

Minutes of the meeting of Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee held at Conference Room 1 - Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane Offices, Hereford, HR4 0LE on Monday 22 July 2024 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor Louis Stark (chairperson)

**Councillor Justine Peberdy (vice-chairperson)** 

Councillors: David Davies, Robert Highfield, Robert Owens and Richard

**Thomas** 

In attendance: Tom Fisher (Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster Greenway CIC), Arthur Lee

(Herefordshire Local Access Forum), Councillor Phillip Price (Cabinet

Member Transport and Infrastructure).

Officers: Mark Averill (Service Director Environment and Highways), Ed Bradford (Head

of Highways and Traffic), Simon Cann (Committee Clerk), Joelle Higgins (Democratic Services Support), Danial Webb (Statutory Scrutiny Officer –

Virtual attendee).

### 82. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received..

### 83. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

There were no named substitutes.

## 84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

### 85. MINUTES

### Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairperson.

### 86. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A document containing a question received from a member of the public and the response given, plus a supplementary question and the response given, is attached at Appendix 1 to the minutes.

### 87. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

No questions were received from councillors.

# 88. PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND GREENWAY POLICY

The Chair introduced and gave an overview of the item including the four main areas for discussion as covered off within the report:

- Understanding the size of the public rights of way network in Herefordshire.
- Accounting for the current state of repair of the network.
- Exploring the current and proposed models of management and operational delivery, including the role of the Parish Paths Partnership including the Herefordshire Local Access Forum.
- Exploring opportunities to develop greenways through the county.

The Chair suggested that initially officers should discuss the report and that it would then be opened up for debate with the committee members and attendees.

# Size of the network

- The Chair invited officers present to cover off the size of the PROW (public rights of way) network, the various elements that made up the network and any specific features within the county - such as bridges and topography - which presented officers with challenges.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic drew the committee's attention to paragraphs 2 and 3 (including Table 1) within the main report, which detailed how Herefordshire's Public Rights of Way network was comprised of Footpaths, Bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic. To give an understanding of the size of the network, it was highlighted that - at 3014km in length - the footpath network within the county was larger than the road network.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic pointed out that the size and accessibility
    of the network, and resources available to manage it presented challenges. In
    particular the remoteness of certain sections made them difficult to access
    and maintain.
  - It was pointed out that there were currently 29 bridges within the network that were recorded as being damaged.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic noted that the complexity around certain legal issues relevant to the network could present issues and challenges for the council.
  - The Service Director Environment and Highways described how the right of way team within the council had reduced in size over recent years.
  - The river running through the county was not necessarily a problem, but maintaining discrete structures bridging remote small streams was a challenge for the team.
  - The rights of way of team was small, and covering over 3,000km of network was a difficult and revenue expenditure-dependent activity.
- The committee enquired if there were any features specific to Herefordshire, such as topography that made it more challenging to deal with compared to other counties.
  - The Service Director Environment and Highways stated that there was nothing specific to Herefordshire presented unique challenges. The topography and land stability issues within the county were similar to those experienced by other counties.
- 3. The chair opened up the discussion to other attendees.

- 4. The Herefordshire Local Access Forum representative noted that the foot path network was larger than the road network, and emphasised the importance of encouraging and promoting walking tourism within the county, as it was valuable means of generating revenue for local businesses
- 5. The committee asked the attending Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure whether they thought the Public Rights of Way network was given enough priority within the Executive.
  - The Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure suggested that perhaps the network wasn't given the priority its size commanded, but suggested that there was perhaps a need to make the network more efficient and that many of the paths within it were potentially irrelevant from a tourism perspective.
  - The Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure suggested that streamlining the footpath network, so that focus and resource was directed at: paths, walks and routes that actually led to places of interest/businesses, would be more efficient and beneficial for walking tourism than trying to manage and maintain remote/little-used paths that led nowhere.
  - The Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure asked the committee to consider whether the network as it stood and was expected to be, was viable and efficient, and whether the council should consider change.
- 6. The committee invited comments from guest attendees.
  - The representative for Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster Greenway CIC echoed the importance of walking tourism within the county and stressed the need for better coordination between the Walkers are Welcome Network, volunteers and the council in promoting towns and villages within Herefordshire as walking destinations.
  - They also stressed the need to consider how rural greenways could be opened up and used within the county to generate tourism revenue for the local economy.
- 7. The committee questioned whether certain paths were not used due to disinterest or rather that they were obstructed and inaccessible.
- 8. The committee noted that consideration needed to be given as to how much council resource should be directed at maintaining remote/blocked paths and how much should be left to volunteer groups and organisations. It acknowledged and agreed with the earlier comments made by the Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure about ensuring that the network was efficient.
- A committee member raised concerns about a potential lack of enforcement in regard to ensuring that landowners met their legal obligations in relation to maintenance of land/property. The committee noted the legal complexity and expense in resolving such matters.
- The committee raised concerns about publicly owned assets being lost when obstructed/unused public pathways were claimed by private landowners as their property.
- 11. A committee member pointed out that some people enjoyed walking along paths that didn't necessarily lead anywhere and that every single footpath had a value to someone and was worth maintaining. Maintaining the network with limited resources was a huge challenge, and more work needed to be done in ensuring landowners carried out required maintenance and that the pool of volunteers

- willing to assist with maintenance of the network was coordinated and utilised effectively.
- 12. A committee member welcomed the appointment of a Public Rights of Way Volunteer Development Officer to the council team, but was concerned that some parish councils had reported the officer wasn't getting the support needed to carry out required work.
- 13. A committee member stressed the need for greater co-operation with parishes and parish path officers who were a good source of information in identifying footpaths that were popular with the public but were unavailable/inaccessible due to obstructions such as broken bridges. It was stated that the quality of repairs being carried out on bridges and other structures needed to be monitored to ensure that repairs made were robust.
- 14. The committee enquired whether the data contained in paragraph 3, table 1 of the main report was accurate and if the backlog of paths that were going through the registration process were included on the definitive map.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic explained that the information in table 1 of the report related to recorded paths, but there was a process for going through definitive map orders that the team was currently working on. It was pointed out that the network was constantly changing and could actually be bigger than it was recorded in the document.
- 15. A committee member suggested that, when deciding where council resources and network maintenance should be directed, complaints/reports from the public should be used as a starting point as these gave an indication of paths that were being used by the public.
  - The representative from the Herefordshire Local Access Forum commented that every public footpath was important and pointed to the physical and mental health benefits of walking and how this helped many people's wellbeing during the Covid pandemic.
  - They acknowledged the resourcing issues faced by the council in terms of footpath maintenance, but stated that significant repair and maintenance work could be carried out by willing and able volunteers from groups such as: the Rambler Practical Footpath Team, parish councils and various walking groups. It was suggested that if an effective volunteer officer and issue identification system was in place, then this would take pressure off the council in terms of finance.
- 16. The committee suggested that the whole network could potentially be maintained if: the council used its resources efficiently, enforcement measures were applied properly and volunteers were coordinated effectively.
- 17. The committee enquired whether it was felt that footpath officers should be council employees or volunteers.
- 18. The committee asked for assurance that the council was still committed to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2018-2028 in terms of user accessibility.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic stated that in relation to determining which
    paths were valuable and which were less so, there was a section in Appendix
    4 of the Rights Of Way Improvement Plan 2018-2028 that covered off
    categorisation of paths. Council rights of way officers tended to focus heavily
    on inspecting category 1 paths and routes, but when members of the public

- flagged an issue or made an enquiry, then the officers would follow that up and investigate.
- The Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure stressed the need to think about how not just current, but future generations would use and engage with the network.
- The Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure asked for clarity in relation to the committee's use of the word accessibility, and whether it meant accessibility for people to reach a path or making paths accessible for all people with disability needs.
- 19. The committee pointed out that the Improvement Plan 2018-2028 did talk explicitly about accessibility for all users.
- 20. A committee member suggested that the idea that the entire network would be made accessible to wheelchair users was probably unrealistic, but did highlight schemes in local parishes where wheelchair accessible routes were being created to allow wheelchair users to access woods and fields.
- 21. Replacing stiles with gates was discussed as a means of improving accessibility for those with disabilities.
  - The representative for the Herefordshire Local Access Forum pointed out that the health and wellbeing benefits derived from being able to walk on public rights of was rarely accounted for in council budget calculations.
  - The Service Director Environment and Highways acknowledged the health benefits derived from public rights of way and stated that there needed to be closer cooperation with colleagues from Public Health, such as working with doctors and surgeries to promote prescriptions for better health by advising people to patriciate in guided walks around the county. There was a need to ensure that money was being invested in the right areas.

# The State of the network.

- 22. The chair invited officers to provide an overview of the state of the network and whether they felt it was better or worse than it had been 20 years ago.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic explained that there wasn't available data to back up how things had changed and that this was partly due to the way in which data had been recorded. Reports from the public made through the website were now fed into the 'Confirm' software system and there was currently work being done on this to ensure that it could measure workload and activity, and identify trends and patterns over time.
- 23. The committee pointed out that data was key in understanding how the network was being managed and that there didn't appear to be a set of KPIs (key performance indicators) that could demonstrate how interventions were impacting the health of and having a positive effect on the network.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic acknowledged that it had been challenging
    providing groups such as the Local Access Forum with information on a
    consistent basis, but that the team was getting closer to being able to provide
    KPIs for measuring what was going in the network and how the team was
    performing.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic suggested that it might be useful to formulate a recommendation around working with the Local Access Forum to create some kind of performance framework.

- The Service Director Environment and Highways described the Best Value Performance Indicative Framework or BVPI 178, which had been used in the past and suggested that this could be reintroduced as the structure for it was already in place.
- The representative from Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster Greenway CIC
  noted that the best value performance framework was still being used by
  other organisation such as the Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural
  Beauty and the Ramblers, which might allow for benchmarking going forward.
  The importance of using parish footpath officers in dealing with these reports
  was also stressed.
- 24. The committee asked if it might be prudent to improve communications about when maintenance work was timetabled and scheduled in order to pre-empt or allay complaints from the public about overgrown or obstructed pathways and routes.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic acknowledged this point and suggested that it was important that the council could communicate to people that it was aware of an issue to avoid repeat enquiries being made about it. Educating people about when and why work was being undertaken and the best time of year to report issues was also important and was something that could be achieved through campaigns.
- 25. The committee noted that annually the number of enquiries was around 1,300, but that in the year to date it stood at around 373, the committee enquired if this was because enquiries were seasonal or a sign that the network was much improved.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic confirmed they were the enquiries that had been received to date and that there was a seasonal pattern to the flow of enquiries. As the data system improved it would be easier to identify the trends and patterns and tailor targeted campaigns at landowners and volunteers regarding the best times to engage in maintenance activity.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic pointed out that batching similar enquiries together when dealing with them would be an effective approach to adopt going forward.
- 26. The committee enquired whether it would be useful to make a recommendation around ensuring the reporting system for the PROW network was as effective as the one used for highways by Balfour Beatty.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic explained reports received currently came through various channels, but the most efficient of these was the council website, which had been undergoing work recently. The remote location of certain PROW related enquiries made them harder to pinpoint than a typical highways issue, but through the digital front door of the website, 'Granicus' automatically linked into the council's 'Confirm' reporting system so that every report received would feed into 'Confirm' and auto-populate and allocated to one of the rights of way inspectors. In the past the process had been carried out manually, which was time consuming and expensive.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic explained that the next part of the work being done to the PROW reports system was how the feedback loop would get back to the member of the public who had made the report/enquiry, to let them know the matter had been addressed and the case was closed.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic pointed out that a lot of the information recorded and received could be displayed on a map where people could see that it has already been reported.

- The representative for Herefordshire Local Access Forum felt the council's report system was not as user friendly as it could be and would benefit from allowing people who were submitting reports to be able to accurately and easily pinpoint issues on a map and sign them off as completed when appropriate.
- The Head of Highways and Traffic pointed out that a system similar to this
  was already active on the council's website, but that they were currently
  working on how to get job information through to parish footpath officers and
  other volunteers to keep the process as simple as possible.
- 27. The committee asked if data could be accessed by ward and parish councillors so that parish footpath officers could monitor the status of local issues.
- 28. A committee member detailed the enforcement process for landowners not taking action to clearing obstructed routes and paths when instructed to do so and enquired why the council did not appear to be prosecuting individuals who refused to carry out work when ordered to do so.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic explained the team worked closely with colleagues in the legal department in dealing with these matters on a caseby-case basis, and there was a need for action taken to be reasonable, proportionate and in the public interest.
- 29. The committee raised concerns about landowners not being prosecuted in situations where they continued to wilfully obstruct public rights of way even after repeated engagement from the council. It was suggested that robust enforcement of existing council policy would potentially have a hugely positive impact on ensuring the network was being maintained as it should be.
- 30. The committee considered if it might be useful for maintaining healthy relationships with landowners if enforcement duties were carried out by officers outside of the PROW team.
  - The Service Director Environment and Highways pointed out that relationships with landowners and the team worked because they were open, honest and cordial. Separating enforcement functions from the team would put a strain on already stretched resources and the act of applying enforcement would still lead to potentially damaged relationships between landowners and the council regardless of which officer carried out the enforcement.
  - It was noted that the nature of landownership was changing. A relatively
    recent development was that large pieces of land were often being carved up
    and sold off to speculative purchasers. It was explained that having multiple
    landowners owning various sections of one big piece of land made
    enforcement of maintenance more difficult than it had been historically.
  - The Service Director Environment and Highways stressed the importance of looking at some problems from a different perspective, and suggested that the council offering a service to landowners to carry out maintenance at a competitive price might motivate individuals to resolve issues around obstructions being reported by the public.
- 31. A committee member suggested that one clear and well publicised example of enforcement being made against a persistent and deliberate offender - who refused repeated attempts to discharge maintenance responsibilities - would send a clear message out to other offenders that there were consequences for non-compliance with policy.

- 32. The committee enquired if the council was made aware when land containing a foot path changed hands and if there was a system in place to alert/educate the new owners about their maintenance responsibilities.
  - The Service Director Environment and Highways said the council did not automatically receive this information.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic suggested that this information could perhaps be relayed when people made council tax enquiries, but this would have to be given consideration as to whether it was viable.

# Models of management and operational delivery.

- The representative for the Herefordshire Local Access Forum suggested all
  parties needed to be working in partnership in a proactive rather than reactive
  way. This could be more easily achieved with an accessible system similar to
  the way highways work with potholes, where people could sign on to get the
  jobs done and sign off when it was completed with a photograph to show the
  work was finished.
- 33. The committee asked if there was enough engagement about managing the network between the Local Access Forum and the council, and whether there was a need to strengthen the Parish Path Partnership.
  - The representative for the Herefordshire Local Access Forum said that historically, when there had been a grant for the number of kilometres of paths/rights of way in a parish area, that the parishes had been more committed to maintaining and taking ownership of them.
  - The representative for the Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster Greenway CIC suggested that there was a need for a reliable and up-to-date list of parish footpath officers. There was also a need for closer working between parish footpath officers and council contractors, which could result in improvements in efficiency.
- 34. The committee enquired about the views of the executive on strengthening partnerships and any resourcing impacts it might have.
  - The Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure stated that the importance
    of partnership working had been forgotten for some time and it needed to be
    re-enabled by building healthy working relationships between the parish and
    county councils. The forthcoming parish charter (being worked on following a
    recent parish summit) could offer guidance on how to harness the local
    volunteer workforce and members of the public in maintaining the network.
- 35. A committee member stressed the need for clear and effective procedures for gathering together volunteer resources, which wouldn't be wholly dependent on parish footpath officers to organise.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic pointed to the role of the volunteer development coordinator that had recently been recruited to. The new officer had been working to put in place processes and procedures that were needed to coordinate volunteer resources effectively. It was stressed that any system of coordination needed to be structured and disciplined to maximise potential and that different skill sets offered by different volunteers needed to be understood.
  - The Service Director Environment and Highways suggested that volunteers and parishes needed to be celebrated for the work they were carrying out and

that this in itself might encourage other people to come forward and get involved.

- 36. The committee noted a lack of detail about individual officers on some parish websites and suggested it would be helpful if some parishes could provide greater detail and information about their structure, so that it was easier to contact them and offer support.
- 37. The committee enquired if the £250,000 allocated to the PROW network had been distributed and whether there had been a great deal of demand from parish councils for funds.
  - The Head of Highways and Traffic explained that approximately £100,000 had been received and that his was an ongoing piece of work, but demand had been high and the deadline for applications from parishes had been extended.

# Greenways.

- 38. The committee noted that land ownership had been a significant issue in relation to the progression of greenway activity within the county.
  - The representative for Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster Greenway CIC
    pointed to and questioned the accuracy of a statement in the agenda report,
    which suggested that studies had found a number of issues that could not be
    easily overcome and there has been no further progress with schemes.
  - The representative suggested previous studies in to the feasibility of greenways had produced positive outcomes and pointed to the Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster document which contained data showing an overall cost benefit ratio of 5:1 that the benefits of a greenway would provide over a 30 year life span. The same document stated that the greenway was a feasible project, and should be considered in further detail to prepare funding bids for its delivery. Sensitivity tests had also been undertaken to account for uncertainty around cost benefit and they had demonstrated good value for money.
  - The representative for Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster Greenway CIC acknowledged land ownership was the significant issue and gaining access to required pieces of land required needed to be done through negotiation with relevant landowners and not compulsory purchases. The greenway CIC was looking to move negotiations with landowners along and that was its strategy going forward.
  - The representative for Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster Greenway CIC noted that the Herefordshire Local Plan made substantial reference to the greenway and green infrastructure.
  - The representative stated that the CIC had not had any significant engagement with the council in the last 18 months and felt that it would be helpful to have a meeting to review progress and activity relating to the matter
  - The Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure stated they felt the
    greenways project had been mis-sold in the context of what it could deliver
    and that certain local councils had raised serious concerns about the project.
    It needed to be more clearly defined and presented in terms of where it would
    and wouldn't run.
  - The representative for Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster Greenway CIC
    pointed out that greenway policy was formulated in the draft Herefordshire
    Plan and that it would be useful to have a session where officers could meet
    with the group to discuss and pick up on feedback around the project.

- The Service Director Environment and Highways confirmed they would be happy to facilitate a meeting.
- 39. Committee members noted that much of the proposed route was privately owned and many bridges and roads were now missing. However, the long term prospect of opening up 27 miles of flat-level connection between a city and a big town was exciting and full of potential - if it could be completed and the difficulties overcome.
  - The Representative Worcester, Bromyard, Leominster Greenway CIC acknowledged that they were ambitious projects and it would take time to make them happen, but stressed it was important to maintain the ambition to make them a reality.
- 40. The committee stressed there was a need for the executive to set out clear policy on greenways.

At the conclusion of the debate, the committee discussed potential recommendations and the following resolutions were agreed.

## Resolved that:

- 1. To assess trends in the overall condition of the PROW network, the Executive should develop or reintroduce one or more key indicators with interested stakeholders (including LAF) that can be used to determine changes in the underlying health of the network over time.
- 2. Funding for the PROW network should be prioritised over time on replacing/repairing the 40 to 50 bridges vital to providing a joined-up network across the County.
- 3. The executive should explore expanding the current system for reporting defects to the county's public rights of way network to make them more user-friendly (map-based system of reporting), to enable parishes and volunteers to carry out remedial works themselves, where appropriate.
- 4. Clear standards for accessibility should be agreed between parish path partnerships and Herefordshire Council.
- 5. The Executive should strengthen the Parish Path Partnership through more effective organisation, engagement, coordination and communications with Parishes to ensure that they, footpath officers, ramblers and volunteers can play their full part in maintaining the PROW network.
- 6. In enforcing the current Improvement Plan, the Executive should redress the balance to give priority to the primary purpose of protecting access rights to the network, by ensuring landowners meet their legal responsibilities and where they are not, to prosecute where appropriate.
- 7. The Executive should set out its policy for expanding the PROW network through the addition of accessible active travel routes (so called greenways and the wider PROW network) as a vital contributor to the Council Plan 2024-28 plus its net zero ambitions for the County.

# 89. CHAIR UPDATE

The Committee received and discussed Executive responses to recommendations it had made regarding River Water Pollution and Implementing the Environment Act 2021.

The Committee was satisfied with the responses received in relation to the Environment Act 2021, but had concerns regarding several of the Executive responses it had received in relation to River Water Pollution. It was unanimously decided it might be useful to

contact and meet with the Cabinet Member Environment to discuss the recommendations that had been partially agreed.

### Resolved:

That the Chair of the Committee would write a letter to the Cabinet Member for the Environment, seeking clarity as to whether they would reconsider the responses to recs a), b) and e) in relation to River Water Pollution and enquire whether they could move towards what was the intention of the three recommendations.

### 90. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee discussed the work programme for the year ahead and voted unanimously to make the following change:

#### Resolved:

That the River Lugg water quality item be rescheduled from the Committee's March 2025 agenda to the January 2025 agenda.

## 91. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Monday 23 September 2024, 2pm

## 92. APPENDIX 1 - QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

Questioner:	Mr Peter McKay, Leominster
Scrutiny Meeting:	Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee 22 July 2024
Ougstion.	

### Question:

A question to Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee February 2024 meeting, now transferred to yourselves, seeking assurance that the two specific Highway and Path Record issues be incorporated in its work programme, records that a response to the substance of my question will be given at the next public meeting, now this meeting, and I seek this assurance. Working through various issues in Leominster I ask if you have any guidance for Parishes should they find that situation on the ground differs from that shown on your Highways and PROW Map, making best use of parish powers and most cost effective map correction process, e.g., local plan, list of streets, showing private maintained highways, highways subject of cease to maintain orders, open spaces, etc.?

### Response:

This committee will be scrutinising how the council manages public rights of way in Herefordshire. As part of that work, the committee will ask questions about how the definitive map is maintained and amended. A further focus for the committee's questioning will be around how Herefordshire Council works with Parish Path Partnerships, to ensure the maintenance of public rights of way.

The council has an established process for modifying the definitive map for public rights of way, which can be found on the council website at

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/public-rights-way/definitive-map-statement-dms/3. This includes guidance for submitting anomalies. Parish council have no powers to amend the definitive map and should submit suggested modifications using the same process as that used by members of the public.

Questioner:	Mr Peter McKay, Leominster
<b>Scrutiny Meeting:</b>	Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee 22 July 2024
Supplementary Question:	
Have worked through Leominster's List of Anomalies on Town Council webpage, plus	
those on your own list, and have raised the attached Draft Action Plan, expected to be	

on Town Council webpage shortly, aiming to address these in most efficient manner, my finding they mostly if not all fall outside scope of your referenced guidance. Town Council has made representation to the 2021-41 Local Plan Place Shaping Consultation that these need to be corrected. Would you please review this, provide some feedback, would it be included in the Local Plan, and would you discuss with Town Council?

Verbal Response from Cabinet Member Transport and Infrastructure delivered during the meeting: Thank you Mr McKay for your supplementary guestion. It's guite complex, so we'll strip your question into various bits. Let's start with 'would it be included in the Local Plan? The Local Plan is likely to undergo significant change as a result of the change of government at the recent general election and we're not sure where that's going to take us. However on the substance of the question, that will still remain whatever government is in place, so we'll just get that out of the way to start with. The Local Plan isn't going to arrive any day soon I suspect. I've looked through your list of actions and it's fairly straightforward, however it always has been the case about many of these paths as to whether we are accepting, as Herefordshire Council, the same places as Leominster Town Council. I suspect that our officers will have to take it up with the Town Council as to whether or not some of these individual items are to be extinguished as is the recommendation on some of them, re-recorded or recommitted to. This is going to take guite a bit of time to work through, but I'm sure that our team will review these on the basis of what you've asked for and there will be some feedback in due course, but it will take a little bit of time. Thank you.

The meeting ended at 12:53pm

Chairperson