

COUNTY SECRETARY AND SOLICITOR
Committee Services

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Your Ref:

Our Ref: MR/CD

Please ask for: Mrs. C. Dyer

Direct Line/Extension: (01432) 260222

Fax: (01432) 260249

E-mail: cdyer@herefordshire.gov.uk

17th July, 2003

Dear Councillor,

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend the meeting of the County of Herefordshire District Council to be held on **FRIDAY, 25TH JULY, 2003** at the Assembly Hall, The Shirehall, Hereford at **10.30 a.m.** at which the business set out in the attached agenda is proposed to be transacted.

Please note that 30 car parking spaces will be reserved at the Shirehall and 10 car parking spaces at the Town Hall for elected Members.

Yours sincerely,



M.E. ROSENTHAL
COUNTY SECRETARY AND SOLICITOR

A G E N D A

Council

Date: **Friday, 25th July, 2003**

Time: **10.30 a.m.**

Place: **The Assembly Hall, The Shirehall,
Hereford.**

Notes: Please note the **time, date** and **venue** of
the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

*Christine Dyer, Members' Services
Manager and Executive Officer*

**Tel: 01432 260222, e-mail:
cdyer@herefordshire.gov.uk**

**County of Herefordshire
District Council**

AGENDA

for the Meeting of the Council

To: All Members of the Council

	Pages
9. CABINET To receive the report and to consider any recommendations to Council arising from the meetings held on:	1 - 12
(a) 12th and 19th June and 10th July, 2003.; and	
(b) 17th July, 2003.	
14. PLANNING COMMITTEE To receive the report and to consider any recommendations to Council arising from the meeting held on 17th July, 2003.	13 - 16

REPORT OF THE MEETINGS OF CABINET

HELD ON 17TH JULY, 2003

Cabinet Members: R.J. Phillips (Leader of the Council), G.V. Hyde (Deputy Leader), Mrs. L.O. Barnett, P.J. Edwards, Mrs. J.P. French, J.C. Mayson, D.W. Rule, MBE, R.V. Stockton, D.B. Wilcox, R.M. Wilson.

This is a supplementary report of the proceedings of the meeting held on 17th July, 2003.

1. CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE (Chairman of Cabinet – Councillor R.J. Phillips)

1.1 Report on Decisions Taken

(i) **Herefordshire Matters Surveys Following Two Pilot Editions** - Herefordshire Council has been involved in the "Connecting with Communities" initiative since January 2002. One of the key recommendations was that the Council needed to establish a regular newspaper or magazine for its residents. Last year Cabinet agreed that two pilot editions of Herefordshire Matters be produced and, following evaluation, a decision would be taken in relation to the future of the magazine. Early feedback was good with the vast majority of comments favourable about the style and layout of the magazine, its content and the cost of production and distribution. Cabinet has asked for more work to be done to reduce costs and with the Council's public sector partners with a view to a joint publication and/or distribution and to review the format. The need to consider this in the wider context of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the Improvement Plan was noted.

(ii) **Procurement of Contract Services** - The Council needs to procure a wide range of contract services to the value of approximately £13 million per annum over the next 10 years. Most of this work has traditionally been carried out by Herefordshire Commercial Services. However, the Council has invited expressions of interest from the private sector for a partnership that would provide a long term relationship and a flexibility to meet changing needs.

During earlier discussions on the approach to be adopted Cabinet had expressed a preference for such a partnership to be through a joint venture company. It has now agreed a course of action to conclude negotiations with the preferred bidder. It has

- endorsed the Heads of Terms agreed, subject to contract, between Jarvis, as preferred bidder for the future delivery of contract Services, and the Council;
- determined the shareholder arrangements for the proposed joint venture company;

- agreed to seek admitted body status with the Local Government Pension Scheme for the proposed joint venture company;
 - agreed the application of new guidance to protect new employees of the joint venture company; and
 - authorised officers to conclude negotiations within the parameters outlined in the report and to report back.
- (iii) **Procurement of Technical Consultancy Services** - The Council needs to procure a wide range of technical consultancy services to the value of £1 million approximately per annum over the next 10 years. A contract for the provision of many of these services is currently held by Halcrow, which ends on 31st August, 2003; a number of other consultants are also employed by the Council to provide some of the services within the scope of this contract. The Council has invited expressions of interest from other contractors and Cabinet had previously agreed Owen Williams Limited as the preferred bidder. Cabinet has now endorsed the Heads of Terms, subject to contract, and authorised the Director of Environment, in consultation with the County Secretary and Solicitor, and County Treasurer to conclude negotiations with Owen Williams Limited and enter into the proposed principal contract documents in relation to the contract.

2. COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Cabinet Member - Councillor R.V. Stockton)

2.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Replacement Swimming Pool for North Herefordshire** - The Sydonia Swimming Pool in Leominster was closed in March 2002 on health and safety grounds. Following its closure Council submitted an application to the National Lottery Sport Fund for a replacement pool. The application was rejected in September 2002. The National Lottery Sports Fund was suspended in December 2002 and this suspension will continue until at least December 2003. The Council has been advised that new applications are unlikely to be invited until April 2004 at the earliest. Sport England had advised the Council to undertake a Joint Facilities Planning Model Study to decide on the most appropriate swimming provision for North Herefordshire. The study found that there was a case for some indoor swimming provision in Leominster which could be met by the provision of a small community pool of 20m x 8m. Cabinet has considered the number of potential users of the pool and the relative costs involved in providing different sizes of pool ranging from 20m x 8m to 25m x 12.5m.

It has agreed that a replacement swimming pool be provided for North Herefordshire and professional advisers be appointed to compile tender documents for a 25m x 12.5m pool with a 50 square metre learning bay at the site adjoining the Leisure Centre in Leominster. The scheme to be as approved by the Council's Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee on 30th May, 2001.

It has also agreed that the local community be requested to seek to raise a minimum of £250,000 which is the additional cost of providing this size of pool. The County Treasurer has been asked to identify funding of the remaining costs. A progress report will be made to Cabinet in November, 2003.

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MARKETS AND PROPERTY (Cabinet Member and Deputy Leader - Councillor G.V. Hyde)

ENVIRONMENT (Cabinet Member - Councillor P.J. Edwards)

3.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Edgar Street Grid Masterplan** - During 2002, Herefordshire Council and Advantage West Midlands agreed to jointly commission a masterplanning exercise to inform the redevelopment of the Edgar Street Grid site which is located immediately to the north of Hereford's historic city centre. In March 2003 DTZ Peda were commissioned to lead a multi disciplinary consultancy team to prepare a strategic vision, masterplan and implementation strategy for the site.

The brief for the masterplanning exercise set out the following key objectives:

- to create a main focus for regeneration within the context of an historic city centre;
- to create a development that is accessible to sustainable transport modes, that contributes to development in the wider city centre, with an emphasis on the development and improvement of sustainable access links to the city centre and other adjacent areas;
- to utilise key locations and physical attributes associated with the project area including opportunities offered by the Livestock Market site, the existing railway station and the former canal basins;
- to set an aspirational, but achievable and robust masterplan for the project area within the context of sustainable developments reflecting the heritage of the city and the use of the new and emerging economy of the 21st century;
- to focus on delivery and the mechanism for implementation.

The Council's Regeneration Board has overseen the Consultants' work to date which has established a series of criteria that any masterplan option must satisfy and four masterplan options 1(a), 1(b), 2 and 3 have been identified. All four options have been subject to a wide ranging consultation exercise.

Option 3 is emerging as the preferred Option, the key features of Option 3 are:

- the new A49/Commercial Road link joins the A49 in the vicinity of the

Courtyard Arts Centre, raising the profile of this venue and allowing in the longer term for a reorientation of the football ground. Details of the junction with A49 will be subject to agreement with the Highways Agency. There are concerns about the capacity of existing junctions to deal with these new proposals. These concerns will need to be addressed in the next phase of the work.

- a new civic focus away from the Market site (as proposed in the UDP) to the Blueschool Street area.
- the introduction of retail uses onto the Livestock Market site. This serves to help the overall economic viability of the scheme and ensures the Council is making best use of its assets. However retail uses need careful handling from a planning point of view. One of the main objectives of the study is to integrate with the existing city centre and it is important that what is effectively a separate focus for investment is not created which would compete rather than complement the main shopping areas to the south. In particular city centre shopping uses are not to be preferred on the Market site. This could weaken the retail emphasis in the existing centre which contributes to the vitality and viability of the historic core. It is essential that this is maintained. In terms of other retail uses, the capacity in the City to accommodate additional food retail is limited and a case would need to be made to or by the Council, acting as planning authority, that additional provision of this nature could be justified by other considerations. Bulky goods retailing could be another possibility, for which there is a need to identify additional land.
- Other uses such as a Hereford Learning Village, multiplex cinema and public transport provision/interchange are not explicitly provided for in the option as it stands. These need to be further considered as part of the development of the implementation plan.

Cabinet has agreed that Option 3 be used as the basis for further consultation, with particular reference to transportation issues, and that an implementation plan be developed on that basis.

**COUNCILLOR R.J. PHILLIPS
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

Report By: County Secretary and Solicitor

Wards Affected

None

Purpose

To recommend amendments to the Constitution.

Recommendation

THAT the amendments summarised in the Report and as detailed in the accompanying draft of the Constitution be approved.

Considerations

1. A draft of the Constitution showing the amendments recommended as a consequence of the changes agreed by Council to the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees of the Council is enclosed for Members and is available to others on request. This also sets out a number of minor textual corrections or updates which have been made. The main changes are summarised below.

Foreword

2. This has been updated.

Part 1 – Aims and Principles

3. No changes necessary.

Part 2 – Councillors

4. This needs to be revised to delete reference to Programme Panels.

Part 3 – Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council

5. No changes necessary.

Part 4 – The Council Meeting

6. The following changes need to be made.
 - Housing Stock Transfer – Following the successful transfer in 2002, the Constitution does not need to make reference to housing stock transfer.
 - Reference to Programme Panels needs to be removed.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Marie Rosenthal, County Secretary and Solicitor on 260200

- The new arrangements approved by Council authorising the Leader to appoint a Deputy Executive Leader need to be made.
- The Herefordshire Commercial Services Board no longer needs to meet as a member working group.

Motions

7. It is suggested that the Constitution be revised to make it clear that the Chairman, in consultation with the County Secretary and Solicitor, has a discretion not to accept a Notice of Motion on the grounds that it is not relevant to the Council's powers or duties (Standing Order 4.21).

Questions

8. It is suggested that new Standing Order 4.24.16 and 4.25.9 be added to the Constitution to make it clear that by convention questions will not be accepted at the first meeting following elections as office holders will only be appointed at that meeting.

Part 5 – Orders Applying to Committees and Other Council Bodies

9. Changes need to be made to reflect the abolition of the Programme Panels and rights of members to attend meetings.

Part 6 – The Executive

10. The Council has agreed to a Cabinet comprising the following ten portfolios:
 - Corporate Strategy and Finance (Leader)
 - Audit and Performance Management
 - Community and Social Development
 - Economic Development, Markets and Property
 - Education
 - Environment
 - Highways and Transportation
 - Human Resources and Corporate Support Services
 - Rural Regeneration and Smallholdings
 - Social Care and Strategic Housing
11. A set of responsibilities for each of the ten portfolios was agreed by the Council on 23 May. These are as set out in Part 6 of the Constitution. The following additional changes are also recommended.
 - The Highways and Transportation portfolio should be extended to include responsibility for all of the Council's engineering functions including, in particular, land drainage because of the implications for highways, safety of large reservoirs, disused mines and quarry tips and also public sewerage functions where agency agreements exist with the water companies. Aside from the synergy in relation to

these matters, they also fall within the scope of services for which the Head of Engineering and Transportation is responsible.

- It is recommended that the Customer Services function be included as part of the Human Resources and Corporate Support Service responsibilities, particularly in relation to the links with information technology and e-government.
- It is recommended that the Rural Regeneration and Smallholdings portfolio be extended to also include responsibility for market towns. It is also recommended that consideration be given to reviewing the composition and role of the Smallholdings Selection Panel to form part of the Cabinet Member's portfolio and to comprise the Cabinet Member plus two non-executive members (one from the administration, one from the opposition) with an advisory role only on smallholding tenant appointments.

Cabinet Procedure Rules

12. Rule 6 currently provides:

“If either Cabinet or a Cabinet Member proposes to take a decision which affects individual wards they shall consult the relevant ward members and those members may be invited to attend and speak at any meeting which considers the matter.”

13. At the Council meeting on 25 April 2003, it was noted that this only gave permissive rights to ward members. It was suggested in the debate that this should be revised to create a right for ward members to be able to attend and speak at Cabinet when decisions were taken affecting individual wards. It has been suggested that Rule 6 should be revised to make it clear that Members “will” be invited to attend and speak on matters affecting their wards.
14. It is considered that extending the Rule in this way will cause procedural and legal risks for the Cabinet. Some issues will have an effect across all wards creating the potential for all Councillors to have the right to speak at the Cabinet meeting. In order to manage these risks, it would be necessary to contain the right by a requirement to give notice and to limit the amount of speaking time. Against that background, it is recommended that the current rule remain leaving the discretion to the Leader of the Council as Chairman of Cabinet to call ward members to contribute.

Public Speaking at Cabinet

15. Members also need to consider the Notice of Motion moved at the Council meeting in April 2003 by former Councillor G.H.M. Woodford recommending that the public be given an opportunity to attend and participate at Cabinet meetings. Similar practical and legal considerations apply to this proposal as outlined in relation to ward members. It is considered that the current arrangement whereby the relevant ward member has a right within the Constitution to be consulted direct and for those members to be invited to attend and speak as appropriate provides a more relevant means of alerting Cabinet to local considerations. Cabinet continues to meet in public and reports are available subject to the statutory rules on confidentiality. Plans are also well advanced to improve public access to Cabinet reports and decisions via the Council's website.

Part 7 – Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements

16. At its meeting on 23 May 2003, the Council resolved to continue the four Scrutiny Committees covering Education, Environment, Social and Economic Development and Social Care and Housing. In addition, the Council has resolved to set up a separate Scrutiny Committee to undertake the Council's statutory overview and scrutiny role in relation to Health Services in the County.
17. Following the changes to the Cabinet portfolios outlined above, it is proposed that the following overview and scrutiny arrangements will apply to each individual Cabinet Member portfolio, reserving to Strategic Monitoring Committee the overview and scrutiny of strategic county-wide issues which may arise in each portfolio from time to time.

Cabinet Member	Scrutiny Committee
Corporate Strategy & Finance (Leader)	Strategic Monitoring
Audit and Performance Management	Strategic Monitoring
Community and Social Development	Social and Economic Development
Economic Development, Markets and Property	Social and Economic Development
Education	Education
Environment	Environment
Highways and Transportation	Environment
Human Resources and Corporate Support Services	Strategic Monitoring
Rural Regeneration and Smallholdings	Social and Economic Development
Social Care and Strategic Housing	Social Care and Housing

18. It is recommended that the following additional terms of reference be added to Standing Order 7.3.2 to make explicit the Scrutiny Committee's powers:
- to allow additional co-opted members
 - to allow public participation in their meetings
 - to receive information, evidence and presentations from external experts and other witnesses

Scrutiny Committee Rules

19. At present, Rule 6 which deals with call-in requirements, requires matters that have been called in which the Scrutiny Committee wish to refer back to the decision maker, to be reconsidered by the decision making body. In the case of a Cabinet decision this currently means convening a meeting of Cabinet. This can sometimes cause practical difficulties particularly when time is of the essence. In order to protect the Council's interests, it is therefore suggested that:
- In the case of a Cabinet decision, the matter will be referred back to the Leader of the Council in the first instance who will decide whether to reconsider the matter on behalf of the Cabinet or to refer the matter back to a meeting of Cabinet.

Co-ordinating Role of the Strategic Monitoring Committee

20. Rule 17 of the Scrutiny Committee Rules will also benefit from clarification and it is suggested that these be revised as follows:

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Marie Rosenthal, County Secretary and Solicitor on 260200

“In dealing with cases other than call-in, where a Scrutiny Committee has reached a view on a matter which it is scrutinising and wishes to make recommendations to the Council, its views will normally be submitted first to the Cabinet. The Strategic Monitoring Committee will be responsible for regulating the flow of reports to Cabinet.”

Part 8 – The Standards Committee and Standards Commission

21. Initially, the Council set up an independent Standards Commission to guide the work of the Council in dealing with the introduction of a new statutory ethical framework. The Standards Commission have met on a very occasional basis to provide independent advice and support to the Standards Committee. The setting up of the Standards Board for England and the issue of statutory guidance and subsequent regulations now provide a framework within which the Standards Committee has to work. Against that background, it is recommended that the formal role of the Standards Commission in the Constitution be repealed.
22. The legislation requires the Standards Committee to comprise at least two councillors (who may not include the Leader of the Council) and at least one person who is a wholly independent member (that is not a member or an officer of the Council). Where the Committee comprises more than three members, at least 25% must be independent. Additionally, the Standards Committee must comprise at least one member of any of the town and parish councils which the Standards Committee exercises responsibility. That person must be present when matters relating to town and parish councils or their members are considered.
23. New Regulations recently issued provide for the Standards Committee to determine complaints referred to it by the Standards Board for England. These Regulations give the Standards Committee powers to impose a number of sanctions ranging from disqualification from office for a period of up to 3 months, to public censure. The Regulations require the Committee, or a sub-committee of it, to meet and determine such complaints within 30 days. It is further understood that the Standards Committee will, later this year, be required to conduct its own investigations in relation to complaints against town and parish councils and also assume responsibility in relation to referred complaints concerning Herefordshire Council Members.
24. Against that background and the need to meet the quorum requirements of the legislation and to determine matters within statutory deadlines, it is recommended that one further independent member be recruited to serve on the Standards Committee and that the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils be asked to nominate an additional parish councillor representative of the town and parish councils to serve on the Standards Committee, or a sub-committee of it to deal with its town and parish council responsibilities under Section 55 of the Local Government Act 2000.

Part 9 – Other Committees and Bodies

25. Because of the current plans to outsource the Council's contract work, it is proposed that the Herefordshire Commercial Services Board not be appointed. It is also proposed to clarify the arrangements for appointments to external bodies and the term of office of those appointments. A new Member body also needs to be set up to sign off the Council's accounts each year. It is recommended this be called the Statutory Accounts Committee and comprise the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member Audit and Performance Management and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Strategic Monitoring Committee.

Planning Committee and Area Planning Sub-Committees

26. There need to be consequential changes to reflect the increase in size of the various planning committees.

Smallholdings Selection Panel

27. It is proposed this Panel be revised as set out above in paragraph 11.

Local Joint Consultative Committee

28. The Constitution needs to be clarified (Standing Orders 5.5 and 4.4.2) that Members of the Council do not generally have the right to attend these meetings.

Part 10 – Local Area Forums

29. A review is under way in relation to local area forums.

Part 11 – Joint Arrangements

30. No changes necessary.

Part 12 – Officer Responsibilities

31. No changes necessary.

Part 13 – Decision Making

32. No changes necessary.

Part 14 – The Public

33. No changes necessary.

Cabinet Procedure Rules

34. Please see details above in paragraphs 12 – 14.

Scrutiny Committee Rules

35. Please see details above in paragraphs 19 and 20.

Policy Framework and Budget Rules

36. No changes necessary.

Financial Procedure Rules and Financial Standing Orders

37. These need to be revised consequent on the other changes outlined in this Report.

Appendix 12 – Protocols on Member/Officer Working Relationships and Use of Facilities

38. Protocols have been recommended by the Standards Committee but not yet adopted by Council. A revised set, to meet the concerns expressed at the Council meeting in April are being prepared.

REPORT OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Meeting Held on 17 July 2003

Membership:

Councillors: Councillor T.W. Hunt (Chairman), Councillor J.B. Williams (Vice-Chairman), BF Ashton, MR Cunningham, Mrs CJ Davis, PJ Dauncey, DJ Fleet, JGS Guthrie, JW Hope, B Hunt, Mrs JA Hyde, Brig P Jones CBE, Mrs RF Lincoln, RM Manning, RI Matthews, Mrs JE Pemberton, R Preece, Mrs SJ Robertson, DC Taylor, WJ Walling

**REFERRED PLANNING APPLICATION - SW2003/0713/F - CHANGE OF USE FROM HOTEL (C1) TO DWELLING HOUSE, THE HAVEN, HARDWICKE, HAY-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR3 5TA
SW2003/0710/F - CHANGE OF USE FROM HOLIDAY GUEST ACCOMMODATION TO ON SITE EDUCATIONAL UNIT FOR THE CHILDREN HOUSED IN THE DWELLING AT THE HAVEN, HARDWICKE, HAY-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE FOR SEDGEMOOR COLLEGE PER OLORUN PLANNING PARTNERSHIP LTD, 107 HIGH STREET, HONITON, DEVON, EX14 1PE**

1. Because the Southern Area Planning Sub-Committee was mindful to refuse the application contrary to officer recommendations and Council policies. This application was referred to the Committee for determination. The Sub-Committee opposed the application on the grounds that the proposed uses were in the wrong location, it was too isolated and had limited facilities for young persons. There was also a concern that there would be an impact on amenity, and there was some local fear about the operation of the use and the location was not convenient for rapid police response.
2. The Committee heard the views of the local Ward Councillor and an objector who spoke against the application. Having considered all the evidence put forward, the Committee decided that there were insufficient grounds for the application to be refused and decided to approve it.

REFERRED PLANNING APPLICATION – NW2003/0283/F – CHANGE OF USE FROM HAULIERS YARD WITH MAINTENANCE, TO LIGHT VEHICLE REPAIR/MAINENANCE DEPOT WITH AGRICULTURAL MAINTENANCE/REPAIR DEPOT AT KILKENNY, LOWER HERGEST, KINGTON, HR5 3ER FOR: MESSRS JONES BROS PER D WALTERS, 27 ELIZABETH ROAD, KINGTON, HEREFORDSHIRE HR5 3DB

3. Because the Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee was mindful to refuse the application contrary to officer recommendations and Council policies. The application was referred to the Committee for determination. The Sub-Committee was opposed to the application on the grounds that the proposals would represent an intensification of use and that due to the site's prominence and isolated location it would harm the character and appearance of this area of great landscape value.
4. Having considered all the evidence put forward, the Committee concluded that insufficient grounds had been put forward to refuse the application and decided that it should be approved.

INSTALLATION BY NETWORK RAIL OF GSM RECEIVING EQUIPMENT FOR SECURE TRAIN DRIVER – SIGNALLER COMMUNICATION

5. Notification has been received from Network Rail of its intention to install equipment for secure train driver to signaller communication. The equipment involves the erection of 33 metre high masts at the following locations:

Cummins Farm
Ledbury Station
Tarrington
Hereford Station
Moreton-on-Lugg
Newton
Leominster Station
Orleton Bridge
Haywood Lodge Bridge
Howton Bridge
Vineyard Farm

6. The company has taken the view that its proposals for Herefordshire constitutes permitted development under the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 17 (Class A) of the General Permitted Development Order 1995 because it is required in connection with the movement of traffic by rail. Other local authorities are using powers under Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order 1995 to require that application for planning permission should be submitted for masts in sensitive locations. Network Rail has given insufficient information about why all the masts should be of the same height, the expected coverage between masts, and how the system would work through the three tunnels in the county (Hope-under-Dinmore, Ledbury and Colwall). There is also no information about trials to ensure that the proposals achieve what is intended, how each site was chosen and there is no indication about giving the public notice about the proposals for individual sites prior to construction. In view of the lack of information and potential problems that could arise the officers have lodged a holding objection.
7. The Committee decided that authority be delegated to the County Secretary and Solicitor, in consultation with the Chairman of Planning Committee and local Members for the sites affected and Officers, to give (if considered appropriate) a direction under Article 4 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, suspending permitted development rights and requiring applications for planning permission on the relevant sites.

HEREFORDSHIRE HOUSING LAND STUDY

8. The Committee received the results of the Herefordshire Housing Land Study 2003. The annual study is vital to assist the Council in maintaining an adequate supply of housing land and to enable its release on a managed basis. A few sites from the adopted local plans also remain un-implemented and without planning permission and these had been added to the outstanding land supply. Deposit Draft Unitary Development Plan proposal sites have also been included within the remit of the 2003 Study. The information obtained from monitoring is also used to track progress in respect of the Council's planning policies and contributes to the Regional Planning Bodies Annual Monitoring Report. The study involves a site survey of all planning permissions for new housing in the county and information is obtained about the number of dwelling built, those under construction and those not started under each permission.
9. The conclusions of the study revealed that
 - the Government's 60% target for development on brownfield land had been achieved for the first time;
 - the reliance upon "windfall" sites was starting to fall behind target within the Unitary Development Plan;
 - the construction of flats is exceeding the construction of houses within the County and is following a national trend. and
 - housing densities in urban areas is increasing.
10. The Committee noted the results of the study and agreed that it should be published as a

record of the housing land position in the County. A copy is available in the Members Room.

EWYAS HAROLD VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

11. The Ewyas Harold Village Design Statement was considered for adoption as interim Supplementary Planning Guidance to the emerging Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan. Village Design Statements (VDSs) are a Countryside Agency initiative to encourage local people to make an assessment of local character based upon their own knowledge and perceptions of their village and its surroundings. Community participation is an important aspect of the initiative and is used to draw together a VDS that identifies, describes and illustrates local character valued by the community. The Countryside Agency recommends that VDSs should be adopted as supplementary planning guidance by the local planning authority.
12. The Committee considered the aims of VDSs and the details of the Ewyas Harold VDS. It was noted that Ewyas Harold Parish Council was preparing a Parish Plan and that the Village Design Statement would form the basis of the development of this plan. The Committee agreed that the Village Design Statements it had previously endorsed for Leintwardine, Much Marcle and Colwall should be adopted together with the Ewyas Harold VDS as Supplementary Planning Guidance to their respective Local Plans.
13. It was recommended to the Cabinet Member (Environment) that;
 - i. the Ewyas Harold Village Design Statement be adopted as interim Supplementary Planning Guidance as an expression of local distinctiveness and community participation;
 - ii. the Statement be treated as a material consideration when dealing with planning matters; and
 - iii. the Village Design Statements for Leintwardine, Much Marcle and Colwall be adopted instead of endorsed as Supplementary Planning Guidance to their respective local plans.

REVISED NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GUIDELINES FOR AGGREGATES PROVISION IN ENGLAND 2001-2016

14. The Committee considered a report setting out revised national and regional guidelines for the aggregate provision in England 2001 – 2016 in relationship to extraction within Herefordshire. As part of its programme of modernisation the ODPM is replacing planning policy guidance and minerals policy guidance notes with planning policy statements and mineral policy statements. The new guidelines set out the levels for mineral extraction nationally and reduce that for the West Midlands by some 19% with an increase in recycled material. The Committee agreed that the West Midlands Regional Aggregate Working Party should be commended to adopt the guidance which was more favourable to Herefordshire and the West Midlands for mineral extraction and recycling and that officers should be authorised to use the guidance with immediate effect for the purposes of the Unitary Development Plan preparation and the determination of planning applications.

**T.W. HUNT
CHAIRMAN
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- **BACKGROUND PAPERS – Agenda for meeting on 17 July 2003**

