

## **POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE USE OF THE RIVERS WYE AND LUGG**

**Report By: Director of Environment**

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

1. To consider the draft Policy Statement for the Use of the Rivers Wye and Lugg as the basis for public consultation.

### **Financial Implications**

2. The financial implications of approving the document for consultation are limited to publication and circulation costs and these will be met from existing budgets.

### **Background**

3. Herefordshire's rivers are important culturally, environmentally and economically to the County's future. The River Wye, in particular, is nationally renowned and together with the River Lugg is defined as navigable within the confines of the County.
4. These two principal rivers offer considerable opportunities in terms of contributing to the economic well being of the County yet by their nature the rivers have constraints that must be acknowledged if the qualities that make them so attractive are to be maintained.
5. Although Herefordshire Council is able to influence some aspects of the rivers' use and activities upon them the Environment Agency has prime responsibility for their management, including flood control, water abstraction, navigation, recreation and biodiversity conservation. Recently the Agency's duties have increased as a consequence of the Water Framework Directive, whereby it must produce River basin Management Plans. Furthermore it recently produced the Wye Waterway Plan, which incorporates the Wye Navigation Plan required under The Wye Navigation Order 2002. The Waterway Plan covers both the Rivers Wye and Lugg.
6. It is however timely for the Council to develop a policy for the use of the two rivers and present this in a formal statement. One of the functions for such a policy statement would be to indicate how it would work with partners, in particular the Environment Agency, on matters of mutual interest and concern. It might, for example, assist the Council's representatives on such forums as the Wye Navigation Committee and the Herefordshire Partnership Board.
7. A draft statement has been prepared and is appended to this report at Appendix 1. Legal services were party to the document's preparation. Informal consultations were undertaken upon an initial draft with the Wye Navigation Committee, the Wye Management Committee and the Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee. At

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
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this stage it is proposed to report to Cabinet recommending that the document be published for consultation including parish councils, representative bodies and relevant sporting and amenity bodies and organisations, as well as with the public.

8. The draft statement sets out the strategic background to the issue, a statement of principle, general policies setting out the Council's approach to the use of the two rivers, and finally operational policies covering those aspects for which the Council has some powers and responsibilities.
9. The Committee's comments on the draft Policy Statement are invited for submission to Cabinet.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the draft Policy Statement for the Use of the Rivers Wye and Lugg be recommended to Cabinet as the basis for consultation with relevant organisations and the public, subject to any comments the Committee wishes to make.**

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)
- Herefordshire Community Strategy
- The Wye Navigation Order 2002
- The Wye Waterway Plan
- West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy