



Big Economic Plan Delivery Plan

Meeting: Cabinet

Meeting date: Thursday 30 July 2026

Report by: Cabinet member economy and growth;

Classification

Open

Decision type

Key

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To consider and approve the Big Economic Delivery Plan

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) Consider and approve the Big Economic Delivery Plan
- b) To delegate to the Director for Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Growth, the ability to make any final minor amendments to the Economic Delivery Plan in finalising for publication
- c) To delegate to the Director for Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Growth, any operational decisions required to implement the Plan.

Alternative options

1. To not approve the Big Economic Delivery Plan. The Big Economic Delivery Plan has been developed by the Economy and Place Partnership Board, with engagement from partners and

stakeholders across the county. To not approve the plan would leave the county without a focussed and targeted approach to support the growth of Herefordshire.

Key considerations

2. The Herefordshire Economic Plan ([2050 Economic Plan](#)) was considered by cabinet in January 2023 ([Decision - Big Economic Plan - Herefordshire Council](#)). It sets our long-term 2050 aspiration for Herefordshire, including a vision for the county to be an exemplar 21st century rural economy.
3. Two of the key recommendations in the Economic Plan are to form an overarching Economy and Place Partnership Board to oversee implementation, through establishing a clear delivery plan identifying critical actions, timescales and lead organisations.
4. The Economy and Place Board was formed in 2024. Chaired by the Leader of the council it brings together the Chairs/ representatives of the Herefordshire Business Growth Board, the Skills Board, the Herefordshire Environment Board, the Cultural Partnership, and the Community Partnership. The Board provides strategic oversight and direction, and co-ordinates the wider county partnerships in seeking to catalyse growth, and create better paid jobs for local people.
5. Once formed the Economy and Place Board initiated and has led the development of the Big Economic Delivery Plan (appendix 1), a route map to achieving the overarching vision in the Economic Plan. The development of the Delivery Plan has included extensive engagement with partners, in particular those groups and their wider networks represented on the Economy and Place Board. This has included a review of delivery against the Economic Plan launched in 2023, and a review of extensive changes in national and local priorities in the intervening period. For example, the launch of the National Industrial Strategy, the Defence Industrial Strategy, government setting a c30,000 mandatory housing development target for the county, and changing priorities in the Council Plan 2024 to 2027 such as a commitment to major new infrastructure in the Hereford Growth Corridor.
6. The Big Economic Delivery Plan identifies four core themes;
 - I. Place - *Contribution to the Herefordshire 2050 Vision: Thriving places, with growth to meet housing demand while protecting our natural environment*
 - II. People and Communities - *Contribution to the Herefordshire 2050 Vision: A growing, skilled and flourishing population working effectively together to solve challenges*
 - III. Business Growth - *Contribution to the Herefordshire 2050 Vision: A growing, skilled and flourishing population working effectively together to solve challenges*
 - IV. Infrastructure - *Contribution to the Herefordshire 2050 Vision: Reliable and resilient infrastructure supporting economic growth and investment across our county*
7. The Plan includes the cross-cutting delivery principles of ensuring sustainability, maximising investment and delivering through partnership working, ensuring that we retain a focus on the environment and collaboration.
8. Each theme identifies specific priorities and priority actions, supplemented by a more detailed annex (appendix 2) which details how the action will be delivered, the lead partner, outcomes and timescales.

9. The Big Economic Delivery Plan is a partnership document for the county, developed by partners, with aspirations of implementation through collaboration with partners. This decision seeks cabinet's approval to adopt the Plan on behalf of the council, and a commitment to lead and progress our delivery actions.

Community impact

10. The Big Economic Delivery Plan has been developed by partners including community representatives.
11. The Council Plan 2024 to 2028 identifies the Herefordshire Economic 2050 Plan as a key council strategy. 'Growth' is one of four priority areas in the Council Plan and states *'We will create the conditions to deliver sustainable growth across the county. We want to attract inward investment, create more jobs, enable housing development and provide the right infrastructure to keep Herefordshire moving forward'*.
12. All of the 'Growth' related actions in the Council Plan Delivery Plan are included in, and will be delivered through, the Big Economic Plan Delivery Plan.

Environmental impact

13. Sustainability and the environment are key cross cutting delivery principles, considered in each theme. The Climate and Nature Partnership are represented on the Economy and Place Board, and have been consulted during the development of the Delivery Plan.

Equality duty

14. 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.
15. The mandatory equality impact screening checklist has been completed for this decision and it has been found to have a low impact for equality
16. Due to the potential impact of this decision being low, a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. However the following equality considerations should be taken into account when making a decision about this activity/project:
 - a. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken for each new activity brought forward in implementing the Delivery Plan
 - b. The Economy and Place Board will maintain oversight of the delivery of the Plan through quarterly reporting, including how related actions considered the needs of people who have different protected characteristics have different needs, experiences, issues or priorities.

Resource implications

17. There are no new resource implications for the council in the adopting the Delivery Plan. The council actions identified are already part of funded projects or service delivery, or are focussed on lobbying government to seek the longer term infrastructural investment critical to enabling growth.

Legal implications

18. The Hereford Economic Plan (2050 Economic Plan) is an economic development strategy that provides the priorities, policy and aims of the Council and partners by 2050. Clearly, the Big Economic Delivery Plan is the plan to implement that strategy.
19. The Economic Plan forms part of the current policy framework of the Council where the delivery plan provides the aspirations to deliver to the aims of the Economic Plan. The approval of the delivery plan indicates the Council's intention to achieve the stated aims.
20. The relevant legal provisions for this decision can be found in the council's constitution, www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution.

Risk management

The following are considered to be the key risks;

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Failure to implement the Big Economic Plan Delivery Plan	The Plan has been developed through extensive engagement with partners, and overseen by local leaders on the Economy and Place Board. Partners have identified the key actions, are committed to the delivery of their respective elements. The council related actions are also identified for delivery in the Council Plan 2024 to 2027.
Failure to secure the resources to deliver actions in the plan	The majority of actions reflect short term local priorities that are already resourced. Where actions require government funding, we are continuing to lobby government for funds. For example, the Chair of the Business Growth Board is regularly meeting government ministers and departments to seek replacement for UK Shared Prosperity Funding.
Change in national or local policy/ priorities such as the creation of a Foundational Strategic Authority (FSA)	The Delivery Plan reflects the local priorities in the Council Plan 2024 to 2027, and new national policy such as the National Industrial Strategy, in seeking to achieve the long term ambitions for 2050. The Delivery Plan has been developed alongside an evidence base considering sub-regional strengths, and in particular is aligned to the defence and security cluster strengths and opportunities in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, our preferred FSA area.

Consultees

21. A Political Group Consultation (PGC) will be held on the 20th July 2026. A range of helpful comments were made during the PGC. There was broad support for the need to support the development of the county's economy and to support existing industry to grow, whilst also catalysing the development of new higher paid jobs for local people. It was commented that the Delivery Plan could better reflect the role of the market towns as focal points for access to services and employment. It would be helpful to clarify the focus on AI in supporting businesses and skills development. The overarching strategy and Economy and Place Board should also consider new longer term strategic priorities such as the proposed Ross on Wye to Gloucester rail link. The meeting also discussed the need to better align employment driven skills needs with education and skills provision and the important role the new skills strategy will play (one of the actions in the Delivery Plan).

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Big Economic Delivery Plan

Appendix 2 – Big Economic Delivery Plan Annex

Background papers

None identified

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report