

# Agenda

## Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Tuesday 12 May 2026**

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Time: **2.00 pm**

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

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

For any further information please contact:

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# **Agenda for the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

## **Membership**

**Chairperson**            **Councillor Toni Fagan**  
**Vice-chairperson**   **Councillor Ben Proctor**

**Councillor Frank Cornthwaite**  
**Councillor Clare Davies**  
**Councillor Dave Davies**  
**Councillor Robert Highfield**  
**Councillor David Hitchiner**

**David Willis**

**Diocese of Hereford**

## Agenda

		Pages
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>To receive apologies for absence.</p>	
2.	<p><b>NAMED SUBSTITUTES</b></p> <p>To receive details of members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a member of the committee.</p>	
3.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>To receive declarations of interests from members of the committee in respect of items on the agenda.</p>	
4.	<p><b>MINUTES</b></p> <p>To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2026.</p>	9 - 12
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HOW TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS</b></p> <p>The deadline for the submission of questions for this meeting is 5pm on Wednesday 6 May.</p> <p>Questions must be submitted to <a href="mailto:councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk">councillorservices@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>. Questions sent to any other address may not be accepted.</p> <p>Accepted questions and the responses will be published as a supplement to the agenda papers prior to the meeting. Further information and guidance is available at <a href="http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/getinvolved">www.herefordshire.gov.uk/getinvolved</a></p>		
5.	<p><b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</b></p> <p>To receive any written questions from members of the public.</p>	
6.	<p><b>QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL</b></p> <p>To receive any written questions from members of the council.</p>	
7.	<p><b>NEGLECT STRATEGY</b></p> <p>A report for the committee to note, advising of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's response to neglect.</p>	13 - 32
8.	<p><b>UPDATE ON RESPONSE TO POLICE EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY AND LEGITIMACY (PEEL) INSPECTION FINDINGS</b></p> <p>An update from Superintendent Leanne Lowe of West Mercia Police detailing the progress and actions the police have taken in response to the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection findings.</p>	33 - 42
9.	<p><b>WORK PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>To consider the work programme for the committee.</p>	43 - 106
10.	<p><b>DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>Wednesday 22 July 2026, 10am.</p>	



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- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title. The council's constitution is available at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution)
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[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1597/hereford-city-bus-map-local-services-](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1597/hereford-city-bus-map-local-services-)

## **The seven principles of public life**

### **(Nolan Principles)**

#### **1. Selflessness**

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

#### **2. Integrity**

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

#### **3. Objectivity**

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

#### **4. Accountability**

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

#### **5. Openness**

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

#### **6. Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

#### **7. Leadership**

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



**Minutes of the meeting of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held at Conference Room 1 - Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Tuesday 10 March 2026 at 2.00 pm**

**Present:** Councillor Toni Fagan (chairperson)  
Councillor Ben Proctor (vice-chairperson)

Councillors: Frank Cornthwaite, Dave Davies, Robert Highfield and David Hitchiner

**In attendance:** Councillor Ivan Powell (Cabinet Member Children and Young People)

**Officers:** Simon Cann (Committee Clerk/Democratic Services Officer), Rachel Gillott (Service Director, Early Help, CIN and Safeguarding), Tori Lynch (Service Director Corporate Parenting), Tina Russell (Corporate Director Children and Young People), Donna Thornton (Democratic Services Support Officer), Danial Webb (Statutory Scrutiny Officer).

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies had been received.

**2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

There had been no named substitutes.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting were received.

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairperson.

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

No questions had been received from members of the public.

**6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

No questions had been received from members of the council.

**7. ILAC INSPECTION AND ACTION PLAN**

The Corporate Director Children and Young People, Service Director, Early Help, CIN and Safeguarding, and Service Director Corporate Parenting provided an overview of the report and answered questions from the Committee:

1. The Director explained that Herefordshire had a strong internal leadership pipeline, a stable and increasingly permanent workforce, and a robust Quality Assurance (QA) framework -- using KPIs, random audits, and random service-user feedback -- that ensured continuity and sustained improvement beyond individual leaders. It was emphasised that simple plans, clear expectations, and an embedded child-centred culture had made the service resilient to organisational or political change.
2. Members questioned how vital services such as early help would be protected if future administrations pursued budget cuts. The Director explained that Children's Services was a statutory function and that Herefordshire had learned the cost of under-investment. It was noted that any future political group would be informed by officers and lead members around the potential risks of cutting preventative services, however early help would need to continue demonstrating impact to justify investment.
3. A query was raised about how early warning signs of deterioration would be identified to prevent a repeat of past failures. The Director explained that the improved QA framework -- quarterly data, random audits, and direct feedback from families -- would highlight problems quickly. It was further noted that previous issues had stemmed from overly complex reporting, whereas current reporting was simpler and therefore easier for councillors to interpret and challenge.
4. In response to a question, the Director did not feel that the previous "Inadequate" judgment had represented a governance failure, and stated that although various oversight boards had existed, information had been too complex and had lacked meaningful connection to frontline practice. The improved simplicity and alignment of reporting now provided clearer and stronger governance.
5. Questions were raised about Government proposals to reduce/remove fostering panels. The Director stated that the service opposed the reforms, explaining that panels provided essential scrutiny, challenge, and quality assurance. The Director warned that removing them would not reduce cost or delays, and might reduce foster carer approval rates because agency decision-makers would lack the depth of information panels helped uncover.
6. Members asked whether future regional devolution or council amalgamation could weaken Herefordshire's children's services. The Director clarified that devolution did not merge services and emphasised that Herefordshire now approached partnership discussions from a position of strength. The service would not be "done unto," and any significant collaborations -- such as regional fostering hubs -- would need to be properly funded, with core resources protected.
7. A question was raised about low resilience among young parents and whether the ECHO service addressed this. The Director confirmed that ECHO had provided rapid, relationship-based support to families experiencing difficulties, helping them stabilise, build coping capacity, and strengthen natural networks to avoid dependency.

8. Members queried whether a 0.5 FTE increase for Family Group Conferencing had been sufficient. The Director pointed out that staffing levels at the time had been adequate, but would be reviewed as outcome data improved. It was noted that improvements had focused on ensuring family plans directly fed into statutory review processes and supported sustained change.
9. A question was asked about the previous gap in English language provision for unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. The service explained that although the Kindle Centre had historically offered lessons, young people had disliked its adult-learning environment. From January, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) had been delivered through the local college, which better met the needs and preferences of students.
10. Members asked about the high proportion of care leavers who were not in education, employment, or training (NEET). The Director and Service Director explained that care leavers often required tailored support due to resilience challenges. Work had included collaboration with the Youth Employment Hub, bespoke mentoring, and high-quality pathway planning. Progress had fluctuated, but the service continued to promote aspiration and had seen notable individual successes.
11. A question was raised about whether the complaints process had been accessible and fair. The Director confirmed it had been redesigned to be more person-centred, with early meetings to clarify issues, semi-independent investigation by the QA team, and feedback loops to support service learning. It was noted that compliments had been captured alongside complaints.
12. Members sought reassurance on how Ofsted had verified that children's voices were heard. The Director reported that inspectors had spoken directly to children and families, reviewed case files, assessed written feedback, and tested staff knowledge of each child's lived experience. Ofsted had concluded that practitioners held a strong and detailed understanding of the children they worked with.
13. Councillors asked about under-recognition of young carers within statutory children's plans. The Director explained that the commissioned young carers service had been strong, but a small number of children on social care plans had not been simultaneously recognised as young carers. Processes had been strengthened to ensure identification and referral.
14. Members questioned why private fostering had remained difficult to capture. The Director explained this had been a national problem: many carers did not recognise their situation as private fostering, and some were reluctant to contact the local authority. Additionally, some children supported under Children in Need plans had not been registered as privately fostered. Awareness campaigns and procedural corrections had been put in place.
15. Members asked whether neglect had been a particular issue in Herefordshire. The Director clarified that neglect was the largest national safeguarding category. Ofsted's finding had related only to a small number of plans where cumulative harm and lived experience had not been sufficiently explicit. The strengthening of consistent child-centred planning was already underway, with benchmarking showing Herefordshire aligned with statistical neighbours.
16. A query was raised about support for kinship carers and Special Guardianship Order (SGO) carers. The Director confirmed the new SGO finance policy guaranteed payments to age 18 and that kinship carers received additional

bespoke training, particularly around managing complex family and contact arrangements. The wider support offer was assessed as strong.

17. Members sought advice on how scrutiny could best balance challenge with support. The Director stressed that quarterly QA reporting, trend analysis, and insistence on clarity should guide effective scrutiny. The Director stated that any reduction or dilution of QA processes should prompt immediate challenge from members.

## **8. WORK PROGRAMME**

1. The committee agreed that several additions to the work programme were needed, including briefings on upcoming SEND changes, the schools' white paper, and the consequences of losing funding for the SEND school. Members also suggested adding updates on the Baby Steps project and exploring the high percentage of 16–17-year-olds not in education, employment or training.
2. Members discussed whether school capacity planning was keeping pace with changing housing projections and considered involving the scrutiny committee responsible for planning.
3. Councillors provided an update on the launch of the Child Friendly Herefordshire programme and agreed to meet the participation lead to embed the voices of children, young people and families across all scrutiny committees. This approach was expected to be reflected in future versions of the work programme.

## **9. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 12 May 2026, 2pm.

The meeting ended at 4pm

**Chairperson**



**Title: Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) - Response to Neglect**

**Meeting: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: Tuesday 12 May 2026**

**Report by: Service Director Early Help, CIN and Safeguarding**

**Classification**

Open

**Report purpose**

To brief the committee on the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's response to neglect.

**Background**

1. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee has identified neglect as a topic that might benefit from being scrutinised and has decided this could be achieved by considering the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's response to neglect.

**Meeting objectives**

2. The committee wishes to consider feedback from the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) to gain a fuller understanding into intentional and unintentional neglect and how it is being addressed by Herefordshire Council and its partners within the county.

**Report information**

3. The experience of neglect in childhood can have significant and long-term consequences, affecting many areas of a child's development and their lives into adulthood. Nationally, neglect is the most common type of abuse experienced by children.

Working Together 2026 defines neglect as *the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.*

Neglect can be evidenced prior to a child's birth due to a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Provide suitable education
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

4. There are many different types of neglect. These are usually broken down into 'intentional neglect' and 'unintentional neglect' but they may be interrelated and nuanced. Child neglect is defined through six key areas (Howarth 2007) including:
  - a. **Medical neglect** - where a parent minimises or does not provide appropriate medical attention to a child. This can also relate to self-care neglect (most commonly seen in adults but also seen in pregnant women and teenagers), linked to Mental Health or medical issues such as diabetes.
  - b. **Emotional neglect** - including where a parent/ caregiver does not provide emotionally attuned care with intention but also where emotional abuse is unintentional due to other issues affecting the parent such as mental health and an omission of care.
  - c. **Nutritional neglect** - where a child is not provided with food and can lead to malnutrition.
  - d. **Intentional neglect** - typically described as a home which is uninhabitable, a combination of not feeding the children and leaving them in unsafe situations, a lack of supervision and or no boundaries regarding sleep or behaviour.
  - e. **Educational neglect** - where a child is not provided with an education, or inadequate school attendance.
  - f. **Physical neglect** - where a child does not have adequate clothing, poor hygiene, untreated dental issues or living conditions are unclean.
5. In determining whether the neglect is intentional or unintentional an evaluation of the family's situation is completed which considers, the wider environmental situation, members individual needs, reviewing the 'lived experience' of the child and the intention and response from the parent/s.
6. A family's lived experience will be impacted by environmental, and socio-economic factors. For some families there are significant challenges including limited resources through unemployment, disability, adult mental health, the impact of the variances in the cost-of-living, insufficient permanent housing, leaving them in bed and breakfast or temporary accommodation away from their child's school with limited transport options or support networks in a rural county.

7. Distinguishing between intentional and unintentional neglect is essential to understand the support a family need to ensure their child's needs are met. This can be complex and there is significant support across the partnership to support this evaluation.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership set out its commitment vision to addressing childhood neglect in the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Child Neglect Strategy 24-27. The strategy and associated documents are located on the [child abuse and neglect](#) section of the [HSCP Website](#).

8. This includes the child neglect practitioner resources to support practitioners across the partnership to identify and respond to child neglect. The resources are varied and have key individual practical briefings to support practitioners to identify and support children and young people of all ages including those with a disability who may be experiencing neglect. The toolkit provides tools such as the screening tool to support practitioners in understanding if what they are seeing is neglect, and more in-depth tools to support clearer identification such as the 'graded care profile' and 'home conditions assessment'. These enable practitioners to develop an overall 'picture' of a child's life and can identify specific areas of concern. This website is a key source of information for practitioners and the public, on how we support children and families where they need support but also the actions needed, where there are concerns about a child's safety.
9. Tools and training across partners have been implemented to support a clear differentiation of distinct aspects of neglect. The [Graded Care Profile 2 \(GCP2\)](#), developed by the [NSPCC](#), is an evidence-based tool used to objectively measure the quality of care a child receives, specifically to identify and assess neglect. It rates care across four areas—physical, safety, emotional, and developmental—on a scale of 1 (best) to 5 (worst), helping practitioners identify, quantify, and address neglect.

Significant training has been undertaken since its introduction across the partnership with a positive 876 practitioners trained in the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2). A practitioner survey was launched in Jan/ Feb 2026 on the use of child neglect tools and the Graded Care Profile 2 and the feedback was:

- a. Practitioners welcomed the tools and advised that they were useful in identifying neglect and supporting their assessment and identification.
  - b. GCP2 is being used consistently by Children's Services and health professionals.
  - c. A small number of education professionals said GCP2 "does not fit with their role"- and there is to be ongoing work to address this.
10. There are a wide range of practitioner forums across the partnership and in the last three quarters these focused on adolescent neglect, diabetes and the use of GCP2.

The HSCP Quality and Effectiveness Subgroup completed multi agency audits reviewing the response to neglect in Q2 of 25/26. This found practice with younger children was assertive, timely and coordinated, there was good multi-agency work with families to address domestic abuse and PPRC (Person Posing A Risk to Children) issues, and additionally in cases graded high risk, good recognition of child exploitation indicators. There was appropriate application of levels of need, and outcomes were evidenced as effective. Reassuringly the application of thresholds was correct, and the response

provided evidence that the child was kept at the centre of assessment and planning. Across the partnership professional curiosity was evident, including detailed risk assessments that were revisited and updated in response to evolving need.

11. Learning from the audit, which was cascaded in quarter3, was the need to address and sustain change when neglect is longstanding particularly with older children. Issues identified included low school attendance, engagement in criminal activity and poor hygiene and dental health. There also needed to be wider consideration of the family's culture. A final identified need was that when working with complex neglect GGP2 should be completed as a multi-agency rather than a single agency. Ofsted (2025) noted the renewed focus advising that **“There is a renewed practice focus on children living in neglectful households, with recent interventions evidencing a positive impact on children's lives”**. Additionally noting **“when circumstances do not change and risk escalates the pre proceedings stage of the Public Law Outline process is strong.”** 16% of children under the CP category of neglect are subject to pre proceedings.
12. For referrals with neglect as a key indicator, we have seen increased identification across partners with referrals increasing since 24/25, where we saw 72-84 referrals per quarter rising to 94-104 referral per quarter in 25/26. Those progressing to a Child in Need (CIN) plan have also shown year on year increases in this category in 24/25 there were 163 CIN Plans with a primary category of neglect, up to 248 CIN plans at the end of Q3 25/26. This evidences earlier identification and support.
13. For children and families subject to a child protection (CP) plan under the category of neglect, we have seen a rise in this classification with more accurate identification of the primary issue. In Q3 79 children were subject to CP planning under the category of neglect totalling 69% of the classifications. All CP plans over 12 months are subject to a key review by an alternate Service Manager to ensure the children's outcomes are improving, this is to support identification if challenges are entrenched and to ascertain if there is over optimism within the wider team. We know there will always be pockets of improvements, but the review ascertains whether this is sustained, considers if there is disguised compliance and whether risks are evidenced as being reduced. This resulted in a 54% reduction in children over 15 months from 23 in in Q2 24/25 to 11 in Q2 25/26. In practice no child on a CP plan should step down from a CP plan after 3 months due to the persistent and entrenched nature of neglect. In year to date for those children on a plan for neglect, 67% the children's outcomes improved and the plan ceased, 28% became looked after/ court proceedings, 5 % transferred to other local authority or turned 18.

### **Education**

14. The Education Safeguarding Team at Herefordshire Council deliver training and updates at three DSL events held across the academic year and via the school's monthly spotlight newsletter. If schools are unable to attend the dedicated safeguarding lead (DSL) events, all receive the presentations and the information directly from the MASH education team after the event. Awareness of neglect is a key safeguarding of the last DSL event last term; there were 63 settings in attendance. The DSL events are open to primary through to post-16 and independent schools. All are on our DSL mailing list. Early years also have a focussed series of updates for nurseries and child minders.

15. When working with individual schools we explore the contextual information for the particular school based on its locality within Herefordshire, we discuss the neglect versus poverty distinction ensuring staff are fully aware that poverty is a lack of financial resources limiting a decent standard of living, while neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or emotional needs, potentially harming them. Poverty is an economic state, whereas neglect is a behaviour.
16. DSL training makes clear, that school level early help at the earliest opportunity will support a family or a child to avert the need for multi-agency involvement. Since 23/24 the annual safeguarding audit has required schools to confirm that they publish their Early Help offer on their school website, an increase from 66% in 23/24 to 89% in 25/26 has been recorded.
17. The annual audit also requires schools to confirm that all staff have read and understood - Keeping children Safe in Education (KCSIE). KCSIE contains clear guidance and information regarding neglect and the expected response to it when staff have a concern about a child or family. With every rewrite of KCSIE, we emphasise to all DSL's the content that has remained a cornerstone of the document and new additions to legislation or guidance. This is reinforced in the face-to-face DSL meeting in the summer term. In the 25/26 audit 100% of the schools confirmed that they utilise the West Midlands Safeguarding procedures. This indicates that schools in Herefordshire are accessing the child neglect practitioner resources.

**ADCS Peer Review with Birmingham Children's Trust February 26/ presentation to West Midlands ADCS March 26**

18. As part of the wider West Midlands work programme, Assistant Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) undertake annual peer challenges across the region enabling two LAs to come together to review a key priority together.
19. Birmingham Children's Trust and Herefordshire presented a shared challenge around neglect. Despite operating within very different geographies and population sizes. Data was used per 10,000 to support understanding of data. Each Local Authorities Strategies, resources and response to neglect was scrutinised. Each area examined their peers Neglect Strategy, data sets, and multi-agency practices. Despite very different demographics, and geography both authorities recognised a proportion of repeated child protection (CP) plans, entrenched patterns of emotional abuse being used previously as a "catch-all," and challenges distinguishing poverty and relationship challenges from neglect. Both have invested in tools such as the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2), strengthened early help pathways, and are working to improve professional confidence, consistency, and sustainability across systems.
20. Strengths identified were:
  - a. **Clear multi-agency commitment** to tackling neglect, with strong communication between agencies, especially across health, police, and children's services. All statutory partners attended the session from both LAs (which was not seen in any other peer review across the West Midlands)

- b. **Significant reduction in both Agencies CP numbers**, Birmingham (22%) Herefordshire repeat plans (23% and all over 4 years since previous plan) following purposeful work on thresholds, earlier reviews, audit, and challenge on long-standing plans.
- c. **Well-established neglect tools**, including GCP2, neglect screening tools, and multi-agency trainers, particularly embedded in early help and family support work.
- d. **Neglect Champions model in BCT** was seen as a key strength and one Herefordshire is adopting as it provides strong, enthusiastic, practitioners embedded in frontline practice and supports sustainability despite limited resources.
- e. **Heat Maps – Birmingham** will be adopting Herefordshire’s heat maps, cross boundary working with neighbours sharing data, strong pre-birth pathways, improved joint Section 47 investigations (38%→60%), and community-based resource development.
- f. **Rapid multi-agency response to complex cases**, including perplexing presentations and medical neglect, this was supported in Herefordshire by strong ICB/designated doctor input and a psychologist working with young people with diabetes after a CSPR in 2024. Self-neglect is also seen as a key indicator in maternity units.
- g. **Herefordshire’s locality model**, Strong partnership with Health in addressing medical neglect with a psychologist to support. Self-neglect an indicator at maternity.
- h. **Herefordshire’s work with West Mercia police** to understand neglect outcomes. Heat maps and shared data set and joint with neighbouring WCC Authority to support wider oversight.

21. Both authorities described challenges in:

- a. **Maintaining sustainability** as Birmingham Trust rely on a time-limited resource to promote and train in neglect and HSCP rely on individuals across partners providing the training which is challenging with reducing budgets and rising expectations across services in continued periods of change.
- b. **Data gaps**: Neither authority can easily track GCP2 completion or impact via their IT systems
- c. **Large siblings’ groups and entrenched intergenerational neglect** requires stronger tools, training, and group supervision.
- d. **Challenges of differentiation between neglect and poverty issue such as poor housing, parenting in B&B, food banks**: Workers across both authorities struggle to ‘confidently’ distinguish the two.

e. **Rurality in Herefordshire in gaining services and capacity in Birmingham:**

Access barriers, reducing services and difficulty sustaining multi-agency presence.

22. Overall, the review supported two very different local contexts with strikingly similar system challenges. Both authorities demonstrate strong commitment, creative practice, and robust partnership engagement, particularly in early help, multi-agency training, and complex case management. However, both face issues with sustainability, data consistency, education engagement, and a continuing pattern (although reducing of repeat neglect cases). The peer discussion was highly reflective, practical, and constructive, surfacing clear opportunities for shared learning - particularly around data, IT systems, professional confidence, and long-term embedding of neglect strategies. Both Local Authorities committed to improve tracking and visibility of GCP2, strengthening engagement with education settings and sharing the positives and evidence base for GCP in schools. It was also agreed to deliver briefings for practitioners on unintentional neglect and strengthen multi agency supervision for complex neglect cases, including the rollout of Family Formulation Meetings in Herefordshire.

23. The focus on neglect will continue within the changes for the Families First Partnership Programme from the Children and Wellbeing Bill 2026 and within the wider partnership, with the strategy due to be refreshed in 2027.

## **Consultees**

West Mercia Police

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board

## **Appendices**

Appendix A - Scrutiny Update revised slides from Peer Review 022026 final

Appendix B - Focus on Neglect from Natalie Solomon - Associate Director for Nursing Quality and Safeguarding

## **Background papers and resources**

[Child Abuse and Neglect](#)

[HSCP Website](#)

[Graded Care Profile 2 \(GCP2\)](#)

[NSPCC](#)



# Scrutiny Update -Regional Peer Review on Neglect 24 February 2026

## Herefordshire County Council & Birmingham Childrens Trust



**Referrals** HCC 119 per 10,000  
BCT 138 per 10,000

**CIN -** HCC 280 per 10,000  
BCT 261 per 10,000

**CP** HCC 38 per 10,000  
BCT 45 per 10,000

# Partnership



- **HSCP Child Neglect Strategy 2024-2027** – Objectives are:
- **Multi-agency strategic leadership is in place to tackle child neglect in Herefordshire.**
- Overseen by the HSCP and Quality and Effectiveness Group Sub-Group
- **Improved awareness and recognition of neglect-** Increased referrals with category of neglect across system to ensure support to children
- **Develop a multi-agency dataset that highlights the prevalence of neglect-** in place reviewed by Q&E sub -group and across boundaries with Worcestershire CC-
- **Prevent and minimise the incidents of child neglect and improve the effectiveness of responses to neglect including assessment.** Increase in awareness with earlier identification , reduction in CP numbers, and evidenced more accurate identification.
- **Improve training and improved use of the Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP) Toolkits** and training delivered across the Partnership with over 800 practitioners trained

# West Mercia Police

- Neglect is a priority for Herefordshire Safeguarding Partnership.
- Use of Police Protection Powers in neglect cases are usually appropriate. Greater connectivity with Childrens Services. Multi-agency review would be beneficial e.g. Shropshire
- 50% increase in joint s47 investigations following review Q2 2025/26 –
- Student officers receive mandatory training around neglect with specialist PPU officers trained to undertake criminal investigations in neglect.
- Learning is disseminated from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.
- Neglect toolkits are available to practitioners on the safeguarding website –
- The voice of the child is often captured (AWARE) and risk assessments incorporated in the criminal investigation - work in progress on AWARE and CRA's generally

# How police treat neglect as a criminal offence-ongoing review

- There is multi-agency training provided by the partnership in “understanding neglect in all ages”) Although open to all officers, normally only taken up by PPU staff and that take up is low.
- Neglect can be subjective and sometimes mitigating factors prevent a criminal investigation, (mental health, learning difficulties) .
- Outcome 20 (further action will be taken by another agency) is used when Police record neglect and are not pursuing a criminal investigation.
- Partnership audit required re perceived low charge rate for neglect.
- There is currently no data in relation to how many charges and convictions we have for child neglect . The only Police data shows recorded child cruelty incidents and outcomes

# Strengthening the Police Response to Neglect Through VHUB Centralisation

- In September 2025, West Mercia Police centralised all Harm Assessment Units into a single Vulnerability Hub (VHUB), bringing together four Local Authorities to create defined decision-making, clear intervention thresholds, and consistent supervision.
- Safeguarding functions were unified into one coordinated hub, reducing duplication, improving consistency across teams, and establishing clear pathways for action.
- The VHUB enhances the identification of neglect through specialist training on criminal thresholds, shared understanding of when neglect becomes a criminal investigation, and direct access to multi-agency expertise.

- Centralised oversight enables early detection, including spotting repeat referrals, recognising patterns of neglect sooner, ensuring consistent attendance at strategy meetings, and triggering police investigations at the appropriate stage.
- This model delivers clearer roles, consistent processes, earlier intervention, and a strong multi-agency response, ensuring neglect is recognised and treated as both a safeguarding concern and a criminal offence when thresholds are met.
- As the VHUB model embeds, more auditing is taking place and where learning needs around neglect are identified, intervention with staff and training is put in place.

# Health – strengths

- Across ICN and Wye Valley -2 GCP trainers
- All HV and School Nursing Teams have neglect and GCP training
- Reviewed and promoted annually at conference – Q3 2025 conference was Adolescent neglect-
- Medical neglect diabetes after learning review psychologist in place
- Self neglect as an indicator for parents presenting at maternity
- Think Family training across safeguarding forums with neglect and wider disability focus – to support wider response

# Health – strengths and increased awareness

- High conversion rates for MARFs and GCP2
- Increase in practitioners being lead practitioners
- Health Trust train staff internally for both neglect and GCP2, this is monitored and tracked
- All areas of Trust have safeguarding supervision
- Psychologist in place at Trust for diabetes, following a learning review.
- Trust have ‘Think Family’ forums and include a Neglect focus with children with disabilities
- Pediatric ward staff use ‘Voice of the Child’ toolkit to gather children’s voices
- Increased use of audit and data set reporting at Quality and Effectiveness Group

# Health- Challenges

- GPs have very short consultation times which limits their professional curiosity
- GPs refer for neglect but do not use the Neglect toolkit but use their own trained knowledge and understanding of neglect to identify concerns
- PCNs keep a record of referrals into CSC but do not have these broken down into categories
- **Next Steps** -Maintaining data on reason for referral from health data base regarding type of concern.
- Wider evaluation needed of the data for trends across County

## Ofsted Jan 26

- ***Families benefiting from effective early help and family support delivered by a multi-agency network of professionals.***
- ***Well considered, comprehensive assessments by social workers, that are informed by the views of children, families and other professionals, and that demonstrate an understanding of the strengths in families, balancing this against presenting risks and needs”***
- ***There is a renewed practice focus on children living in neglectful households, with recent interventions evidencing a positive impact on children’s lives.***
- ***Effective Partnerships, MA network of professionals which meet regularly***
- ***Appropriate thresholds for care and protection being applied effectively with strong management oversight at all tiers, demonstrating evidence-based rationale for further action.***
- ***When children’s circumstances do not change and risks escalate, the pre-proceedings stage of the Public Law Outline process is strong. This provides effective oversight to ensure that families get the support they need to divert from family court proceedings and for children to remain living with their families.***

## Scrutiny Committee Report - Health Focus on Neglect

### 1. Purpose and Scope

This paper provides a high-level overview of health-sector strengths, emerging improvements, and ongoing challenges in identifying and responding to neglect across the Herefordshire health system. It draws on current practice themes including training, safeguarding supervision, multi-agency coordination and contribution, and the use of audit mechanisms to support safeguarding effectiveness.

### 2. The Health Role in Neglect Response

Health services sit at a key point in early identification of neglect, due to routine contact staff have with children and families across universal, targeted, and specialist pathways. This includes maternity services, health visiting, school nursing, general practice, community services, and hospital services.

### 3. Strengths

The health system demonstrates a strong platform for neglect response, with several foundational assets in place:

- **Workforce Development and Training Coverage**-There are 2 GCP trainers in Wye Valley, and health visiting and school nursing teams have established access to neglect and GCP training. Training is supported through regular reinforcement and visibility, including annual review and promotion through conference activity. The growth in practitioners acting as lead practitioners suggests an increasing confidence in risk articulation and case ownership. Trust internal training for neglect and GCP2 that is monitored and tracked indicates movement toward more formal assurance of workforce readiness.
- **Thematic Learning and Practice Development**- Neglect related themes are being actively strengthened through learning reviews and targeted topic focus, which indicates an organisational willingness to translate learning into service improvement. Following learning review outcomes, the presence of a psychologist supporting diabetes related safeguarding reflects purposeful alignment of clinical expertise to safeguarding risk areas, especially where medical neglect is a known concern. Inclusion of neglect and disability focus strengthens a more equitable safeguarding response for children with additional vulnerabilities.
- **Safeguarding Supervision**- The availability of safeguarding supervision across Trust areas suggests that practitioners have structured support for reflection, case direction, and risk escalation key enablers of professional curiosity and consistent threshold application.
- **Think Family and the voice of the Child**- Activity across safeguarding forums supports a broader lens, including attention to parents and carers, family functioning, and disability-Specialist. Paediatric ward staff use a “Voice of the

**Natalie Solomon**  
Associate Director for Nursing, Quality and Safeguarding

## **Scrutiny Committee Report - Health Focus on Neglect**

Child” toolkit, supporting structured methods to ensure children’s experiences and perspectives inform assessment and care planning.

### **4. Challenges**

Despite the recognised strengths, systemic constraints in primary care are currently limiting the consistency and depth of the neglect response. Short appointment times can reduce opportunities to fully explore family circumstances, ask follow-up questions, and triangulate information, which can in turn affect professional curiosity and early help identification.

General Practice may refer concerns however, the neglect toolkit is not used consistently meaning staff are more reliant on their individual judgement and existing training. Whilst professional judgement remains essential, inconsistent use of tools can reduce the opportunity for the use of shared language and alignment on thresholds across agencies. General Practice also record referrals to children’s services, but these are not routinely coded by category (e.g., type of neglect or presenting concern), which limits the system’s ability to identify trends, hotspots, and emerging risks across localities and population groups.

### **5. Conclusion**

The health system is continuing to strengthen its response to neglect through workforce development and training, safeguarding supervision, thematic learning, and quality governance. We acknowledge that effective safeguarding relies not only on recognising indicators of neglect, but also on consistent referral quality, professional curiosity, multi-agency collaboration, and learning and assurance through supervision and audit. Further improvement is needed to strengthen practice across all pathways, with particular focus on supporting consistent approaches within primary care.



# CYSP Herefordshire

West Mercia Police Update –  
HMICFRS Inspections

Det/Supt Leanne Lowe  
May 2026



# Context

In the PEEL 2023-2025 Inspection (2024), West Mercia Police was issued an area for improvement (AFI) relating to protecting vulnerable people, specifically the force's ability to identify risk, assess safeguarding referrals, and make timely and proportionate referrals to statutory partners. HMICFRS identified that backlogs within the Vulnerability Hub (VHub), variability in referral quality, and inconsistent secondary risk assessment led to the force not being able to reassure itself that it was reducing the risk of harm to vulnerable people.

## Context continued.....


During 2025, HMICFRS determined that the force's response to safeguarding was inadequate and it hadn't improved how it managed safeguarding referrals since the previous inspection.

As a result, in September 2025, HMICFRS issued West Mercia Police with an accelerated cause for concern (ACoC), requiring immediate remedial action with close inspectorate oversight.

# Issue Identification

1. Referral backlog - risk not sufficiently understood or prioritised
2. Manual, fragmented police and partnership processes
3. Inconsistent quality of frontline risk assessments
4. Capacity misalignment
5. Limited real-time performance visibility

# Governance - Response

Child Protection Governance Board  Strategic Vulnerability Board

Urgent measures implemented, overseen by Chief Officers:

- Surge capacity introduced
- Analytical products produced to identify:
  - repeat children,
  - crime types carrying highest safeguarding risk,
  - and any hidden high-risk cases within backlogs.
  - missing Child Risk Assessments
- Performance dashboards and daily reporting introduced
- Partner agency engagement, including ACC-led briefings with Director's of Children Services
- AWARE Campaign (Voice of the Child)

# Process re-design

A dedicated process analyst was embedded within the VHub to map the end-to-end safeguarding journey, from initial police contact through to referral outcome. This work has underpinned a move towards a single pathway model, reducing variability across local authorities and strengthening consistency.

# Partnership Arrangements

West Mercia Police and the four Directors of Children's Services are currently progressing the Vulnerability Hub Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This document will clearly outline:

- processes
- timescales
- escalation routes
- shared accountability for safeguarding decisions.

The MOU aligns with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, reinforces lawful and proportionate information sharing, and formalises the VHub as a single, consistent policing interface for safeguarding.

# Workforce Capacity & Capability

- All VHub staff received refreshed MASH and safeguarding training.
- Workforce training on identification and recording of vulnerability.
- Single points of contact embedded within local policing areas and departments to review completion of child risk assessments.
- Monthly force audit modified to track quality of child risk assessment submissions
- Single and joint agency audits of Vhub referrals to promote continuous learning.
- Learning needs analysis and wellbeing offer established to support Vhub staff

# Digital Enablement and Automation

The force is moving away from manual processes by:

- Developing automated dashboards and Teams-based reporting to eliminate spreadsheet risk.
- Scoping robotic process automation (RPA) and AI-enabled solutions across referrals, information sharing requests (ISRs), Operation Encompass and MARAC workflows.
- Progressing a digital risk management, information-sharing platform, to efficiently process referrals, ISRs and Operation Encompass. This will improve quality, timeliness and the ability to audit cases.

# Current Position

West Mercia Police has moved from a position of dealing with the immediacy of the Vhub backlogs to proactive continuous improvement. Backlogs are now effectively managed, governance is embedded, and digital enablement will reduce risk and variability. The force continues to work openly and transparently with partners and HMICFRS, with a clear focus on sustained improvement and improved outcomes for children and vulnerable adults.

The journey is ongoing, but the force is now demonstrably learning, adapting and modernising in line with national expectations and best practice.



**Title: Work Programme 2026-27**

**Meeting: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: Tuesday 12 May 2026**

**Report by: Statutory Scrutiny Officer**

**Classification**

Open

**Report purpose**

The report:

- Provides the committee with a draft work programme for the committee, for approval.
- Provides the committee with a copy of the council's forward plan of key decisions to assist the committee in deciding its programme of work.
- Lists the recommendations made by the committee since January 2025, and any responses to these recommendations.

**Background**

1. A fundamental part of good scrutiny is planning and agreeing a programme of work for the committee to undertake. A well-considered work programme:
  - a. identifies priorities for the committee's work that align with corporate and partnership priorities, as well as reflecting community concern;
  - b. ensures that each identified topic has clear objectives that focus the committee's work;
  - c. creates a timetable for the committee's programme of work so that the committee carry out its work at the optimal time; and
  - d. provides officers and partners with requirements for evidence that will support the committee in providing evidence-based scrutiny.

**Meeting objectives**

2. To agree the committee's work programme.
3. To note the work programmes of Herefordshire Council's other scrutiny committees.

**Report information**

4. The most recent work programme was published on 1 May 2026 and is attached as Appendix 1.
5. Attached as Appendix 2 to this report is the council's most recently published forward plan of key decisions.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Danial Webb, Statutory Scrutiny Officer, email: danial.webb@herefordshire.gov.uk

6. Appendix 3 is a list of all recommendations made by the committee in 2025 and 2026.

### **Consultees**

7. To prepare this work programme, the committee chairs have met with officers of the council to identify potential priority areas of work for the committee. These priority areas have been scheduled within the work programme to ensure the committee considers topics when it is most useful to do so. A draft of this work programme has then been circulated to the council's corporate leadership team and other key senior directors, alongside committee chairs, for further comment and refinement.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Work Programme May 2026

Appendix 2 – Herefordshire Council Forward Plan 1 May 2026

Appendix 3 – Recommendations made by Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in 2025 and 2026.

### **Background papers and resources**

None



## APPENDIX 1

# SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

## May 2026 – March 2027

Below are the work programmes of Herefordshire Council's five scrutiny committees and their six task and finish groups.

Work programmes are subject to change, with revised programmes agreed at the end of formal committee meetings.

***Please note that no meetings will be scheduled after March 2027 until after the 2027 Council elections have concluded.***

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# Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

## Committee work programme

### *Committee Briefing*

29 April and 8 May 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Ofsted Action Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of the work underway to respond to Ofsted's inspection of children's services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member briefing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Tina Russell, Corporate Director, Children's Services</b></li> </ul>

### **Committee Meeting**

12 May 2026 **report deadline 1 May 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 7 May 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) inspection findings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee briefing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEEL inspection report and findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Leanne Lowe</b></li> <li>Ruby Card, Service Manager MASH, ECHO &amp; SAFE</li> <li>Rachel Gillott</li> </ul>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b></li> </ul>
<b>Neglect Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the definition of intention and unintentional neglect.</li> <li>Feedback on regional peer review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officer report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Rachel Gillott</b></li> <li>Natalie Solomon, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board</li> <li>Leanne Lowe, West Mercia Police</li> </ul>

**Committee Meeting**22 July 2026 **report deadline 14 July 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 17 July 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Families First Programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer review findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Dawn Knight, Service Manager Early Help</b></li> <li>Lindsay MacHardy, Public Health Principal</li> <li><i>Core members of the steering group</i></li> </ul>
<b>All Age access to play and open space</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree terms of reference for a review of access to play and other open space.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terms of reference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Lindsay MacHardy</b></li> <li><b>Emily Garner</b></li> <li><b>Leigh Whitehouse</b></li> <li><b>Ed Bradford</b></li> <li><b>HVOSS (possibly)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Early Help Task and Finish Group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review group findings and recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final group report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Chair, Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</b></li> </ul>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b></li> </ul>

**Committee Meeting**6 October 2026 **report deadline 28 September 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 2 October 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Alternative provision</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of capital programme relating to alternative provision</li> <li>Overview of existing provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officer report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Liz Farr</b></li> <li>Louise Tanner, Head of Learning and Achievement</li> <li>Hilary Jones, Head of Additional Needs</li> </ul>

<b>Youth Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tina Russell</li> <li>• Hereford Rural Media</li> <li>• Will Lindsey HVOSS</li> <li>• Lindsay McHardy</li> </ul>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>

#### Topics for possible future scrutiny

- Youth provision
- Participation strategy
- Housing
- School place planning
- Fostering (generally)
- SEND white paper

# Early help task and finish group

## Terms of reference

### Background

Herefordshire's Early Help offer includes both universal and targeted services aimed at supporting children, young people, and families before statutory intervention is required. The offer includes:

- **Universal services:** Provided largely through Talk Community, voluntary and community organisations, schools, health, and public health-funded initiatives.
- **Targeted early help:** Led by the Early Help team within Children's Services, working directly with families who require structured support.

Key developments in this area in recent years include:

- Integration of Early Help into wider Children's Services through locality models.
- Introduction of Families First and Lead Practitioner roles.
- Recruitment of two new children's-focused community development workers within Talk Community.
- Partnership commissioning (such as with the PCC) to support local early intervention initiatives.

To build on these developments, work is underway to identify and address weaknesses in current practice, including:

- Persistent confusion around distinctions between universal and targeted Early Help.
- Limited public visibility of the Early Help offer and recent developments.
- Variability in provision and access across different localities.
- Pressure on schools to deliver Early Help without sufficient funding or infrastructure.
- Need for improved coordination between statutory and non-statutory partners.

### Purpose

The group therefore aims to provide a constructive and collaborative space to:

- Recognise strengths in current Early Help provision.
- Identify good practice across different communities.
- Highlight gaps or inconsistencies in provision and the work in place to address them.

**Scope of Inquiry:**

In recognition of the broad and varied nature of early help available in Herefordshire, the group intends to carry out two distinct but closely interdependent streams of work:

- **Targeted Early Help and Families First**
  - Understanding the Families First implementation.
  - Exploring the role of lead practitioners.
  - Clarifying the role of schools and multi-agency collaboration.
- **Community and Universal Offer**
  - Mapping and showcasing local Early Help initiatives.
  - Exploring partnerships with Talk Community hubs, voluntary groups, parish and town councils.
  - Engagement around youth activities, access barriers (transport), and local innovation.

**Work Programme**

The group will determine its programme of work to meet the above objectives. This programme will include:

- Local Appreciative Inquiry events in Hereford City Ross, and Leominster, supported by Talk Community and Children's Services.
- Case studies
- Meeting with families and professionals, individually and in focus groups

# Work programme

## Targeted early help and Families First

- Recognise strengths in current Early Help provision.
- Identify good practice across different communities.
- Highlight gaps or inconsistencies in provision and the work in place to address them.

### Guide:

Not completed and overdue	Partially completed and overdue	On track	Completed
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Objective	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Understand targeted early help - rationale and performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of programme briefing note               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Thresholds of need</li> <li>○ Current performance management</li> <li>○ Current programme of activity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Simon Cann	November 2025
Overview of current Families First programme and targeted early help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with service managers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Victoria Leader</li> <li>○ Dawn Knight</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Simon Cann	15 Dec 2026, 3pm
Update on implementation of Families First programme and targeted early help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with service managers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dawn Knight</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Simon Cann	14 or 19 May 2026
Support for young carers, no wrong door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with young carers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Jane Marshall – South – Ross and VL, John Burgess, Susan Brace, Niall Crawford</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Simon Cann	2 Mar 2026, 3pm
Appraise locality-based targeted early help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with a locality team               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Victoria Roe – North</li> <li>○ Jane Marshall – South – Ross</li> <li>○ Chantelle Bennett – Central</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Simon Cann	16 Jan 2025, 3pm

Objective	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tracey Spencer – Central</li> </ul>		
Working with schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting with schools</li> <li>○ Neil Crawford</li> </ul>	Simon Cann	21 Jan 2026, 3pm
Commissioned targeted early help services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting with Venture – commissioned service</li> <li>○ Hilary Thomas hilary.thomas@venture.org</li> </ul>	Simon Cann	27 Feb 2026, 1pm

### Community and Universal Offer

- Mapping and showcasing local Early Help initiatives.
- Exploring partnerships with Talk Community hubs, voluntary groups, parish and town councils.
- Engagement around youth activities, access barriers (transport), and local innovation.

Topic	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Overview of local early help initiatives	Early help marketplace – Ross-on-Wye	Danial Webb	13 Oct 2025
Overview of local early help initiatives	Early help marketplace - Hereford	Danial Webb	17 Nov 2025
Overview of local early help initiatives	Early help marketplace - Leominster	Danial Webb	3 Dec 2025
Understand how midwives support young parents to be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting with midwives</li> <li>● Emily Strange (named safeguarding midwife)</li> <li>● Sian Jenkins (community Midwife manager)</li> </ul>	Simon Cann	20 Mar 2026
The role of school nurses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting with school nurses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ emma.dewar@wvt.nhs.uk</li> <li>○ Wendy.Long@wvt.nhs.uk</li> <li>○ Nikki.Lawley@wvt.nhs.uk</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Simon Cann	8 May 2026
The role of health visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting with health visitors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lyndsay McHardy, Julia Stephens -0-19 Strat.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Simon Cann	17 Mar 2026

Topic	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hannah Bannister-White</li> <li>● “Best Start in Life” strategy</li> </ul>		
Youth clubs overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Overview of youth and sports clubs in Herefordshire</li> <li>● Visit to youth club</li> <li>● Meeting with youth club attendees</li> <li>● HVOSS Will Lindesay</li> </ul>	Simon Cann	9 April 2026
Talk Community and co-ordination of support for universal community services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Overview community support carried out by Talk Community.</li> <li>● Nikki Stroud, Emily Lowe, Michelle Trussler, Abigail Allcock</li> </ul>	Simon Cann	21 April 2026

#### Report to Cabinet

Topic	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Draft final report	Learning from above meetings		May 26
Agree final report	Draft report	Task and Finish Group	June 26
Present to Cabinet	Final report	Toni Fagan	July 26

# Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee

## Committee work programme

### Committee Meeting

23 June 2026 **report deadline 15 June 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Hereford Bypass Phase One – full business case</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutinise the full business case to ensure it provides Cabinet with sufficient information to make an informed decision on Hereford Bypass Phase One, having regard to the assessment criteria.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hereford Bypass Phase One full business case.</li> <li>Assessment criteria for the full business case.</li> <li>Complete compliance matrix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Delivery Director, Infrastructure</b></li> <li><b>Representative AECOM</b></li> <li><b>Expert Witness</b></li> <li><b>Bypass Phase One Project Manager</b></li> </ul>
<b>Broadband Connectivity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of coverage gaps and speeds, and work to address them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation with businesses, schools, parish councils</li> <li>Public call for evidence</li> <li>Supplier business plans</li> <li>Ofcom policy</li> <li>Other evidence to be determined</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>To be determined</b></li> </ul>

**Committee Meeting**7 July 2026 **report deadline 29 June 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 2 July 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Year of delivery – capital projects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid-year review of capital projects taking place in 2026.</li> <li>Scrutinise project budgets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council capital programme</li> <li>Individual programme progress reports</li> <li>Capital delivery programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Service Director, Economy and Growth</b></li> <li>Director of Resources</li> </ul>
<b>Public participation in planning task and finish group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree the task and finish final report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task and finish group report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b></li> </ul>

**Committee Meeting**Autumn 2026 **report deadline TBC 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>UK Shared Prosperity Fund</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of projects funded</li> <li>Examine future funding opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Service Director, Economy and Growth</b></li> </ul>

**Committee Meeting**

27 January 2027 **report deadline 19 January 2027** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<p><b>Year of delivery – capital projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of year review of capital projects taking place in 2026.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council capital programme</li> <li>• Individual programme progress reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To be determined</b></li> </ul>

\*The Corporate Director, Economy and Environment, Cabinet Member, Economy and Growth, Cabinet Member, Community Services and Assets, Cabinet Member, Roads and Regulatory Services, and Cabinet Member, Transport and Infrastructure, all have a standing invitation to the meeting.

**Additional Topics Proposed for Future Consideration**

- Hereford City Masterplan

# Placemaking and Public Participation task and finish group

## Terms of reference

### Background

Herefordshire is entering a significant period of growth and change. Delivering new housing, infrastructure, and services must strengthen local communities and reflect the county's distinctive rural character.

Research shows that while public involvement in planning is vital, engagement often remains procedural rather than meaningful. Many residents feel disconnected from decision-making, uncertain about how to participate, or unconvinced that their input makes a difference.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires every local planning authority such as Herefordshire to publish a Statement of Community Involvement. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 and resultant secondary legislation is likely to place greater emphasis on this statement with a proposed requirement for a local planning authority Community Involvement Scheme. This provides a timely opportunity to modernise Herefordshire's existing Statement of Community Involvement (January 2022), ensuring it reflects Herefordshire Council's 2024–2028 priorities for economic growth and community development.

This task and finish group will explore how Herefordshire can plan with its communities, ensuring that growth, infrastructure and environment evolve together in a fair, transparent, and creative way. It will then make recommendations to underpin the Council's new statutory engagement framework.

The aim is to move beyond statutory minimum consultation and create a culture in which residents look forward to new development as something they have helped to shape. Growth with, not to, communities.

### Purpose

To identify and recommend practical, evidence-based measures for making community engagement in planning and placemaking more inclusive, accessible, and effective across Herefordshire. The group will:

- Examine best practice and innovative approaches to public participation.
- Advise on the update and replacement of the Statement of Community Involvement (2022) with a new Community Involvement Scheme (2026).
- Ensure that community voice and cultural engagement sit at the heart of the county's future planning system.

## Objectives

- To understand current legislation and good practice in community involvement and evaluate how residents currently engage with planning in Herefordshire and identify barriers to participation.
- Review and learn from good practice in community engagement in other local authorities and with housing providers.
- Inform and help draft the replacement of the Statement of Community Involvement (2022) with a new Community Involvement Scheme (2026)
- Make recommendations to the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet to deliver the above.

## Scope

The task and finish group will focus on how communities are involved in shaping growth, not on what is built or where sites are allocated. It will not duplicate the work of the Housing Development Working Group or the technical drafting of the Local Plan.

## Membership and Governance

- 5–7 elected members of Herefordshire Council (no Cabinet members).
- Up to two co-opted members with relevant expertise or community experience.
- Supported by officers from Democratic Services, Economy and Environment, and Communications.
- Reports through the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee, which will submit recommendations to Cabinet for formal response.

## Expected Outputs

- A final report setting out
  - practical recommendations for improving public participation in planning and placemaking.
  - A proposed structure and content outline for Herefordshire’s new Community Involvement Scheme (2026), replacing the 2022 Statement.
  - Case studies and prototypes demonstrating innovative engagement methods suitable for rural and market-town contexts.

## Success Measures

- At least five examples of national or local best practice reviewed.
- Two or more new engagement methods agreed or trialled.
- Clear, costed recommendations adopted within the 2026 Community Involvement Scheme.
- Cabinet adoption of group recommendations into council policy.

# WORK PROGRAMME

## Guide:

Not completed and overdue	Partially completed and overdue	On track	Completed
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**Objective** To understand current legislation and good practice in community involvement and evaluate how residents currently engage with planning in Herefordshire and identify barriers to participation.

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Understand current legislation and good practice in community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</li> <li>• Overview of The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023</li> <li>• Good practice guidance</li> </ul>		November 2025
Evaluate how residents currently engage with planning in Herefordshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herefordshire Council Statement of Community Involvement.</li> <li>• Interviews with housing associations and council planning officers.</li> </ul>		November 2025
Identify current barriers to participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with housing association, community groups and council planning officers.</li> </ul>		November 2025
<b>GROUP MEETING</b>		<b>Henry Merricks Murgatroyd</b>	<b>November 2025</b>

**Objective** Review and learn from good practice in community engagement in other local authorities and with housing providers.

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Examine requirements for new Community Involvement Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft regulation and statutory guidance</li> </ul>		December 2025

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Identify good practice in other local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literature review</li> <li>Site visit (if useful)</li> </ul>		January 2026
Identify creative engagement methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desktop search ideas such as including digital tools, easy-read and visual materials, short videos, and cultural or media partnerships.</li> </ul>		January 2026
<b>GROUP MEETING</b>			<b>February 2025</b>

**Objective** Inform and help draft the replacement of the Statement of Community Involvement (2022) with a new Community Involvement Scheme.

**This section of the work of the task and finish group is paused due to legislative changes that will replace the Community Involvement Scheme.**

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Work with officers to set new parameters and scope for the Community Involvement Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Community Involvement Scheme</li> </ul>	TBA	March 2026
Ensure inclusivity by improving reach to rural residents, younger people, working families, and under-represented communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Community Involvement Scheme</li> </ul>	TBA	April 2026
Recommend resourcing and governance arrangements to support sustained, meaningful participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with planning officers in a 'good' local planning authority</li> <li>Draft recommendations</li> </ul>		May 2026
<b>GROUP MEETING</b>			May 2026

**Objective** Make recommendations to the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Draft report to committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="674 288 869 316">• Draft report</li></ul>		June 2026
Draft report and recommendations to Cabinet (if required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="674 349 869 376">• Final report</li></ul>		July 2026

# Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee

## Committee work programme

### Committee Meeting

17 June 2026 **report deadline 9 June 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 11 June 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Land Use Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review the operation of current council policy on enabling and enforcing appropriate land management and use (including riparian responsibilities) across the county;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ to protect carriageways, ditches and verges.</li> <li>○ To look at related enforcement issues – including planning breaches.</li> <li>○ The impact on public rights of way.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To explore how the local authority can support adoption of sustainable farming methods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcement analysis</li> <li>• Current council planning regulation concerning land use management</li> <li>• MP office briefing on the withdrawal of the Sustainable Farming Incentive</li> <li>• Catchment Sensitive farming data (including regenerative farming)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Richard Vaughan, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager</b></li> <li>• Kelly Gibbons, Development Management Service Manager</li> <li>• Environment Agency representative</li> <li>• NFU</li> <li>• Mark Tansley, Development Manager – Enforcement</li> <li>• Officer - Highways</li> </ul>
<b>Bus Services task and finish group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal update from the group chair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No evidence required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Task and finish group chair</b></li> </ul>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b></li> </ul>

\*The Corporate Director, Economy and Environment and Cabinet Member, Environment, both have a standing invitation to the meeting.

## Committee Meeting

21 September 2026 **report deadline 11 September 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 17 September 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<p><b>Transformation of the economy and environment directorate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the transformed leadership structure and how it is performing currently, in particular where responsibility for delivering on the council's environmental priorities and targets, including net zero.</li> <li>Has embedding a commercial mindset impacted on the delivery of these environmental priorities and targets.</li> <li>Has transformation impacted on the overall resource dedicated to the environmental side of the directorate.</li> <li>Explore the case for a more distinct operational area for environmental matters under the Corporate Director.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officer report</li> <li>List of environmental project currently undertaken by Herefordshire Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>John Hobbs, Corporate Director Environment and Economy</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Buses and passenger services task and finish group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To receive the final report from the group and consider their recommendations, including testing the evidence on which they are based.</li> <li>To agree a set of recommendations to go forward from the committee to the executive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Chair, buses task and finish group</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Flooding spotlight review – terms of reference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To agree the terms of reference for a proposed spotlight review to scrutinise flood risk management and flood emergency responses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spotlight review terms of reference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b></li> </ul>

**Committee Meeting**

2 December 2026 **report deadline 24 November 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 27 November 2026

<b>Topic and Objectives</b>	<b>Evidence required</b>	<b>Attendees*</b>
<b>Rail Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives to be agreed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence to be agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Hobbs</li> <li>Ffion Horton</li> <li>Roger Allonby</li> <li>David Land</li> </ul>
<b>Herefordshire Council Carbon Management Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives to be agreed.</li> <li>Council-installed solar panels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carbon Management Plan</li> <li>Cabinet paper (if available)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Richard Vaughan</li> <li>Daniel Lenain</li> </ul>

**Prospective spotlight review**

March 2027

<b>Topic and Objectives</b>	<b>Evidence required</b>	<b>Attendees*</b>
<b>Flooding and flood risk management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terms of reference to be agreed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence to be agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Hobbs</li> <li>Other TBC</li> </ul>

# Bus and passenger services task and finish group

## Work programme

Guide:

Not completed and overdue	Partially completed and overdue	On track	Completed
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Objective	Activity or information needed	Carried out by	Timeline
<b>Initial review meeting</b>		<b>Task and Finish Group</b>	<b>July 2025</b>
Create a central information repository	Setup Teams library and chat space	Simon Cann, Danial Webb	September 2025
Review Herefordshire Council's current powers and responsibilities.	Compile and provide overview of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing legislation in England and Wales               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local Transport Act 2008</li> <li>○ Transport Act 2000</li> <li>○ Bus Service Act 2017</li> <li>○ Bus Services (No. 2) Bill</li> <li>○ Public Service Vehicle Regulations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <a href="#">Overview of who is responsible for local transport in England</a> (Commons library)</li> <li>• Any allied statutory guidance</li> <li>• Bus operator legislation and guidance.</li> <li>• How these apply in Herefordshire.</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos, task and finish group	Sep-Oct 2025

Objective	Activity or information needed	Carried out by	Timeline
Review current passenger transport operations in Herefordshire and how they meet current and future need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous council bus service reviews (c. 2019)</li> <li>• For both commercial and community operators               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Routes and frequency</li> <li>○ Passenger numbers</li> <li>○ Subsidy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Home to school transport               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Current services provided</li> <li>○ Current providers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• SEND transport</li> <li>• Adult Social Care Passenger transport</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	Sep-Oct 2025
Current local authority and regional funding	2025-2026 and medium-term funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• subsidised routes</li> <li>• community transport</li> <li>• other transport funding provided by the local authority</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	Sep-Oct 2025
<b>Review Meeting</b>		<b>Task and Finish Group</b>	<b>21 October 2025</b>
Overview of current BSIP funding	Summary of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">National Bus Strategy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Herefordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024</a></li> </ul> Briefing on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Allocation of the £3.2m BSIP grant (2025–26) (£1.3m capital, £1.9m revenue) e.g., shelters, passenger experience, supported services</a></li> <li>• Progress in delivering funded projects and services</li> <li>• Their contribution to improved services</li> </ul> Site visit to any BSIP-related capital project	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	Nov-Dec 2025
Assess Enhanced Partnership performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how the current <a href="#">enhanced partnership</a> timetabling meets the objectives of the partnership.</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis,	Nov-Dec 2025

Objective	Activity or information needed	Carried out by	Timeline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify ways to apply learning from the group to new ways of meeting the objectives of the enhanced partnership.</li> </ul>	Natalie Amos, task and finish group	
Combining bus services with other transport services	Desktop research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current rail services and how they align with bus services</li> </ul> Group meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network Rail or other responsible authority</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	Nov-Dec 2025
Explore cross-border and cross-county transport	Map and list of current cross-border services to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequency</li> <li>Operator</li> <li>Funding (if applicable)</li> </ul> Examples from other local authorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See previous work looking at other local authorities</li> <li>Identify opportunities for any cross-border service support</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	Nov-Dec 2025
<b>Review Meeting</b>		<b>Task and Finish Group</b>	<b>11 December 2025</b>
Community Transport	Site visits to community transport providers. Attendance at bus service forum. Overview brief of Services in Herefordshire, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current services, routes and frequencies</li> <li>Cost</li> <li>Funding</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	Jan-Mar 2026
Home to school and other resident transport	Overview brief of home to school services in Herefordshire, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current services, routes and frequencies</li> <li>Cost and funding</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	March 2026

Objective	Activity or information needed	Carried out by	Timeline
	Meeting with Home to school co-ordinator  Meeting with Transformation team		
<b>Review Meeting</b>		<b>Task and Finish Group</b>	<b>26 March 2026</b>
Examine how other rural local authorities provide sustainable services.	Internet research – what do they do in other rural local authorities? Suggested workstreams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demand Responsive transport               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ YorBus, CallConnect</li> <li>○ <a href="#">Worcestershire on Demand   Worcestershire County Council</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">The Robin (your bookable bus)   Gloucestershire County Council</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use of powers of funding               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use of enhanced partnerships – Oxfordshire, Cornwall</li> <li>○ Branding</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Integrating transport and social care               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community transport</li> <li>○ The role of third sector organisations</li> </ul> </li> </ul> Site Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shropshire DRT – Shrewsbury</li> <li>• Social care focused visit</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	June 2026
Bus franchising	Overview of Bus Services Bill  Overview of approach taken by other local authorities  Meeting with consultants or another local authority <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the barriers to franchising in rural areas?</li> <li>• Is this an opportunity for Herefordshire to pursue?</li> <li>• Are there partnership opportunities with other local authorities?</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	June 2026
<b>Review Meeting</b>		<b>Task and Finish Group</b>	<b>June/July 2026</b>

Objective	Activity or information needed	Carried out by	Timeline
Draft report and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft final report</li> <li>• Draft recommendations</li> </ul>	Simon Cann, David Land, Craig Lewis, Natalie Amos	September 2026
<b>Present report to Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee</b>		<b>Task and Finish Group</b>	<b>September 2026</b>

# Health Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

## Committee work programme

### Committee Briefing

10 June 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the work of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report</li> </ul>	<b>Joanna Newton, Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board</b>

### Committee Meeting

27 July 2026 **report deadline 17 July 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 23 July 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<b>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work to develop a new joint strategic needs assessment for Herefordshire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</li> </ul>	<b>Zoe Clifford, Director of Public Health</b>
<b>Health and Wellbeing Strategy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on delivery of the existing strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> </ul>	<b>Zoe Clifford, Director of Public Health</b>
<b>Adult Social Care budget outturn</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutinise financial outturn against budget</li> <li>Scrutinise performance against the performance management framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly budget outturn and performance monitoring</li> </ul>	<b>Hilary Hall, Corporate Director, Community Wellbeing</b>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>

**Committee Meeting****14 September 2026 report deadline 4 September 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 10 September 2026**

<b>Topic and Objectives</b>	<b>Evidence required</b>	<b>Attendees*</b>
<b>Right Care Right Place</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on work to deliver acute community mental health support in Herefordshire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence to be agreed</li> </ul>	<b>Gareth Morris, West Mercia Police</b> <b>Zoe Clifford, Director of Public Health</b>
<b>Meeting the demand for adult social care task and finish group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree draft report and recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final task and finish group report</li> </ul>	<b>Chair, task and finish group</b>
<b>Adult Social Care budget outturn</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutinise financial outturn against budget savings plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly budget outturn and performance monitoring</li> </ul>	<b>Hilary Hall, Corporate Director,</b> <b>Community Wellbeing</b>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>

**Committee Meeting****14 December 2026 report deadline 4 December 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning December 2026**

<b>Topic and Objectives</b>	<b>Evidence required</b>	<b>Attendees*</b>
<b>Shaping neighbourhood health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse how the health partnership identifies health needs in communities.</li> <li>Scrutinise provision of current and future neighbourhood health services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2Neighbourhood health bid</li> <li>Taurus Out of Hours GP service</li> <li>Worcestershire Council papers</li> </ul>	<b>Zoe Clifford, Director of Public Health</b>
<b>Adult Social Care budget outturn</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutinise financial outturn against budget savings plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly budget outturn and performance monitoring</li> </ul>	<b>Hilary Hall, Corporate Director,</b> <b>Community Wellbeing</b>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>

Special Committee Meeting (to be held once the inspection report is published.)

TBC report deadline TBC pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
<p><b>CQC Inspection of adult social care services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine findings of the recent CQC inspection of adult social care services.</li> <li>• Scrutinise any action plan arising from the inspection findings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CQC inspection findings</li> <li>• Post-inspection action plan</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hilary Hall, Corporate Director, Community Wellbeing</b></p>
<p><b>Work programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<p><b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b></p>

\*The Corporate Director, Community Wellbeing and Cabinet Member Adults, Health and Wellbeing, both have a standing invitation to the meeting.

# Meeting the demand for adult social care task and finish group

## Work programme

### Guide:

Not completed and overdue	Partially completed and overdue	On track	Completed
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**Objective** To understand the extent of demand for adult social care services provided or commissioned in Herefordshire, and the likely change over time.

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Understand Herefordshire's demographics and future demographic change	Demographic information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Understanding Herefordshire</i> demographic data</li> <li>• <i>Future population of Herefordshire</i> report</li> <li>• Joint Strategic Needs Assessment report</li> </ul>	Charlotte Worthy/Herefordshire Research team	Dec 25-Jan 26
Understand the demand for adult social care in Herefordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Market Position Statement</i></li> <li>• <i>Market Sustainability Plan</i></li> <li>• Current rates of demand for adult social care               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Type of demand (domiciliary, residential, nursing)</li> <li>○ Duration</li> <li>○ Change over time</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Zakia Loughead	Dec 25-Jan 26
Compare demographic change and demand for adult social care compared to other local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desktop research comparison with 'statistical neighbours'</li> </ul>	Danial Webb/Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd	Dec 25-Jan 26
<b>GROUP MEETING</b>		<b>Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd</b>	<b>26 February 2026</b>

**Objective** To explore the drivers of increased demand for adult social care, and the capacity of the local authority and other care providers to meet it.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
Increased complexity of demand from an ageing population	Site visit – supported housing provider Site visit – third sector organisation working with older adults		Feb-Mar 26
The nature of funding for social care	Briefing on social care funding	Zakia Loughead ASC finance team	Feb-Mar 26
The size and structure of the social care market in Herefordshire	Overview of social care market Meeting with care providers	Zakia Loughead	Feb-Mar 26
Lack of housing growth, and flatlining tax base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview with Cabinet portfolio holders</li> </ul>		Feb-Mar 26
<b>GROUP MEETING</b>		<b>Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd</b>	<b>22 April 2026</b>

**Objective** To identify strategies and work carried out by Herefordshire Council and partners such as housing associations and other organisations reduce demand for social care services, or to increase revenue to pay for services.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
Assistive technology	Visit to Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS) Team	TBC	May-Jun 26
Community based universal and targeted services	Meeting with Talk Community Meeting with third sector organisation	Emily Lowe – Talk Community	May-Jun 26

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
	Meeting with other community team in another local authority		
Market shaping and support	Meeting – service director Meeting – care providers’ network	Commissioning	May-Jun 26
Supported living	Meeting – director for housing support Visit to supported housing	Hayley Crane A supported housing provider	May-Jun 26
In-house services and the role of Hoople	Case study – Essex Meeting with Hoople		May-Jun 26
<b>GROUP MEETING</b>		<b>Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd</b>	<b>July 2026</b>

**Objective** To make recommendations to the executive on steps that should be taken to reduce service demand and to increase revenue.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
Write draft report and recommendations	Draft report and recommendations	Task and finish group	August 2026
Agree draft report and recommendations with committee	Draft report and recommendations	Task and finish group	September 2026

# Scrutiny Management Board

## Committee work programme

### Committee Meeting

3 July 2026 **report deadline 25 June 2026** member briefing 22 June 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 30 June 2026

Topic and objective	Evidence required	Attendees
<b>Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block Management Plan</b> Review the draft management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management Plan</li> </ul>	<b>Rachael Sanders, Director of Finance</b>
<b>Q4 Budget scrutiny</b> <b>Q4 Performance monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget report</li> <li>Supplementary information as requested by the committee</li> </ul>	<b>Cabinet members</b> Rachael Sanders Jessica Karia, Head of Corporate Performance and Intelligence
<b>Inequalities task and finish group final report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree final report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final report</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>
<b>Commercialisation task and finish group final report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree final report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final report</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>
<b>Hoople working group terms of reference</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terms of reference</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>

**Committee Meeting**

September 2026 **report deadline TBC 2026 member briefing TBC pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC**

Topic and objective	Evidence required	Attendees
Annual review of effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny annual review</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>

**Committee Meeting**

1 December 2026 **report deadline 23 November 2026 member briefing 24 November 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 27 November 2026**

Topic and objective	Evidence required	Attendees
<b>Q2 Budget scrutiny</b>  <b>Q2 Performance monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget report</li> <li>Supplementary information as requested by the committee</li> </ul>	<b>Cabinet members</b>  Rachael Sanders  Jessica Karia, Head of Corporate Performance and Intelligence
<b>Work programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review work programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft work programme</li> </ul>	<b>Statutory Scrutiny Officer</b>

**Long list of potential topics**

- Social Value in procurement
- Working with the voluntary sector and others to help deliver services
- Review of the workforce strategy
- Supplier risk management
- Emergency Planning
- Medium-Term Financial Strategy

# Inequality and social mobility task and finish group

## Work programme

### Guide:

Not completed and overdue	Partially completed and overdue	On track	Completed
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**Objective** To define and understand the different dimensions of inequality (including but not limited to protected characteristics, rurality, socio-economic background and care experience) and social mobility in Herefordshire and the United Kingdom, including Herefordshire Council's understanding of inequality and social mobility.

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
To define and understand the different dimensions of inequality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefing on different types of inequality, to include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wealth/income</li> <li>○ Health</li> <li>○ Rurality</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Briefing on groups affected by inequality               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Protected characteristics</li> <li>○ Military families</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Overview of inequality as defined by other local authority scrutiny</li> </ul>	Danial Webb	Sep-Oct 25
To understand those dimensions that are particularly relevant to Herefordshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sub-ward indices of deprivation</li> <li>• Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</li> <li>• Economic data</li> </ul>	Danial Webb and Charlotte Worthy	Sep-Oct 25
To test Herefordshire Council's understanding of inequality, how it prioritises different elements of inequality, and its priorities to tackle and reduce inequality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herefordshire Council Plan</li> <li>• Meeting with leader and deputy</li> <li>• <i>(should this be merged with the above?)</i></li> </ul>	Danial Webb and Charlotte Worthy	Sep-Oct 25

<b>GROUP MEETING</b>	<b>Danial Webb</b>	<b>November 2025</b>
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**Objective** To measure inequality and social mobility across the county and the different dimensions that impact on inequality and social mobility within the county and between Herefordshire and other parts of the UK.

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Evidence required</b>	<b>People to speak with</b>	<b>Date</b>
Collect and analyse relevant datasets pertaining to Herefordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sub-ward indices of deprivation</li> <li>• Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</li> <li>• Economic data TBC</li> </ul>	Ian Sockett and Charlotte Worthy	Jan-April 2026
<b>GROUP MEETING</b>		<b>Danial Webb</b>	<b>TBC 2026</b>

**Objective** To identify the plans, strategies and actions deployed by the council to reduce inequality and improve social mobility, and the degree to which they are likely to or are actually reducing inequality and improving social mobility, and the degree to which they are not.

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Evidence required</b>	<b>People to speak with</b>	<b>Date</b>
**work yet to be planned			
<b>GROUP MEETING</b>			<b>TBC</b>

**Objective** To make recommendations to the executive on steps that should be taken to meaningfully reduce inequality and improve social mobility across the county.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
Write draft report and recommendations	Draft report and recommendations	Task and finish group	June 2026
Agree draft report and recommendations with committee	Draft report and recommendations	Task and finish group	July 2026

# Commercialisation working group

## Terms of reference

### Background

Herefordshire Council faces a potential funding gap of £27.3 million for the 2026-27 financial year, and further funding gaps in future years. The executive has already identified commercialisation as key to its transformation programme. The executive has also indicated that commercialisation and income generation will form part of the strategy to address the funding gap.

Commercialisation within local government represents both a financial opportunity and a cultural challenge. Commercialisation could deliver significant cost savings and income-generating opportunities but only as a result of cultural change. For example [guidance](#) from the Association For Public Service Excellence emphasises that commercialisation cannot simply be a reaction to budget deficits – it requires an embedded strategy, a commercial mindset within the local authority, clear governance, and a well-developed understanding of risk.

To assist the Cabinet in developing a budget to propose to council Scrutiny Management Board will undertake a working group of members investigating how the council could increase income in the short and medium term alongside greater commercialisation.

Initial recommendations will be provided informally to the Cabinet by the end of November,

### Short- and Long-Term Opportunities

Short term: The working group will examine the opportunities of:

- reviewing and adjusting fees and charges,
- maximising income from council assets (such as property leases and car parks), or exploring asset repurposing or disposals.
- benchmarking against neighbouring authorities could identify under-priced services as well as gaining an understanding of work that has already been undertaken in this area and
- other opportunities for income generation

The working group will seek to understand the impact and the risks associated with any short term operations

Longer term: The working group will identify opportunities to increase income and to drive efficiency in future years across the life of the medium-term financial strategy including, but not limited to those opportunities presented by commercialisation.

Given the timescale the working group's recommendations, especially for future years may be quite high level. The working group will deliver the best-founded recommendations it can within the fixed (and tight) timescale.

### **Overall approach**

We propose a three-stage approach

- Herefordshire council is already working on commercialisation and income generation. The working group will consider current plans and arrangements, challenge these and work with officers to identify areas that they may not have considered.
- The working group will also have regard to the impact of their proposals on local people and the risks that may be associated with them.
- If there is time the working group will also investigate the strategic issues relating to commercialization and make recommendations for the cabinet to consider.

***The Working Group will also have regard to guidance and experience across the sector in regards to areas such as (not an exhaustive list):***

- The purposes of commercial activity, namely the balance between maximising income (for example, through fees, charges, or property ventures), supporting broader social value and strengthening community resilience.
- How the council might operate in markets without distorting competition and maintaining fairness to local businesses-governance and risk management
- The cultural dimension, which cannot be overstated. Officers and members must share a mindset that sees prudent risk-taking as legitimate. Without organisational readiness – training, leadership commitment, and internal capability – commercial ambitions will fail.

The scrutiny process must therefore explore how Herefordshire can build this culture safely, balancing entrepreneurial ambition with its statutory duty to protect public assets. It must also concern itself both with the immediate opportunities to increase income and the longer-term changes required to inculcate greater commercialisation.

# HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN



This document, known as the Forward Plan, sets out the decisions which are expected to be taken during the period covered by the Plan by either Cabinet as a whole, or by individual Cabinet Members. The Plan is updated regularly and is available on the Herefordshire Council website ([www.herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk)) and from Council Offices. This edition supersedes all previous editions.

The council must give at least 28 days' notice of key decisions to be taken. A key decision is one which results in the council incurring expenditure or making savings of £500,000 or more, and/or is likely to be significant in terms of the strategic nature of the decision or its impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the council to a significant number of people living or working in the locality affected.

**Current cabinet members are listed below.** For more information and links papers for Cabinet meetings please visit <https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251>

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

Documents submitted in relation to each decision will be a formal report, which may include one or more appendices. Reports will usually be made available on the council website at least 5 clear working days before the date of the decision. Occasionally it will be necessary to exempt part or all of a decision report from publication due to the nature of the decision, for example if it relates to the commercial or business affairs of the council. Other documents may be submitted in advance of the decision being taken and will also be published on the website unless exempt.

To request a copy of a decision report or related documents please contact [governancesupportteam@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:governancesupportteam@herefordshire.gov.uk) or telephone 01432 261699.

<b>Report title and purpose</b>	<b>Decision Maker and Due date</b>	<b>Lead officer and lead cabinet member</b>	<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Notice of decision first published / ID</b>	<b>Issue Type and exemptions</b>
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FORWARD PLAN FOR 1 May 2026 ONWARDS

The following information is provided for each entry in the Forward Plan:

<b>Heading</b>	<b>Contains</b>
<b>Report title and purpose</b>	A summary of the proposal
<b>Decision Maker and Due date</b>	Who will take the decision and the date the decision is expected to be made
<b>Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)</b>	The cabinet member with responsibility for this decision and the officers producing the decision report.
<b>Directorate</b>	The directorate of the council responsible for the decision.
<b>Date uploaded onto plan</b>	The date the decision was first uploaded and the notice period started for key decisions.
<b>Decision type, exemptions and urgency</b>	Whether the decision is a Key or Non-Key decision, if the report is expected to be fully open, partly exempt or fully exempt and if urgency procedures are being followed.

Decisions to be taken by Cabinet at a formal meeting are listed first, ordered by date, and include both Key and Non-Key decisions. Decisions to be taken by individual Cabinet Members are then listed, grouped by portfolio area and sorted by date. These include Key and Non-Key decisions.

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
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**Cabinet decisions by date (Key and Non-key listed)**

<p><b>Carbon Management Plan 2026/27-2030/31</b> To adopt the new carbon management plan for the period 2026/27 to 2030/31</p>	<p>Cabinet 21 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member culture and Environment</p> <p>Gareth Ellis, Sustainability and Climate Change Officer, Daniel Lenain, Principal Sustainability and Climate Change Officer</p> <p>Gareth.Ellis@herefordshire.gov.uk, daniel.lenain@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 383646</p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Q4 2025/26 Budget Report</b> To report the provisional financial outturn position for 2025/26 for revenue and capital budgets, subject to external audit.</p>	<p>Cabinet 21 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member finance and corporate services</p> <p>Rachael Sanders, Director of Finance</p> <p>Rachael.sanders@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 383775</p>	<p>Corporate Support Centre</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>Non Key</b> Open</p>

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Q4 Performance Report</b> To review performance for Quarter 4 (Q4) 2025/26 and to report the performance position across all Directorates for this period.</p>	<p>Cabinet 25 June 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member finance and corporate services</p> <p>Jessica Karia, Head of Corporate Performance and Intelligence jessica.karia@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260976</p>	<p>Corporate Support Centre</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>Non Key</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Update on the Phase 2 Phosphate Mitigation Schemes</b> To provide Cabinet with an update regarding the Phosphate Mitigation Wetland schemes</p>	<p>Cabinet 25 June 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member culture and Environment</p> <p>Roger Allonby, Service Director Economy and Growth, Gemma Dando, Chief Operating Officer, Scott Tompkins, Delivery Director - Infrastructure, Susan White, Programme Manager Roger.Allonby@herefordshire.gov.uk, gemma.dando@herefordshire.gov.uk, scott.tompkins@herefordshire.gov.uk, Susan.White2@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260330, , , Tel: 01432 260070</p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Herefordshire Parking Strategy 2026 - 2041</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for the adoption of a new Parking Strategy for Herefordshire. This report presents the new Parking Strategy, which sets out the Council's long-term vision, principles and priorities for parking across Herefordshire. The strategy is intended to guide decision-making, investment, and operational practice for both on-street and off-street parking, ensuring that parking plays a supportive role within the wider transport network rather than operating in isolation.</p> <p>The strategy has been developed to align with the Local Transport Plan, the Council Plan and other relevant corporate and place-based priorities. It recognises the role parking plays in supporting town centres, tourism, freight and servicing, enabling access for disabled users and residents, and creating safe and attractive public spaces. It also reflects the increasing importance of integrating parking with sustainable travel choices, technological innovation, and efficient asset management.</p>	<p>Cabinet 16 July 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member roads and regulatory services</p> <p>Ffion Horton, Transport Planning Services Manager ffion.horton@herefordshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>NEW ITEM</p>	<p><b>Non Key</b> Open</p>

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Travel Plan Strategy</b> The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for an updated Travel Plan process for Herefordshire. The updated approach sets out a clearer, more consistent and outcome-focused process for the development, implementation and monitoring of travel plans across new developments, existing organisations and key trip-generating sites.</p>	<p>Cabinet 24 September 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member transport and infrastructure  Ffion Horton, Transport Planning Services Manager <small>ffion.horton@herefordshire.gov.uk</small></p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>NEW ITEM</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Cabinet Member Decisions (Key and Non Key decisions)</b></p>					
<p><b>Portfolio: adults, health and wellbeing</b></p>					
<p><b>Purchase of flats for temporary accommodation</b> Purchase of 4 flats in Hereford city for use as temporary accommodation.</p>	<p>Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing 30 April 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing  Hannah McSherry, Housing Strategy Officer <small>Hannah.McSherry2@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 383061</small></p>	<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open Urgent</p>

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Local Authority Housing Fund Round 4 - Grant Acceptance</b></p> <p>To accept a capital grant of £2,899,500 and a revenue grant of £22,548 and to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which sets out the agreed working relationship between Herefordshire Council and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government regarding the administration and delivery of the fourth round of the Local Authority Housing Fund – (LAHF 4).</p>	<p>Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing</p> <p>Before 12 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing</p> <p>Hannah McSherry, Housing Strategy Officer</p> <p>Hannah.McSherry2@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 383061</p>	<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b></p> <p>Open</p>
<p><b>To extend the council's current commissioned home care framework</b></p> <p>To approve an extension to the council's current commissioned home care framework for up to six months from 31 October 2026 to 30 April 2027.</p>	<p>Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing</p> <p>Before 26 June 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing</p> <p>Helen Davies, Commissioning Manager</p> <p>helen.davies3@herefordshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b></p> <p>Open</p>

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Herefordshire Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy</b> The purpose of the report is to approve the 2026-2036 Herefordshire Adult Social Care Prevention Strategy</p>	<p>Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing July 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member adults, health and wellbeing  David Collyer, Acting Consultant in Public Health: General Practitioner <small>david.collyer2@herefordshire.gov.uk</small></p>	<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Portfolio: children and young people</b></p>					
<p><b>Allocation of Basic Need Capital Grant for the Expansion of John Masefield High School and Weobley High School</b> To seek approval for the allocation of Basic Need Capital Grant funding to support the expansion of John Masefield High School and Weobley High School in order to meet future demand for additional secondary school places.</p>	<p>Cabinet member community services and assets 29 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member children and young people  Quentin Mee, Head of Educational Development <small>Quentin.Mee@herefordshire.gov.uk</small></p>	<p>Children and Young People</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Portfolio: community services and assets</b></p>					

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Property Services Estates Capital Building Improvement Programme 202629</b> To approve expenditure within the capital building improvement programme 2026-2029</p>	<p>Cabinet member community services and assets 12 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member community services and assets  Katie Ainsworth, Senior Project Manager, Michael Griffin, Head of Major Projects  <small>katie.ainsworth2@herefordshire.gov.uk, Michael.Griffin2@herefordshire.gov.uk</small></p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Establish a new Alternative Provision Centre capital spend</b> To approve the spend of the capital allocation to establish a new Alternative Provision Centre</p>	<p>Cabinet member community services and assets 25 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member community services and assets  Quentin Mee, Head of Educational Development  <small>Quentin.Mee@herefordshire.gov.uk</small></p>	<p>Children and Young People</p>	<p>NEW ITEM</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Relocation of Herefordshire Pupil Referral Units Capital Spend</b></p> <p>To approve the spend of the capital allocation to relocate Herefordshire Pupil Referral Units onto a single site.</p>	<p>Cabinet member community services and assets</p> <p>4 June 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member community services and assets</p> <p>Quentin Mee, Head of Educational Development</p> <p><small>Quentin.Mee@herefordshire.gov.uk</small></p>	<p>Children and Young People</p>	<p>NEW ITEM</p>	<p><b>KEY</b></p> <p>Open</p>
<p><b>Portfolio: economy and growth</b></p>					
<p><b>Strategic Housing: Three-year Capital Programme 2026/27 - 2028/29</b></p> <p>To approve the capital budget allocated to Strategic Housing through the Council's capital programme to meet the immediate housing need of vulnerable groups and provide grant assistance to property owners to bring empty properties back into use.</p>	<p>Cabinet member economy and growth</p> <p>30 April 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member economy and growth</p> <p>Hannah McSherry, Housing Strategy Officer</p> <p><small>Hannah.McSherry2@herefordshire.gov.uk</small></p> <p><small>Tel: 01432 383061</small></p>	<p>Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b></p> <p>Open</p>
<p><b>Portfolio: environment</b></p>					

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Allocating the Climate and Nature Reserve Phase 2</b></p> <p>To Allocate the balance of the Climate and Nature Reserve for the delivery of projects which will positively impact the climate and natural environment of Herefordshire to the benefit of all who reside in the county.</p>	<p>Cabinet member culture and Environment 30 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member culture and Environment</p> <p>Richard Vaughan, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager</p> <p><small>Richard.Vaughan@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260192</small></p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Adoption of Herefordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy</b></p> <p>To formally adopt the Herefordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and accept associated government grant for delivery.</p>	<p>Cabinet member culture and Environment 10 June 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member culture and Environment</p> <p>Mandy Neill, Senior Landscape Officer, Richard Vaughan, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager</p> <p><small>mandy.neill@herefordshire.gov.uk, Richard.Vaughan@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260192</small></p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Solar Car Ports at Plough Lane</b> To approve the scoping and construction of solar car ports at Plough Lane</p>	<p>Cabinet member culture and Environment 1 July 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member culture and Environment</p> <p>Katie Ainsworth, Senior Project Manager, Richard Vaughan, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager, Rosanna Willmott, Sustainability and Climate Change Officer</p> <p><small>katie.ainsworth2@herefordshire.gov.uk, Richard.Vaughan@herefordshire.gov.uk, rosanna.willmott@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260192, Tel: 01432 261749</small></p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Portfolio: finance and corporate services</b></p>					
<p><b>Portfolio: local engagement and community resilience</b></p>					
<p><b>Portfolio: roads and regulatory services</b></p>					

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>National Parking Platform (NPP)</b> To agree to join the NPP to provide multiple options of cashless parking providers for all council pay and display car parks and on-street.</p>	<p>Cabinet member roads and regulatory services Before 7 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member roads and regulatory services  Michael Barnes, Parking Services Manager michael.barnes@herefordshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Justice for Tenants (JFT) – Renters’ Rights Act 2025: Housing Enforcement, Civil Penalties and HMO Licensing</b> This report seeks approval from the Cabinet Member for Roads and Regulatory Services to adopt a revised private rented sector enforcement framework in preparation for the commencement of the Renters’ Rights Act 2025. The report proposes the adoption of a Justice for Tenants (JFT) Housing Enforcement Policy, a standalone JFT Civil Penalty Policy and matrix, and updated standard HMO licence conditions, together with approval to enter into a JFT support contract (subject to legal review and agreement) to support implementation. The purpose of the report is to ensure the Council is legally compliant, operationally ready and able to deliver consistent, transparent and defensible enforcement of housing standards and landlord legislation from 1 May 2026.</p>	<p>Cabinet member roads and regulatory services Before 8 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member roads and regulatory services  Charles Yarnold, Head of Regulation and Technical Services Charles.Yarnold@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260765</p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>

Report title and purpose	Decision Maker and Due date	Lead cabinet member and officer contact(s)	Directorate	Date uploaded onto plan	Decision Type, exemptions and urgency
<p><b>Highway Maintenance Plan</b> To update the Highway Maintenance Plan, which sets out the reasonable system of inspection and repair that will be deployed by the Council to ensure that it meets its duty to maintain all publicly maintainable highways.</p>	<p>Cabinet member roads and regulatory services 15 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member roads and regulatory services  Ed Bradford, Head of Highways and Traffic Edward.Bradford@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260786</p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>KEY</b> Open</p>
<p><b>Portfolio: transport and infrastructure</b></p>					
<p><b>Capability and Ambition Fund 2025/26 allocation</b> The purpose of the report is to confirm what Herefordshire Council will deliver with the Capability and Ambition Fund grant</p>	<p>Cabinet member transport and infrastructure 8 May 2026</p>	<p>Cabinet member transport and infrastructure  Ffion Horton, Transport Planning Services Manager, Scott Tompkins, Delivery Director - Infrastructure, Richard Vaughan, Sustainability and Climate Change Manager  ffion.horton@herefordshire.gov.uk, scott.tompkins@herefordshire.gov.uk, Richard.Vaughan@herefordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01432 260192</p>	<p>Economy and Environment</p>	<p>24 April 2026</p>	<p><b>Non Key</b> Open</p>





Appendix 3 Recommendations made by Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, January 2025 – March 2026

Tuesday 21 January 2025		
Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership - Yearly Review of Effectiveness Report 2023-24		
Rec. No.	Recommendation	Response
1	The partnership ensures that recommendations from the 2024-25 annual review of effectiveness onwards have an identified partnership lead and an indicative timeframe for completion;	Noted and will be incorporated into business plan 25/26
2	The partnership appends an implementation plan for the recommendations in its 2024-25 annual review of effectiveness; and	Noted and will be created for the business plan agreed for 25/26
3	Herefordshire Council's director of children's services and director of governance and law provide guidance to elected members on their corporate parent responsibilities in the event of a significant incident, or death, concerning a care leaver under the age of 25.	<p><b>The role of members as corporate parents:</b>            The Children and Social Work Act 2017 says that when a child or young person comes into the care of the council, or is a "qualifying care leaver" (someone who between 16 and 25 and was looked-after by the authority for at least 13 weeks after their fourteenth birthday), the council becomes their corporate parent. This means that they should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people</li> <li>• encourage them to express their views, wishes and feelings, and take them into account,</li> <li>• make sure they have access to services</li> <li>• make sure children and young people are safe, with stable home lives, relationships and education or work</li> <li>• promote high aspirations and try to secure the best outcomes for them</li> <li>• prepare them for adulthood and independent living.</li> </ul> <p>All councillors and officers are corporate parents. It is therefore every councillor's responsibility to make sure that the council is meeting these duties towards children in care and care leavers. Children can be in care in a range of different settings, with the authority acting as corporate parent to all of them. This includes foster care, children's homes, secure children's homes, young</p>

offender institutions, secure training centres and some types of kinship care. Every councillor and officer within a council has a responsibility to act for those children and young people as a parent would for their own child. Lead members, those on corporate parenting panels, and overview and scrutiny committees will have particular responsibilities, but for all councillors, there is a role of being the “eyes and ears of the community”.

#### **The role of the council in child deaths**

The death of a child is a tragedy, and subsequent enquiries / investigations should keep an appropriate balance between forensic and medical requirements and the family’s need for support. There is a strict statutory framework to be adhered to following the death of a child, this is led in Herefordshire by the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) under strict legislative guidance, and the Council does not have a role independently in such matters. Statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 defines child death review partners as “local authorities and any Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) for the local area as set out in the Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017”. The HSCP therefore has a legal duty to undertake reviews of serious cases (Rapid Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews) where a child has died or suffered serious harm, and abuse or neglect is known or suspected. When a child dies, in any circumstances, it is important for parents and families to understand what has happened and whether there are any lessons to be learned. HSCP must make arrangements to review all deaths of children normally resident in the local area and, if they consider it appropriate, for any non-resident child who has died in their area.

#### **Key scrutiny responsibilities in children’s services**

Through legislation, scrutiny committees have several critical roles:

- **Examining Children’s Services Performance:** They assess whether local authorities and partners are effectively delivering services such as social care, education, and youth support.
- **Scrutinising Safeguarding Practices:** Ensuring that child protection measures, multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, and social work interventions are effective.
- **Monitoring SEND Services:** Reviewing how well councils and health partners implement the SEND reforms and improve outcomes for children with disabilities.
- **Assessing Children’s Health and Well-being Services:** Overseeing the effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), public health initiatives, and early intervention programmes.
- **Reviewing Education and Skills Provision:** Evaluating school performance, alternative provision, post-16 education, and how councils support vulnerable learners.

		<p><b>Limitations</b></p> <p>Despite their statutory powers, scrutiny committees have limitations in scrutinising children's services, particularly where other statutory processes are already in place. The Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent legislation outline that scrutiny committees cannot duplicate or interfere with statutory decision-making processes. This restriction affects their ability to intervene in certain cases, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Casework and Complaints: Committees do not have the power to scrutinise individual cases of child protection, SEND disputes, or social care interventions, as these matters are subject to separate statutory complaints and appeals mechanisms, such as the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.</li> <li>• Regulated Inspection Processes: Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, Ofsted has a statutory role in inspecting children's services, including safeguarding and SEND provision. Scrutiny committees cannot override or replace the findings of Ofsted or direct the regulatory body's work.</li> <li>• Judicial and Tribunal Matters: Matters that are subject to legal proceedings, such as care proceedings in the Family Court under the Children Act 1989, are beyond the remit of scrutiny committees. They cannot influence court decisions or interfere in ongoing legal cases.</li> </ul> <p>Statutory Safeguarding Boards: The Children and Social Work Act 2017 established Local Safeguarding Partnerships, replacing Local Safeguarding Children Boards. Scrutiny committees cannot take over or interfere with the statutory duties of these multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including serious case reviews, which have legal responsibility for protecting children at risk. They can, however scrutinise the safeguarding partnership itself.</p>
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<b>Tuesday 22 July 2025</b>		
<b>Herefordshire Children's Services and Partnership Improvement Plan</b>		
<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Response</b>
1	For the executive to ensure that the council's digital, data and technology teams are sufficiently staffed, and properly resourced in the next budget, to ensure that all of the data needs of the children and young people directorate are met.	A review of the council's ICT and Corporate Performance & Intelligence resources to support all Directorate teams will be undertaken as part of development of the council's revenue budget for 2026/27. This review will ensure that resource requirements are prioritised within the context of the funding available and the council's overall financial position.
2	For full Council to debate and commit to the principle of working for a child friendly Herefordshire.	Cllr Fagan proposed her motion at the Full Council meeting on 10 October 2025 which was carried unanimously.

<b>Tuesday 16 September 2025</b>		
<b>Children And Young People's Quality Assurance</b>		
<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Response</b>
1	Herefordshire Council ensures that in quarterly performance monitoring and its annual report of complaints it includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learning from compliments</li> <li>• complaints that are declined and the reasons for this and</li> <li>• evidence in case file audits of informal resolutions.</li> </ul>	Recommendations are agreed and will be incorporated into annual report 25/26 and quarterly case audit reports and reflected in summary in the annual report 25/26
<b>Youth Justice</b>		
<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Response</b>
1	Herefordshire Council engage with colleges regarding education and training for those in the youth justice system.	
<b>Tuesday 11 November 2025</b>		
<b>Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 2024-25</b>		
<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Response</b>
1	Partnership to consider explicitly reporting what partners learned from children and families and how it influenced policy and practice (you said, we did) in its annual report.	Recommendations are agreed and will be incorporated into annual report 25/26 and quarterly case audit reports and reflected in summary in the annual report 25/26
<b>Pursue Prevent Protect Prepare</b>		
<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Response</b>
1	The Director of Children's Services, through the all-member briefing, to brief elected members on Pursue, Prevent, Protect, Prepare, and on	

	elected members' duties as corporate parents with regard to Prevent.	
2	The Protect and Prepare Board to consider how the specific perspectives and experiences of children and young people can be built into the design and delivery of emergency/civil contingencies exercises	

<b>Tuesday 10 March 2026</b>
<b>ILAC inspection and action plan</b>
No recommendations

