

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 2 MARCH 2012**Question from Councillor EMK Chave of Councillor DB Wilcox, Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning**

- 1 *Who is undertaking the analysis of LDF consultation responses on behalf of Herefordshire Council and what is the timescale of when these responses will be reported to Council?*

Answer from Councillor DB Wilcox Cabinet Member, Environment, Housing and Planning

Answer to question 1

I refer to my answer to Mr Brown (Public Question 5). The analysis is undertaken by the planning policy team.

Question from Councillor DC Taylor of Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education

- 2 *Could the Cabinet Member advise me which Parish Councils have increased their precept for the 2012/13 financial year over the precept they set for the 2011/12 year and by what percentage have they increased?*

Answer from Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education

Answer to question 2

The table below identifies those 80 Parish Councils that have increased their precepts, together with the level of increase for each.

It should be recognised that local councils are able to actively respond to meeting the identified needs of their communities, supporting much valued local facilities and services, through their use of local precepts.

Parish Council Meeting	Precept Required	Last Year's Precept	Increase/ (Decrease)
Allensmore Parish Council	£1,500	£600	150.00%
Almeley Parish Council	£7,250	£6,250	16.00%
Aston Ingham Parish Council	£2,200	£1,750	25.71%
Avenbury Parish Council	£3,500	£1,750	100.00%
Aymestrey Parish Council	£2,739	£2,634	3.99%
Bartestree & Lugwardine Group Parish Council	£23,000	£21,000	9.52%
Birley with Upper Hill Parish Council	£2,000	£1,827	9.47%
Bishop's Frome Parish Council	£20,000	£18,000	11.11%
Bishopstone Group Parish Council	£4,174	£3,885	7.44%
Bodenham Parish Council	£9,780	£8,150	20.00%
Border Group Parish Council	£7,500	£7,000	7.14%

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Parish Council Meeting	Precept Required	Last Year's Precept	Increase/ (Decrease)
Bosbury and Coddington Parish Council	£10,000	£4,750	110.53%
Brampton Abbots & Foy Group Parish Council	£2,000	£1,500	33.33%
Bredenbury & District Group Parish Council	£4,250	£1,700	150.00%
Breinton Parish Council	£7,020	£6,500	8.00%
Bridstow Parish Council	£5,225	£4,750	10.00%
Brilley Parish Council	£4,000	£2,750	45.45%
Brimfield and Little Hereford Group Parish Council	£9,500	£9,000	5.56%
Brockhampton Parish Council	£3,600	£2,800	28.57%
Bromyard & Winslow Town Council	£168,000	£141,700	18.56%
Callow & Haywood Group Parish Council	£5,500	£4,400	25.00%
Clehonger Parish Council	£11,000	£8,000	37.50%
Colwall Parish Council	£56,873	£55,758	2.00%
Dormington & Mordiford Group Parish Council	£10,945	£9,155	19.55%
Dorstone Parish Council	£2,300	£1,700	35.29%
Eardisland Parish Council	£15,750	£15,000	5.00%
Eardisley Group Parish Council	£7,700	£7,000	10.00%
Garway Parish Council	£4,724	£3,938	19.96%
Hampton Bishop Parish Council	£10,000	£7,000	42.86%
Hatfield and District Group Parish Council	£2,500	£1,800	38.89%
Hereford City Council	£734,960	£712,340	3.18%
Holmer & Shelwick Parish Council	£6,575	£6,250	5.20%
Hope under Dinmore Group Parish Council	£3,300	£3,000	10.00%
How Caple, Sollershope & Yatton Group Parish Council	£5,000	£4,250	17.65%
Huntington Parish Council	£650	£600	8.33%
Kimbolton Parish Council	£5,000	£4,450	12.36%
Kings Caple Parish Council	£6,688	£4,400	52.00%
Kingsland Parish Council	£10,000	£7,000	42.86%
Kington Town Council	£60,900	£58,000	5.00%
Kinnersley and District Group Parish Council	£3,000	£2,800	7.14%
Lea Parish Council	£9,600	£5,600	71.43%
Ledbury Town Council	£266,596	£265,773	0.31%
Leintwardine Group Parish Council	£15,000	£14,500	3.45%
Leominster Town Council	£229,011	£218,279	4.92%
Linton Parish Council	£6,000	£5,800	3.45%
Little Birch Parish Council	£2,700	£2,300	17.39%
Little Dewchurch Parish Council	£7,500	£6,500	15.38%
Llangarron Parish Council	£5,000	£4,500	11.11%
Luston Group Parish Council	£9,000	£7,900	13.92%
Lyonshall Parish Council	£5,000	£4,500	11.11%

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Parish Council Meeting	Precept Required	Last Year's Precept	Increase/ (Decrease)
Malvern Hills Conservators (Colwall Parish Council)	£33,040	£31,350	5.39%
Malvern Hills Conservators (Mathon)	£4,400	£4,180	5.26%
Marstow Parish Council	£5,000	£4,500	11.11%
Mathon Parish Council	£6,392	£6,279	1.80%
Middleton-on-the-Hill and Leysters Group Parish Council	£3,500	£3,000	16.67%
Monkland and Stretford Parish Council	£2,900	£2,300	26.09%
Much Cowarne Group Parish Council	£3,600	£3,500	2.86%
Much Dewchurch Parish Council	£3,500	£3,000	16.67%
Pencombe Group Parish Council	£6,500	£5,750	13.04%
Peterchurch Parish Council	£13,560	£11,708	15.82%
Peterstow Parish Council	£3,500	£3,000	16.67%
Pipe and Lyde Parish Council	£2,330	£1,400	66.43%
Pixley & District Parish Council	£5,000	£4,000	25.00%
Putley Parish Council	£4,500	£4,300	4.65%
Sellack Parish Council	£1,750	£1,300	34.62%
Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council	£2,000	£1,750	14.29%
Stretton Sugwas Parish Council	£3,500	£3,000	16.67%
Thornbury Group Parish Council	£3,300	£3,000	10.00%
Titley and District Group Parish Council	£3,921	£3,825	2.51%
Vowchurch & District Group Parish Council	£6,200	£5,400	14.81%
Walford Parish Council	£16,000	£12,500	28.00%
Wellington Heath Parish Council	£7,400	£7,300	1.37%
Wellington Parish Council	£21,500	£13,500	59.26%
Weobley Parish Council	£10,555	£8,139	29.68%
Weston Beggard Parish Council	£1,000	£600	66.67%
Weston-under-Penyard Parish Council	£6,300	£6,000	5.00%
Whitchurch & Ganarew Group Parish Council	£9,000	£7,000	28.57%
Wigmore Group Parish Council	£17,000	£12,000	41.67%
Yarkhill Parish Council	£4,000	£3,000	33.33%
Yarpole Group Parish Council	£10,385	£8,300	25.12%

Question from Councillor MAF Hubbard of Councillor AJM Blackshaw, Cabinet Member Highways, Transportation and Sustainability

Question 3 disallowed on the grounds that it is the same or similar to a question put to a meeting of Council in the last six months, see Herefordshire Council Constitution Part 4, 4.1.15.4 c. Member question number 26 18 November 2011.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 2 MARCH 2012

Question from Councillor RI Matthews of Councillor RJ Phillips, Cabinet Member Enterprise and Culture

- 4 *It has recently been announced that a kilometre of hoarding is due to be erected around the old cattle market site in the near future. Can Members be told how much this work will cost, and who is paying for it?*

Answer from Councillor RJ Phillips, Cabinet Member Enterprise and Culture

Answer to question 4

The hoarding is to be erected by the developer's nominated principle contractor; the costs of which are not being carried by the council.

Question from Councillor RI Matthews of Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education.

- 5 *Can Members be informed how much Herefordshire Council have spent on consultants between 01/01/2011 – 01/01/2012 and how do these figures compare to the expenditure during the previous twelve months, on this same issue.*

Answer from Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education.

Answer to question 5

This information will take time to collate and I will provide a written response in due course

Supplementary Question

I have been informed that the Council is paying consultants up to £600k per day, is the Council getting value for money?

Response at the meeting

The Cabinet Member advised that a written response would be provided.

Written response

Like all other parts of the public sector the Council engages individuals with specific skills on short term contracts to support project delivery where it would not be cost effective to employ a permanent member of staff. By doing so the Council can specify the length of time an individual provides expert advice and support without incurring the costs associated with permanent employment.

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Question from Councillor RI Matthews of Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education.

Question 6 disallowed on the grounds that it is the same or similar to a question put to a meeting of Council in the last six months, see Herefordshire Council Constitution Part 4, 4.1.15.4 c. Public question number three 2 March 2012.

Question from Councillor TM James of Councillor JG Jarvis, Leader of the Council

Question 7 disallowed on the grounds that it is the same or similar to a question put to a meeting of Council in the last six months, see Herefordshire Council Constitution Part 4, 4.1.15.4 c. Member question number three 18 November 2012.

Question from Councillor MAF Hubbard of Councillor BD Wilcox, Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning

8 *Under what circumstances is it appropriate or necessary for the Chief Executive to involve himself in the issuing, or otherwise, of emergency Tree Preservation Orders.*

Answer from Councillor BD Wilcox, Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning

Answer to question 8

The council's constitution makes provision for the exercise of functions by the Chief Executive on behalf of the council; it also identifies how those functions may be delegated and in what circumstances officers taking delegated decisions should consult with the Chief Executive.

Supplementary Question

As the result of a details document from a member of the public following a Freedom of Information request in 2009, why was the Chief Executive consulted on an emergency tree preservation order, why was a Councillor treated differently and on what grounds did the Chief Executive intervene?

Response at the meeting

The Leader of the Council advised that a written response would be provided.

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Written response

It is not unusual for officers to seek the views of senior managers on the appropriateness of provisional protection activity; this is the case whether dealing with a member of the public or an elected member. The Chief Executive has not 'intervened' in any case although he has been consulted, appropriately, on a number of occasions.

Question from Councillor MAF Hubbard of Councillor BD Wilcox, Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning

Question 9 disallowed on the grounds that it is the same or similar to a question put to a meeting of Council in the last six months, see Herefordshire Council Constitution Part 4, 4.1.15.4 c. Member question number 26 18 November 2011.

Question from Councillor SJ Robertson of Councillor DB Wilcox, Cabinet Member Environment, Housing and Planning

Question 10 disallowed on the grounds that it is the same or similar to a question put to a meeting of Council in the last six months, see Herefordshire Council Constitution Part 4, 4.1.15.4 c. Member question number 26 18 November 2011

Question from Councillor MAF Hubbard of Councillor AJM Blackshaw, Cabinet Member Highways, Transportation and Sustainability

Question 11 disallowed on the grounds that it is the same or similar to a question put to a meeting of Council in the last six months, see Herefordshire Council Constitution Part 4, 4.1.15.4 c. Member question number three 18 November 2011

Question from Councillor MAF Hubbard of Councillor RJ Phillips, Cabinet Member Enterprise and Culture

Question 12 disallowed on the grounds that it is the same or similar to a question put to a meeting of Council in the last six months, see Herefordshire Council Constitution Part 4, 4.1.15.4 c. Member question number three 18 November 2011

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Question from Councillor MAF Hubbard of Councillor RJ Phillips, Cabinet Member Enterprise and Culture

Question 13 disallowed on the grounds that it is the same or similar to a question put to a meeting of Council in the last six months, see Herefordshire Council Constitution Part 4, 4.1.15.4 c. Member question number four 2 March 2012

Question from Councillor MAF Hubbard of Councillor RJ Phillips, Cabinet Member Enterprise and Culture

14 *Who is paying for the archaeological investigations on the Old Cattle Market Site?*

Answer from Councillor RJ Phillips, Cabinet Member Enterprise and Culture

Answer to question 14

The developer.

Question from Councillor MAF Hubbard of Councillor PD Price Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education

15 *Please can you detail any properties owned by Herefordshire Council where the income earned on the property is being paid directly to Hereford Futures? Please include details of the income levels.*

Answer from Councillor PD Price Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education

Answer to question 15

None is paid directly to Herefordshire Futures.

A number of properties were acquired to progress the Hereford Futures programme utilising funds provided entirely by AWM, as part of the Agency's funding of the Hereford Futures programme. As the accountable body for Hereford Futures, the council agreed to acquire these properties.

Under the terms of the funding agreement between the council and the Agency, Hereford Futures receives a variable residual amount of funding, to support implementation of the programme, from income from these properties which would otherwise be repaid to the Agency or its successor body. This amount is net of council deductions for repairs, alterations, management and maintenance

The properties in respect of which AWM funded the acquisition are

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Franklin House
Blueschool House
4, Blackfriars St
32 Coningsby St
Station Approach Trading Estate

During the current financial year, £146,000 was the net figure made available to Hereford Futures under these arrangements.

Supplementary Question

Where are the accounting procedures in relation to Hereford Futures? A number of properties pay rent direct to the Council, which is then paid to Hereford Futures, where are the accounting procedures for this?

Response at the meeting

The Cabinet Member advised that a written response would be provided.

Written Response

As a limited company Hereford Futures files its annual accounts in accordance with legal requirements and its overall procedures are overseen by its Audit Committee. The arrangements for the use of property rent form part of the overall agreement reached with Advantage West Midlands who provided funding for the purchase of these properties.

Question from Councillor PJ Watts of Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education

16A Given that Herefordshire Council employed Drivers Jonas Deloitte to do an appraisal report on the Tesco site (Ledbury 2011) in conjunction with the Tesco application – how much did this report cost?

B Given that Herefordshire Council employed Drivers Jonas Deloitte to do an appraisal report on the Sainsbury site (Ledbury 2012) in conjunction with the recent Sainsbury application – how much did this report cost?

Answer from Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education

Answer to question 16

A £2,900

B £2,000

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL – 2 MARCH 2012**Supplementary Question**

Why was the officer report diametrically opposed to the consultant's report given that the consultant's report cost the Council £2,000?

Response at the meeting

The Cabinet Member advised that as this related to a planning application he would need to provide a written response to the question in consultation with the Chairman of Planning.

Written response

The Drivers Jonas Deloitte report prepared for the Council on the Sainsbury's application in Ledbury was included as an appendix to the committee report submitted to the Planning Committee on 22 February 2012. There is no distinction between the consult's report and the officer recommendation.

- 1 The application site is in an out of centre location in retail planning policy terms (para 140).
- 2 The application site is well beyond walking distance to the town centre for shopping purposes.
- 3 The Turley assessment (on behalf of Sainsbury's) was both unrealistic and incomplete (paras 147 and 148).
- 4 The location of the proposed food store is too far from Ledbury town centre to facilitate linked trips from the store on foot. This is considered to be a major defect of the application site in planning policy terms (para 151).
- 5 The application proposal is inconsistent with the retail spatial strategy for the area as set out in policy S5 of the adopted UDP.
- 6 The application site is not a sustainable location for a new shopping development (para 153).

Question from Councillor MD Lloyd-Hayes of Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education

- 17 "The recent "Herefordshire Matters" survey was distributed to 80,000 households in the county in September asking people's views. The response was published in the November 2011 edition. There were 200 responses (0.25%), so the views of 99.75% of the readership were not recorded. Of respondents, one third thought the magazine not worthwhile, and a quarter did not trust the information published.

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On the basis of these figures, do you not agree it is misleading to publish conclusions from the survey that suggest that "Herefordshire Matters" is supported by its readers?

Answer from Councillor PD Price, Cabinet Member Corporate Services and Education

Answer to question 17

No. The article published in the November edition of Herefordshire Matters was not misleading - the specific results which were included clearly related to, and were contextualised by, the numbers of responses received.

Whilst improvements continue to be made in response to feedback from customers to ensure information is accessible, relevant and available in a range of formats, Herefordshire Matters will continue to be a key element of public services communication and engagement within the county

Supplementary Question

Who has the last word on the content of Herefordshire Matters politicians or staff?

Answer

The Cabinet Member advised that the magazine was sent to a number of people for the collection of items. Members were also invited to put forward a submission. The magazine is seen by a selection of people to ensure it is editorially correct and is then produced in the format of the current magazine.