

REPORT OF THE MEETINGS OF CABINET

HELD ON 7TH AND 21ST JUNE AND 12TH JULY, 2007

Cabinet Members: R.J. Phillips (Leader of the Council),
J.P. French (Deputy Leader),
Mrs. L.O. Barnett, P.J. Edwards, D.B. Wilcox, A.J.M. Blackshaw, H.
Bramer, J.G. Jarvis, J.A. Hyde

This report submitted to Council covers proceedings of the meetings listed above.

1. DECISIONS RESERVED TO COUNCIL UNDER PART 4 OF THE CONSTITUTION

- 1.1 Youth Justice Plan 2007/8 - Cabinet has received a report detailing the Youth Justice Plan, which is prepared annually on behalf of Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council. Cabinet has endorsed the Youth Justice Plan, as prepared, and supported the recommendation that the Plan be approved by Council at its meeting on 27th July 2007. Cabinet noted that performance against targets in Herefordshire and Worcestershire exceeded that of other areas within West Mercia. Cabinet noted that Worcestershire YISP crime prevention programme included children as young as eight, and accepted that members' support would be necessary for similar action in Herefordshire.

Cabinet recommends to Council that:

the Youth Justice Plan 2007/8 be approved

2. NOTICES OF MOTION

- 2.1 No motions to Council were considered by Cabinet during the reporting period.

3. KEY DECISIONS BY INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS WHICH WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE FORWARD PLAN

- 3.1 There were no such decisions made during the reporting period.

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

4.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Herefordshire Connects** – Cabinet has received a report which provides an update on the progress made in the contract negotiation and the due diligence period following identification in April of Deloitte as the preferred supplier for the Herefordshire Connects Programme. Cabinet were informed of the next phase of the programme, Phase 3 Programme Definition and that fundamental to this was the benefits review, which examines the business case and the benefits that will be derived. Cabinet were advised of the visits made to other authorities to assess the technology, with an emphasis on the Social Care and Performance Management. Particular concentration had been made on visits to Surrey with expert advice, as a similar transformation was being carried out using Deloitte as the preferred supplier. Cabinet noted

the managerial and governance arrangements proposed and that it would need to be implemented as quickly as possible. The integrated support services would take further the consolidation of central support services. Cabinet was reminded that the Member group would continue to meet and were looking to include a wider membership of the group to ensure programme delivery. Cabinet noted the progress that has been made in negotiating the contract and that detailed negotiations would continue with the Cabinet Members: Resources, Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources and the Leader of the Council who would jointly authorise the completion of the master agreement subject to the satisfactory conclusion of contract negotiations and Cabinet receiving a further progress report in July.

- (ii) **Treasury Management activities** - Cabinet has received a report detailing the Council's Treasury Management activities for the period 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007. Cabinet has noted that the cost of borrowing during the period was in line with the budget and that investment income was above the budget. Cabinet has also noted that, while the return on internally managed investments exceeded the index benchmark, the net return on funds managed externally by Investec Asset Management Ltd was below the index benchmark, and that the Council had decided to withdraw these funds and manage them internally. Cabinet noted the information relating to the Council's long-term borrowing transactions. The aim was to maintain a nil cleared balance in, as far as possible, low interest bearing accounts. The average daily bank balance, at £9,252 in credit, was very close to target.
- (iii) **Herefordshire Jarvis Services** – Cabinet has received a confidential report on the Herefordshire Jarvis Services contract and will give further consideration to the matter in the Autumn.

5. CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES (Cabinet Member – Councillor J.P. French)

5.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Integrated Performance Report** – Cabinet has received a report on the Integrated Performance Report, which covers performance for the whole of the operating year 2006-07 against the Annual Operating Plan 2006-07. Additionally the report covers the full set of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and the progress made against the Council's Overall Improvement Programme. Cabinet were advised that the in built targets for 2009 were for a significant improvement across all areas of the council and the work carried out of the next two years would be crucial for the 2009 Comprehensive Performance Assessment. Cabinet were informed that 32% of targets were not achieved, which was a significant improvement on last years which was 58%. The Best Value Performance Indicators were better with an improving picture over the last 12 months. Cabinet examined the performance figures for Highways and Transportation and noted there had only been a slight increase in the figures, which related to street lighting and was being addressed. In addition it was noted that just one accident could have a significant impact on the indicator figures for the killed and injured. Cabinet acknowledged there were some indicators that there was less control over as the performance indicators for these could be due to the work of partner organisations. Cabinet noted the 2006-07 performance and approved for publication the 2006-07 performance indicators.

- (ii) **Integrated Performance Report** - Cabinet has received a report detailing the Council's final 2006/7 end of year performance and proposing new arrangements for future performance reporting. Cabinet welcomed the improvements in performance on the previous year: of 123 strategic indicators monitored, 26% failed to achieve targets, compared with 54% the previous year, and best value performance indicators showed 68% improved and 29% deteriorated, compared with 40% improved and 35% deteriorated the previous year. Cabinet endorsed the proposal that it receives, as part of future Integrated Performance Reports, an analysis of performance against those indicators from the Annual Operating Plan (AOP), which it directly leads on. This would enable the Council to focus effectively on its own performance within the larger set of indicators in the latest AOP 2007/8.
- (iii) **Corporate ICT Strategy** – Cabinet received a further report on the Corporate ICT Strategy taking into account the impact of the Herefordshire Connects Programme, the Public Service Trust Initiative and the Members ICT Scrutiny Review. In addition the strategy has been updated in line with the Medium Term Financial Management Strategy (MTFMS). Cabinet agreed the financial impact of the strategy would be partly funded by the corporate funding for ICT, with additional funding being subject to the business case and the usual budgetary process. Cabinet thanked officers for the work carried out so far in delivering the programme. Cabinet approved the Corporate ICT Strategy as it supports the Council's corporate objectives and the service objectives of directorates.
- (iv) **Pay and Workforce Development Strategy** - Cabinet has approved the Pay and Workforce Development Strategy for 2007/10 in order to progress the human resources issues and actions outlined in the Strategy. It has noted a number of successes in 2006/07 including: achievement of sickness absence targets; stable turnover of staff at not more than 9% a year; modernisation of recruitment administration and agency working provision with significant cashable savings in local recruitment media advertising; establishment of a Skills for Work Centre; support post-job evaluation, leading to a 70% reduction in number of those in receipt of job evaluation protection; and a commitment to achieve Investors in people standard. It has also noted a number of areas where the Council has underperformed in 2006/07 including, numbers of disabled employees, employees from black/minority ethnic groups; female wage earners in the top 5%; black/minority ethnic groups in the top 5% wage earners.
- The Strategy identified six themes: effective leadership; learning and skills development; organisations development; pay, reward and recognition; resources; and employee well-being; and sets out a series of associated actions in the context of the Human Resources three-year Service Plan.
- (v) **Community Forums** – Cabinet has received a report detailing proceeding at the pilot Community Forum/Partners and Communities Together (PACT), Forums in November 2006, February 2007 and May/June 2007. Cabinet has noted the report and proposed that the future of the forums should be referred to group leaders and the Herefordshire Partnership and that a further report on the outcome of discussions be submitted to Cabinet as soon as possible.

6. **SOCIAL CARE ADULTS AND HEALTH**
(Cabinet Member – Councillor L.O. Barnett)

6.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Fairer Charging** – Cabinet received a report recommending a number of changes to be made under the Fairer Charging regulations governing non-residential services in Adult Social Care. Cabinet was reminded that OLM Consultants were commissioned in September 2006 to carry out a review of fairer charging to support the delivery of the overall improvement proposal following the CSCI Inspection, which was part funded by the Department of Health. The objective was to develop and draft a new charging policy in respect to charging for non-residential services that provides equity in charging while maximising the income available. The review benchmarked Herefordshire's income and charging position in relation to other authorities and to develop a draft charging structure that more accurately reflected the costs of providing those services. Cabinet approved the revised and updated fairer charging policy, with changes made to the maximum weekly charge so the current absolute ceiling charge was replaced by one defined as the full cost of service. That tariff income is included in the financial assessment from savings and capital. One hundred percent of occupational/private pensions are included in the financial assessment. A flat rate for meals and transport continues to be charged with direct payment charges to be set using the same principles as day care and homecare. Services for carers to remain free of charges. Cabinet approved an eight week consultation period which would take place with all stakeholders, including service users. Cabinet revised the recommendation for charging so that the day care charges are to be set at £7.30 per hour rather than £14.00 and that a review of day care service provision takes place recognising the changing preventative agenda and other local authority good practice.
- (ii) **Commission for Social Care Inspection Report on Services for People with Learning Disabilities and the Council's Action Plan** – Cabinet has received a report advising on the Commission for Social Care Inspection report on services in Herefordshire for people with learning disabilities. Cabinet has welcomed the report as an important contribution to the improvement of services for people with learning disabilities in the County, has accepted the inspectors' judgement and their 27 recommendations and has approved an action plan to address them.
- (iii) **Extra Care Housing, Rose Gardens, Ledbury Road** – Cabinet considered an exempt report on Extra Care Housing at Rose Gardens, Ledbury Road, Hereford, and approved the approach to funding additional capital costs identified in developing the scheme.

7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES (Cabinet Member – A. Blackshaw)

7.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Response to the Review of the Support for Museums and Heritage Centres** - Cabinet has received a report from the Museum Review Group which was presented to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee in December 2006. Although Cabinet has rejected a number of proposals in the report, it has supported the following recommendations:
 - (a) All Museums in the County be encouraged to complete the Museum

Associations Accreditation process;

- (b) the Museum Development Officer MDO project should continue through the support of the Hub and the MLA;
 - (c) independent museums in the County be reminded that they can apply for Community Grant Funding;
 - (d) the possibility of a partnership insurance scheme for the Herefordshire Museums Forum members should be explored. This could be pursued by the Museum Development Officer on the Forum's behalf;
 - (e) a small hiring collection be established to loan objects along the lines of the Reading Corporate Loans scheme. (The recommendation to be pursued with an outline scheme presented to the Cabinet Member);
 - (f) a formula be developed to measure Heritage's impact on both tourism and to demonstrate its social and economic impact; and
 - (g) prevention measures be undertaken to protect Kington Museum from being struck by lorries reversing to a nearby store.
- (ii) **Sale of Council Assets within the Edgar Street Grid Urban Village –** Cabinet has agreed in principal to the marketing of the Council's assets within the Edgar Street Grid Urban Village and for further work to be undertaken on detailed aspects of the development following which it will receive a further report.

8. RESOURCES (Cabinet Member – H. Bramer)

8.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Final Revenue and Capital Outturn 2006/07 –** Cabinet received a report on the final outturn position for 2006/07, the Corporate Management Board's recommendations for the carry forward of unspent budget into 2007/08 and the creation of new reserves and provisions in the 2006/07 accounts. Cabinet were advised that the full Statement of Accounts for 2006/07 would be presented to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 29th June in order to meet the statutory deadline. Cabinet were advised of the service budget underspends. Cabinet noted the overspend in the Adult and Community Services Directorate, was due to budgetary pressures, and is to be brought back into line using contingency funding. The forecast outturn at month 12 is for an overspend of £698k, which reflects the reassessment of commitments against the Community Services budgets. The overspend areas were Learning Disability, Mental Health and Physical Disability. Children and Young People's Services forecast outturn at month 12 was for an overspend of £122k excluding schools budgets. This represented an improvement in financial performance of some £261k excluding schools budgets. Safeguarding and assessment budgets had an overspend of £554k. This included a £528k overspend on external agency placement budgets where the number of placements doubled in 2006/07. Increased fostering placements led to a £255k overspend and social work budgets overspent by £144k. There was an underspend of £373k on assessment and family

support, which eased the budgetary position. Additionally there were significant underspends on school transport due to route reviews and falling rolls at schools. Corporate and Customer Services directorate overspent on the budget by £191k, which was better than expected as the forecast outturn at month 12 was for an overspend of £568k, representing a financial performance of £377k. The Environment directorate under spent compared to budget by £274k. The under spend has been recommended to be used to increase the level of waste management reserve rather than carried forward for other areas of corporate support. Resources directorate under spent compared to budget by £589k, the forecast outturn at month 12 was for an under spend of £150k. This is due to the improved performance in benefits processing times resulting in a reduction in penalties. The Corporate budgets showed an under spend at outturn. Cabinet was advised there was £8.7m in general reserves, which was a better than expected position. Cabinet approved the final outturn for 2006/07 and Corporate Management Board's recommendations for carry forward of unspent budget into 2007/08.

- (ii) **New Procurement Strategy** - Cabinet has received a report on the proposed new Procurement Strategy and has supported the proposal that the Strategy be adopted as a framework document pending further comparative work with other similar local authorities. Cabinet noted the creation of a new post of Strategic Procurement and Efficiency Manager, whose responsibilities would include implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of the Strategy, monitoring compliance and updating as appropriate. Cabinet noted that a consistent approach to procurement would enable the Council to maximise savings and efficiency opportunities, leading to better outcomes and a reduction in current risk.

9. CHILDREN'S SERVICES (Cabinet Member – J.A. Hyde)

9.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Children and Young People's Plan Annual Review 2007 and Annual Performance Assessment** – Cabinet received an urgent report on the Children and Young People's Plan (C&YPP) Annual Review 2007 and Annual Performance Assessment submission. The Annual Review of the C&YPP is a statutory requirement. The revised Annual Performance Assessment and inspection arrangements from 2007 require submission of the C&YPP Review document, which includes the Delivery (Action) Plan for 2007/08 and the Council's self-evaluation of its contribution to maintaining and improving the five Every Child Matters outcomes for children and young people. The review document included the consultation with the shadow Children and Young People's Partnership Board. Cabinet recognised that overall good progress had been made against the priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan with a strong capacity to improve with ongoing support from the Government office. Cabinet noted the range of improvements in place and the work to be carried out to move towards a Children's Trust. Cabinet approved, subject to any minor amendments by the Director, the Children and Young People's Plan Review 2007 and the Annual Performance Assessment Self Assessment document.
- (ii) **Progress on Improvement – Children and Young People's Services** - On 12th April, 2007, Cabinet was advised of the continuing engagement with the

Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) in the drive for improvement in Children and Young People's Services in Herefordshire. Cabinet has now received a report advising of the success criteria agreed with the GOWM which will judge if sufficient improvement has been made in the service, with a view to ceasing that engagement in the autumn. The Cabinet has noted that staffing is the most significant risk to achieving the criteria, but that the performance unit will have a permanent lead officer, and staff resources to support the school review will be strengthened in this period.

- (iii) **Review of School Provision** - Cabinet has received a report advising on the position on the review of school provision being undertaken in the County. Cabinet has supported the proposals from the Governors of Wigmore Primary School and Wigmore High School to form a federated school from September 2007 and has asked that a further report on the project be submitted to Cabinet after that date.

10. ENVIRONMENT AND STRATEGIC HOUSING (Cabinet Member – J.G. Jarvis)

10.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Local Development Framework Core Strategy** - Cabinet has received a report on the LSF Task Group meeting on 25 June 2007 and endorsed the suggested approach to the Core Strategy Issues public consultation to be undertaken in September and October. The proposed approach was that consultation would include the issue of leaflets and questionnaires, a “visioning” event; media releases; mail-outs to stakeholders; interest group meetings and local exhibitions. It was also proposed that Cabinet Members covering specific portfolio areas be given delegated authority to approve the issues and scope of the questionnaire to be published. Cabinet heard that a timetable was being set to include consulting with all members and this would be reported to Cabinet on 19th July.

11. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION (Cabinet Member – D.B. Wilcox)

- (i) **Concessionary Fares Scheme for older people and those with a disability** – Cabinet has received a report advising the revisions necessary to the Council's Concessionary Travel Scheme to take account of the new statutory requirements from 1st April 2008. Cabinet endorsed the recommendations that:
 - a. The area of the Scheme be amended so that the statutory minimum scheme allows travel throughout England and the enhanced scheme allows travel on all journeys starting or ending in Herefordshire on through buses into Wales, and journeys between Presteigne and Knighton, which start and end in Wales
 - b. Where appropriate, reciprocal arrangements be entered into with neighbouring English authorities to preserve existing benefits;
 - c. The eligibility criteria under the enhanced scheme be amended to allow disabled persons unable to travel independently to be accompanied by a companion;
 - d. Arrangements be put in place to issue new passes in the form of smartcards.

Cabinet welcomed the proposals and noted that disabled people requiring assistance from a companion could transfer the companion card between carers. A progress report would come before Cabinet at a later date.

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