

Between 20 January 2020 and 25 January 2021 a scrutiny review concerning the climate and ecological emergency was conducted.

The following was recommended to the executive:

<b>Recommendation 1</b>	<p><b>Internal Governance;</b></p> <p><b>A The Council should establish a politically proportionate Committee (the Climate and Ecological Emergency Policy Committee) with responsibility for directing the Council's response to the climate and ecological emergency. The Chairperson of that Committee may or may not be a Cabinet Member depending on the precise arrangements adopted by the council, but the Committee is to have primacy.</b></p> <p><b>B The Committee should take account of the proposed Future Generations Act.</b></p> <p><b>C The Committee should have some form of decision making powers in line with the future hybrid system of governance.</b></p> <p><b>D The Committee should have its own budget that facilitates it to fulfil its remit and initiate projects that will enable the council to make progress required with respect to the climate &amp; ecological emergency.</b></p> <p><b>E The Committee should be the focal point for all council climate change related work.</b></p> <p><b>F The Committee should receive regular reports from bodies charged with directing the countywide response to the climate and ecological emergency. The Committee would not duplicate this work but ensure that the council remained sighted upon it.</b></p> <p><b>G Research should be undertaken and consideration given to models adopted by other authorities reflecting these principles.</b></p>
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Rejected. Recommendation G to be referred to the Rethinking Governance Group.</p> <p>Parts A, C and D are not possible under a Hybrid Model of governance, however the proposal will be referred to the Rethinking Governance Group who are considering Hybrid Model governance arrangements for the council. Elements of the recommendation, specifically part G and elements of B, E and F will be considered as a part of this work.</p> <p>The Council is currently operating its governance arrangements by way of a Leader/Cabinet model ( Local Government Act 2000) which means that the Leader is appointed by Full Council and the leader appoints the Cabinet and the leader decides which executive functions will be carried out by individual Cabinet Members. The constitution sets this out at Part 2 Article 5. This leadership model also has to have at least one overview and scrutiny committee, it currently has three such committees. The proposal to establish a Climate Change Committee, would not fall within the Leader/Cabinet model but instead would be a committee established under a committee system where the council would divide itself into politically balanced committees that make the decisions.</p>

	The Cabinet Member is very much open to the idea of working with an advisory group of interested members and will seek to establish such a group informally.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
The recommendation will be considered as a part of the work by the rethinking governance working group.	Monitoring Officer	May 2021.	Review completed by rethinking governance group.	
<b>Recommendation 2</b>	<p><b>The existing county wide steering group was set up in 2019 to create the basis of a net zero, nature rich action plan and set up a new Partnership to adopt and drive forward the action plan. The Group recommends the following approach to a Partnership to deliver a countywide response to the climate and ecological emergency;</b></p> <p><b>a. A collaborative, open and transparent partnership body needs to be established to deliver the countywide response to the climate and ecological emergency.</b></p> <p><b>b. The Council should be represented on the partnership, should participate in it and make a robust contribution.</b></p> <p><b>c. Arrangements should be put in place to ensure regular feedback from the partnership to the Committee.</b></p> <p><b>d. Provision should be made for the membership of the partnership to include those who are responsible for the delivery of measures that are likely to be recommended to ensure that they are practical and capable of implementation.</b></p> <p><b>e. Provision should be made for the membership of the partnership to include a range of views to promote effective critical friend challenge.</b></p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The executive acknowledge the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group were shared with the outgoing County Steering Group and considered as a part of the drafting of the Terms of Reference for the proposed Herefordshire Climate and Nature Partnership.</p> <p>A forthcoming decision will be made to consider the establishment a new Herefordshire Climate and Nature Partnership board to facilitate the aim of achieving countywide carbon neutrality by 2030 and to further protect and enhance local biodiversity. This is a key commitment within the council's corporate delivery plan.</p>			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision to be taken.</li> <li>Board to meet and take forward action plan.</li> </ul>	Richard Vaughan	July 2021.	Board established.	Terms of reference and application process drafted. Subject to Cabinet approval the invitation to apply to the role of board member will

				open and will be publicised.
<b>Recommendation 3</b>	<b>On 12 July 2019 a Zero Carbon Citizens Assembly was agreed at Full Council. The executive response 26 September 2019 offered four options to be detailed in a forthcoming report. The Group recommend that the report should be produced and one of these options taken forward as a priority. This option should be delivered and supported by the council and feed into the Committee and Partnership to inform the work regarding the climate and ecological emergency.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted. Subject to review.</p> <p>As part of the development of a wider engagement framework for the council, considerations are being given to the inclusion of citizen assemblies as a method of engagement with citizens (alongside other tools and approaches). Considerations will include the resources required to deliver the assembly, the method by which citizens are invited and the prioritisation for the area of focus to ensure that they are clearly linked to the County Plan and the council's wider strategic objectives.</p> <p>The council has recently partnered with an external agency (Impact Consultancy) to support the council's engagement with the public and key stakeholders. Impact Consultancy will support the relevant teams with the planning and delivery of a citizen's assembly on Zero Carbon once the resources have been committed to and timeframes for delivery agreed.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Confirmation of resources to be committed and timeframes agreed.	Donna Vickers	Current review ongoing.	Delivery of Zero Carbon citizen's assembly.	
<b>Recommendation 4</b>	<b>The executive should ensure that all relevant teams are sufficiently resourced to carry out all recommendations that are accepted.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>All relevant heads of services have been consulted during the process and all teams are adequately resourced to carry out the work set out in the executive response to recommendations that have been accepted. Due to the extraordinary financial pressures the council is under and the savings targets required some recommendations have had to be rejected, these are noted in relevant responses.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>Recommendation 5</b>	<b>A mandatory training element should be added to the Herefordshire Council staff online training service regarding the environment and personal responsibility to ensure all staff are clear on their own professional and personal role in the climate and ecological emergency.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>The existing training module on the environment will be updated. The training will make it clear to staff what is expected of them in their professional capacity whilst making them aware of what they can do in their personal life to help the county move</p>			

	<p>towards carbon zero and nature rich by 2030. The training will be engaging and will provide staff with practical steps to help them professionally and personally. This training will be widely advertised to staff.</p> <p>Whilst advisory the module will not be a mandatory module as it is corporate policy that only modules that are required by law are made mandatory.</p>			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Existing course to be updated and promoted to all staff.	Richard Vaughan	July 2021.	Course updated and promoted to staff.	Course currently being updated by the Sustainability & Climate Change team.
<b>Recommendation 6</b>	<p><b>Whilst discussing the issues around the climate and ecological emergency the Group felt it was important that the executive commit to work with the Local Government Association to;</b></p> <p><b>a. Press for a joined-up regulatory and enforcement framework on Natural Capital.</b></p> <p><b>b. Support and encourage behaviour change around reducing unnecessary vehicle use and support sustainable transport.</b></p> <p><b>c. Ensure there is no gap between the Shared Prosperity Funding and the existing European Regional Development Fund.</b></p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The council will write to and engage with the Local Government Association (LGA) on these issues as well as raise these issues in the County Council Network (CCN).</p>			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Write to the LGA. Table issues at County Council Network.	Ben Boswell	June 2021.	Actively engage with LGA. Discuss matters at CCN.	
<b>Recommendation 7</b>	<p><b>A dedicated communications officer in the Communications team is recommended to support environmental communications. Consideration should be given to the website, social media, active and passive promotion and engagement with the public including young people and schools to facilitate behaviour change. The officer should facilitate the following;</b></p> <p><b>a. The officer should link with the work of the Partnership to avoid duplication.</b></p> <p><b>b. A link to the section on climate and ecological emergency on the council's website should be promoted by a permanent banner at the top of the home page and the website pages relating to the environment should be more interactive to encourage more public involvement.</b></p> <p><b>c. The 'Newsroom' should reflect all news relating to the climate and ecological emergency and signpost to other sources of news on the climate and ecological emergency within the County.</b></p>			

	<p><b>d. As a way of generating engagement, competitions and awards for innovative approaches to tackle the climate and ecological emergency should be promoted by the council and/or its partners.</b></p> <p><b>e. Good farming and land use practice should be actively promoted by the council, supporting existing work by the Wye &amp; Usk foundation and others, engaging in discussion with farming bodies.</b></p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>Due to the financial pressures the council is under it is not possible to entirely dedicate the work of a single officer to support environmental communications. The council's corporate approach provides a mix of resource and specialist skills to develop and deliver its corporate campaigns, and environmental aspects are included within this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Council communications team will support the work of the Partnership using our communications channels where the work is in line with the council's zero carbon ambitions for the county and/or has a positive impact on the residents of the county. The team can help promote case stories, news items and examples of commitment to the climate and ecological emergency.</li> <li>b. The home page banners on the council website are used to promote messages as part of the multi-media marketing mix. Banners are changed regularly and permanent banners are not recommended as they lose their effectiveness. There is opportunity for services to develop content to embed and include within council web pages to allow for greater interaction. A climate emergency link has been added into the Community navigation box on the home page to provide easier navigation from the home page.</li> <li>c. The Newsroom provides the latest corporate news for Herefordshire Council and links to relevant content including news stories relating to the climate and ecological emergency and will continue to do so.</li> <li>d. The Council communications team can support any corporate activity that aims to engage and inform local residents.</li> <li>e. Herefordshire Council communications team can help promote case stories and examples of its commitment to the climate and ecological emergency, where it is the lead agency and has had direct involvement. Identification of these stories will need to be undertaken by service lead officers, as the experts on best practice and preferred approach.</li> </ul>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. To promote work of the partnership when it has formed.</li> <li>b. Climate emergency link has been added into the Community navigation box.</li> <li>c. The newsroom will continue to deliver news relating to the climate and ecological emergency.</li> <li>d. Support corporate activity that aims to engage and inform local residents including competitions and awards.</li> </ul>	Alex Floyd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Upon formation of partnership.</li> <li>b. Complete.</li> <li>c. Ongoing.</li> <li>d. Ongoing.</li> <li>e. Ongoing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Ongoing promotions.</li> <li>b. Complete.</li> <li>c. Ongoing promotions.</li> <li>d. Ongoing promotions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Climate emergency link has been added into the Community navigation box on the front page of</li> </ul>

e. Promote case stories and examples of its commitment to the climate and ecological emergency, where it is the lead agency and has had direct involvement.			e. Ongoing promotions.	the council's website.
<b>Recommendation 8</b>	<p><b>Full account should be taken of the concept of Natural Capital (including air quality) making it the driver for all council decisions. The concept of Natural Capital could offer a different economic model with weight given to the environment's contribution to economic development;</b></p> <p><b>a. The Cabinet consider designating Natural Capital as a separate and distinct policy area in their portfolio of responsibilities and appoint a lead on it.</b></p> <p><b>b. The council should incorporate in tender assessment, criteria to take account of Natural Capital and prioritise support for low impact, sustainable local businesses as part of a progressive procurement policy that takes account of social value.</b></p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>In 2020 the Council updated the corporate decision making process to require that all new decision reports set out how the decision / proposal seeks to deliver the council's environmental policy commitments, aligns to the Environmental success measures in the County Plan and addresses wider Environmental Impacts. In order to strengthen the consideration for Natural Capital further guidance will be developed for report authors to further inform future decision making.</p> <p>The Council's updated Social Value Policy requires consideration of social, environmental and economic considerations as part of all corporate commissioning.</p> <p>A key objective of the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan is the development of a new Nature Strategy which will include further consideration of Natural Capital.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Updated guidance on Natural Capital to be developed to inform future decision making and future commissioning.	Liz Duberley	Sept 2021.	Guidance produced.	
Development of a Nature Strategy.	Liz Duberley	Feb 2022.	Adoption of Nature Strategy.	
<b>Recommendation 9</b>	<p><b>The Group recognises and endorses the continued focus on broadband infrastructure and recommends that hard to reach areas that are not possible to reach with cable services are provided impartial advice regarding mobile network solutions.</b></p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Rejected.			

The current Fastershire strategy is not to give up and deem any premise 'not possible to reach with fibre optic' until the council have exhausted all other opportunities to find fixed broadband solutions.

As well as its various strategic contracts, the council is utilising a number of grant schemes to implement this strategy. This current strategy is in effect until the end of 2022. If a premise is not in one of Fastershire's contracts, residents can express an interest via the Fastershire website in developing a community project which Fastershire will fund and support. This will only fund Gigabit Capable fixed broadband infrastructure. Businesses have access to the Marches and Gloucestershire Business Broadband Grant, which is also administered by Herefordshire Council and provides Gigabit Capable Services. It would only be when these approaches have failed to deliver a fixed broadband solution that the project would look to advise people to consider mobile network solutions as the two are not comparable.

It is important to note that access to 4G home broadband packages are available already to most people in the county.

Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Continue to support the deployment of fibre optic broadband to rural properties until the end of 2022 utilising grant funding.	Matt Smith	2023.	>98% coverage at superfast speeds.	The county currently sits at c. 93% superfast coverage. The existing contracts will boost coverage to 97% by 2023. The Fastershire Community Grant and Business Grant will boost this coverage further but to what extent will depend on the level of demand from the community. So far 7 communities are in the pipeline for the Community Grant.
<b>Recommendation 10</b>	<p><b>The Group recognises the importance of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the role they have to play in making progress with regards to the climate and ecological emergency. The Group recommends;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. A Natural Capital partnership with Marches authorities and the LEP should be explored.</b></li> <li><b>b. The executive should request that the LEP publically commit to support all three authorities to deliver on the net zero carbon targets.</b></li> <li><b>c. The executive should request the LEP review assessment criteria and consider taking account of Natural Capital. Support for low impact, sustainable local businesses could be prioritised as part of a progressive procurement policy that takes account of social value.</b></li> </ul>			

	<b>d. The executive should raise with the LEP the issue of maize used as a feedstock for anaerobic digestion which causes environmental damage and request it reflects on the damage to Natural Capital as well as the road network.</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted. The council will write to and engage with the Marches LEP regarding the issues outlined in the recommendation.				
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>	
a. Explore with the Marches LEP the possibilities around a Marches Natural Capital partnership. b. Request the LEP publically commit to support all Marches authorities and their net zero carbon ambitions by 2030. c. Request the LEP review their assessment criteria for support and consider taking account of Natural Capital. Request the LEP support for low impact, sustainable local businesses could be prioritised as part of a progressive procurement policy that takes account of social value. d. Raise with the LEP the issue of maize used as a feedstock for anaerobic digestion and discuss a joined up approach to tackling the issue, although this will be governed by national policy.	Ben Boswell	June 2021.	Dialogue with LEP around these issues raised.		
<b>Recommendation 11</b>	<b>The Committee be consultees under the Core Strategy review.</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted. All members will be consulted as a part of the Local Plan update via Members briefing sessions.				
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>	
Ensure appropriate member/committee engagement during the plan making process.	Kevin Singleton	Ongoing process 2021-2024.	Members of the Committee consulted under Local Plan Update.		
<b>Recommendation 12</b>	<b>Biodiversity net gain should be a consideration in future planning applications through the Core Strategy review.</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted.				



	There will be a requirement to achieve biodiversity net gain of 10% introduced into the planning system through the forthcoming Environment Bill. However the Local Plan update will be able to consider the scope for requirements above the national target.				
Action		Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Local Plan update will be able to consider the scope for requirements above the national target.		Kevin Singleton	Ongoing process 2021-2024.	The scope for setting requirements above national targets are considered.	
Recommendation 13	Under the Core Strategy review the development of a new truly sustainable town to meet housing targets should be considered preferable to incremental growth. The town would include biodiversity net gain, sustainable transport links and local renewable energy generation including a heat network. This should prevent broad countryside loss across the county and protect the historic nature of existing settlements.				
Executive Response	Accepted in part, the proposal will be reviewed as a part of the Local Plan update process.  There is a requirement that the Local Plan update will need to demonstrate that reasonable alternatives are considered during the plan making process. The executive will consider whether one of the appropriate alternatives developed for the new spatial strategy for the County could be a new settlement or settlements.				
Action		Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Consideration given to appropriate alternatives developed for the new spatial strategy for the County could be a new settlement or settlements.		Kevin Singleton	Ongoing process 2021-2024.	A review of options completed.	
Recommendation 14	The group recognises there is a definition of sustainability in the NPPF; “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. However given the environmental and ecological emergency the group recommends that greater weight is given to “the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” through the Core Strategy review.				
Executive Response	Accepted, in part. As part of the Local Plan update how sustainable development can be better defined and prioritised will be considered.				
Action		Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
To consider how sustainable development can be better defined and prioritised as part of the Local Plan update.		Kevin Singleton	Ongoing process 2021-2024.	Review completed of the definition and priority given to sustainability as a part of the Local Plan update.	

<b>Recommendation 15</b>	<b>Good clear environmental policies should be developed, demonstrably supported by the evidence base, containing specific minimum standards that could then be enforced. A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should be produced to address the climate &amp; ecological emergency</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>An SPD on Environmental Building Standards is being developed and will encourage new buildings built to a higher standard and therefore reduce the amount of heat and energy required to run them.</p> <p>An SPD on Intensive Livestock Units and River Quality will look to produce policy guidance, primarily for agricultural development to reduce pollution into the rivers. Particular focus will be on the reduction of phosphate into the River Wye SAC.</p> <p>The Local Plan update will enable further policy development in support of the climate &amp; ecological emergency.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<p>SPD on Environmental Building Standards be developed.</p> <p>SPD on Intensive Livestock Units and River Quality be developed.</p> <p>The Local Plan update will enable further policy development in support of the climate &amp; ecological emergency.</p>	Kevin Singleton	<p>Both SPDs to be completed by December 2021.</p> <p>Local Plan update ongoing process 2021-2024.</p>	<p>SPD on Buildings Standards and SPD on River Quality are in force.</p> <p>Local Plan reinforce policies in support of the climate &amp; ecological emergency.</p>	<p>SPDs on building standards and river quality are currently underway.</p>
<b>Recommendation 16</b>	<b>Local planning strategy to include nature recovery networks through the Core Strategy review.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part, this will be considered as a part of the Local Plan review.</p> <p>It is understood that local planning strategy will likely be required to include nature recovery networks following the enactment of the Environment Bill.</p> <p>In any event the preparation of the new local plan will enable consideration of nature recovery networks to be integrated into the policies of the new local plan.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<p>Review the Environment Bill once it becomes an Act of Parliament.</p>	Kevin Singleton	<p>When the Bill becomes an Act of Parliament/ Local Plan update ongoing process 2021-2024.</p>	<p>Review.</p>	
<b>Recommendation 17</b>	<b>The existing environmental and forthcoming ecology compliance checklists should sit in the pre validation stage of a planning applications where they will form part of our local list.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Rejected.			

	<p>The council does not currently have a local list, so this is something that is being explored although the last local list was disbanded to make the planning service more efficient so that it could validate applications more quickly. Should the review conclude that a local list be established then a statutory consultation will follow.</p> <p>Currently the checklists are held on the planning pages of the website and all applicants are encouraged to use them.</p> <p>All applications are validated using national standards (in lieu of a local list).</p> <p>Applications without a checklist are informed the checklists are required.</p> <p>Should the decision be made to move forward with a local list, then this will be incorporated in accordance with any other recommendations made by the recent Planning Advisory Service (PAS) review of the planning service.</p>			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Review opportunity for a local list.	Kevin Bishop	Jan 2022.	Completion of review.	The opportunity for a local list is currently being explored.
Statutory consultation on local list.	Kevin Bishop	April 2022.	Completion of consultation.	
<b>Recommendation 18</b>	<p><b>The executive should ensure that existing provisions and policies on climate change and ecology are given their maximum possible weight in the planning balance and consider whether consolidating these provisions would assist in providing a stronger focus on the issues and weight to be attributed to them.</b></p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>In respect of existing policies the forthcoming SPDs on Environmental Building Standards and Intensive Livestock Units and River Quality will provide additional context and help inform the decision making of planning officers regarding climate change and ecology.</p> <p>Ultimately this is a matter of planning judgement for the professional officer in the processing of the application and conclusions within the planning balance.</p> <p>The Local Plan update will provide the opportunity to strengthen existing and/or introduce new planning policies in respect of climate change and ecology.</p>			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Enactment of SPD on Environmental Building Standards. Enactment of SPD on Intensive Livestock Units and River Quality. Incorporate up-to-date policies to strengthen the response to the climate and ecological emergency where possible within the Local Plan update.	Kevin Singleton	Dec 2021.  2021-2024.	Implementation of two SPDs.	Both SPDs are currently underway.
<b>Recommendation 19</b>	<p><b>Working in conjunction with the Environment Agency, manure management plans which have been used as mitigation in planning applications should be mapped and cross referenced and existing plans should be reviewed before new</b></p>			

	<b>plans are issued to ensure land is not under multiple plans which would mean an exceedance would exist. Any exceedances should be reported to the Environment Agency.</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	Rejected. We do not have the capabilities to monitor this action as the Environment Agency enforce this. However, when manure management plans are submitted to the planning service as part of an application they will be assessed.				
<b>Action</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Manure management plans are reviewed before new plans are issued to ensure land is not under multiple plans.		Kevin Bishop	Ongoing.		
<b>Recommendation 20</b>	<b>A greater focus must be given within neighbourhood development plans (NDPs) to low carbon policies and green space and the scope for the neighbourhood planning team to provide greater encouragement to and support for such policies. A guidance note should be produced setting out the council's expectations for provision of green space. This could include a checklist. The provision of green space as a condition for planning as well as retaining wildlife corridors, preventing the breaking up of wildlife corridors for individual plots and ensuring biodiversity net gain should be included.</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted. There are currently 37 Guidance notes which have been produce to assist parish councils producing neighbourhood development plans. Three of these currently cover topics on 'Conservation issues (Guidance Note 23)', 'Recreation Areas (Guidance Note 24)' and 'Renewable Energy (Guidance Note 25)'. These three Guidance Notes will be reviewed, recast and broadened to cover a greater focus on low carbon policies, carbon reduction, transport, green space and biodiversity. Checklists can be included within the notes to help guide those parishes whilst producing their revised NDPs.				
<b>Action</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
To revise and recast the current NDP Guidance Notes 23, 24 and 25 to include a wider scope of green spaces and low carbon.		Sam Banks	September 2021.	Issuing of new guidance note to parish councils.	
<b>Recommendation 21</b>	<b>Consideration should be given to an SPD for new anaerobic digesters which should prioritise feedstock which supports the circular economy and where it can be shown there will be no adverse effects on water quality.</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	Rejected. The Minerals and Waste Local Plan sets out an emerging policy (M3) which would carry greater weight than an SPD. The draft policy supports anaerobic digestion where its use is to manage only natural wastes generated primarily on the agricultural unit within which it is located. The policy would also require development proposals to demonstrate delivery of a net reduction in nutrient discharges contributing to nutrient neutrality, or betterment, within the River Wye SAC.				
<b>Action</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>

Implementation of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.	Kevin Singleton	Programmed for adoption 2022.	The implantation of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.	
<b>Recommendation 22</b>	<p><b>With respect to flooding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. No future development sites should be brought forward in Environment Agency designated flood zones 2 and 3 in order to allow these areas to sequester carbon, improve biodiversity and resilience.</b></li> <li><b>b. Actively investigate the causes of pluvial flooding and the discharge of water and sediments onto the public highway and carry out enforcement.</b></li> <li><b>c. Discussions take place with the LGA/EA/local and national drainage authorities and other appropriate bodies to see how flooding issues can be addressed at a national level</b></li> <li><b>d. That there be a focus on actions that can be taken locally by council and partners</b></li> <li><b>e. Work with landowners from whose land flooding onto the highway is known to occur reminding them of their responsibilities</b></li> </ul>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Rejected.</li> <li>b. Accepted.</li> <li>c. Accepted.</li> <li>d. Accepted.</li> <li>e. Accepted.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. It is not possible to prevent all development on flood zones 2 and 3 however, policy SD3 ‘sustainable water management and water resources’ of Herefordshire’s Core Strategy addresses this. It states that “development proposals are located in accordance with the Sequential Test and Exception Tests (where appropriate) and have regard to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2009 for Herefordshire”. This policy aims to ensure development is located on land at lowest risk of flooding i.e. Flood Zone 1.</li> <li>b. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 places a duty on Lead Local Flood Authorities to investigate incidents of flooding and this is set out in Section 19 of the Act and the investigations are therefore typically termed ‘S19 Reports.’ Analysis has been carried out of the October 2019 and February 2020 flood events, identifying the impact of the flooding for each geographical area affected and whether this is attributable to main river (therefore to be investigated by the Environment Agency) or local sources of flooding, i.e. ordinary watercourses, surface water and groundwater (therefore to be investigated and reported within a S19). Using this data, initial budget and programme estimates were produced and a desktop study is currently being conducted in order to further refine this dataset. Some 55 locations across the</li> </ul>			

county have been identified as requiring further investigation. Of these, 29 will require S19s by the council and 26 are within the remit of the Environment Agency. Note that we ordinarily plan for one S19 report to be completed per year. Whilst the desktop study will clearly help in prioritising and defining a programme of S19 reports, completing all of these investigations will clearly take some time.

- c. The primary way in which we do this is through Regional Flood & Coastal Committees (RFCC). These are committees established by the Environment Agency under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010. They bring together members appointed by Lead Local Flood Authorities and independent members with relevant experience who are appointed by the Environment Agency. RFCCs approve the annual programme of Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) work in their region and set the local levy that funds FCRM activities within the region that are a local priority. Herefordshire Council is part of the English Severn and Wye RFCC and its representative is Cllr Harrington. Through the River Wye and Lugg Natural Flood Management (NFM) Project ([www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nfm](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nfm)) we have been working closely with the EA and project partners to deliver NFM measures that will reduce flood risk to downstream communities. Monitoring data and outputs from this project will feed into national discussions.
- d. It is extremely important to involve local communities in discussions about flooding and how to reduce their flood risk. Locals have a wealth of knowledge on flooding issues which are integral to identifying solutions. We are seeking to further engage with the various flood groups that have formed in Herefordshire. As resources allow, our approach is to create mutually beneficial relationships with local flood groups, providing advice as to what measures the flood groups/parishes can carry out themselves, and sharing asset information with them. As per recommendation 50 this will be supported by Talk Community over the coming year. The NFM project has highlighted the important role landowners can play in reducing flood risk, by adopting different land management practices or installing NFM features such as attenuation areas and leaky dams.
- e. At the request of Cabinet Members, BBLP have reviewed internal procedures to produce step by step processes that can be used by parish councillors, Ward Members, BBLP and residents alike to ensure a more focussed response to good maintenance of drainage throughout the county. This targeted enforcement work with landowners from initial stages of informing and helping them to discharge their responsibilities through to enforcement will be briefed to members and the guidance updated on the council's webpage at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/flooding/6>. We would always look to work with landowners first before taking any action ourselves. Under Farming Rules For Water (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rules-for-farmers-and-land-managers-to-prevent-water-pollution#prevent-erosion-manage-livestock-and-soil>) landowners are required to look after their soils and prevent erosion. It is the Environment Agency's responsibility to ensure compliance to these rules and they undertake inspections to do this. In Herefordshire we also have a soil patrol which is led by the Environment Agency. As part of this patrol work, high risk fields are identified using satellite imagery and then Environment Agency staff work with the relevant landowners to help prevent soil erosion and remind them of their responsibilities ([https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/819/preventing\\_pollution\\_and\\_hazards\\_from\\_soil\\_water\\_run-off](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/819/preventing_pollution_and_hazards_from_soil_water_run-off)).

Action		Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Continued working with the EA, BBLP to investigate flooding and identify mitigation.</li> <li>b. Conduct Section 19 investigations into significant flood events.</li> <li>c. Continued working with the EA, BBLP and regional flood committees</li> <li>c. Deliver NFM to reduce flood risk</li> <li>d. Support local Flood Groups through the Talk Communities project.</li> <li>e. Council website to be updated regarding guidance on riparian responsibilities.</li> </ul>		Steve Hodges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Ongoing.</li> <li>c. Ongoing.</li> <li>d. Refer to recommendation 50.</li> <li>e. March 2022.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Continued investigation and mitigation, section 19 investigations carried out</li> <li>c. Ongoing partnership working</li> <li>d. Support provided to emerging Flood Groups</li> <li>e. Website updated</li> </ul>	
<b>Recommendation 23</b>		<b>Where sites have already been identified for development, the council should be supporting local house builders to build sustainable housing.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>		<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>With regards to housing sites, the council will not be able to direct that local house builders build out development sites. It could, by virtue of the review of the Local Plan, allocate a range of sizes of development sites that would assist both small scale local house builders and national house builders in delivering sites in Herefordshire.</p> <p>In the review of the Local Plan the council will investigate whether section 106 agreements can be used to facilitate the use of local employment and training clauses to encourage creation of sustainable jobs and training. This will require an understanding of the needs of the construction industry, and the local context in terms of the availability of skilled, trained and experienced workers.</p> <p>Implementing the recommendation will be dependent on how the Government responds to the consultation responses received on their proposals to abolish the use of section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy and the replacement with a national Infrastructure Levy.</p> <p>The Building Standards SPD which is currently underway will seek to address the need for sustainable housing by requiring and encouraging more sustainable building methods and techniques.</p>			
Action		Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress

Recommendation to be captured and explored in the review of the Local Plan.	Kevin Singleton.	Ongoing process 2021-2024.		
Enactment of SPD on Environmental Building Standards.	Kevin Singleton.	December 2021	Implementation of SPD.	SPD currently underway.
<b>Recommendation 24</b>	<b>The council assess the potential for using s.106 monies to retrofit existing poorly performing housing stock in the county to improve thermal efficiency (Milton Keynes as an example)</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>Carbon offsetting can operate as a planning policy that requires a reduction in carbon emissions beyond that required by Building Regulations. The offset payments pay for carbon saving projects to go ahead elsewhere, to make up for the carbon savings not achieved within developments. Carbon offsets are collected through section 106 legal agreements.</p> <p>In the review of the Local Plan the council will investigate how a carbon offset regime could operate, the risks and benefits of using carbon offsetting, the price that developers could be charged per tonne of carbon to achieve carbon abatement offsite, the type of measures that might be eligible and how a carbon offset fund might be managed.</p> <p>Implementing the recommendation will be dependent on how the Government responds to the consultation responses received on their proposals to abolish the use of section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy and the replacement with a national Infrastructure Levy.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
To consider as a part of the Local Plan review.	Kevin Singleton	Ongoing process 2021-2024.	The scope for supporting domestic retrofit using S.106 monies are considered.	
<b>Recommendation 25</b>	<b>The Group recognises the good work of officers in signposting community groups to grant funding and recommends the council increases resources so it is able to support bids through the application process and proactively drive bids in support of environmental projects with significant positive environmental outcomes</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The council recognises the importance in supporting community group's access grants and the excellent return on investment that results. The operational services provided by the Talk Community Division are currently being developed and redesigned with the aim to increase reach and impact for all the services. The Talk Community division have been supporting Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) to fund activities, services and projects and the redesign aims to increase this reach by offering community support and advice through a model of self-help tools, as well as upskilling those supporting community groups and organisations so that there is wider access to funding advice.</p> <p>Officers from the Talk Community Division support Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations seeking to fund activities, services and projects. The service is available to all such organisations including those developing environmental projects. In support of environmental projects the Sustainability &amp; Climate Change team will provide technical advice and support wherever necessary/possible. So far in 2020/21 the Talk Community Division have supported VCSE</p>			



	organisations to secure £1,253,620 for environmental projects and activities and will continue to support these organisations moving forward.				
Action		Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to actively promote the support available to VCSE organisations seeking to fund environmental projects.</li> <li>Continued joint working of the Talk Community Division and Sustainability and Climate Change teams in support of environmental bids.</li> </ul>		Nina Bridges	Ongoing.	VCSE organisations supported in the securing of grant funding for environmental projects.	
<b>Recommendation 26</b>		<b>The council should continue to support and promote Keep Herefordshire Warm having regard to the importance of addressing fuel poverty and provide incentives and support to individuals to make behaviour changes to reduce carbon emissions.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>		<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The current Keep Herefordshire Warm (KHW) contract, run by Severn Wye Energy Agency, will run until 2022, when the contract will be reviewed and either extended or re-tendered. KHW has supported over 900 households through the course of 2020/21, however energy efficiency measure installs and physical home visits are down on previous years as a result of the pandemic. Activity is on-going to promote the service and associated schemes and funding through a suite of tools including targeted social media, e-learning delivery and the website.</p>			
Action		Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to promote KHW using a variety of methods in 2021/22;</li> <li>Increase uptake of energy efficiency measures and home visits as County transitions out of the pandemic.</li> </ul>		Richard Vaughan	June 2021	Maintained household engagement levels and increased realisation of energy efficiency installs.	<p>In quarters 1-3 of 2020/21:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>893 households have received advice through KHW (target 750);</li> <li>35 energy efficiency measures installed;</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7 home visits completed;</li><li>• 8,879 'hits' to KHW website;</li><li>• 36 separate marketing activities completed and 48 staff/stakeholders engaged for fuel poverty training and affordable warmth network facilitation.</li></ul>
<b>`Recommendation 27</b>	<b>The council should have sufficient expertise and resource to carry out proactive works to protect the natural environment with a focus on wider ecological concerns in addition to responding to planning applications. The council should therefore appoint a dedicated officer to carry out proactive works.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>In addition to providing ecological advice for planning consults the Council's recently appointed Principal Ecologist will also take a leading role engaging in strategic and proactive work including the development of a new Nature Strategy, addressing the recently declared ecological emergency, and further supporting work to address water quality and phosphate pollution within the Rivers Lugg and Wye.</p> <p>We do also require sufficient ecology expertise to carry out our statutory duty in terms of providing ecological advice for planning consults and processing HRA, in order to avoid legal challenge. This would require an additional full time planning ecologist.</p> <p>In order to consider the increasing complexity and work load for the natural environment team a strategic review is proposed to consider the current and future resource requirements to deliver the statutory planning function, to meet the Council's commitments on the climate and ecological emergency and also to consider the future implications of the forthcoming Environment Bill.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>

Strategic review of the Built & Natural Environment service to consider current and future resource requirements.	Ben Boswell	Sept 2021.	Review undertaken.	
<b>Recommendation 28</b>	<b>To immediately resource an update of the Biological Records, making the data contained therein an up to date and accurate benchmark from which to understand and enhance biodiversity in the County.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part. The process of updating the records is a live and iterative process to enable the records to be continually kept up to date and we are currently working with partners and volunteers to do this. Due to resource constraints it is not possible to allocate further resource to accelerate the process, however we continue to explore other funding opportunities.</p> <p>Herefordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC) was established in 2001 as a 'not for profit' organisation run for the public benefit. It has been hosted from the outset by Herefordshire Council, operates on a self-financing model and works with partners and volunteers to provide a central database for environmental data in the county.</p> <p>The HBRC is proactively working with partners to develop data sharing agreements with recording groups across the county in order to expand and update the Biological Records.</p> <p>HBRC officers are also seeking alternative funding opportunities and are developing external grant applications in order to further develop the website, to enable online data requests and to free up officer time to input and improve data.</p> <p>However we are proactively working with partners and looking to make a funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund which will help to update the records.</p> <p>The service is also working in partnership with Herefordshire Wildlife Trust (HWT) to review the current criterion for the designation of Local Wildlife Sites, to resurvey the existing sites is to be undertaken this year in partnership and new sites identified next year, which will enable HBRC to update this dataset.</p> <p>HBRC &amp; the council are also working in partnership with Malvern Hills AONB to share data for the Nature Recovery Network pilot scheme which is currently underway.</p> <p>The Wye Valley AONB have carried out more up to date survey work of habitats in AONB through a project in 2017 with trainee ecologists. HBRC will contact both AONBs to investigate data sharing agreement (this year).</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Funding application developed and submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.	Liz Duberley	March 2022.	Application submitted / Successful.	

Partnership working with the Herefordshire Wildlife Trust to resurvey the Local Wildlife Sites.		Liz Duberley	March 2022.	Updated datasets.	
<b>Recommendation 29</b>	<b>A soil strategy for the County should be produced as a matter of urgency.</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>It is envisaged that the proposed nature strategy will encompass all areas of the natural environment including air, water, green infrastructure and soil. It will set out good practice in terms of soil management in order to address soil erosion and nutrient leaching in line with Defra guidance on Catchment Sensitive Farming Measures and Farming Rules for Water.</p> <p>This will also link with the existing partnership work on soils through the Herefordshire and Marches Nature Partnerships and the delivery of the Marches Environment Strategy 2020-2023 which includes agriculture, soils and woodland as a key strategic priority.</p>				
<b>Action</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Soils to be included within the development of the proposed Nature Strategy.		Liz Duberley	Feb 2022.	Adoption of Nature Strategy.	
<b>Recommendation 30</b>	<p><b>Improving biodiversity of hedgerows and trees;</b></p> <p><b>a. Review the approach by statutory undertakers to rewilding verges.</b></p> <p><b>b. The council should adopt a Hedgerow Manifesto as part of the emerging tree strategy including ancient and semi natural woodland.</b></p> <p><b>c. That the business case for another cut and collect machine is developed.</b></p> <p><b>d. That training be provided on sustainable verge management as part of a Parish Summit meeting inviting other key stakeholders who look after green open spaces including lengthsman.</b></p> <p><b>e. Recognise the importance of effective communication in advance of any changes to explain them fully to the public.</b></p>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>a. Accepted in part, subject to Nature Strategy review.</p> <p>b. Accepted in part, subject to Nature Strategy review.</p> <p>c. Accepted in part, subject to development of business case.</p> <p>d. Rejected.</p> <p>e. Accepted.</p> <p>a. Within the recently approved capital budget for 2021/22 the Council has allocated £2.299m for the new Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance &amp; Biodiversity Net Gain project. This innovative new project seeks to mitigate carbon emissions</p>				

	<p>and to deliver biodiversity net gain as part of highway maintenance and will include enhancements to verges and increased tree coverage.</p> <p>b. The proposed Nature Strategy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity and key to this will be consideration of hedgerows and trees. As such the proposed response is to include consideration of a Hedgerow Manifesto through the development of this strategy.</p> <p>This work will also be informed through the recent purchase of new mapping software for Hereford city that enables us to calculate percentage of canopy coverage in the urban area. Officers will also explore the potential to broaden the use of this mapping to consider hedgerows.</p> <p>c. The consideration of a business case for a new cut and collect machine will be included within the Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance &amp; Biodiversity Net Gain project.</p> <p>d. The council does not currently have the resources to undertake this proposal and is unable to commit additional resource due to financial pressures.</p> <p>e. The Council recognises the importance of effective communication in advance of any changes which will be promoted through the corporate communications channels. Further opportunities for partnership working will also be considered, for example working with tree wardens and members of public to identify species of trees within settlements and include this within the Council’s mapping. This would enable us to address the ecological emergency through increased diversity of species. For example the Council has begun to plant different species at the King George playing fields as these are likely to be more flood tolerant.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Consideration of a Hedgerow Manifesto and approach to rewilding verges to be considered through the development of the Nature Strategy.	Liz Duberley	Feb 2022.	Inclusion in strategy.	
Development of business case for additional cut and collect machine to be included within the Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance & Biodiversity Net Gain project.	Ben Boswell	Aug 2021.	Business case developed.	
<b>Recommendation 31</b>	<b>The council should, in consultation with Highways England, explore getting local authority verges in Herefordshire registered under Tier 3 for Environmental Land Management Schemes</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted			

		<p>The council is currently working with numerous partners including Balfour Beatty Living Places, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and several other wildlife organisations on the 'Verging on Wild' project. This partnership activity has identified 10 sites to undertake this activity which is currently being reviewed by the officers with BBLP.</p> <p>Officers can make contact with Verging on Wild to investigate this further and can also obtain mapping of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) to assist with identifying further sites for possible intervention.</p> <p>BBLP also offered parish councils the opportunity to change to their mowing regime to promote wildlife although this has had limited take up.</p> <p>Officer will investigate the opportunity for local authority verges to become registered as part of Environmental Land Management Schemes.</p>		
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Consider opportunity for local authority verges to become registered as part of Environmental Land Management Schemes.	Liz Duberley	March 2022.		
Continuation of partnership working on the Verging on Wild project.	Spencer Grogan	March 2022.		
Further promotion to Parish Councils to enhance wildlife through changes to mowing regime.	BBLP	March 2022.	Additional Parishes amending mowing regimes.	
<b>Recommendation 32</b>	<p><b>A strategic approach to biodiversity net gain should be established, working alongside partners to aggregate biodiversity net gain across the County and maximise the benefit. Carbon sequestration and offsetting should be pursued together with the scope for the County to benefit economically from these actions through the development of a business case. The Council should engage with other landowners highlighting the potential gain to them of tree planting and offer support to owners in growing;</b></p> <p><b>a. A record should be kept of number of trees planted, and felled, their age, location and regrowth plan for example a running counter on the website since the declaration of the climate and ecological emergency.</b></p> <p><b>b. The council should explore options for an open market trading platform for biodiversity and carbon.</b></p> <p><b>c. The council should take every opportunity to expedite tree planting on council owned land where appropriate, including closed landfill sites.</b></p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>a. Accepted in part, a record of tree planting facilitated, enabled and delivered by the Council to be maintained.</p> <p>b. Accepted in part, phosphate trading platform is currently being explored.</p>			

c. Accepted.

The County Plan sets out a strong commitment to 'Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold environmental standards' and the Nature Strategy proposed within the Corporate Delivery Plan will further develop the Council's strategic approach to biodiversity net gain.

As a committed member of the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership the council will continue to work with partners to maximise biodiversity net gain across the County.

Offsetting will also come forward as part of the Environment Bill. The delivery of biodiversity net gain where it cannot be achieved on site therefore needs to be incorporated into section 106 contributions as part of the planning process. This will also be guided by the timescales of the Bill and the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS).

Further examples of existing activity and partnership working include:

- Partnership with Natural England and Herefordshire Wildlife Trust to develop Nature Recovery Networks (NRNs) for the county which will help to identify opportunities for offsetting. Officers are also on the steering group for the NRN pilot scheme in the Malvern Hills AONB which is trialling the Gloucestershire model.
- The Council is investigating the opportunities to utilise s.106 contributions for phosphate credits through the development of a new phosphate trading platform which could then be used to fund projects to improve water quality such as wetlands.
- The Council has also commissioned the Wye & Usk Foundation to identify areas of land at risk of a higher degree of phosphate leaching as well as projects to address the pollution. This will allow the council to identify further strategic projects to improve water quality and rewilding.
- Through the Green Space Enhancement Project as part of the Towns Fund accelerated funding programme the Council is providing 519 trees free of charge to residents and organisations in Hereford City, ~80 new landmark trees in self-watering planters and planting ~90 large trees across the Hereford Enterprise Zone.
- The Extra Ordinary Highways Maintenance & Biodiversity Net Gain project will also include significant tree planting across the public realm.

Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Record of tree planting facilitated, enabled and delivered by the Council to be maintained.	Liz Duberley	Ongoing.		

Tree planting enabled through the Towns Fund Green Space Enhancement Project to be mapped on the Council's website.		Ben Boswell	July 2021.	Website updated.	Free tree offer already includes permission from tree recipients to enable the mapping.
Completion of phosphate trading platform.		Liz Duberley	April 2021.		
<b>Recommendation 33</b>	<b>The council should urgently seek counsel advice regarding the implementation of a water protection zone to protect the special area of conservation (SAC) from diffuse agricultural pollution (Wye and tributaries).</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>The council's legal team have provided advice in a meeting on 5 January 2021 regarding Water Protection Zones (WPZ) and how they work, and who is legislatively able to seek one.</p> <p>The council has been in discussion with the Environment Agency (who are the only ones able legislatively to make an application to the secretary of state for a WPZ) and other Nutrient Management Board partners to understand the process behind this. The first stage would be detailed modelling to demonstrate the need for a Water Protection Zone (WPZ), in order to put a business case to DEFRA should the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales wish to proceed.</p> <p>Councillors and officers have met with local MPs to request intervention and a list of proposals for funding is being put forward, with the alternative being to lobby the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales to press for a WPZ. The process of seeking a WPZ can take up to 10 years, with only one so far in the UK.</p>				
<b>Action</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
A list of actions for DEFRA shall be presented to the local MPs through a working group which is coordinated by the Environment Agency.		Ben Boswell	July 2021.	List accepted by MPs and Defra.	List for the MPs attains financial support from Defra.
<b>Recommendation 34</b>	<b>The council should explore the use of council land for solar farms and where appropriate council car parks linked with EV charging points.</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>The Sustainability &amp; Climate Change team have previously carried out a scoping exercise for solar farms with the ex-landfill site at Stretton Sugwas identified as a potential location, however after investigation with an installer and community support the site was not deemed suitable. The Sustainability &amp; Climate Change team will identify council owned car parks with sufficient electrical demand for solar photovoltaic (PV) installations.</p>				
<b>Action</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review electricity demand of council car parks.</li> </ul>		Richard Vaughan	June 2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of car parks complete.</li> <li>Feasibility of Garrick Multi-</li> </ul>	A provisional survey has revealed that Garrick Multi-storey car park has enough energy



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out a feasibility study on Garrick Multi-storey car park.</li> </ul>			storey car park carried out.	consumption to support a solar PV installation.
<b>Should a Climate and Ecological Emergency Policy Committee not be agreed or established the following recommendations should be made to the executive.</b>				
<b>Recommendation 35</b>	<b>The Committee should review all elements of the work so far on the climate and ecological emergency to ensure progress and avoid duplication of work.</b> <b>a. Specifically the Committee should review the SPD and environmental and ecological checklists produced.</b> <b>b. The work of the Committee and others should guide the council's actions to ensure it is moving in the right direction.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted. The Cabinet Member will review the SPDs and ecological checklists produced and will share this with the governance arrangements that are established as a result of the Rethinking Governance working group.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Review of SPD on Intensive Livestock Units and River Quality.	Sustainability & Climate Change Team	December 2021.	Review complete.	
Review of SPD on Environmental Building Standards.	Sustainability & Climate Change Team	December 2021.	Review complete.	
Review ecological checklist	Sustainability & Climate Change Team	July 2021.	Review complete.	
<b>Recommendation 36</b>	<b>There is a need to explore where the council can support the work of the Environment Agency and work more closely together on mutual targets and ambitions regarding enforcement.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted. The council chairs regular meetings with the Environment Agency for the purpose of identifying opportunities to reduce flood risk in a collaborative manner. In addition both the council and the Environment Agency are committed members of both the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership and Nutrient Management Board. These groups work across a number of issues including land use, water quality and reducing phosphate levels in the River Wye catchment area.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Continue to meet and work with the Environment Agency for the purpose of identifying opportunities to reduce flood risk in a collaborative manner and reduce phosphate levels.	Steve Hodges/ Ben Boswell	Ongoing.		

<b>Recommendation 37</b>	<b>Good farming and land use practice should be actively promoted by the Committee, supporting existing work by the Wye &amp; Usk foundation and others, with a view to setting up a Herefordshire local seal of quality. The produce should be promoted for example in a food festival, local farm shop or farmers market.</b>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>Currently the council does not have the resource or expertise to set up a local seal of quality for produce.</p> <p>Through the delivery of the Sustainable Food Places <a href="#">SFP framework</a> we aim to tackle 6 key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Take a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action',</li> <li>2. 'Build public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement',</li> <li>3. 'Tackle food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food',</li> <li>4. 'Create a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy',</li> <li>5. 'Transform catering and procurement and revitalise local sustainable food chains'</li> <li>6. 'Tackle the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste'.</li> </ol> <p>More specifically under key area 2 'inspire and engage the public about good local food' and 'foster food citizenship and a local good food movement', Area 4 'promote healthy sustainable and independent food businesses to consumers' and Area 6 'Promote sustainable food production and consumption and resource efficiency' &amp; Provide training, advice and support on adopting agroecological production and management techniques'.</p> <p>Through the River Wye and Lugg Natural Flood Management (NFM) scheme the council have been engaging with landowners within 7 catchment areas, providing them with tailored advice about how they can alter their land management practices to help slow the flow of water and reduce flood risk. To help implement these changes the council have ran an NFM Construction grant scheme. Details about the grant scheme, the catchment areas we have worked in and case study examples of the work delivered so far is available on the Council's webpage: <a href="http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nfm">www.herefordshire.gov.uk/nfm</a></p> <p>The work has been promoted through the Communications team and has received media coverage from BBC Hereford &amp; Worcester and from BBC Radio 4, Farming Today.</p> <p>As part of the climate action plan development work, the council are working closely with the NFU, Farm Herefordshire and the Wildlife Trust to promote good farming and land use practice.</p>				
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>	

Continue to work with landowners and promote best practice on NFM.	Steve Hodges	Ongoing.		
SFP co-ordinator grant application	Lindsay Macardy	Dec 2020	Success	Co-ordinator in post Jan 2021
Expansion in membership of Food alliance (leading SFP)	Lindsay Macardy	Ongoing	Increasing numbers	Additional members March 21
Mapping of current county-wide food activity	Lindsay Macardy	Ongoing	Map produced	Mapping ongoing
SFP criteria gap analysis & initial action plan development	Lindsay Macardy	July 2020	SFP 6 month action plan	Ongoing
<b>Recommendation 38</b>	<b>The council should work with Parish Councils and partners such as Sustrans and the Local Access Forum to map potential cycle and walking route extensions.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted. The council is planning to progress development of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). In progressing the LCWIP over the next year it will engage with key stakeholders including parish councils, Local Access Forum and other relevant consultees. This will include review of rural cycle routes which are already identified and consideration of new routes and extensions to routes. It is likely that some of the rural routes will present opportunities for leisure cycling and will help contribute to tourism opportunities in the county.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Subject to cabinet confirming next steps in development of transport strategy and agreement to allocate appropriate resource, progress LCWIP during 2021/22.	James Fishlock	March 2022.	Completed LCWIP.	
<b>Recommendation 39</b>	<b>Strips of land alongside rural roads should be investigated to create cycle ways with a view to purchase or lease the land.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted. The development of the LCWIP described in recommendation 38 would allow for consideration of rural cycle routes adjacent to existing highways. Any assessment of these routes would need to consider the appropriate design including if land was required and the potential costs of schemes. As per recommendation 31 it is important to recognise that 'strips of land alongside rural roads' may well provide an important wildlife asset and any proposals to identify these for cycle routes would need to consider how this would impact a wildlife asset.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Subject to cabinet confirming next steps in development of transport strategy and agreement to allocate appropriate resource progress LCWIP during 2021/22.	James Fishlock	March 2022.	Completed LCWIP.	
<b>Recommendation 40</b>	<b>20 mph zones should be implemented across Hereford, the market towns and around schools, countywide.</b>			

<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, subject to funding.</p> <p>Whilst the Local Transport Plan includes general policies supporting the introduction of residential 20mph zones, 20mph zones designed within public realm projects and 20mph zones for schools these can only be implemented subject to securing sufficient capital funds and meeting the requirements through the Traffic Regulation Order process.</p> <p>Following the motion by council that 'this Council requests that the executive undertakes an investigation concerning the introduction of area-wide 20mph speed limits across Herefordshire's towns and major villages.' Officers confirmed that an investigation would be undertaken subject to securing government funding in the summer of 2020. Some funding for temporary 20mph limits was secured in 2020 through the Emergency Active Travel scheme, but no funding has yet been secured for the investigation of area-wide 20mph speed limits across Herefordshire's towns and major villages so this has not yet been progressed. A capital funding business case is to be developed to undertake an investigation of 20 mph limits across the county and to develop a programme to implement these.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Subject to securing funding, commission an investigation of 20mph zones for Herefordshire's towns and major villages. The outcome of this investigation to form funding submissions to progress the implementation of limits prioritised around those which would provide the most significant benefits in terms of safety, modal shift and with greatest level of community support.	James Fishlock	Capital funding business case to be developed for countywide development of 20 zones, by September 2021. Hereford 20 Zones to be developed by March 2022.	Funding secured for investigation. Subject to the first action being completed: Investigation undertaken. Prioritised programme developed. Schemes implemented.	
<b>Recommendation 41</b>	<b>Opportunities to support all schools in developing school travel plans noting the link to changing travel to school behaviour and wider travel behaviour of children and parents should be explored.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>Support for school travel planning has focused on Hereford schools in recent years through the Destination Hereford programme which has been funded via external revenue grant (local sustainable transport fund and in more recent years Access Fund). A review of approaches and preferred model for delivering countywide school travel plan will be progressed to determine the opportunities for providing countywide support and how this would be funded.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Review countywide school travel plan support and identify preferred approach, resource requirements and funding sources.	Ben Boswell	March 2022.	Review completed and approach to supporting countywide school	

			travel planning identified and implemented.	
<b>Recommendation 42</b>	<b>To address the issues of rural transport the council should pursue funding to support innovative transport schemes within the community sector including demand responsive transport (DRT), car clubs and low traffic neighbourhoods</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>At full council on 12 February, £1.241m was allocated to further progress the councils sustainable transport strategy. A Cabinet report is progressed to consider the allocation of the budget set at Full Council. Innovative transport schemes within the community will be considered as a part of this report.</p> <p>Opportunities to pursue funding to support innovative transport schemes (including those described in the recommendation) will be progressed as and when such opportunities are identified. For example during 2020/21 an expression of interest was submitted to the DfT's Rural Mobility Fund to support a trial DRT scheme in the county. Unfortunately, DfT did not prioritise this submission but officers will continue to develop funding submissions as the opportunities arise. DfT has announced some potential future funding sources in its Gear Change policy statement including trials for mini Holland schemes outside of London and is also committed to produce a National Bus Strategy in 2021 which could also set out new funding opportunities.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<p>A Cabinet report is progressed to consider the allocation of the budget set at full council.</p> <p>Monitor opportunities to pursue funding for innovative transport schemes to support transport for rural areas as well as urban locations. Any funding submission will need to be in accordance with the council's financial procedures rules.</p>	<p>Steve Burgess (passenger transport)</p> <p>James Fishlock (infrastructure)</p> <p>Ben Boswell (behaviour change/shared mobility)</p>	<p>Cabinet report is due for consideration May 2021.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>	<p>Funding submissions pursued in relation to funding opportunities.</p>	
<b>Recommendation 43</b>	<b>A 'shop drop' scheme should be considered to support car-free city and town centres to enable shoppers to park on the outskirts and have shopping sustainably transported to their car, choose how you move location or bus stop. This should support existing 'first mile last mile' schemes. And investigate alternative delivery modes.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>The development of mobility hubs will form part of the active travel component of the further work developing the Hereford Transport Strategy which will consider this opportunity for both the city and market towns.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>

Develop concept designs for mobility hubs as part of the development of the package of active travel improvements.	James Fishlock	March 2022.	Locations and concept designs for mobility hubs.	
<b>Recommendation 44</b>	<b>Demand management should be further implemented, supported by robust communications and used to increase the provision of infrastructure to support active travel e.g.;</b> <b>a. Reduce on street parking and replace with infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians.</b> <b>b. Work place levy operated by the council with funds used to increase uptake of active travel.</b> <b>c. Car parking charges to be based on emissions.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted, in part. Options for car parking management including those set out in parts A, B and C in the recommendation will be reviewed during 2021/22 to identify preferred solutions which will help manage demand particularly for shorter distance trips made by car. Options will need to consider the important role parking plays in providing access to key services (particularly for rural residents, elderly people and people with disabilities) and supporting vibrant local economies as well as the important contribution which parking income makes to supporting transport services including subsidised buses.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Undertake parking review as part of the local transport plan update.	Steve Burgess	March 2022.	Revised parking strategy included in draft LTP for council adoption by council.	
<b>Recommendation 45</b>	<b>The Group recognises the existing work by officers to support the retrofit of fuel poor households. It recommends an investigation into the potential for a local 'green deal' option potentially through the establishment of a social enterprise to support the retrofit of the largest domestic users of energy in the County</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted, subject to further decision. The council is committed to the continuation of the support provided by the Keeping Herefordshire Warm service. The council also aims to support the development of domestic building retrofit programmes to further improve the energy efficiency of Herefordshire's housing stock, reducing carbon emissions, improving wellbeing and tackling fuel poverty. Subject to governance and funding, the council will develop a long term countywide retrofit strategy that seeks to facilitate the retrofit of buildings to a much higher standard, help to reduce environmental impact, fuel poverty and improve the quality of life for residents. The study will provide a robust business case to be made to the capital programme in September 2021. In addition to the strategy the council will support fuel poor households to install energy efficiency measures through the upcoming Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (GHG LAD) Phase 2.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
To prepare a cabinet member report to consider the development of a Herefordshire Retrofit strategy.	Richard Vaughan	May 2021.	Governance obtained.	Report drafted. Specification of works for

				the county strategy currently being drafted.
Develop a business case to apply to the Council's capital programme for a domestic energy efficiency programme to deliver countywide retrofit.	Richard Vaughan	September 2021.	Partner engagement to take place and governance secured.	
Submit informed proposal to Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (GHG LAD) Phase 2 project in order to support fuel poor households to install energy efficiency measures.	Richard Vaughan	May 2021.	Securing GHG LAD2 funding.	
<b>Recommendation 46</b>	<b>Consideration should be given to use of alternative fuel market for council fleet and contractors when vehicles/contractors are commissioned.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>In 2020 the council undertook a green fleet review and re-procured its fleet of vehicles. Included within this six hybrid electric cars and six fully electric cars were purchased for use as pool vehicles or as service vehicles for council teams. The fleet is due to be replaced in 2026 when a further green fleet review will be undertaken to ensure that alternate powered vehicles will be considered before fossil fuel powered vehicles.</p> <p>Through the recently updated decision making process all new decisions must consider their environmental impact as part of their consideration, as such all decisions relating to the purchase of new vehicles will take this into account as a part of the business case development.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
In 2026 when the corporate fleet is reprocured non fossil fuel powered vehicles will be considered before fossil fuel powered vehicles.	Richard Vaughan	2027.	All replacement vehicles consider alternate fuels including hybrid and full electric before internal combustion engines are considered.	Thirteen vehicles to date are electric hybrid or fully electric representing 29% of the fleet and 31% of fleet mileage.
<b>Recommendation 47</b>	<b>The use of hydrogen as an alternative fuel for long range vehicles or HGVs across the County should be explored</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>This recommendation aligns well with one of the 6 strategic priorities set out by government in its Decarbonising Transport – Setting the Challenge Paper: Decarbonisation of Road Vehicles<sup>1</sup>. This will be a government led approach which would enable local authorities to identify how they could support this priority as and when government sets out its Decarbonising Transport</p>			

<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/932122/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf)

	<p>Plan (this was due end of 2020 but has been delayed by government until spring 2021). Government announced that it will be funding research and development into a number of areas of interest to support decarbonisation of transport and this included hydrogen technology stating:</p> <p><i>“Hydrogen: Electric batteries are a viable technology for smaller vehicles today, but the fuel for delivering a solution for larger road, marine and rail vehicles is not yet clear. Hydrogen is a potential solution, and the UK has a number of world leading centres that could readily test the viability of the hydrogen economy for transport.”</i></p>			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Review government's Decarbonising Transport Plan and promised accompanying Science Plan which are due spring 2021, following Decarbonising Transport, and clarify further actions the council might take in supporting hydrogen as an alternative fuel option for road vehicles in the county.	Steve Burgess	Ongoing.	Approach developed to alternative fuels in response to government lead following on from Decarbonising Transport.	
<b>Recommendation 48</b>	<p><b>A Natural Capital management plan should be drawn up with partners. A baseline should be established and the plan should;</b></p> <p><b>a. Ensure that its preservation and restoration are given equal weight to economic growth and development in the allocation of funding (particularly capital) and in the decision making process.</b></p> <p><b>b. Be used as a framework for positive and collaborative engagement with key partners to achieve a unified approach to remedy damage done to Natural Capital across the County</b></p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>The forthcoming Nature Strategy will consider the council's approach to managing Natural Capital across its landholdings.</p> <p>As the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) is the overarching strategic partnership for the environment and natural capital, the proposed response is to formally invite the LNP to consider the development of a Natural Capital management plan as part of its future work programme. This will also be a recommendation to the emerging Herefordshire Climate &amp; Nature Partnership.</p> <p>An initial step for the council would be to identify the approach taken elsewhere. For example, Warwickshire County Council are developing a Nature Recovery Network, we will be in contact with them and others to assist with the scope of the proposed Nature Strategy.</p> <p>This could also include consideration of the new Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services (MAES) which is likely to come forward as part of the Environment Bill. This will also assist in the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain and as a tool for</p>			



	<p>establishing baseline of development sites and ensuring the development proposal delivers the min 10% biodiversity net gain as currently proposed in the Environment Bill.</p> <p>In addition the emerging Herefordshire Climate and Nature Partnership will consider Natural Capital as a part of the land use action plan which is one of the six themes that form the countywide action plan.</p>			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Best practice review of Natural Capital management plans.	Liz Duberley	July 2021.		
Proposal to Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership to develop Herefordshire Natural Capital management plan.	Ben Boswell	July 2021.		
Consideration of councils approach to Natural Capital through development of a Nature Strategy.	Liz Duberley	Feb 2022.	Adoption of Nature Strategy.	
<b>Recommendation 49</b>	<b>A fund to be established to support businesses to contribute to carbon reduction or ecological restoration</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>The council does not have monies available to establish its own fund specifically to provide grants to businesses for carbon reduction or ecological restoration. However we seek to maximise opportunities to use national grant schemes to support such work locally.</p> <p>The council will continue to look to national grants to support carbon reduction and ecological restoration. Current examples of active grant schemes in support of carbon reduction or ecological restoration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marches Renewable Energy (MarRE) that supports business uptake of renewable energy across the Marches. Up to 50% grant is available to eligible businesses to install a renewable energy installation to reduce carbon emissions and improve business efficiency. This scheme has been a great success in Herefordshire and is currently closed to applications in Herefordshire ahead of project completion at the end of 2021.</li> <li>• Business Energy Efficiency Programme (BEEP) which similarly is a European funded grant scheme that operates across the Marches and Worcester. Assessments of improvements that can be made with respect to energy and resource usage are carried out before grants of up to 40% are made available to help implement the recommendations.</li> <li>• Through the Accelerated Towns Fund, 520 trees have been given out to residents and local businesses in Hereford City to increase tree coverage and improve local biodiversity. In addition to this c.80 large 'feature' trees will be located in self watering planters in Hereford City centre and a further 88 large trees will be planted at the Hereford Enterprise Zone.</li> </ul> <p>The council is proactively exploring ways to use non-specific, national funds in support of carbon reduction or ecological restoration including the Additional Restrictions Grant fund and Community Renewal Fund. On the 3rd March government announced the Community Renewal Fund, with Herefordshire identified as one of one hundred priority local authority areas with</p>			

an opportunity to receive up to £3m of funding support. The fund can support Investment in skills, investment in local business, investment in community and place, and supporting people into employment. The prospectus states ‘proposals should demonstrate the extent of contribution to net zero objectives or wider environmental considerations. Projects should be based on low or zero carbon best practice, adopt and support innovative clean tech where possible and support the growing skills and supply chains in support of Net Zero where possible’. In taking forward this fund the council will seek project proposals that support businesses to contribute to carbon reduction, as well as developing retrofit skills and green building skills development programme.

In addition to grant schemes administered by the council, the Marches Growth Hub developed by the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) act as a single point of contact and signpost businesses to available loans, support and advice including support for business to reduce their carbon and ecological impact.

Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Through the Community Renewal Fund seek project proposals that will support businesses to contribute to carbon reduction, and develop retrofit and green building skills	Roger Allonby	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	Proposal finalised.	Awaiting further guidance on the fund from government, prior to seeking project proposals.
Subject to government approval, contract and manage the delivery of the proposed projects.	Roger Allonby	September 2021.	Numbers of business assists to reduce carbon.	
Evaluate uptake/ impact and feedback on the schemes offered to inform future schemes by end of May 2022.	Roger Allonby	June 2022.		
Continue to support BEEP in Herefordshire	Richard Vaughan	December 2022.	The provision of 60 free energy efficiency assessments to SME's in Herefordshire and a target reduction of 591 tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum in Herefordshire.	
<b>Recommendation 50</b>	<b>The Group would recognise the excellent existing work of Talk Community and recommend it explore support and actively engage with single person households to improve or enhance resilience and prepared for the effects of the climate and ecological emergency</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted, in part.			

The aim of Talk Community is to bring Herefordshire together encouraging residents, businesses, community leaders and the Council to work together to make our community a better place to live and work. To enable residents to take care of themselves, look out for one another and take pride in the place you live. The scheme is specifically designed to be all inclusive, across all ages and to support the whole population which includes single person households.

From small acts of kindness such as looking out for a neighbour, to volunteer-run community hubs across the county and partnerships with the Police and NHS – our communities are the beating heart of Herefordshire.

A parish summit on community resilience is due in May to further support the excellent work carried out by parishes and communities and to continue working in partnership to build on the excellent work undertaken during floods and Covid-19. The Hubs can be used as anchor points within communities to provide education and awareness around the Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE), as a part of this process organisations and volunteers could provide information sessions through the hubs. The council will explore recruiting or training community champions on the CEE.

The Talk Community team will be working with the Directorate Services and Emergency Planning teams and partners throughout 2021 to build on the resilience gained during the past 18 months.

Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening of 50 Talk Community Hubs across the county to support residents.</li> <li>• Host Parish summit on community resilience.</li> <li>• Work with Directorate Services team and partners to build on community resilience.</li> <li>• Explore recruiting or training community champions on the CEE.</li> </ul>	Amy Pitt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 Hubs due to be open by March 2022.</li> <li>• Parish summit in May.</li> <li>• Continue working with communities to continue to develop and build resilience.</li> <li>• Explore recruiting or training community champions by September 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 Hubs live across county.</li> <li>• Parish summit held.</li> <li>• Continue working with communities.</li> </ul>	17 Hubs are open, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, information sessions are currently being held online.
<b>Recommendation 51</b>	<b>Where the council provides schools meals they must be nutritious, locally sourced, low carbon and ethical</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Accepted, in part.			

The council doesn't currently provide school meals, each school contracts its own service with each governing board responsible for school food provision and school food standards compliance. Historically there have been many small providers across the county rather than a few large caterers which adds to the complexity of the issue but this also provides opportunity. Through the delivery of the SFP model we aim to tackle 6 key areas:

1. 'Take a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action',
2. 'Build public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement',
3. 'Tackle food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food',
4. 'Create a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy',
5. 'Transform catering and procurement and revitalise local sustainable food chains'
6. 'Tackle the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste'.

More specifically under area 3 'Promote the adoption of holistic food culture transformation programmes in a range of settings e.g. schools'

Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
SFP grant application	Lindsay MacHardy	Dec 2020	Grant award	Co-ordinator in post Jan 2021
Expansion in membership of Food alliance (leading SFP)	Lindsay MacHardy	Ongoing	Increasing numbers	Additional members March 21
Mapping of current county-wide food activity	Lindsay MacHardy	Ongoing	Map produced	Mapping ongoing
SFP criteria gap analysis & initial action plan development	Lindsay MacHardy	July 2020	SFP 6 month action plan	Ongoing
School food project plan	Lindsay MacHardy	August 2021	Delivery plan approval	
<b>Recommendation 52</b>	<b>In terms of community gardens, the potential for using pockets of green space in the more urban areas for orchards/market gardens should be explored. A scheme be developed to facilitate residents in the countryside who cannot manage their gardens to find someone eager to make productive use of that land.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted in part.  In part this will be explored within our approach to implementing the Sustainable Food Place (SFP) model. Through the delivery of the SFP model we aim to tackle 6 key areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Take a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action'</li> <li>2. 'Build public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement'</li> <li>3. 'Tackle food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food'</li> <li>4. 'Create a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy'</li> </ol>			

	<p>5. 'Transform catering and procurement and revitalise local sustainable food chains'</p> <p>6. 'Tackle the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste'.</p> <p>In particular area 2 'Foster food citizenship and a local good food movement' by ensuring communities can access and take control of green, brownfield and unused building spaces and increasing participation in food growing by increase in allotment provision, incorporating growing sites into developments and edible landscapes.'</p> <p>In key area 6 'develop &amp; deliver a land use and management strategy that protects and makes land available for community growing and commercial sustainable agriculture'.</p>			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
SFP grant application.	Lindsay MacHardy	Dec 2020	Grant award.	Co-ordinator in post Jan 2021.
Expansion in membership of Food alliance (leading SFP).	Lindsay MacHardy	Ongoing	Increasing numbers.	Additional members March 21.
Mapping of current county-wide food activity.	Lindsay MacHardy	Ongoing	Map produced.	Mapping ongoing.
SFP criteria gap analysis & initial action plan development.	Lindsay MacHardy	July 2020	SFP 6 month action plan.	Ongoing.
<b>Recommendation 53</b>	<p><b>To recognise and properly protect the natural resource in Herefordshire the Committee should:</b></p> <p><b>a. Consider the creation of additional areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB).</b></p> <p><b>b. Support the Wye Valley (including the Monnow Valley) be a national park (see Glover Review) and explore other areas including the Golden Valley as well as link to the other Marches authorities to establish nature recovery networks.</b></p> <p><b>c. support protection of the County's SSSIs and SACs</b></p>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>a. Accepted, in part.</p> <p>b. Accepted, in part.</p> <p>c. Accepted.</p> <p>SSSI and SACs are the responsibility of Natural England who are consulted on planning applications. The council also have a duty to consider and protect these designations at a planning stage.</p> <p>Officers are currently working in partnership with HWT and HBRC to review Local Wildlife Sites, reviewing their criterion and survey sites.</p>			

	The creation of new AONBs is a decision for Natural England. Some areas in the north of the county adjacent to the Shropshire Hills AONB have been mooted as potential AONBs for a number of years and officers could investigate the process of promoting this further.			
	The Wye Valley AONB could be linked to the Malvern Hills AONB as a national park, although this is also a decision for Natural England and could be promoted following the Glover Report. Officers could speak with the Wye Valley AONB to understand if this is something they would wish and the process timescales etc.			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Explore potential to extend Shropshire Hills AONB with colleagues in Shropshire Council. Explore the potential to link up Wye Valley AONB with neighbouring authorities to create a national park. Continue to support protection of SSSIs and SACs by working in partnership with other agencies and through our planning processes. Continued partnership working with our strategic partners through the Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership.	Ben Boswell	August 2021.	Partners engaged.	
Recommendation 54	An article 4 suspension of the general permitted development order relating to temporary events of off-road motorsports, to develop a more considered approach to the sport which acknowledges its impact on environment and ecology should be made. (Previously under planning)			
Executive Response	Rejected. An article 4 direction can be made under the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (“the Order”) to remove permitted development rights (“pd rights”). In the case of off-road motor sports an article 4 direction would need to be made to remove pd rights under Schedule 2 part 4 Class B (b) and Class BA(b) of the Order. The use of article 4 directions to remove pd rights are normally made on a case by case basis where it is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area. There will need to be particularly strong justified reasons for withdrawing pd rights relating to a wide area, such as the entire county of Herefordshire.  If an article 4 direction is to be made, consultation will need to be undertaken in line with the legislation. Notice of the making of the article 4 direction will need to specify a period of at least 21 days (stating the date on which that period begins) within which any representations concerning the direction may be made to the Council. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government must also be notified that the direction has been made. Any representations received must be considered in determining whether to confirm the direction. The Council would not be able to confirm the direction until after the expiration of a period of at least 28 days following the latest date on which the direction is served or published. If confirmed, the direction will come into force on the date specified in the notice, and notice must again be served on all persons affected by the			

order. The Secretary of State must also be notified it has been confirmed. The Secretary of State has the power to modify or cancel article 4 directions at any time before or after they are confirmed.

Compensation can be due for abortive expenditure or other loss or damage directly attributable to the withdrawal of pd rights which includes works carried out under the pd rights before they were removed, as well as the preparation of plans for the purposes of any work. Loss or damage directly attributable to the withdrawal of pd rights would include the depreciation in the value of land or buildings, when its value with the permitted development right is compared to its value without the right.

As each article 4 direction has to be considered on the merits of each location, the impact of the motorsport has to be considered upon the environment for each bespoke location. It is not therefore possible to categorically state that the planning and legal officers can be supportive of proceeding to an article 4 direction for each and every site in the county, as its success cannot be guaranteed given the other agencies involved and likely legal challenge. That said, it does provide a legal remedy to remove the permitted rights enjoyed by motorsports who would otherwise not need to apply for planning consent if they use the land for less than 28 days a year for a motor sport, of which only 14 days can be for racing or practising for racing.

Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Planning officers to liaise with the council's legal team to explore the merits in proceeding to an Article 4 Direction in cases where harm can be shown to be caused to the local community or environment.	Planning enforcement Development Manager	July 2021.	Legal support can be obtained to pursue with an Article 4 Direction.	
<b>Recommendation 55</b>	<b>The council should make a revolving loan fund available to victims of pluvial flooding caused by human activity, to seek legal redress. Cases and progress should be publicised.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>Under section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003 a LA may invest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) for any purpose relevant to its functions under any enactment, or</li> <li>(b) for the purposes of the prudent management of its financial affairs.</li> </ul> <p>The use of the power is subject to guidance issued by the SoS under section 15. Guidance has been issued entitled Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments for financial years commencing on or after 1 April 2018. The guidance is clear that loans come within the ambit of investments. As such the LA is expected to make a return on its investments and interest will be payable (which will need to be at commercial rates to avoid state subsidy rules). Note the guidance also refers to loans to third parties for economic growth purposes.</p>			

	<p>Section 12 is a pre-commencement power for the purpose of section 2 of Localism Act 2011 (Boundaries of the general power) which is subject to restrictions i.e. the section 15 guidance and therefore also applies to the general power under section 1 of the 2011 Act.</p> <p>The suggested fund is for the purposes of funding litigation by individuals affected by flooding due to the failures of neighbouring landowners. It does not appear that this purpose is related to any of the Council's functions as set out in legislation. As such the requirements of section 12 do not appear to be met and the Council would not appear to have the vires to make loans for this purpose.</p> <p>Advice to residents regarding flooding can be found on the councils website: <a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/flooding?documentId=345&amp;categoryId=200196">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/roads-1/flooding?documentId=345&amp;categoryId=200196</a></p> <p>If government considers the severity, duration and extent of reported impact of a flood enough to trigger activation of the Flood Recovery Framework, information regarding any financial support will be published on: <a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/floods">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/floods</a></p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
The council website be kept up to date with the latest information regarding support after flooding.	Steve Hodges	Ongoing.		
<b>Recommendation 56</b>	<b>Proactively protect the ecology of potential development sites prior to planning permission being sought, mindful of implications for biodiversity net gain.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Rejected.</p> <p>Whilst this is delivered to a degree through the existing Hedgerow Regulations and Tree Protection Orders, unfortunately there is no other legislation that is currently in place that the council can utilise in this manner.</p>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Consideration of options to deliver higher level of protection through the development of the proposed Nature Strategy and through recommendations for policy in the Local Plan.	Liz Duberley	Feb 2022.	Inclusion in Nature Strategy and policy recommendations for Local Plan.	
Ongoing review of any new legislation, in particular through the emerging Environment Bill.	Liz Duberley	Aug 2021.		
<b>Recommendation 57</b>	<b>That this year's mailing of annual Council Tax notices to residents includes a statement from the Leader explaining why the Council has declared the CEE, what goals have been set, and in outline, how can residents and businesses support the Council's efforts to achieve carbon neutrality. And that each subsequent year a statement is sent to residents outlining the progress made in the preceding 12 months.</b>			
<b>Executive Response</b>	Rejected.			



		<p>The executive consider that a better use of resource and a more positive engagement message would be to utilise other forms of communications. The launch of the 'Herefordshire Zero Carbon and Nature Rich' website in March is intended to speak to residents in an engaging and interactive way. The website will set out the net zero carbon ambition for the county, our action plans in six key areas (transport, housing and buildings, energy, waste, food and farming and land use) as well as informing residents what they can personally do to make a difference. The website also asks for ideas from residents as to how we can achieve this ambitious goal together. The intention is that the website will be better received, more informative and interactive than a flyer with the council tax letter which may be perceived poorly, especially in relation to the use of paper and ink to disseminate information about climate change or the information lost amongst the other inserts.</p>			
<b>Action</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Zero Carbon and Nature Rich website launch alongside establishment of Herefordshire Climate and Nature Partnership.		Richard Vaughan	July 2021.	Website launched and kept up to date.	Website has had a soft launch with partners.
<b>Recommendation 58</b>	<p><b>Some other local authorities have issued bonds to raise funding for climate-related investments, for example West Berkshire's Community Municipal Investment bond which has reached 50% of its target of £1m and will be used to pay for solar panels on schools. Would the Executive investigate the feasibility of Herefordshire creating a similar investment bond?</b></p>				
<b>Executive Response</b>	<p>Accepted, in part.</p> <p>It is the understanding of the executive that bonds are currently more expensive than the prudential borrowing authorities have access to. West Berkshire pay investors 1.2 percent over a five year term alongside capital repayments. This is a higher cost than the cost of utilising prudential borrowing over the same repayment term, currently 0.8%. There would also be set up costs and the need to generate adequate investor interest.</p> <p>A decision is due to be taken to invest in up to £941,000 of prudential borrowing to install Solar PV where feasible on maintained schools over a three year period. This would offer those schools, a zero cost solar install and discounted energy prices, generated from the solar PV.</p> <p>A decision is due regarding the development of a countywide retrofit strategy. Should the development of the strategy go ahead this strategy will consider the use of Community Municipal Investment bonds as one of the potential funding options to deliver a retrofit programme.</p>				
<b>Action</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>Target/Success Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Decision to be made regarding the investment of up to £941k in Solar PV on maintained schools.		Richard Vaughan	Decision by April 2021 Programme to complete by April 2024.	Solar PV offered to maintained schools.	
To prepare a cabinet member report to consider the development of a Herefordshire Retrofit strategy.		Richard Vaughan	May 2021.	Governance obtained.	Report drafted. Specification of works for

				the county strategy currently being drafted.
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