

In attendance were clerks and councillors from Leominster, Bromyard, Kington, Ross on Wye and Ledbury Town Councils as well as Hereford City Council.

Corrections to last minutes and apologies.

Invited Speakers :- Yvonne Coleman – S106 Officer – Unable to attend
Monitoring Officer:- Unable to attend due to high workload
Nick Webster & Cllr Dave Harlow:- Economic Master Plan

Nick Webster & Dave Harlow gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the Herefordshire Council's intention to promote and attract new higher technology businesses to the county and so boost its business rates income following the projected council income shortfall post 2020.

Members were told that the Master Plan (probable title change expected) was largely visionary and aspirational, this version presented was the first completed draft and had yet to go before cabinet, after which the plan would in its amended form be sent to the Market Towns for consultation and approval.

Members were told that the Market Towns had been invited to participate in the Spring consultation exercise (disputed by Kington & Ross) and members expressed their dissatisfaction and anger with the content of the plan, citing a lack of reference to the County's main income sources, tourism and agriculture, and no mention at all of Brexit and its effect on the county. Members thought that the plan concentrated on the City and that little or no thought had been given to the needs of the Market Towns. Lip service consultations. Members considered following some discussion that each Market Town should conduct its own consultation and draw up its own Economic Plan, if they so wish.

The presentation with the Q&A session lasted some 1 hour 20 minutes.

Library Update – None

Herefordshire Council Budget Consultation – None

CAB Update – CAB want to come to a meeting early next year to give an update.

Balfour Beatty 2017/18 Contract – Next Meeting

S106 Agreements – all Market Towns have substantial S106 monies set aside but no information as to how or when they will be spent, Frustration that Yvonne Coleman does not reply to requests for meetings, Paul Russell (Leominster Town Council Clerk) said that he has used his Ward Member as a leverage tool to organise a meeting with Ms Coleman the following week.

Transpired during the discussion that even though S106 moneys had been set, if the developer has a smaller than projected profit from the development than they can use to S106 money to make up the shortfall – as has happened in Leominster.

Item for future meeting is to be a discussion as the Future Viability of Herefordshire Council if the proposed boundary changes come into effect and the considerable projected income shortfall.

Meeting finished at 9pm and the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 25th January 2017

Cllr Martin Eager