



APPENDIX 1

WORK PROGRAMME 2025-2026

January 2026

Below are the work programmes of Herefordshire Council's five scrutiny committees and their six task and finish groups.

Work programmes are subject to change, with revised programmes agreed at the end of formal committee meetings.

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Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Committee work programme

Committee Briefing

3 March 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
School Capital Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lizz Farr • Quentin Mee

Committee Meeting

10 March 2026 **report deadline 2 March 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
ILAC inspection and action plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives to be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence to be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees to be determined
Work programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Committee Briefing

14 April 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Fostering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing on fostering. • Update on recommendations made July 2024. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tori Lynch

Committee Meeting**12 May 2026 report deadline 30 April 2025 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC**

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Topic TBC	• TBC	• TBC
Work programme • Review work programme	• Draft work programme	• Statutory Scrutiny Officer

*The Corporate Director, Children and Young People and Portfolio Holder, Children and Young People, both have a standing invitation to each committee meeting. It is assumed that the portfolio holder will attend each meeting.

Topics for possible future scrutiny

- Permanency
- Youth provision
- Neglect strategy
- Home/elective education
- Alternative provision
- WMP Peel report – assurance briefing – safeguarding

Early help task and finish group

Terms of reference

Background

Herefordshire's Early Help offer includes both universal and targeted services aimed at supporting children, young people, and families before statutory intervention is required. The offer includes:

- **Universal services:** Provided largely through Talk Community, voluntary and community organisations, schools, health, and public health-funded initiatives.
- **Targeted early help:** Led by the Early Help team within Children's Services, working directly with families who require structured support.

Key developments in this area in recent years include:

- Integration of Early Help into wider Children's Services through locality models.
- Introduction of Families First and Lead Practitioner roles.
- Recruitment of two new children's-focused community development workers within Talk Community.
- Partnership commissioning (such as with the PCC) to support local early intervention initiatives.

To build on these developments, work is underway to identify and address weaknesses in current practice, including:

- Persistent confusion around distinctions between universal and targeted Early Help.
- Limited public visibility of the Early Help offer and recent developments.
- Variability in provision and access across different localities.
- Pressure on schools to deliver Early Help without sufficient funding or infrastructure.
- Need for improved coordination between statutory and non-statutory partners.

Purpose

The group therefore aims to provide a constructive and collaborative space to:

- Recognise strengths in current Early Help provision.
- Identify good practice across different communities.
- Highlight gaps or inconsistencies in provision and the work in place to address them.

Scope of Inquiry:

In recognition of the broad and varied nature of early help available in Herefordshire, the group intends to carry out two distinct but closely interdependent streams of work:

- **Targeted Early Help and Families First**
 - Understanding the Families First implementation.
 - Exploring the role of lead practitioners.
 - Clarifying the role of schools and multi-agency collaboration.
- **Community and Universal Offer**
 - Mapping and showcasing local Early Help initiatives.
 - Exploring partnerships with Talk Community hubs, voluntary groups, parish and town councils.
 - Engagement around youth activities, access barriers (transport), and local innovation.

Work Programme

The group will determine its programme of work to meet the above objectives. This programme is likely to include:

- Local Appreciative Inquiry events in Hereford City and each of the five key market towns (Ross, Ledbury, Kington, Leominster, Bromyard), Supported by Talk Community and Children's Services.
- Case studies
- Meeting with families and professionals, individually and in focus groups

Proposed Timeline

- Summer 2025: Agree task and finish group, establish membership, agree programme of work
- Autumn 2025 to Spring 2026: Community engagement events, interviews, focus groups.
- Spring/Summer 2026: Reflection and analysis.
- Summer 2026: Presentation of findings and recommendations to Children and Young People Scrutiny.

Work programme

Targeted early help and Families First

- Recognise strengths in current Early Help provision.
- Identify good practice across different communities.
- Highlight gaps or inconsistencies in provision and the work in place to address them.

Objective	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Understand targeted early help - rationale and performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of programme briefing note <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Thresholds of need ◦ Current performance management ◦ Current programme of activity 	Simon Cann	November 2025
Overview of current Families First programme and targeted early help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with service managers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Victoria Leader ◦ Dawn Knight 	Simon Cann	December 2025
Appraise current Families First programme and targeted early help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with team leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Victoria Roe – North ◦ Jane Marshall – South – Ross ◦ Chantelle Bennett – Central ◦ Tracey Spencer – Central 	Simon Cann	January 2026
Support for young carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with young carers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Jane Marshall – South – Ross 	Simon Cann	January 2026
Appraise locality-based targeted early help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with a locality team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Combine with a locality event 	Simon Cann	January 2026
Working with schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Neil Crawford 	Simon Cann	January 2026

Commissioned early help services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Venture – commissioned service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hilary Thomas 	Simon Cann	January 2026
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Community and Universal Offer

- Mapping and showcasing local Early Help initiatives.
- Exploring partnerships with Talk Community hubs, voluntary groups, parish and town councils.
- Engagement around youth activities, access barriers (transport), and local innovation.

Topic	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Overview of local early help initiatives	Early help marketplace – Ross-on-Wye	Danial Webb	13 Oct 25
Overview of local early help initiatives	Early help marketplace - Hereford	Danial Webb	17 Nov 25
Overview of local early help initiatives	Early help marketplace - Leominster	Danial Webb	3 Dec 25
Evaluate the role of school community support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with service manager, Quentin Mee Meeting with school counsellor/school support service 	Simon Cann	Feb 26
Understand how midwives support young parents to be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with midwives 	Simon Cann	Feb 26
The role of school nurses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with school nurses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> emma.dewar@wvt.nhs.uk Wendy.Long@wvt.nhs.uk Nikki.Lawley@wvt.nhs.uk 	Simon Cann	Mar 26
The role of health visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with health visitors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lyndsey McHardy “Best Start in Life” strategy 	Simon Cann	Mar 26
Youth clubs overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of youth and sports clubs in Herefordshire Visit to youth club Meeting with youth club attendees 	Simon Cann	April 26
Talk Community and co-ordination of support for universal community services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview community support carried out by Talk Community. 	Simon Cann	April 26

Report to Cabinet

Topic	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Draft final report	Learning from above meetings	Simon Cann	May 26
Agree final report	Draft report	Task and Finish Group	June 26
Present to Cabinet	Final report	Toni Fagan	July 26

Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee

Committee work programme

Committee Meeting

17 February 2026 report deadline 9 February 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 12 February 2025

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Tourism and Destination Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the opportunity and value in developing a tourism strategy for Herefordshire Examine tourism strategies in similar local authorities Examine the role of cultural and heritage strategy in supporting development of tourism throughout the county. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence to be agreed Meeting with Herefordshire Business Improvement District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture and Leisure Lead DBID Tourism and destination management service
Work programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Committee Meeting

15 April 2026 report deadline 7 April 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 9 April 2026

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Broadband Connectivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of coverage gaps and speeds, and work to address them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with businesses, schools, parish councils Public call for evidence Supplier business plans Ofcom policy Other evidence to be determined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be determined

Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Scrutiny Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work programme 		

Committee Meeting

7 July 2026 **report deadline 29 June 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 2 July 2027

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Year of delivery – capital projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council capital programme Individual programme progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be determined
Public participation in planning task and finish group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree the task and finish group review and recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Scrutiny Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work programme 		

*The Corporate Director, Economy and Environment, Cabinet Member, Economy and Growth, Cabinet Member, Community Services and Assets, Cabinet Member, Roads and Regulatory Services, and Cabinet Member, Transport and Infrastructure, all have a standing invitation to the meeting.

Additional Topics Proposed for Future Consideration

- Hereford City Masterplan
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Broadband

Placemaking and Public Participation task and finish group

Terms of reference

Background

Herefordshire is entering a significant period of growth and change. Delivering new housing, infrastructure, and services must strengthen local communities and reflect the county's distinctive rural character.

Research shows that while public involvement in planning is vital, engagement often remains procedural rather than meaningful. Many residents feel disconnected from decision-making, uncertain about how to participate, or unconvinced that their input makes a difference.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires every local planning authority such as Herefordshire to publish a Statement of Community Involvement. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 and resultant secondary legislation is likely to place greater emphasis on this statement with a proposed requirement for a local planning authority Community Involvement Scheme. This provides a timely opportunity to modernise Herefordshire's existing Statement of Community Involvement (January 2022), ensuring it reflects Herefordshire Council's 2024–2028 priorities for economic growth and community development.

This task and finish group will explore how Herefordshire can plan with its communities, ensuring that growth, infrastructure and environment evolve together in a fair, transparent, and creative way. It will then make recommendations to underpin the Council's new statutory engagement framework.

The aim is to move beyond statutory minimum consultation and create a culture in which residents look forward to new development as something they have helped to shape. Growth with, not to, communities.

Purpose

To identify and recommend practical, evidence-based measures for making community engagement in planning and placemaking more inclusive, accessible, and effective across Herefordshire. The group will:

- Examine best practice and innovative approaches to public participation.
- Advise on the update and replacement of the Statement of Community Involvement (2022) with a new Community Involvement Scheme (2026).
- Ensure that community voice and cultural engagement sit at the heart of the county's future planning system.

Objectives

- To understand current legislation and good practice in community involvement and evaluate how residents currently engage with planning in Herefordshire and identify barriers to participation.
- Review and learn from good practice in community engagement in other local authorities and with housing providers.
- Inform and help draft the replacement of the Statement of Community Involvement (2022) with a new Community Involvement Scheme (2026)
- Make recommendations to the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet to deliver the above.

Scope

The task and finish group will focus on how communities are involved in shaping growth, not on what is built or where sites are allocated. It will not duplicate the work of the Housing Development Working Group or the technical drafting of the Local Plan.

Membership and Governance

- 5–7 elected members of Herefordshire Council (no Cabinet members).
- Up to two co-opted members with relevant expertise or community experience.
- Supported by officers from Democratic Services, Economy and Environment, and Communications.
- Reports through the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee, which will submit recommendations to Cabinet for formal response.

Expected Outputs

- A final report setting out
 - practical recommendations for improving public participation in planning and placemaking.
 - A proposed structure and content outline for Herefordshire's new Community Involvement Scheme (2026), replacing the 2022 Statement.
 - Case studies and prototypes demonstrating innovative engagement methods suitable for rural and market-town contexts.

Success Measures

- At least five examples of national or local best practice reviewed.
- Two or more new engagement methods agreed or trialled.
- Clear, costed recommendations adopted within the 2026 Community Involvement Scheme.
- Cabinet adoption of group recommendations into council policy.

WORK PROGRAMME

Objective To understand current legislation and good practice in community involvement and evaluate how residents currently engage with planning in Herefordshire and identify barriers to participation.

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Understand current legislation and good practice in community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Overview of The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 Good practice guidance 	Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	November 2025
Evaluate how residents currently engage with planning in Herefordshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herefordshire Council Statement of Community Involvement. Interviews with housing associations and council planning officers. 	Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	November 2025
Identify current barriers to participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with housing association, community groups and council planning officers. 	TBA	November 2025
GROUP MEETING		Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	November 2025

Objective Review and learn from good practice in community engagement in other local authorities and with housing providers.

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Examine requirements for new Community Involvement Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft regulation and statutory guidance 	Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	December 2025
Identify good practice in other local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature review Site visit (if useful) 	Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	January 2026
Identify creative engagement methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desktop search ideas such as including digital tools, easy-read and visual materials, short videos, and cultural or media partnerships. 	Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	January 2026

GROUP MEETING	Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	February 2025
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Objective Inform and help draft the replacement of the Statement of Community Involvement (2022) with a new Community Involvement Scheme (2026).

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Work with officers to set new parameters and scope for the Community Involvement Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Community Involvement Scheme 	TBA	March 2026
Ensure inclusivity by improving reach to rural residents, younger people, working families, and under-represented communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Community Involvement Scheme 	TBA	April 2026
Recommend resourcing and governance arrangements to support sustained, meaningful participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with planning officers in a 'good' local planning authority Draft recommendations 	Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	May 2026
GROUP MEETING		Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	May 2026

Objective Make recommendations to the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Draft report to Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft report 	Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	June 2026

Draft report and recommendations to Cabinet (if required)	• Final report	Henry Merricks Murgatroyd	July 2026
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Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee

Committee work programme

Committee Meeting

2 March 2026 **report deadline 20 February 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBA

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Active Travel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on previous recommendations regarding the forthcoming draft local, cycling, walking and wheeling infrastructure plan (LCWWIP). Assurance on funding and deliverability of the LCWWIP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft LCWWIP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gemma Dando David Land Ffion Horton
Transformation of the economy and environment directorate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the transformed leadership structure and how it is performing currently, in particular where responsibility for delivering on the Council's environmental priorities and targets, including net zero. Has embedding a commercial mindset impacted on the delivery of these environmental priorities and targets. Has transformation impacted on the overall resource dedicated to the environmental side of the directorate. Explore the case for a more distinct operational area for environmental matters under the Corporate Director. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Director, Economy and Environment
Work programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Committee MeetingJune 2026 **report deadline TBA** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning **TBA**

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Land Use Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the operation of current council policy on enabling and enforcing appropriate land management and use (including riparian responsibilities) across the county; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to protect natural assets eg our rivers to protect highway assets for flood management to facilitate landscape schemes, such as Wyescapes through associated enforcement – including planning breaches. To obtain data on the area of land subject to Catchment Sensitive farming (including regenerative farming) and how this is progressing. To explore how the local authority can support adoption of sustainable farming methods. To review the impact of the withdrawal of the Sustainable Farming Incentive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highway flooding data Enforcement analysis Current council planning regulation concerning land use management. Farmscoper data tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Vaughan Kelly Gibbons Environment Agency representative Farming representative
Work programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Scrutiny Officer

*The Corporate Director, Economy and Environment and Cabinet Member, Environment, both have a standing invitation to the meeting.

Committee Meeting**September 2026 report deadline TBA September 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBA**

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Buses and passenger services task and finish group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive the final report from the Group and consider their recommendations, including testing the evidence on which they are based. • To agree a set of recommendations to go forward from the committee to the executive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair, buses task and finish group
Flooding task and finish group – terms of reference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To agree the terms of reference for a proposed task and finish group to scrutinise flood risk management and flood emergency responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task and finish terms of reference 	Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Committee Meeting**December 2026 report deadline TBA December 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBA**

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Rail Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives to be agreed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence to be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees to be agreed

Bus and passenger services task and finish group

Work programme

Objective	Activity or information needed	Carried out by	Timeline
Initial review meeting		Task and Finish Group	July 2025
Create a central information repository	Setup Teams library and chat space	Simon Cann, Danial Webb	September 2025
Review Herefordshire Council's current powers and responsibilities.	<p>Compile and provide overview of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing legislation in England and Wales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Local Transport Act 2008 ◦ Transport Act 2000 ◦ Bus Service Act 2017 ◦ Bus Services (No. 2) Bill ◦ Public Service Vehicle Regulations. • Overview of who is responsible for local transport in England (Commons library) • Any allied statutory guidance • Bus operator legislation and guidance. • How these apply in Herefordshire. 	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land, task and finish group	Sep-Oct 2025
Review current passenger transport operations in Herefordshire and how they meet current and future need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous council bus service reviews (c. 2019) • For both commercial and community operators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Routes and frequency ◦ Passenger numbers ◦ Subsidy • Home to school transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Current services provided ◦ Current providers • SEND transport • Adult Social Care Passenger transport 	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	Sep-Oct 2025

Current local authority and regional funding	2025-2026 and medium-term funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subsidised routes • community transport • other transport funding provided by the local authority 	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	Sep-Oct 2025
Review Meeting		Task and Finish Group	October 2025
Overview of current BSIP funding	Summary of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Bus Strategy • Herefordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024 Briefing on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of the £3.2m BSIP grant (2025–26) (£1.3m capital, £1.9m revenue) e.g., shelters, passenger experience, supported services • Progress in delivering funded projects and services • Their contribution to improved services Site visit to any BSIP-related capital project	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	Nov-Dec 2025
Assess Enhanced Partnership performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how the current enhanced partnership timetabling meets the objectives of the partnership. • Identify ways to apply learning from the group to new ways of meeting the objectives of the enhanced partnership. 	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land, task and finish group	Nov-Dec 2025
Combining bus services with other transport services	Desktop research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current rail services and how they align with bus services • Network Rail or other responsible authority Group meeting	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	Nov-Dec 2025
Explore cross-border and cross-county transport	Map and list of current cross-border services to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency • Operator • Funding (if applicable) Examples from other local authorities	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	Nov-Dec 2025

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See previous work looking at other local authorities • Identify opportunities for any cross-border service support 		
Review Meeting		Task and Finish Group	December 2025
Community Transport	<p>Site visit to a community transport provider</p> <p>Overview brief of Services in Herefordshire, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current services, routes and frequencies • Cost • Funding 	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	Jan-Feb 2026
Home to school and other resident transport	<p>Overview brief of home to school services in Herefordshire, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current services, routes and frequencies • Cost and funding <p>Meeting with Home to school co-ordinator</p> <p>Meeting with Transformation team</p>	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	Jan-Feb 2026
Review Meeting		Task and Finish Group	February 2026
Examine how other rural local authorities provide sustainable services.	<p>Internet research – what do they do in other rural local authorities?</p> <p>Suggested workstreams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand Responsive transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ YorBus, CallConnect ◦ Worcestershire on Demand Worcestershire County Council ◦ The Robin (your bookable bus) Gloucestershire County Council • Use of powers of funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Use of enhanced partnerships – Oxfordshire, Cornwall ◦ Branding • Integrating transport and social care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Community transport ◦ The role of third sector organisations 	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	Mar-Apr 2026

	<p>Site Visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shropshire DRT – Shrewsbury • Social care focused visit 		
Bus franchising	<p>Overview of Bus Services Bill</p> <p>Overview of approach taken by other local authorities</p> <p>Meeting with consultants or another local authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the barriers to franchising in rural areas? • Is this an opportunity for Herefordshire to pursue? • Are there partnership opportunities with other local authorities? 	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	Mar-Apr 2026
Review Meeting		Task and Finish Group	May 2026
Draft report and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft final report • Draft recommendations 	Simon Cann, Danial Webb, David Land	May-June 2026
Present report to Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee		Task and Finish Group	June 2026

Health Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Committee work programme

Committee Meeting

26 January 2026 **report deadline 16 January 2026**

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider an update on progress to address the recommendations from the CQC inspection of the trust Scrutinise development of the new Trust strategy Consider work underway to develop neighbourhood health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust strategy update 	Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
CQC Inspection of adult social care services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine findings of the recent CQC inspection of adult social care services. Scrutinise any action plan arising from the inspection findings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CQC inspection findings Post-inspection action plan 	
Work programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Committee Meeting

27 April 2026 **report deadline 17 April 2026**

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Shaping neighbourhood health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse how the health partnership identifies health needs in communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood health bid Taurus Out of Hours GP service Worcestershire Council papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees to be agreed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutinise provision of current and future neighbourhood health services. 		
Work programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Scrutiny Officer

*The Corporate Director, Community Wellbeing and Cabinet Member Adults, Health and Wellbeing, both have a standing invitation to the meeting.

Committee Briefing

April 2026 (TBC)

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the work of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kevin Crompton, Independent Scrutineer, Safeguarding Boards

Committee Meeting

27 July 2026 **report deadline 17 July 2026**

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work to develop a new joint strategic needs assessment for Herefordshire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director of Public Health
Health and Wellbeing Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives to be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence to be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees to be agreed

Committee Meeting**14 September 2026 report deadline 4 September 2026**

Topic and Objectives	Evidence required	Attendees*
Right Care Right Place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on work to deliver acute community mental health support in Herefordshire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence to be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees to be agreed
Q2 Better Care Fund outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives to be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence to be agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendees to be agreed
Meeting the demand for adult social care task and finish group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree draft report and recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final task and finish group report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair, task and finish group

Meeting the demand for adult social care task and finish group

Work programme

Objective To understand the extent of demand for adult social care services provided or commissioned in Herefordshire, and the likely change over time.

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
Understand Herefordshire's demographics and future demographic change	<p>Demographic information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Understanding Herefordshire demographic data</i> • <i>Future population of Herefordshire report</i> • Joint Strategic Needs Assessment report 	Charlotte Worthy/Herefordshire Research team	Dec 25-Jan 26
Understand the demand for adult social care in Herefordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Market Position Statement</i> • <i>Market Sustainability Plan</i> • Current rates of demand for adult social care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Type of demand (domiciliary, residential, nursing) ◦ Duration ◦ Change over time 	Zakia Loughead	Dec 25-Jan 26
Compare demographic change and demand for adult social care compared to other local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desktop research comparison with 'statistical neighbours' 	Danial Webb/Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd	Dec 25-Jan 26
GROUP MEETING		Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd	February 2026

Objective To explore the drivers of increased demand for adult social care, and the capacity of the local authority and other care providers to meet it.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date

Increased complexity of demand from an ageing population	Site visit – supported housing provider Site visit – third sector organisation working with older adults		Feb-Mar 26
The nature of funding for social care	Briefing on social care funding	Zakia Loughead ASC finance team	Feb-Mar 26
The size and structure of the social care market in Herefordshire	Overview of social care market Meeting with care providers	Zakia Loughead	Feb-Mar 26
Lack of housing growth, and flatlining tax base	• Interview with Cabinet portfolio holders		Feb-Mar 26
GROUP MEETING		Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd	April 2026

Objective To identify strategies and work carried out by Herefordshire Council and partners such as housing associations and other organisations reduce demand for social care services, or to increase revenue to pay for services.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
Assistive technology	Visit to Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS) Team	TBC	May-Jun 26
Community based universal and targeted services	Meeting with Talk Community Meeting with third sector organisation Meeting with other community team in another local authority	Emily Lowe – Talk Community	May-Jun 26
Market shaping and support	Meeting – service director Meeting – care providers' network	Commissioning	May-Jun 26
Supported living	Meeting – director for housing support Visit to supported housing	Hayley Crane	May-Jun 26

		A supported housing provider	
In-house services and the role of Hoople	Case study – Essex Meeting with Hoople		May-Jun 26
GROUP MEETING		Henry Merricks-Murgatroyd	July 2026

Objective To make recommendations to the executive on steps that should be taken to reduce service demand and to increase revenue.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
Write draft report and recommendations	Draft report and recommendations	Task and finish group	August 2026
Agree draft report and recommendations with committee	Draft report and recommendations	Task and finish group	October 2026

Scrutiny Management Board

Committee work programme

Committee Briefing

13 January 2026

Topic and objective	Evidence required	Attendees
Budget scrutiny <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the executive's proposed budget and medium term financial strategy. To make recommendations for the executive to consider before proposing the budget to Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget report Supplementary information as requested by the committee 	Cabinet members Directors

Committee Meeting

23 January 2026 **report deadline 15 January 2026** pre meeting lines of enquiry planning 16 January 2026

Topic and objective	Evidence required	Attendees
Budget scrutiny <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the executive's proposed budget and medium term financial strategy. To make recommendations for the executive to consider before proposing the budget to Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget report Supplementary information as requested by the committee 	Cabinet members Directors
Work programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Committee Meeting**19 March 2026 report deadline 11 March 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC**

Topic and objective	Evidence required	Attendees
DSG High Needs Block Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Plan 	Director of Finance
Q3 Budget scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget report 	Cabinet members
Q3 Performance monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplementary information as requested by the committee 	Directors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the executive's proposed budget and medium-term financial strategy. To make recommendations for the executive to consider before proposing the budget to Council 		
Work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Scrutiny Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review work programme 		

Committee Meeting**June 2026 report deadline May/June 2026 pre meeting lines of enquiry planning TBC**

Topic and objective	Evidence required	Attendees
Inequality and Social Mobility Task and Finish Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task and Finish Group Report 	Task and Finish Group members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To receive the report of the Task and Finish Group. To agree any recommendations the committee as a result 		
Q4 Budget scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget report 	Cabinet members

Q4 Performance monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To understand the executive's proposed budget and medium-term financial strategy.• To make recommendations for the executive to consider before proposing the budget to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supplementary information as requested by the committee	Directors
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Long list of potential topics

- Social Value in procurement
- Working with the voluntary sector and others to help deliver services
- Review of the workforce strategy
- Supplier risk management
- Emergency Planning
- Annual review of effectiveness

Inequality and social mobility task and finish group

Work programme

Objective To define and understand the different dimensions of inequality (including but not limited to protected characteristics, rurality, socio-economic background and care experience) and social mobility in Herefordshire and the United Kingdom, including Herefordshire Council's understanding of inequality and social mobility.

Objectives	Evidence required	Responsible officer	Date
To define and understand the different dimensions of inequality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing on different types of inequality, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wealth/income Health Rurality Briefing on groups affected by inequality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protected characteristics Military families Overview of inequality as defined by other local authority scrutiny 	Danial Webb	Sep-Oct 25
To understand those dimensions that are particularly relevant to Herefordshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sub-ward indices of deprivation Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Economic data 	Danial Webb and Charlotte Worthy	Sep-Oct 25
To test Herefordshire Council's understanding of inequality, how it prioritises different elements of inequality, and its priorities to tackle and reduce inequality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herefordshire Council Plan Meeting with leader and deputy <i>(should this be merged with the above?)</i> 	Danial Webb and Charlotte Worthy	Sep-Oct 25
GROUP MEETING		Danial Webb	November 2025

Objective To measure inequality and social mobility across the county and the different dimensions that impact on inequality and social mobility within the county and between Herefordshire and other parts of the UK.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
Collect and analyse relevant datasets pertaining to Herefordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sub-ward indices of deprivation Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Economic data TBC 		Nov-Dec 25
Comparisons with statistical neighbours			Nov-Dec 25
Housing inequality	Meeting with housing providers		Nov-Dec 25
Rurality	•		
GROUP MEETING		Danial Webb	January 2026

Objective To gather examples of local authorities and wider local partnerships meaningfully reducing inequality and/or meaningfully improving social mobility from across the UK and other countries.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
Examples from other scrutiny reviews	Other scrutiny reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope Learning 		
Examples of other inequality and social mobility strategies	Other scrutiny reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope Learning 		
Examples of evaluations of strategies and action plans			
Gather learning from those examples			

GROUP MEETING	Danial Webb	March 2026
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Objective To identify the plans, strategies and actions deployed by the council to reduce inequality and improve social mobility, and the degree to which they are likely to or are actually reducing inequality and improving social mobility, and the degree to which they are not.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
GROUP MEETING		Simon Cann	April 2026

Objective To make recommendations to the executive on steps that should be taken to meaningfully reduce inequality and improve social mobility across the county.

Objectives	Evidence required	People to speak with	Date
Write draft report and recommendations	Draft report and recommendations	Task and finish group	May 2026
Agree draft report and recommendations with committee	Draft report and recommendations	Task and finish group	July 2026

Commercialisation working group

Terms of reference

Background

Herefordshire Council faces a potential funding gap of £27.3 million for the 2026-27 financial year, and further funding gaps in future years. The executive has already identified commercialisation as key to its transformation programme. The executive has also indicated that commercialisation and income generation will form part of the strategy to address the funding gap.

Commercialisation within local government represents both a financial opportunity and a cultural challenge. Commercialisation could deliver significant cost savings and income-generating opportunities but only as a result of cultural change. For example [guidance](#) from the Association For Public Service Excellence emphasises that commercialisation cannot simply be a reaction to budget deficits – it requires an embedded strategy, a commercial mindset within the local authority, clear governance, and a well-developed understanding of risk.

To assist the Cabinet in developing a budget to propose to council Scrutiny Management Board will undertake a working group of members investigating how the council could increase income in the short and medium term alongside greater commercialisation.

Initial recommendations will be provided informally to the Cabinet by the end of November,

Short- and Long-Term Opportunities

Short term: The working group will examine the opportunities of:

- reviewing and adjusting fees and charges,
- maximising income from council assets (such as property leases and car parks), or exploring asset repurposing or disposals.
- benchmarking against neighbouring authorities could identify under-priced services as well as gaining an understanding of work that has already been undertaken in this area and
- other opportunities for income generation

The working group will seek to understand the impact and the risks associated with any short term operations

Longer term: The working group will identify opportunities to increase income and to drive efficiency in future years across the life of the medium-term financial strategy including, but not limited to those opportunities presented by commercialisation.

Given the timescale the working group's recommendations, especially for future years may be quite high level. The working group will deliver the best-founded recommendations it can within the fixed (and tight) timescale.

Overall approach

We propose a three-stage approach

- Herefordshire council is already working on commercialisation and income generation. The working group will consider current plans and arrangements, challenge these and work with officers to identify areas that they may not have considered.
- The working group will also have regard to the impact of their proposals on local people and the risks that may be associated with them.
- If there is time the working group will also investigate the strategic issues relating to commercialization and make recommendations for the cabinet to consider.

The Working Group will also have regard to guidance and experience across the sector in regards to areas such as (not an exhaustive list):

- The purposes of commercial activity, namely the balance between maximising income (for example, through fees, charges, or property ventures), supporting broader social value and strengthening community resilience.
- How the council might operate in markets without distorting competition and maintaining fairness to local businesses-governance and risk management
- The cultural dimension, which cannot be overstated. Officers and members must share a mindset that sees prudent risk-taking as legitimate. Without organisational readiness – training, leadership commitment, and internal capability – commercial ambitions will fail.

The scrutiny process must therefore explore how Herefordshire can build this culture safely, balancing entrepreneurial ambition with its statutory duty to protect public assets. It must also concern itself both with the immediate opportunities to increase income and the longer-term changes required to inculcate greater commercialisation.