

Agenda

Cabinet

Date: **Thursday 5 June 2025**

Time: **2.30 pm**

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

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

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Agenda for the meeting of Cabinet

Membership

Chairperson	Councillor Jonathan Lester, Leader of the Council
Vice-Chairperson	Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst, Deputy Leader of the Council
	Councillor Graham Biggs
	Councillor Harry Bramer
	Councillor Barry Durkin
	Councillor Carol Gandy
	Councillor Dan Hurcomb
	Councillor Ivan Powell
	Councillor Philip Price
	Councillor Peter Stoddart

Agenda

	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive declarations of interests in respect of Table A, Table B or Other Interests from members of the committee in respect of items on the agenda.	
3. MINUTES To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2025.	11 - 20
HOW TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS <i>The deadline for submission of questions for this meeting is:</i> <i>5pm on Friday 30 May 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>	
4. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC To receive questions from members of the public.	
5. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS To receive questions from councillors.	
6. REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES To receive reports from the Council's scrutiny committees on any recommendations to the Cabinet arising from recent scrutiny committee meetings. There are no reports from Scrutiny.	
7. Q4 PERFORMANCE REPORT To review performance for Quarter 4 (Q4) 2024/25 and to report the performance position across all Directorates for this period.	21 - 44
8. Q4 2024/25 BUDGET REPORT To report the provisional financial outturn position for 2024/25 for revenue and capital budgets.	45 - 80
9. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY To approve the Risk Management Strategy and Corporate Risk Register.	81 - 108

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- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
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<http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1597/hereford-city-bus-map-local-services->

Guide to Cabinet

The Executive or Cabinet of the Herefordshire Council consists of a Leader and Deputy Leader and eight other Cabinet Members each with their own individual programme area responsibilities. The current Cabinet membership is:

Cllr Jonathan Lester (Leader)	Corporate Strategy and Budget
Cllr Elissa Swinglehurst (Deputy Leader)	Environment
Cllr Ivan Powell	Children and Young People
Cllr Harry Bramer	Community Services and Assets
Cllr Pete Stoddart	Finance and Corporate Services
Cllr Carole Gandy	Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Cllr Graham Biggs	Economy and Growth
Cllr Barry Durkin	Roads and Regulatory Services
Cllr Philip Price	Transport and Infrastructure
Cllr Dan Hurcomb	Local Engagement and Community Resilience

The Cabinet's roles are:

- To consider the overall management and direction of the Council. Directed by the Leader of the Council, it will work with senior managers to ensure the policies of Herefordshire are clear and carried through effectively;
- To propose to Council a strategic policy framework and individual strategic policies;
- To identify priorities and recommend them to Council;
- To propose to Council the Council's budget and levels of Council Tax;
- To give guidance in relation to: policy co-ordination; implementation of policy; management of the Council; senior employees in relation to day to day implementation issues;
- To receive reports from Cabinet Members on significant matters requiring consideration and proposals for new or amended policies and initiatives;
- To consider and determine policy issues within the policy framework covering more than one programme area and issues relating to the implementation of the outcomes of monitoring reviews.

Who attends cabinet meetings?

- Members of the cabinet, including the leader of the council and deputy leader – these are the decision makers, only members of the cabinet can vote on recommendations put to the meeting.
- Officers of the council – attend to present reports and give technical advice to cabinet members
- Chairpersons of scrutiny committees – attend to present the views of their committee if it has considered the item under discussion

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- Political group leaders attend to present the views of their political group on the item under discussion. Other councillors may also attend as observers but are not entitled to take part in the discussion.

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.

Herefordshire Council

Draft

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Herefordshire Council Offices, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Thursday 1 May 2025 at 2.30 pm

Cabinet Members Physically Present and voting:	Councillor Jonathan Lester, Leader of the Council (Chairperson) Councillor Elissa Swinglehurst, Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairperson) Councillors Graham Biggs, Harry Bramer, Carole Gandy, Ivan Powell, Philip Price and Pete Stoddart
Cabinet Members in remote attendance	None <i>Cabinet members attending the meeting remotely, e.g. through video conferencing facilities, may not vote on any decisions taken.</i>

Cabinet support members in attendance	None
Group leaders / representatives in attendance	Councillors Liz Harvey (in person) and Diana Toynbee (in person). Councillor Clare Davies (online)
Scrutiny chairpersons in attendance	Councillors Pauline Crockett (in person) and Louis Stark (online)
Officers in attendance:	B Bowell, R Cook, H Hall, L Featherstone, S O'Connor, S Thompkins, R Thomas-Easton, D Thornton, S Gregory (Secretary)

Opening remarks

The Leader opened the meeting to acknowledge the passing of Phill Cutter. The Leader expressed that it was with great sadness that former councillor Phill Cutter had passed away on Monday 28th April 2025, condolences were extended to his family on behalf of Herefordshire Council. It was expressed that Phill would be fondly remembered, he was a dedicated member of the council, he served with distinction on many committees including the planning committee. He was highly regarded and served his community well, he was a trusted friend and a dear colleague.

A minute's silence was observed.

85. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Councillor Durkin.

There were further apologies from councillors Fagan, James and Proctor.

86. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

87. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

88. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Pages 7 - 10)
Questions received and responses given are attached as appendix 1 to the minutes.

89. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS
None were received.

90. REPORTS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
There were no reports from scrutiny committees for consideration at this meeting.

91. FOOD WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE
The member for environment introduced the report. It was highlighted that section 57 (8) of the Environment Act 2021 states that recyclable household waste which is food waste, must be collected at least once a week. It was noted to comply with legislation a food waste recycling service must be in place by 31 March 2026. It was anticipated that the recycling rates will increase from around 40% to 45% and once the chargeable garden waste service is factored in, this would increase to 58% which would exceed the target for 2025. It was further noted that the council were now collecting batteries and smaller electricals which also enhances the councils recycling ability.

It was confirmed that more than 1m mega watt hours of electricity had been generated from food waste collected since 2017. The new proposal was suggesting it be put through anaerobic digestion, which would create biogas to generate energy. It was highlighted that the contract contained a specific provision to ensure that none of the digestates produced would be sold into or spread into the Wye Lugg SAC to avoid increasing the nutrient loads within the catchment. It was confirmed that diverting food waste energy from waste plants to AD recycling has estimated to save £621k per annum. It was noted that utilising existing digesters in the county had been considered but the nature of food waste required a specific set up that could not be achieved without excessive expenditure on the existing installations. A commercial food waste collection and disposal service was being piloted which would merge with the domestic food waste service from 2026.

Regarding the additional recycling bins, it was confirmed each household would be provided with a small kitchen caddy and a 25L outdoor caddy, this will be supported by a detailed communications and engagement strategy.

It was confirmed that this decision will have paved the way for the service to take on the new requirements once the annual new burdens revenue grant has been agreed.

Comments from cabinet members. This was noted to be a positive step and a fantastic piece of work. It was noted as showing the council's commitment to the environment.

Group leaders gave the views of their groups. It was raised that the substantive papers for cabinet were issued a day after the agenda was published and a request that this didn't occur going forward. There was full support for this initiative, and it was a positive step to have weekly collections for food waste. It was noted that anaerobic digestion management would be monitored and ensuring that the council were going beyond the statutory requirements.

There were no responses to queries.

Councillor Swinglehurst, proposed the recommendations, and it was unanimously resolved that:

That conditional on sufficient annual new burdens revenue grant received from government that:

- a) Cabinet approves the commencement of a new food waste collection;
- b) Authority is delegated to the Corporate Director for Economy and Environment to enact the existing option to introduce a weekly food waste service within the recyclables and waste collection contract with FCC Environment for an initial term of 6 years, including options to extend by up to a further 12 years;
- c) Authority is delegated to the Corporate Director for Economy and Environment to enact the existing variation option to within the current waste disposal contract with Mercia Waste Management Ltd to recycle the food waste;
- d) To authorise the expenditure as detailed in Appendix 1 to purchase the new food waste collection fleet and to purchase and deliver the new food containers and caddy liners;
- e) To authorise the expenditure as detailed in Appendix 1 for the required depot improvements works and to mobilise the new service;
- f) Delegate all operational decisions to implement the above recommendations and to undertake the annual review of commercial food waste fees and charges to the Head of Environment, Climate Emergency & Waste.

92. GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE

The member for environment introduced the report. It was confirmed that the Environment Act 2021 stated that garden waste must be collected separately and composted. However, unlike the food waste service this was a discretionary service that could be charged for. Additional recycling of 14,260 tonnes of garden waste per annum was estimated and this would support delivery of the council's current recycling targets. It was noted that alongside the food waste collection, the recycling would increase from 40% to 58% against the 2025 target of 55%.

Market research indicated that there would be a 44% to 51% uptake of the service, and a full cost recovery was anticipated provided there was an uptake of just over 19% (16,000 customers). It was confirmed this would be a year-round service, with fortnightly collections using 240L bins and the subscription fee would be £60. The green sack service would cease once the service was introduced. There will be a 10-month mobilisation period, and the service is planned to go live in March 2026.

The proposed service would increase recycling in line with the Council Plan 2024-28 and would support the objective to reduce carbon emissions, modelled on an uptake of 18,150 households. It was noted that over the projected 6-year period it was hoped that the service would produce a revenue positive outturn of £886k and if the customer base rose in line with benchmarking from other local authorities the income could rise to £500k per year based on 35,600 customers (43% uptake). It was highlighted that the 2023 consultation indicated that 51.2% of respondents would use the service. It was noted there would always be an element of risk, but it had been underwritten by an allocation of £890k in the waste reserve.

Cabinet members comments. It was noted that this was addressing a need, it was beneficial for residents and the environment whilst also having a positive revenue impact.

Group leaders gave the views of their groups. The item was fully supported and confirmation that it would be a year-round service was very positive. It was requested

that the income from the service be ringfenced for the climate change and environmental projects. It was also queried if a campaign could take place to encourage residents to do home composting and it would be beneficial to have local support providing expertise to residents.

In response to queries it was noted that ringfencing the money would be considered.

In respect of composting, a campaign was carried out in 2016/17 where composters were provided but there wasn't a large uptake at the time. It was acknowledged that uptake may now be greater. It was noted that households could make a choice to use this service or do their own composting. The many benefits of composting were acknowledged.

Councillor Swinglehurst proposed the recommendations, and it was unanimously resolved that:

That:

- a) Cabinet approves the commencement of a new chargeable garden waste collection from 30 March 2026;**
- b) Authority is delegated to the Corporate Director for Economy and Environment to enact the existing option to introduce a chargeable garden waste service within the Recyclables and Waste Collection Services Contract with FCC Environment for an initial term of 6 years, including options to extend by up to a further 12 years;**
- c) Authority is delegated to the Corporate Director for Economy and Environment to enact the existing variation option to within the current Waste Management Services Contract with Mercia Waste Management Ltd to recycle the garden waste;**
- d) To authorise the expenditure of up to £1,039,292 from the approved capital programme to purchase the new garden waste collection fleet;**
- e) To authorise the expenditure of up to £588,050 from the waste revenue reserve to fund mobilisation and to purchase and deliver the new garden waste containers;**
- f) To authorise the expenditure of up to £890,000 to underwrite any potential year losses as the new service establishes and grows the customer base;**
- g) Delegate all operational decisions to implement the above recommendations and to undertake the annual review of fees and charges to the Head of Environment, Climate Emergency & Waste.**

93. PROCUREMENT OF A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES SUPPLIER TO SUPPORT HIGHWAYS & INFRASTRUCTURE

The member for transport and infrastructure introduced the report. It was noted that Balfour Beatty Living Places (the current provider) utilise WSP for top up professional services such as engineering design work and advising on specialist areas such as bridge maintenance or on landslip repairs. It was confirmed that the council's new operating model for public realm services would be moving away from a mostly outsourced model and will commence in June 2026. It was confirmed that the council were looking to procure a single professional services partner in a long-term contract to assist with the delivery of highways, transport and infrastructure work. The partnership

would be with a multi disciplined professional services provider, which had the capabilities to deliver a wide range of highways, transport, economy and environmental professional advice and to supplement and support Herefordshire's in-house teams.

The procurement would be completed and the professional services partner would be mobilised ahead of the new public realm contract start.

The benefits of a long-term professional services partner were highlighted which included having a provider which knew Herefordshire and the long-term relationship would mean that the provider would become very efficient in providing services to the council through knowledge of systems and processes, consistency of management and staff and early involvement in the development projects. This would help avoid additional fee costs creating a 3% to 5% saving over time.

A partnership relationship would also mean that the council could respond to bidding opportunities and changes in government approach quickly. It would also mean that the council had specialist support staff available quickly to help deal with emergencies.

It was confirmed that the expectation of the professional services provider would be to work with council officers to provide regular continuing professional development (CPD), training, seminars and other staff development opportunities. This would likely include a joint graduate development programme.

It was confirmed that the expectation would be for the provider to actively engage with employing local people, and would get involved with local charities, supporting local schools and consider supporting care leavers with work experience and apprenticeship opportunities.

Comments from cabinet members. This was supported and noted that having this process and framework in place would mean relevant expertise could be called upon when needed. It would provide best efficiency and best value for money alongside enriching the knowledge base. Also, it linked well across two cabinet members portfolios with the work being carried out on growth, education and training.

Group leaders gave the views of their groups. This was supported by all group leaders present. It was noted that being an intelligent customer and the move to providing in-house services, would only aid the new contract being successful. Caution was expressed regarding outsourcing all the services identified in the report (at paragraph 3) and a flexible approach was requested regarding how the council partners with the provider, a mixed model may provide the better outcome.

The advantages of a long-term relationship were recognised, and the social value element would be monitored. It was noted the importance of retaining local knowledge particularly regarding ecological advice. It was noted that the range for what the council currently spent on professional services was large and had not been refined for the report. It was raised that the reserves and future funding would be monitored going forward and breakdowns would be requested.

In response to queries it was noted that it could be a wide scope and procuring this in one supplier may be difficult, but market engagement sessions were taking place in May and June. It would be positive if this service could be procured in the way the council intended to. It was confirmed that the arrangement would mean that the expertise would only be used when required and when more technical knowledge was required.

Councillor Price proposed the recommendations, and it was unanimously resolved that:

That:

- a) Cabinet agrees to the procurement of a professional services partner to support the new public realm services model and the wider highways, transport, infrastructure, ecology, environment and economic development teams.**
- b) Cabinet delegates authority to the Corporate Director Economy and Environment to undertake the procurement and award of contract of a professional services partner.**

The meeting ended at: 15:22

Chairperson

Agenda item no. 4 - Questions from members of the public

Question No.	Questioner	Question	Question to
PQ 1.	Peter McKay, Leominster	<p>Will this years 'Professional services supplier to support Highways and Infrastructure' work programme include:-</p> <p>a) identification of Unsurfaced Unclassified Roads on Highways Map by change of line colour,</p> <p>b) identification of Unadopted Highways Not Maintainable at Public Expense on the Street Works Register, especial those that are through routes or link to public paths,</p> <p>c) showing open spaces on the Public Rights of Way Map,</p> <p>d) an addendum to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan comprising an amplification of the Public Right of Way Glossary that says CRF's and CRB's were intended to be shown as Roads Used as Public Paths, but in fact were shown as Footpaths and Bridleways, identifying them as being prospective upgrades, along with other identified anomalies,</p> <p>and</p> <p>e) showing long term defects in red on the road and path problem webpage?</p>	Cllr Price
<p>Response:</p> <p>Thank you for your question. We have no current plans to use any Professional Service Support for the items that you have raised. I have provided an update on each item that you have raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. At the 26th April meeting of the Local Access Forum, the council provided the forum with a copy of a list of Herefordshire's unsurfaced, unclassified roads and made a commitment for these to be displayed in an appropriate place on our public website. B. Unadopted Highways Not Maintainable at Public Expense are available on our website via the Street Works Register tab on the Highways and Public Rights of Way map. C. A search facility for Parks, Open Spaces and Sports Pitches is available on our website. The council have no current plans to include this information on the Public Rights of Way map. D. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan is in place until 2028. The council will consider this amendment when redrafting the plan. E. We are currently making improvements to our public rights of way defect map and I have asked Officers to consider your suggestion. We have made additional funding available for investment in the PROW network during 2025/26 in order to re-open paths and address as many long term defects as possible. 			

Supplementary question:

Thank you for your reply to my question. I will not be attending the meeting and ask re item 'A' will these be shown with a different line colour on the Highways and Public Rights of Way Map, and re item 'B' very few if any are shown on the Street Works Register, with reply to my question 16 May 2024 being that those you are aware of and shown on the Local Street Gazetteer would be added to the Street Works Register and enquire for any progress regarding this, and re item 'C' the Highway and Public Rights of Way Map webpage provides a link to your Parks, play area and sports pitches webpage but not to your Commons and village greens webpage, or any other open space webpage you have so could these links be added?

Supplementary response:

Thank you for your supplemental question. Following on from the last meeting a few days back, we've had lots of discussions about many of the things that were raised, and as you're unable to attend today, I will provide a written response to your supplementary question.

PQ 2.	Nigel Shaw, Bromyard	Is the Cabinet Member responsible aware of the number of applications for Tree Protection Orders received by the Council in the last quarter and the Council's inability to consider applications because of a lack of resource in the appropriate department?	Cllr Swinglehurst
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Response:

Yes, I am - so far in 2025, we have received 10 applications for Tree Preservation Orders.

The applications were dealt with in a timely manner and there is no inability to deliver the service. Each of these applications were reviewed by the Natural Environment Team and desktop assessments of each were undertaken.

Of these, 5 applications were considered appropriate for a site visit using the national Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders. Of these, two applications were deemed appropriate for a provisional TPO to commence the consultation process for a full TPO.

Whilst we are seeking to recruit a new Tree Officer the team is supported by specialist interim resource and is performing well.

Supplementary question:

I am much heartened by Cllr. Swinglehurst's reply.

An application I submitted over ten weeks ago met with a prompt but cursory response that ended, "given the resources available to us."

Cllr Swinglehurst and I have discussed council staff recruitment and retention issues in the past. Is she aware of current significant salary differentials between public and private sector roles in the specialist posts that deal with these and related issues? What does she think the Council can do to improve the recruitment and retention of qualified and enthusiastic staff for these vital roles?

Supplementary response:

Thank you for the supplementary question.

Yes, I am aware that there can be large differences in salaries between different organisations, although it is important to note that this is only one part of the overall employment package, so for example all Council employees are eligible for a number of wider employee benefits such as flexible working and the Local Government Pension Scheme which is typically much more competitive than most private sector pension offers.

Recognising the importance of recruitment and retention, particularly for some of these hard to recruit specialist posts, the team is currently working with our Learning and Organisational Development team to explore further opportunities such as career graded posts and increased investment in learning and development.

PQ 3.	Will Vaughn, Hereford	Are there processes and criteria within the proposed food-waste collection and disposal contracts that will allow the Council to vary its scope. or appoint a sub-contractor, to accommodate any innovative or future improved ways of collecting or processing food-waste?	Cllr Swinglehurst
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Response:

Yes. Both the waste collection contract with FCC Environment and waste disposal contract with Mercia Waste Management Ltd include change mechanisms to ensure that we can continue to drive service improvement and innovation through our waste management services.

Supplementary question:

None

Supplementary response:



Title of report: Q4 Performance Report

Meeting:	Cabinet
Meeting date:	Thursday 5 June 2025
Cabinet member:	Cabinet member finance and corporate services
Report by:	Director of Strategy and Transformation
Report author:	Head of Corporate Performance and Intelligence

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To review performance for Quarter 4 (Q4) 2024/25 and to report the performance position across all Directorates for this period.

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- a) review performance for Q4 2024/25; and**
- b) agree any outstanding key milestones from the Delivery Plan 2024/25 (see Appendix A) are carried forward to the Delivery Plan 2025/26**

Alternative options

Cabinet may choose to review delivery and operational performance more or less frequently however regular updates on performance is essential for good governance, therefore less frequently is not recommended; and quarterly updates on the Delivery Plan is likely to capture a more significant update than on a monthly basis.

Cabinet may choose not to carry forward any outstanding key milestones into the new Delivery Plan (not recommended).

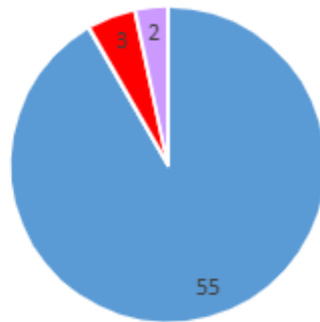
Key considerations

1. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2024-2028 and the associated annual Delivery Plan for the 2024/25 financial year. It provides a summary of the activities undertaken to deliver the key priorities and goals in Q4, and highlights the achievement of key performance indicators (KPIs). Appendix A provides the full breakdown of the Q4 updates on the Delivery Plan milestones that are due to be completed by the end of the financial year. 146 out of 187 (78%) milestones set out in the Delivery Plan for 2024/25 were delivered by the end of the financial year. 9% are red and are being recommended to be carried over into the 2025-26 Delivery Plan (see Appendix A for the remarks on each red milestone). 12% are purple and are also being recommended to be carried over into the 2025-26 Delivery Plan due to the timescale changing due to interdependent activity. One milestone is awaiting an outturn on CO2 emissions to be available for 2024/25 in order to assess whether the target has been met.
2. Beyond the Delivery Plan, the council has achieved many successes in Q4 of 2024/25. The following table presents some of the highlights of the Capital Investment Programme for Quarter 4.

Project	Investment	Where are we...
Peterchurch Primary School – New School Building	£10.8 million corporate borrowing & Capital Receipts	Planning application for the rebuilding of Peterchurch Primary School on the existing site has been submitted with construction, subject to planning approval. Build is planned to commence in September 2025.
Aylestone School Expansion	£13.1 million DFE capital grant	Planning application for the expansion of Aylestone School has been submitted with construction, subject to planning approval, to commence in September 2025.
Improvements to schools under the Schools Capital Maintenance Programme	£275,000 DFE Grant	2 completed projects in Q4 under the Schools Capital Maintenance Programme. Example project: Replacement roof, roof lights and guttering at Ledbury Primary to enhance the life expectancy of a corporate asset.
Estates Capital Improvement Programme	£391,000 corporate borrowing	5 completed projects in Q4 under the Estates Capital Investment Programme. Example project: Roofing works and improvements at Widemarsh Children's Centre to enhance the life expectancy of a corporate asset.
Section 106 Delivery Programme	£134,000 Section 106 funding	6 completed projects in Q4. Example project: Installation of bus shelters on St Martins Way, Ledbury. In addition, an extension to the office area and reception area at Ashfield Park Primary School, Ross has commenced on site.
Schools Accessibility Programme	£205,000 corporate borrowing	2 projects completed in Q4 under the School Accessibility Improvement programme. Example project: Internal adaptations and remodelling at Sutton St. Nicholas Primary School to improve accessibility for disabled pupils.

Road resurfacing across the county	£15 million in total, £5 million in 2024/25 and £10 million in 2025/2026	£4.92m was invested in 2024/25 which rolls on uninterrupted into a projected investment of £10.08m in 2025/26. Resurfaced total was around 135,000 square metres, as well as an extensive surface dressing programme.
Hereford Transport Hub	£11.57 million, of which £6.3 million is Levelling-Up grant funding and £1.0m is Active Travel Measures grant funding	The complex and drawn-out legal agreements with Network Rail and Transport for Wales have been completed during Q4, formalising the essential land transfer and rights. This has allowed contractor procurement to conclude, and McPhillips Wellington Ltd have been secured as preferred contractor to begin construction work in Q1.
Holme Lacy Road Active Travel Improvements (Levelling Up Fund)	£7.914 million grant funding	Detailed design and road safety audits completed, and procurement for construction underway during Q4.
Phosphate Mitigation/Integrated Wetlands	£4.76 million grant funding	Detailed design for the Tarrington wetland completed during Q4 ahead of planned construction in Q1. Contracts have been finalised for land and access rights acquisition for the third wetland.
Shirehall Restoration (phase 1) and Library/Learning Centre	£7.2 million (of which £3.005 million is Stronger Towns funding)	Planning and Listed Building consent was secured during Q4, and a two-stage procurement process for construction delivery got underway.
Hereford Museum & Art Gallery	£19.15 million	Stage 1 contractor procurement concluded during Q4, with Vinci UK Ltd appointed as construction partners moving into a pre-construction design phase involving both design team and contractor. Further grant funding of £1 million has also been secured from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme in Q4 to fund energy efficiency measures already incorporated in the design proposals.
Home Upgrade Grant 2	£4.65 million	The scheme completed in Q4 and delivered thermal and energy upgrades to 220 off-mains Herefordshire households during 2024/25 (against a target of 200) with a value of £3.6 million
Western By-Pass Phase 1	£40.3 million	Design consultants have been appointed during Q4 and the design process begun.

Performance: People



Milestones Colour Key: Blue: Completed; Red: Rolled over to 2025/26; Purple: Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity

Children and Young People

3. Over 300 young people aged 16 to 24 have been referred to the Youth Employment Hub, surpassing the target of 200 referrals for the year. Plans are underway to increase capacity to meet the growing demand.
4. The capacity of specialist Special Educational Needs (SEN) school places has been increased, with an additional specialist places becoming available at the following schools: Aylestone School (8 places from September 2025 and 8 further places from September 2026); Trinity Primary School (16 places from September 2025); Hampton Dene expansion of the Language and Communication Centre (16 places from Easter 2026); Leominster Primary School (8 permanent places from September 2025). These placements will focus on supporting students with autism and Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.
5. The Herefordshire Safeguarding Partnership has agreed on a Participation Strategy. A 'Voice of the Child and Participation Toolkit' is available on the Herefordshire Council website for use by all partners, supporting strategic planning and service improvement. Additionally, a specific framework has been published for those working within the SEND sector.

Community Wellbeing

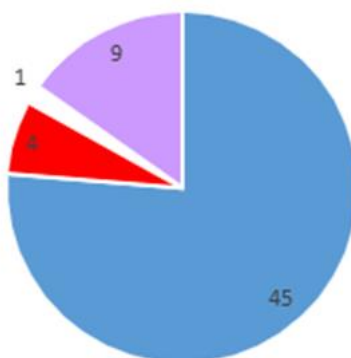
6. The first year of the Community Safety Partnership Strategy has been implemented, focusing on four priority areas: Domestic Abuse, Violence against Women and Girls (Sexual Violence), Misuse of Drugs, and Neighbourhood Crime. Implementation has been carried out through strategic and operational sub-groups aligned with key outcomes. Progress is monitored quarterly by the Community Safety Partnership Board.
7. There are 3 milestones that are being carried over to 2025/26:

- i. The evaluation of the technology pilots within the wider Technology Enabled Living Programme is taking slightly longer than originally anticipated, however work on this is underway to go through all outcomes with the participating customers to undertake the evaluation and will be completed by the end of April 2025.
- ii. Work is also underway to identify three new work opportunities providers to extend the services for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues.
- iii. A full business case is being worked up on the options for investing in, and building, the council's own care facility, and will be considered by Cabinet in Autumn 2025.

Economy and Environment

8. The Hereford Enterprise Zone has supported 7 businesses with employer travel plans to encourage more walking and cycling, exceeding the target.
9. The waiting list of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) has been significantly reduced from 130 to 61 schemes waiting to be started.

Performance: Place



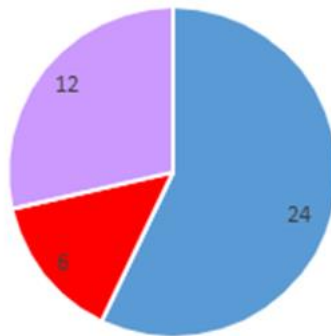
Milestones Colour Key: Blue: Completed; Red: Rolled over to 2025/26; Purple: Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity; Blank: TBC as awaiting data for 2024/25

10. A key area of focus of the Delivery Plan was to expand and maintain the transport infrastructure network in a sustainable manner, with the goal of improving connectivity throughout the county. This includes enhancing existing routes, developing new connections, and ensuring long-term environmental and economic sustainability in transport planning and development. A parking strategy for the city has been developed as part of the transport infrastructure improvement plan.
11. The Library Strategy is progressing following the rigorous analysis of the extensive consultation with key stakeholders and is hoped to be delivered by the end of Q1 of 2025/26. The contractor is also due to be appointed to redevelop the Library and Learning Centre in the Shire Hall by the end of Q2 of 2025/26. Likewise, the construction work to redevelop the

Hereford Museum and Art Gallery is slightly delayed and due to take place during Q1 of 2025/26.

12. The delay in completing the public consultation on the draft of the Local Transport Plan is due to Government changes to the National Planning policy framework and therefore was outside of the council's direct control. The consultation will take place within Q1 of 2025/26
13. The purchase of additional wetland site to deliver on Phase 2 Strategic Mitigation for Phosphate Credits is almost complete and is hoped to be delivered by Q1 of 2025/26.
14. The timelines for the publication of the Nature Recovery Strategy have been adjusted in line with the revised timelines provided by the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs.

Performance: Growth

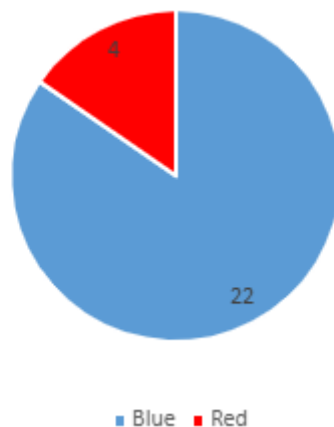


Milestones Colour Key : Blue: Completed; Red: Rolled over to 2025/26; Purple: Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity

15. A key mechanism to bring employment opportunities to the county is to attract businesses. This includes developing and implementing an Inward Investment and Place Marketing plan for Herefordshire. To support this development the recruitment of an inward investment manager has been completed in Q4.
16. We successfully delivered the 3 year £7m UK Shared Prosperity and Rural Prosperity Fund in March 2025. Examples of outcomes delivered include:
 - a. Research and Development Consultancy - 35 businesses provided with over 20 hours of support, plus over 100 businesses engaged
 - b. One to one Business Advice - 9 professional advisors engaged and 120 businesses receiving one to one advice
 - c. One to one Start up - 45 start up businesses supported
17. There have been challenges resolving the section 278 matters for planning in the context of other private developments in the same zone have caused a delay to the finalisation of the design and the procurement for the Ross Enterprise Park. This is now resolved, and tenders will go out during Q1 of 2025/26.

18. The development and implementation of an Inwards Investment and Place Marketing plan for Herefordshire is on track to be delivered during 2025/26.
19. Further support for growth in Herefordshire is slightly delayed but in progress is the allocation of funding for additional employment land and the Careers and Enterprise programme in local schools and colleges to attract students to study in the county.
20. The strategy to support improved network coverage will be better informed following the publication of the results of the 4G/5G mobile coverage by the River Severn Partnership. It will, therefore, be delivered during 2025/26.

Performance: Transformation



Milestones Colour Key: Blue: Completed; Red: Rolled over to 2025/26

21. The Transformation Strategy setting out our strategic transformation programme was published in Q4. Our Strategic Transformation Programme will improve all aspects of the way the council works, and its delivery is fundamental to ensuring that we evolve into a council which is fit for the future. This programme will enable our staff, our council and our residents to grow, develop, prosper, and flourish. Transformation is a core pillar of the Herefordshire Council Plan, and by delivering against this strategy, we can be certain that we will be delivering the best for Herefordshire in all that we do.
22. We recognise that the needs of our customers can vary so there is no one size fits all approach. To ensure we work collaboratively and achieve the best results for the residents and business in Herefordshire we have developed a new set of customer standards which are the foundations for our wider customer transformation programme which is set out in detail in the transformation strategy.
23. Working in partnership to deliver our ambitions for Herefordshire is at the core of the council plan. We have made significant progress towards strengthening our relationships with town and parish councils and the city council in Herefordshire by relaunching and rebranding Parish Summits, and in Q4 we finalise the coproduced Herefordshire Councils Charter which is due to be published in May 2025.

Local Authority Data Explorer

24. The Office for Local Government (Oflog) was an office of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) launched in July 2023 and set up the Local Authority Data Explorer. Oflog has since closed, however the Local Authority Data Explorer continues to be maintained by the MHCLG.
25. The aim of the tool is to create an overlapping and holistic picture of local government performance, with the facility to easily view metrics across different domains.
26. At present, the Explorer covers six areas of performance. These are: waste management, planning, adult social care, roads, adult skills, corporate and finance.
27. Some of the data published in this tool is historic and therefore should be interpreted with caution.
28. The following top ten indicators have, therefore, been selected to demonstrate a more meaningful indication of the latest performance:

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Q3 Actual	Q4* Projection	Q4* Actual	Q4* RAG**
Percentage of service users aged 65+ discharged from hospital into Home First who are still at home 91 days after discharge	78.75%	80%	79.83%	
Percentage of Children and Young People social work assessments completed within timescale (45 days)	63.5%	85%	67.7%	
Percentage of children in care who have an up-to-date review	99.5%	95%	98.25%	
Percentage of major planning applications dealt with within 13 weeks (or 16 weeks if subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment), or with an agreed extension of time <i>Provisional subject to DLUHC confirmation</i>	88.89%	70%	94.59%	
Percentage of non-major (minor and other) planning applications dealt with within 8 weeks, or with an agreed extension of time <i>Provisional subject to DLUHC confirmation</i>	77.63%	80%	77.71%	
Number of kg of waste that is not sent to reuse, recycling or composting (per household) <i>Provisional subject to DEFRA confirmation</i>	325.08kg (YTD Nov 2024)	360kg (YTD Dec 2024)	366.40kg (YTD Dec 2024)	

Number of affordable homes delivered	209	260	276	
Local count of Herefordshire homelessness	5	5	1	
Value of grants awarded to businesses to support viability and enable growth through UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund	£2,960,138	£2,647,783	£2,927,548	
Average days sickness per FTE	8.04	9	8.02	

* year to date (April 2024 – March 2025)

** RAG (Red Amber Green) Key: Green (target met/ exceeded); Amber (within 10% threshold); Red (away from target by 10%+ in an adverse direction); Grey (not targeted/ monitoring only)

29. In relation to the percentage of children and young people social work assessments completed within timescale, the trend through 2024/25 has improved each quarter from 57% to 67.7% but remains a challenging indicator with social work staffing vacancies and instability in the Assessment Teams creating fluctuating caseloads. In stable periods, for example December 2024, we saw 84% of assessments completed in timescales. Mitigations are in place and the council has launched a new recruitment campaign (April 2025) which to date is proving successful.

Community impact

30. In accordance with the accepted code of corporate governance, the council must ensure that it has an effective performance management system that facilitates effective and efficient delivery of planned services. To support effective accountability the council is committed to reporting on actions completed and outcomes achieved, and ensuring stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the council plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner.
31. Regularly reviewing performance with a view to identifying actions which will further drive improvement in outcomes or efficiencies helps ensure the council achieves its Council Plan priorities.

Environmental Impact

32. This report details how progress is being made in achieving the Delivery Plan which details how the council is working to deliver the environmental ambitions set out in the Council Plan. Individual projects and deliverables included within the Delivery Plan will all be subject to their own governance arrangements and assessment of environmental and ecological impact.

Equality duty

33. 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. Each project within the Delivery Plan will assess its equality impact individually.

34. The equality impact assessments that will be undertaken prior to commencing projects set out in the Delivery Plan will assess where a decision is likely to result in detrimental impact on any group with a protected characteristic. Mitigations and positive actions will be identified for each project in planning stages.

Resource implications

35. These recommendations have no direct financial implications.

Legal implications

36. This Council is a best value authority designated under the Local Government Act 1999. It is required to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way it exercises its functions. Measuring performance is a tool to evidence such improvement.

Risk management

37. The risks associated with the council's business are recorded on the relevant service risk register and escalated in accordance with the council's Performance Management Framework and Risk Management Plan. The highest risks, i.e. those scoring greater than 16 after controls, are escalated to the council's Corporate Risk Register.

Consultees

38. None in relation to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A Q4 Council Plan Delivery Plan Updates

Background papers

Council Plan 2024-2028
Delivery Plan 2024-2025

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Governance	John Coleman	Date 09/05/2025
Finance	Karen Morris	Date 13/05/2025
Legal	Sean O'Connor	Date 28/05/2025
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 07/05/2025

Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 08/05/2025
Procurement	Claire Powell	Date 13/05/2025
Risk	Paige McInerney	Date 13/05/2025

Approved by	Rosie Thomas-Easton	Date 12/05/2025
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Appendix A - Council Plan Delivery Plan Updates

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.

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
Support all children to have the best start in life.	Develop a revised Children's Improvement Plan	• Work with our partners to deliver against the approved priorities in the revised Children's Improvement Plan for 2024-2025	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
	Further develop and embed our restorative practice model focussed on working with families	• Deliver a programme of 8 restorative practice learning webinars • Complete the supervision train the trainer programme	Blue Blue	Completed Quarter 1 Completed Quarter 1
	Ensure that the views and lived experience of children and young people inform strategic intent and service delivery	• Conduct a quality of life survey with children and young people • Utilise findings from the Bright Spots survey to update service delivery and strategic intent	Blue Blue	Completed Quarter 2 Completed Quarter 2
		• Develop and publish a Participation Strategy for vulnerable children and young people	Blue	A Participation Strategy has been agreed by the Herefordshire Safeguarding Partnership. There is a 'voice of the child and participation toolkit' on Herefordshire Council website for use by all partners. This also supports information on how to support strategic planning and service improvement. There is also a specific published framework for those working within the SEND arena.
	Roll out delivery of the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy for children and young people	• Complete a review of early help provision	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
	Update the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy for children and young people based on the above review and update the implementation plan	• Develop an implementation plan for the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy	Blue	The existing Early Help Strategy was updated and is now in place the revision of this will be part of the new delivery 25/26 plan
	Increase capacity of specialist Special Educational Needs (SEN) school places so that children and young people can attend a local provision that meets their needs	• Update the Education Strategy which includes a sufficiency focus • Ensure that all future applications to Department for Education (DfE) schemes are completed and submitted by the DfE specified deadline	Blue Blue	Completed Quarter 2 No new rounds of bids from the DfE have opened. No announcements on future rounds.
		• Publish a plan to explore solutions through the High Needs capital grant to increase or improve SEN provision, that may include: resource based provision, repurposing of existing council buildings, new build, and purchase and conversion of existing buildings	Blue	Another 50 specialist places on stream either September 25 or some January 26 across four schools including Brookfield, Aylestone, Hampton Dene and Trinity. Primary need of autism and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) focused areas.
	Develop and launch the updated Corporate Parenting Strategy	• Approve the refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy • Produce an implementation plan for the strategy	Blue Blue	Completed Quarter 2 Completed Quarter 3
	Support all residents to live healthy lives within their communities.	• Support 5 businesses at the Hereford Enterprise Zone with employer travel plans • Engage with 15 primary schools across Hereford and the market towns as part of the Stride Active (walk to school) programme • Deliver the Bikeability (cycle training) programme	Blue Blue Blue	7 supported with travel plans. A travel survey is due to be completed May 25 providing us with further data. Completed quarter 3 Completed Quarter 4
Support all residents to live healthy lives within their communities.	Increase capacity and capability of addiction programmes to reduce harm from smoking, alcohol and drugs	• Deliver the national Harm to Hope strategy by increasing the number of adults in structured treatment to 996 • Increase capacity of the Herefordshire Stop Smoking Service by recruiting additional Stop Smoking Advisors • Increase smoking quit rates amongst smokers by 25% aligned to the Smoke Free Generation Funding targets	Blue Blue Blue	This has exceeded 996 Numbers in Treatment (NIT). However, there is a time lag in obtaining Drug and Alcohol data and we will have Q3 at the end of Apr 25. Completed Quarter 2 723 quits for 24/25 which exceeds the target of 550 and achieves over the 25% increase.
	Sign up education settings to the healthy tots/healthy schools framework	• Complete pilot of healthy tots/schools framework • Sign up 20% of education settings to the framework	Blue Blue	Completed Quarter 2 Completed Quarter 3
	Tackle inequality and facilitate social mobility by focussing on early intervention and	Protect children and young people at risk of exploitation	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		• Develop Get Safe as a response to child exploitation and contextual safeguarding concerns	Blue	Completed Quarter 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.

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
prevention activities that enable people to live independent and fulfilling lives.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop support for young adults up to 25 years, who may be at risk of exploitation, and a transition pathway, through review of the Care and Risk Management Process (CARM) for this cohort and introduction of the adults exploitation toolkit	Blue	The CARM process has been reviewed and improved and the toolkit has been introduced.
	Promote the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">400 new registrations achieved to the online Solihull Approach parenting programme and 600 new courses started by parents/carers	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
	Deliver a Youth Employment Hub to support young people aged 16 to 24 into education, employment and/or training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Launch a Youth Employment Hub	Blue	Completed quarter 3. The hub opened end of October 24 and an official launch was held on 11 February 25 during national apprenticeship week.
	Deliver five technology pilots within the wider Technology Enabled Living Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide support for 200 young people who are not in education employment or training	Blue	Over 300 young people aged 16 to 24 have been referred into the hub in the first 5 months. The 200 target was for 12 months and we are already planning to increase capacity to meet need.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete roll out of the technology pilots	Blue	Completed. These technologies are now business as usual.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete evaluation of the technology pilots	Red	The evaluation has taken longer to complete than originally anticipated. The Technology Enabled Care Team are currently working through all outcomes with the participating customers to undertake the evaluation and this will be completed by the end of April 2025.
	Deliver implementation plans for best start in life and good mental wellbeing within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sign up to the prevention concordat for better mental health	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Agree the Mental Wellbeing implementation plan	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Present annual progress reports against the implementation plans to the Health and Wellbeing Board	Blue	The Best Start in Life plan review and forward plans were approved in March 24. The Good Mental Health plans were approved in June 24. A review of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and both implementation plans was undertaken by the Health, Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in March 25.
	Deliver schemes to tackle inequality and support our most vulnerable residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure the council tax reduction scheme continues to be maintained at its maximum level of discount	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deliver the Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF) targeted at children in receipt of free school meals		Blue	Completed Quarter 3. Another years funding confirmed by DfE. The HAF programme will continue for 25-26 enabling Herefordshire to offer activities and food to Free School Meals eligible children.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Deliver the Household Support Fund (HSF) to those affected by cost of living		Blue	Completed Quarter 2	
Enable people to support themselves and each other by providing the right help at the right time.	Improve services for carers of all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Approve and launch the All Ages Carers Strategy	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Commence delivery of the implementation plan	Blue	Work had begun in Quarter 3 and 4 on delivery of the action plan. Actions are on-going and being overseen by the Carers Partnership Board.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Produce an annual report on progress of the strategy	Purple	The first annual review of progress is not due until December 25.
	Improve services for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement a new framework for supported living and community activities	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sign up three new work opportunities providers	Red	Several existing providers who support people into work are on the framework. Work is underway to identify further opportunities to extend the provision.
	Review existing respite provision and design and implement a model for future delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consult users of existing respite services to understand issues and areas for improvement	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Design a model for improved respite provision	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implement revised model	Blue	Implementation will be through the course of several months due to existing service contracts.
	Explore options for investing in, and building, the council's own care facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete a business case for a council-owned care facility	Blue	Completed Quarter 3. An updated business case is under development with a new target date of Q2 25/26.

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.

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
		• Take a decision on a council owned care facility	Red	The full business case is being worked up, following soft market engagement with providers. There is a need to align with the new SEND Strategy and to do more detailed data modelling work to inform the business case. The business case will be considered by Cabinet in autumn 25.
	Improve the model to ensure that people who are discharged from hospital receive the right support in the community, including reablement	• Implement robust processes with health partners to achieve safe discharge from hospital	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Review the existing reablement model in light of best practice	Blue	Benchmarking complete and wider system to work to review existing model is taking place.
		• Undertake a review of 25 sample hospital discharge cases of people aged over 18 to provide assurance on partnership working.	Purple	Not undertaken due to resource challenges, planned for next quarter
Work with partners and residents to build connected and resilient communities.	Implement the findings of the Talk Community strategic review	• Publish the findings of the strategic review	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Develop and agree the three-year Talk Community Strategy	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Launch the community capital grants scheme	Blue	First stage of the application process completed. 68 applications totalling £12 million. Successful applications have progressed to the full application stage which will close in June 25.
		• Allocate funding	Blue	Completed Quarter 4
Support people to feel safe and respected in their communities.	Implement the new Working Together 2023 requirements through the Herefordshire Children's Safeguarding	• Agree and appoint a new Chair	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		• Full implementation of the Working Together 2023 requirements	Blue	Completed Quarter 4
	Expand CCTV through delivery of the Safer Streets 5 programme	• Install CCTV cameras and undertake other related improvements in Leominster, Ross on Wye and Ledbury	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
	Deliver a Safer Streets for Schools policy and deliver designs for safer routes to school	• Policy developed and approved	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Identify three priority schools	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		• Complete co-design stage & stakeholder consultation	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
		• Identify eight schools to benefit from smaller scale enhancements	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
	Commence implementation of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Strategy 2024 – 2027	• Implement the first year of the CSP Strategy against the four priority areas: Domestic Abuse, Violence against Women and Girls - Sexual Violence, Misuse of Drugs and Neighbourhood Crime	Blue	Completed Q4. The first year of the strategy has been implemented through a number of strategic and operational sub groups aligned to key outcomes of the strategy. Delivery is monitored quarterly through the Community Safety Partnership Board.
	Reduce the waiting list of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) and investigate and commence delivery of 35 TRO's countywide	• Progress the delivery of 35 schemes to reduce the TRO waiting list using Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Funding	Blue	There are now only 61 schemes waiting to be started on the TRO list against approx. 130 at the same time last year.

Key

Completed

Rollled over to 2025/26

Discontinued due to change of priority/ circumstance

Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity

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

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
Develop Herefordshire as a place for growth, prosperity and communities to thrive	Undertake the Draft Local Plan 2021-2041 consultation (Regulation 18 and Regulation 19)	• Launch Regulation 18 consultation	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		• Commence Regulation 19 consultation	Purple	A Regulation 19 Consultation will no longer be undertaken as a decision has been taken to progress a new Local Plan under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act system. Government changes to the National Planning policy framework has led to a revised programme.
	Deliver the New Road Strategy	• Complete design review of phase 1 (Southern section of the western bypass)	Purple	Design review completion delayed to Q1 25/26 to ensure that the impact of additional housing allocations fully informs design. No impact on construction programme.
		• Complete "heads of terms" on land acquisition for phase 1 (Southern section of the western bypass)	Purple	Delayed to Q1 25/26 as a result of additional work required to accommodate additional requirements raised through negotiations. No impact on construction programme.
		• Complete scheme review of phase 2 (western bypass)	Purple	Scheme review completion delayed to Q2 26/27 to ensure that the impact of additional housing allocations fully informs review of route options.
	Deliver a new Local Transport Plan	• Complete public consultation on draft Local Transport Plan (LTP)	Purple	Government changes to the National Planning policy framework has led to a revised programme. This will now be out for consultation during May 25. As agreed with Cabinet Portfolio holder.
		• Complete draft Local transport Plan	Purple	Government changes to the National Planning policy framework has led to a revised programme.
	Deliver the Public Realm Services	• Agree Public Realm Services operating model	Blue	The operating model was agreed in principle in Quarter 3, but there is further work to develop and refine during 25.
		• Commence the procurement for a new Public Realm contractor	Blue	Procurement commenced in accordance with programme Quarter 3.
	Continue to deliver Section 106 infrastructure projects	• Reduce backlog of Section 106 schemes	Blue	Section 106 contributions continue to be delivered with delivery at the highest in Herefordshire Council's history. However, whilst the backlog continues to be delivered more monies are being received.
		• Commission infrastructure projects in a timely manner to ensure best value for money when income is received	Blue	Commissioning of projects by service areas is being completed in a timely manner.
Expand and maintain the transport infrastructure network in a sustainable way and improve connectivity across the county.	Work with an investment partner to develop student accommodation across the city	• Work with stakeholders to progress designs at the College Road Campus site and Edgar Street Football Stadium site	Blue	Feasibility study completed to Royal Institutes of British Architects (RIBA) stage 2. Project no longer progressing due to £18m viability gap.
		• Cabinet to consider a business case and investment models to build student accommodation on both sites	Blue	Feasibility study completed to RIBA stage 2. Project no longer progressing due to £18m viability gap.
	Carry out transport infrastructure improvements	• Continue with the delivery of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) projects	Blue	Delivery of LUF schemes has continued: Transport Hub: land transfers and legal rights complete; contractor procurement complete Holme Lacy Road/Herefordshire Enterprise Zone (HEZ) quiet Routes: design complete and contractor procurement underway Aylestone Hill: detailed design continues. Site investigations commissioned Safer Routes to School: scoped and moving to delivery.
		• Produce a Parking Strategy for the City	Blue	Completed Quarter 4
	Deliver the highways maintenance investment programme across the county	• Deliver the Department for Transport (DfT) Highways Maintenance scheme within the additional funding	Blue	Works completed to time and budget by end of March 25.
		• Deliver the Resurfacing Herefordshire Highways scheme	Blue	Works completed to time and budget by end of March 25.
	Work with parishes on locally important maintenance	• Lengthsman: deliver the scheme within the additional £250k	Blue	Additional £250k was provided to Parishes.
		• Public Rights of Way (PROW): deliver the scheme within the additional £250k	Blue	£178k of grants have been distributed to Parishes to replace 551 assets. Any remaining monies will be rolled over to 25/26 as per agreement with Finance Team.
		• Drainage: deliver the scheme within the additional £445k	Blue	£390k of grants have been distributed to 86 Parish/Town Councils. Any remaining monies will be rolled over to 25/26 as per agreement with Finance Team.
	Reopen as many closed public rights of way routes as possible	• Deliver £140k Local Transport Plan (LTP) capital funding to scope, design and replace bridges to support reopening of routes	Blue	10 bridges have been replaced on the Public Rights of Way (PROW) network this financial year, along with a set of 200 steps at a total cost of £194k. Additional funding was used from the Highway Infrastructure Investment Capital Programme.

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
	Work with partners across the recently launched Marches Forward Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with both UK and Welsh governments on a new model for working together that not only reflects our functional geography but will also be a pilot for other potential partnerships who sit outside urban conurbations 	Blue	The Marches Connect group have commissioned a transport study looking at cross boundary traffic and public transport to develop areas for joint working. The partnership is currently reviewing a tourism report that was completed earlier this year and an additional housing study has also been commissioned all of which will look at area for best practice and joint working.
Value nature and uphold environmental standards to minimise pollution and maximise biodiversity	Deliver Phase 2 Strategic Mitigation for Phosphate Credits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase additional wetland site 	Red	Contracts were finalised during Q4 for the acquisition of land and access rights. Signing and exchange of contracts was scheduled with solicitors of all parties in the final week of Q4, but one of the landowners did not show and could not be contacted. This target will carry forward into Q1.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence design for second site 	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence construction on the second site 	Blue	Detailed design complete and some enabling works commenced on site during Q4, which will continue into the main phase of construction in Q1.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence first off-mains treatment plant replacement 	Blue	The project has commenced and Q4 has seen a full feasibility/works proposal commissioned from a drainage specialist, an environmental survey of the site arranged and engagement with the new head-teacher and school management company to progress legal agreement.
	To lead and be responsible for the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of the Nature Recovery Network mapping 	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public engagement to support delivery of the strategy 	Blue	Public engagement has been undertaken. Online meetings with the following sectors; parish & town councils, business and commerce and are holding a series of workshops in partnership with farmers across the county to reach out to landowners to provide feedback.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of the Nature Recovery Strategy 	Purple	Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) have provided revised timelines and agreed to an extension of time for all Responsible Authorities. Therefore the timeline for publication is November/December 25.
	Integrate Biodiversity Net Gain into the planning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Securing Biodiversity Net Gain through creation of natural habitats both onsite and offsite through individual planning applications 	Blue	Biodiversity Net Gain Mechanism has been integrated into the planning process.
	Develop a countywide Tree Strategy and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver guidance for the management of the council's tree and hedgerow stock 	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Ash Die Back action plan for the council 	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to deliver a countywide Tree Strategy 	Blue	Final draft is completed. Due for publication.
	Continue to implement the Herefordshire Natural Flood Management (NFM) project to reduce flood risk to communities within the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a range of engagement activity throughout the year 	Blue	The NFM webpages have been kept up to date. The spring 25 NFM newsletter has been drafted and will be issued in April 25. Team supported the FloodPod, discussing flooding and NFM with the public. Team have been liaising with colleagues regarding a proposed site visit with Ellie Chowns MP to look at NFM in Herefordshire.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide landowners and farmers with recommendations to reduce flood risk and to access the Natural Flood Management (NFM) construction grant 	Blue	Catchment advisors continue to produce tailored reports for landowners identifying potential NFM works. 128 landowners have been engaged and 59 reports issued. 46 grant scheme offers have been issued with payments made of £103k. £80k is currently waiting to be claimed. Advisors continue to work with landowners on further applications.
	Support and facilitate the partnership approach to address river pollution, through the River Wye Nutrient Management Board, the work of the Wye Catchment Partnership, the Cabinet Commission and working closely with the River Champion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress the Nutrient Management Plan and the Wye Catchment Plan 	Blue	The nutrient Mitigation Lead supports both the Nutrient Management Board and the Wye Catchment Partnership in the delivery of their evidence led plans.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a rivers conference to promote sustainable farming innovation 	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to support in bringing forward river restoration projects on the ground 	Blue	Governance is now in place to support the delivery of projects on the ground, deriving from priority actions identified within the plans.

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
Reduce waste, increase reuse and increase recycling	Mobilise the new waste contract	• New contract commences	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
Work towards reducing county and council carbon emissions, aiming for net zero CO ₂ by 2030/31 and work with partners and communities to make the county more resilient to the effects of climate change.	Reduce the council's own CO ₂ footprint through implementing our Carbon Management Action Plan	• 2 electric refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) to be added to the waste collection fleet	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
		• Achieve a 65% reduction of CO ₂ emissions from our 2008/09 baseline by the end of the financial year	TBC - Data for 24/25 is not yet available	Reduction of 63.2% achieved (FY 23/24). Carbon reductions will come next year from a new & improved waste collection fleet. Projects identified within the current plan have largely been delivered and almost achieved the target reduction. The team are working with a cabinet task and finish group to develop the next plan, to 2030 and net zero carbon.
		• 5 heat decarbonisation plans for the corporate estate	Red	Heat decarbonisation plans are underway, and whilst no reports have been delivered in 25/26, the programme will roll over to next year with 6 additional plans delivered for a total of 11. Consultants' visits are planned for April 25 and reports are expected in May 25.
		• Scope and commence development of the next carbon management plan to take us to 2030/31	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
	Support households and businesses to take action to address climate change	• Deliver a climate focused youth conference	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
		• Install energy efficient measures to 200 homes and retrofit assessments completed for 150 households	Blue	231 homes received energy efficiency installs with 375 retrofit assessments carried out. Broken down per project: Home Upgrade Grant 2 - 220 homes received an install with 264 retrofit assessments carried out. Home Energy Savers - 11 homes received an install with 111 retrofit assessments carried out. Q4 has also seen mobilisation for the new Warm Homes scheme which commences in Q1.
		• Deliver 6 farm carbon audits	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Deliver the Big Green Business Event in partnership with Herefordshire Means Business	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
	Expand the electric vehicles charging network in council owned car parks and additional points through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funded project	• Deliver a total of 50 publically available charge point sockets across the county	Purple	Total of 30 charge point sockets delivered by end Q4 24. Additional 24 sockets approved awaiting installation in council car parks. Installation delays primarily due to district network operator timescales and contractor availability. Contract for on-street charge points was awarded in 24. First on-street sockets are expected in Q2 25.
Support our local culture and heritage and make Herefordshire a thriving, safe and attractive place to live and visit.	Progress the project to redevelop the Library and Learning Centre in the Shire Hall	• Appoint a Library design consultant to deliver design proposals	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		• Relocate interim Library to the Town Hall	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Undertake consultation with users, stakeholders and internal staff on designs	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
		• Develop a new Library Strategy	Red	The library strategy is progressing. There has been extensive consultation with users, staff and key stakeholders, and analysis of the findings has taken longer than planned. The strategy will be completed by 30 June 2025.
		• Appoint principal contractor	Red	The contractor is due to be appointed in Q2 2025-2026 and construction is due to start in Q3 2025-2026 in line with the programme.
	Progress the project to redevelop the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery	• Complete design work	Blue	Review of interpretation plans complete. Riba 4 design freeze complete.
		• Commence Activity Plan (National Lottery Heritage Fund funded)	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Procure contractor	Blue	Complete Quarter 3 to 4
		• Commence construction work	Purple	Construction works commenced in Q1 2025-2026
	Progress the Leominster Heritage Action Zone Project; including completion of public realm improvements			
		• Contractor commences works	Blue	Completed Quarter 1

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
		• Completion of public realm improvements works	Blue	Completed Quarter 3

Key

Completed

Rolled over to 2025/26

Discontinued due to change of priority/ circumstance

Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity

Growth: We will create the conditions to deliver sustainable growth across the county: attracting inward investment, building business confidence.

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
40 Develop employment land to unlock new business opportunities for the County and generate local jobs.	Develop employment land across Herefordshire	• Commission Ross Enterprise Park design team	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		• Procure contractor for Ross Enterprise Park	Purple	Challenges resolving the section 278 matters for planning in the context of other private developments in the same zone have caused a delay to finalisation of the design and consequently to procurement. Now resolved and a 96A submission has been made to planning. This allows design to be more certain and tender outcomes more robust. Tenders out Q1.
		• Contractor commences work at Ross Enterprise Park	Purple	Challenges resolving the section 278 matters for planning in the context of other private developments in the same zone have caused a delay to finalisation of the design and consequently to procurement. Now resolved and a 96A submission has been made to planning. This allows design to be more certain and tender outcomes more robust. Tenders out Q1.
		• Complete countywide review of additional employment land needs and opportunities	Blue	Completed Quarter 4
		• Select and allocate funding to additional employment land projects across Herefordshire	Purple	Decision to proceed with selected sites currently being drafted for cabinet member decision in April/ May.
	Support the growth of the Enterprise Zone in Hereford	• Complete current plot sales in the Enterprise Zone	Red	3 land sales completed in year, 6 more land sales currently underway which cover 7.8 acres and will result in 10000 sqm of new workspace. Whilst this represents a considerable amount of activity in progress none has reached stage of commitment to be included in 24/25 figures.
		• Engage with businesses in Skylon Park regarding future management arrangements	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
		• Complete transition of management of Skylon Park to the council	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
	Develop and implement an Inward Investment and Place Marketing plan for Herefordshire	• Recruit inward investment manager	Blue	completed Quarter 4
		• Establish inward investment programme	Red	Continuing the work through the 25/26 Delivery Plan.
		• Commence delivery of the inward investment programme	Red	Continuing the work through the 25/26 Delivery Plan.
		• Publish an Investment Prospectus setting out both financial and development opportunities	Red	Continuing the work through the 25/26 Delivery Plan.
Support market towns and Hereford City to be vibrant hubs through working with residents, grassroots organisations and businesses.	Implement the £403k Towns Investment for the Greening the City Towns Investment project	• Secure land for improvements of the Great Western Way pathway	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Confirm design of the widening of the pathway	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		• Award contracts of works for the widening the pathway	Purple	Quality assurance issues with design documents have delayed the move to procurement as there are concerns that the returned tenders would be misleading. Design currently being revisited leading to re-procurement in Q1.
		• Works completed on the pathway	Purple	Quality assurance issues with design documents have delayed the move to procurement as there are concerns that the returned tenders would be misleading. Design currently being revisited leading to re-procurement in Q1, which has a knock-on effect to construction timeline.
	Support implementation of the Market Town Investment Plans (MTIP)	• UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund) feasibility funding awarded to each town to support development of Market Town Investment Plan (MTIP) priorities.	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
	Work with partners in the Golden Valley Parkway Task Force to complete the strategic outline business case for the proposed new railway station	• Strategic Outline Business Case completed	Purple	Delayed awaiting the outcomes of modelling of other proposed changes on the Marches Line to inform viability and business case.
Support residents to access skills development, training and employment opportunities.	Work in partnership with Wye Valley Trust (WVT) with a view to developing a new Education Centre at Hereford County Hospital	• Signed "heads of terms" agreed	Purple	Wye Valley Trust is currently reviewing funding options and associated costs after a review of the financial viability of the scheme. The business case and charitable fundraising programme for the scheme has been paused by the Trust.
		• Full business case presented to Cabinet and decision to be taken	Purple	Wye Valley Trust is currently reviewing funding options and associated costs after a review of the financial viability of the scheme. The business case and charitable fundraising programme for the scheme has been paused by the Trust.
	Explore options for a strategic investment partnership with	• Signed "heads of terms" agreed	Purple	On hold whilst options are reviewed

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
41	Herefordshire and Worcestershire Group Training Association (HWGTA) to establish a new centre of excellence at Skylon Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full business case and delivery model for the new centre of excellence completed Present to Cabinet for decision to be taken 	Purple	On hold whilst options are reviewed
	Agree a new strategic plan for the council's adult and community learning education service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and agree the new strategy and delivery plan to support learning and enable access to employment, further training and skill development opportunities 	Purple	A new strategy and delivery plan is in draft. The final plan has been delayed to be able to take into consideration Government policy and plans and impact of cuts to adult skills allocations.
	Working in partnership with the Skills Board to promote the higher education offer available in Herefordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a joint promotional/marketing campaign and the Careers and Enterprise programme in local schools and colleges, to attract students to study in the county including local residents 	Red	This is in progress and will be rolled over into 2025/26 to work with the local further and higher education providers and the Marches Careers Hub to inform young people and residents about the local higher education opportunities.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with NMiTE to support their development and growth 	Blue	In 24-25 we have supported the development of NMiTE as they prepare for the summer enrolment of new students and also the first NMiTE Graduation on 10th May 25. This support is ongoing into the new financial year (25-26).
	Work with partners to provide high quality and affordable housing to meet all needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a housing development team 	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a housing forum to engage registered social providers and developers to identify development opportunities and barriers to growth for high quality and affordable housing 	Blue	Engagement commenced with developers.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with surrounding land owners and key stakeholders to progress strategically significant council owned sites such as Merton Meadow in Hereford and Model Farm in Ross-on-Wye 	Blue	Master Plans commissioned and commenced.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the delivery programme 	Blue	Council sites appropriate for Housing Development currently being brought forward.
	Secure accommodation for vulnerable people at risk of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase a further 15 properties using funding through the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme, specifically for young people aged 18-25 identified at risk of homelessness 	Blue	Purchased 12 self-contained 1 bed properties, purchased a House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) to be converted in to the final 3 self-contained property.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with rough sleepers to enable them to access accommodation and appropriate support 	Blue	Proactively working with Registered Provider, to secure move on accommodation from Temporary Accommodation, or off street accommodation for those who are homeless. Street homeless numbers as at 31/03/25 was 1.
	Enhance the rollout of improved broadband across the county to deliver a fully digital Herefordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the delivery of the remaining Fastershire stage 3 contracts 	Blue	Completed Quarter 4
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the transition and delivery of BDUK's (Building Digital UK) Project Gigabit investment programme in the county 	Blue	The council has supported the delivery of Fastershire and BDUK's project Gigabit Investment Programme up until 31 March 2025. Coverage across Herefordshire has gone from 0.6% in 2011 to 97.6% Superfast in 2025 (the UK figure is 98.3%). Moving forward BDUK delivery is now the responsibility of national government.
Work with our partners and businesses to facilitate growth across the county.	Ensure engagement with local businesses by the Herefordshire Growth Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the Herefordshire Growth Hub brand 	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and deliver a range of business support networking events 	Blue	Delivered throughout the year through the Herefordshire Growth Hub.
	Support the growth of the tourism industry across Herefordshire, working closely with the Herefordshire County Business Improvement District (BID) and other key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure local visitor economy partnership status 	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the tourism rural prosperity grants 2024 	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver all tourism focussed grant funding 	Blue	Delivered through UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural Prosperity Fund.
	Implement the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (RPF) grant schemes, to support local businesses and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch all remaining UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund) and RPF (Rural England Prosperity Fund) grant schemes 	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver and claim all UKSPF and RPF budget allocations 	Blue	Programmes delivered.

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
	Engage with mobile network providers to improve coverage across Herefordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Produce a strategy to support improved network coverage	Red	River Severn Partnership have advised that the results of the 4G/5G mobile coverage survey will begin to become accessible during Q2 2025. This will be considered as part of the digital infrastructure proposal in Herefordshire to be delivered in 2025/26.

Key

Completed

Rolled over to 2025/26

Discontinued due to change of priority/ circumstance

Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity

Transformation: We will be an efficient council that embraces best practice, delivers innovation through technology and demonstrates value for

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
43	Change and transform the organisation to be fit for the future and deliver the efficiencies required	• Develop and launch the Transformation Strategy	Blue	Completed Quarter 4
		• Develop and launch the Future Council Operating model	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Develop and implement the strategic and directorate transformation programmes to support delivery of the Transformation Strategy and Future Council Operating Model	Blue	Completed Quarter 4 - transformation programme approved by Cabinet and published.
	Attract and retain an excellent workforce through effective approaches to recruitment and retention.	• Launch the new Workforce Strategy incorporating our updated values through a planned programme of staff engagement	Blue	Completed Quarter 1
		• Conduct the employee survey	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Deliver the employee survey action plan	Blue	Completed Quarter 3
		• Report the revised employee engagement score	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
	Work collaboratively with our residents, communities and businesses to achieve the best results together.	• Develop and agree the implementation plan to deliver the strategy	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Develop the new customer standards	Blue	Completed Quarter 4
		• Review the top 10 high volume customer 'journeys' to streamline and improve the end to end process and experience	Blue	Over 10 customer journeys have been reviewed and improvements implemented. Further work around customer journey and experience to be aligned to the new customer target operating model.
		• Review the council website and microsites to ensure that the information is accessible and relevant	Blue	Council website has been reviewed as part of the implementation of a new CMS (Content Management System) platform and work will continue in 25/26.
		• Develop a draft Town and Parish Charter	Blue	Completed Quarter 4
		• Charter ratified by Town and Parish Councils	Blue	Completed Quarter 4 - Herefordshire councils charter approved at April 25 Parish Summit.
		• Recommence the Parish Summits	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Review and make recommendations for improving communications with Town and Parish Councils following the first Parish Summit	Blue	Completed Quarter 2
		• Roll out phase 1 of Microsoft 365 to ensure the workforce have the latest version of Microsoft tools	Red	Roll out has progressed through 24/25 with staff upgrades due to be completed by end of April and councillor upgrades by end of May 25.
		• Full review of the council website	Blue	The council website has been reviewed and we are now implementing a new CMS (Content Management System) platform.
		• Implement a new telephony system	Red	Project to implement a new telephony system is underway and due to complete in Q1 25/26.
		• Upgrade the online and telephone payment function	Red	This is aligned to the implementation of the new telephony system and will be part of the phase 2 of the above project. The move to the new CMS platform will be completed in Q2 25/26 and an upgrade of the online payments will form part of this work.
		• Increase digital functionality in customer services, voice automation and Microsoft co-pilot capabilities	Red	This objective is being delivered through the new customer and digital programme and will continue into 25/26.
		• Review and upgrade of our key software systems to be more efficient and fit for the future in order to support our statutory services	Blue	This is an ongoing piece of work as and when systems become end of life or the current contract is due to expire.
	Strengthen the council's strategy ensuring alignment for delivering the future vision	• Review the council's strategic plans and alignment to the Herefordshire Council Plan	Blue	Completed quarter 4 - schedule of key policy review in place. Each key strategic document will be updated in line with the council plan and strategic ambition for the future at point of update.
		• Implement business service planning across the directorates to align to the Herefordshire Council plan	Blue	Completed quarter 4 - new service planning template developed with leadership group development workshop scheduled for May.
	Build a data and performance rich culture to inform decisions, improve efficiency and manage demand	• Agree and deliver a development plan for improved performance reporting across the organisation	Blue	Completed Quarter 4
		• Develop and implement a Data and Intelligence Strategy to inform decision making, improve efficiency and manage demand more effectively	Blue	Completed Quarter 4

Objectives	THIS YEAR WE WILL....	Key Milestones to Deliver	RAG	Remarks
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a Corporate Risk Strategy to improve the process for managing corporate and directorate risks	Blue	Completed - an update on the Revised Risk Strategy was presented to Audit & Governance Committee in March 25 and the Strategy will be formally approved by Cabinet at the meeting in June 25.

Key

Completed

Rolled over to 2025/26

Discontinued due to change of priority/ circumstance

Delivery timescale changed due to other interdependent activity



Title of report: Q4 2024/25 Budget Report

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 5 June 2025

Cabinet Member: Cabinet member finance and corporate services

Report by: S151 Officer

Report Author: Director of Finance (S151 Officer)

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To report the provisional financial outturn position for 2024/25 for revenue and capital budgets, subject to external audit. The 2024/25 outturn shows a net underspend of £0.5 million after the use of reserves and implementation of recovery plan actions.

Recommendation(s)

That: Cabinet

- a) review the financial outturn for 2024/25, as set out in the appendices A-E, and identifies any additional actions to be considered to achieve future improvements; and
- b) agree the transfer of the reported underspend of £0.5 million to increase the General Fund Balance.

Alternative options

1. Cabinet may choose to review financial performance more or less frequently; or request alternative actions to address any identified areas of variance from budget, including referral to the relevant scrutiny committee.

Key considerations

Revenue Outturn

2. 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.
3. This report presents the outturn underspend position for 2024/25 of £0.5 million (0.2% of budget) after the use of reserves and recovery actions implemented by management during the year. Detailed explanations for variances from budget are set out in Appendix A, by Directorate and Service Area.
4. In November 2024, Cabinet approved the transfer of £11.0 million from the Business Rates risk reserve to establish a Budget Resilience Reserve to mitigate against in-year cost pressures. The outturn position assumes a transfer of £4.0 million from the Budget Resilience Reserve, applied to expenditure in adult social care and temporary accommodation budgets in the Community Wellbeing Directorate in 2024/25.
5. This reduces the reserve balance from £11.0 million to £7.0 million at 31 March 2025. The Earmarked Reserves and General Balances Policy Statement 2025/26, reviewed by Cabinet in January 2025, confirms that this balance will be carried forward at 31 March 2025 to manage future emerging risks and in-year budgetary pressures over the medium term period.
6. It is recommended that the £0.5 million underspend for the year ended 31 March 2025 is transferred to increase the General Fund Balance from £9.6 million to £10.1 million.
7. The General Fund Balance, expressed as a percentage of the council's net revenue expenditure, is a key measure of the council's financial resilience. The General Fund Balance was last increased in the year ended 31 March 2022 from £9.1 million to £9.6 million. At £10.1 million, the General Fund represents 4.4% of net revenue expenditure in 2025/26 and represents 2.3 weeks of spend.
8. The Children & Young People Directorate budget delivered an underspend of £2.8 million in 2025/26 and planned savings of £2.3 million have been delivered in full. The budget amendment, approved in February 2024, allocated additional budget of £2.3 million to the Directorate to mitigate against non-delivery of savings.
9. As savings have been delivered in full, the additional budget has not been used in 2024/25 and is presented as an underspend which contributes to the overall underspend position for the year as noted in Table 1: 2024/25 Revenue Outturn below. It is proposed that this budget is not returned to reserves (£1.3 million Financial Resilience Reserve, £0.9 million Care Market Costs) in the year ended 31 March 2025.

10. The revenue outturn position for 2024/25 by Directorate, is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: 2024/25 Revenue Outturn

2024/25 Revenue Outturn			
	Revenue Budget £m	Outturn £m	Variance £m
Community Wellbeing	76.2	77.8	1.6
Children & Young People	59.7	56.9	(2.8)
Economy & Environment	26.7	25.3	(1.4)
Corporate Services	22.2	23.9	1.7
SEN&Home to School Transport	9.3	12.7	3.4
Directorate Total	194.1	196.6	2.5
Central	16.4	15.7	(0.7)
Sub-Total	210.5	212.3	1.8
C&YP Budget Amendment	2.3	-	(2.3)
Total	212.8	212.3	(0.5)

Delivery of Savings

11. 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. As at 31 March 2025, £10.9 million (56%) of the approved savings have been delivered.
12. Where savings have not been delivered recurrently in 2024/25, a focused review of the original proposals and planned activity has been undertaken and revised savings plans have been developed, where appropriate, to confirm activity to deliver savings in 2025/26.
13. The revised savings plans will be approved as part of Directorate Savings Boards and Budget Boards in 2025/26 and delivery will be monitored robustly against approved targets as part of monthly routine budget monitoring arrangements.
14. The status of individual savings plans is included at Appendix D; a summary by Directorate is noted in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Delivery of Savings 2024/25

	Approved Savings £m	Delivered £m	Not delivered £m
Community & Wellbeing	3.2	2.4	0.8
Children & Young People	2.3	2.3	-
Economy & Environment	3.3	2.8	0.5
Corporate Services	2.8	1.2	1.6
Council-wide Savings	7.9	2.2	5.7
Total	19.5	10.9	8.6
	100%	56%	44%

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

15. The cumulative DSG deficit is accounted for as an unusable reserve on the council's Balance Sheet, as permitted via statutory instrument, which will remain in place until 31 March 2026. This enables all local authorities to ring-fence the DSG deficit from the overall financial position in the statutory accounts. Beyond the period of the statutory override, the expectation is that any balance on the DSG Unusable Reserve will transfer back to the council's total Earmarked Reserves.
16. On 1 April 2024, the cumulative deficit brought forward was £6.1 million. The outturn position for 2025/26 is an overspend of £13.9 million in 2024/25. This increases the council's cumulative DSG deficit to £20.0 million at 31 March 2025. A deficit budget of £20.2 million has been approved for 2025/26; if expenditure is contained within the approved budget, the cumulative DSG deficit will total £40.2 million by 31 March 2026 which is the end of the statutory override period.
17. The Earmarked Reserves and General Balances Policy Statement 2025/26 reported to Cabinet in January 2025 highlighted forecast Earmarked Reserve balances (excluding Schools' balances) of £45.7 million at 31 March 2026. If reserves are required to support the council's financial position in 2025/26, there will be insufficient Earmarked Reserves to mitigate the cumulative deficit balance at 31 March 2026.
18. The risk to the council's overall financial position once the override period ends is being monitored alongside the assessment of the adequacy of the council's reserves, as part of the council's medium term financial strategy. It should be noted that this issue is a major concern amongst local authorities nationally.
19. Herefordshire, like many other local authorities, continues to experience increases in demand which are not met by corresponding increases in funding. This is a significant risk across local government and the number of authorities with significant DSG deficits is increasing. The council continues to work with the Department of Education, Local Government Association and other local authorities to seek clarification on the position once the statutory instrument expires and a sustainable funding strategy for the High Needs budget.
20. Measures to contain the deficit and mitigate future cost and demand pressures will be managed by the Service through the DSG Deficit Management Plan and the financial impact of agreed mitigations will be monitored and reported throughout the year as part of the council's routine budget monitoring processes.

Capital Outturn

21. The 2024/25 approved capital budget of £160.0 million has been revised to £97.0 million. The revised capital budget includes £15.3 million of unspent project budgets brought forward from 2023/24, approved movements of £0.3 million, £4.1 million additional grants and a reduction of £82.7 million reprofiled into future years, all of which are detailed at the bottom of Appendix B Table b. A summary breakdown is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Revised Capital budget 2024/25 to 2027/28

	2024/25 Budget £m	2025/26 Budget £m	2026/27 Budget £m	2027/28 Budget £m	Total £m
February 2024 Council Approved Budget	160.0	50.8	19.2	-	230.0
Re-profile Budget	(82.7)	55.3	20.1	7.3	0.0
Other Approved Movements	0.3	2.5	-	-	2.8
23/24 Carry Forward	15.3	-	-	-	15.3
Additional Grant	4.1	31.8	22.4	20.4	78.7
Revised Capital Budget	97.0	140.4	61.7	27.7	326.8

22. The final spend position is £74.1 million which represents an underspend of £22.9 million against a budget of £97.0 million; an increase in underspend of £5.6 million from the position reported at Quarter 3. Full details for each project are in Appendix B, Table a. This underspend consists of £5.2 million projects that have delivered below the project budget and £17.7 million in respect of project budgets to be rolled forward for delivery 2025/26 (£11.7 million) and 2026/27 (£6.0 million). The full capital programme analysed by project for current and future years can be seen in detail by Appendix B Table b.

Community impact

23. In accordance with the accepted code of corporate governance, the council must ensure that it has an effective financial control framework to support delivery of services within the agreed budget. The council is accountable for how it uses the resources under its stewardship, including accountability for outputs and outcomes achieved. In addition, the council has an overarching responsibility to serve the public interest in adhering to the requirements of legislation and government policies.

Environmental Impact

24. The council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
25. This report is to review the financial outturn at Quarter 3 of 2024/25 so will have minimal environmental impacts, however consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the council's Environmental Policy.

Equality duty

26. 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.
27. The mandatory equality impact screening checklist has been completed for this activity, and it has been found to have no impact for equality.

Legal implications

28. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Risk management

29. The risks associated with the council's business are recorded on the relevant service risk register and escalated in accordance with the council's Performance Management Framework and Risk Management Plan. The highest risks, i.e. those scoring greater than 16 after controls, are escalated to the council's Corporate Risk Register.

Resource Implications

30. These recommendations have no direct financial implications, however cabinet may wish to consider how money is utilised in order to meet the council's objectives.

Consultees

31. None in relation to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A - Revenue outturn

Appendix B – Capital outturn

Appendix C - Treasury management outturn

Appendix D - Savings delivery

Appendix E – Earmarked Reserve balances

Background papers

None Identified

Appendix A: 2024/25 Revenue Outturn Quarter 4 (March 2025)

2024/25 Revenue Outturn at Quarter 4 (March 2025)			
	2024/25 Revenue Budget	Q4 Outturn	Q4 Outturn Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Community Wellbeing	76.2	77.8	1.6
Children & Young People	59.7	56.9	(2.8)
Economy & Environment	36.0	38.0	2.0
Corporate Services	22.2	23.9	1.7
Directorate Total	194.1	196.6	2.5
Central	16.4	15.7	(0.7)
Sub-Total	210.5	212.3	1.8
C&YP Budget Amendment	2.3	-	(2.3)
Total	212.8	212.3	(0.5)

Community Wellbeing	2024/25 Approved Revenue Budget £'000	Q4 Outturn £'000	Q4 Outturn Variance £'000
Director and Community Services	(14,634)	(10,853)	3,781
Adult Social Care and Housing	72,824	75,128	2,304
All Ages Commissioning	16,961	16,630	(331)
Public Health	1,082	879	(203)
Directorate Total	76,233	81,784	5,551
Budget Resilience Reserve	-	(4,000)	(4,000)
Total	76,233	77,784	1,551

Key variances from budget (> £250k) at Q4:

£2.4m overspend - 2024/25 and b/fwd 2023/24 Savings Plans considered 'at risk' of delivery

£2.3m overspend - Increase in demand for adult social care - Residential and Homecare

£1.0m overspend - General Fund Housing - Temporary Accommodation

£0.7m overspend - Discharge to Assess Pressures

£4.0m utilisation from the Budget Resilience Reserve

£0.6m utilisation from the Social Care Resilience Reserve

£0.3m utilisation from the Public Health Reserve

Children & Young People	2024/25 Approved Revenue Budget £'000	Q4 Outturn £'000	Q4 Outturn Variance £'000
Central Children Directorate Costs	923	604	(319)
Education Skills & Learning	3,685	3,510	(175)
Performance Quality, Assurance & Safeguarding	8,133	7,219	(914)
Safeguarding and Family Support	46,915	45,602	(1,313)
Sub Total	59,656	56,935	(2,721)
Supplementary Budget Approval	2,303	0	(2,303)
Directorate Total	61,959	56,935	(5,024)

Key variances from budget (> £250k) at Q4:

£0.5m overspend - Looked After Children - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

£0.2m overspend - Special Guardianship Allowance

£3.6m underspend - Net underspend - reduced headcount of Staff and Agency/Interims

£0.7m underspend - Looked After Children - Agency and In-house Foster Care

£0.6m underspend - Looked After Children - Supported Accommodation

£0.3m underspend - Short Breaks

£0.2m underspend - Residential Placements

£0.2m underspend - reduced Legal costs - funded from provision

£0.1m utilisation from the Public Health Reserve

£2.3m Supplementary Budget Approval - Delivery of 3 Year Plan

Economy & Environment	2024/25 Approved Revenue Budget £'000	Q4 Outturn £'000	Q4 Outturn Variance £'000
Director Management	55	615	560
Environment, Highways and Waste	22,630	20,168	(2,462)
Strategic Assets	3,217	3,002	(215)
Economy and Growth	794	1,566	772
Sub-Total	26,696	25,351	(1,345)
SEN & Home to School Transport	9,348	12,671	3,323
Directorate Total	36,044	38,022	1,978

Key variances from budget (> £250k) at Q3:

£2.2m overspend - SEND Transport

£1.1m overspend - Home to School Transport (HTST)

£1.3m overspend - Development Planning Control Income

£0.7m overspend - 2024/25 and b/fwd 2023/24 Savings Plans considered 'at risk' of delivery

£1.2m underspend - Reduced Waste Disposal contract costs

£0.6m underspend - Reduced Energy costs

£0.4m underspend - Economic Development

£0.2m underspend - Market Towns

£0.2m underspend - Car Parking

£0.2m underspend - Strategic Assets

£0.2m underspend - Public Realm costs

£0.2m utilisation from the Public Health Reserve

Corporate Services	2024/25 Approved Revenue Budget £'000	Q4 Outturn £'000	Q4 Outturn Variance £'000
Transformation and Strategy Services	7,600	9,454	1,854
Governance & Legal	5,639	5,373	(266)
HR & Organisational Development	1,866	1,806	(60)
Strategic Finance	7,063	7,265	202
Directorate Total	22,168	23,898	1,730

Key variances from budget (> £250k) at Q2:

£1.6m overspend - 2024/25 and b/fwd 2023/24 Saving Plans considered 'at risk' of delivery

£0.5m overspend - Project Management Office

£0.3m overspend - External Audit Fees

£0.6m underspend - Application of flexible capital receipts to fund transformation

Central	2024/25 Approved Revenue Budget £'000	Q4 Outturn £'000	Q4 Outturn Variance £'000
Central Total	16,352	15,700	(652)

Key variances from budget (> £250k) at Q3:

£0.5m underspend - WME dividend received for 24/25

£0.2m underspend - interest received not utilised against unmet savings

Appendix B

Table A - 2024/25 Capital Programme Outturn

Table A - 2024/25 Capital Programme Outturn					2024/25				
Adjustments include 23/24 carry forwards and additional grants allocations	2024/25 Original Budgets £000s	Adjustments in Year £000s			Current Capital Budget £000s	Q3 Forecast £000s	Outturn £000s	Outturn Variance to Current Budget £000s	Reason for Forecast Variance to Current Capital Budget
		2023/24 C/Fwd	Reprofile Table C	Grant & Other changes Table B					
Disabled facilities grant	2,000	1,009	0	815	3,824	3,484	3,266	-558	Additional £340k Grant was allocated late in February and therefore there wasn't time to spend it by the end of March and there were some delays on construction works on some of the properties purchased using the SHAP grant.
Empty Property Investment & Development	0	893	-300	0	593	593	306	-287	The construction works on Blackfriars St have not commenced as estimated but the contract has now been awarded, and works will take place in 25/26
Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP)	455	0	0	460	915	915	896	-18	Completed under budget
Acquisition Fund for Housing Provision	0	0	0	2,500	2,500	250	111	-2,389	This is a fund to enable the Council to react quickly to opportunities, therefore the forecast will remain low until purchases come forward. The budget is not reprofiled to ensure its available in year.
Merton Meadow - Brownfield Land Release Fund	0	0	0	600	600	402	393	-207	Funded from a government grant (£2m). Re-profile due to slight delay in procuring and appointing master planners for the development. They are now contracted and have commenced work. Outline planning application to be submitted in the spring, to enable the flood alleviation scheme to commence in the autumn (in accordance with the requirements of the grant).
Swimming Pool Support Fund	0	0	0	83	83	83	79	-3	Completed under budget
Libraries Improvement Fund	0	0	-19	62	42	42	31	-11	Works to continue in 25/26

Stronger Towns Fund - Hereford Museum & Art Gallery Redevelopment	7,400	227	-6,228	0	1,399	1,056	874	-525	Due to the delay in appointing a contractor to advise on RIBA stage 4 (construction designs) and implement the construction phase (RIBA 5) subject to being within budget. The council has proactively engaged contractors at each stage. To date there has been limited interest in a design and build approach. We are at advance stage of discussions with a major contractor regarding a direct award via a framework.
Stronger Towns Library & Learning Centre relocation to Shirehall	2,611	350	-2,687	0	274	274	295	22	
Shirehall Improvement Works	3,000	0	-3,000	0	0	0	0	0	
Property Improvements in Care Homes	550	0		0	550	475	225	-325	The contingency won't be required, so should deliver under budget and some works were late starting so will complete early 2025/26.
Community Capital Grants Scheme	1,800	200	-1,880	0	120	0	4	-116	Scheme has been launched late, so no grants issued in year, but a small amount of spend on officer time.
Total Community Wellbeing Transformation Board	17,816	2,679	-14,114	4,519	10,900	7,573	6,481	-4,419	
Key Network Infrastructure (Core Data Centre Switches & Corporate Wi-Fi)	0	28	0	0	28	28	20	-8	Completed under budget
HARC SAN Lifecycle Replacement	370	0	0	-160	211	155	155	-56	Completed under budget
Data Centre Equipment Lifecycle Replacement	0	137	0	-100	37	37	16	-21	Completed under budget
Windows Server Upgrades	0	155	-36	0	119	119	119	-1	
Device and Ancillary kit replacement programme	365	-178	0	0	187	187	158	-30	Less laptops were purchased than forecast
M365 E5 Implementation	150	0	0	77	227	227	191	-36	Some upgrades were delayed until April so the budget will be carried forward to fund costs in 25/26

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Planning & Regulatory Services software	698	0	-28	0	670	200	3	-667	Due to the complexity of the procurement process and the broad scope of service areas involved, the process to appoint a new provider has been more time consuming than originally anticipated
Contact Centre Telephony Replacement	0	0	0	82	82	82	15	-67	Work was not completed by March and therefore the budget will carry forward to 2025/26 for these works to complete
Wide Area Network (WAN) Replacement	0	0	0	286	286	286	165	-121	Work was not completed by March and therefore the budget will carry forward to 2025/26 for these works to complete
VMWare Host Replacement	248	0	0	0	248	187	182	-65	Completed under budget
Total IT & Transformation Delivery Board	1,831	142	-64	185	2,094	1,508	1,023	-1,071	
Schools Capital Maintenance Grant	3,902	976	-1,595	18	3,300	3,300	3,278	-22	
Peterchurch Area School Investment	3,175	-26	-2,478	0	671	500	666	-6	
Brookfield School Improvements	3,875	703	-1,748	0	2,830	1,892	1,759	-1,070	Due to a delay in completing contract with the contractor and the retained multi-disciplinary team together with a decision to re-programme one phase of the project, initial payments were delayed, however the programme is still on track overall to complete by the end of Oct 2025.
High Needs Grant	3,328	143	-2,971	0	500	500	398	-102	Lower costs than estimated and Hampton Dene project has been delayed.
Basic Needs Funding	5,000	-16	-3,984	0	1,000	300	345	-655	Budget reprofiled due to delays with the appointment of the main contractor. It should be noted that this does not affect the completion date for the works at Aylestone School.
Childcare Expansion Capital Grant 2023-24	0	0	-296	296	0	0	13	13	

Preliminary works to inform key investment need throughout the county	23	186	0	0	210	210	194	-15	Completed under budget
School Accessibility Works	2,172	189	-1,837	0	524	590	617	93	Some schemes have progressed sooner than expected so accelerated spend approved
C & F's S106	1,047	-13	1,105	301	2,440	1,444	1,488	-952	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kingstone High School Storage conversion and extension project (£318k) have been placed on hold while the school are re-evaluating their options Kingstone & Thruxton Primary School - Small Group / Intervention room and Forest School Upgrades is expected to complete (£22k) under budget Kingstone High School - Access Corridor Installation has a very large budget and after tendering is expecting an underspend of (£187k) Ashfield Park Office and Reception Area extension (£663k) has a longer build programme than anticipated and some spend has been moved into the next FY <p>The above project related delays/issues have prompted the reduction in forecast</p>
Work to Shirehall Annex (Care Leavers Base)	0	100	0	0	100	84	85	-15	Some furniture still needs to be purchased to complete the project, all construction works are complete.
Children's residential homes for 11- to 18-year-olds	424	0	-424	0	0	0	0	0	
Estates Capital Programme 2019/22	1,456	113	-331	0	1,238	1,238	806	-432	The car parks work came in under budget and the works at Shirehall has not progressed as early as expected.
Residual property works identified in the 2019 condition reports	650	129	0	0	779	429	344	-435	Underspend by £250k projects delivering under original budget or no longer required. There is one project that will complete by June 2025 to complete all this programme of works

Estates Building Improvement Programme 22-25	1,135	418	-1,053	0	500	400	474	-26	Underspend due to a combination of projects being delivered under budget and re-programming of works to account for receipt of statutory approvals and delivery during seasonal restrictions.
Estates Building Improvement Programme 2023-25	2,747	21	-1,768	0	1,000	906	799	-201	Underspend due to a combination of projects being delivered under budget and re-programming of works to account for receipt of statutory approvals and delivery during seasonal restrictions.
Estates Building Improvement Programme 2024-27	1,818	0	-918	0	901	820	689	-212	Underspend due to projects being delivered under budget and re-profiling of programme to focus on urgent works.
Building works from 2022 Condition Surveys	191	0	-181	0	10	2	4	-6	
Flexible Futures	0	110	0	0	110	110	89	-21	Completed under budget
Wye Valley Trust - Education Centre Investment	6,000	0	-6,000	0	0	0	0	0	
HWGTA - Development of Vocational Work Based Skills Investment	2,000	0	-2,000	0	0	0	0	0	
Green Homes Grant - Local Authority Delivery	0	40	0	0	40	1	1	-39	Project has delivered under budget
Home Upgrade Grant	4,646	0	0	0	4,646	4,125	3,628	-1,018	The underspend is based on the number of applications that have been received and can be delivered by March 2025. The grant budget is a 'ceiling' amount against which funds can be drawn down. Actual spend is always influenced by the type of applications coming forward and the resulting spend per property, which can only be estimated at the outset. A new scheme will continue in 25/26, following on from this current phase. There will be some works for surveys and agreement for some construction works to be carried out in April 2025 due to planning issues.

Employment Land & Incubation Space in Market Towns	10,000	98	-9,471	0	627	531	523	-104	Reflects a slight delay in finalising the RIBA stage 4 (construction designs) prior to seeking a contractor. Some changes are required to the highway's designs requiring a revision to the current planning approval. Contractor to be procured by April/ May and on site in summer 2025.
Leominster Heritage Action Zone	653	958		300	1,911	1,878	1,858	-53	Underspend relates to the £30k grant not claimed in 23/24 and project completing £23k under budget.
Gypsy & Traveller Pitch development	1,046	23	0	0	1,069	0	0	-1,068	Due to planning being refused a new business case will be required as an alternative plan is developed.
Total Growth Delivery Board	55,287	4,152	-35,951	915	24,404	19,259	18,057	-6,347	
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	15,466	0	0	0	15,466	15,466	15,466	0	
Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance & Biodiversity Net Gain	151	213	0	0	365	207	206	-159	Works completed under budget and no use of the contingency.
Public Realm Maintenance - Mitigating Risk on the Network	193	832	0	0	1,025	404	333	-691	Works completed under budget and no use of the contingency.
Additional Pothole Allocation 23/24 & 24/25	3,660	0	0	0	3,660	3,660	3,660	0	
Winter Resilience	740	44	435	0	1,219	1,175	1,178	-41	Completed under budget
Resurfacing Herefordshire Highways	5,000	0	0	0	5,000	5,000	4,919	-81	Some contingency budgets were not required but the budget will be rolled forward and spent in 25/26
Natural Flood Management	337	43	-104	0	276	276	280	4	
Highways Infrastructure Investment	6,835	1,335	0	0	8,170	8,170	7,354	-816	There were delays on the bridge works to be carried out by BBPL, the work will be carried out in 25/26
Public Realm Improvements for Ash Die Back	367	296	-118	0	544	526	562	17	
Traffic Signal Obsolescence Grant and Green Light Fund		0	-271	541	270	270	3	-267	Other works were prioritised over these works in 24/25, the work will progress in 2025/26.

Hereford City Centre Transport Package	5,755	420	-5,375	0	800	597	604	-196	Challenging and protracted negotiations with legal teams at Network Rail and Transport for Wales in connection with the Transport Hub have delayed the point of certainty at which a contractor can be appointed, which has prevented construction expenditure originally planned for Q4.
Hereford City Centre Improvements (HCCI)	300	603	0	0	903	560	560	-343	Project completed under budget mainly due to underspend on project management and lack of capital bids for shop front grants
Hereford ATMs and Super Cycle Highway	650	350	-711	0	289	0	0	-289	This budget represents match-funding to the Levelling Up South programme and so being delivered together. Budget profiling is to match LUF South as noted below.
Emergency Active travel Fund	0	31	0	0	31	31	31	0	
Active Travel Fund 4	150	98	0	0	248	121	76	-172	Underspend on the Barton Road element is to be re-allocated to Quiet Routes. Though agreed in principle previously, this re-allocation was only formalised by Active Travel England in late December and so the budget could not be re-profiled until confirmed.
Southern Link Road	2,200	800	-1,620	0	1,380	639	356	-1,024	The need to procure alternative professional services rather than utilising Public Realm contract has delayed the start of works meaning that less work will be undertaken this financial year than anticipated.
Stronger Towns Fund - Greening the City	300	-2	0	0	298	11	11	-288	This element of Stronger Towns funding represents match funding for the Great Western Way part of the Levelling Up programme, and so the budget is profiled to match. Previous in-year budget figures reflect the original ST grant timeline and could only be reprofiled when the Stronger Towns board formalised approval for delivery in 25/26 alongside LUF.

LUF - Active Travel Measures (north of river)	3,715	196	-3,053	0	858	459	541	-316	Changes to scope arising from the consultation phases, alongside internal reviews of delivery priorities have elongated the design period compared to what had originally been envisaged. This has moved construction phases into 25/26. A revised timeline on this basis has previously been agreed in principle with DfT, extending the delivery period to March 2026. However, it has not been possible to reprofile the budget until more recently without the Project Adjustment Request which formalises the agreement, and so previous in-year forecasts could not reflect the proposed carry-forward. The LUF North programme (Transport Hub) has also been impacted by the legal challenges and delays associated with Network Rail/Transport for Wales as noted under HCCTP above.
LUF - Active Travel Measures (south of river)	8,445	507	-5,029	0	3,923	335	289	-3,634	Comments as noted for LUF North
Integrated Wetlands	339	182	-616	591	497	375	197	-300	Much of the expenditure forecast for 24/25 related to the pilot scheme for school sewage treatment plant replacement, a new approach to phosphate mitigation. Natural England as a stakeholder raised a challenge to the way the pollution load from day pupils and boarders was being accounted for, which if justified risked making the scheme financially non-viable. A cautionary pause while the council's legal position was reviewed and ratified means that while the scheme is back on track, the main expenditure will now be in 25/26. Design for the Tarrington wetland remain on track but the land acquisition for the Dilwyn site did not take place in 2024/25 as expected.
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Capital Fund (LEVI)	300	124	-424	0	0	0	0	0	

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LEVI Pilot Fund Grant	0	0	-36	60	24	0	24	0	
Wye Valley National Landscape (previously AONB)	116	37	0	123	276	276	231	-45	Ring fenced grant to be carried forward for works to complete in 2025/26
Safer Streets 5	0	0	0	165	165	165	165	0	
Solar Photovoltaic Panels	1,007	64	-1,070	0	1	1	1	0	
Fastershire Broadband	2,508	272	0	-108	2,672	1,637	1,606	-1,066	Spend based on Gigaclear final claims for 24/25, all planned works have been delivered.
E & E's S106	4,045	1,223	-3,237	0	2,030	1,935	1,179	-852	CCG not claiming £280k income that is held for them. The property purchase in Ross was later than expected so the £250k conversion works will now take place in 25/26. Offsite Play and Open Space have under delivered by £260k on projects that were expected to complete.
Moving Traffic Enforcement Phase 2	119	25	0	0	144	0	0	-144	There is no plan to progress this project currently
Total Infrastructure Delivery Board	62,698	7,693	-21,229	1,372	50,534	42,297	39,832	-10,702	
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	845	103	0	0	948	935	946	-2	Majority of the grant was spent by March 2025
Waste	18,090	0	-11,393	0	6,697	6,697	6,323	-374	Phase 1 completed under budget
Rural Prosperity Fund	856	569	0	0	1,424	1,369	1,424	0	All the grant was spent by March 2025
Total Commissioning Delivery Board	19,790	671	-11,393	0	9,069	9,001	8,693	-375	

Total	157,422	15,338	-82,751	6,991	97,000	79,637	74,087	-22,914
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Projects delayed into 25/26, some with no decisions yet made on spend, others with delays in delivery.	-17,708
Project to deliver under budget, not spend full grant allocation or project not continuing.	-5,206
	-22,914

Table B – Overall Capital Programme position 2024/25

Scheme Name	Prior Years £000s	2024/25 budget £000s	2025/26 budget £000s	2026/27 budget £000s	2027/28 budget £000s	Total scheme budget £000s
Disabled facilities grant	0	3,824	2,200	2,200	2,200	10,424
Empty Property Investment & Development	0	593	600	0	0	1,193
Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme (SHAP)	455	915	0	0	0	1,370
Acquisition Fund for Housing Provision	0	2,500	2,500	0	0	5,000
Merton Meadow - Brownfield Land Release Fund	0	600	1,400	0	0	2,000
Swimming Pool Support Fund	0	83	0	0	0	83
Libraries Improvement Fund	0	42	19	0	0	62
Stronger Towns Fund - Hereford Museum & Art Gallery Redevelopment	2,008	1,399	5,690	10,000	53	19,150
Stronger Towns Library & Learning Centre relocation to Shirehall	45	274	2,063	624	0	3,005
Property Improvements in Care Homes	0	550	0	0	0	550
Community Capital Grants Scheme	0	120	1,530	350	0	2,000
Total Community Wellbeing Transformation Board	2,508	10,900	16,003	13,174	2,253	44,837
Key Network Infrastructure (Core Data Centre Switches & Corporate Wi-Fi)	527	28	0	0	0	555
HARC SAN Lifecycle Replacement	1	211	0	0	0	212
Data Centre Equipment Lifecycle Replacement	192	37	0	0	0	229
Windows Server Upgrades	175	119	36	0	0	330
Device and Ancillary kit replacement programme	0	187	415	548	0	1,150
M365 E5 Implementation	300	227	43	0	0	570
Planning & Regulatory Services software	0	670	726	0	0	1,396
Contact Centre Telephony Replacement	0	82	0	0	0	82
Wide Area Network (WAN) Replacement	0	286	0	0	0	286

VMWare Host Replacement	0	248	0	0	0	248
Total IT & Transformation Delivery Board	1,196	2,094	1,220	548	0	5,058
Schools Capital Maintenance Grant	0	3,300	2,795	1,200	1,200	8,495
Peterchurch Area School Investment	288	671	6,595	3,299	0	10,853
Brookfield School Improvements	422	2,830	2,570	0	0	5,822
High Needs Grant	85	500	2,000	4,318	0	6,903
Basic Needs Funding	215	1,000	8,000	7,068	0	16,284
Childcare Expansion Capital Grant 2023-24	0	0	296	0	0	296
Preliminary works to inform key investment need throughout the county	306	210	0	0	0	516
School Accessibility Works	141	524	1,143	693	0	2,503
C & F's S106	0	2,440	2,369	345	0	5,153
Work to Shirehall Annex (Care Leavers Base)	0	100	0	0	0	100
Shirehall Improvement Works	0	0	2,220	780	0	3,000
Children's residential homes for 11- to 18-year-olds	0	0	424	0	0	424
Estates Capital Programme 2019/22	4,313	1,238	331	0	0	5,882
Residual property works identified in the 2019 condition reports	613	779	0	0	0	1,392
Estates Building Improvement Programme 22-25	1,453	500	1,053	0	0	3,007
Estates Building Improvement Programme 2023-25	759	1,000	1,768	0	0	3,527
Estates Building Improvement Programme 2024-27	0	901	1,525	340	0	2,766
Building works from 2022 Condition Surveys	0	10	455	280	0	745
Flexible Futures	740	110	0	0	0	850
Wye Valley Trust - Education Centre Investment	0	0	6,000	0	0	6,000
HWGTA - Development of Vocational Work Based Skills Investment	0	0	2,000	0	0	2,000
Green Homes Grant - Local Authority Delivery	779	40	0	0	0	819
Home Upgrade Grant	0	4,646	0	0	0	4,646
Employment Land & Incubation Space in Market Towns	343	627	11,318	53	8,360	20,701

Leominster Heritage Action Zone	1,493	1,911	0	0	0	3,404
Gypsy & Traveller Pitch development	808	1,069	0	0	0	1,877
Total Growth Delivery Board	12,761	24,404	52,864	18,376	9,560	117,965
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	0	15,466	21,348	15,466	15,466	67,746
Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance & Biodiversity Net Gain	1,934	365	0	0	0	2,299
Public Realm Maintenance - Mitigating Risk on the Network	3,925	1,025	0	0	0	4,950
Additional Pothole Allocation 23/24 & 24/25	0	3,660	0	0	0	3,660
Winter Resilience	183	1,219	0	0	0	1,402
Resurfacing Herefordshire Highways	0	5,000	5,000	0	0	10,000
Natural Flood Management	274	276	373	350	0	1,274
Highways Infrastructure Investment	0	8,170	3,985	3,885	0	16,040
Public Realm Improvements for Ash Die Back	19	544	494	240	118	1,416
Traffic Signal Obsolescence Grant and Green Light Fund	0	270	271	0	0	541
Hereford City Centre Transport Package	38,304	800	7,875	0	0	46,979
Hereford City Centre Improvements (HCCI)	5097	903	0	0	0	6,000
Hereford ATMs and Super Cycle Highway	0	289	711	0	0	1,000
Emergency Active travel Fund	88	31	0	0	0	119
Active Travel Fund 4	58	248	0	0	0	306
Active Travel Fund 5	0	0	99	0	0	99
Southern Link Road	0	1,380	3,620	5,300	0	10,300
Stronger Towns Fund - Greening the City	105	298	0	0	0	404
LUF - Active Travel Measures (north of river)	555	858	3,053	0	0	4,466
LUF - Active Travel Measures (south of river)	244	3,923	5,029	0	0	9,197
Integrated Wetlands	2,479	497	1,686	99	0	4,760
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Capital Fund (LEVI)	0	0	424	400	300	1,124
LEVI Pilot Fund Grant	0	24	96	0	0	120
Wye Valley National Landscape (previously AONB)	173	276	0	0	0	449

Safer Streets 5	0	165	0	0	0	165
Solar Photovoltaic Panels	1,063	1	535	535	0	2,134
Fastershire Broadband	30,958	2,672	0	0	0	33,630
E & E's S106	0	2,030	3,904	3,356	26	9,315
Moving Traffic Enforcement Phase 2	0	144	0	0	0	144
Total Highways Maintenance Delivery Board	85,461	50,534	58,503	29,630	15,910	240,038
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	187	948	401	0	0	1,536
Waste	0	6,697	11,393	0	0	18,090
Rural Prosperity Fund	281	1,424	0	0	0	1,706
Total Commissioning Delivery Board	469	9,069	11,795	0	0	21,332

Total	102,394	97,000	140,385	61,728	27,723	429,230
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	2024/25 Budget £000s	2025/26 Budget £000s	2026/27 Budget £000s	2027/28 Budget £000s	Total
February 2024 Council Approved Budget	160,033	50,791	19,187	-	230,011
Reprofile Budget	-82,751	55,302	20,092	7,357	0
Other approved Movements	266	2,543	-	-	2,809
23/24 Carry Forwards	15,338	-	-	-	15,338
Additional Grants	4,114	31,748	22,449	20,366	78,677
Revised Capital Budget	97,000	140,385	61,728	27,723	326,836

Grant Additions since February Council						
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	£000s
DfE - Childcare Expansion Capital Grant 2023-24		296				296
WMP - Safer Streets 5 Grant & Town Council Cont		165				165
DLUHC - Phosphate Mitigation Grant		591	1,071	99		1,760
DfE - additional Grant for Brookfield School			822			822
WMCA - LEVI Pilot Grant		60	60			120
DfE - High Needs Grant Increase			2,847			2,847
DfT - TSOG and Green Light Fund Grant		541				541
DfE - Schools Maintenance Grant		18				18
DLUHC - SHAP Grant		460				460
Sport England - Swimming Pool Support Fund		83				83
Libraries Improvement Fund Grants		62				62
DLUHC - DFG 24/25 additional grant		475				475
DfE - Schools Maintenance Grant 25/26 to 27/28			1,200	1,200	1,200	3,600
DLUHC - DFG 25/26 to 27/28			2,200	2,200	2,200	6,600
DfT - LTP Grant 25/26 to 27/28			15,466	15,466	15,466	46,398
C&F S106 Income		301		1,734		2,035
E&E S106 Income				1,000	1,500	2,500
Arts Council Grant for Museum Project				750		750
DLUHC - Brownfield Land Release Fund		600	1,400			2,000
DEFRA - Wye Valley National Landscape		123				123
MHCLG - RS15 Grant			300			300
MHCLG - Additional 24/25 DFG Grant		340				340
DfT - Additional 25/26 LTP Grant			5,882			5,882
DfT - Active Travel Fund 5 Grant			99			99
MHCLG - UKSPS 25/26 Grant			401			401
		4,114	31,748	22,449	20,366	78,677

Other Movements		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	£000s
LHAZ additional budget approved at council		300	0	0	0	300
Acquisition Fund for Housing Provision approved at Council		2,500	2,500	0	0	5,000
M365 Project funded from reserves		77	43			120
Removal of Maylords Library Project		(2,611)				(2,611)
		266	2,543	0	0	2,809
Total Grants and other movements		4,381	34,291	22,449	20,366	81,486



APPENDIX C TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2024/25

Introduction

- 1.1 Treasury Management is the management of the council's borrowing, investments and cash flows, including its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.
- 1.2 The CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Code of Practice for Treasury Management 2021 recommends that members be updated on treasury management activities at least quarterly. The Local Government Act 2003 also requires that the council produce an annual review of treasury management activities comparing actual activity during the year with the Treasury Management Strategy approved prior to the start of the year.

Economic Context

- 2.1 The final quarter of the year saw:
 - Gross Domestic Produce is low at 0.1% for the final quarter of the year, giving 1.1% overall growth for the financial year.
 - Unemployment is currently 4.5%, with annual wage inflation at 6%.
 - Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation has increased in the last quarter of the financial year to 3% in January, 2.8% in February and 2.6% in March.
 - Borrowing has become more expensive over 2024/25, Gilt yields rose in the Autumn and have remained elevated.
- 2.2 In March, the Bank of England voted to keep interest rates unchanged at 4.5% and suggested that further reductions would be gradual. The latest projections from our treasury management advisors suggest the bank rate will continue to decrease in a cut and hold pattern, falling to 3.5% at the end of the 2025/26 financial year.

Investments

3.1 At 31 March 2025, the council held investments as shown in table 1.

Table 1 Investment Portfolio

Treasury investments	Term	Maturity date	Interest rate	Amount invested £m
Instant Access Money Market Funds:				
Federated	N/A	N/A	4.53%	10.00
Aberdeen Standard	N/A	N/A	4.53%	10.00
Invesco	N/A	N/A	4.53%	7.00
CCLA	N/A	N/A	4.50%	4.61
95 Day Notice Bank Accounts:				
Barclays (ESG green deposits)	N/A	16/06/2025	4.40%	5.00
Fixed Term Deposits:				
Central Bedfordshire Council	181 days	20/05/2025	5.20%	5.00
Total treasury investments			Average 4.59%	41.61

3.2 The council applies the credit worthiness service provided by MUFG Corporate Markets (formerly Link). This service employs a modelling approach utilising credit ratings from three main credit rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's). This modelling approach combines credit ratings, credit watches and credit outlooks in a weighted scoring system to which MUFG allocate a series of colour coded bands with suggested maximum durations for investments. These are detailed in the Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25 as approved by Council in February 2024.

3.3 The council has earned interest on its investments as shown in table 2. There is a revenue budget of £0.5 million for 2024/25m resulting in an underspend of £2.6 million within the Central budget line.

Table 2: Interest earned

Month	Average amount invested £m	Average rate of interest earned	Amount of interest earned £m
Apr 24	54.6	5.31%	0.221
May 24	61.0	5.27%	0.273
Jun 24	64.0	5.26%	0.276
Jul 24	76.2	5.23%	0.339
Aug 24	75.4	5.06%	0.324
Sep 24	68.5	5.01%	0.282
Oct 24	69.7	4.97%	0.294
Nov 24	71.6	4.82%	0.284
Dec 24	60.5	4.79%	0.246
Jan 25	61.5	4.76%	0.249
Feb 25	49.8	4.66%	0.178
Mar 25	42.8	4.59%	0.167
Total			3.133

3.4 In addition to the investment income, the council earns interest on the provision of loan finance to the waste disposal PFI provider. This has generated loan interest of £1.9 million in 2024/25 and has been credited to the waste reserve.

Borrowing

- 4.1 The council can only borrow up to its Authorised Borrowing Limit which represents the affordable limit determined in compliance with the Local Government Act 2003. It is the maximum amount of debt that the authority can legally owe. The authorised limit provides headroom over and above the operational boundary for unusual cash movements. The Authorised Borrowing Limit for external borrowing for 2024/25 is £350m which was approved in the Treasury Management Strategy.
- 4.2 At 31 March 2025, the council held long-term borrowing of £138.8m; this includes a new long-term loan of £25m which has been secured during the financial year (20-year repayment term at 5.44% interest). The council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), this is the capital expenditure that has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources. The council's CFR at 31 March 2025 is £326.0m, which demonstrates that the Council has significant internal borrowing when compared to the actual long-term borrowing (excluding PFI liabilities).
- 4.3 The current capital financing budget position is shown in table 3. The underspend has arisen from utilisation of internal borrowing over external borrowing, alongside a slippage in the capital investment budget spend.

Table 3: Summary of borrowing budget

	Budget £m	Outturn £m	(Surplus)/deficit £m
Minimum Revenue Position (MRP)	9.7	9.2	(0.5)
Interest Payable on loans	5.8	4.8	(1.0)
Total	15.5	14.0	(1.5)

Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits

- 5.1 During the quarter ended 31 March 2025, the council has operated within the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25. Actual values for quarter 4 are shown in table 4.
- 5.2 Treasury indicators for quarter 4 are shown as actual values as at 31 March 2025, e.g. for PI4 (authorised limit for external debt), the actual value of external debt as at 31 March 2025 of £186.6 million is shown against a Treasury Indicator limit of £420.0 million as approved in the Treasury Management Strategy. This means that actual debt is lower than the approved limit and the council is operating within agreed boundaries.
- 5.3 Prudential indicators (PI) for quarter 4 are shown as actual outturns for the financial year 2024/25, e.g. for PI1 (capital expenditure), the outturn spend for the financial year 2024/25 of £74.1 million is shown against a Prudential indicator value approved in the Treasury Management Strategy of £160.0 million. This means that capital expenditure for 2024/25 outturn is lower than was budgeted for at the start of the year.

Table 4: Prudential and Treasury indicators for 2024/25 as at 31 March 2025

Ref	Treasury indicators	Description	2024/25 Budget/Limit £000	Actual as at 31 March 2025 £000	Compliance result
PI4	Authorised limit for external debt	To set an authorised limit for its gross external debt for the forthcoming financial year (includes PFI liabilities)	420,000	186,600	Within limit
PI5	Operational boundary for external debt	To set an operational boundary for its gross external debt for the forthcoming financial year (includes PFI liabilities)	400,000	186,600	Within limit
PI8	Upper limit for principal sums invested over 364 days	To set an upper limit for total principal sums invested over 364 days	5,000	NIL	Within limit
PI7	Maturity structure upper and lower limits:	To set upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of its borrowing			
	Under 12 months		0-10%	5%	Within limit
	12 months to 2 years		0-10%	6%	Within limit
	2 to 5 years		0-25%	8%	Within limit
	5 to 10 years		0-35%	22%	Within limit
	10 years and above		0-80%	59%	Within limit
Ref	Prudential indicators	Description	2024/25 Budget £000	2024/25 Actual £000	Compliance result
PI1	Capital expenditure	A reasonable estimate of the total capital expenditure that it plans to incur during the forthcoming financial year	160,033	74,078	Under budget
PI2	Capital financing requirement (CFR)	A reasonable estimate of the total capital financing requirement at the end of the forthcoming financial year	349,974	325,964	Under budget
PI3	Gross debt and CFR	To ensure that the total gross debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement	52%	43%	Below 100%, within limit
PI6	Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	To estimate the proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream for the forthcoming financial year	7%	7%	Under budget
PI9	Ratio of net commercial and service investments income to net revenue stream	To estimate the proportion of net income from commercial and service investments to net revenue stream for the forthcoming financial year	1%	1%	Low reliance on this income

Appendix D: Progress against 2024/25 approved Savings as at 31 March 2025 (Quarter 4)

Total Savings of £19.5m for 2024/25 were approved by Council on 9 February 2024.

The outturn of the delivered approved savings at 31 March 2025 (Quarter 4) is noted below:

Directorate	Approved Savings	Delivered	Not Delivered
	£m	£m	£m
Community Wellbeing	3.2	2.4	0.8
Children & Young People	2.3	2.3	-
Economy & Environment	3.3	2.8	0.5
Corporate Services	2.8	1.2	1.6
Council-wide	7.9	2.2	5.7
Total Savings	19.5	10.9	8.6
	100%	56%	44%

At 31 March 2025 (Quarter 4), £10.9 million (56%) of the 2024/25 £19.5 million savings were delivered, and £8.6 million (44%) were outstanding.

The status of individual Directorate savings as per Appendix B of the Council Report approved on 9 February 2024, is shown in Annex 1 below.

Annex 1: Status of delivery of approved savings at 31 March 2025 (Quarter 4)

Community Wellbeing 2024/25 Saving Targets Q2 Forecast	Target £'000	At Risk £'000	In Progress £'000	On Target £'000	Delivered Recurrent £'000
S1 (i) Workforce service review - reduce posts in Talk Community	353	-	-	-	353
S3 Delete vacant permanent posts not currently occupied	801	-	-	-	801
S4 Review of high cost packages in Adult Social Care	1,000	649	-	-	351
S5 Better utilisation of existing care contracts	200	200	-	-	-
S6 Reduction in non-care contract values	104	-	-	-	104
S7 Public Health Savings	211	-	-	-	211
S8 Maximise housing benefit claims	22	-	-	-	22
S9 Ensure correct pathways for funding of complex care	500	-	-	-	500
S10 Charge for welfare benefits support	5	-	-	-	5
Total Community Wellbeing	3,196	849	-	-	2,347
Children & Young People 2024/25 Saving Targets Q2 Forecast	Target £'000	At Risk £'000	In Progress £'000	On Target £'000	Delivered Recurrent £'000
S1 Reduce Children's High Cost Placements	959	-	-	-	959
S2 Reduce the number of Social Workers based on assumption of reduced demand	338	-	-	-	338
S3 From 1 October 2024 convert 30 posts from Agency to permanent	1,006	-	-	-	1,006
Total Children and Young People	2,303	-	-	-	2,303
Economy & Environment 2024/25 Saving Targets Q2 Forecast	Target £'000	At Risk £'000	In Progress £'000	On Target £'000	Delivered Recurrent £'000
S1 Delete vacant permanent posts not currently	340	-	-	-	340
S2 BBLP – Revision of Annual Plan works	450	-	-	-	450
S3 BBLP – Annual Efficiency Saving	250	-	-	-	250
S4 Reduced Energy Costs	580	-	-	-	580
S5 Changes to School Enforcement team	40	3	-	-	37
S6 Inflationary Increases in Fees and Charges	350	267	-	-	83

S7 Waste Collection Service	800	-	-	-	800
S8 Transfer of functions from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	250	-	-	-	150
S9 Stop using Scoot Highways System	20	-	-	-	20
S4 Transferred from C&YP SEN Transport Efficiencies	200	200	-	-	-
Total Economy and Environment	3,280	470	-	-	2,810
Corporate Services 2024/25 Saving Targets Q2 Forecast	Target £'000	At Risk £'000	In Progress £'000	On Target £'000	Delivered Recurrent £'000
S1 Governance & Legal Services: 50% reduction in locum budget	200	-	-	-	200
S2 Governance & Legal Services: 20% reduction in external legal budget	100	-	-	-	100
S3 Resources & Assurance: Implementation of Oxygen Finance solution	60	60	-	-	-
S4 Resources & Assurance: Reduction in mobile phone provider contract	170	109	-	-	61
S5 Resources & Assurance: automation of Council Tax and Business Rate processes using GovTech solution	100	100	-	-	-
S6 Reduction in Hoople SLA contract value and workforce service reviews	2,142	1,273	-	-	869
Total Corporate Services	2,772	1,542	-	-	1,230
Central Budget 2024/25 Saving Targets Q2 Forecast	Target £'000	At Risk £'000	In Progress £'000	On Target £'000	Delivered Recurrent £'000
S1 Mutual Early Resignation Scheme 2024 (MERS24)	4,500	2,375	-	-	2,136
S2 Transformation: Thrive Programme Savings	2,600	2,541	-	-	59
S3 Transformation: Target Operating Model	815	815	-	-	-
Total Central Budget	7,915	5,731	-	-	2,195
Total All Directorates 2024/25 Savings Targets	19,466	8,592	-	-	10,885



EARMARKED RESERVES AND GENERAL FUND BALANCES 01 APRIL 2024 TO 31 MARCH 2025

Reserve	01 April 2024 £m*	Transfers out £m	Transfers in £m	31 March 2025 £m
Business rates risk	(19.7)	11.0	(4.6)	(13.3)
Waste disposal	(6.8)	1.6	(1.9)	(7.1)
Budget resilience reserve	-	4.0	(11.0)	(7.0)
Enterprise zone business rates growth	(0.9)	0.2	(2.3)	(3.0)
Fastershire clawback	(0.5)	-	(2.2)	(2.7)
Financial resilience	(3.1)	1.3	(0.5)	(2.3)
Settlement monies	(2.8)	0.8	-	(2.0)
Whitecross school PFI	(1.8)	-	-	(1.8)
Public realm project	-	0.3	(1.9)	(1.6)
RNC campus	(1.0)	-	(0.2)	(1.2)
Unused grants carried forward	(17.3)	4.7	(5.4)	(18.0)
Other reserves individually under £1 million	(9.4)	7.9	(7.5)	(9.0)
Total reserves excluding schools	(63.3)	31.8	(37.5)	(69.0)
Schools' balances	(9.9)	-	(1.8)	(11.7)
Total earmarked reserves	(73.2)	31.8	(39.3)	(80.7)
General fund balance	(9.6)	-	(0.5)	(10.1)
Total earmarked reserves and general fund	(82.8)	31.8	(39.8)	(90.8)

*audited balances per the council's statutory accounts



Title of report: Risk Management Strategy

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 5 June 2025

Report by: Cabinet member finance and corporate services;

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

All Wards

Purpose

To approve the Risk Management Strategy and Corporate Risk Register.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The Risk Management Strategy 2025/26 and Risk Appetite Statement are approved by Cabinet; and**
- b) **The risks identified in the revised Corporate Risk Register are agreed as those of significant, strategic and cross-cutting importance to be managed and monitored in 2025/26.**

Alternative options

- 1. Cabinet may choose not to approve the Risk Management Strategy. This is not recommended as risk management is an integral part of the council's governance arrangements and decision-making processes and is fundamental to the successful delivery of strategic objectives.

Key considerations

- 2. Activity to review and update the council's risk management arrangements was undertaken in 2024/25 to update the Risk Management Strategy and strengthen the management and monitoring of risks across the council.

3. This activity has included feedback from the council's external risk management consultants, Corporate Leadership Team Risk Management workshops, facilitated by the council's Internal Auditor's Chief Technical Advisor for Risk and Head of Internal Audit, and engagement with Cabinet Members and Audit & Governance Committee.
4. A revised Risk Management Strategy has been completed, incorporating a new Risk Appetite Statement which defines the level of risk the council is willing to accept to deliver the priorities of the Herefordshire Council Plan 2024-28 and annual Delivery Plan (2025/26).
5. The Strategy sets out the approach and principles of risk management, outlining the council's risk appetite, risk management objectives and confirms the roles and responsibilities of elected Members and Officers across the council.
6. Risk management takes place across the council at Corporate, Directorate and Service levels and activity will continue in 2025/26 to review the council's risk management framework which outlines the processes and activities by which risks are identified, evaluated, managed, monitored and reported, in line with the revised Risk Management Strategy.

Community impact

7. Effective risk management is essential to the delivery of the priorities set out in the Council Plan. Specially, the Council plan commits the council to 'develop a Corporate Risk Strategy to improve the process for managing corporate and directorate risks'.

Environmental Impact

8. Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
9. Whilst this is a report for information and will have minimal environmental impacts, consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the council's Environmental Policy.

Equality duty

10. 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.
11. The mandatory equality impact screening checklist has been completed for this activity and it has been found to have no impact for equality. It is recognised that each identified individual corporate risk may have its own individual impacts on equalities or assessed as a risk due to its effect on equality. These are monitored as part of the ongoing individual service or project delivery.

Resource implications

12. There are no specific resource implications from the report itself.

Legal implications

13. Cabinet is responsible for approving the Risk Management Strategy.

Risk management

14. This is a report to approve the council's Risk Management Strategy and Corporate Risk Register.

Consultees

15. Regular updates on the development of the Risk Management Strategy and the council's approach to risk management arrangements have been provided to Audit & Governance Committee throughout 2024/25.

Appendices

- Appendix A Risk Management Strategy 2025/26
- Appendix B Corporate Risk Register 2025/26
- Appendix C Equality Impact Screening Checklist

Background papers

None identified.

Risk Management Strategy 2025/26

RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2025/26

Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 The Risk Management Strategy sets out how the council will effectively manage challenges and risks to delivering the priorities of the Herefordshire Council Plan 2024-28. The strategy aims to provide staff, elected members and partners with guidance to ensure there is an effective, robust and consistent framework for proportionate management of risk across the council.
- 1.2 It sets out the approach and principles of risk management, outlining the council's risk appetite, risk management objectives and confirming the roles and responsibilities across the council.
- 1.3 Risk management forms an integral part of the council's governance arrangements and decision-making processes and is fundamental to the successful delivery of strategic objectives. Effective risk management enables the council to make informed decisions in respect of challenges and risks within the boundaries of risk appetite, available resources and legislative and regulatory requirements and strengthens the council's ability to be agile to respond to challenges and opportunities.
- 1.4 This strategy has been prepared in accordance with the following guidance and regulatory frameworks:
 - Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015
 - The Orange Book (Management of Risk – Principles and Concepts) 2020 and Good Practice Guide: Risk Reporting
 - CIPFA/SoLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016
 - ISO 31000: 2018 Risk Management - Guidelines





Risk and Risk Management

Risk Definitions

- 2.1 Risk can be defined as the effect of uncertainty on objectives. For the council, risks represent threats, incidents or adverse events that prevent the achievement of the objectives of the Council Plan. Risk is typically expressed in terms of causes, potential events and their consequences.
- 2.2 The council accepts that risks are present across all services, operations, activities and in decision-making. Risks must be identified and evaluated in the context of the council's appetite for risk and risk management framework.
- 2.3 Risk management is the term used to describe the activities and methods designed and operated to manage risk and exercise internal control within the council. Risk management involves the identification, analysis and control of threats or events that adversely affect the achievement of the council's strategic and operational objectives. It also enables action to be taken to innovate and improve service provision.
- 2.4 The council's risk management framework outlines processes and activities by which risks are identified, evaluated, managed, monitored and reported.

Risk Categories

- 2.2 The categories of risk identified as part of the risk management framework are outlined in the table below. The Risk Appetite Statement is included at Appendix A and the level of risk appetite determined for each category of risk is set out at Appendix B.

Risk category	Risk definition
<p>Strategic Delivery (Council Plan Priorities)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>GROWTH  We will create the conditions to deliver sustainable growth across the county; attracting inward investment, building business confidence, creating jobs, enabling housing development and provide the right infrastructure.</p> <p>TRANSFORMATION  We will be an efficient council that embraces best practice, delivers innovation through technology and demonstrates value for money.</p>	<p>Risks that will prevent the timely delivery of priorities and objectives of the Council Plan 2024-2028 and supporting annual Delivery Plan.</p> <p>People: Risks arising from a failure to effectively support residents to live healthy lives in safe communities including failure to meet statutory responsibilities such as education services, children's safeguarding and social care, adult social care and corporate parenting responsibilities.</p> <p>Place: Risks arising from: failure to protect the environment and mitigate extreme weather conditions arising as a result of climate change, failure to deliver capital and major projects to expand infrastructure and develop cultural offering across the county.</p> <p>Growth: Risks arising from failure to support and enable business growth and investment within the county.</p> <p>Transformation: Risks arising from failure to deliver the council's transformation strategy and supporting plans to deliver required improvements and sustainable change across the organisation.</p>
<p>Legal & Compliance</p>	<p>Risks arising from a defective transaction, a claim being made (including a defence to a claim or a counterclaim) or some other legal event occurring that results in a liability or other loss, or a failure to take appropriate measures to meet legal or regulatory requirements or to protect assets (for example, intellectual property).</p>
<p>Financial</p>	<p>Risks arising from not managing finances in accordance with requirements and financial constraints resulting in poor returns from investments, failure to manage assets/liabilities or to obtain value for money from the resources deployed, and/or non-compliant financial reporting.</p>
<p>Governance</p>	<p>Risks arising from unclear plans, priorities, authorities and accountabilities, and/or ineffective or disproportionate oversight of decision-making and/or performance.</p>
<p>Data & Technology</p>	<p>Risks arising from a failure to produce robust, suitable and appropriate data/information and to exploit data/information to its full potential.</p>
<p>Security</p>	<p>Risks arising from a failure to prevent unauthorised and/or inappropriate access to the estate and information, including cyber security and non-compliance with General Data Protection Regulation requirements.</p>
<p>Reputational</p>	<p>Risks arising from adverse events, including ethical violations, a lack of sustainability, systemic or repeated failures or poor quality or a lack of innovation, leading to damages to reputation and or destruction of trust and relations. The risk of detriment to Herefordshire Council's reputation locally and nationally.</p>

Roles and Responsibilities for Risk Management

- 3.1 A strong risk management culture is demonstrated through the way in which staff and elected members understand, and comply with, the council's risk management strategy and processes and are fully aware of their respective roles and responsibilities.
- 3.2 The THRIVE core values are the guiding principles and beliefs that shape the council's culture and behaviours. These values promote a culture of trust and collaboration and provide a framework to align actions to the council's vision and priorities.

- 3.3 The core values of Trust, Honesty, Responsibility and Value support the effective management of risk across the council: individuals are trusted and empowered to explore opportunities within a clear risk management framework, to challenge consideration of risk in decision-making and service delivery, to take responsibility for designing controls to manage risks and to uphold high standards, ethics and integrity by raising and reporting risks at the appropriate level.
- 3.4 The roles and responsibilities for risk management within the council for Elected Members and Officers are outlined in the Table below.

ELECTED MEMBERS	
Role	Responsibilities
Leader of the Council and Cabinet	<p>The Leader of the Council and Cabinet are responsible and accountable for ensuring the council has effective risk management arrangements in place to support delivery of strategic priorities. Cabinet Members have specific responsibility for the oversight of risk arrangements within their individual portfolios.</p> <p>Cabinet approves the Risk Management Strategy and provides appropriate challenge to ensure that risk management implications are considered as part of strategic decision-making. It is accountable for ensuring that a corporate risk register is established and maintained, including details of actions to mitigate identified risks, and that this is regularly monitored.</p> <p>The Annual Governance Statement, which confirms the effectiveness of governance arrangements, including risk management arrangements, is certified by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.</p>
Audit & Governance Committee	<p>The Audit & Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing the adequacy of the council's governance arrangements, including the risk management framework and internal controls.</p> <p>The Annual Governance Statement is presented to the Audit & Governance Committee as part of the statutory accounts and external audit process and the Committee is required to determine whether the Statement properly reflects the risk environment the council is operating in and that actions identified to strengthen governance arrangements are appropriate.</p> <p>It is not a function of the Committee to examine specific risks however its functions include monitoring of the development and operation of risk management processes and receiving assurance from internal and external sources of the effectiveness of arrangements.</p>
All Elected Members	<p>All elected members have the ability to speak and vote on the council's most significant decisions through their committee membership and full Council and to engage in decision making through membership of working groups, attendance at political group consultations and member briefings, asking member questions or calling in a decision.</p> <p>Through this activity, all elected members have a responsibility to understand the council's risk management arrangements, the strategic risks to delivery of the priorities of the Council Plan and the appetite for each category of risk. Elected members are responsible for properly considering the risk implications during decision-making and policy approval, particularly where the decision may have resource implications, an impact on the authority's strategic priorities or propose a service change.</p>

OFFICERS	
Role	Responsibilities
Corporate Leadership Team	<p>Members of the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) are collectively responsible for ensuring that all strategic delivery risks are effectively managed, monitored and reported. CLT is responsible for ensuring for integrating risk to enable informed consequence-based decision-making.</p> <p>CLT has collective ownership of the Corporate Risk Register and Risk Appetite Statement and ensures that due consideration is given to identifying and managing the risks associated with the delivery of the council's strategic priorities and with major business change proposals. This may include reviewing the allocation of resources and establishing clear lines of accountability across the organisation and with external partners.</p> <p>CLT members create an environment and risk culture which embraces openness and clear communication, supports transparency, welcomes constructive challenge and promotes collaboration, consultation and co-operation.</p> <p>Individual Corporate Directors are responsible for the management of Directorate risks and providing information to Cabinet Members to enable oversight of significant risks within their portfolio.</p>
Director of Finance (S151 Officer)	The Director of Finance (S151 Officer) has specific responsibility for the oversight and delivery of financial management arrangements; achieved through a robust financial control framework, financial procedure rules, a scheme of delegation and an independent and objective Internal Audit function.
Monitoring Officer	The council's Monitoring Officer is the Director of Governance & Legal Services. This role has specific responsibility for risks which relate to lawfulness and fairness in the operation of the council's decision-making process.
Director of Children's Services	The Director of Children's Services (DCS) has specific responsibility for risks which relate to securing the provision of services which address the needs of all children and young people, and their families and carers, and those risks in respect of the performance of the council's functions relating to the education and social care of children and young people.
Director of Adult Social Services	The Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) is the Corporate Director (Community Wellbeing). This role has specific responsibility for risks which relate to the council's obligations under the Care Act and other relevant social care legislation.
Internal Audit	Internal Audit provides an independent and objective opinion on the council's governance, risk management and control environment; evaluating effectiveness through a risk-based approach. The annual Internal Audit Plan comprises: operational audit reviews, cross-cutting governance audits, annual review of key financial system controls, IT audits, grant assurance work and any other special or unplanned review; aligned to the council's corporate risks.
Risk & Insurance Manager	<p>The Risk & Insurance Manager is responsible for ensuring a consistent and proportionate approach to risk management across the council and for the provision of advisory support and challenge to risk owners.</p> <p>The Risk & Insurance Manager is responsible for the annual review of the Risk Management Strategy, analysing and reporting of corporate risks to CLT and the Audit & Governance Committee and working with colleagues across the council to help identify, assess and manage strategic risks. This role provides risk management training and development, and facilitates risks workshops.</p>

Risk Owners (Heads of Service and Service Managers)	<p>Risk owners are responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place within their directorates and services to identify and manage risks in accordance with the council's risk management framework.</p> <p>They are responsible for assessing the impact of controls, developing mitigations actions as required to manage risks in accordance with the council's risk appetite and maintain and reviewing service and directorate level risk registers.</p> <p>Senior Managers are responsible for determining the risk management training needs of their staff and ensuring that proportionate risk assessments are included in decision reports.</p>
All Council Staff	<p>All staff have a duty to consider the risks to the achievement of their day-to-day objectives and the council's strategic priorities. It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and to work to mitigate and control risks.</p> <p>Staff should also ensure that risks which they cannot manage, or those that have a wider impact, are escalated in accordance with the risk management framework.</p>

Risk Management Framework and Processes

- 4.1 The risk management framework is a series of co-ordinated activities and processes, carried out in sequence, by which risks are identified, evaluated, treated, reported and monitored on a regular basis. The risk management process helps us to:
- understand the nature of the risks faced and 'what could go wrong';
 - be aware of the extent of these risks;
 - identify the level of risk that the council is willing to accept; its risk appetite;
 - recognise the council's ability to manage and treat each risk, so appropriate decisions and action can be taken; and
 - take action, where possible, to avoid something going wrong and to minimise the impact.
- 4.2 The key elements of the council's risk management processes are summarised below:

Step 1: Establish Objectives

The starting point for the management of risks is the Herefordshire Council Plan 2024-28 and the strategies and plans that will support delivery of the key priorities and objectives (including the annual Delivery Plan).

Step 2: Identify the risks

Consideration should be given to the threats and opportunities to delivery of these objectives and priorities. The purpose of risk identification is to generate a comprehensive, up to date and easy to understand list of risks relevant to the council, directorate, service or programme/project.

There are a variety of ways in which risks can be identified including:

- Risk assessment exercises or workshops undertaken within Directorates, Services, projects and partnerships;
- Research and consideration of the risks or incidents that have affected others in delivering similar objectives;
- Review of local, national, and international policies, legislation, and events that may affect the objectives;
- Measurement of current performance and identification of weaknesses;
- Reviewing reports about council services, such as those issued by internal and external auditors and inspection results; and
- Consideration of risk categories and types.

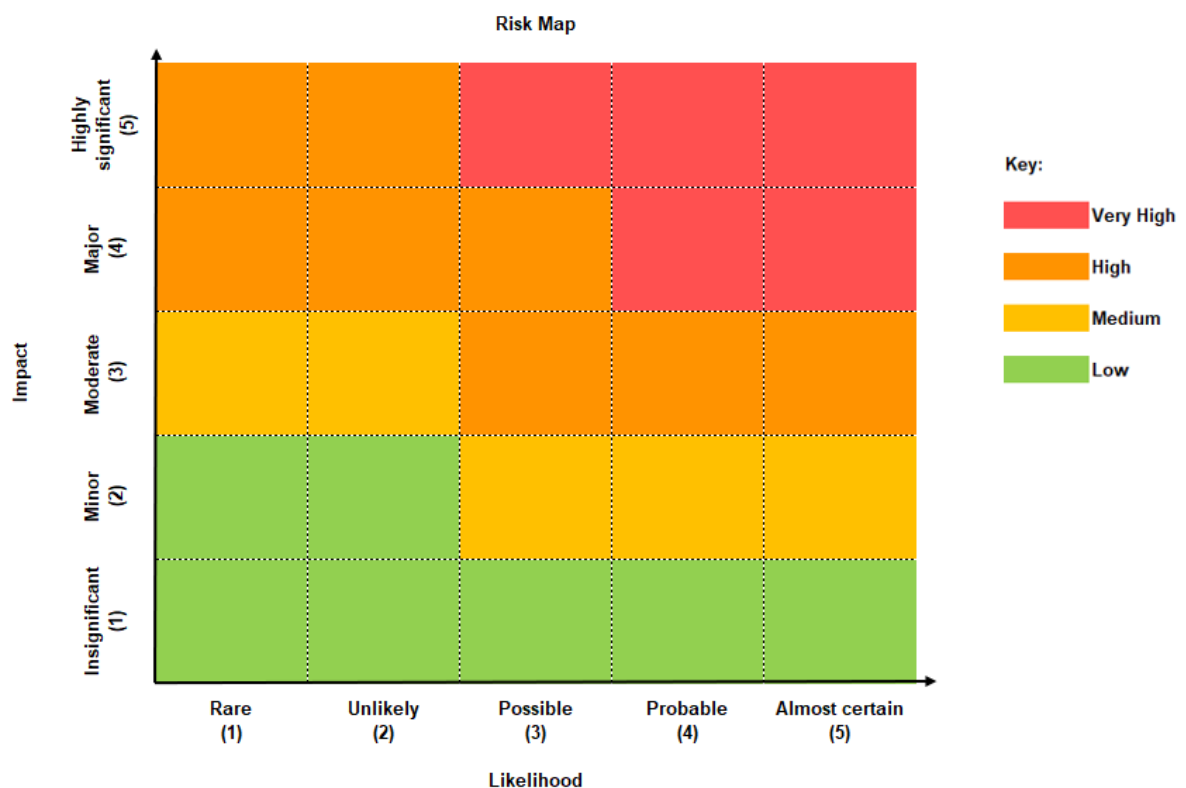
Risks need to be described in clear terms that can easily be understood and must specify the tangible threat or opportunity. Risks should generally be described in a couple of sentences, explaining the cause, risk and effect and the description should help determine how the risk will be managed and treated

Step 3: Analyse and evaluate the risk

Once identified, the risk should be analysed, evaluated and prioritised for treatment. Risks are rated through a combined assessment of:

- Likelihood: How likely the risk is to occur; and
- Impact: The potential impact / consequences, taking into account the controls already in place to manage/ mitigate the risk.

A '5x5' scoring mechanism is used to carry out the assessment of likelihood and impact to ensure that the risks are rated in a consistent way. These scores allow the risks to be plotted onto a risk chart, a visual tool used to illustrate and compare risks. The greater the assessed risk, the more effort will be required to manage it. The risks in the 'red zone', determined to have a very high likelihood and severe impact represent the risks which must be prioritised for treatment.



Many of the risks uncovered during the risk identification and analysis stages will already have controls in place to mitigate them and these, together with their effectiveness, should be taken into account when determining the scores. The assessment of controls should take place as part of the regular risk review.

The council has four risk rating options with corresponding risk management action:

Risk rating	Action
Very High	Immediate and significant management action and control required. Continued proactive monitoring of risk.
High	See cost effective management actions and controls. Continued proactive monitoring of risk.
Medium	Seek cost effective control improvements. Monitor and review risk regularly.
Low	Seek improvements to controls if cost effective to do so. Monitor and review risk regularly.

Risk ratings should be checked regularly as part of the routine risk review process and amended to take into account changes in the probability and impact scores, e.g. the implementation of additional controls or the completion of actions to manage the risk should result in a reduction in the risk rating.

Step 4: Manage (mitigate/treat) risks

Once a risk has been identified and its rating and priority determined, controls and actions to manage or treat the risk should be developed. Controls are activities which are carried out regularly to review the risk or something associated with it. An action is a one-off activity to bring in a control or change a specific matter associated with the risk.

Options for mitigating a risk should either minimise the likelihood of a risk event occurring, reduce the frequency with which it might occur or limit the severity of the consequences in the event that it does occur. Activity to determine the appropriate options to manage risks includes:

- identifying the existing controls in place;
- identifying what further controls and/or actions are required. This will either involve improving existing controls or developing and implementing new ones; and
- accepting that it is not possible to eliminate all risk and there are not reasonable mitigations available.

Whilst there are a variety of options to manage risk, the council recognises that it is not possible to eliminate all risks: in some cases, no one control can completely remove a risk and no amount of treatment can adequately control the risk. Progress in implementing actions to treat the risk should be regularly reviewed and reported.

There may be some element of 'residual risk' (the level of risk that remains after all appropriate treatment and controls have been implemented) and this will be recorded and monitored as part of risk management arrangements.

Responsibility and accountability for managing each risk needs to be assigned:

Risk owner: The person who is responsible and accountable for the risk. This should be someone with knowledge of the risk area and sufficient seniority to enable them to allocate resources to manage the risk and to ensure that actions required to treat it are completed.

Corporate risks are owned by the relevant Director. Directorate risks are usually owned by the relevant Head of Service or Senior Manager.

Step 5: Record and report

Risks need to be recorded and reported and this activity occurs through the Corporate, Directorate, Service, project and other risk registers across the council.

A risk register is a working document that records the key details of the risks, such as title/description, risk owner, risk rating, the main controls in place to manage the risk, a summary of the actions and their progress, and comments providing further information and updates on the management of the risk.

There are three key levels of risk register in the council's risk reporting framework:

Corporate Risk Register: Corporate risks are those of significant, strategic and cross-cutting importance that require the attention of the council's most senior managers and elected members. Each of the corporate risks has named risk owners: a lead Cabinet Member and a Director who are jointly accountable for their management.

Directorate Risk Registers: Directorate risks are those that require the attention of the respective Directorate Leadership Team (the Director and Heads of Service/Senior Managers). Directorate risks may be local versions of those on the corporate risk register e.g. directorate budget or information management and governance, articulating in more specific terms how the directorate manages the risk as it relates to their services. Other risks may reflect issues specific to that

directorate. Should a directorate risk increase in significance, to the extent that it may have a corporate impact, the risk may need to be escalated to the Corporate Risk Register.

Service Risk Registers: Service level risks, including those for programmes and projects, are those of a more operational nature. Risks at this level are reported to the respective Service Management Teams or Programme/Project Boards. Should a service level risk increase in significance, it may need to be escalated onto the directorate or even the corporate risk register.

Risk reporting should:

- provide relevant, sufficient and accessible risk information in a timely manner that facilitates decision making and action;
- ensure that the views of the board, committee or leadership/management team receiving the risk report are passed to the relevant risk owners and key contacts; and
- focus on the most significant risks, ensuring adequate responses are put in place; and
- facilitate the raising and discussion of new and emerging risks and encourage the escalation of risks to a higher level risk register where necessary.

The Risk & Insurance Manager is responsible for ensuring consistency in approach across the three levels of risk register.

Step 6: Monitor and update

Few risks and risk registers remain static, they evolve over time as risk characteristics, priorities and responsibilities change, and actions get completed. Monitoring and updating risk registers and records is an essential part of the risk management framework and this includes the following key elements:

- monitoring the changes in the risk characteristics and values;
- monitoring the effectiveness of our response to the risk by considering the adequacy of controls and how the risk actions are progressing and changing; and
- monitoring the risk profile; the regular review of the risks facing the council via the reporting of risk registers to the relevant boards, committees and leadership teams.

Any changes identified during the monitoring meetings should be reflected in the risk/risk register.

Identifying when a risk should be escalated is an important part of the monitoring process. There may be instances where further action to mitigate a risk cannot be taken by its current owner meaning it needs to be escalated e.g. from the Directorate to Corporate Risk Register or from the Service to Directorate Risk Register. This activity will be supported by the council's Risk & Insurance Manager.

Risk Governance Assurance

- 5.1 Risk management is a key part of the council's governance arrangements and the Risk Management Strategy supports compliance with statutory requirements of the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015. These regulations require the council to undertake a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls systems and governance arrangements, including risk management, and this is reported in the Annual Governance Statement.
- 5.2 This statement explains how the council has discharged its governance responsibilities during the financial year, the key governance mechanisms in place and planned future improvements to strengthen arrangements and controls.
- 5.3 Risk governance across the council is demonstrated by the following arrangements:
 - roles and responsibilities for risk management have been identified, documented, and communicated;
 - risk is integrated with decision making. All decision reports must include an outline of the key risks along with information on how they are to be managed; and
 - risk is embedded at Service, Directorate and Corporate levels across the council and risks management arrangements are widely reported.

Appendix A – Risk Appetite Statement 2025/26

Risk Appetite Statement 2025/26

- 6.1 The Risk Appetite Statement forms part of the risk management framework and defines the level of risk the council is willing to accept to deliver the priorities of the Herefordshire Council Plan 2024-28 and annual Delivery Plan.
- 6.2 Identifying the level of risk appetite for each of the council's key risk categories ensures a balanced and proportionate approach to the management of risks which is aligned to the delivery of strategic objectives. This approach recognises that there will be a range of appetites for different risks and that these appetites may change as the priorities and operating conditions of the council evolve.
- 6.3 The Statements sets out clear boundaries for risk-taking and serves as a guide for decision-making and management of risk at all levels. A clear risk management framework encourages and supports innovation and collaboration, ensuring that opportunities are explored within a specified risk appetite.
- 6.4 Risks will be monitored and managed against the risk appetite levels determined for each category and where decisions or planned activities expose the council to risks above the accepted risk appetite, the impact will be assessed and escalated as part of the risk management and governance framework.

Risk Appetite Levels

- 6.5 The levels of risk appetite which guide the council's risk management activity are outlined below:

	Risk appetite	Description
Tolerate less risk---->	Averse	Avoidance of risk and uncertainty in achievement of key deliverables or initiatives is key objective. Activities undertaken will only be those considered to carry no/low degree of inherent risk.
	Cautious	Preference for safe options that have low degree of inherent risk and only limited potential for benefit. Willing to tolerate a degree of risk in selecting which activities to undertake to achieve key deliverables or initiatives, where we have identified scope to achieve significant benefit and/or realise an opportunity. Activities undertaken may carry a high degree of inherent risk that is deemed controllable to a large extent.
<----Tolerate more risk	Open	Willing to consider all options and choose one most likely to result in successful delivery while providing an acceptable level of benefit. Seek to achieve a balance between a high likelihood of successful delivery and a high degree of benefit and value for money. Activities themselves may potentially carry, or contribute to, a high degree of residual risk.
	Eager	Eager to be innovative and to choose options based on maximising opportunities and potential higher benefit even if those activities carry a very high residual risk.

- 5.6 The level of risk appetite determined for each category of risk is set out in the Risk Appetite Matrix at Appendix B.

Appendix B – Risk Appetite Matrix

	Denotes the council's risk appetite for each Risk category
	Denotes the council's risk appetite for the identified Exception

Risk category	Risk appetite level definition			
	Averse	Cautious	Open	Eager
Strategic Delivery (Council Plan Priority: PEOPLE)	Innovation largely avoided unless essential. Decision making authority held by senior management.	The council has a limited tolerance to risk. Tendency to stick to the status quo, innovations generally avoided unless necessary. Decision making authority generally held by senior management.	The council is ambitious in its aim to support children and young people to thrive within highly effective schools and flourishing communities. It seeks out opportunities to collaborate with partners to support residents to live healthy lives within connected and safe communities and is prepared to accept a level of risk to deliver against this priority.	Innovation pursued – desire to 'break the mould' and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust / lagging indicators rather than close control.
Exception 1: Safety and wellbeing of residents	Limited appetite to risk. The council is responsible for providing care to those who need it most, including vulnerable adults and children and operates rigorous safeguarding measure to ensure the health and safety of residents. The council will continually seek to avoid activities that present a threat to the safety of the public and will do everything possible to prevent the loss of life.			
Strategic Delivery (Council Plan Priority: PLACE)	Innovation largely avoided unless essential. Decision making authority held by senior management.	The council has a limited tolerance to risk. Tendency to stick to the status quo, innovations generally avoided unless necessary. Decision making authority generally held by senior management.	The council is innovative and pioneering in its commitment to managing the effects of climate change across the county. It has ambitious plans to deliver learning and culture projects and to expand infrastructure, to support economic growth and	Innovation pursued – desire to 'break the mould' and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust / lagging indicators rather than close control.

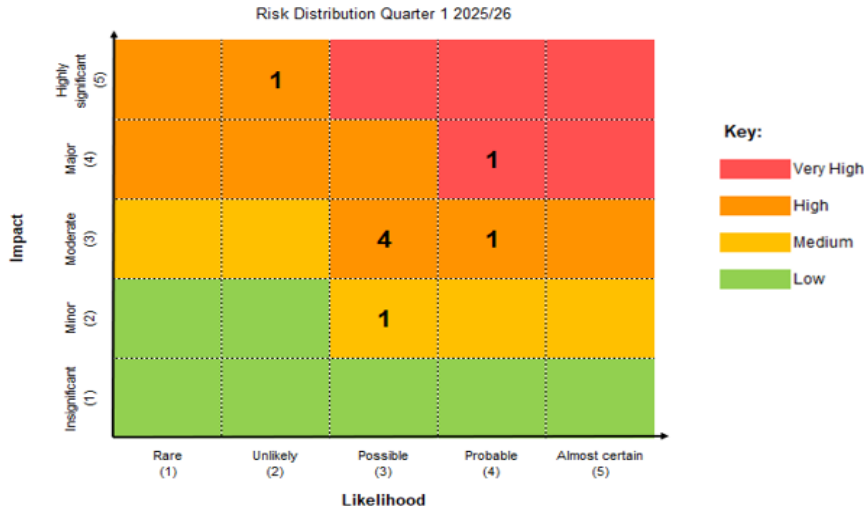
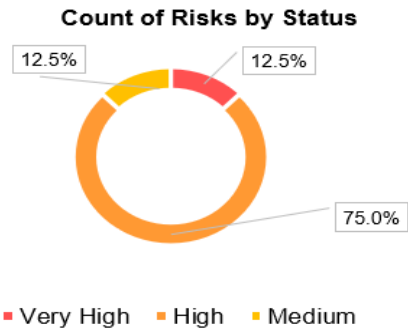
Risk category	Risk appetite level definition			
	Averse	Cautious	Open	Eager
			housing, and is prepared to accept a level of risk to deliver against this priority.	
Strategic Delivery (Council Plan Priority: GROWTH)	Innovation largely avoided unless essential. Decision making authority held by senior management.	The council has a limited tolerance to risk. Tendency to stick to the status quo, innovations generally avoided unless necessary. Decision making authority generally held by senior management.	The council is aspirational and seeks out opportunities to attract investment, drive business growth and development of talent across the county and is prepared to accept a level of risk to deliver against this priority.	Innovation pursued – desire to ‘break the mould’ and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust rather than close control.
Strategic Delivery (Council Plan Priority: TRANSFORMATION)	Innovation largely avoided unless essential. Decision making authority held by senior management.	The council has a limited tolerance to risk. Tendency to stick to the status quo, innovations generally avoided unless necessary. Decision making authority generally held by senior management.	The council is committed to improving the use of technology across its services and will embrace new technologies, test ideas and develop a culture of innovation to improve services and deliver value for money. Transformation and Digital Strategies in place to support deliver of aims.	Innovation pursued – desire to ‘break the mould’ and challenge current working practices. High levels of devolved authority – management by trust rather than close control.
Legal & Compliance	Play safe and avoid anything which could be challenged, even unsuccessfully.	The council has a cautious appetite level towards legal and compliance risks with robust processes in place to ensure the risk of legal challenge is minimised.	Legal challenge will be problematic; we are likely to win, and the gain will outweigh the adverse impact.	Chances of losing legal challenge are high but exceptional benefits could be realised.
Financial	Avoidance of any financial impact or loss, is a key objective.	Seek prudent financial options and solutions with little or no residual financial loss. Maintain strong financial governance and systems to protect financial position.	Prepared to invest for benefit and to minimise the possibility of financial loss by managing the risks to tolerable levels.	Prepared to invest for best possible benefit and accept possibility of financial loss (controls must be in place).
Governance	Avoid actions with associated risk. No decisions are taken outside of processes and oversight / monitoring arrangements. Organisational controls minimise risk of fraud, with significant levels of resource	Willing to consider actions where benefits outweigh risks. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements enable cautious risk taking. Implemented controls enable fraud prevention, detection and deterrence by maintaining	Receptive to taking difficult decisions when benefits outweigh risks. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements enable considered risk taking. Levels of fraud controls are varied to reflect scale of risks with costs.	Ready to take difficult decisions when benefits outweigh risks. Processes, and oversight / monitoring arrangements support informed risk taking. Levels of fraud controls are varied to reflect scale of risk with costs.

Risk category	Risk appetite level definition			
	Averse	Cautious	Open	Eager
	focused on detection and prevention.	appropriate controls and sanctions.		
Data & Technology	Lock down data & information. Access tightly controlled, high levels of monitoring.	Accept need for operational effectiveness with risk mitigated through careful management limiting distribution.	Accept need for operational effectiveness in distribution and information sharing.	Level of controls minimised with data and information openly shared.
Security	Low tolerance for security risks causing loss or damage to property, assets, information or people. Risks minimised through stringent security measures,	Limited security risks accepted to support business need, with appropriate checks and balances in place.	Considered security risk accepted to support business need, with appropriate checks and balances in place.	Willing to accept security risk to support business need, with appropriate checks and balances in place.
Reputational	Zero appetite for any decisions with high chance of repercussion for the council's reputation.	Appetite for risk taking limited to those events where there is little chance of any significant repercussion for the council.	Appetite to take decisions with potential to expose the council to additional scrutiny, but only where appropriate steps are taken to minimise exposure.	Appetite to take decisions which are likely to bring additional organisational scrutiny only where potential benefits outweigh risks.

Corporate Risk Register 2025/26

Ref	Corporate Risk	2025/26 Q1 Residual	2025/26 Q2 Residual	2025/26 Q3 Residual	2025/26 Q4 Residual	Current RAG
R1	Failure to discharge duty of care for a vulnerable child or vulnerable adult.	10				High
R2	Demand for client-based services continues to increase resulting in increased budget pressures and poor outcomes for those people in receipt of our services.	12				High
R3	Lack of local special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) placement provision to meet current and future levels of demand.	16				Very High
R4	Failure to deliver capital and major projects within identified resources and planned timeframes resulting in significant overspend and reduced project outcomes.	9				High
R5	Failure to deliver a sustainable financial strategy that supports delivery of the Council Plan priorities.	9				High
R6	Inability to attract and recruit candidates and retain staff leading to an inability to deliver services.	6				Medium
R7	Inability to respond adequately to a significant emergency affecting ability to provide priority services.	9				High
R8	Risks within the West Mercia community area.	9				High

Risk rating	Action
Very High	Immediate and significant management action and control required. Continued proactive monitoring of risk.
High	Seek cost effective management actions and controls. Continued proactive monitoring of risk.
Medium	Seek cost effective control improvements. Monitor and review risk regularly.
Low	Seek improvements to controls if cost effective to do so. Monitor and review risk regularly.



Ref	Corporate Risk	Risk Category	Risk Appetite	Control Measures/Mitigating Actions	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score
R1	<p>Failure to discharge duty of care for a vulnerable child or vulnerable adult.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Corporate Directors: Community Wellbeing, Children & Young People</p>	<p>Strategic Delivery - Council Plan Priority: PEOPLE</p> <p>(Exception 1: Safety and wellbeing of residents)</p>	<p>Exception 1: Averse Limited appetite to risk. The council is responsible for providing care to those who need it most, including vulnerable adults and children and operates rigorous safeguarding measure to ensure the health and safety of residents. The council will continually seek to avoid activities that present a threat to the safety of the public and will do everything possible to prevent the loss of life.</p>	<p>Services for Adults There are clear processes in place for same-day triage of safeguarding concerns raised and action is taken for those at greatest risk. Outcomes are monitored by frontline managers with senior management oversight. All staff access training aligned to their job roles and responsibilities. The Principal Social Worker (PSW) led practitioner forums provide further support and embed practice for staff working with vulnerable adults. Daily case discussions take place and established processes for escalation are in place across the service. The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Service follows the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) guidance for case prioritisation. Continuous professional development for staff and providers, additional legal support and constant review and prioritisation of cases waiting for assessment is undertaken. Safe and well checks are undertaken for those at high risk. There are duty arrangements in place to cover emergencies and any urgent work required. Oversight and assurance of multi-agency safeguarding practice is delivered by the Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB). The Complex Adult Risk Management (CARM) process has been reviewed and strengthened. There is an established process of 'Team Around Me' and 'Breaking the Cycle' forums with partners to ensure a joined-up approach by agencies to support adults with multiple complex vulnerabilities.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 3 (Possible)</p> <p>Impact: 5 (Highly significant)</p> <p>Inherent Risk Score = 15</p>	<p>Likelihood: 2 (Unlikely)</p> <p>Impact: 5 (Highly significant)</p> <p>Residual Risk Score = 10</p>

Ref	Corporate Risk	Risk Category	Risk Appetite	Control Measures/Mitigating Actions	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score
				Children's Services Children's Safeguarding procedures and Practice Standards in place to guide practice. An audit programme is in place to review compliance with practice standards. There is regular (monthly) supervision of social workers – KPI and Audit review compliance The Better Outcomes Panel is responsible for reviewing children in care placements. The Service Director receives and is the decision maker on all children received into care. Cases with high risk are reviewed within Legal Gateway meeting chaired by Senior Manager and attended by Legal to ensure threshold for proceedings is considered.		
R2	Demand for client-based services continues to increase resulting in increased budget pressures and poor outcomes for those people in receipt of our services. Risk Owner: Corporate Directors: Community Wellbeing, Children & Young People	Strategic Delivery - Council Plan Priority: PEOPLE	Open The council is ambitious in its aim to support children and young people to thrive within highly effective schools and flourishing communities. It seeks out opportunities to collaborate with partners to support residents to live healthy lives within connected and safe communities and is prepared to accept a level of risk to deliver against this priority.	A Budget Resilience Reserve was established in 2024/25 to manage the impact of in-year cost pressures and volatility in demand across social care budgets in 2025/26 and 2026/27. A balance of £7.0m has been carried forward at 1 April 2025 to be allocated by the S151 Officer and Cabinet approval to ensure that appropriate measures have been taken within Directorates. Demand for Adult Services: Demand pressures are managed through a robust 'front-door' prevention strategy including: Promotion of Technology Enabled Care (TEC), Community options via Talk Community model, Monthly review of operational performance data, Pathway Redesign and Structural Reform, Community Brokerage, Case Collaboration and Peer Challenge, Complex Care Pathway Development and a Prevention-focused Culture. Joint working arrangements are in place and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) for complex	Likelihood: 4 (Probable) Impact: 4 (Major) Inherent Risk Score = 16	Likelihood: 4 (Probable) Impact: 3 (Moderate) Residual Risk Score = 12

Ref	Corporate Risk	Risk Category	Risk Appetite	Control Measures/Mitigating Actions	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score
				<p>care pathway has been established for those with high level needs.</p> <p>Monthly Budget Board meetings are in place to monitor spend and progress in the delivery of savings, and opportunities for income maximisation, is monitored via a dedicated Savings Programme group.</p> <p>Monthly Directorate Budget Reports track spend against budget, identify cost pressures and highlight financial risks.</p> <p>Managing the market work programme will include a redesign of block contract beds to increase capacity.</p> <p>A feasibility review of a council-controlled care capacity for complex/dementia care is underway.</p> <p>Demand for Children's Services: Regular meetings between Service Directors and Finance to monitor budget throughout the year and identify cost pressures in timely manner.</p> <p>There is a strong cultural message from Directorate leadership to ensure Best Value in the delivery of services.</p> <p>The Better Outcome Panel, chaired by the Service Director, oversees placement costs.</p> <p>A Care Placement Sufficiency Strategy is expected to be completed June 2025. The Strategy will ensure value for money through sufficiency of safe and appropriate options for young people.</p>		
R3	Lack of local special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) placement provision to meet current and future levels of demand. Risk that the needs of children with SEND cannot be met in Herefordshire and/or Out of County placements will be required, leading to costs exceeding budget and	Strategic Delivery - Council Plan Priority: PEOPLE	Open The council is ambitious in its aim to support children and young people to thrive within highly effective schools and flourishing communities. It seeks out opportunities to collaborate with partners to support residents to live healthy lives within connected and safe communities and is prepared	<p>The Area SEND inspection was completed in December 2024 and an action plan has been developed to address the areas for improvement identified.</p> <p>A new SEND service manager was appointed in September 2024 to provide additional managerial oversight, scrutiny and direction to this part of the service.</p> <p>Business cases for increased Alternative Provision (AP) are in development to maximise inclusive education and reduce the use and cost of independent provision. The</p>	<p>Likelihood: 4 (Probable)</p> <p>Impact: 4 (Major)</p> <p>Inherent Risk Score = 16</p>	<p>Likelihood: 4 (Probable)</p> <p>Impact: 4 (Major)</p> <p>Residual Risk Score = 16</p>

Ref	Corporate Risk	Risk Category	Risk Appetite	Control Measures/Mitigating Actions	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score
	poorer outcomes for children and young people. Risk Owner: Corporate Director Children & Young People		to accept a level of risk to deliver against this priority.	proposed additional provision will be delivered through the capital programme in 2025/26 and 2026/27. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Deficit Management Plan is monitored by the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and S151 Officer as part of monthly Budget Boards. The plan includes detailed financial modelling of the impact of current and planned increases in provision. The Department of Education (DfE) is providing funding for a new special school in Herefordshire, expected to open in 2026/27. This school will increase the number of in-county specialist education places.		
R4	Failure to deliver capital and major projects within identified resources and planned timeframes resulting in significant overspend and reduced project outcomes. Risk Owner: Corporate Director of Economy & Environment	Strategic Delivery - Council Plan Priority: GROWTH PLACE	Open The council is aspirational and seeks out opportunities to attract investment, drive business growth and development of talent across the county and is prepared to accept a level of risk to deliver against this priority. The council is innovative and pioneering in its commitment to managing the effects of climate change across the county. It has ambitious plans to deliver learning and culture projects and to expand infrastructure, to support economic growth and housing, and is prepared to accept a level of risk to deliver against this priority.	Each major project has an assigned Senior Responsible Officer, a dedicated Project Management Officer Project Manager and a Project Board of relevant representatives from across the council (relevant service area, legal, finance, property services etc) to lead delivery. A review of the Project Management Office is currently being undertaken, to ensure we have access to the range of skills required to successfully implement the programme. Additional controls are in place to monitor expenditure in respect of capital and major projects linked to cashflow requirements via monthly Directorate Budget Boards.	Likelihood: 4 (Probable) Impact: 4 (Major) Inherent Risk Score = 16	Likelihood: 3 (Possible) Impact: 3 (Moderate) Residual Risk Score = 9
R5	Failure to deliver a sustainable financial strategy that supports delivery of the Council Plan priorities. (Including delivery of savings, commercial income, capital receipts and ensuring	Financial	Cautious The council has a cautious appetite level towards legal and compliance risks with robust processes in place to ensure the risk of legal challenge is minimised.	Council set a balanced budget for 2025/26 at its meeting in February 2025. An MTFS gap of £4.2m is projected for the period to 2028/29 and this is expected to be managed via transformation of service delivery, increasing opportunities to recover costs of service delivery, expenditure reviews	Likelihood: 4 (Probable) Impact: 4 (Major) Inherent Risk Score = 16	Likelihood: 3 (Possible) Impact: 3 (Moderate)

Ref	Corporate Risk	Risk Category	Risk Appetite	Control Measures/Mitigating Actions	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score
	<p>resources are available to deliver statutory obligations and fund organisational development and transformation.)</p> <p>Risk Owner: Director of Finance (S151 Officer)</p>			<p>and reviewing the size and shape of the workforce.</p> <p>The forecast outturn position against budget is reported on a monthly basis to Directorates and CLT.</p> <p>Effective budget monitoring arrangements are in place via Directorate Budget Boards to monitor delivery of services against agreed budget, achievement of savings and delivery of capital and major projects.</p> <p>Expenditure controls will continue in 25/26 via Directorate Control Panels to challenge and reduce, defer or stop spend above £500. High quality financial reporting is achieved through additional controls to ensure forecasting informed by reliable, timely activity data.</p> <p>The Finance Team adhere to statutory deadlines; an unqualified audit opinion was achieved in 2023/24 and the 2024/25 are in progress to be published by 31 May 2025 with audit testing expected to take place during Quarter 2.</p> <p>Additional controls are in place to monitor expenditure in respect of capital and major projects linked to cashflow requirements via monthly Directorate Budget Boards.</p> <p>A review of earmarked reserves undertaken in December 2024 and the Budget Resilience Reserve was established to manage demand pressures in 2025/26 and 2026/27.</p> <p>A review of third party spend is underway as part of the Transformation Strategy.</p>		Residual Risk Score = 9
R6	<p>Inability to attract and recruit candidates and retain staff leading to an inability to deliver services. Loss of skills knowledge and experience (retention & recruitment) in relation to staffing.</p> <p>Risk Owner:</p>	<p>Strategic Delivery - Council Plan</p> <p>Priority: TRANSFORMATION</p>	<p>Open</p> <p>The council is committed to improving the use of technology across its services and will embrace new technologies, test ideas and develop a culture of innovation to improve services and deliver value for money. Transformation and</p>	<p>The council's Workforce Strategy 2024-2028 was approved for implementation in April 2024. The Strategy has been developed to recruit, retain and invest in a skilled and well-trained workforce.</p> <p>A Children & Young People Workforce Strategy, aligned to the Corporate Workforce Strategy with a specific focus on ambitions for staff in the C&YP Directorate, is in place</p>	<p>Likelihood: 3 (Possible)</p> <p>Impact: 3 (Moderate)</p> <p>Inherent Risk Score = 9</p>	<p>Likelihood: 3 (Possible)</p> <p>Impact: 2 (Minor)</p> <p>Residual Risk Score = 6</p>

Ref	Corporate Risk	Risk Category	Risk Appetite	Control Measures/Mitigating Actions	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score
	Director of HR and OD		Digital Strategies in place to support deliver of aims.	to support permanent recruitment and development of staff internally. The Spirit of Herefordshire recruitment brand has been developed to increase awareness of job opportunities within the council and county and provide relevant information to ensure a positive candidate experience and support strong applications. The council offers welcome and retention scheme payments to respond to challenges in the recruitment and retention of qualified and experienced social workers. Through the council's Learning & Organisation (L&OD) team, activity to identify and recruit to new apprenticeship programmes is underway. A leadership development programme (@LeadHC) has been developed and will be launched in 2025/26 to address gaps in the learning and development offer and strengthen leadership skills and capabilities. The Lead@HC Programme will aim to develop inspirational leaders across four themes: Grow, Aspire, Empower, Innovate.		
R7	<p>Inability to respond adequately to a significant emergency affecting ability to provide priority services.</p> <p>Including severe weather, critical damage to council buildings, loss of power or infrastructure, cyber security.</p> <p>Risk Owner: Corporate Leadership Team/Cabinet Members</p>	<p>Legal & Compliance Governance Data & Technology Security Reputational</p>	<p>Cautious</p> <p>The council has a cautious appetite level towards these risk categories with robust processes in place to ensure the impact on service delivery is minimised.</p>	<p>Gold/Silver emergency planning arrangements are in place across the council. Training has been delivered to Gold/Silver level officers in 2025.</p> <p>An Information Directory has been set up to ensure responsible individuals can provide an effective/timely response.</p> <p>Training exercises are planned in 2025/26 with partner agencies to test and review the adequacy of arrangements.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 3 (Possible)</p> <p>Impact: 4 (Major)</p> <p>Inherent Risk Score = 12</p>	<p>Likelihood: 3 (Possible)</p> <p>Impact: 3 (Moderate)</p> <p>Residual Risk Score = 9</p>

Ref	Corporate Risk	Risk Category	Risk Appetite	Control Measures/Mitigating Actions	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score
R8	<p>Risks within the West Mercia community area including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrorism • Cyber and fraud • Serious and organised crime (such as people trafficking) • Accidents and system failures (such as power failure or an interruption to water supplies) • Natural and environmental hazards (such as flooding or heatwaves) • Human and animal disease (such as flu pandemics or foot & mouth) • Societal risks (such as riots) <p>Risk Owner: Corporate Leadership Team/Cabinet Members</p>	<p>Legal & Compliance Governance Data & Technology Security Reputational</p>	<p>Cautious</p> <p>The council has a cautious appetite level towards these risk categories with robust processes in place to ensure the impact on service delivery is minimised.</p>	<p>The council is a member of West Mercia Local Resilience Forum (LRF). The member organisations meet regularly to assess the risks of accidents and emergencies and put in place plans to prevent or reduce risks. The LRF has close link to government departments to share information on local risks. Members undertake training and exercises together to prepare for emergencies.</p> <p>The aim of the West Mercia LRF is to ensure there is an appropriate level of preparedness to enable an effective multi-agency response to emergency incidents in the West Mercia area and to get partners working together to ensure that preparations and plans are in place for emergencies.</p> <p>The LRF Community Risk Register is maintained and published by West Mercia LRF. This register aims to localise some of the items included in the National Risk Register.</p>	<p>Likelihood: 3 (Possible)</p> <p>Impact: 4 (Major)</p> <p>Inherent Risk Score = 12</p>	<p>Likelihood: 3 (Possible)</p> <p>Impact: 3 (Moderate)</p> <p>Residual Risk Score = 9</p>

Equality impact screening checklist

Remember that your completed checklist will be available to decision-makers and the public, and is therefore open to challenge. Consider what evidence is in place to support your answers.

	Yes	No
1. Does/will the policy or activity affect the public directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Does the evidence/data show an existing or likely differential impact for any of the protected characteristics (eg. age, sex, disability, race, religion, pregnancy, etc)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Do/will people who have different protected characteristics have different needs, experiences, issues or priorities in relation to this policy or activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Could the policy or activity affect how services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, where and by whom?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Could the policy or activity affect our workforce or our employment practices (eg. software purchase, team restructure or relocation, HR policy)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. Have complaints been received from different equality groups about the effect of this policy, proposal or our activities in general (having no complaints does not always mean there is no issue?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. Does the policy involve, or will it have an impact upon, eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity, or promoting good relations between different groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. Is there likely to be an adverse/negative impact or risks to the organisation, for users, equality groups or staff if the policy or activity is implemented in its current format?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Add up the "yes" column:

0

How many answers are "yes"?:

0: **No impact** – the process is complete.

1-3: **Low impact** – an EIA is not required at this point (you can complete a light-touch EIA now or later if you want to – that is never wrong). But you must still indicate within your documentation and decision papers what [equality factors](#) you have considered. This is a statutory requirement, and is open to challenge and scrutiny.

4-9: **High impact** - a full [EIA](#) is required immediately. The EIA can be reviewed, re-done, or updated at any time as necessary.

