

County plan

2020-2024



“Respecting our past, shaping our future - we will improve the **sustainability**, **connectivity** and **wellbeing** of our county by strengthening our **communities**, creating a thriving local **economy** and protecting and enhancing our **environment**”.



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Introduction from the Leader of Herefordshire Council Councillor David Hitchiner

Our County plan shapes the future of Herefordshire and aims to encourage and strengthen our vibrant communities, create a thriving local economy and protect and enhance our environment to ensure Herefordshire remains a great place to live, visit, work, learn and do business. The plan guides the work of the council and our relationship with individuals, families, communities and partners over the next four years. Underpinning this plan are the themes of **connectivity, wellbeing and sustainability**, which sit at the core of our policy making, planning and design for the future.

We know that in the future transport systems must, and will, change, so we need to rethink our investment now in transport infrastructure to tackle the 21st century challenges of climate emergency and to support the wellbeing of our population. This will be central to the review of the Hereford bypass and southern link road schemes and the urgent update of our Core Strategy and planning policies.

Being better connected is not just about the physical infrastructure. We all need a bit of help from time to time. During such tough times, we believe it is really important that the council supports people and finds ways to help them to connect to the rich tapestry of services provided by the voluntary sector and to their own community. The council will

always need to safeguard the most vulnerable in our communities, but we want to enable everyone to feel more strongly a part of their local community too.

We want all children and young people in this county to have a great start in life and be healthy, safe and inspired to be the best they can be. Our young people should be proud to grow up here in Herefordshire and we also want them to feel able to build their lives here. This requires us to deliver good learning facilities, great job opportunities and homes that young people can afford to buy or rent. We recognise that for some children and young people life can be particularly tough, and we are determined to address the inequalities which put these children and young people at a disadvantage.

We place arts and culture at the centre of our plans for Herefordshire. We do this to recognise the value heritage and creativity bring through generating income from our fantastic exhibitions and events and by nurturing people's overall wellbeing. There is growing evidence of the social value that cultural services provide in our communities, particularly in combatting social isolation.

We are committed to working more closely in partnership with town and parish councils, community partners, private

enterprise and our fellow public sector organisations. We recognise that we will only be able to deliver on our ambition by working together effectively.

The council must have financial resilience to enable us to continue to serve the people of Herefordshire, to invest prudently in the county and to continue to deliver the services that our residents need. This will continue to remain at the forefront of our thinking.

Our ambition is for Herefordshire to be an exemplar of 21st century rural living where market towns and rural communities are properly valued and recognised for the contributions they make to the success of the county. We will achieve this by recognising and building upon the strengths of our people, our places and our past while embracing the future by taking proven concepts and systems developed in modern cities and adapting them for rural Herefordshire so that we create a county which is better connected in every way.

Herefordshire is a great place to live with a beautiful and unique natural environment - we will work in partnership with our farming and business community to protect and enhance this wonderful asset for future generations while ensuring that we balance this sensitively with playing an active part in the modern world.





Herefordshire

Situated in the south west of the West Midlands region bordering Wales, Herefordshire has beautiful unspoilt countryside with remote valleys and rivers and a distinctive heritage. The River Wye winds through the county, flowing east from the Welsh border through Hereford city before turning south to flow through the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Malvern Hills border the east of county, while the south west is dominated by the western reaches of the Black Mountains.

The Wye Valley is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and recognised as one of the nation's most treasured landscapes. Inside the Wye Valley AONB, the market town of Ross-on-Wye is steeped in culture and history, and is regarded as being the birthplace of British tourism. When the Reverend William Gilpin visited 250 years ago, he documented his trip with the UK's first 'tourist guide' of the cruises up and down the picturesque River Wye. This brought more and more visitors who dined at specific locations, took walks to particular viewpoints and visited romantic ruins, making the 'Wye Tour' the first 'package' holiday.

In addition to Hereford city, the county is served by five beautiful and distinctive market towns: Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye. Understandably, the county is a

popular destination for visitors and for those who commute to employment out of the county.

Herefordshire has the fourth lowest population density in England, with a land area of 2,180km² but a population of only 192,100 (2018). Most of the county (95%) is rural and 53% of the population live in rural areas.

While life expectancy for both males and females is higher and mortality rates are lower here than the national average, there are pockets of deprivation in the county. There are notable differences in life expectancy and mortality in these areas, much of which is attributable to lifestyle-related conditions such as circulatory or respiratory diseases or cancers.

Herefordshire is an entrepreneurial county, with 20% of the population being self-employed. Defence and technology business sectors are well-represented across the county, which is home to the Special Air Service (SAS) and a short distance from Gloucester-based Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ).

Unemployment in the county is low, but average earnings in the county are significantly below both the regional and national averages. Average house prices are high compared with elsewhere in the region. In 2016, Herefordshire's affordable housing ratio was the worst in the West Midlands, with houses at the lower end of the market, costing around 8.6 times the annual wage of the lowest earners.

Herefordshire is generally a low crime rate area and partners work together to ensure that it continues to be a safe place to live, work and visit.



Our challenge

ENVIRONMENT



12% of households in fuel poverty (in 2015) (11% England)



We have higher service delivery costs because

95% of the county is classified as rural

COMMUNITY



24% of population over 65 (mid 2018) (18% nationally)



1 in 4 Reception age children (4-5yrs)

and more than **1 in 3** Year 6 children (aged 10-11yrs) are overweight or obese (2016/17)



Herefordshire is **the worst area within the West Midlands** region for housing affordability

ECONOMY



£461 average weekly wage in Herefordshire (national average £575)

Herefordshire's Gross Value Added per head of population was £20,300 (national average of £27,950)



36.4% of people qualified to NVQ Level 4 and above (national average of 39.3%)

Herefordshire performs in the **bottom quartile for 16 and 17 year olds** in either education, employment and training

Using our resources wisely

Using our resources wisely is one of our core principles so we are always on the look out for new ways to provide efficiencies in service delivery. We work continuously to maximise our purchasing power, deliver value for money, and direct all that we do to the benefit of Herefordshire residents and local business.

We employ nearly 1,300 staff and support many more jobs in the local economy through our contracts with local businesses.

The council has an annual budget in 2020 of £380m which we use to deliver services to over 187,000 residents. These services include the maintenance of over 2,000 miles of roads, over 2,000 miles of public rights of way, over 700 highway bridges and over 11,000 streetlights, collection of waste and recycled materials from over 85,000 residential properties, safeguarding around 1,000 children and providing care and support to 2,500 vulnerable adults.



Herefordshire is a rural county with a higher than average number of people aged over 65 living in the county. Herefordshire Council has faced significant financial challenges over recent years as annual central government funding has been reduced from £60.1m in 2011/12 to £0.6m in 2019/20. During this same period both service delivery costs and demand for those same services have increased, particularly for adult social care and children in care of the council.

The council has risen to this financial challenge by:

- Delivering substantial savings of £90m in annual operating costs
- Keeping services going by delivering them differently
- Changing how we make best use of publicly owned assets
- Consistently delivering balanced budgets

Receipts from the sale of publicly owned assets will be reinvested in projects which replenish and enhance the tangible assets of the council. We will use these assets to generate new and sustainable income streams to help fund future services and address the pressing needs of the county's residents which are not being met by market forces.

We shall also build new community facilities and bring forward new employment sites throughout the county. In making these investments we will continue to balance environmental, economic and community returns and will carry forward measures which further manage demand for our services.

The council will continue to look for opportunities to share our accommodation and service delivery with partners. We will further rationalise our property holdings to deliver efficiencies as well as new income streams to support our services.

The council recognises, celebrates and values the central role our employees play in delivering this plan and our many statutory duties. We shall continue to invest in activities that ensure we recruit people with the skills and attributes to meet the changing demands of the council's services. We will also continue the investment we are making in developing our people, rewarding them appropriately and providing support to ensure their continued wellbeing.

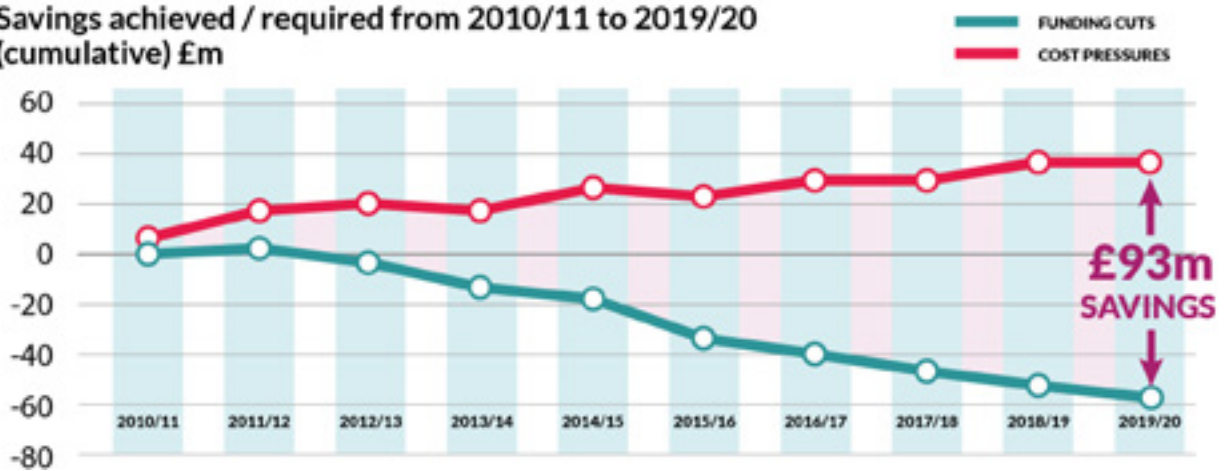




Where the money comes from



Savings achieved / required from 2010/11 to 2019/20 (cumulative) £m



Where the money goes

DID YOU KNOW?

The council spends £1m a day on delivering services to residents

Herefordshire Council	
Charges per month (average Band D property) 2020/21 monthly Council Tax receipt	
** Daily life **	
* Waste, Cleansing	12.34
* Environmental Health	1.53
* Roads and bridges	5.73
* Care of public spaces	1.24
* Schools and education	99.16
* Public, School and community transport	5.97
* Libraries, records and customer services	1.22
** Looking after Adults **	
* Older People in residential/nursing care	14.39
* Older people supported at home	9.89
* Disabled adults	28.92
* Lifestyles services (substance abuse, sexual health)	2.84
* Health improvement (Public Health nursing, health checks, smoking cessation)	5.67
* Housing	0.53
** Looking after children **	
* Child protection	4.29
* Children in care	14.97
* Children with special needs	3.31
** Local government running costs **	
* Election, governance and legal services	3.50
* Directors & Staff costs	0.56
* Organisational administration	1.39
* IT, Council Tax and Benefits admin, invoices and payments	5.27
* Insurance and property maintenance	4.84
** Financing **	
* Capital finance - Debt repayment	6.97
* Capital finance - Interest payments	9.43
** Economic growth **	
* Economic development and regeneration	1.74
* Broadband - rural rollout	0.15
* Planning	0.35
***** VOUCHER *****	246.20
** Income that supplements council tax **	**
* Investment Property income	-2.94
* Car parking	-5.42
* Capital finance - Interest received	-2.01
* Public Health grant	-7.70
* National Education funding	-66.98
TOTAL TO PAY (per month)	131.15

MORE INFORMATION AT WWW.HEREFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK/	
COUNCIL TAX 01/01/20 09:00 1234 2342	

What we heard

The 2020-24 County plan has been developed following consultation and engagement events with the public and key stakeholders across the county.

We heard from over 2,000 people, including seldom heard from groups that included younger people through the sixth form college, a young farmers event, people with long-term illness and their carers and ethnic minority groups.

People told us that we should be prioritising investment in the following areas:

- More affordable housing
- Maintenance of our existing highways network and public spaces
- Specialist care home facilities and accommodation for vulnerable people of all ages
- Improved public transport across the county
- Action to tackle the climate emergency (this was the top priority for young people)

Our plan

The following section sets out what we aim to achieve over the next four years. Our key areas of focus will be the Environment, our Communities and the local Economy. Recognising that we don't live and work in silos these will be developed against three key themes of **Sustainability, Connectivity and Wellbeing** which will guide our planning, design and policy making over the coming years.

How we will measure success

In each of the following sections we have indicated the high level outcomes that we expect to achieve. The detailed targets for each ambition will be published each year in the annual delivery plan. This ensures we can monitor and evidence that we are delivering the outcomes we have committed to on an annual basis.

*People with disabilities:
"We want to be counted
in the community and we
want to be listened to"*

*Environment
"Tackling the climate
emergency should be
ambitious but achievable
with ambition"*

*Public transport:
"Public transport can be
amazing e.g.. in London,
therefore there should be
scope to make it better here in
Herefordshire."*





Our ambition for Herefordshire

Environment

Protect and enhance our environment and keep Herefordshire a great place to live

WE WILL



- Minimise waste and increase reuse, repair and recycling
- Improve and extend active travel options throughout the county
- Build understanding and support for sustainable living
- Invest in low carbon projects
- Identify climate change action in all aspects of council operation
- Seek strong stewardship of the county's natural resources
- Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity, value nature and uphold environmental standards

Community

Strengthen communities to ensure everyone lives well and safely together

WE WILL



- Ensure all children are healthy, safe and inspired to achieve
- Ensure that children in care, and moving on from care, are well supported and make good life choices
- Build publicly owned sustainable and affordable houses and bring empty properties back into use
- Protect and improve the lives of vulnerable people
- Use technology to support home care and extend independent living
- Support communities to help each other through a network of community hubs

Economy

Support an economy which builds on the county's strengths and resources

WE WILL



- Develop environmentally sound infrastructure that attracts investment
- Use council land to create economic opportunities and bring higher paid jobs to the county
- Invest in education and the skills needed by employers
- Enhance digital connectivity for communities and business
- Protect and promote our heritage, culture and natural beauty to enhance quality of life and support tourism
- Spend public money in the local economy wherever possible

Our principles

- Partnership** We collaborate to maximise our strengths and resources
- Resilience** We use resources wisely so Herefordshire is fit for future generations
- Integrity** We make decisions based on evidence and work with respect, openness and accountability
- Democracy** We strengthen local democracy, decision making and service delivery and involve more young people
- Engagement** We listen to and learn from our communities and help people connect through culture, creativity and care





Ambition:

ENVIRONMENT

Protect and enhance our environment and keep Herefordshire a great place to live

Herefordshire has a rich, beautiful and varied natural environment which cleans our air, channels our water, supports wildlife in all its many forms, lifts our spirits and keep us well.

The council recognises that healthy, connected and vibrant ecosystems strongly support the local economy, improve health and wellbeing and make the county an attractive place to live and to visit. It is vital that we protect and enhance this environment while stewarding it for future generations.

One of the effects of climate change will be that our weather becomes more unpredictable, with longer periods of both dry and wet weather, where each of these may also be more severe and intense. Significant areas of Herefordshire are low-lying and liable to flooding: climate change further increases the risk and severity of that flooding (including flash flooding) throughout the county.

In March 2019, Herefordshire Council unanimously declared a Climate Emergency and formally adopted commitments to lead a local response, aspiring for the county to become carbon neutral by 2030.

The council will consider the impact of climate change and the opportunity for carbon reduction in every aspect of our operation.

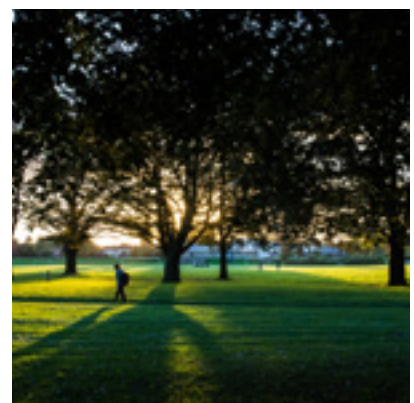
In addition we will continue to invest in low carbon projects such as renewable energy systems, using energy efficiency measures and electric vehicles to further reduce our carbon footprint and our daily running costs. We will support this commitment by ensuring that tree planting and habitat enhancement is prioritised.

Herefordshire has excellent biodiversity and natural assets and its natural environment supports a wide range of habitats. The richness of biodiversity within Herefordshire is reflected in the number of nature conservation sites within the county, including

the Rivers Wye and Lugg which benefit from European protection as 'Special Areas of Conservation' because of their unique and invaluable biodiversity.

We are proud of our rich rural heritage and will work in partnership with our farming community and land managers to promote sustainable stewardship of the County's farmland, soils and woods.

We are committed to creating greater public awareness of the part each of us can play in supporting nature and biodiversity in the county.



The county's geology and soils shape a highly fertile landscape for quality food and drink production, particularly on low-lying land. This landscape is a key economic asset creating not only an attractive place to live and work but also making Herefordshire an important tourist destination; something which is a key economic strength of the county.

We want Herefordshire to be a destination of choice for walking and cycling tourism and to increase significantly the use of these active means of travel by local residents.

We will enable more healthy low carbon travel options, including walking, public transport and cycling, to reduce congestion, improve local air quality and enhance health and wellbeing.

We all consume material resources to generate economic growth and to meet our basic human needs. But our overall use of these resources has become unsustainable. We use too much and are too quick to

throw things away. The council will use its community initiatives, partnerships and our waste contracts to make it easier for businesses and residents to share, repair, reuse and recycle.

Success measures

- Increase flood resilience and reduce levels of phosphate pollution in the county's river
- Reduce the council's carbon emissions
- Work in partnership with others to reduce county carbon emissions
- Improve the air quality within Herefordshire
- Improve residents' access to green space in Herefordshire
- Improve energy efficiency of homes and build standards for new housing

Key Facts

ENVIRONMENT

- Target of carbon neutrality by 2030
- 43% carbon reduction between 2008/09 and 2018/19 for the council's own operations
- 9% of the county designated for nature conservation
- Over 6,000 listed buildings
- 64 conservation areas across our city, towns and villages



Ambition:

COMMUNITY

Strengthen communities to ensure that everyone lives well and safely together

Our ambition is to make wellbeing inevitable here in Herefordshire by putting physical and mental health at the heart of everything we do. 'Talk Community' is the key council initiative by which we aim to progress this objective.

Talk Community is an approach which focusses on the people within our communities, the place and space in which they live and the economy in which people work. The initiative sets out to help people use their and their community's strengths to help one another to live well, stay safe and maximise their independence. Talk Community looks at how people can best be supported and can support each other to achieve this, and how communities and businesses can develop to meet the local needs of each community.

The programme has a number of strands including development of a network of Talk Community hubs throughout the county. The aim of these hubs is to concentrate investment and support to connect people more effectively to their community and to local

support systems through effective information and signposting.

In larger hubs, this will include offering a range of services that enable people to gain new skills, get help and advice, access a culture and arts offer and receive health and care services.

We recognise that communities across Herefordshire differ tremendously. Consequently, the location of these hubs, and what exactly they comprise will be down to each community to decide.

We will develop further preventative family-centred approaches with partners. This will include building up our early help approach by making best use of community spaces which might include Talk Community hubs and children's centres.

When people need support, we know that this support comes in a variety of ways and has the greatest impact when it comes from genuine connections and friendships. We shall continue to develop approaches that build

on people's strengths and the many resources they have in their local communities, such as our exceptionally strong voluntary sector and family carers. We aim to recognise and support the role that these important people play in enriching the lives of many vulnerable people in our community. By taking this community centred approach we intend that formal care services will be targeted to those most in need so that the growing demand on adult and children's social care services can continue to be met.

Where vulnerable people of all ages need formal care it is really important to us that it is of high quality and that it enables people to reach their goals. We will continue to improve outcomes for children in care, and moving on from care, and support them to make good life choices.

Demand for adult and children's social care services is increasing both in terms of the number of people and also in the cost of delivering care. Social care will also consider other things besides





care services, such as community support and the use of new technology which can contribute to meeting any desired outcomes. Some of Herefordshire's most vulnerable residents have very complex needs which can be very challenging and costly to meet. We intend to invest in new models of care, housing and accommodation to maximise the levels of personal independence these vulnerable people are able to attain while remaining in their communities. This might include new care homes, care villages, technology or specialist accommodation for vulnerable children and young people.

There are key public health challenges for the county that we want to address including poor oral health, obesity and cold homes. We will work with partners to address these issues through an oral health action plan, physical activity strategy and measures to tackle fuel poverty.

We will also intend to use our planning and licensing functions, our contracting power and partnerships to influence and create healthy physical and cultural environments that support wellbeing.

We are committed to supporting our NHS partners across Herefordshire to deliver their long-term ambitions within our communities. We will work with them as the lead partner on prevention and wellbeing initiatives.

This council recognises that arts and culture plays a huge part in our plans. We want culture and creativity to be part of our



residents' everyday lives, whether by engaging with our many fantastic exhibitions and events; supporting the health and wellbeing agenda by recognising the significant social value that can come from cultural services such as libraries and arts; or by increasing inclusivity by providing all our residents with more opportunities to benefit from our varied cultural activities. We are committed to working with the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership to ensure that Herefordshire continues to build on our many strengths and successes.

Technology is another key component for promoting and supporting wellbeing, particularly for those with high levels of need. Technology can be very liberating and empowering where it can improve independence without relying on formal and often intrusive levels of care. This includes such things as prompts to take medication, voice-activated response services when crisis occurs (such as a fall), health and wellbeing apps etc. Over the





coming years, we will continue to develop our technology strategies and make further investments in this important, exciting and fast moving area of service transformation.

Our schools enable our young people to achieve and excel intellectually, physically and socially, and prepare them to do well once they move on to college, training or work. We continue to invest in education by redeveloping, and building new schools to ensure that we have the right facilities in the right location, to meet emerging and future demand. We will continue to work with schools and communities to improve and maximise children's attainment; our targeting of extra

support for disadvantaged children is fundamental to achieving this.

Herefordshire needs more genuinely affordable homes delivered through carefully planned policies for growth. We will use our Herefordshire Area Plan, communities' own Neighbourhood Development Plans, and an updated Core Strategy to make sure we deliver sustainable development which meets the needs of local people while respecting our heritage and our natural environment.

Investing in improved community infrastructure is an important factor in delivering community resilience as the county's population grows.

We will work with housing associations and developers to enable them to build more homes for sale and for long-term rent. To drive the delivery of affordable housing, the council will look to develop its own housing stock to provide over 1,000 additional genuinely affordable homes for local people in Herefordshire.

Increasing the number of private properties to rent is also important, so we will work

with landlords and local people to speed up the rate at which empty properties are brought back into active use and to support community land trusts and community-owned housing projects to succeed.





Success measures

- Improve Herefordshire's house affordability ratio, making accommodation more affordable to local people
- Increase the proportion of adults requiring formal care services who are supported in their own homes
- Improve the life chances of disadvantaged children in Herefordshire, meaning that they have a better chance of doing well at school, getting good jobs and secure housing (measured by the social mobility index)
- Reduce the number of children living with poverty, tooth decay or obesity
- Reduce the number of children requiring formal social care interventions (measured by the number of children in need)
- Increase the number of children that are assessed as 'ready for school'; for both children with and without free school meal status
- Improve community resilience in Herefordshire
- Reduce the number of people admitted to hospital for unplanned events
- Improve the mental wellbeing of Herefordshire residents
- Reduce the number of people in Herefordshire identified as homeless
- Reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty



Key Facts

COMMUNITY

- Herefordshire has the longest healthy life expectation across the West Midlands for both men and women
- 500,000 visits to a library a year
- Herefordshire has one of the lowest rates of violent crime in the West Midlands and over 20% less than the national average
- Herefordshire is currently ranked as a "cold spot" nationally for social mobility



Ambition:

ECONOMY

Support an economy which builds on the county's strengths and resources

A thriving and prosperous economy is vital if we are to provide sustainable, well-paid and rewarding job opportunities to local people. A vibrant local economy improves quality of life for everyone and also generates the income through Council Tax and business rates that we need as a council to support local services.

Herefordshire faces a number of significant economic challenges. Although overall unemployment levels are very low, our average wage levels are also very low. The county has a greater proportion of retired people than the national average. Our retired residents make very significant contributions to the voluntary and third sector locally, but also contribute to house prices being high and to the lack of availability of social housing for younger families. Limited higher education opportunities in the county mean that most of the county's younger people leave the county to study beyond A-level. It is important that we increase the number of better paid job opportunities that are available so as to attract our university educated young people

to return and to encourage others to move here to live.

For those who do choose to live here, the county offers a very good quality of life. The majority of our schools are assessed as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' and Herefordshire's natural assets, cultural offer and strong sense of community make the county a highly attractive place to live, learn, visit and to invest.

More than 90% of our businesses are SMEs (small to medium sized enterprises) or micro businesses, and business start-ups in Herefordshire are more successful than the national average. The high profile Hereford Enterprise Zone, known as Skylon Park, is a council-led initiative within the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which is attracting new high-tech businesses to the county and delivering a growing number of well-paid jobs, whilst also regenerating a large brownfield site to the south of the city.

Alongside supporting our bedrock businesses and attracting exciting new ones we are determined to work with all sectors of the business community to implement a community wealth building initiative. This involves four key principles:

- Spend more locally – Work with large local employers (anchor organisations) to build strong local supply chains and increase the amount of money which stays in the local economy





- Skill-up – Encourage continuous investment in our local workforce and a culture of lifelong learning in our community
- Strengthen the use of our assets– Work with our anchor organisations to be more creative in how we use and share our collective assets, increase our local investment, encourage the development of new businesses and explore new methods of financial support
- Speak up and out – Give the wider community a meaningful say in shaping economic plans and local investments. We will do this through transparent decision-making, well publicised public consultation and by engaging positively with key stakeholders on the future plans for Herefordshire

We want to emphasise the critical role the market towns and villages play in Herefordshire’s economy and we will ensure high quality employment land, business space and business support is made available throughout the county.

We will continue to support the significant growth of education opportunities within the county to provide new opportunities for younger people to live and learn locally. The council will promote a culture of lifelong learning throughout the county and enable access to tools and resources to support upskilling, reskilling and employability by providing routes to training opportunities, apprenticeships and hands-on experience.

Building on existing local strengths and seizing global opportunities we will support growth in new technology-enabled and digital business sectors, such as cyber security. We will also encourage the use of green technologies to support the growth of a clean, low-carbon economy whilst maximising the new economic opportunities this will bring to

forward thinking companies and communities throughout the county.

We will continue to take advantage of digital investments, made through the Fastershire project, to support local companies to make the most of the superfast and ultrafast digital fibre connectivity. The wide availability of high performance fibre broadband will ensure Herefordshire is able to attract entrepreneurs seeking digital connectivity and will encourage growth in the county’s already strong ‘creative sector’ whose workers are attracted by the lifestyle and work-life balance on offer here.





The council will make a positive commitment to invest in the support and development of tourism and our valuable visitor economy. We are convinced that there continues to be a significant role for the council to play in enabling growth in the number of visitors to the county, especially for those encouraged to stay for more than a day.

As a council, we continue to be successful in attracting grants to support the economic and community development of the county. We will work with partners to maximise the Stronger Towns Fund grant (up to £25m) awarded to Hereford and to support investment programmes across all our market towns. An example of which is the significant town centre enhancement programme for Leominster following the town council's successful application for Heritage Action Zone funding (up to £2m) which is being matched with county funds.

We will work to enable parish councils to act quickly to undertake routine maintenance work to improve and maintain the condition of the local road and footpath networks. We will prioritise the maintenance of our existing transport networks and through our approach to locality working we will ensure that this local delivery complements our countywide programme of works.

Success measures

- Increase the average workplace earnings in Herefordshire
- Grow jobs and keep unemployment rates low in all areas of the county
- Improve educational attainment and widen further and higher education opportunities
- Increase the number of short distance trips being done by sustainable modes of travel – walking, cycling, public transport
- Increase road safety in the county and improve the overall condition of the road network
- Increase local wealth creation (measured by the Gross Values Added per head of population)
- Extend superfast and ultrafast broadband network

Key Facts

ECONOMY

- Low unemployment levels 2.4%
- In 2018, the total number of businesses in Herefordshire was 10,130
- 90% of businesses in Herefordshire are "micro" enterprises employing nine or fewer employees
- 24% of the population are aged 65 or over



How did we do against the previous Corporate plan (2016-2020)?

Enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives

- Creation of online Wellbeing Information and Signposting for Herefordshire (WISH) website providing a single point of information for residents and professionals on community groups and events. Activity continues to increase
- Implementation of a new way of working to support people with adult social care needs. This focusses on client's strengths, rather than the things they can't do and looks to connect people with needs to their communities
- Client satisfaction indicators regarding care and support services is one of the highest nationally
- Delivered balanced budget for adult social care whilst many councils have struggled to managed demand in this area
- Creation of new "Homefirst" service to prevent hospital admission or support hospital discharge. This new service has been rated "good" by the Care Quality Commission
- Enabled people to access services online through major increase in the superfast and ultrafast broadband network, provide digital training and more council services provided digitally

Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life

- Early help services have been increased since 2018; this service now works with more than 1,000 children at a point in time
- Children leaving care of the council will not be required to pay council tax until they reach 25
- Schools in Herefordshire's continue to perform well, with the majority of metrics showing performance in the top quartile nationally
- Enhanced children's social worker offer to help recruit and retain our workforce in this critical area
- School improvements at a number of sites throughout the county
- Investment in children centres operated by the council

How did we do against the previous Corporate Plan (2016-2020)?

Support the growth of our economy

- 90% of premises in the county able to access a superfast and ultrafast broadband service with investment secured for this to increase and a bespoke programme to connect business with advice and training
- An extra £20 million of works targeted to fix roads in the greatest need of repair and with the greatest value to our local communities. Major investment over two years (2014/15 and 2015/16)
- City link road has been delivered opening up a large amount of land for development
- More than 14,000 streetlights now near 100% on LED, saving money and reducing light pollution
- New Cyber Security Centre now under construction (due to complete summer 2020)
- Acquisition of key sites to support the development of higher educational facilities in Herefordshire
- Development of Yazor Brook flood alleviation scheme to reduce flood risk and enable growth
- Expansion of Hereford Enterprise Zone (Skylon Park)

Secure better services, quality of life and value for money

- Delivered financial savings in excess of £30 million over four year period
- Continual development of the information and services available online; new council website launched in 2017 and awarded full star rating for its first two years
- Making the most of council libraries as shared sites with children centres and community facilities



Useful information

Herefordshire Council

www.herefordshire.gov.uk

Facts and figures on Herefordshire

www.understanding.herefordshire.gov.uk

Wellbeing Information and Signposting for
Herefordshire

www.wisherefordshire.org

You can contact Herefordshire Council in the following ways:

Online by visiting our mobile-friendly website:

www.herefordshire.gov.uk

On social media: @hfdscouncil

Write to us at:

Herefordshire Council, Plough Lane,
Hereford, HR4 0LE

By calling: 01432 260000

If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call the Communications Team on 01432 260006 or email: communications@herefordshire.gov.uk