

Title of report: Motions on notice

Meeting: Council

Meeting date: Friday 7 March 2025

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

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Matthew Evans, democratic services officer on Tel (01432) 383690

be varied at the discretion of the chairman.

- 6 Two motions have been received and will be debated at the meeting. The motions for debate are set out below:

Motion 1 – Minor Injury Units

(Proposed by Councillor Ed O'Driscoll, Seconded by Councillor Ben Proctor)

Hereford County Hospital continues to experience unacceptable A&E waiting times, with NHS England data showing that between 25th November 2024 and 16th February 2025, 25% of ambulances waited over an hour before being able to hand over their patients to the Emergency Department.

All services at the County Hospital are under immense pressure, as are many primary care services across Herefordshire.

Historically, community hospitals in Herefordshire's market towns successfully operated Minor Injuries Units (MIUs), providing accessible and efficient urgent care to local residents. These units reduced strain on the County Hospital, ensured faster treatment for minor injuries, and allowed patients to receive care closer to home.

Minor Injury Units (MIUs) are still successfully operating in Gloucestershire, Powys, Shropshire, and Worcestershire, demonstrating their effectiveness in delivering timely and appropriate care outside of major hospitals.

When the MIUs in Herefordshire were closed, a petition in Ross-on-Wye alone gathered over 1,500 signatures, reflecting strong public demand for the service. There is significant community support for reinstating these services across the county.

Motion:

This Council:

- **Supports the reinstatement of Minor Injury Units in Herefordshire as soon as possible to alleviate pressure on A&E services and improve access to urgent care for residents across the county**
- **Calls upon the Executive to work with NHS partners and other stakeholders to facilitate the reopening of Minor Injury Units in Herefordshire**

Motion 2 – Agricultural Property Relief

(Proposed by Councillor Nick Mason, Seconded by Councillor Dan Hurcomb)

At the 2024 Autumn Budget the Chancellor announced changes to Agricultural Property Relief and Business Property Relief in the largest tax raid on the rural economy for a generation. Despite repeated calls by national and local politicians alike, the Government has not yet accepted there are deep flaws within their proposals which, if not amended or retracted, will see family owned farms and businesses which have flourished in Herefordshire for generations broken up and sold off. The direct result of this will undoubtedly be a loss of jobs, a reduction in investment and maybe most damaging of all the destruction of an ecosystem holding knowledge and wisdom across many generations

Council therefore resolves to:

Request the Chief Executive write to:

- **The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Chancellor to outline the Council's concern at the short-sighted decision to change both Agricultural Property Relief and Business Property Relief without proper consultation and sufficient scrutiny of the long term and immediate consequences on the rural economy.**
- **The Herefordshire National Farmers Union to note the Council's opposition to the Family Farm Tax and to confirm our wider support for a sustainable multigenerational agricultural economy.**

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	A formal executive response will be provided to this motion as part of the Executive Response for the Scrutiny Committee report on the NMB.
<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> <p>Consider including the following areas of urgent action in the remit of the proposed Cabinet Commission on Phosphates:</p> <p>1. Request of government that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. <p>2. Request that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>3. Identify now how best to use the update of the Local Plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>4. Using the '<u>precautionary principle</u>' 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 '<i>cumulative impact</i>', 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.</p>
<p>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.</p>

Date of meeting	Motion	Current Status
9 December 2022	Multi-storey car park (Bus Station)	As part of bringing the Merton Meadow car parks forward for development, PJA were commissioned and have provided a report detailing the current use patterns across the City's car parks, and have identified a mitigation provision of circa 400 spaces . Due to the pattern of car park utilisation The Bus station is the recommended mitigation location. They have provided 3 MSCP options from 389 to 599 spaces dependant on whether a bus station offer is retained. These options will be investigated further as part of a wider car parking strategy review, but the principle of a MSCP on the Bus station will form part of the mitigation strategy for Merton and be indicated in the Outline planning application for the wider Merton Development.
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	<p>Three Dragons have completed their review of good practice in affordable housing delivery, and the information was presented to the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee on 13th November. The recommendation was for the council to proceed with a 'development company or an arm's length company'. This will be further considered by the cross party housing working group in order to make recommendations on the way forward to Cabinet.</p> <p>Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee carried out its review of good practice at its meeting on 13 November 2024 and made the following recommendations to the portfolio holder (rather than Cabinet)</p> <p>Herefordshire Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress at pace a pilot project to develop smaller sites owned by Herefordshire Council, subject to planning conditions and business plan. • Identify and begin the process of setting up a development company, using the lessons learned from other local authorities identified in the report. • Consider prioritising phosphate credits for developments with a higher percentage of social or affordable housing, such as those in the pilot project. • Explore Local Government Pension Scheme options for funding the delivery of affordable housing. • Report these recommendations to the council's housing development working group.
<p>Council therefore resolves to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 		

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