

## **Title of report: Motions on notice**

**Meeting: Council**

**Meeting date: Friday 8 March 2024**

**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 motions listed at paragraph 6 are 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 Two motions have been received and will be debated at the meeting. The motions for discussion are set out below:

### **Motion 1 – Gaza**

(Proposed by Councillor Ed O’Driscoll, Seconded by Councillor tbc)

**This Council expresses deep sympathy for all those affected by the conflict in Israel and Palestine. For those in Herefordshire who have been affected by this conflict we offer our support at this difficult time.**

**This Council calls for an immediate release of all hostages and a sustainable bilateral ceasefire with unfettered access to humanitarian aid across Gaza in order to strengthen the possibility of a permanent peaceful resolution.**

**This Council believes that people of all faiths and none should feel safe both in Herefordshire and throughout the world, and utterly condemn the increase in anti-Semitic and Islamophobic abuse and violence. Herefordshire Council thanks community leaders for the role they are playing in reducing tensions at this sensitive and difficult time.**

**This Council resolves to write to the Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary, and Herefordshire’s two Members of Parliament stating that the Council supports a sustainable and lasting bilateral ceasefire requesting they do all in their power to work towards a viable two state-solution.**

**We also ask they recognise with additional funding the key role local authorities play in promoting cohesion and understanding throughout their communities by supporting the many voluntary organisations and faith groups who work together to help those affected by this and other conflicts.**

### **Motion 2 – Household Support Fund**

(Proposed by Councillor Ellie Chowns, Seconded by Councillor tbc)

**The government proposes to end the Household Support Fund on 31st March this year.**

**This fund has been providing vital support to help vulnerable households cope with the rising cost of living.**

**Many local community groups and charities across Herefordshire do amazing work to help ensure this funding gets to those who need it most.**

**Since the cost of living is still rising, and very many families are still struggling, this council believes it is not right for the government to axe the Household Support Fund.**

**This council therefore asks the Leader and Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to:**

- a) **express this council’s deep concern that the Household Support Fund has been axed, and ask that the decision be reversed;**
- b) **urge the government to establish improved funding settlements (multi-year, with greater levels of funding) for local councils, in order to support our essential services for all Herefordshire residents.**

**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 Council continues to press for concerted action to systemically tackle the river pollution challenges that the Wye faces. Significant progress has been made in the Council’s own efforts to provide relief to house builders and people wanting new homes in the Lugg sub-catchment with a revised Phosphate Mitigation strategy agreed by Cabinet at its February meeting. Never the less such progress does not address the underlying pollution issues especially from agriculture. A successful conference was held in November 2023 bringing together the farming and environmental lobby in which farmers were able to present the innovative solutions they are working on to reduce river pollution.</p> <p>Whilst a response has yet to be received from the letter sent to the Secretary of State on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 previously reported to Council, DEFRA officials have recently indicated they continue to work on a plan for the Wye and have offered to meet officers to discuss. Separately, In January 2024, the Office of Environmental Protection (OEP) who have a statutory role to monitor whether public bodies are meeting their environmental obligations expressed general concern about national progress to address river pollution issues. The Cabinet Commission will meet again in March 2024 and will continue to keep under review the progress being made by the Statutory Officers Group under the recently changed NMB governance arrangements. If as partner Council’s we together conclude that progress is inadequate then discussions will take place on how best all the Councils can together resource and support a submission to the OEP.</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. 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
8 December 2023	Affordable Housing	Cabinet will establish a cross party housing working group to oversee the development of an Affordable Housing Strategy for Herefordshire and the associated five year delivery programme. Engagement with registered providers has taken place with a view to holding a strategic summit with them by the end of April 2024.  Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee is considering this issue as part of its work programming.
Council therefore resolves to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>Request that the Leader of the Council to provide an update on housing delivery at each meeting of the Council.</li> </ul>		

## 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**