



Title of report: Executive Response to Recommendations Made by Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee Regarding: 'Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting' & the 'Waste Contract'

Decision maker: Cabinet member environment

Decision date:

Report by: Head of Environment, Climate Emergency and Waste Services, Principal Sustainability and Climate Change Officer, Waste Services Manager, Sustainability & Climate Change Manager

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To approve the executive response to recommendations made by Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee Regarding: Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting & the Waste Contract.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The response to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting, attached as Appendix 1 are approved.**
- b) **The response to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee's recommendation regarding the Waste Contract, attached as Appendix 2 is approved.**

Alternative options

1. None proposed; it is a legal and constitutional requirement to provide a response to recommendations made by Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee. It is open to the executive to accept, partially accept or reject a recommendation from Scrutiny Committee, should a recommendation not be accepted an explanation should be provided.

Key considerations

Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting

2. The Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee met on 24 March 2025 to discuss Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting. The papers considered for this item at the meeting are available online via the following links:
 - a. <https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50125505/ESSC%2024.03.25%20-%20Energy%20Efficiency%20and%20Retrofitting%20Cover.pdf>
 - b. [Appendix 1 Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting in Herefordshire.pdf](#)
3. The committee made 11 recommendations and the executive response to these recommendations are detailed in Appendix 1.

Waste Contract

4. At the same meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee an update report on the new Waste Contract was also considered. This report is available online via the following link:
 - a. <https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50125571/ESSC%2024.03.25%20Waste%20Contract.pdf>
5. The committee made 1 recommendation and the executive response to this recommendation is detailed in Appendix 2.

Community impact

6. There are no direct community impacts as a result of providing an update to the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee.
7. The effects resulting from a changing climate will potentially impact every community in the county. Poorly insulated homes increase the vulnerability to extreme cold and heat and this will affect those residents living in such homes from pensioners to families. The risk and level of impact is increased for specific geographic areas, specific archetype of houses and demographics. Working towards energy efficiency and retrofitting homes supports improvements that will benefit all of those who reside within them. This will be one of the key aims of the proposed retrofit strategy document.
8. We recognise the importance of professional standards of retrofit to ensure quality work on residents' homes and as such use the PAS2035 standard for council-funded retrofit delivery to ensure this.
9. Improvements in energy efficiency and retrofitting will positively contribute towards the delivery of Herefordshire Council Plan (2024-28), specifically the following challenge:
 - I. In 2019 32% of homes in Herefordshire were poorly insulated and in need of retrofitting to improve their energy efficiency

10. Other benefits generated through retrofitting and energy efficiency include:
- II. economic development and employment opportunities in the retrofit sector and
 - III. improved public health and reduced health risks.

Environmental Impact

11. Climate and environmental impact are intrinsically linked. Activities that impact the climate impact biodiversity and local air, water and soil quality. Emissions reduction and climate adaptation will also have associated environmental impacts.
12. Supporting domestic energy retrofit as outlined in appendix 1 supports not only a reduction in harmful greenhouse gas emissions but also helps to alleviate fuel poverty and has a positive impact on public health.
13. Working towards net zero carbon supports the delivery of the Herefordshire Council Plan 2024-2028, specifically the 'Place' priority: We will protect and enhance our environment and ensure that Herefordshire remains a great place to live. We will support the right housing in the right place and do everything we can to improve the health of our rivers. The specific priorities are:
- a. Develop Herefordshire as a place for growth, prosperity and communities to thrive.
 - b. Expand and maintain the transport infrastructure in a sustainable way and improve connectivity across the county.
 - c. Value nature and uphold environmental standards to minimise pollution and maximise biodiversity.
 - d. Reduce waste, increase reuse and increase recycling.
 - e. Work towards reducing county and council carbon emissions, aiming for net zero by 2030/31 and work with partners and communities to make the county more resilient to the effects of climate change.
 - f. Support our local culture and heritage and make Herefordshire a thriving, safe and attractive place to live and visit.
14. The recent cabinet decisions to implement a new chargeable garden waste and domestic food waste collection services have been conservatively modelled to increase our recycling rate from 40% to 58% which would represent a 45% increase in our recycling performance.

Equality duty

15. The public sector equality duty requires the Council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that it is paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
16. Environmental inequalities tend to disproportionately adversely impact areas of deprivation and those with lower household income¹. These places are often those with populations that suffer from multiple deprivation. Factors associated with deprivation, such as language barriers, ability to earn, old age, and health status, often affect people's vulnerability to other pressures, including those caused by environmental inequalities. The Chief Medical Officer for England

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-environment/the-state-of-the-environment-the-urban-environment>

recently highlighted the 'triple jeopardy' experienced by deprived communities, who face higher risks from social determinants of health, air pollution exposure and greater susceptibility to the impacts of pollution². By reducing the Council's emissions and working with partners to help reduce county emissions we seek to improve the quality of the environment in Herefordshire for all.

17. The move towards net zero carbon supports the commitments outlined in the Herefordshire Council Plan 2024-2028 which are outlined under Environmental Impact.
18. An equality impact assessment was undertaken as part of the waste strategy review and informed the design of the new waste collection services.

Resource implications

19. There are no resource implications associated with agreeing the content of this report as the Executive response provides information and indicates how the work is being taken forward within existing budgets and staff resources. Where further decisions are required upon completion of the recommendations, any resource requirements will be considered in future reports.

Legal implications

20. The role of the scrutiny committees is to help develop policy, to carry out reviews of council and other local services, and to hold decision makers to account for their actions and decisions. The Constitution includes a mechanism where recommendations from scrutiny committees must be considered by Cabinet.

Risk management

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-environment/the-state-of-the-environment-the-urban-environment>

<p>Risk / opportunity Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting The risk of not addressing the retrofit challenge misses the opportunities to reduce fuel poverty, harmful greenhouse gas emissions from homes and improving public health. The size of the challenge and therefore the opportunity for improvement in Herefordshire is significant.</p> <p>Funding uncertainty and delivery capacity for large-scale retrofit programmes. Given the scale of retrofitting required, there is a risk that either external funding is insufficient or internal capacity limits the pace of delivery.</p>	<p>Mitigation Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting The proposed retrofit strategy will help Herefordshire Council further identify the retrofit challenge and importantly explore the opportunities the Council has in supporting the residents of the county to achieve higher quality homes to keep them warm and healthy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Ensure funding opportunities (e.g. government grants or public-private partnerships) are monitored and explored. Project delivery should be phased in alignment with available resource capacity.</p>
<p>Waste Contract Ability to achieve the ambitious recycling targets within the Integrated Waste Management Strategy to achieve 55% by 2025, 60% by 2030 and 65% by 2035.</p>	<p>Waste Contract The implementation of the new chargeable garden waste and domestic food waste collection services have been conservatively modelled to increase our recycling rate from 40% to 58% in 2026 and with further promotion and education this is anticipated to increase further.</p>
<p>Behavioural and resident uptake challenges in energy efficiency and waste initiatives</p> <p>Success depends not only on service availability but on public willingness to participate in schemes like retrofitting or food waste separation.</p>	<p>Targeted communications, behavioural insights, and community engagement to be embedded into programme delivery plans.</p>
<p>Reputational impact if carbon or recycling targets are missed</p> <p>Failure to meet published targets could result in public and political scrutiny.</p>	<p>The council regular reports performance publically and transparently and works with organisations and bodies across the county in these aims.</p>
<p>Delivery timelines slipping due to contractual or procurement delays</p> <p>Delays in waste service implementation or retrofit programme mobilisation could impact strategic targets.</p>	<p>Robust programme management, early contractor engagement, and clear milestone tracking to identify risks early.</p>

21. The risks associated with delivering the executive response to the scrutiny committee's recommendations on energy efficiency, retrofitting, and the waste contract are being managed in line with the council's risk management strategy. Relevant risks will be monitored on a project-by-project basis and escalated through appropriate governance structures as necessary. The mitigations set out are proportionate, and oversight arrangements are in place to ensure delivery is kept under review throughout the life of these initiatives.

Consultees

22. The legal and Constitutional issues are explained in other parts of this report. This decision will form the response of the Executive function to the recommendations from ESSC.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Executive response regarding Energy Efficiency and Retrofitting.
- Appendix 2 - Executive regarding the Waste Contract.

Background papers

- None identified.

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:		
Governance	John Coleman	Date 22/05/2025
Finance	Karen Morris	Date 22/05/2025
Legal	Sarah Halliwell	Date 22/05/2025
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 19/05/2025
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 22/05/2025
Procurement	Nena Beric	Date 22/05/2025
Risk	Paige McInerney	Date 22/05/2025
Approved by	Ross Cook	Date 23/05/2025

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

EPC Energy Performance Certificate
 ESSC Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee
 MCS Microgeneration Certification Scheme
 PAS2035 Publicly Available Specifications
 PRS Private Rented Sector
 WH:LG Warm Homes: Local Grant