

Title of report: Motions on notice

Meeting: Council

Meeting date: Friday 8 December 2023

Report by: Director of Governance and Law

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To consider motions received on notice.

Recommendation

THAT: the motion listed at paragraph 6 is debated and determined by Council.

Alternative options

- 1 There are no alternative options to the recommendation; the constitution makes provision for motions on notice to be debated and decided by Council.

Key considerations

- 2 The constitution provides that members of Council may submit written notice of motions for debate at Council. A motion must be signed by the proposer and seconder and submitted not later than midday on the seventh working day before the date of the meeting. A member cannot propose more than one motion on notice per meeting and a maximum of three motions will be debated at meetings of full Council.
- 3 Motions must be about matters for which the council has a responsibility or which affect Herefordshire.
- 4 Motions for which notice has been given will be listed on the agenda in the order in which notice was received unless the member giving notice states, in writing, that they propose to move it to a later meeting or withdraw it.
- 5 Up to one and a half hours will be allocated to debate motions on notice but that time may

be varied at the discretion of the chairman.

- 6 One motion has been received and will be debated at the meeting. The motions for discussion are set out below:

Motion 1 – Housing

(Proposed by Councillor Rob Owens, Seconded by Councillor Ben Proctor)

Data from The Office of National Statistics and The Land Registry shows that the average house price in Herefordshire in March 2023 was £303, 606, this is above the West Midlands average of £279,450.

16% of households in Herefordshire live in homes rented from the private sector, offering them no long term security of tenure. 14% of households in the county rent through the social sector. 1500 households live in overcrowded conditions. The latest data, published in November 2023, shows the average pre-tax income in Herefordshire is £31, 878 this is below the national average of £38, 000.

Up to now, housing delivery through the open market has led to an increase in private and social housing, but it has not delivered the types of homes, or the kind of tenancy, that local people need. The county not only needs more housing, but crucially it needs more homes that people can afford to own, and which offer long term security of tenure. Herefordshire Council owns a significant amount of land suitable for development at sites across the county.

The council can and should play a greater role in ensuring that local people have a safe, secure, affordable home that meets their needs. The council can and should use its capital programme to directly deliver these homes. The council can fund prudential borrowing through the sale and rental of properties that it builds.

Council therefore resolves to:

- **Request the cabinet develop a programme to deliver an ambitious number of units of social housing, market-rent lifetime tenancies, affordable home ownership and market sale properties, funded through the prudent use of borrowing, capital receipts and the management of council assets in time for this to be agreed by Council as part of next year’s capital programme.**
- **Request that the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee undertake a review of good practice in housing delivery provided directly by local authorities and make recommendations to Cabinet by June 2024.**
- **Request that the Leader of the Council to provide an update on housing delivery at each meeting of the Council.**

Updates – outstanding resolutions

- 7 The constitution provides that the report to Council containing notices of motion on hand will also include detail of progress of all outstanding resolutions. There are outstanding resolutions with respect to motions considered at earlier meetings of full Council; updates of progress against these resolutions are provided below:

Date of meeting	Motion	Current Status
29 July 2022	Cabinet Commission on Phosphates	<p>The Cabinet Commission was set up in response to the ministerial response declining to introduce a Water Protection Zone and the lack of progress NMB was making in progressing a plan. Since the March Cabinet update report on the Commission the Agencies have become more engaged with the need for a governance review of NMB and the incoming administration met with the Secretary of State in May calling for a cross border task force. The Council has supported the completion of the governance review which comprises and expanded NMB with stronger environmental representation and an independent “voice for the river.” The Technical Advisory Group will now be supported by a more senior Statutory Officers group who will own the Nutrient Management Plan.</p> <p>Commissioners have held two informal meetings in September and November 2023. Commissioners are supportive of the governance review but remain very concerned about progress. They will set some benchmarks against which to test the new arrangements and review this in six months’ time. If the benchmarks are not met, the potential for forming a Joint Scrutiny Panel for the Wye will be considered supported by both Exec and Scrutiny leads from each Council. Commissioners have yet to consider how this review could take place but Herefordshire will recommend consideration is given to undertaking such a review against the evidential requirements for a referral to the Office of Environment Protection.</p> <p>A letter has been sent on the 14th November to the new Secretary of State for Environment reminding them of the repeated commitment to produce a “Special Plan for the Wye” seeking further engagement on this.</p> <p>The Council awaits further news (or has had news) on its £2.1m to provide further support in delivering mitigation schemes for house builders and a next steps report will potentially come to January 2024 Cabinet (please confirm before release as news is expected in the next couple of weeks).</p>
<p>RESOLVED: We welcome all the actions that Herefordshire Council and other statutory partners have taken and continue to take to address the issue of phosphate over-loading of the River Wye SAC.</p> <p>As scientific research now exists which indicates that further impactful and coordinated responses are required to save the river catchment from permanent eutrophication, this motion calls upon the executive to:</p>		

Consider including the following areas of urgent action in the remit of the proposed Cabinet Commission on Phosphates:

1. Request of government that:

- the new Minister in charge of Defra clarifies what additional evidence they require before they would be prepared to reconsider the Council's Water Protection Zone request for the Wye;
- DEFRA commission the catchment-wide appraisal of nutrient flows in the Wye (and all other river systems within Herefordshire) that will inform and enable consideration of the cumulative impact of housing, agricultural and industrial development.

2. Request that:

- the Environment Agency improve the effectiveness of their regulatory and enforcement actions and their work with partners, to deliver best practice in sewerage treatment and manure management and to encourage and support the ongoing work of compliant farm businesses.
- Natural England update their current (2011) River Wye water quality data in relation to the SSSI and SAC targets in a timeframe which is aligned to the current update of the Herefordshire Local Plan; and provide guidance on appropriate conditioning of permissions to achieve the necessary reduction targets.

3. Identify now how best to use the update of the Local Plan to:

- recognise and address proportionately the legacy and ongoing contribution to phosphate pollution made by each development sector;
- promote and support best practice nutrient actions across all sectors;
- encourage and incentivise catchment restoration through alternative, restorative and regenerative land use; and
- decommission intensive poultry units that have reached the end of useful life.

4. Using the 'precautionary principle' explore immediately the adoption of a planning position statement for all future development which accurately reflects the sector risks identified in research; and reinstating the consideration of '*cumulative impact*', in co-ordination with Powys County Council, to ensure that the Supplementary Planning Document on Agricultural Development, which is already in progress, enables officers to exercise the full extent of the council's planning powers in these regards.

5. Consider urgently how data sharing, data management and data visualisation can support science-led and evidence-based decision-making at all levels and across all stakeholders.

Date of meeting	Motion	Current Status
9 December 2022	Multi-storey car park (Bus Station)	The Parking Service is seeking to undertake a review of parking in the city, this review will help to inform plans for future parking provision. Once the review is complete then we will be in a position to determine the future parking requirements and whether or not a new multi storey car park on the Bus Station site would be a part of the solution.
The Council, therefore, calls on the Executive to explore the construction of a new multi-storey car park on the current bus station site to serve the needs of Hospital Staff, visitors and contractors as well as to provide additional car parking capacity to support the railway station and town centre.		

Date of meeting	Motion	Current Status
28 July 2023	County Athletics Track	The £70k contribution will be funded from the public health grant.
<p>RESOLVED: This Council asks the cabinet to reconsider the decision made by council back in February, at the budget meeting, regarding funding for the County Athletics Track in Hereford. Since that meeting they have attracted additional funding from the levelling up government fund and the local community following the initial pump prime funding from Hereford City council of £70k the short fall for the project to be fully funded is £70k the total project cost is £450k.</p>		

Date of meeting	Motion	Current Status
28 July 2023	Climate and ecological emergency	An Executive Response to the Motion Regarding the Climate and Ecological Emergency has been published (see link below): Issue details - Executive Response to the Motion Regarding the Climate and Ecological Emergency - Herefordshire Council
<p>RESOLVED: That this Council resolves to declare its recognition of the climate and ecological emergency, and calls on the executive to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Integrate consideration of climate mitigation and adaptation, and nature recovery, into all council decision-making; and ensure that all decisions are compatible with the goal of a zero-carbon, nature-rich Herefordshire by 2030; b) Commit to further accelerating reduction of the council's own carbon footprint towards the target of net zero by 2030, including taking every opportunity to reduce use of fossil fuels; 		

- c) Commit to taking every opportunity to improve wildlife protection and better management of land for nature, including on council-owned land;
- d) Support and strengthen action with partners towards the goal of a zero-carbon, nature-rich Herefordshire by 2030, including through the Herefordshire Climate and Nature Partnership Board;
- e) Provide the necessary resources for officers to deliver on the council's carbon reduction and nature protection commitments, and to develop evidence based indicators to enable the council to monitor and report annually on the county's position.

Date of meeting	Motion	Current Status
13 October 2023	Net Zero Targets	Draft letters have been completed and will be sent shortly.
<p>Council therefore resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Secretary of State for Transport to ask him to return to the government's previous target of ending the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 • the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero asking her to return to the previous target of ending the sale of new fossil fuel boilers by 2030 • the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities asking him to continue to require landlords to upgrade the energy efficiency of their properties • the prime minister to ask him to allocate adequate government funding to implement these measures fairly. 		

Community impact

- 8 Herefordshire Council's adopted code of corporate governance provides the framework for maintaining high standards of corporate governance in order to achieve the council's vision of "people, organisations and businesses working together to bring sustainable prosperity and well-being for all, in the outstanding natural environment of Herefordshire."
- 9 In accordance with the code, the long-term nature of many of Herefordshire Council's responsibilities mean that we should define and plan outcomes and that these should be sustainable. Decisions should further the council's purpose, contribute to intended benefits and outcomes, and remain within the limits of authority and resources. Input from all groups of stakeholders is vital to the success of this process and in balancing competing demands when determining priorities for the finite resources available.

Equality duty

- 10 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

11 The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. If any motion results in a request that the executive (cabinet) consider taking some action, the cabinet will have regard to the equality duty when determining its response to the request.

Resource implications

12 None arising from the recommendation; if any motion results in a request that the executive (cabinet) consider taking some action the implications of such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

Legal implications

13 None arising from the recommendation; if any motion results in a request that the executive (cabinet) consider taking some action the implications of such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

Risk management

14 None arising from the recommendation; if any motion results in a request that the executive (cabinet) take some action the risks associated with such action will inform any decision by cabinet.

Consultees

15 None.

Appendices – None

Background papers – none identified