

AGENDA

Community Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday 5 October 2009**

Time: **10.00 am**

Place: **The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,
Hereford**

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

For any further information please contact:

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If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call David Penrose, Democratic Services Officer, Tel: 01432 383690 on 01432 383690 or e-mail dpenrose@herefordshire.gov.uk in advance of the meeting.

Agenda for the Meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Chairman **Councillor TM James**
Vice-Chairman **Councillor KG Grumbley**

Councillor DJ Benjamin
Councillor GFM Dawe
Councillor BA Durkin
Councillor DW Greenow
Councillor KS Guthrie
Councillor MAF Hubbard
Councillor B Hunt
Councillor RH Smith
Councillor RV Stockton

Non Voting	Mrs Gillian Churchill	HALC
	Mrs. J. Evans	National Farmers Union
	Mr P Hands	Visit Herefordshire
	Mr Gary Woodman	Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce

GUIDANCE ON DECLARING PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

The Council's Members' Code of Conduct requires Councillors to declare against an Agenda item(s) the nature of an interest and whether the interest is personal or prejudicial. Councillors have to decide first whether or not they have a personal interest in the matter under discussion. They will then have to decide whether that personal interest is also prejudicial.

A personal interest is an interest that affects the Councillor more than most other people in the area. People in the area include those who live, work or have property in the area of the Council. Councillors will also have a personal interest if their partner, relative or a close friend, or an organisation that they or the member works for, is affected more than other people in the area. If they do have a personal interest, they must declare it but can stay and take part and vote in the meeting.

Whether an interest is prejudicial is a matter of judgement for each Councillor. What Councillors have to do is ask themselves whether a member of the public – if he or she knew all the facts – would think that the Councillor's interest was so important that their decision would be affected by it. If a Councillor has a prejudicial interest then they must declare what that interest is. A Councillor who has declared a prejudicial interest at a meeting may nevertheless be able to address that meeting, but only in circumstances where an ordinary member of the public would be also allowed to speak. In such circumstances, the Councillor concerned will have the same opportunity to address the meeting and on the same terms. However, a Councillor exercising their ability to speak in these circumstances must leave the meeting immediately after they have spoken.

AGENDA

		Pages
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive apologies for absence.	
2.	NAMED SUBSTITUTES To receive any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.	
4.	MINUTES To approve and sign the Minutes of the meetings held on 29 June 2009 and 13 July 2009.	1 - 18
5.	SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY To consider suggestions from members of the public on issues the Committee could scrutinise in the future.	
6.	REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2009/10 To provide an up date on the projected outturn for financial year 2009/10 for the Economic and Community Services Division within the Regeneration Directorate and Cultural Services functions within the Environment and Culture Directorate.	19 - 24
7.	ENVIRONMENT & CULTURE AND REGENERATION DIRECTORATES: PERFORMANCE FOR THE THREE-MONTH PERIOD TO JUNE 2009 To report on the performance indicator position and other performance management information for the Economic and Community Services Division within the Regeneration Directorate and Cultural Services functions within the Environment and Culture Directorate for the three-month period to June 2009.	25 - 40
8.	IMPACT OF THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN To receive a report on the impact of the recession on Herefordshire.	41 - 44
9.	REVIEW OF THE HEREFORDSHIRE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2005- 25 To consider the findings of the Scrutiny Review of the Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy 2005-25.	45 - 60
10.	COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME To consider the Committee's work programme.	61 - 64

PUBLIC INFORMATION

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Council has established Scrutiny Committees for Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing, Childrens' Services, Community Services, Environment, and Health. A Strategic Monitoring Committee scrutinises corporate matters and co-ordinates the work of these Committees.

The purpose of the Committees is to ensure the accountability and transparency of the Council's decision making process.

The principal roles of Scrutiny Committees are to

- Help in developing Council policy
- Probe, investigate, test the options and ask the difficult questions before and after decisions are taken
- Look in more detail at areas of concern which may have been raised by the Cabinet itself, by other Councillors or by members of the public
- "call in" decisions - this is a statutory power which gives Scrutiny Committees the right to place a decision on hold pending further scrutiny.
- Review performance of the Council
- Conduct Best Value reviews
- Undertake external scrutiny work engaging partners and the public

Formal meetings of the Committees are held in public and information on your rights to attend meetings and access to information are set out overleaf

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public Involvement at Scrutiny Committee Meetings

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There are also two other ways in which you can directly contribute at Herefordshire Council's Scrutiny Committee meetings.

1. Identifying Areas for Scrutiny

At the meeting the Chairman will ask the members of the public present if they have any issues which they would like the Scrutiny Committee to investigate, however, there will be no discussion of the issue at the time when the matter is raised. Councillors will research the issue and consider whether it should form part of the Committee's work programme when compared with other competing priorities.

Please note that the Committees can only scrutinise items which fall within their specific remit (see below). If a matter is raised which falls within the remit of another Scrutiny Committee then it will be noted and passed on to the relevant Chairman for their consideration.

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(Please note that the Scrutiny Committees are not able to discuss questions relating to personal or confidential issues.)

Remits of Herefordshire Council's Scrutiny Committees

Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing

*Statutory functions for adult social services including:
Learning Disabilities
Strategic Housing
Supporting People
Public Health*

Children's Services

Provision of services relating to the well-being of children including education, health and social care.

Community Services Scrutiny Committee

*Libraries
Cultural Services including heritage and tourism
Leisure Services
Parks and Countryside
Community Safety
Economic Development
Youth Services*

Health

*Planning, provision and operation of health services affecting the area
Health Improvement
Services provided by the NHS*

Environment

*Environmental Issues
Highways and Transportation*

Strategic Monitoring Committee

*Corporate Strategy and Finance
Resources
Corporate and Customer Services
Human Resources*

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- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
- Access to a public Register stating the names, addresses and wards of all Councillors with details of the membership of Cabinet and of all Committees and Sub-Committees.
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HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD.

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HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Community Services Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Monday 29 June 2009 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor TM James (Chairman)
Councillor KG Grumbley (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: DJ Benjamin, DW Greenow, KS Guthrie, B Hunt, RH Smith and RV Stockton

Co-opted Members Mrs G Churchill (HALC), Mr B Seamans (LINK) and Mr G. Woodman (Hereford & Worcester Chamber of Commerce)

In attendance: Councillors WLS Bowen and PJ Edwards

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor MAF Hubbard and Mr P Hands.

2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

There were no named substitutes.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor RH Smith	8	Personal – West Mercia Police Authority
Councillor B Hunt	8	Personal – West Mercia Police Authority

4. SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY

There were no suggestions from the public for issues for future Scrutiny.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes for the meetings held on 11 March and 6 April 2009, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. ANNUAL REPORT ON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Cabinet Member (Economic and Community Services) presented his report.

The Cabinet Member took the Committee through his report, and highlighted the following areas in particular:

- Enterprising Britain UK Runner Up Award
- Rotherwas Access Road opened in July 2008 with at least £1m worth of new business created

- New University Challenge – the development of a bid to the Higher Education Funding Council for a University Centre for Herefordshire which should accommodate a further 200+ students.
- The free swimming initiative for 16+ and 60+ at Halo Leisure Centres had been very successful; overall participants for May 2009 were 3225 which was 25% up for 16+ compared to May 2008 and 28% up for 60+ compared to May 2008.
- That in 2008/9 the Economic and Community Services budget saved £60k to contribute to the budget pressures within the Regeneration Directorate caused by an increase in homelessness and a reduction in income to the Planning Service due the economic downturn.

Although a large number of performance indicators were new for 2008-09 there were a number of areas where targets were achieved and performance was better than in 2007-08. These were:

- Number employed in knowledge and technology intensive industries (increased from 10,923 to 11,722)
- People killed or seriously injured (down from 133 to 93)
- Children killed or seriously injured (down from 11 to 6)
- Violent crime per 100,000 population (down from 15.6 to 13.9)
- Vehicle crimes per 100,000 population (down from 5 to 4.8)
- Overall crime numbers (down from 11,172 to 10,471)

In reply to a question, the Cabinet Member said that the Hereford City Partnership was designed to promote the City centre.

In reply to a further question, the Head of Economic and Community Services said that the New University Challenge would provide a University Centre for the Edgar Street Grid was a move away from a traditional university campus model. The emphasis would be far more on distance learning, although it was envisaged that courses would also be held on the Blackfriars site.

A Member asked how far the increase in funding to the Parish Path Partnership scheme went to meet the demands of the parishes. The Interim Parks, Countryside and Leisure Development Manager replied that maintenance was generally up to date in those parishes that were members of the scheme.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

7. REVIEW OF THE BACKLOG OF DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDERS

The Committee received a report on Definitive Map Modification Orders. The Interim Parks, Countryside and Leisure Development Manager reported that the Council currently had a backlog of 82 modification order applications awaiting determination. The number of new applications being made per year was variable, but over the past eight years it averaged at 7.6 applications per year. At present there are 13 high-priority applications, 33 medium-priority applications, and 36 low-priority applications awaiting determination. An investment of £200k per year over three years would be needed to clear the backlog up to determination stage. Beyond that, a further £300k per year would be required to employ extra legal support and open up the routes on the ground.

Whilst the clearance of the backlog of Definitive Map Modification Orders up to determination stage within 3 years was possible, it would in all likelihood result in the backlog being shifted along rather than cleared. The service was currently concentrating on high priority applications which were those that provided the most benefit to the

community. Considerable parts of the process were out of the Council's control so it would not be possible to completely clear the backlog within 3 years as it is unlikely that either the council's Legal services or the Secretary of State would be able to deal with a dramatic increase in orders and the subsequent objections. The service should however ensure that some orders are made this year. The service delivery review will provide the opportunity to review the resources committed to this area of work and to possibly re visit the current statement of priorities.

The Council was undergoing review of a number of Services with Amey, who currently had two contracts with the Council to deliver a number of Services including Rights of Way. It had been decided that it was in the Council's interest to commission out all aspects of Public Rights of Way leaving only those areas that could not be delegated. Amey would be responsible for all areas of the Service including Definitive Modification Orders.

In response to a question, the Director, Environment and Culture said that strategy work would remain with the Council after the Service was transferred to Amey, who would be expected to deliver to the Council's priorities. The priorities for the Directorate were set by the Executive.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- A Member said that he found the report to be unsatisfactory, and said that firmer proposals were required.
- That the budget for footpaths for the previous year had been £230k. This had to cover the maintenance of 3,500 km of rights of way, as well as all the legal work associated with Definitive Map Modification order work.
- A Motion that an exempt report should be provided to the Committee on how the Definitive Map Modification order backlog would be addressed in the contractual arrangements with Amey, was lost.

Mr Everitt, a resident of Ledbury, addressed the meeting. He said that he had submitted four applications for footpath Definitive Map Modifications in 2006 and, bearing in mind both the backlog and the way certain applications were prioritised, it was unlikely that his applications would be dealt with in his lifetime. He asked whether this was an appropriate level of service that the public should expect from the Council.

The Director of Environment and Culture replied that the Service extracted the maximum value for money from the funds that were available to it. There was scope to improve the existing service, and this was why it was being transferred to Amey.

RESOLVED:

That: a) The Committee expressed its concerns regarding the continued backlog of Definitive Map Modification Orders.

and;

b) That the need for improvement in the resourcing of the Service, both financial and personnel, should be highlighted to the Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services).

8. EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE TO THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITH THE HEREFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY AND SAFETY DRUGS PARTNERSHIP

The Committee received a report on the Executive's response made to it in the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Community Engagement in Community Safety and Drugs Partnership. The Head of Economic and Community Services reported that all the recommendations from the review had been accepted by Cabinet. In the ensuing discussion the following points were raised:

- A review of PACT meetings had been undertaken and the changes that had been recommended would be implemented in the next round of PACT meetings which would start in September 2009.
- That more support was required, both financial and administrative, for the Drug and Alcohol Forums if they were to continue to exist in some Market Towns.

RESOLVED:

That: a) The Committee draw to the attention of the Cabinet Member its concerns regarding the lack of funding for Safer Herefordshire Forums, and would urge that continued and enhanced funding to these groups be confirmed in order to prevent their demise.

and;

b) The Committee greeted with disappointment the fact that the presented report had not been updated for two months.

9. HEREFORD UNITED FOOTBALL GROUND LEASES

The Committee received a report on the options for development of the Hereford United Football Ground within the context of the wider ESG development. The Council and ESG Ltd had held a number of meetings with the head tenants and the football club to discuss proposals for a commercial redevelopment of part of the ground to fund the refurbishment of the football ground and stands. Discussions had reached the stage of preparing Heads of Terms for a re-structuring of the lease to permit such a development.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

10. COMMUNITY/CULTURAL SERVICES REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee received a report on the final revenue outturn position for Community Services for 2008/09 and the outlined agreed budget for 2009/10. The Community Services Accountant reported that, as previously projected, expenditure had exceeded budget by £200k in relation to the HALO job evaluation costs. Over time funding had become insufficient as staff had progressed through the pay grades. For 2008/09 this had been met by transferring the sum from reserves at year end. From 2009/10 the amount was being built into the Council's base budget.

She went on to say that Libraries had overspent by £102k, mainly as a result of an insufficient budget to meet IT service level agreement costs which included maintenance of the public access PC's. There was an overspend on Public Rights of Way of £30k as a result of contract inflation on works carried out by Amey Wye Valley Ltd.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**11. ENVIRONMENT & CULTURE AND REGENERATION DIRECTORATES:
PERFORMANCE FOR THE YEAR 1 APRIL 2008 - 31 MARCH 2009**

The Committee received a report to update Members on the achievement of targets for 2008-09 relevant to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee and contained within the Environment & Culture and Regeneration Directorates Plans. It was noted that indicators were moving in a positive direction, with 69% showing green, and 10% showing red.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

12. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report to update Members on the achievement of targets for 2008-09 relevant to the Committee and contained within the Environment & Culture and Regeneration Directorates Plans.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 12:15

CHAIRMAN

MINUTES of the meeting of Community Services Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Monday 13 July 2009 at 10.30 am

Present: Councillor TM James (Chairman)
Councillor *KG Grumbley (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: DJ Benjamin, Churchill, GFM Dawe, BA Durkin, JHR Goodwin, DW Greenow, KS Guthrie, Mr PH Hands, MAF Hubbard, RH Smith, PJ Watts, Mr G. Woodman and JD Woodward

In attendance: Councillors PA Andrews, WLS Bowen, Councillor H Bramer (Cabinet Member, Resources), Councillor JA Hyde (Cabinet Member, Children's Services), MD Lloyd-Hayes and Councillor PD Price (Cabinet Member, ICT, Education and Achievement)

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors KG Grumbley, B Hunt and RV Stockton.

14. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Councillor PJ Watts was present as a substitute for Councillor KG Grumbley; Councillor JD Woodward for Councillor B Hunt; Councillor JHR Goodwin for Councillor RV Stockton.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name	Item	Interest
Cllr AJM Blackshaw	5	Personal - Board Member Hereford City Partnership
Cllr DJ Benjamin	5	Personal - Businessman in City Centre
Mr P Hands	5	Personal - Board Member Hereford City Partnership
Cllr MAF Hubbard	5	Personal - Board Member Hereford City Partnership
Cllr TM James	5	Personal - Board Member Hereford City Partnership
Cllr RH Smith	5	Personal – Board Member Courtyard Theatre
Mr G Woodman	5	Personal - Board Member Hereford City Partnership

16. SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY

No suggestions were received.

17. CALL IN OF THE CABINET DECISION ON THE EDGAR STREET GRID RETAIL QUARTER DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

The Committee considered Cabinet's decision to grant approval to enter into the Edgar Street Grid (ESG) Retail Quarter Development Agreement between Herefordshire Council, ESG Herefordshire Ltd, and Stanhope.

The decision had been called in by three Members of the Committee: Councillors DJ Benjamin, GFM Dawe and MAF Hubbard.

The stated reasons for the call-in were

- There being no previous indication that a 250 year lease was being considered, and insufficient explanation as to why this was necessary.
- The 'Masterplan' was negotiated before the start of the credit crunch and there has been no public re-negotiation of plans for the Retail Quarter since those events.
- With due regard to matters of commercial confidentiality, there is insufficient information about the structure of the financial arrangements in relation to the Retail Quarter itself, and also between the Retail Quarter and other parts of the ESG project.

The Chairman explained how he proposed to conduct the meeting. He emphasised that the focus of the meeting should be on the merits of the Cabinet decision of 25 June.

A Member proposed that Mr R Clay, a city resident, should be co-opted onto the Committee for the part of the meeting open to the public outlining his qualifications and the support he had provided to those initiating the call-in.

The Committee considered the matter and decided not to co-opt Mr Clay.

A statement was then made on behalf of those initiating the call-in. The principal points are summarised below:

- Too little information had been made available about a momentous decision for the City and the County.
- There were considerable unanswered concerns on the part of the business and related professional community in the City.
- The recent resignation of Clive Richards as Chair of the ESG Company was unexplained.
- That the scrutiny process was flawed.
- That the Community Services Scrutiny Committee had not previously conducted any in-depth or robust examination of the ESG project.
- A criticism of the role of the Chairman of the Committee and the appropriateness of his chairing the meeting.
- A concern that Cabinet had taken its decision on the ESG Retail Quarter Development Agreement before planning approval had been given to the new relocated Livestock Market which it was suggested raised the question of predetermination.
- Criticism that a number of people had not been invited to appear before the Committee as witnesses.
- That those initiating the call-in had not been granted their wish to have an advisor of their choice co-opted onto the committee to assist them. This made it difficult for them to challenge the professional representatives attending the meeting on behalf of the Council and ESG Board.
- That depending on the outcome of the meeting it was intended to pursue the matter including by holding a public meeting where the concerns of the citizens and its business community could be given a full airing.
- It was suggested that the way in which the call-in had been handled had impaired the attempt to hold the Executive to account and therefore might increase the prospect of legal challenge to the Council's decisions.

- That it was of major concern that the Development Agreement represented a new approach to the Development that had not been discussed in public and neither had the proposal to grant a 250 year lease. There had also been no discussion or reconsideration of the project since the credit crunch which had made a fundamental change to the national retail picture. The project needed to be revaluated to see if it were truly viable, or was unattainable in retail terms and would leave the City in debt.
- That the infrastructure for the project should be put in place first, concern being expressed that there was a lack of finance available for the development. There was also criticism of the way in which the Council presented the project, in particular the references to the provision of a new cinema as part of the development.

In conclusion it was stated that the reasons in support of the call-in reflected public feeling.

The Chairman refuted the criticism of his role, emphasising that he had ceased to be Leader of the Council before the decisions in relation to the Cattle Market and the Edgar Street Grid that were the subject of scrutiny had been taken.

The Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services) then spoke in reply to the call-in. His principal comments are summarised below:

- In connection with the resignation of Mr Richards as Chairman of ESG Ltd, he emphasised that the Board was committed to the ESG Project.
- In respect of the three stated reasons for the Call-in he said:
 - A 250 year lease was an industry standard for a project of this size.
 - The project was for delivery after the recession. The master plan had not been changed but the phasing of the project would be consulted on.
 - That information on the proposed financial arrangements had been available at Cabinet.
- He questioned the motivation behind the call-in stating that cross-party working was needed to improve service delivery.
- That there were strengths to the Herefordshire economy which comprised a mix of sectors. However, Hereford City, the nucleus, faced many problems. The City was losing its retail and leisure market share and the position would worsen significantly without the ESG project.
- The recession would end. Investment in development was therefore appropriate. He highlighted the focus on the historical heart of the City and the streetscene proposals of architect, Ben Hamilton-Baillie stating that the development would benefit the City as a whole including the existing centre. The choice lay between decline and a dynamic, attractive regional city. The ESG project was an opportunity to be seized.

It was noted in reply that two of those initiating the call-in were city based Councillors who were reflecting the level of concern about the proposal within the City.

A question was asked about what would happen to the City Centre whilst proposals for the development were being pursued, giving as an example the failure of Wrexham City Centre. It was suggested that the key principles of Mr Hamilton-Baillie's approach were not being followed and the implications of the phasing of the project in the context of the UDP and connectivity were unclear.

The Cabinet Member concluded by saying that there would be an opportunity to comment on the phasing proposals.

Mr Jonathan Bretherton, Chief Executive of the ESG Company then gave a presentation on the Development Agreement that he had presented to Cabinet on 25 June, with some additions in response to issues raised by the call-in.

The principal points were:

- That this was a complex deal, but that it was based on a tried and tested structure within the industry.
- That there were three key elements to the structure of the deal
 - Development Agreement
 - Compulsory Purchase Indemnity Agreement
 - 250 Year Lease
- The initial 18 month period after the agreement was signed (which could be extended to 24 months under certain circumstances) would consist of consideration of the phasing of the project, determination of who the anchor tenants should be, and finalising funding for the infrastructure. A decision to relocate the Livestock Market would also have to be taken. The phasing had not been agreed, and was not part of this section of the agreement. The Tenants would be sought by Stanhope. During this period, either party would be able to walk away from the agreement with no penalties. If a satisfactory phasing arrangement could not be agreed, then the agreement would not progress.
- The three main Council preconditions that would have to be met during the initial stage of the agreement, a period of up to six years, were:
 1. that the livestock market should be moved
 2. that Planning and land assembly for link road was completed
 3. A construction contract for the road had been let.

No waiver of any of these preconditions was allowed.

- There were seven Stanhope preconditions that would have to be met during the same period:
 1. Obtain planning consent
 2. Land acquisition
 3. Deals with tenants - cinema, department store and food store
 4. Obtain any consents or orders needed to allow the upgrading of Blueschool Street and Newmarket Street
 5. Obtain funding
 6. Environmental and ground conditions reports
 7. Affordable housing units deal with an approved RSL

Of these preconditions, only the provision of affordable housing units could be waived.

In the ensuing discussion the following principal points were made:

- Asked if the Cabinet decision represented a point of no return, Mr Bretherton reiterated that the initial pre-conditions had to be satisfied within 18 months of signing the Development Agreement, 24 months at the outside (under certain conditions), with the main pre-conditions to have been satisfied within six years of the signing of the Development Agreement.

- Asked about the reasons for Mr Richards's resignation, Mr Bretherton replied that it was not a matter for him to comment upon. The Cabinet Member commented that Mr Richards had done an excellent job. The ESG Ltd Board was united in its determination the ESG project should be successful.
- A question was asked about the protection of the existing City Centre and restrictions that would be placed on Stanhope approaching existing retailers to coax them on to the ESG retail quarter. Mr Bretherton replied that he had previously said that certain existing City Centre retailers would move, but by far the majority of the ESG retailers would be new to the City.
- It was suggested that assurances had previously been given that relocation of existing retailers could be prevented. Mr Bretherton said that he had never said that no retailers would move. However, by far the majority would be excluded from doing so. The ESG site would be leased to Stanhope not sold freehold allowing the Council to exercise some control over tenancies. However, some retailers were determined to relocate. The Council had already had to defend a number of applications to relocate at planning inquiries. In response to a suggestion that this in effect meant any major company could relocate to the retail quarter, leaving small independent traders isolated, Mr Bretherton said this was not the case and he did not consider the existing City Centre would fail. Pressed further on the point he said he thought 2-3 retailers would move.

The Cabinet Member added that, if the ESG did not proceed, retailers, a number of whom were already seeking to move to the Holmer Road trading estate would have a stronger case.

The Director of Regeneration supported the comment that because the ESG site would be leased to Stanhope, not sold freehold, control could be exercised over movement of retailers.

- Asked about the proposed 250 year lease Mr Bretherton said that two of the three shortlisted developers had rejected the 125 year lease initially proposed. The offer of an extended lease was one of the consequences of the credit crunch and reflected the market. The one developer who had been willing to proceed on a 125 year lease had recently gone into administration.
- The Cabinet Member commented that the development represented a unique opportunity, making a visit to the city a leisure experience. The private sector was keen to invest in the development now and this interest would grow after the recession. Experts saw Hereford as a good investment opportunity.

The following further points were made:

- That further regular updates on the project would be welcomed by all Members.
- That, in accordance with one of the Committee's resolutions of October 2009 the project should be referred to as the extended city centre.
- A question was asked about the role of a company called Pendower Developments Ltd, described as a small company with two shares, in the Development Agreement, and its viability. Mr Bretherton said that the Development Agreement was with Stanhope. The two executives comprising Pendower Developments were experts named in the Development Agreement who worked with Stanhope. Stanhope could not sub-contract without the Council's approval. The relationship between Stanhope and Pendower was a matter for Stanhope.

- There was criticism of the grounds for the call-in, suggesting that each point had been addressed. The reason for the 250 year lease had been given; account had been taken of the credit crunch and it needed to be borne in mind that there would be more changes to address during the life of the project; and the relevant financial information had been available at the Cabinet meeting on 25 June.
- It was questioned whether the phasing of the project was consistent with the Unitary Development Plan, in particular the provision that any development extension of the city centre had to be complementary and, under PPG 6, within 300 yards of existing retail provision.
- Mr Bretherton said that negotiations on the phasing were in the early stages and could not be finalised until a number of variables had been resolved. The phasing process would be subject to further consultation. Phasing would not be able to proceed without agreement. The UDP designated the ESG retail quarter as being within the City Centre. The proposals were, therefore, consistent with PPG 6. Signing the Agreement committed the Council to a process. However, designs for schemes forming part of the Agreement would have to be consulted upon and would have to demonstrate a range of things including connectivity to the City Centre.
- A Member expressed concern at the degree to which the current proposal differed from the original and the perception that the Council was committing progressively more finance to the project and acting in haste.
- That city ward councillors had a considerable amount of concern about the potentially detrimental effect of the development on the existing City Centre.
- It was unfortunate that the conclusion of the 18 month period would coincide with Council elections, potentially leaving a new administration saddled with a project it did not support.
- It was suggested there would be pressure to ensure there were no void shops in the ESG, irrespective of however many shops were empty in the existing Centre and which should be given precedence.

Mr Bretherton replied that the master plan provided for approximately 35 new shops for the whole ESG development. The 18 month provision in the Development Agreement recognised the need to review the position as did the phased approach. A single development without phasing was too large in his professional opinion.

- It was questioned whether account had been taken of the fundamental change in the retail environment precipitated by the credit crunch and suggested that the project had been overtaken by events. There should therefore be a review of the policy, however politically unpalatable this might be given the commitment given to it to date, and a new approach considered, focusing on developing the existing City Centre using the capital receipt from the disposal of the Cattle market site.

The Cabinet Member reiterated that the regeneration of the Centre had to involve both enhancing the existing Centre and providing new development. There was insufficient space in the City Centre for stores needing a large footprint.

- Mr Bretherton stated that it was the ESG Board's intention to support the Football Ground remaining in its current location.

- In relation to the pace of Mr Hamilton-Baillie's work it was noted that the nature of the work meant it took time to produce. It was reiterated that consultation would take place on the content.
- A question was asked about Compulsory Purchase Orders and the relocation of existing businesses on the ESG. It was reported that there were 16 businesses on the Cattle Market site, one of which had so far relocated.
- In response to confirmation that the food hall proposed in the development on the Cattle Market site was a supermarket, reference was made to Hansard's record of the debate in the House of Lords on 14 May 2003 on the Hereford Markets Bill. It was said it was clear from that debate that the intention had been that there should not be a supermarket on that site. The Head of Legal Services replied that the Act itself was brief and dealt solely with the translocation of the Cattle Market

(The Committee adjourned between 12:25 and 12:30.)

The Chairman then invited comments from Members of the public present.

Mr Roy England, head lessee of Maylords Orchard Shopping Centre, Hereford, read a detailed statement to the Committee. The following is a summary of his principal comments:

- That it appeared that the Council lacked the appropriate level of professional input and opinion, in particular, the evidence of an independent external retail expert.
- He had opposed the ESG plans in 2007 because the issue of integrating the new development with the existing City Centre was not addressed. There was no linkage between the two areas, which were some 500 yards apart. People from outside the City would simply drive to the new development, park, shop and leave, without visiting the existing Centre.
- That part of the ESG originally identified as the civic quarter would have formed a better retail site as it would have facilitated a circular shopping route involving the existing centre and the new development.
- The ESG Master Plan had been developed prior to the credit crunch. He questioned whether the case for including a retail quarter remained valid. An up to date professional assessment was required. He noted that there were currently 50 empty shops in the City Centre and queried whether new owners could be found.
- Spending had been funded by credit. There was a need to adjust to the change in spending patterns that would prevail in future.
- There were a number of examples across the Country of retail closures including large chains.
- The poorer the integration of the new development with the existing centre, the greater the detrimental impact would be. There were many examples of Town Centres that were suffering: Northampton, Coventry, Gloucester, Tamworth, Wrexham, and Kidderminster.
- The Council was ignoring public opinion.
- There was a lack of detail about the funding and viability of the Scheme. The Council needed to take a step back and look at recent retail development schemes which had failed. He cited Wakefield as an example. A professional and pragmatic approach was required.

- The funding details, options, and penalties the Council might face should be published.
- That he did not consider the role of Pendower had been sufficiently answered.
- He asked why the Chairman of the ESG Board had resigned.
- The new intention to phase the development meant the scheme would lack impact.

In the following discussion the following principal points were made

- The Director of Regeneration commented that the Council had called on independent professional expertise. Advice had been sought to inform the UDP. A report from Drivers Jonas had been received in the last six months to inform the LDF process. He added that the UDP had redrawn the City Centre boundary and the ESG development now lay within the City Centre. The UDP, the Local Development Framework and regional spatial strategy and regional and sub-regional work also informed the Council's view.
- Mr Bretherton added that the ESG Board had separately commissioned a report on the retail position from the firm M Evans. The Board needed to satisfy itself as to the position and it was recognised that further work would need to be done.
- Mr England asked that the expert advice provided to the Council should be made public to provide an opportunity for people to assess it.
- The Director of Regeneration undertook to investigate what information could be made public.
- The extent of the recession meant people in Herefordshire, where incomes were low, would not have money to spend for some considerable time and the Scheme should be postponed.
- Mr Bretherton clarified that the proposal meant that the pre-conditions would have to be met within 6 years. He expected some development to take place, subject to planning permission by the end of 2011. He added that the application for planning permission would require a retail impact assessment to be carried out. There would be a lot of checks and balances and many opportunities to challenge the proposals.

Mr B Clay a City resident then made a statement to the Committee. The following is a summary of his principal comments:

- He praised the Councillors who had called in the Cabinet decision. He said that they represented the overwhelming view of the people of Hereford.
- It had been argued that the ESG Scheme would benefit the existing City Centre. This meant that Mr England's concerns about the scheme, from which he should presumably expect to benefit, deserved consideration.
- He deplored the fact that no independent witnesses, specialists in retail and planning, were appearing before the Committee.
- The public concern was that the Council had a poor deal and was seeking to rush into an agreement before the terms got worse.
- He also commented on the issue of independence and the vested interest he considered Cabinet and the ESG Board had in pursuing the scheme.

- He expressed concern about the finances of the Scheme noting that funding was now being sought from the Homes and Communities Agency. He was concerned that there was no clear statement of the total cost of the various elements of the project, both capital and revenue and the Council's total debt.
- He questioned whether the timetable for the development was realistic.
- The Council was wrong to highlight the proposal for a multi-screen cinema as part of the development in its press releases. If there was a market a developer would already have found a site.
- The provision of social housing in the development was insufficient and should be reconsidered.
- He agreed with the Cabinet Member that doing nothing was not an option. However, there was a clear alternative to retail development on the ESG. There should be an independent review of the way forward with proper scrutiny allowing Mr England and others a more structured input.

Peter Baines, a Herefordshire Resident, in summary, questioned the Cabinet Member's view that retail spend was being lost to other areas making the ESG development necessary. He referred to work by Hereford City Council and the former Hereford and Worcester County Council that had discounted the view that a major store would come to Hereford and said that that analysis had proved correct.

The Cabinet Member cited work by Drivers Jonas and CACI as evidence that the City was losing retail spend to other areas. The acid test was whether the private sector would invest in the ESG project and there was every indication that they would.

Kirsty Chadd, Managing Director of the former Chadd's Department store in the City said, in summary, that the large brands tended to move into an area as a group. It had proved difficult to attract big brands to the City in the past, and it was hard to see how they would be attracted in the future unless there was a significant new retail development. She added that independent traders in the City would struggle unless they worked together to market and promote their services and that without the large brands in the City centre their task was impossible.

A Member sought clarification on the financial contribution of AWM, given that Regional Development Agencies would be abolished before any final decision on whether or not to proceed with the ESG project was taken. It was essential that there was a guarantee that that element of the funding package, including any increase in the costs of that element, was met by Central Government. There were otherwise potentially serious implications for Herefordshire. A decision on whether or not to proceed should not be delegated to an officer. Councillors needed to have knowledge of the financial implications before a final decision was taken on whether or not to proceed.

The Cabinet Member said there was no certainty about the future of AWM. However, if that body ceased to exist there would have to be another body fulfilling that role. Once projects had been committed they would continue. Under the proposed Development Agreement the Council would have 18 months to assess the position.

It was agreed that Mr Bretherton's presentation would be sent to all Councillors.

The Director of Regeneration agreed to publish the professional opinion obtained by the Council on the retail assessment, if that were possible, or, if it were not, to put into the public domain what information could be made public on the issue.

RESOLVED: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting at this point during consideration of Appendices 3 and 4 to the report on the grounds that they disclosed information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Summary of Proceedings during which the public and press were excluded

The Committee considered a synopsis of the retail quarter development and a financial model of the retail quarter development and questioned aspects of both documents.

(The meeting was opened to the press and public again at 2.50 pm)

The following motion was moved:

We ask the Cabinet to reconsider its decision to start final negotiations on a development agreement with Stanhope plc, since there had been insufficient information and explanation in relation to the new circumstances and changes to the ESG Masterplan that have arisen since the credit crunch and in particular publicly published independent expert retail analysis of the current situation in Hereford and how that affects the ESG retail quarter.

We recommend the Cabinet to require a review of the project, involving a sufficient measure of independent assessment and consultation to re-assure the widespread and increasing concerns expressed by other Hereford City centre stakeholders and the wider public.

This was put to the vote and lost.

The following motion was then moved:

The Committee endorses and supports Cabinet decision no 2009. Cab. 036;

The Committee invites Cabinet to consider periodic update briefings for all Members on the project's programme and progress;

The Committee seeks Cabinet's assurance that Members will be given the opportunity to question and be satisfied as to the financial and operational viability of the project before irrevocable decisions were taken.

Some Members reiterated their wish for independent external retail advice to be secured and published.

A Member expressed the hope that the executive took independent advice on the Agreement as a whole and made this available to the Council as a whole before a final decision was taken on whether or not to proceed with the project.

Mr Bretherton, whilst acknowledging concerns about the difficulty of securing truly independent advice, stated that advice had been sought from two experts: Drivers Jonas and CACI and an overall view then agreed between them, reconciling their two separate perspectives. He added that he would be repeating this exercise. He would also be commissioning a report to the ESG Board on the Agreement as a whole before a final decision was taken on whether or not to proceed with the project.

The following amendment was moved:

That Cabinet look at how they might publish independent external retail analysis of the project as soon as possible.

The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

The motion was then put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

That (a) Cabinet decision no 2009. Cab. 036 be endorsed and supported;

(b) Cabinet be invited to consider periodic update briefings for all Members on the project's programme and progress; and

(c) Cabinet's assurance be sought that Members will be given the opportunity to question and be satisfied as to the financial and operational viability of the project before irrevocable decisions were taken.

The meeting ended at 3.05 pm

CHAIRMAN

MEETING:	COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	5 OCTOBER 2009
TITLE OF REPORT:	REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2009/10
PORTFOLIO AREA:	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To advise members of the committee of the financial position for Community Services revenue budgets for the period to 31st July 2009. The report lists the variations against budget at this stage in the year and a projected outturn for the year.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision

Recommendations

THAT: the report be noted

Reasons for Recommendations

- 1 To enable Scrutiny Committee to carry out its function in relation to the Community Services revenue budget for 2009/10.

Key Considerations

- 2 A detailed Budget Monitoring Report to 31st July 2009 is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.
- 3 The total Community Services budget has decreased from £10,184,000 as reported at the last meeting to £9,680,000. This net reduction of £504,000 relates to:
 - i) An additional income budget of £375,000 has been added to Economic Development for the purpose of transferring to reserves additional external funding income received, pending the proposed Blackfriars Street Higher Education Learning Hub;
 - ii) Community Regeneration also has a budget reduction of £2,000 due to a transfer to other areas within the Regeneration directorate to support Performance improvement savings required this year;
 - iii) Parks & Countryside and Public Rights of Way budgets have been reduced by £244,000 in relation to the transfer of staff on 1st September 2009 to Amey Wye Valley

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Cathy Stokes, Principal Accountant (Environment & Regeneration) or Shirley Coultas, Community Services Accountant (Tel: 01432 261849)

Limited, following the service delivery review. This budget has transferred to the Management Services budget along with Highways staff budgets and will be managed within the Environment & Culture Directorate as a whole in order to track the £1million savings.

- iv) An addition of £117,000 in relation to Community Safety which is included in the Community Services Portfolio.

4 The summary position is set out in the table below.

2009/10	Annual Budget	Projected Outturn	Over/-Under spend
<u>Service Area</u>	£000	£000	£000
Cultural Services	3,369	3,463	94
HALO & Leisure Centres	1,884	1,884	0
Parks, Countryside & Public Rights of Way	2,120	2,026	-94
Head of Culture & Leisure	99	99	0
Community Safety	117	117	0
Social & Economic Regeneration	1,936	2,006	70
Head of Economic & Community Regeneration	155	155	0
Community Services Total	9,680	9,750	70

Cultural Services

- 5 Savings of £26,000 are expected on employee costs for Sports Development. This relates to the Exercise Referral development Officer post.
- 6 The Libraries budget is expected to overspend by £120,000. This mainly relates to employee costs and Broad Street Library building running costs and the Self-service booking system ICT Project costs
- 7 There is also a risk that there will be further overspend on Bromyard Library and Heritage Centre in relation to previous year premises costs payable to HALO which have recently come to light. This is currently being discussed with HALO in conjunction with future management fees.

Parks, Countryside & Public Rights of Way

- 8 There is an expected underspend of £15,000 on Parks and Countryside. This is mainly due to an underspend on grounds maintenance and out of scope work. However, this is reduced by the expected expenditure on dealing with significant tree issues in the County.
- 9 There is a further £57,000 underspend on Parks & Countryside and £22,000 on Public Rights of Way due to the recruitment freeze pending the service delivery review.

Tourism

- 10 Tourism is currently expected to overspend by £70,000. This is following the disaggregation from Cultural services and due to staffing levels and premises costs.

Recovery Plans

- 11 Work is currently being carried out to address the budget pressures within Libraries and progress will be reported to the next Scrutiny Committee. However this pressure is currently expected to be managed within the Environment & Culture Directorate budget for 2009/10 due to further savings in Cultural Services staffing and other areas outside of the Community Services Portfolio.
- 12 To address the overspend in Tourism the service is currently being restructured and any residual overspend this year will also be mitigated by savings to be made from within the Regeneration directorate.

Financial Implications

- 13 These are contained in the body of the report. The projected outturn is based upon results to the end of July 2009.

Legal Implications

- 14 None

Risk Management

- 15 The risks are set out in the body of the report, in terms of the potential overspend. The report notes the actions planned to address this potential overspend.

Consultees

- 16 Not applicable

Appendices

- 17 Appendix 1 – Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for 2009/10 Period to 31st July 2009.

**REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2009/10
PERIOD TO 31ST JULY 2009**

	Annual Budget £000	Predicted Outturn £000	Predicted Over/-under spend for Year £000	Actual to 31.07.09 £000	Budget to 31.07.09 £000	Variance Over/ -under spend to 31.07.09 £000
Arts	592	592	0	314	319	-5
Cultural Services Staff	179	179	0	50	55	-5
Heritage	549	549	0	218	201	17
Sports Development	197	171	-26	48	67	-19
Library	1,852	1,972	120	734	706	28
Total for Cultural Services	3,369	3,463	94	1,364	1,348	16
Leisure Centres	22	22	0	10	10	0
HALO	1,862	1,862	0	515	615	-100
Total for HALO & Leisure Centres	1,884	1,884	0	525	625	-100
Parks & Countryside	1,673	1,601	-72	425	428	-3
Public Rights of Way (PROW)	447	425	-22	211	211	0
Total for Parks Countryside & PROW	2,120	2,026	-94	636	639	-3
Head of Culture and Leisure	99	99	0	57	32	25
TOTAL CULTURE AND LEISURE	7,472	7,472	0	2,582	2,644	-62
TOTAL COMMUNITY SAFETY	117	117	0	78	39	39
Economic Development	394	394	0	-39	-48	9
Community Regeneration	767	767	0	-54	308	-362
Regeneration Programmes	290	290	0	77	96	-19
Tourism	485	555	70	234	201	33
Total for Social & Economic Regeneration	1,936	2,006	70	218	557	-339
Head of Economic and community regeneration	155	155	0	49	52	-3
TOTAL COMMUNITY REGENERATION	2,091	2,161	70	267	609	-342
COMMUNITY SERVICES TOTAL	9,680	9,750	70	2,927	3,292	-365



MEETING:	COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	5TH OCTOBER 2009
TITLE OF REPORT:	ENVIRONMENT & CULTURE AND REGENERATION DIRECTORATES: PERFORMANCE FOR THE THREE-MONTH PERIOD TO JUNE 2009
REPORT BY:	IMPROVEMENT MANAGER

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To update Members on the progress towards achievement of targets for 2009-10 that are relevant to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee and contained within the Environment & Culture and Regeneration Directorates' Plans. This report has the same format as that for last year, but has adopted the performance rating system being used in the new integrated corporate performance report for Cabinet; an explanation of the ratings is shown at **Appendix A**.

Recommendation

THAT, subject to any comments which Members may wish to make, the report be noted.

Introduction and Background

2. The Council's Corporate Plan sets out its objectives, priorities, targets and key actions for each of the three years 2008-11. It includes all the indicators and targets in the new Local Area Agreement (LAA), as well as those in the Herefordshire Community Strategy (HCS). Each Directorate's plan sets out the contribution, in terms of objectives, priorities, targets and key actions, it will make to achieving the objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan as well as to the achievement of other Directorate priorities. Progress needs to be assessed regularly, together with the risks to achievement and the action being taken to address these and improve performance.

Key Considerations

Progress against the Council's Corporate Plan

3. Following is an analysis of performance against target in relation to the Corporate Plan and Directorate plans:

	No. of indicators	R	A	B	G
Corporate Plan	9	1	3	5	0
Local Area Agreement	13	1	3	9	0
Herefordshire Community Strategy	10	1	5	4	0
All National Indicators (NIs)	42	3	16	22	1
All reported indicators	43	3	17	22	1

Direction of travel

4. Of the 43 indicators only 12 have data reported for the first quarter of 2009-10. There is insufficient comparative data available at present for all of those to show any meaningful direction of travel for the first quarter of 2009-10 compared with the same quarter for 2008-09. It is hoped that this position will have improved for the next meeting of this Committee.

Overall performance

5. Last year much of the activity reported focused on establishing baselines for the new National Indicators. Although some baseline data is still awaited from Government departments most baselines are in place and, in the vast majority of cases, targets have been set for 2009-10. Where target-setting is reliant on information from a partner indicators have been rated Amber if activity has been reported.

Details of performance for the period are set out in **Appendix B**.

Highlights

- Only 1 LAA indicator, people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents (NI 47), is judged Red; performance to date is worse than last year and it is anticipated that this year's target will not be met. Last year's performance was exceptionally low. Further detailed analysis of accidents this year is being undertaken. Although this year's target may not be met it is anticipated that the LAA target, which will be measured at the end of 2010, can still be achieved.

- More than half the indicators have been judged Blue or Green (on or exceeding target); 3 on the basis of data and activity and the remainder on the basis of activity only.
- Offenders under probation supervision living in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence (NI 143) is rated Green - current performance at 81% is in excess of the target of 70%; however, that target is significantly lower than the outturn of 78% achieved in 2008-09.
- Of the 16 indicators judged Amber, 6 crime-related indicators have had no target set by West Mercia Constabulary (WMC) and 6 are derived from the biennial Place Survey which will next be conducted in 2010 and no target has yet been set for 2010-11.
- Of the 3 indicators judged Red, 2, people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents, (NI 47) and offenders under probation supervision in employment at the end of their order or licence, (NI 144) are not achieving their target and 1 gun crime rate, (NI 29) has no target (to be set by WMC) nor any reported activity.

Appendices

- 10 Appendix A.: Key to performance reports
 Appendix B: Details of performance for the period 1st April – 30th June 2009.

Background Papers

- None identified.

KEY TO PERFORMANCE REPORTS

PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS AND ACTION PLANS	
4	Outturn is 10% or more above target
3	Outturn is on or above target by up to 10% or , where up to date performance data against target is not available for good reason, the action plan shows satisfactory progress
2	Outturn is below target, but within 5% or where up to date performance data against target is not available for good reason, the action plan shows inadequate progress
1	Outturn is 5% or more below target or no target has been set without good reason or there is no action plan
<p>N.B. Where data is available this determines the judgment made for each indicator. Action plans are used to judge performance only as a default where data is unavailable.</p>	
DIRECTION OF TRAVEL	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance is better than the same period last year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance is the same as for this period last year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance is behind the same period last year

NIS	Reference		Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn July	Comment/progress	RABG rating July	Reason for judgements
	LAA	HCS								
Economic Development and Enterprise										
151			Overall employment rate These are National Statistics collected via ONS' Annual Population Survey and are available with an 8 month time lag.	Regeneration	77.7% (Oct '07 to Sept '08)	70%	Next update due October 2009	Developing a Business Growth Fund to encourage business development and employment. Working with Chamber of Commerce and FSB on implementation of this and hope to open grant by next quarter. Capital infrastructure schemes progressing - ESG, Rotherwas Futures, Model Farm. All are being developed in partnership with AWM and will provide the necessary infrastructure to allow company growth and investment on the back of the downturn. See commentary for N152/153 below also.	B	Activity reported that should impact on target
152	Yes		Working age people on out of work benefits	Regeneration	8.80%	8.60%	Outturn available November	ESF funded project 'Engage' focused at getting long term unemployed from priority wards into employment - now operational. Future Jobs Fund application submitted. Project also aimed at getting workless young individuals back into work. Application for ABG funding to encourage individuals access support and advice.	B	Activity reported that should impact on target
153			Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods Data is reported quarterly by Jobcentre Plus with a 6 month timelag	Regeneration	41.80%	41.80%			B	Activity reported that should impact on target
161		Yes	Learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy	Regeneration	250 (Academic year 2007/08)	250 (Academic year 2008/09)		Both Train to Gain and Skills for Life Courses are demand led as all individuals are entitled to the courses however, currently the Train to Gain budget is spent.	A	Activity currently ceased
162		Yes	Learners achieving an Entry Level 3 qualification in numeracy	Regeneration	12 (Academic Year 2007/08)	12 (Academic Year 2008/09)			A	Activity currently ceased
163	Yes		Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher The data for this indicator will be available as calendar year data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Population Survey (APS). The results of which will be available the following August.	Regeneration	Data should be available end July 2009	74.90%		Funding being sought through the ABG to accommodate training voucher scheme and NEET provision. Commission research work for Neighbourhood Employment Skills Plan in order to identify specific needs of target areas and action plan to address needs. There is an annual household survey which is used to establish the achievements of the individuals in progress towards the PL. This is reported to the Learning and Skills Council but is not yet available. Activity reported from LSC that influences this indicator showing improvements against target.	B	Activity reported that should impact on target

NIS	Reference			Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn July	Comment/progress	RABG rating July	Reason for judgements
	LAA	HCS	CP								
164		Yes		Working age population qualified to at least Level 3 or higher These are National Statistics collected via ONS' Annual Population Survey and are available with an 8 month time lag.	Regeneration	Data should be available end July 2009	46.10%		Activity reported from LSC that influences this indicator showing improvement.	B	Activity reported that should impact on target
165		Yes		Working age population qualified to at least Level 4 or higher These are National Statistics collected via ONS' Annual Population Survey and are available with an 8 month time lag.	Regeneration	Data should be available end July 2009	27.80%		The Higher Education for Herefordshire Management Group have developed proposals for a university gateway (hib) and spoke provision to enable improved access to higher education in the county. A 'Statement of Intent' to secure HEFCE funding to enable this project was submitted on 30th June. The Lifelong Learning Network for Herefordshire and Worcestershire has launched a web site to assist students with progression routes	B	Activity reported that should impact on target
166		Yes		Average earnings of employees in the area	Regeneration	£389.40 (+/- £49.61)	£390		Progression on the ESG scheme - Planning Permission for replacement Livestock market obtained. - Cabinet Approval for Retail Quarter development agreement obtained. Promotion of Rotherwas as key business location - Discussions with Environment Agency re flooding have opened up South Magazine site and indicated ways forward for other elements. - Planning Application for Norther Magazine access arrangement submitted. Establish Live/Work units on Model Farm - Ross-on-Wye - Masterplan for site to be completed in July. - Market analysis survey to be completed in July 09. - Tendering process for infrastructure design and servicing to be completed in July. Rural Enterprise Grants - AWM offer letter signed and returned. - 26 projects supported to date. - 370 stage one application forms sent out.	B	Activity reported that should impact on target

NIS	Reference			Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn July	Comment/progress	RABG rating July	Reason for judgements
	LAA	HCS	CP								
171	Yes	Yes	Yes	New business registration rate per 100,000 resident population aged 16+	Regeneration	59.2	41.80		<p>Creation of business grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Received ABG approval for business growth fund and business development fund, working with Chamber and FSB on implementation of scheme. - Received ABG approval for training voucher scheme Economic Development - Economic Development Partnership Group Conversion of existing businesses to VAT and PAYE registration. - Initial meeting with HMRC to investigate possibility of joint roadshows and promotional events, favourable response received. - Secured funding to run roadshows and publicise benefits of VAT and PAYE registration. <p>See commentary for NI171.</p> <p>Support for businesses within ABG "Fighting the Downturn" submission, specifically Business Fund. Investigating range of business support measures to be undertaken within future ABG and LPSA submission.</p> <p>New Rural enterprise Grant supports micro enterprises and farming households.</p> <p>Capital schemes still progressing - ESG, Rotherwas Futures, Model Farm.</p> <p>Schemes being developed to address "Worklessness" schemes funded by EU sources.</p> <p>DARE project aimed at those people in hard to reach groups from employment perspective now been pulled by AWM for funding.</p>	B	Activity showing progress towards target
172			Yes	% of small businesses in an area showing employment growth	Regeneration	14.2% (2007)	14.20%			B	Activity reported that should impact on target
173				People falling out of work and on to incapacity benefits	Regeneration	0.62 (2008)	0.62			B	Activity reported that should impact on target
174				Skills gaps in the current workforce reported by employers This data is collected by the LSC from a biennial survey. The next survey is due in 2009.	Regeneration	6% for Hereford & Worcester (LSC Area) (2007)	6% for Hereford & Worcester (LSC Area)		Working with the 6th Form College and Hereford Group training to identify and address skills gap for the future.	B	Activity reported that should impact on target

NIS	Reference			Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn		Comment/progress	RABG rating	Reason for judgements
	LAA	HCS	CP					July	July			
15				Number of serious violent crimes/1,000 population	Environment & Culture	0.97	No local target set by WMC	0.16		Performance for Quarter 1 number = 28. There was a change in the Home Office Counting Rules in 2008/9 therefore there is no benchmark to compare the 2008/9 figure to, but we will be looking to improve upon 2008/9 offence levels in 2009/10. Offences in this category are the most serious and would either lead to the appointment of an SIO, or review by an SIO to ensure all lines of enquiry were being followed. Serious Violent Crimes are also subject to daily and weekly monitoring at Command Team level, and performance is also reviewed at the monthly divisional Leadership & Delivery meeting.	A	Activity and data reported, but no target set by WMC
16				Number of serious acquisitive crimes/1,000 population	Environment & Culture	6.95	No local target set by WMC	1.73		Performance for Quarter 1 number = 308. Offences in this category are subject to daily, weekly and monthly monitoring and regular analysis to pick up on any trends and patterns and action through the Tasking process as appropriate.	A	Activity and data reported, but no target set by WMC
17		Yes	Yes	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour Data is collected through the Place survey biennially.	Environment & Culture	12%	Next survey to be conducted 2010			Discussions with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) have occurred and data sharing is now underway. Intermediate action plan now in place with the Children's Trust and membership of sub-groups strengthened. Links between the Community Protection Team and HCSDP still to take place.	A	Activity reported, but target yet to be set for 2010-11
18				Adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision	Environment & Culture					Targeted programme to engage PPO's in reducing offending. Data not collected/measured locally, West Mercia area only. West Mercia data to be provided by WM Probation HQ as and when national figures become available.	A	Activity reported, but data awaited and target yet to be set
20				Assault with injury crime rate	Environment & Culture	5.39	No local target set by WMC	1.36		Performance for Quarter 1 number = 243. NI20 is also a proxy for alcohol fuelled violence. Note: the Home Office guidance for 2008/9 was subtly different to that for 2007/8 – the impact of which was to reduce the number of offences by 4 - 16%. As 2007/8 was the baseline for a number of Partnerships who have this as a priority National Indicator some govt offices are trying to renegotiate the baseline and hence target.	A	Data reported, but no target set by WMC
21	Yes		Yes	Dealing with local concerns about antisocial behaviour and crime by the local council and police Data is collected through the Place survey biennially. Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area	Environment & Culture	25.40%	30.4% (2010)			Discussions with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) have occurred and data sharing is now underway. Intermediate action plan now in place with the Children's Trust and membership of sub-groups strengthened. Links between the Community Protection Team and HCSDP still to take place.	B	Activity reported that should impact on target
22					Environment & Culture	36%	Next survey to be conducted 2010			Discussions with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) have occurred and data sharing is now underway. Intermediate action plan now in place with the Children's Trust and membership of sub-groups strengthened. Links between the Community Protection Team and HCSDP still to take place.	A	Activity reported, but target yet to be set for 2010-11

NIS	Reference		Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn July	Comment/progress	RABG rating July	Reason for judgements
	LAA	HCS								
24			Satisfaction with the way the police and local council dealt with antisocial behaviour	Environment & Culture	21%	Next survey to be conducted 2010		Discussions with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) have occurred and data sharing is now underway. Intermediate action plan now in place with the Children's Trust and membership of sub-groups strengthened. Links between the Community Protection Team and HCSDP still to take place.	A	Activity reported, but target yet to be set for 2010-11
27			Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police Data is collected through the Place survey biennially.	Environment & Culture	24%	Next survey to be conducted 2010		Discussions with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) have occurred and data sharing is now underway. Intermediate action plan now in place with the Children's Trust and membership of sub-groups strengthened. Links between the Community Protection Team and HCSDP still to take place.	A	Activity reported, but target yet to be set for 2010-11
28			Knife crime rate	Environment & Culture	0.14	No local target set by WMC	0.03	Outturn for Qtr 1 number = 5. In August 2008 the Division introduced a new protocol to deal with knife crime, not in response to an identified trend, but as a pre-emptive measure to counter a potential rise in knife related incidents. A specific element of this, Operation Deter, identified a number of individuals that intelligence indicated were carrying knives. Structured interventions, ahead of any offending, took place with these individuals. All incidents involving knives are reviewed through the daily tasking process to ensure that positive action is taken against any named offender.	A	Activity and data reported, but no target set by WMC
29			Gun crime rate	Environment & Culture	0.05	No local target set by WMC	0.07	Outturn for Qtr 1 number = 13	R	Data available, but no target set by WMC and no activity reported
30	Yes		Re-offending rate of prolific and priority offenders (PPO)	Environment & Culture		21%		Target has just been confirmed by Home Office. Evaluation report prepared for the PPO Management Group in respect of the potential contribution of the alcohol arrest referral scheme. PPO Scheme being delivered. Drug Conditional Cautioning developed and in place. Benchmarking to take place between September and December.	B	Activity reported that should impact on target
32			Repeat incidents of domestic violence	Environment & Culture		New indicator, target to be set		Indicator still under development. HCSDP are currently monitoring repeat victims of DV which has been agreed locally with WMC. Supported through Women's Aid and Domestic Abuse Forum	B	Activity reported against a new indicator, which is being monitored

NIS	Reference		Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn July	Comment/progress	RABG rating July	Reason for judgements
	LAA	HCS								
33			Arson incidents - the number of primary fires (major fires involving property, casualties or involving 5 or more fire appliances) per 10,000 population; and - the number of secondary fires (that did not involve property, casualties or rescue, attended by 4 or fewer fire appliances) per 10,000 population.	Environment & Culture	a) 2.9 b) 7.6	a) 4.0 b) 9.8	a) 0.6 b) 2.2	HWFRS has developed links with West Mercia Constabulary's Arson Task Force and appointed an Arson Reduction Manager to work with the police. HWFRS will develop an arson reduction policy to achieve a reduction in the number of deliberate fires and a greater understanding of how to prevent deliberate fires within the community.	B	Performance on target and activity reported
34			Domestic violence – murder	Environment & Culture	0	No local target set by WMC	0	Not a priority area for WMC - data monitored	B	Although no target, best performance achievable
39	Yes (Local)		Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates per 100,000	Environment & Culture	1249	1237	335.7 (cumulative)	Action plan on target	A	Performance below target and worse than for the same period last year, but action plan being delivered
40	Yes		Drug users in effective treatment	Environment & Culture		541		Await report confirming outturn for 2008/09. Needle exchange audit carried out in May. Pharmacy Needle Exchange Pilot Scheme continues in Herefordshire. This provides an additional means to engage problematic drug users. Recent integration of Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) team from Probation to the Criminal Justice Integrated Service within Drug and Alcohol Services Hereford (DASH).	B	Action plan being delivered
41			Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem Data is collected through the Place survey biennially.	Environment & Culture	22%	Next survey to be conducted 2010		Place Survey data being analysed in detail. Discussions with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) have occurred and data sharing is now underway. Intermediate action plan now in place with the Children's Trust and membership of sub-groups strengthened. Links between the Community Protection Team and HCSDP still to take place.	A	Activity reported, but target yet to be set for 2010-11
42			Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem Data is collected through the Place survey biennially.	Environment & Culture	25%	Next survey to be conducted 2010		Place Survey data being analysed in detail. Discussions with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) have occurred and data sharing is now underway. Intermediate action plan now in place with the Children's Trust and membership of sub-groups strengthened. Links between the Community Protection Team and HCSDP still to take place.	A	Activity reported, but target yet to be set for 2010-11

NIS	Reference		Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn July	Comment/progress	RABG rating July	Reason for judgements
	LAA	HCS								
47	Yes	Yes	Yes	Environment & Culture	115 (3 year average)	114 (3 year average)	53 (January to May)	Compared with 30 for the same period last year. The Planning and Transportation's Road Safety and Accident Investigation and Prevention teams lead on a wide range of education, training and publicity and engineering measures to address road traffic accidents. More detailed commentary on this activity is set out in the Local Transport Plan Road Safety Strategy and is reported on in an annual progress report. Driver education programmes are being provided throughout the county to try and reduce the outturns.	R	Performance above target and worse than for the same period last year.
49			Number of primary fires and related fatalities and non-fatal casualties, excluding precautionary checks	Environment & Culture	a) 154.7 b) 0 c) 4.5	a) 179.10 b) 0 c) 5.18	a) 46.0 b) 1.1 c) 1.7	HWFRS's balanced programme of Prevention, Protection and Intervention initiatives have been developed to address the primary aim of improving community safety and reducing risk. The risk reduction strategies are based upon a process of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying those who are most 'at risk'; confirming the location of those people; identifying the risks to which they are exposed to; targeting most of HWFRS's efforts and resources at reducing those risks using a range of prevention, protection and intervention initiatives; whilst also sustaining a broad service provision in order to address matters relating to sparsity and equity of service 	A	On target, except for fatalities
143			Offenders under probation supervision living in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their order or licence	Environment & Culture	78%	70%	81%		G	Target exceeded
144			Offenders under probation supervision in employment at the end of their order or licence	Environment & Culture	54%	38%	9%		R	Performance well below target
Stronger Communities										

NIS	Reference		Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn July	Comment/progress	RABG rating July	Reason for judgements
	LAA	HCS								
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Regeneration	28.8%	32.3% (2010)		<p>The Community Led Planning Transition Group is in the process of submitting a number of funding bids to deliver the recommendations of the Review of Community led planning. This includes ABG funds for the key co-ordinating and commissioning post as well as LEADER funding for community support.</p> <p>£25k confirmed for purpose of CLP Commissioning Officer appointment from ABG</p> <p>Community Regeneration, HALC, Herefordshire Partnership and Community First continue to support start-ups and ongoing plans. Grants and project development advice available through Economic and Community Services to support the development of plans, together with resulting actions identified. Some resources outstanding for this.</p> <p>Agreement by Hampton Bishop PC to take part in the national pilot on participatory budgeting.</p> <p>HALC/HCVYS/HC working on a proposal to get young adults more involved in local democracy.</p> <p>Reaching Hearts in Herefordshire: a programme working with councillors, council officers and all local partners to understand how to best work together to improve the lives of people and communities.</p>	B	Planned activity progressing which should impact on the target
6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Regeneration	29%	32.5% (2010)		<p>The implementation plan for the Volunteering Code of Good Practice has now been finalised and a draft action plan drawn up.</p> <p>HVA and CVA Ledbury continue to receive strategic investment through SLA's to support volunteer centre activity.</p> <p>Herefordshire Volunteers of the Year awards held in June 2009, which raises the profile of volunteering.</p> <p>£6k secured for marketing campaigns although activity is not due to start in earnest til Nov 2009 (originally June/July 2009) to tie in with Compact Action Plan</p> <p>There is a risk that not all of actions will be achieved due to a shortfall in resources.</p>	A	Some planned activity progressing which should impact on the target, but risk identified and not yet mitigated.

NIS	Reference		Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn July	Comment/progress	RABG rating July	Reason for judgements
	LAA	HCS								
7			Environment for a thriving third sector National survey commissioned by the Office of the Third Sector	Regeneration	14.9%	19% (2010-11)		The Compact code of practice on funding and procurement for health and social care is being reviewed with the aim of refreshing the document and rolling it out across the whole of the third sector and LSP partners. The consultation on the 'Informing, consulting and partnership working' code has finished with the final document is being revised before formal signoff by the LSP. Strategic investments to the third sector continue to be made through SLA's against the councils strategic framework for support to the voluntary and community sector. Work on the countywide online database of community halls in Herefordshire is nearly complete. A review of third sector engagement in the new Herefordshire Partnership governance arrangements is currently underway.	B	Planned activity progressing which should impact on the target
9	Yes		Use of public libraries	Environment & Culture	47.9%	51%		Detailed analysis of library service customers undertaken. Mobile library review underway; consultation to be completed by September. Project plan developed and negotiation underway for a licence to open a volunteer run community library in Peterchurch. Seeking alternative funding (not funded through the ABG) to deliver ICT training packages to targeted groups. Summer Reading Challenge underway; early analysis suggests a greater take up compared to last year.	B	Action plan being delivered
10			Visits to museums and galleries	Environment & Culture	48.0%	51.3%		Leadbury Heritage Centre re-opened. Hereford Museum and Art Gallery - Tooth and Claw exhibition attracted 5,439 visitors and was particularly popular with children. The Hereford Photographic exhibition of works by John Bulmer attracted 2,956 visitors. At the Museum Resource Centre, open days have been run and the events starting to attract a regular clientele. Usages for tours, lectures and seminars exceeds the targets set in the original Audience Development Plan. Family Friendly mystery shopper visits took place in May at all sites except Ledbury Heritage Centre and once feedback has been received actions will be instigated to work to improve highlighted issues	B	Action plan being delivered
11	Yes		Engagement in the arts	Environment & Culture	46.4%	49.5%		Take pART launched. Publicity campaign underway. Events publicised through Broadsheep. Survey in place. Review of Take pART to take place between September and October before the launch of phase 2.	B	Action plan being delivered

Reference			Indicator	Lead Directorate	2008-09 Outturn	2009-10 Target	Latest Outturn		Comment/progress	RABG rating	Reason for judgements
NIS	LAA	HCS					CP	July			
	Yes		Local – % of the adult population who find access to the following services difficult: Local shop Advice provision Public transport facility Cultural / recreational facility	Regeneration	12% 18% 21% 21%	11% 16% 21% 19%		July	ABG funding was not secured for the Rural Services officer, which will limit the level of resources that can be put into this area. There are four multi-use centres in development in Ledbury, Leintwardine, Leominster and Peterchurch. Peterchurch, which has secured full funding, is an example of joint provision - Early Years will provide an outreach children's centre; library service also to be provided.	A	Some planned activity progressing which should impact on the target, but risk identified and not yet mitigated.

MEETING:	COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	5TH OCTOBER 2009
TITLE OF REPORT:	FIGHTING THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN
PORTFOLIO AREA:	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To report on activity being undertaken to address the effects of the downturn in the economy.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation

THAT the Committee note the report.

Key Points Summary

- The County has been affected by the economic downturn with an increase in unemployment and businesses ceasing to trade.
- Whilst the Council's Economic and Community Services are leading in the intervention to address the effects of the downturn, a Herefordshire Partnership and cross organisational approach is being taken in recognition that the downturn impacts on people's lives in many different ways.
- The effects of the downturn are being addressed with short term and long term measures, and that the County has to continue to look forward to prepare for recovery.
- Herefordshire has been helped through the downturn by its diverse business base without the reliance's on one or two major employers and small and home based businesses have shown strong resilience.
- Recent media reports and local intelligence suggest the first signs of growth, though the expectation is that growth will be slow.

Alternative Options

- 1 No alternative option.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 To inform Members of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee of the activity to address the downturn in the economy.

Introduction and Background

- 3 The downturn in the economy has affected the County. Claimant count (Jobseekers Allowance) has raised 100% between July 2008 and July 2009 (1,505 to 3,009). The County has seen a number of business closures. More people are presenting as homeless and there is an increase in people experiencing dept.
- 4 A number of intervention activities have taken place. These have been schemes which specifically support business and employment creating opportunities. A “Fighting the Downturn Action Plan” has been produced by the Economic and Community Services working with the Economic Development Partnership Group. This action plan has been adopted by the Herefordshire Partnership Board and Area Based Grant has been allocated to deliver the action plan.

Key Considerations

- 5 The following section gives a brief outline of new activity to address the effects of the downturn:
- 6 Business Booster Grant – a new programme offering small to medium size businesses grants of between £500 and £5000 to provide 50% of match funding for new schemes to diversify product base to enter new markets.
- 7 Training Voucher – a new fund offering grants of up to £750 for businesses to upskill their workforce to prepare for future markets – to contribute 25% match funding.
- 8 Roadshows and support programme – eight events in different parts of the County to address business queries and concerns. To involve a number of organisations including HM Revenue & Customs, Business Link, Hereford & Worcester Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and the Rural Hub – starting in November.
- 9 Tourism – additional support to capitalise on a home market. Including creating a new Fishing and Angling package.
- 10 Future Jobs Fund and Connections to Opportunities – two programmes that aim to address unemployment levels. Including addressing barriers to employment and long term unemployment. Both programmes externally funded.
- 11 Advice Support – additional support to Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to meet the demands of employment and debt enquiries.
- 12 Information – dedicated website created (www/Herefordshire.gov.uk/downturn) to give advice to businesses and individuals – including interactive guidance on grants available. Information leaflet also produced and widely distributed, and e-newsletter for businesses listing the latest opportunities.
- 13 Artwork in shop windows – to address unsightliness of empty shop windows, art work was commissioned for shops in Hereford. This to be rolled out in market towns.

- 14 Supplementary Planning – reduction in the planning obligation for 106 for developments under 5 properties and business developments in key locations.
- 15 Payment times – Herefordshire Council committed to achieving a 20 day payment on undisputed invoices, working towards a ten day time scale (currently 15 days average).
- 16 Business Portal – the portal has been established on the internet to enable local companies to be aware of public service contracts. Recent intervention to increase opportunities for businesses is for all service contracts over £5k to be placed on the portal.
- 17 In addition to the short term intervention mentioned above, the council are pursuing long term schemes such as development of industrial land as part of Rotherwas Futures and Model Farm in Ross in preparation for the recovery, and building on the assets of the County to attract new companies.
- 18 The Strategic Housing Service have a number of support mechanisms to address the impact of the downturn. These include offering a range of preventative interventions aimed at reducing the risk of homelessness. To enable access to private sector rented property a rent/deposit scheme provides rent in advance and deposit payments through a loan to be paid to agents/landlords on behalf of households at risk of homelessness. Loan payments are offered in certain circumstances to offset rent arrears when this would help prevent someone leaving their home where the local authority considered it would otherwise have a duty to provide temporary accommodation. Via the CAB the council funds a debt advice service and court desk service to help households remain in their existing accommodation.
- 19 Private sector landlords are also being offered the opportunity to lease their empty property to the council for the purpose of offering homeless households on the waiting list a home. The properties can be managed either by the Housing Association or a letting agent to whom the council will direct prospective tenants.

Community Impact

- 20 The economic downturn is having a significant impact on communities. As well as council intervention organisations such as CAB and Job Centre Plus are addressing the challenges of businesses and communities.

Financial Implications

- 21 Additional funding for fighting the downturn has been allocated from Area Based Grant for £100k to spend by March 2009.

Risk Management

- 23 The risk of the schemes as presented do have the desired effect to addressing the effects of the downturn and do not have significant impact. However, schemes have been formulated by working with the Economic Development Partnership Group which includes representation from the business community and employee organisations.

Background Papers

- None

Scrutiny Review of the Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy 2005 - 2025

**Report by the Community
Services Scrutiny Review
Group – October 2009**

**For presentation to the Community
Services Scrutiny Committee in
October 2009**

**People
Excellence
Openness
Partnership
Listening
Environment**

Scrutiny Review of the Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy 2005 - 2025

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Members of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee agreed to conduct a review of the Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy (EDS) at its meeting on 17th July 2008. The Economic Development Strategy was first produced in 2004 and its primary focus is to address the key economic challenges facing the County over a 20 year period. The current strategy runs until 2025, however a number of regional and local changes have taken place that may affect the local strategy and it therefore requires an earlier review.
- 1.2 A scoping statement for the Scrutiny Review (Appendix 1), including the Terms of Reference were approved at its meeting on the 17th July 2008. It was agreed that the review Group would comprise of 5 Members: Councillor RV Stockton (Chairman); Councillor PGH Cutter; Councillor B Durkin; Councillor MAF Hubbard and Councillor TM James.
- 1.3 The Review took place between 24th September 2008 and 2 July 2009. This report summaries its findings concluding with its recommendations to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.4 The Review Group would like to express its thanks to all internal and external officers and organisations who were interviewed at part of this review.

Next Steps

- 1.5 The Review Group anticipate that, when approved by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, this report will be presented to Cabinet for consideration.
- 1.6 The Community Services Scrutiny would then expect Cabinet within two months of receipt of the report to consider the report and recommendations and respond to the Committee indicating what action the Cabinet propose to take together with an action plan.

2 Method of Gathering Information

- 2.1 The Review Group undertook a series of meetings in order to collect the evidence to complete the review. Evidence that was considered included the following:
- 2.2 **Face to Face interviews** – a series of interviews took place with key Council officers and a representative sample of service users and interested parties. A list of those interviewed is set out at Appendix 2.
- 2.3 This initial meeting agreed the Terms of Reference for the Group, considered the format of the review and timescale for production. The Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy (EDS), Living Working Countryside (The Taylor Report), Regional Economic Strategy for the West Midlands were supplied and discussed. An overview was given of the Local Development Framework (LDF), the sub-national review and Local Area Agreements (LAA). The Head of Economic and Community Services also provided a presentation on the existing EDS highlighting a number of areas, which may be worth considering within the review.
- 2.4 Meeting 29th October 2008
At this meeting a list of interviewees was compiled and the topics to discuss at these interviews established. In order to reach a wider range of local businesses, the Group decided to use a business questionnaire via letter inviting people to answer the following questions;
 - Do you think the economic Development Strategy should be based on themes or places?

- Are the issues and challenges of your market town/ rural area reflected in the current EDS?
- Are the needs of your business reflected in the EDS?
- Are there any other issues that you feel should be included in any new document?

This letter was sent to 15 local businesses across the county of various types and sizes on the 18th November 2008.

2.5 Meeting 26th February 2009 Interviews

This meeting consisted of a set of interviews to gain officers of Herefordshire Council's opinions on the current strategy. The following officers were interviewed;

- Geoff Hughes - Director of Regeneration
- Andrew Ashcroft – Head of Planning and Transportation
- Peter Yates – Planning Policy Manager

2.6 Interviews 30th April 2009

This set of interviews involved external officers and included;

- Gary Woodman – Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce
- Cynthia Palmer – Hereford City Manager
- Angela Smith – Federation of Small Businesses and Vice Chair of Herefordshire Partnership Economic Development Group

2.7 Interviews 1st June 2009

This set of interviews involved external officers and a Cabinet Member including;

- Philip Roberts – Advantage West Midlands
- Julian Morgan – Local Business, 7 Y Services Ltd
- Cllr AJM Blackshaw – Cabinet Member Economic Development and Community Services
- Nick Webster – Economic Development Manager

2.8 Interview of 9th June 2009

The interview was held with Natalia Silver – Head of Economic and Community Services

2.9 **Written evidence**

The Review Group considered a range of written evidence to assist their deliberations including:

- a) Connecting to Success – West Midlands Economic Strategy.
- b) Living Working Countryside - Taylor Report(July 2008).
- c) Individuals from a range of backgrounds/interests also provided written evidence and opinions for the Review Group to consider.

3 Background to the Review of the Economic Development Strategy

3.1 The Economic Development Strategy was developed in 2004 by Herefordshire Council working with consultants who collected key data from various sources and recommended a way forward to address key challenges. These included:

- Not capitalising on high standard of school education
- Out-migration of young people
- Net loss of people working outside the County
- Residents with higher level qualifications working outside the county
- Lower than average wages than in the West Midlands as a whole
- Declining manufacturing and agricultural sectors
- Lack of high value employment e.g. technology and knowledge intensive industries

3.2 The Strategy was written on the basis of Key Themes which included:

- Sustainable Development
 - Business and Enterprise
 - Skills and Workforce Development
 - Communication and Infrastructure
 - Inclusion and Community Cohesion
- 3.3 Key projects for the Strategy included Edgar Street Grid, the Learning Village and Rotherwas Futures. The strategy used a spatial approach, dividing the County up into Hereford City and its Hinterland, the Market Towns, the Rural Heartland and an Eastern Corridor.
- 3.4 Delivery of the activity within the strategy is through the most relevant organisation and largely driven by Herefordshire Council with finance from Advantage West Midlands. Activity is monitored by the Economic Development Partnership Group (a policy and delivery group of the Herefordshire Partnership).
- 3.5 Key issues emerging and reflective of the terms of reference are: the ability of the EDS as a county wide strategy to specifically address challenges faced by the Market Towns and Rural Areas; synergy with the regional framework and emerging Local Development Framework; measurable impact of the strategy; and addressing the needs of businesses, employees and investors.

4 Findings of the Review

- 4.1 The findings of the evidence gathered has been amalgamated into one table, which is reproduced in Appendix 2 to this report, but summarised below in response to the issues raised in paragraph 3.4.
- 4.2 How does the strategy meet the requirements of Hereford City, the Market Towns and the Rural Areas?
- The focus on Hereford and ESG was seen to be important but greater emphasis was needed on the Market Towns and Rural Areas. This could be achieved by the use of Action Plans for Hereford, the Market Towns and Rural Areas to address particular issues and attract inward investment. These could be linked to the LDF Area Plans being developed to follow on from the Core Strategy.
- 4.3 Does the existing strategy meet regional requirements?
- There was general agreement that the existing strategy does reflect regional strategy and that there are good links with Advantage West Midlands, although emerging changes with respect to a Single Regional Strategy would need to be reflected in any review.
- 4.4 Does the existing strategy meet the requirements of the emerging Local Development Framework?
- It was felt that the EDS was not sufficiently linked with existing planning and housing strategies for e.g. it was difficult to refer to the EDS in commenting on the reasons for acceptance or refusal of planning applications because of a lack of references in either document. Any new strategy would need to be reflective of the outcomes of the Core Strategy to create synergy between the two documents. The Core Strategy will support the implementation of strategies such as the Community Strategy, the Economic Development Strategy and the Housing Strategy.
- 4.5 How are the aims of the strategy being delivered and is this effective?
- The activity of the strategy is monitored by the Economic Development Partnership Group through written reports produced by Herefordshire Council officers for each of the meetings. This gives a detailed update on progress of activity. Mentoring also takes

place via the performance framework and national performance indicators. However, the achievement of the overall aims is not reviewed or monitored.

4.6 How could a strategy further fulfil the needs of businesses, employees and investors?

There were many suggestions as to how activity leading from the strategy could contribute more to the local business community. These included:

- More support for businesses to develop their ideas for expansion e.g. Muddy Boots, nr Ross on Wye
- Greater emphasis on all sectors of industry, not just manufacturing
- Lack of reference to and support for tourism
- Insufficient attention to attracting higher skilled people and inward investment
- Lack of emphasis on providing jobs themselves

4.7 Other Issues to be considered in any review

Various topics were raised in addition to the main issues asked of the Review Group. These issues were considered to be of sufficient importance to warrant greater reference in any review of the EDS. They included:

- **Climate change** – buying local but not ignoring trade, utilising existing producers to promote food/tourism/environmental technology industries, promoting low carbon economy, energy efficiency and prudent use of resources
- **Broadband speed and coverage** - huge issue for encouraging new businesses and helping existing businesses
- **Focus on regeneration** - continued focus on employment land provision, conservation led regeneration and creation of identity/sense of place
- **Transport Issues** – rail freight is not given prominence in the EDS. Parking, traffic flow and signage all need addressing in Hereford. Greater emphasis on public transport generally was also needed.

4.8 The recommendations in section 6 address the above issues.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The current EDS is over 5 years old. It is recognised that the content needs to be updated to reflect changing regional and local circumstances. The strategy has been strong in terms of benefiting certain projects, using the idea of themes, support for local business and relationships with Partners, but now needs a refresh.

5.2 There would be significant benefits in refreshing the strategy at this time, not only to take into account the effects of the downturn in the economy, but also to reflect and tie in with the new Regional Economic Strategy and Local Development Framework (LDF).

6 Recommendations

6.1 The following recommendations have been proposed to respond to the Terms of Reference in the original scoping document:-

6.2 Address recommendations and comments of the Scrutiny Review Group, specifically in terms of reviewing the Economic Development Strategy. Those recommendations include:

- a) Ensure stronger links to the Local Development Framework (LDF) and new regional guidance and enable more effective use in determining planning applications

- b) Produce individual action plans on Hereford, the Market Towns and the Rural Areas (considering roles and identities) linked to the LDF; engage community groups and monitor through Policy Delivery Group of Partnership
- c) Greater emphasis on ICT and particularly actively seeking ways of improving broadband speeds and coverage across the County to support existing and attract new businesses; create “hubs” in market towns for business use
- d) Greater emphasis on regeneration and ways of promoting this e.g. re-use of Council owned buildings in Hereford for heritage based projects run in partnership with outside bodies
- e) Greater emphasis on attracting new businesses and jobs into the county – reflecting economic downturn.
- f) Existing businesses – need section on all sectors of industry and their needs, should be a specific reference to business support available
- g) Greater reference to tourism strategy and links to economic development
- h) Need to integrate specific objectives into the sustainability theme on climate change e.g. measures to promote renewable energy schemes based on independent study of potential of renewable energy production in the County
- i) Reflect the significance transport plays in supporting business development with a focus on sustainable transport solutions.
- j) Review skills objectives and delivery mechanisms against State of Herefordshire Report and recent developments i.e. University Challenge
- k) Revise the current EDS in light of a changing economic climate, reflective of the local economic assessment and the outcomes of the LDF consultation – to include wider consultation on a draft review document
- l) Develop Annual Monitoring to relate indicators to objectives (tied in with Comprehensive Area Assessments and Local Economic Assessments) to test effectiveness of programmes/investment. Produce “Partners Map” – explaining objectives/targets/milestones and areas of responsibility for monitoring.
- m) Suggest greater formal interaction - specifically between economic development, the Herefordshire Partnership and planning sections to develop revised strategy.

REVIEW:	Economic Development Strategy for Herefordshire	
Committee:	Community Services Scrutiny Committee	Chair: Councillor R V Stockton
Lead support officer:	Samantha Banks Jane Reeves	

Scoping

Terms of Reference

This review covers:

- To examine the current economic development strategy published in 2006 and its delivery mechanisms.
- To consider local, regional and national policy in relation to the current strategy, specifically in relation to the local development framework, changing relationship with Advantage West Midlands and Local Area Agreement.
- Recommend ways forward in the delivery of the future economic development strategy.

Desired outcomes

- To assess the current Economic Development Strategy to ensure it is fit for purpose in meeting changes in local, regional and national policy.
- Recommend a way forward to the future revision of economic development strategy for the county considering resource requirements.

Key questions

- What are the emerging requirements of the Local Development Framework and does the current strategy meet those requirements?
- How does the current strategy meet local requirements of Hereford City, Market Towns and rural areas?
- Does the current strategy fulfil the requirement of the Local Area Agreement?
- How are the aims of the strategy delivered, and is this effective in working with partner organisations?
- What should be the future composition of a future strategy and how will that be resourced?
- How could a strategy further fulfil the needs of businesses, employees, and investors?

Corporate Plan Priorities

Economy and Enterprise

Timetable (some of the facilities are only open seasonally and will influence the time table)	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
Agree approach, programme of consultation/research/provisional witnesses/dates (first meeting with members)	September 2008
Assess strategy and Government guidance / reports	September and October 2008
Conduct small selection of interviews	November 2008
Pull together findings in a draft report with recommendations	December 2008
Report presented to Scrutiny Committee	January 2009
Present options/recommendations to Cabinet	February 2009
Cabinet response	March 2009
Implementation of agreed recommendations	April 2009
Members	Support Officers
Councillor RV Stockton (Chairman) Councillor PGH Cutter Councillor MAF Hubbard Councillor T M James	Jane Reeves (Senior Planning Officer) Samantha Banks (Senior Planning Officer)

Summary Outcomes for Review of the Economic Development Strategy following from Internal/External Interviews

Issue	Comment	Suggested Recommendations for any review of EDS
1. Strengths of existing EDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developed with partners e.g. Business Link/Chamber of Commerce/AWM ▪ Supports businesses wanting to expand, local apprenticeship schemes, grants for redundant buildings etc ▪ Themes were still relevant to needs of county ▪ Eastern Corridor was good approach but rural west neglected ▪ Focus on Hereford/ESG was important 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any review should utilise same approach of working in partnership with local business organisations but involve wider consultation with local businesses
2. Weaknesses of existing EDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not enough consideration given to market towns and rural areas ▪ Doesn't support all businesses particularly larger ones that have developed their ideas/or are in growth areas e.g. Muddy Boots ▪ Linkages between sectors and focus on diversity of the economy. ▪ Does not support planning function as well as could – difficult to use EDS in assessing planning applications ▪ Council dependent on partners to deliver their aspects of the strategy and monitor but indicators not always appropriate 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Individual action plans could be developed for Hereford, Market Towns and Rural Areas to supplement strategic overview and support inward investment to these areas as well as Hereford (Could link to emerging LDF Area Plans). NB. New Market Towns programme being developed for 2010 – need to ensure review takes this on board. 3. Look at better ways of attracting new (and supporting existing) larger scale value added businesses to Herefordshire e.g. by looking at best practice in other rural authorities. This may need to feed through into more flexible planning policies where appropriate. Provide better quality rental units. 4. Introduce new section/action plan on different sectors of industry to ensure needs of all business sectors are considered e.g. agriculture and consider the linkages between sectors 5. Simplify vision and objectives of strategy with direct link to policies in LDF. 6. Get support from Director of Planning and Transportation to ensure planning officers request business appraisals in support of certain planning applications to better review all the social, economic and environmental considerations of

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key challenge is to provide jobs ▪ Greater reference to Tourism in EDS ▪ Not doing enough to attract higher skilled people 	<p>proposals.</p> <p>7. More investment support needed for existing businesses to grow and develop (could be indirect e.g. business rate holidays/funding from Homes and Communities Agency/removal of need for planning obligations). See also recommendation 3.</p> <p>8. Consider integrating elements of tourism strategy or at least objectives into review of EDS</p> <p>9. Review skills objectives and delivery mechanisms against LAA and State of Herefordshire Report indicators.</p>
3. How well is the EDS working on the ground? How is it monitored?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some aspects working well particularly regarding infrastructure improvements e.g. Rotherwas Access Road ▪ Partnership Thematic groups designed to test implementation. Recent improvements with changes to Partnership Structure. 	<p>-</p> <p>10. Annual monitoring should be considered in similar vein to Annual Monitoring Report for Unitary Development Plan. A simplified monitoring procedure that relates indicators to actions/objectives should be set up to test the implementation of any reviewed EDS – this should be linked to new Local Economic Assessments using State of Herefordshire Report and linked to Comprehensive Area Assessments to test effectiveness of programmes/investment. This will need to address issues of funding but should at the very least ensure HC monies are well spent. See Norfolk example of implementation</p> <p>11. A partnership “Map” would be useful which explained which partner was responsible for which actions in the EDS and where funding came from but indicating who was the responsible partner for ensuring the action took place, the timescale involved as well as targets/milestones</p>
Other Issues to be considered in any review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Climate change – buying local but not ignoring trade, utilising existing producers to promote food/tourism/environmental technology industries, promoting low carbon economy, energy efficiency and prudent use of resources ▪ Broadband speed and coverage - huge issue for encouraging new businesses and helping existing businesses 	<p>12. Specific objectives to address the impacts of climate change should be integrated into the objectives of the sustainability theme e.g. measures to promote renewable energy schemes and linked to the LDF. Consider independent study regarding a review of renewable energy production in the County and its potential contribution to the local economy.</p> <p>13. Although referred to in existing EDS, should be made priority of review of strategy. (NB – already made part of an objective in the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy). Council should be actively seeking more ways of promoting improvements to broadband speeds and coverage across the County</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on regeneration (employment land provision, conservation led regeneration and creation of identity/sense of place) ▪ Transport Issues – rail freight is not given prominence in EDS. Parking, traffic flow and signage all need addressing in Hereford. Greater emphasis on public community /transport ▪ Higher Education/Skills Training – although referred to in EDS, needs greater emphasis and inward investment – “University Challenge” ▪ Job creation – long term, generational employment, and short term due to the economic downturn 	<p>particularly at Rotherwas and the “notspots”.</p> <p>14. Review should make reference to economic downturn and conditions that would support business growth e.g. area based grants. (Utilise forthcoming Employment Land Survey/Retail Survey to establish gaps in provision. Make use of Heritage studies being carried out by the Council to produce Action Plans for market towns (Recommendation 2), engage community groups and monitor through Policy Delivery Group.)</p> <p>15. Consider re-use of existing Council buildings in Hereford City Centre for heritage-based projects linked to regeneration, run in partnership with outside bodies.</p> <p>16. Consider “hub” approach in market towns for interaction between rural businesses</p> <p>17. Utilise current/future work undertaken in LDF regarding roles of Hereford/Market towns plus other information sources (resident surveys etc) to establish common strands and whether there is a need for further work on this issue</p> <p>18. Promotion of Rail freight facilities and links. Public transport should be given greater emphasis in review –links to themes of sustainable development and climate change. Promote doubling of track to Hereford. Better links in Rural Areas to attract small businesses. Freight issues in west with HGV traffic would need addressing. Would need to link to LDF.</p> <p>19. Review as per Recommendation 9. Need public relations exercise amongst employers. Help needed in running businesses.</p> <p>20. Review and strengthen measures to attract inward investment into the County (promote investment from bodies other than AWM), continue support for growing existing businesses. Support Champion idea. Promote idea of leaflets/DVD sent out by Council and existing businesses e.g. to European counterparts.</p>
Does EDS meet requirements of LDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential link to planning and housing strategies 	<p>21. Need greater interaction with planning and housing sections to ensure full integration with emerging strategies. Suggest bi-annual or quarterly update meetings between Managers of Housing/Transport/Development Management/Forward Planning/Conservation/Tourism and Economic Development sections to feed through strategies</p>
Does EDS reflect regional strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General agreement that does reflect regional strategy and are good links with AWM 	<p>22. Emerging changes to regional policy in terms of Single Integrated Strategy would need to be reflected in any review.</p>

MEETING:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND STRATEGIC HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	2 OCTOBER 2009
TITLE OF REPORT:	COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
REPORT BY:	DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide.

Purpose

To consider the Committee's work programme.

Recommendation

THAT subject to any comment or issues raised by the Committee the Committee work programme be approved and reported to the Strategic Monitoring Committee.

Introduction and Background

1. Members were informed in July that the Strategic Monitoring Committee had met informally to consider the findings of the external healthcheck of the scrutiny function, undertaken by the Leadership Centre, some of which related to the content of annual work programmes. As part of this process, all Members of the Scrutiny Committees and the Executive were invited to attend a facilitated scrutiny event on the 8th September. The focus of which was on developing the external focus of the Scrutiny Work programmes whilst taking account of public sector challenges and corporate priorities. After a discussion of two questions: What are the issues that matter to the people of Herefordshire? and What are the issues that we (O&S) should be looking at?, a list of topics was produced. A prioritisation exercise was then undertaken which produced the following top five priorities: Housing Related issues, Youth, Communication, Safeguarding and Transport. Further discussion took place at an informal Strategic Monitoring Committee meeting on the 21st September in order to refine the focus of work on these topics.
2. Proposals will be brought forward to Members for consideration, and Work Programmes of all the Scrutiny Committees will need to be reconsidered in the light of these discussions. The Committee should have the opportunity to consider a revised work programme at its next meeting
3. Pending the outcome of the above work, a report on the Committee's current work programme will be made to each scheduled meeting of this Scrutiny Committee. A copy of the work programme is attached as an appendix.

4. The programme may be modified by the Chairman following consultation with the Vice-Chairman and the Directors in response to changing circumstances.
5. Should any urgent, prominent or high profile issue arise, the Chairman may consider calling an additional meeting to consider that issue.
6. A number of other possible issues for consideration have been logged and depending on the Committee's further instructions may be added to the programme as it is further developed. The issues are listed at the foot of the programme.
7. Should Members become aware of any issues they consider may be added to the scrutiny programme they should contact the Democratic Services Officer to log the issue so that it may be taken into consideration when planning future agendas or when revising the work programme.

Background Papers

- None identified.

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION ON 5 OCTOBER 2009

7 December 2009	
Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Performance Monitoring • Edgar Street Grid – Update • Action Plan Monitoring: Scrutiny Review of Community and Safety Drugs Partnership. • PACT Meetings • Consider the Executive’s Response to the Scrutiny Review of Tourism
Scrutiny Reviews	
	Other issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Volunteering • Review of Access to Services • Review of Festivals in Herefordshire
	12 April 2010
Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Performance Monitoring • Edgar Street Grid – Update • Action Plan Monitoring: Scrutiny Review of Community and Safety Drugs Partnership. • Consider the Executive’s Response to the Scrutiny Review of the Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy 2005- 25
Scrutiny Reviews	

Further additions to the work programme will be made as required.

