

# AGENDA

## Community Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Thursday 13 January 2011**

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Time: **10.00 am**

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Place: **Council Chamber - Brockington**

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

For any further information please contact:

**David Penrose, Democratic Services Officer**

Tel: 01432 383690

Email: [dpenrose@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:dpenrose@herefordshire.gov.uk)

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# Agenda for the Meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee

## Membership

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

**Councillor PL Bettington**  
**Councillor BA Durkin**  
**Councillor DW Greenow**  
**Councillor KS Guthrie**  
**Councillor MAF Hubbard**  
**Councillor B Hunt**  
**Councillor SJ Robertson**  
**Councillor RH Smith**  
**Councillor AP Taylor**

<b>Non Voting</b>	<b>Mrs Gillian Churchill</b>	HALC
	<b>Mrs. J. Evans</b>	National Farmers Union
	<b>Mr Gary Woodman</b>	Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce

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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.

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**AGENDA**

		Pages
1.	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive apologies for absence.	
2.	<b>NAMED SUBSTITUTES</b> To receive any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
3.	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.	
4.	<b>MINUTES</b> To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2010.	1 - 6
5.	<b>SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY</b> To consider suggestions from members of the public on issues the Committee could scrutinise in the future.	
6.	<b>SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF THE EDGAR STREET GRID PROJECT</b> To receive a report on the Scrutiny Review of the Strategic Direction of the Edgar Street Grid Project.	7 - 22



## **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

### **HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

The Council has established Scrutiny Committees for Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing, Children's Services, Community Services, Environment, and Health. An Overview and Scrutiny 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**

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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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You can submit a question for consideration at a Scrutiny Committee meeting so long as the question you are asking is directly related to an item listed on the agenda. If you have a question you would like to ask then please submit it **no later than two working days before the meeting** to the Committee Officer. This will help to ensure that an answer can be provided at the meeting. Contact details for the Committee Officer can be found on the front page of this agenda.

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### **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*

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

*Corporate Strategy and Finance*

*Resources*

*Corporate and Customer Services*

*Human Resources*

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## **HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

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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 6 December 2010 at 10.00 am**

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

Councillors: SPA Daniels, BA Durkin, DW Greenow, KS Guthrie, MAF Hubbard, B Hunt, SJ Robertson, RH Smith and Mr G. Woodman

**In attendance:** Councillors WLS Bowen and PJ Edwards

**37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor PL Bettington and AP Taylor.

**38. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor SPA Daniels substituted for Councillor AP Taylor.

**39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Interest</b>
Cllr MAF Hubbard	12 - Edgar Street Grid - Update	Director of a not for profit campaigning organisation, It's Our City
Cllr SPA Daniels	10 - Progress Report from the Safer Herefordshire Scrutiny Review Group	A family member is employed by Safer Herefordshire
Cllr RH Smith	10 - Progress Report from the Safer Herefordshire Scrutiny Review Group	Council appointed Member of the West Mercia Police Authority.

**40. MINUTES**

On considering the accuracy of the Minutes, the following amendments were made:

The penultimate bullet point on page 9: 'ESG Herefordshire Ltd had adopted a strident attitude in the early stages of the project, and had not accepted constructive criticism' be changed to 'but the company had accepted constructive criticism'.

The final bullet point on page 9: He had, however, been told by Stanhope that it was not appropriate for Rockfield to be on the new site' be changed to 'He had, however, been told in a letter from ESG Herefordshire Ltd that it was not appropriate for Rockfield to be on the new site'.

**RESOLVED:** That, subject to the above amendments, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 November 2010 were approved.

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

There were no suggestions from members of the public.

## 42. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received a report on the Revenue Forecast outturn position for Community Services as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010 and the progress of the 2010/11 Capital Programme

The Community Services Accountant reported that currently there was an underspend of 48k in the Directorate which would be used to help ease pressure on the Adult Social Care budget.

There was an apparent overspend in Appendix 1 of £375k, but this was an accounting measure pertaining to funds held by the Council on behalf of the Robert Owens Society, which provided funding for Higher Education in the County. The Society had initially looked to provide funding in Hereford in partnership with the Council, but were now working with partners to develop a teacher training centre in Bromyard. They were unable to wait two more years in order to invest in Hereford as they required high quality accommodation in order to meet OFSTED requirements

There was a reduction in the budgets for Belmont Pools of £78k, as the budget had been re profiled to be spent in 2011/12 rather than the current year. A reduction in the Free Swimming budgets of £54k. This had been transferred to Hereford Leisure pool, which was not within the Community Services Capital Programme as it was run by Halo.

She went on to say that the Ross Library scheme had been under review and it was expected that the budget for 2010/11 would be significantly reduced. Ledbury Library continued to be under review and it was expected that the exposure for this year would be reduced to £100k until the review had been completed.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- That there was ambiguity in the accounts, as the apparent overspend on the budget for Hereford Futures was not correct.
- In reply to a question from a Member, the Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services) said that it was unclear what the full impact of the Comprehensive Funding Review would be until the end of December. A meeting would be held with Ledbury Town Council thereafter to discuss the future of Ledbury Library.
- He went on to say that contrary to concerns expressed in the meeting, Tourist Information Centres (TIC's) were not being closed, and that there would be a TIC in every market town.
- That there was no reduction in spend on CCTV, the Council had budgeted for £14k for the year, of which only £10k had been spent to date.
- That the Free Swimming Scheme had been withdrawn, as it had been funded by a grant from Central Government. This grant had been stopped when the new administration had been formed, and the Council had therefore been obliged to stop the scheme.
- The Golf Driving Range, reported in the capital programme, would be an asset to the Council, and would be run by a third party in order to reduce revenue costs.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

#### **43. PERFORMANCE OUT-TURN UP TO THE END OF SEPTEMBER 2010**

The Committee received a report on the outturns for key national Performance Indicator targets for services within the Sustainable Communities Directorate.

The Assistant Directorate Services Manager (Strategy) reported that whilst the majority of indicators were on target, there were a number that were currently below target. Where possible the services had action plans in place to improve performance against these indicators.

In reply to a question from a Member asking how the encouragement of multinational stores onto the Edgar Street Grid site would improve NI 166 (Average employee earnings in the area), as these retailers would, in his opinion, pay little more than the national minimum wage to staff. The Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services) replied that there was a concern in the County that the average wage was £20k, rather than the national average of £25k. There was a need to migrate businesses into the County, and the number of technology companies that had moved to Herefordshire was growing apace. The Director of Sustainable Development added that there was a lot of evidence that investment by local companies in the skills of their employees helped them to secure better wages, and the proposed Higher Education Centre within the Edgar Street Grid Site would also be of benefit in this respect.

A Member said that he was glad to see that NI 21 (Dealings with concerns about anti-social behaviour) was performing well, and that the number of incidents had been reduced.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That:**

- (a) the report be noted; and;**
- (b) areas of concern continue to be monitored.**

#### **44. REVIEW OF THIRD SECTOR SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

The Committee received a report on the proposals contained within the Review of the Third Sector Support and Development Services and its overall objective to achieve consensus on the future provision of services, resources and delivery.

The Director of Resources reported that joint review between Herefordshire Public Services (HPS) and the Third Sector was being undertaken to consider future provision of support services to front line voluntary and community organisations. It had examined the needs of front line organisations and taken account of both the views of key stakeholders the financial constraints placed on HPS. A number of options for the future structure for the delivery and commissioning of support services had been developed and were under consideration.

There was a tight timetable on the future delivery arrangements, which would need to be agreed and substantially in place by April 2011.

As a result of consideration of feedback and the work undertaken as part of the preliminary phases of the project a list of options had been developed. Five options had been agreed for evaluation and the Third Sector Support Services Review Group had decided that between Option 2 and Option 5, the latter was the most preferable. A report would be submitted to the Joint Management Team, and then to the Cabinet meeting in January.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- That whilst it was clear that there was commitment to the process by those involved, it was important that the specific skills offered by individual organisations should not be lost.
- A Member expressed concern that insufficient consideration had been taken of how the existing system had evolved.
- That if all the organisations were merged, there was a danger that a great number of volunteers would be lost.

A Member said that he found the report obscure, lacking in clarity, and felt that the report as a whole was inadequate. There was a multiplicity of organisational structures, but it wasn't clear as to what these pertained to. It appeared that the approach that had been adopted was a passive reaction to a series of inputs, rather than active investigation. There was a lack of information on the amount of public money that had been spent, and to what purpose. He went on to say that, on the available evidence, Option 5 seemed to be too bureaucratic and over-complicated. The reliance on 'spokes' suggested weakening of control over both expenditure and effectiveness of delivery. He found that Option 2 was the most attractive of the five possible options.

In reply, the Director of Resources said that he believed that the report had captured the complexity of the situation, as the Review Group had been dealing with separate autonomous bodies with separate governance issues. The Council was trying to take individual organisations with it, as there was no way they could be made to undertake these changes, apart from using the leverage of financing. There had been two active research exercises that had provided the initial evidence base for the Review, and Grant Thornton had conducted further research.

In reply to a further question, the Director said that there was dialogue between the spokes and the localities, although it was clear that not all localities were the same.

## **RESOLVED**

### **THAT:**

- a) The Committee considered the Review of Third Sector Support and Development Services and in particular commented on the conclusions, which would be used to inform recommendations to the Joint Management Team and Cabinet, and;**
- b) It was proposed that the Director of Resources should be invited to review the report in the light of the Committee's considerations, and provide a more substantive report to the Committee in order to allow it to form an opinion.**

## **45. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY REVIEW OF SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERING**

The Committee considered a report on the Executive's response to the Review of Volunteering conducted by the Committee.

The Third Sector Liaison Officer reported that the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Volunteering had been agreed by the Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services) and an Action Plan out together that outlined how the recommendations would be achieved. The key activities outlined in the plan aimed to result in more people volunteering. The activity would be concentrated on a collaborate approach facilitated through the Voluntary Development Group (VDG), specifically supported by the Voluntary Sector Liaison Officer employed by the Council.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- That any parishes that were not members of the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) would be dealt with by the Parish Liaison and Rural Services Officer, who would also be involved.
- A Member said that he believed that the role of Community Transport would be more important following the Comprehensive Spending Review, and urged the Third Sector Liaison Officer to take consideration of this when compiling the report outlined in Recommendation 11 of the Action Plan.

## **RESOLVED**

**That:**

- (a) the report was approved; and;**
- (b) the action plan should be monitored by the Committee over the next 12 months.**

## **46. PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE SAFER HEREFORDSHIRE SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUP**

(Councillor Daniels and Councillor Smith declared a personal interest)

The Committee received a summary report of the evidence the Safer Herefordshire Review Group had received.

The Partnership Manager for Safer Herefordshire reported that the Review Group felt that the indicator NI 30 (To reduce the re-offending rate of prolific and other offenders) was well understood by Safer Herefordshire and performance against the indicator was good and that positive progress was being made. The Review Group felt the meeting had been very useful and informative. It was recognised that Safer Herefordshire had tangible information and intelligence which it used to direct activity and thereby reduce the impact on the County of persistent offenders.

The Vice Chairman concurred, and added that it was clear that progress was being made in this area, which dealt with the needs of a specific number of offenders.

## **RESOLVED**

**THAT:**

- a) The recommendations made by the Safer Herefordshire Review Group be endorsed by the Committee, and referred to the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing), for consideration.**
- b) The Review Group applauded the success of the Shift Care Farm Programme and were impressed to receive clear evidence of its results.**
- c) that the Chairman of Herefordshire Policing Board be invited to consider, in consultation with the BCU Commander, the possibility of offering some degree of funding to evidently high performing services such as Shift Care Farm Programme.**

#### 47. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the Work Programme.

**RESOLVED: That the work programme be approved and reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

#### 48. EDGAR STREET GRID - UPDATE

(Councillor Hubbard declared a personal interest)

The Committee received an updated report on the Edgar Street Grid Project.

The Economic Development Manager reported that the Government's White Paper *Local Growth: Realising Every Place's Potential* gave an indication of possible new financial instruments that would be available to Local Government. The potential impact this would have on Council led projects had yet to be determined but could increase the number of financial options available to deliver ESG related projects. The Government had also announced the launch of a £1.4b Regional Growth Fund (RGF), and a number of projects within the Hereford Futures portfolio had been submitted to the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Shadow Board as project ideas for RGF funding.

There had been a pause in negotiations with settlements for businesses in the second and third phases of the Link Road project as a result of the uncertainty over funding. Funds had been identified, however, to open negotiations with two businesses in phase three of the project.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- That the Flood Alleviation Scheme was fully funded by a capital grant from Advantage West Midlands.
- Negotiations with three of the businesses on the Old Cattle Market Site were underway, and one had shown interest in moving to the New Market Site. There was a restrictive covenant on the site that meant that any businesses that wished to trade from it had to be agriculturally related. There were a number of options available to businesses that were not agriculturally related, and they could move, for example, to the Beech Business Park, where the National Farmers Union and the Young Farmers Club were.
- That seven plots on the Masterplan for the New Cattle Market Site had been allotted for an agricultural related business park

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

The meeting ended at 11.45 am

**CHAIRMAN**





<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>13 JANUARY 2011</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF THE EDGAR STREET GRID PROJECT</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>Edgar Street Grid Scrutiny Review Group</b>

**CLASSIFICATION:** Open

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide.

### **Purpose**

To consider the findings arising from the Scrutiny Review of The Strategic Direction of the Edgar Street Grid Project..

### **Recommendation**

**THAT**

- (a) **the Committee considers the report of the Review Group, in particular its recommendations, and determines whether it wishes to agree the findings for submission to the Cabinet Member.**
- (b) **subject to the Review being approved, the Executive's response to the Review including an action plan be reported to the first available meeting of the Committee after the Executive has approved its response;**
- and;**
- (c) **a further report on progress in response to the Review be made after six months with consideration then being given to the need for any further reports to be made.**

### **Introduction and Background**

1. At the meeting of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 11 October 2010 the Committee considered a suggestion that a Scrutiny Review of the Strategic Direction of the Edgar Street Grid Project should be undertaken. The Committee agreed to form a scrutiny review group and appointed its membership. The terms of reference for the review were drawn up by the Lead Officer for the Review and are incorporated into the attached report at Appendix 1.

2. The Review Group's report setting out its approach to its task, its findings, and recommendations is attached.

## **Background Papers**

- None identified.

# **Scrutiny Review of The Strategic Direction of the Edgar Street Grid Project**

**Report by the Community  
Services Scrutiny Review  
Group – January 2011**

**People  
Excellence  
Openness  
Partnership  
Listening  
Environment**



# **Scrutiny Review of the Strategic Direction of the Edgar Street Grid Project**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Members of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee agreed to conduct a Review of the Strategic Direction of the Edgar Street Grid project on 11th October 2010.
- 1.2 A scoping statement for the Scrutiny Review (Appendix 1), including the Terms of Reference were approved at the meeting on the on 11th October 2010. The key aim was to consider the future strategy of the Edgar Street Grid project as part of Hereford Futures Programme. It was agreed that the Review Group would comprise all Members of the Committee, and would be chaired by Councillor TM James, with Councillor KG Grumbley as Vice Chairman.
- 1.3 The Review took place on the afternoon 15th and the morning of 16th November 2010. This report summarises the findings concluding with 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.

## **2 Next Steps**

- 2.1 When approved by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, this report will be presented to Cabinet for consideration.
- 2.2 The Community Services Scrutiny Committee 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.

## **3 Method of Gathering Information**

- 3.1 The Review took place on the afternoon 15th and the morning of 16th November 2010. The two half days, open to the public, included a presentation by and an interview of, the Chief Executive of Herefordshire Futures, representatives from Stanhope and the Sanctuary Group, the developers. This was followed by interviews of interested and related parties (Appendix 2), which enabled an exploration of the key issues concerning the scheme, as outlined in the Terms of Reference (Appendix 1). A subsequent informal meeting was held on 6th December for Members of the Scrutiny Committee to put forward recommendations.

## **4 Background**

- 4.1 The ESG area is a 100 acre redevelopment site to the North of the existing Hereford City Centre. Bounded by Edgar Street to the West, the Cardiff to Shrewsbury railway line to the North, Commercial road to the East and Newmarket and Blueschool Streets to the South. A map of the ESG area is attached at Appendix 3.
- 4.2 ESG Herefordshire Ltd was a joint venture company set up, following Cabinet approval on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2004, by Herefordshire Council and Advantage West Midlands (AWM) to coordinate the redevelopment of the site. The Company's remit has now been replaced by Hereford Futures Ltd. Since its inception there has been close liaison between the Company, Herefordshire Council, and AWM.

- 4.3 The options for the development of the site as a whole were initially considered as part of the Unitary Development Plan process conducted by Herefordshire Council and expanded upon through a subsequent master planning exercise instigated by ESG.
- 4.4 The principal development sites consist of a Retail and Leisure development, located on the current livestock market site, and an Urban Village comprising of residential development sites, new canal basin, and realigned Widemarsh Brook. Additional development will occur within the New Area, a mixed use development site centred on Catherine Street, and the Transport Hub, a new interchange between the various forms of public transport within the city, located at the Railway Station.
- 4.5 In the course of the Review, a number of key themes emerged from discussions. These were:
- Consultation with the public regarding the ESG project
  - Linkages between the ESG site and City Centre
  - Phasing of construction of the Old Cattle Market and the Urban Village
  - Treatment of and effect on businesses within the ESG area.
  - The potential for traffic disruption in the City as a result of construction works
  - Pedestrian and vehicular access

## **5 Consultation**

- 5.1 Proposals for the ESG area were included within the draft Unitary Development Plan, and subject to a statutory six week public consultation period October to December 2002. In 2003, the ESG Masterplan took the draft UDP proposals as a starting point. As well as consultation undertaken through a local advisory group, website, media and working with a local school, two specific consultation exercises were undertaken during 2003. Key themes emerging from this consultation were:
- Proposals should include additional car parking capacity
  - Not to worsen traffic congestion and support for proposals such as park and ride and a new outer relief road
  - Provision of new bus station close to railway station
  - Football Ground should be redeveloped at its current location
  - Support for new Library and Canal basin
  - Comments from landowners and businesses re their future investment decisions and the scope for relocation assistance
  - Proposed food retailing on the Livestock Market site should be well designed and incorporate car parking.
- 5.2 Proposals for the ESG area were then included within the revised draft of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan, and published for six weeks statutory public consultation as before. A public inquiry into objections to both versions of the UDP was held from February to June 2005 and included consideration of objections to the Plan's ESG proposals. The UDP was adopted in its final form in March 2007.
- 5.3 The ESG Masterplan was produced between 2007 and 2008 and significant consultation was undertaken over this period with organisations, other stakeholders and members of the public. A consultation statement was produced and is available via the Hereford Futures Ltd website. In terms of responses from the general public, some 164 questionnaires were received, overall indicating 77% in favour of the Masterplan proposals. 83% agreed with the proposed expansion of the city centre, with 72% agreeing with the downgrading of Newmarket and Blueschool Streets to reduce the barrier between the historic city centre and the ESG area.



## **6 Linkages to the City Centre - pedestrian and vehicular access and Phasing of construction of the Old Cattle Market and the Urban Village**

- 6.1 The Committee felt that it was very important that any new development should have strong links to the existing retail centre from the outset and that construction works should cause minimum disruption both to the city and traffic flow.
- 6.2 In the evidence they provided to the Committee, the representatives of Stanhope Plc recognised that linking the scheme with the existing city centre was a vital aspect of the project. In order to ensure that this would happen, improvements to the crossing on Newmarket Street would be included in the planning application, additional car parking would be provided, and highway works to improve the flow of traffic through the city in advance of the Edgar Street to Commercial Road Link Road and Cycleway. A new vehicular access from Blackfriars Street was proposed in order to intercept visitors by car before the majority reach the Edgar Street Roundabout or travel along Newmarket Street. Additionally it is proposed that the existing subway beneath the Street should be replaced with a new surface level pedestrian crossing providing a more direct route for pedestrians to walk to the public right of way adjacent to the Tesco Store and into Eign Street.
- 6.3 In order to cause minimum disruption to traffic flow, cars would be allowed to turn right up Widemarsh Street in order to access the Garrick Multi-storey Car Park and the Blackfriars Street site access junction, thereby voiding the need to travel along Newmarket Street. Allowing cars to turn right out of Wall Street when leaving the Tesco car park would also help to reduce pressure on the Edgar Street Roundabout.

**Recommendation 1: Development of the Old Cattle Market Site and construction of the link road should be carefully phased in order to avoid major disruption to traffic flow in and through the city.**

**Recommendation 2: Provision of car parking to the east of the City should be considered.**

## **7 Treatment of and effect on businesses**

- 7.1 The Committee interviewed three businesses on the proposed route of the Edgar Street to Commercial Road Link Road.
- 7.2 The committee heard that the uncertainty of the development of the link road was deeply unsettling for the businesses making it impossible for them to make any coherent business decisions. Additionally, in their communication with council officers and Hereford Futures officials, businesses felt that they were getting mixed messages and would instead prefer a single point of contact.

**Recommendation 3: That Hereford Futures Ltd and Herefordshire Council officers adopt a coherent, coordinated and open approach to the businesses on the Edgar Street Grid site.**

## **8 Key Findings**

- 8.1 The committee based its lines of enquiry around 13 key questions. On the documentary and witness evidence provided the committee agreed the following:
- 8.2 It is vital that the new development has strong links to the existing retail centre from the outset and construction works should cause minimum disruption both to the city and traffic flow.
- 8.3 That the ESG project is vital to delivering the county's ambitions for economic development. The committee had no doubt or reservation concerning the overall long term economic benefits provided there was minimum disruption to the city.

- 8.4 The current financial climate had resulted in a delay to the construction of the Link Road and Urban Village, whereas the Stanhope scheme has been reduced in size
- 8.5 Although regional development agency funding would no longer be an option Hereford Futures would be looking to source investment from new government initiatives such as Tax Increment Financing and Regional Growth Fund in order to finance developments.
- 8.6 That private business would play key role in the success of the overall delivery of the scheme.
- 8.7 The proposed outcomes are to create a vibrant city centre that offers a whole day experience for visitors and residents and to create a comprehensive solution for transportation and parking.
- 8.8 Alternative options for the site were considered during the UDP consultations but no viable alternatives for the site were identified.
- 8.9 The committee were content that sufficient public debate was given to the sites uses in the early years of planning the project
- 8.10 Throughout the review process a range of data was presented to the committee which demonstrated public support for the current ESG project thereby justifying its continuance.
- 8.11 Whilst there were no firm proposals early in the process of consultation, it was hoped that a contribution could be made towards partially funding a library building within the New Area. It is clear that this is no longer possible. The remaining elements of the redevelopment are proceeding: a multi screen cinema, department store, public realm areas, new homes, new livestock market, Higher Education centre, flood alleviation scheme and other infrastructure. Elements of the proposals, notably the Link Road, have been delayed but will still happen.
- 8.12 The committee were concerned that businesses had not been treated with consisted fairness and in a businesslike manner.
- 8.13 It is desirable for the link road to be a first priority and that it should be delivered on time preferably before the development of the old cattle market site

## **10. Summary of Recommendations**

The Review Group recommended that:

- 1 Development of the Old Cattle Market Site and construction of the link road should be carefully phased in order to avoid major disruption to traffic flow in and through the city.**
- 2 Provision of car parking to the east of the City should be considered.**
- 3 That Hereford Futures Ltd and Herefordshire Council officers adopt a coherent, coordinated and open approach to the businesses on the Edgar Street Grid site.**
- 4 That regular Edgar Street Grid updates to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee should include financial information which provides details on how much has been spent on the project to date and by whom.**

<b>REVIEW:</b>	<b>Review of the Future Strategy of the ESG Project</b>	
<b>Committee:</b>	Community Services Scrutiny Committee	<b>Chair:</b> Cllr TM James
<b>Lead support officers:</b>	Penny Jones	

## SCOPING

<b>Terms of Reference</b>
This review covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The future strategy of the Edgar Street Grid project as part of Hereford Futures Programme.</li> </ul>

<b>Desired outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create an understanding of current and long term strategy for the ESG project.</li> <li>• To identify how the future strategy will be resourced and implemented.</li> <li>• To understand how the future plans contribute to the wider regeneration of Hereford City and the county.</li> <li>• To reflect on priorities in relation to the current financial climate.</li> </ul>

<b>Key questions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the current and long term strategy of the ESG project?</li> <li>• How does the project meet the economic development ambitions of the city and the wider county?</li> <li>• How has the financial climate had an impact on a change of strategy?</li> <li>• How will the strategy going forward be financed?</li> <li>• What is the role of private business?</li> <li>• What are the predicted outcomes and impacts?</li> <li>• Are there any viable alternatives for the site?</li> <li>• Was sufficient public debate given to site uses in the early years of planning this project?</li> <li>• What precise data is available to demonstrate public support for the current ESG project in order to justify its continuance?</li> <li>• How have the plans which promised large private investment for many facilities now changed? In other words, what are we not getting from what was originally promised during early consultation?</li> <li>• Have the businesses currently located on the Edgar Street Grid been fairly and professionally treated?</li> <li>• Can the Retail Quarter be developed in isolation of the link road given the effect this will have on the connectivity of the Quarter with Hereford's historic centre?</li> <li>• How will access by vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian be facilitated to and between the old and new City centres?</li> </ul>

## Corporate Plan Priorities

Economic and Enterprise

<b>Timetable</b>	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Suggested Timescale</i>
Pre-meeting with scrutiny members	Mid November 2010
2 review days with partners and stakeholders	Beginning December 2010
Discussion Session	End December 2010
Scrutiny Meeting – report presented	January / February 2011

**Scrutiny Review of the Strategic Direction of the Edgar Street Grid Project**

**Interviewees**

**Commissioners and Developers**

Hereford Futures Ltd	Jonathan Bretherton, Chief Executive Gerrard Williams, Development Director
Herefordshire Council	David Nicholson, Strategic Delivery Manager Mairead Lane, Construction Manager
Sanctuary Housing	Gareth Scannell, Senior Development Manager Andrew White, Head of Development, Midlands and North
Stanhope Plc	Gary Bourne, Development Director Alistair Shaw, Development Director

**Stakeholders**

Hereford City Council	Steven Kerry, Town Clerk.
Hereford Civic Society	Garry Thomas, Chairman
Rockfield DIY	Leon Wolverson, Chief Executive
Reprodux Printers	Alison Holmes, Chief Executive
ESG Business Association	Andrew Sanders, Chairman

A statement was received from Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce





NOT TO SCALE

- UV - Land parcels for Urban Village/housing
- BR - Business Relocation
- Transport Hub
- Roads/link road
- Football Club
- Canal and waterways
- Land parcels
- Walkways
- New Area - Retail/leisure/civic uses
- Old Livestock Market site - Retail/leisure area
- Possible higher education site

KEY





