

Chief Executive's Announcements – 24 May 2019

- The Shell Store development on the Hereford Enterprise Zone began construction on the 1st April. The £7.5m project will renovate a World War 2 shell store building to create business incubation, enabling businesses to develop and grow. It will also provide an opportunity for Higher Education providers such as the New Model in Technology and Engineering (NMiTE) to engage with industry and for students to develop their own business ideas.
- The construction of the Cyber Security Centre located on the Hereford Enterprise Zone started on site in May. The £9m joint venture between the Council and the University of Wolverhampton will provide business accommodation, secure training and educational facilities and a base for undertaking specialist research.
- A 'Veterans self-build' scheme in Leominster is starting on site imminently in a partnership between Herefordshire Council and Stonewater. The project will see the delivery of a mixed scheme of 19 new dwellings built to Lifetime Homes Standards. Nine will be allocated to veterans as part of a self-build initiative with the Community Self Build Association, SSAFA and the Royal British Legion supporting the veterans to gain new skills in construction and gain the confidence to live independently. Herefordshire Council is a signatory to the Military Covenant which supports the local military and veteran community.
- The Natural Flood Management scheme we are running with the Environment Agency was covered by BBC's Farming Today. This positive report highlights the importance of addressing flood risk in a rural county in an environmentally sensitive way and supporting our local communities.
- The National Bikeability Conference was held in Hereford on 16th May. The chief executive opened the conference and Jesse Norman provided a supportive speech. This national conference highlights the impact of Herefordshire Council's commitment to the programme and promotion of cycling, ensuring effective cycling training is in place.
- The foundation stone on the new GP Hub was laid on 16th May, with construction works now underway on Station Approach. This is being managed through our One Public Estate programme, in conjunction with Prime and the NHS. The development will improve GP provision for the city and brings together six separate practices into a single modern facility.

- We recently completed the latest phase of refurbishment in Hereford City Centre with the works in Commercial Street which provides a high quality public realm to support the city centre economy.
- We have developed a short video called “Truth be Told” that can be found on the Council website and on Youtube. It provides true accounts of foster carers and their heartfelt experiences of fostering teenagers and sibling groups. We have publicised it widely and I encourage all to share it so that we have more people coming forward to provide that essential and life-changing care for our looked after children
- We recently had a return visit from Mark Riddell, national advisor for care leavers. We were able to share with him the progress we have made since his last visit including putting in place more housing options, buying a property which will provide further local accommodation, and of course enabling care leavers to be eligible for Council tax exemption.
- On 2nd May, our public health team received a review visit from the regional director. The feedback was very positive, describing a big step forward in the Council’s public health work under the DPH Karen Wright.
- I can report that the local council elections ran as a smooth operation, with credit to Colette Maund, Amy Hallett and the elections team. Preparations for the EU election on 23rd May were put in place over the last 6 weeks, with the count taking place on Sunday 26th May.