershire, demonstrating their effectiveness in delivering timely and appropriate care outside of major hospitals.

When the MIUs in Herefordshire were closed, a petition in Ross-on-Wye alone gathered over 1,500 signatures, reflecting strong public demand for the service. There is significant community support for reinstating these services across the county.

Motion:

This Council:

- **Supports the reinstatement of Minor Injury Units in Herefordshire as soon as possible to alleviate pressure on A&E services and improve access to urgent care for residents across the county**
- **Calls upon the Executive to work with NHS partners and other stakeholders to facilitate the reopening of Minor Injury Units in Herefordshire**

Motion 2 – Agricultural Property Relief

(Proposed by Councillor Nick Mason, Seconded by Councillor Dan Hurcomb)

At the 2024 Autumn Budget the Chancellor announced changes to Agricultural Property Relief and Business Property Relief in the largest tax raid on the rural economy for a generation. Despite repeated calls by national and local politicians alike, the Government has not yet accepted there are deep flaws within their proposals which, if not amended or retracted, will see family owned farms and businesses which have flourished in Herefordshire for generations broken up and sold off. The direct result of this will undoubtedly be a loss of jobs, a reduction in investment and maybe most damaging of all the destruction of an ecosystem holding knowledge and wisdom across many generations

Council therefore resolves to:

Request the Chief Executive write to:

- **The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Chancellor to outline the Council's concern at the short-sighted decision to change both Agricultural Property Relief and Business Property Relief without proper consultation and sufficient scrutiny of the long term and immediate consequences on the rural economy.**
- **The Herefordshire National Farmers Union to note the Council's opposition to the Family Farm Tax and to confirm our wider support for a sustainable multigenerational agricultural economy.**

Updates – outstanding resolutions

- 7 The constitution provides that the report to Council, containing notices of motion on hand, will also include detail of progress of all outstanding resolutions. There are outstanding resolutions with respect to motions considered at earlier meetings of full Council; updates of progress against these resolutions are provided below:

Date of meeting	Motion	Current Status
29 July 2022	Cabinet Commission on Phosphates	A formal executive response will be provided to this motion as part of the Executive Response for the Scrutiny Committee report on the NMB.
<p>RESOLVED: We welcome all the actions that Herefordshire Council and other statutory partners have taken and continue to take to address the issue of phosphate over-loading of the River Wye SAC.</p> <p>As scientific research now exists which indicates that further impactful and coordinated responses are required to save the river catchment from permanent eutrophication, this motion calls upon the executive to:</p> <p>Consider including the following areas of urgent action in the remit of the proposed Cabinet Commission on Phosphates:</p> <p>1. Request of government that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the new Minister in charge of Defra clarifies what additional evidence they require before they would be prepared to reconsider the Council's Water Protection Zone request for the Wye; • DEFRA commission the catchment-wide appraisal of nutrient flows in the Wye (and all other river systems within Herefordshire) that will inform and enable consideration of the cumulative impact of housing, agricultural and industrial development. <p>2. Request that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Environment Agency improve the effectiveness of their regulatory and enforcement actions and their work with partners, to deliver best practice in sewerage treatment and manure management and to encourage and support the ongoing work of compliant farm businesses. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural England update their current (2011) River Wye water quality data in relation to the SSSI and SAC targets in a timeframe which is aligned to the current update of the Herefordshire Local Plan; and provide guidance on appropriate conditioning of permissions to achieve the necessary reduction targets.
<p>3. Identify now how best to use the update of the Local Plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognise and address proportionately the legacy and ongoing contribution to phosphate pollution made by each development sector; promote and support best practice nutrient actions across all sectors; encourage and incentivise catchment restoration through alternative, restorative and regenerative land use; and decommission intensive poultry units that have reached the end of useful life.
<p>4. Using the '<u>precautionary principle</u>' explore immediately the adoption of a planning position statement for all future development which accurately reflects the sector risks identified in research; and reinstating the consideration of '<i>cumulative impact</i>', in co-ordination with Powys County Council, to ensure that the Supplementary Planning Document on Agricultural Development, which is already in progress, enables officers to exercise the full extent of the council's planning powers in these regards.</p>
<p>5. Consider urgently how data sharing, data management and data visualisation can support science-led and evidence-based decision-making at all levels and across all stakeholders.</p>

Date of meeting	Motion	Current Status
9 December 2022	Multi-storey car park (Bus Station)	As part of bringing the Merton Meadow car parks forward for development, PJA were commissioned and have provided a report detailing the current use patterns across the City's car parks, and have identified a mitigation provision of circa 400 spaces . Due to the pattern of car park utilisation The Bus station is the recommended mitigation location. They have provided 3 MSCP options from 389 to 599 spaces dependant on whether a bus station offer is retained. These options will be investigated further as part of a wider car parking strategy review, but the principle of a MSCP on the Bus station will form part of the mitigation strategy for Merton and be indicated in the Outline planning application for the wider Merton Development.
The Council, therefore, calls on the Executive to explore the construction of a new multi-storey car park on the current bus station site to serve the needs of Hospital		

Staff, visitors and contractors as well as to provide additional car parking capacity to support the railway station and town centre.

Date of meeting	Motion	Current Status
8 December 2023	Affordable Housing	<p>Three Dragons have completed their review of good practice in affordable housing delivery, and the information was presented to the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee on 13th November. The recommendation was for the council to proceed with a 'development company or an arm's length company'. This will be further considered by the cross party housing working group in order to make recommendations on the way forward to Cabinet.</p> <p>Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee carried out its review of good practice at its meeting on 13 November 2024 and made the following recommendations to the portfolio holder (rather than Cabinet)</p> <p>Herefordshire Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress at pace a pilot project to develop smaller sites owned by Herefordshire Council, subject to planning conditions and business plan. • Identify and begin the process of setting up a development company, using the lessons learned from other local authorities identified in the report. • Consider prioritising phosphate credits for developments with a higher percentage of social or affordable housing, such as those in the pilot project. • Explore Local Government Pension Scheme options for funding the delivery of affordable housing. • Report these recommendations to the council's housing development working group.
<p>Council therefore resolves to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request the cabinet develop a programme to deliver an ambitious number of units of social housing, market-rent lifetime tenancies, affordable home ownership and market sale properties, funded through the prudent use of borrowing, capital receipts and the management of council assets in time for this to be agreed by Council as part of next year's capital programme. • Request that the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee undertake a review of good practice in housing delivery provided directly by local authorities and make recommendations to Cabinet by June 2024. • Request that the Leader of the Council to provide an update on housing delivery at each meeting of the Council. 		

Community impact

- 8 Herefordshire Council's adopted code of corporate governance provides the framework for maintaining high standards of corporate governance in order to achieve the council's vision of "people, organisations and businesses working together to bring sustainable prosperity and well-being for all, in the outstanding natural environment of Herefordshire."
- 9 In accordance with the code, the long-term nature of many of Herefordshire Council's responsibilities mean that we should define and plan outcomes and that these should be sustainable. Decisions should further the council's purpose, contribute to intended benefits and outcomes, and remain within the limits of authority and resources. Input from all groups of stakeholders is vital to the success of this process and in balancing competing demands when determining priorities for the finite resources available.

Equality duty

- 10 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.
- 11 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. If any motion results in a request that the executive (cabinet) consider taking some action, the cabinet will have regard to the equality duty when determining its response to the request.

Resource implications

- 12 None arising from the recommendation; if any motion results in a request that the executive (cabinet) consider taking some action the implications of such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

Legal implications

- 13 None arising from the recommendation; if any motion results in a request that the executive (cabinet) consider taking some action the implications of such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

Risk management

- 14 None arising from the recommendation; if any motion results in a request that the executive (cabinet) take some action the risks associated with such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

Consultees

15 None.

Appendices — None

Background papers — none identified

