

**MINUTES of the meeting of COUNCIL held at : The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford. on Friday, 27th July, 2007 at 10.30 a.m.**

**Present:** Councillor J Stone (Chairman)  
Councillor JB Williams (Vice Chairman)

**Councillors:** PA Andrews, LO Barnett, DJ Benjamin, AJM Blackshaw, WLS Bowen, H Bramer, RBA Burke, ACR Chappell, ME Cooper, PGH Cutter, H Davies, GFM Dawe, PJ Edwards, MJ Fishley, JP French, JHR Goodwin, AE Gray, DW Greenow, KG Grumbley, KS Guthrie, JW Hope MBE, MAF Hubbard, B Hunt, TW Hunt, JA Hyde, TM James, JG Jarvis, P Jones CBE, MD Lloyd-Hayes, G Lucas, RI Matthews, R Mills, PM Morgan, AT Oliver, JE Pemberton, RJ Phillips, GA Powell, PD Price, SJ Robertson, A Seldon, RH Smith, RV Stockton, JK Swinburne, DC Taylor, AM Toon, NL Vaughan, WJ Walling, PJ Watts, DB Wilcox and JD Woodward

**16. PRAYERS**

The Very Reverend Peter Haynes led the Council in prayer.

**17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Attfield, Bartrum, Daniels, RC Hunt, McLean, and AP Taylor.

**18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor AE Gray declared an interest in Item 6.1 (ii) of the Cabinet report, Commission for Social Care Inspection Report on Services for People with Learning Disabilities and the Council's Action Plan.

Councillors DB Wilcox and RJ Phillips declared an interest in Item 1.1 of the Cabinet report, Youth Justice Plan.

**19. MINUTES**

The Chairman drew Council's attention to Appendices 1 and 2 of the Council Minutes, which had been omitted from the agenda.

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th May, 2007 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**20. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman acknowledged the amount of interest that had been generated by the archaeological find of the Rotherwas Ribbon during the construction of the Rotherwas Relief Road. He noted the number of members of the public in attendance for the item, the interest in the number of questions put by Members and the public and the Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor MD Lloyd-Hayes relating to the item.

He reminded Council that public questions were limited to 25 minutes and stated that

the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) would read a statement relating to public questions on the archaeological find and then answer Members' questions individually. He announced that he would not be permitting supplementary questions under paragraph 4.25.2 of the Council's Constitution, as Members would be able to debate the Notice of Motion under the main agenda item, Minute number 23.

The Chairman referred to flooding that had been experienced in the County following the heavy rainfall on Friday, 20th July, through to the 24th July and stated that a number of people had been adversely affected by the flooding. He extended the thanks of the Council to all staff who assisted over that weekend, with special thanks to St Johns Ambulance, the voluntary sector and Halo.

The Chairman announced the retirement of Mrs. Jean Wood who had been secretarial assistant to both the Chairman and Leader of the Council since 1998.

Finally, the Chairman announced that the Council meeting scheduled for the 9th November, 2007 would be changing to the 2nd November, due to a clash with the annual meeting of Advantage West Midlands and the Regional Development Agency.

There were no petitions.

## 21. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Under the Constitution a member of the public can ask a Cabinet Member or Chairman of a Committee any question relevant to a matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties, or which affects the County, as long as a copy of the question is deposited with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services more than six clear working days before the meeting. A number of questions had been received and were included in the agenda. The questions, together with a summary of the responses, are set out below:

### **Questions from M Wilson, Lugwardine, Hereford**

*"Why does the local Standards Committee not follow the Standards Board for England's procedures when carrying out a local investigation? Viz issuing the investigating officers report in draft so that misunderstandings, misinterpretations, error of fact and bias can be corrected before the report is presented to the Committee?"*

*Having had errors reported to them, why does the Committee use a report containing all the above errors as the basis for the findings?"*

*What appeal procedures are available to challenge the procedures of the Monitoring Officer and the local Standards Committee in carrying out local investigations into alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct, when the Director and Chief Executive decline to use the Council's complaints procedure and the Standards Board for England have washed their hands of the matter in passing it to the Monitoring Officer?"*

### **Answer from Mr Robert Rogers Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee**

With permission, Chairman, I will answer these three questions together as they are closely related. I say questions, but they are more in the nature of allegations,

regrettably intemperately phrased.

The questioner made seven complaints against Members of Herefordshire Council; all seven were referred by the Standards Board for England for local investigation, and then were subject to local determination by the Committee which I chair.

The fact that these matters have been considered by the Committee means that it would be wholly improper for me to revisit the evidence and the decisions in public. But I can comment upon the procedures followed.

The questioner alleges that the Committee did not follow the procedures recommended by the Standards Board for England. This is unfounded. We have now determined 13 cases locally, and in every one the SBE's procedures for local investigation and local determination, as appropriate, have been followed exactly.

The Monitoring Officer, not the Committee, appoints the investigating officer (who must not be an adviser to the Committee). Under the SBE's procedures, it is for the investigating officer to decide whether or not to issue a draft report before a final report goes to the Committee. But when the Committee considers the final report, it must analyse the evidence and take a view on all the interpretations and deductions made by the investigating officer. This is what we did in these seven cases, carefully considering some 700 pages of evidence in all. We were fully aware of the evidence upon which the allegations were founded. Our Decision Notices set out very plainly and in detail why we found the complaints to be wholly without foundation.

The SBE are reviewing these cases – as they review all local determinations. The questioner is welcome to ask them for the outcome.

I cannot finish without commenting on the fact that Question 1 accuses the investigating officer of bias. This is a damaging allegation to make against a conscientious public servant who also has professional obligations as a solicitor of the Supreme Court. I reject the allegation.

It sometimes happens that those dissatisfied with the decision of a tribunal seek to attack the process; but there are better ways of doing it than this.

### **Questions from P Cocks, Hereford**

*“Observation of the traffic flow at the junction of Ross Road and Holme Lacy Road indicate that the percentage of heavy goods vehicles against light vans and cars turning into Holme Lacy Road is very small. What is the evidence that the Council carried out a detailed traffic survey to justify the Rotherwas Relief Road. Sites for a survey need to have been at the junction of the A49 and Holm Lacy Road, also at the entrances to the Rotherwas Industrial Estate, in the following categories?”*

- 1) *Pedal Cycles*
- 2) *Two wheeled motorised vehicles*
- 3) *Cars and taxis*
- 4) *Buses and coaches*
- 5) *Light goods vehicles*
- 6) *HGV rigid 2 axles*
- 7) *HGV rigid 3 axles*
- 8) *HGV rigid 4 axles*
- 9) *HGV articulated 3 axles*
- 10) *HGV articulated 4 axles*
- 11) *HGV articulated 5 or more axles*

*The above formula is from the Ministry of Transport. It is used by many councils, from 07:00 hrs to 19:00 hrs. If Herefordshire Council has not carried out such a categorized traffic Census then what detailed data can you produce to justify the*

*Rotherwas Road?*

*A weight restriction is proposed for Holme Lacy Road. At what weight will the restriction be set? Will this limit include vehicles carrying waste and domestic rubbish to Rotherwas? How stringent will the enforcement of the weight restriction be and what is the calculated cost of this enforcement?*

*Earlier proposals for Holme Lacy Road included a restriction of traffic at the Railway Bridge on Holme Lacy Road to force the majority of vehicles to use the new Rotherwas road. Is this proposal still under consideration?*

*It would be appreciated if an answer to these questions be given as an item and not as on the 9th February 2007 included in an all encompassing statement, which was designed to confuse."*

**Answer from Councillor DB Wilcox, Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation)**

Considerable data collection, analysis and traffic modelling was undertaken during the development of the Rotherwas Access Road scheme to demonstrate the need for the scheme. New data was collected in relation to traffic movements at various points on both the A49 and Holme Lacy Road. Data was also supplied by the Highways Agency in relation to traffic on the A49. This data was collected in line with Government guidance. This data was used to enable detailed traffic modelling work to be undertaken to forecast and demonstrate the traffic effects and the likely benefits of the scheme both now and in the future with the expected development of the estate. The benefits identified include reducing HGV movements along Holme Lacy Road to improve the environment of this residential area. This modelling work was used in the preparation of the Transport Assessment which accompanied the Planning Application for the scheme and the Major Scheme Business Case that was submitted to Government.

The planning consent for the access road requires the introduction of a weight restriction banning vehicles above 7.5tonne on Holme Lacy Road no later than 12 months after the access road is opened to further reduce the number of HGVs using this route. The Council has commenced the required statutory consultation associated with the associated Order to enable this restriction to be in place next Spring to coincide with the opening of the access road. Enforcement of the weight restriction will be the responsibility of West Mercia Police.

The planning consent for the access road does not make specific reference to measures at Holme Lacy Road Railway Bridge. However an overall package of improvements for road users once the weight restriction on Holme Lacy Road is in place is being considered to reinforce the weight limit. Scoping, feasibility and costings reports are being prepared to determine the extent and programme of works to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists .

**Questions from R Hattersley, Hereford**

*"What is the extent of the research the Council have undertaken into the potential for tourism for the Ribbon? What plans do the Council have for investigating this before covering the find up? Have the Council undertaken any research into the concept of a Heritage Park on Dinedor Hill and surrounding area? Do they intend to do so?"*

**Answers from Councillor A Blackshaw, Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services)**

Despite claims made by those who oppose the road that the Ribbon would be a viable tourist attraction, the fact is it does not make a significant visual impact of anything like the nature of Stone Henge, The White Horse at Uffington nor, indeed, the serpent feature in the United States. The fact that those making these claims were, and remain, opposed to the building of the road is, I think, no coincidence. The Council would need to find considerable funds to both move the course of the road and to provide a permanent structure to cover the site. Therefore the question of funding research into the viability of the site at this time as a tourist attraction is premature.

Once Cabinet has made a decision on the course of the road, the preservation of the site and further investigation of the Ribbon tourism and/or educational potential can be explored in detail.

The Council has not undertaken research into the concept of a Heritage Park on Dinedor Hill but would welcome any proposals from interested parties for consideration.

*“How important do the Council believe to be the views of local tourism business, and how do the Council intend to consult with them on the potentially positive impact the ribbon could have on their business? How important do the Council believe the views of the Herefordshire public to be on what should be done with the Ribbon? When and how do the Council plan to take these views into account?”*

The Council take into account the views of local tourism business as well as other economic, community and environmental aspects of life in the County. As above, detailed consideration of the tourism impact of the Ribbon at this time, ahead of a Cabinet decision, is premature.

The Council thinks the views of all residents are important, including the 5,000 who signed a petition asking government for funding for the road. All views will be taken into account before a decision is made.

*“In a recent letter to businesses in Rotherwas, the Council's Director of Environment stated, “The Ribbon has not even a fraction of the intrinsic interest enjoyed by Stonehenge...” On what evidence was this statement based?”*

The full text of the passage to which the questioner refers is “The Ribbon has not even a fraction of the intrinsic interest enjoyed by Stonehenge nor the visual impact.” This statement is based on the evidence that Stone Henge, described by English Heritage as “one of the wonders of world” comprises a stone circle 284 feet in diameter, standing stones weighing up to 4 tonnes, some of which were transported for hundreds of miles. Stone Henge is a world heritage site, the Ribbon has not yet even been scheduled as an ancient monument by English Heritage.

**Questions from J Hines, Hereford**

*“What date was the Ribbon actually discovered, when was its significance realised, and when was English Heritage informed?”*

**Answers from Councillor JG Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing)**

The earliest indications that the Ribbon might exist was on 24 April. English Heritage

visited the site on 2 May. The full significance became apparent during the excavations and was confirmed on 13 June.

*“Had the solution to cover the Ribbon with the road been formally approved by English Heritage when the Council made this proposal public and what alternative options had been investigated other than the proposal to cover the Ribbon with the road? Has any analysis been done of the potential effect of ground vibration and compaction caused by the road on the Rotherwas Ribbon?”*

The design solution we have considered has been developed in conjunction with English Heritage. It had not been formally approved when we made the find public. Other options under consideration for a decision by Cabinet include stopping the road, diverting left or right, going under the site and building a bridge structure over the site. Details of these options will be made public in the Cabinet report. The solution under consideration is one employed to protect a site on Salisbury Plain subject to the passage of tanks over it. Our proposed solution includes vibration monitoring for a period of 3 years.

*“Has the Council asked English Heritage to Schedule the Ribbon? Given that Scheduling would bring the Council financial compensation would that not be a benefit?”*

The Council has discussed with English heritage the possibility of scheduling the site. Compensation is only available in limited circumstances. In any event, whether the site is scheduled or not this does not preclude any of the options that will be considered by Cabinet.

*“Why did the Council press releases imply that a 60m long object had been discovered, when in fact it is a 60m length of something much bigger that has been found so far? If as seems likely the Ribbon is much longer than 60m, is the Council concerned that if the road proceeds the Ribbon can never be viewed in its potential and dramatic entirety? What plans have been made for further investigations?”*

The Council’s press release of 4th July includes “The ribbon-shaped feature is not flat, but is three dimensional as it appears to have been deliberately sculpted to undulate throughout the 60 metres of its length which have so far been uncovered.”

The southernmost part of the Ribbon seems likely to be underneath the Northern part of the Rotherwas Industrial Estate, though this is subject to confirmation. Viewing the Ribbon in its entirety would not therefore be possible even without the road, continuation of which, and in what form, is a matter for Cabinet. We are intending to carry out further investigations in September subject to Cabinet agreement and funding from English Heritage.

#### **Questions from Ms S Norman**

*“How much does Herefordshire earn from tourism and how much from heavy industry? Which of these two sectors do the Council believe should have priority in future policy, especially if there is a conflict between the two?”*

**Answers from Councillor A Blackshaw, Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services)**

Unfortunately no directly comparable figures are available in respect of how much Herefordshire earns from Tourism and how much it earns from heavy

industry. As a best estimate for earnings in heavy industry we can use the manufacturing sector. In 2004 Herefordshire's manufacturing sector was worth approximately £437 million in (Gross Value Added) GVA for the County. This was approximately 19% of the overall GVA for the County.

In 2004 there was some 11,700 people employed in manufacturing in the County. It is worth noting that this figure significantly under represents the full value of manufacturing to the County as in addition to this GVA figure there are many service sector businesses in the County that make their living by supporting the manufacturing sector in the County.

It is not possible to identify the GVA figures for tourism, the Government collects these figures, and doesn't define tourism as an industry sector in its own rights. Tourism cuts across a number of sectors for example hotels, restaurants, wholesale and the retail trade so it is not possible to provide GVA estimates or employment numbers for tourism. There was a piece of regional work done in 2002 which looked at the value of tourism to the region. On this basis of this model the tourism industry was worth approximately £272 million per annum to Herefordshire.

The County's Economic Development strategy identifies both sectors as being important for the future economy of the County. There is little evidence to suggest that there will be any conflict between the growth of the two sectors in the County. Indeed significant parts of the manufacturing sector are a key part of the Counties tourism attraction for example the Scottish and Newcastle cider production and other cider production facilities in the County are a key reason for the retention of orchards in the County and in themselves act as a tourism product with the cider museum in Hereford being a key part of that.

*"Why is the Council continuing to encourage businesses into Rotherwas if access is so poor, when Leominster Enterprise Park, built at great expense about three years ago, also with AWM money, is huge and virtually empty? It has excellent access to both the A49 and, potentially, to the railway line, as does Moreton Camp, which also has plenty of space."*

The Council continues to focus its efforts in providing employment land at Rotherwas, both to support the large number of existing businesses that already operate from the estate and to take advantage of its sustainable location at the heart of the County. It is important to provide employment opportunities as close to people's homes as possible to minimise the impact of travel around the County. Rotherwas is well located to the larger populated centres of the County and the access road that is currently under construction will provide good access to the M50 and the rest of the national motorway network. The employment land provision in Leominster has been developed to provide employment land supply for the North of the County for a number of years. Much of the land that was available at the Leominster Enterprise Park has in fact now been committed for development. A number of developments are under construction including eight single story office units, premises for a local printing company, a number of units are also being developed by Tensing Holdings, and a number of other plots have all been purchased for development. In addition the new Leominster Police station is currently under construction and is very close to completion and occupancy.

#### **Questions from R Clay, Hereford**

*"Why did the Council not tell English Heritage that the Rotherwas relief road was already highly controversial before the archaeological find? Which Councillors, whether in the Cabinet or not, knew about the Dinedor archaeological Find before it*

*was announced on the BBC Radio 4 Today Programme? Please name the distinguished Archaeologists who have been invited to inspect the Dinedor Find and indicate which ones have now made a visit and which ones still intend to do so?"*

**Answers from Councillor JG Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing)**

The Council had no cause to contact English Heritage before the archaeological find. However, had English Heritage wished, they could have found out all about the road from the Council's website.

All of the Council's Cabinet knew about the archaeological find prior to the piece broadcast on Radio 4.

**Questions from Ms U Clay, Hereford**

*"Will the Council make publicly available all correspondence between themselves and English Heritage concerning the Dinedor Archaeological Find?"*

**Answers from Councillor JG Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing)**

Subject to freedom of information legislation the council will make all information available.

*"How many members of the public have asked to view the Find at Dinedor and how many have been accommodated so far?"*

RR Trips – numbers of people booking	
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup> -	202
Tues 11 <sup>th</sup> -	181
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>	188
Tues 17 <sup>th</sup>	146
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup>	149
Thurs 19 <sup>th</sup>	132
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>998</b>
Events cancelled because of weather	
Fri 20 <sup>th</sup>	152
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup>	177
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>329 (HENCE WANTED TO SEE BUT DID NOT)</b>

Tried to arrange a replacement day for Tues 24<sup>th</sup> but had to cancel that also.

Not all who booked attended but there were also some that attended who did not book or booked late such that were told to turn up after the lists had been forwarded to those managing the trips on the day. I staffed the tours on two of the days and such just about equalled out. Unfortunately it was not possible to do a head count at all times because of the comings and goings. There were also small party visits of councillors, business people, archaeologists, staff and others so I think the figure of 1,000 would be a very realistic estimate.

*"Keeping in mind that Dinedor Hill was already known to be rich in matters of Archaeological interest, what contingency plans were made for a circumstance in which a sufficiently important discovery made the continuation of the line of the Rotherwas relief road impossible?"*

The planning consent given for the constriction of the road was dealt with in



accordance with PPG16 (national policy guidelines relating to archaeology) and this included provision for archaeology investigations. Impossible to predict all

## 22. QUESTIONS TO THE CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN UNDER STANDING ORDERS

Councillors may ask questions of Cabinet Members and Chairmen of Committees so long as a copy of the question is deposited with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. A list of questions, set out in the order in which they had been received, was circulated at the beginning of the meeting. Councillors may also, at the discretion of the Chairman, ask one additional question on the same topic. The questions and summary of the answers are set out below.

### Questions from Councillor ACR Chappell

*“Will the Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Strategic Housing):*

- a) make his findings public with regard to the Rotherwas Ribbon?*
- b) invite interested parties to investigate other sites immediate to the Rotherwas Ribbon site?*
- c) if English Heritage and other expert authorities agree that any new finds of the ‘Ribbon’ are worth preserving for tourism, will he tell me how many visits from the public would make a new tourist centre for the ‘Rotherwas Ribbon’ financially viable for rate payers money to be used for such a project?*
- d) give me a categorical assurance that any greater vehicle movements along Holme Lacy Road/Hoarwithy Road/Ross Road as a result of the discovery of the ‘Ribbon’ will in no way increase congestion on this road, and if he cannot, will he build an alternative route to any new tourist attraction?”*

### Answers from Councillor A Blackshaw, Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services)

- a) He had visited the site with representatives of the Herefordshire Tourism Sector and it was their conclusion that the site offered little potential as a major tourism attraction in itself. He believed there might be some merit in producing interpretive material for display at Hereford Museum and for exploring the possibility of a local viewing point of the find. An insert from the Visit Herefordshire is attached for information. This article was written following a visit by a Director of Tourism West Midlands and a Director of Visit Herefordshire.
- b) In respect of the tourism potential of other sites immediate to the Rotherwas Ribbon site, interested parties are encouraged to provide their views on that matter.
- c) As already mentioned it is not believed that the remains provide the opportunity to develop a significant as a tourism attraction. If however, there was a decision to try to provide a tourism centre for the Rotherwas Ribbon its financial viability would depend upon the charging regime that was put in place for the facility. It is not envisaged that the attraction will be capable of attracting visitors who would be prepared to pay significant amounts to visit a facility. On this basis it is anticipated that a financially viable tourism attraction might

require as many as 1 million visitors per annum to make it stack up financially.

- d) A categorical assurance cannot be given that a visitor attraction would not generate greater vehicle movements. It is anticipated that if a tourism attraction were to be developed it would generate some additional vehicle movements. It would not be financially viable to build an alternative route to any new tourism attraction sited along the Rotherwas Access Road.

*“Is the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) aware that flooding took place on Friday/Saturday last, in Prospect Walk off Whittern Way, Tupsley, Widemarsh Street near Newtown Road and Hinton Road as a direct result of water rising out of drains?”*

**Answers from Councillor DB Wilcox, Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation)**

The Highways & Transportation Service are aware that flooding took place on Friday/Saturday last, in Prospect Walk off Whittern Way, Tupsley, Widemarsh Street near Newtown Road and Hinton Road and that this was a result of water rising out of drains. The Highways & Transportation Service are also aware of numerous other locations throughout the County where flooding has occurred as a result of the recent heavy rainfall. Herefordshire has seen a months worth of rainfall in one day, surcharged drainage systems, swollen brooks and surface water run-off has caused properties to flood, roads to be closed and necessitated the evacuation of entire communities.

*“Can he assure me that all areas affected by flooding will be inspected for blocked drains and immediate action taken where necessary?”*

The Highways & Transportation team have worked around the clock with their partners HJS and alongside many other services within Council, the emergency services and other agencies to respond to the flooding. Immediate action has taken place across the County. An indication of the scale of our response can be gauged from the following statistics; we deployed of some 19500 sandbags, 560 cones, 1325m of barriers 185 flood boards and 155 road closure boards, over 4 days. Highways & Transportation's work is continuing as the waters subside, roads become open and the true extent of the damage can be assessed. The Highway repair costs associated with the last flood event, which took place only a matter of weeks ago, has been assessed at £200,000, the repair costs associated with this event are anticipated to be a multiple of this figure. The clearance of drainage will form part of these repairs. However the Council is not responsible for the public sewerage, the surcharge of which will have caused flooding at a number of the sites indicated by Cllr Chappell, and where appropriate we will request Welsh Water to respond. Please be assured that we are doing all that is humanly possible not only in immediate response to the storms, but in order to promote recovery from this flooding, that has impacted on the entire County.

Councillor Chappell thanked Herefordshire Jarvis Services, the Highways and Transportation Department and BBC Hereford and Worcester local radio for the help they had provided to residents. He asked that the culverts near to the railway bridge and on Holme Lacy Road be cleared out when the water had lowered.

The Chairman reiterate the thanks to BBC Hereford and Worcester for the important information they had provided on the flooding and which roads were accessible.

*“Does the Leader agree with me that Hereford needs an outer relief road and further public transport packages?”*

**Answers from Councillor RJ Phillips Leader of the Council**

The Council's Local Transport Plan identifies the development of an Outer Distributor Road, including a river crossing, as a key component of our long-term transport strategy for the County and recognises its importance in ensuring that the City is able to fully meet its role as a sub-regional centre. As set out in the LTP, the Outer Distributor Road should be accompanied by investment in improvements for public transport, such as Park and Ride. This should also be complemented by improvements to encourage cycling and walking. Together this forms the Council's long term integrated transport strategy to tackle the City's transport problems.

*"Does he believe that the majority of people in the county want an orbital road around Hereford and does he accept that any future outer relief road is likely to link with the Rotherwas access road?"*

The need for an Outer Distributor Road, including a river crossing, has been highlighted in the Council's Local Transport Plan. The scheme has also been highlighted at regional level as part of the forthcoming review of the West Midlands priorities for future major transport investment.

**Questions from Councillor GFM Dawe**

*"What archaeological evaluations were carried out before the current investigation? What are the dates of the briefs (in full) and the dates of the resulting evaluations received?"*

**Answers from Councillor JG Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing)**

Pre construction reports -  
Brief for Archaeological Evaluation of Route (to update EIA report) (prepared by HC) - 10/01/2002.  
Proposals for Archaeological Assessment in response to that brief (Worcestershire County Archaeological Service) 2/5/2002.  
Report on Archaeological Evaluation of the Route of The Rotherwas Access Road, Herefordshire (Worcestershire County Archaeological Service) - 21/6/2002

*"Has a geophysical (non-invasive) survey been carried out to delimit the extent of the monument?"*

Works prior to and during construction phase -  
Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Work (HC Archaeology Service) 21/5/2004.  
Report on the watching brief of Geotech Test Pits (Worcestershire County Archaeological Service) Dec 2004.  
Report arising from this work has yet to be prepared as the watching brief is still continuing and results of issues such as carbon dating, artifact analysis etc are awaited.

*"What techniques and specifications will be used to protect the archaeology in the event of road construction?: I require as much detail as possible on this, even if it is still 'in negotiation'."*

Details will be provided in forthcoming Cabinet Report.

*"Who is involved in designing the specification (the exact people, and organisations)"*

*and where has in situ conservation under a road demonstrably worked elsewhere for the preservation of a 'fragile' monument?"*

Details will be provided in forthcoming Cabinet Report.

*"What investigations exactly have English Heritage carried out since they announced that they would be thoroughly looking at the site three weeks ago?"*

This is properly a question to be put to English Heritage.

*"In the Hereford Times of 12.7.07 Charlotte Tamvakis of English Heritage was quoted as saying "we will ensure the local authority covers the remains [e.g. the Rotherwas Ribbon] to protect them from bad weather. If we have more rain it could be damaged", and also, that 'English Heritage ... is recommending a temporary cover is used to protect it'. According to ADAS, a rainfall of 102 mm (4 inches) was recorded between 10 am last Thursday and 9 am Monday (more than double the July average). Allowing for 'natural silting' (Simon Sworn's explanation for the lack of a temporary cover, in today's Hereford Times) is inadequate as a way of 'protecting' the monument. It was covered in rivulets and streams over the weekend. Why was English Heritage's recommendation not carried through as instructed? And why has the simple expedient of diverting some of the worst streams, using shovels, and without damaging the monument itself, not been carried out?"*

It was not possible to cover temporarily or to dig a trench without risking damage. This is on the clear advice of our archaeologists. We left the site uncovered to allow people to see it during the last week.

*"When is a temporary cover to be installed on the monument and water diversion to be carried out?"*

As soon as site conditions allow.

*"Can the Council release details of any analysis that has been undertaken of the relative economic benefits to the County as a result of the Rotherwas Access Road compared to the economic tourism potential of the Rotherwas Ribbon?"*

Very detailed analysis of the economic benefits of the Rotherwas Access Road have been prepared and are available for public consideration. In summary the road will protect the 2500 jobs currently located on the industrial estate and open up land to create at least a further 850 jobs. Whilst no detailed analysis has been undertaken of the relative economic benefits to the County of the Rotherwas Ribbon, the site has been visited by representatives of the County's tourism sector and it is not considered to provide the opportunity to develop a significant tourism attraction. Whilst there may be some opportunity to explore a small viewing point the main opportunity would appear to be to provide some interpretive material at Hereford Museum. The Council estimates that only a small number of jobs would be supported in the tourism sector as a result.

*"What alternative options have been investigated to date other than the proposal to cover the Ribbon with the road? Please make the full assessments available."*

Details will be provided in forthcoming Cabinet Report.

*"Apart from English Heritage, what other archaeological bodies and Bronze Age experts been consulted?"*

1. Team Leader (Herefordshire Shropshire and Warwickshire)
2. Inspector of Ancient Monuments (Herefordshire)

3. Regional Science Adviser
4. Geomorphology Specialist Adviser
5. Heritage Protection Officer

Others: representatives of editorial team for:  
British Archaeology (Council for British Archaeology)  
Current Archaeology

Invitations were issued to around 20 senior prehistorians, mostly University based. Only three were able to attend in the time available, but enquiries and expressions of interest have been received from several others.

*“Can their opinions be made public?”*

Yes, with their consent.

*“Is the Council prepared to halt the road construction completely for a 6 month period in order to allow a full independent study of alternative options to be undertaken?”*

This is a decision for Cabinet and will be considered in the forthcoming report.

*“Is the Council prepared to listen to and consult the people of Herefordshire ( 93.6% on the Hereford Times web poll) who have clearly stated their view that the road should be stopped?”*

The Council always listens too and considers carefully the people of Herefordshire's views.

*“Would the Council confirm how many potential sites (e.g. either in terms of hectares, or business units) there are available in the County for industrial development.”*

Latest estimates of available employment land in Herefordshire is 185.65 hectares of land available for employment use on 128 sites in a variety of ownerships. This land is either allocated for employment use within the adopted local plans (146.94ha), benefits from unimplemented planning permissions (27.61ha) or is currently under construction (11.10ha). Source for this information is the Annual Monitoring Report 2005-2006 of the Herefordshire Local Development Framework published in December 2006.

It should be noted that whilst 186.65ha is the estimate of land available many of these sites have development constraints e.g. inadequate access, unwillingness of landowner to develop, flooding, ground contamination etc.

*“How many 4,000 year old archaeological finds of unique international significance there are?”*

It is impossible to tell without excavating the entire county.

#### **Questions from Councillor MD Lloyd-Hayes**

*“Was a geophysical survey conducted on the route to the proposed Rotherwas Road and its surrounding area, prior to the letting of the construction contract?”*

#### **Answers from Councillor JG Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing)**

Yes, in accordance with best practice, geophysical surveys were carried out on a

sample basis along the course of the proposed road route. Among the constraints upon this limited survey work were overall cost, and the availability of access. Details can be provided as to both the brief and the design for the archaeological field evaluation project.

*"What was the exact date that Herefordshire Council became aware of the Rotherwas Ribbon/Serpent discovery?"*

24 April 2007.

#### **Questions from Councillor GA Powell**

*"I have been asked by members of the public for a paper petition for an open debate on the Rotherwas Ribbon. Such petition to be made available at the Shire Hall or Town Hall. Would the Cabinet Member therefore consider agreeing to this request?"*

#### **Answer from Councillor JG Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing)**

Anyone could start a petition and I would not presume to give the Councillor permission, as such.

#### **Questions form Councillor DC Taylor**

*"I understand that Waste Watchers have requested that the Courts consider a judicial review of the planning permission that this Council granted to Estech in November 2006. Could the Cabinet Member advise as to whether the Courts have agreed to the request from Waste Watchers and has a date been agreed for a hearing and if a date has been agreed could I be advised of that date?"*

#### **Answer from Councillor JG Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing)**

I can confirm that Hereford Waste Watchers have applied for a judicial review of the decision to grant planning permission to Estech. The review was refused when it was considered on paper submissions only. However, Hereford Waste Watchers applied to renew the application and this will take place in front of a single judge sitting in the High Court. Legal Services have not yet been notified of a date for this hearing.

*"Several members of the electorate in the Stoney Street ward have asked what the ultimate number of car parking spaces will be in the Edgar Street Grid once it has been completed. Please could I be advised of this figure?"*

#### **Answer from Councillor A Blackshaw, Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services)**

Currently 1600 spaces are available. It is anticipated that once the ESG is complete 2400 spaces will be available.

*"In November 2006 the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) was asked at the Council meeting if passing bays would be put in place on the Madley to Bridge Sollars road to ease traffic congestion. In response to the question the Cabinet Member stated that passing bays would be put in place by the end of March 2007. Could the Cabinet Member advise as to why the passing bays have not been provided and when will this work will be carried out, as it would facilitate the movement of traffic?"*

**Answer from Councillor DB Wilcox, Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation)**

Councillor Taylor appears to have summarised the answer I gave in November 2006 a little too much. The final paragraph of my answer on that occasion actually stated "Subject to all the necessary permissions being granted and agreement being reached with the landowner, it was hoped to be able to commence the works during the current financial year with a start date anticipated in March 2007".

The scheme to provide passing bays on the Bridge Sollars Road was delayed following problems with land negotiations which have now been resolved and the scheme has been added to this year's programme and is due to be completed this Autumn.

Councillor Taylor asked that the Cabinet Member keep an eye on the matter and keep Members informed of any possible changes.

**Questions from Councillor MAF Hubbard**

*"When was the first report from Prudential regarding the re-development of the Maylords Orchards shopping centre received by the Council and when were Members subsequently contacted to discuss the offer and whom did this involve?"*

**Answer from Council H Bramer, Cabinet Member (Resources)**

Prudential Property Investment Managers Ltd made a formal approach to the Council to acquire the freehold interest from the Council, or to restructure the lease, in June 2005. The matter was discussed with the Cabinet Member in July.

*"Why, when the Cabinet received the report by Driver Jonas on Prudential's offer in May 2006, did officers not consider it was a priority issue for the Council, especially in the light of the planning application for change of use at the old B&Q site by two tenants of Maylords?"*

The approach from Prudential was a normal Landlord and Tenant matter. There was and is no legal requirement for the Council to even consider an approach of this nature.

*"What negotiations have gone on between officers and the Prudential since Cabinet gave permission in December 2006 to enter into full dialogue with them?"*

Both the Council and Prudential had and were going through staff changes. Nevertheless informal contact and discussions were ongoing. While approval to negotiate had been approved, there was a large difference between the Prudential's view of the value of the restructured lease and that of the Council and its external advisers. However, at the last meeting between the Council and Prudential, it was agreed that Prudential would provide the Council with further scheme proposals. These proposals are still awaited.

*"What income has the Council received over the last three years from the leasing of Maylords, especially in the last twelve months when both the old New Look and Silver Screen premises have failed to attract new tenants? Please break this information down into annual income for each year."*

The income received by the Council from the Maylords lease was:

- 2004/05 - £451,886
- 2005/06 - £397,769
- 2006/07 - £432,668

**Question from Councillors SJ Robertson and RI Matthews**

*"We are very concerned about the poor state of footpaths and lack of drains maintenance, particularly in the rural areas. This is a cross party concern and we would, therefore, ask what plans the Cabinet Member has to address these issues, especially as there was a £274,000 underspend in the Environment Directorate for 2006/2007?"*

**Answer from Councillor DB Wilcox, Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation)**

The importance of highway maintenance is recognised and the Council invests annually around £9 million of capital and revenue funding on maintaining the highway network of the County. Whilst there was a small under-spend across the Environment Directorate as a whole during 2006/7, the Highways and Transportation revenue budgets were overspent by £751,000, as reported to Environment Scrutiny Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

Whilst Highway Maintenance is important, pressure on the Directorate's revenue budgets for 2007/8 have resulted in a reduction in the Highway Maintenance budget for the current year of £909,000. The reduction in the highway maintenance budget is partly mitigated by an increase in capital funding that the Council receives through the Local Transport Plan. However, the Highways and Transportation Service will, necessarily, have to prioritise the work to be carried out within the available budget, particularly bearing in mind the impact on road conditions resulting from the recent severe weather conditions.

**Questions from Councillor WLS Bowen**

*"What percentage of letters from the public are answered on time?"*

**Answers from Councillor JP French, Cabinet Member (Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources)**

The Council has set corporate standards for responses to correspondence.

These are 95% of all letters to be responded to within 10 working days,  
100% within 15 working days.

As part of the implementation of the Customer Services Strategy, a framework for monitoring compliance to the standard across the Council is being developed to be implemented from 1 October 2007.

This will run in parallel with the introduction of the new complaints monitoring system via the customer relationship management software.

The target for acknowledgement of complaints is two working days with a full response within eight working days.

Satisfaction rates with handling of complaints for Herefordshire Council stood at 36%, higher than any in our benchmarking group.

Additionally 200 staff, mainly those in direct contact with the public have participated in specialised customer services training over the last year which sets out a series of



qualitative measures for staff in dealing with the public

*"How many letters to the planning services, in particular, are answered on time?"*

The majority of letters to the Planning Service are letters of representation to planning applications. All such letters are acknowledged within 3 days. Other letters consist of enquiries about proposed development and general correspondence. These are responded to in accordance with the Council's published standards. Detailed records are not kept of the performance of the Service in this area.

*"How soon can the Council institute "Passiv Haus" standards of building throughout the county?"*

**Answers from Councillor JG Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing)**

The Government is currently consulting on *Building Regulations - Energy Efficiency requirements for new buildings: A forward look at what standards may be in 2010 and 2013*

This consultation outlines the issues that will need to be addressed in the forthcoming review of the Building Regulations energy efficiency requirements (Part L) for new dwellings that will support the aims expressed in the Housing Green Paper - *Homes for the Future: More Affordable, More Sustainable*.

It gives an indication of the issues that will need to be considered in developing proposals for the significantly higher standards that will be necessary, and illustrations of the sorts of building specifications that might be adopted in order to meet them.

The paper highlights the importance of the next review of the Building Regulations, planned for 2010. Passiv Haus and other building standards are actively being pursued.

*"Do you agree that this would be a major step forward in energy conservation and improved building methods and give us a much reduced carbon footprint?"*

It is inevitable that improved standards of building efficiency will assist in reducing carbon footprint of new development. Equivalent effort should also be given to improving the thermal efficiency of existing buildings

*"Is the Herefordshire Connects programme on time and within budget? If not, please will you inform us as to the current and predicted positions?"*

The Procurement phase of Herefordshire Connects was completed within the timetable the Council set. That phase identified the preferred supplier. The timetable for negotiation with the preferred supplier was less firm than the earlier phases but has broadly met the objectives in ensuring that the active part of the programme could begin before the "August holiday break".

For commercial reasons the Council has to date only entered into an interim agreement with the intention of the Master Agreement being completed in September. The costs of the programme are less than the original estimates and negotiations continue to secure further reductions. The benefits of the programme have been subject to rigorous appraisal both internally and externally to ensure the financial stability of the programme.

The overall picture remains one of substantial return on investment but there are, as

would be expected, differences in the profile of that return which do affect the assumptions made in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Following recent consideration by the relevant Cabinet Members it is clear that these are capable of being contained within the Medium Term Financial Strategy. A full report will be made to Cabinet as soon as the Master Agreement is completed.

### Questions from Councillor AM Toon

*"It was reported this week in the Hereford Journal about discussions being held with the Church of England as potential sponsors of Wyebridge Sports College to become an Academy. This would take the school out of the Local Authority Control. Academies can be sponsored in many ways and the Manchester model of being jointly sponsored by local businesses has been part of a regeneration strategy. I have been disappointed with the past record of the Education Dept engaging with the community and Councillors in keeping them informed on this type of project. I would therefore ask the Cabinet member for Children's Services:*

- a) *At what stage are the current discussions?*
- b) *Who else has the department spoken to explore options?*
- c) *Will this be a true Academy or a Voluntary Aided school under another guise?*
- d) *Will it remain with its same catchment?*
- e) *Will it have faith places and as such be eligible for more free and subsidised transport places at the local taxpayers expense and parents subjected to being scored on their Christianity on how many times a year the parents do bell ringing, give readings or help out at the church fete as is the current arrangement?*

*The article quoted a response from the Church of England stating that it was a 'red herring' to suggest the school would break the law. In July 2006 I had to take matters into my own hands and referred 15 Voluntary Aided schools to DFES the majority of them Church of England and including both of the county's Faith secondary schools for failure to comply with Government admissions Code of practice, even after these schools were given an additional 12 months to comply by the council. One school I understand has still has not complied. The previous cabinet member declined to refer the matter to the adjudicator even after the Local Admissions Forum had passed a recommendation to do so.*

- i) *What confidence can the cabinet member give this assembly that it will not shirk its obligations to the public and will not again support the churches ambitions, against the parents and children's rights when the matter of compliance with the law, good practice and inclusiveness are at stake?*
- ii) *If this council has been unable or unwilling to control the current behaviour of some of the voluntary aided schools what mechanisms will it put in place to ensure that an independent school will comply?*
- iii) *Will the cabinet member be prepared to hold a seminar on the matter for all members, for the matter to come to Children's Services scrutiny committee and hold open public meetings for parents to engage in deciding the future of their children?"*

### Answer from Councillor JA Hyde, Cabinet Member (Children's Services)

In response to the questions on the proposal to create an academy at Wyebridge

Sports College, I answer as follows:

1. Following the expression of interest jointly submitted by the Chair of Governors of Wyebriidge Sports College, the Director of Education at Hereford Diocese, and the Director of Children's Services, in January 2007 the DfES approved that the proposal enters a feasibility stage. In this the sponsors have a leading role setting out their vision for the new school. This is being prepared at the moment, and the sponsors have planned to consult the school and local community on this in September. Following this a business case would need to be submitted to the DCSF. The LA is contributing to the construction aspects of the business case. We have been told that a capital sum of £20M will be available for the building and £1.9 for IT equipment.
2. The Director of Children's Services in December 2006 took the view that the rebuilding of Wyebriidge is essential to the education of children in the area. The academy solution was the only solution available for such expenditure and an academy supported by a local sponsor with whom we have had and still enjoy close working relationships was less threatening than working with unknown third parties.
3. The DCSF, if they approve the proposals, will establish the new school as an academy.
4. All parties signed the expression of interest document on the basis that the school would serve the area currently served by Wyebriidge Sports College.
5. All parties signed the expression of interest on the basis that there would be no change to the current admission arrangements and oversubscription policy no faith places would be offered.

On the question of legal compliance I can report that in the opinion of the officers all 24 aided schools in the County comply to the Admission Code of Practice. The academy will be subject to the same scrutiny and obligations on all other maintained schools, and be party to the Local Admissions Forum. If members felt that they would benefit from learning more about admissions this can be arranged. The agenda for Scrutiny Committee is out of my control, although I am happy to pass Cllr Toon's request to Cllr Robertson if she feels that this is required. I would be guided by the Local Admissions Forum on whether additional public meetings would be beneficial.

## **23. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDERS**

Councillor MD Lloyd-Hayes had submitted the following Notice of Motion.

*This Council resolves to ensure that no irreversible action be taken that would prejudice the potential for appropriate access to this major archaeological site.*

*That this Council suspend the building of the Rotherwas Relief Road in the area of the archaeological find and land adjacent to it, in order to undertake an independent, external and exhaustive enquiry and report back to Council.*

*The findings to be made available to all Members to consider and vote on at the 9th November meeting of Council. The report be made available to Members and the public at least 21 days prior to the same Council meeting.*

The Chairman moved to urgency and that Motion was duly seconded.

Councillor Lloyd-Hayes read out a statement on the possible significance of the discovery of the Rotherwas Ribbon and its possible potential as a tourist attraction, although agreed that funding for it could be expensive. She requested that there

was more public involvement and debate on the issue.

Councillor Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) stated that he agreed with a lot of the points put forward, but did not believe the Notice of Motion as it stood would fit in with the Council's constitution and proposed an amendment. The Leader of the Council seconded the amendment.

In relation to a query regarding the original Notice of Motion and possible inconsistencies with the Council's Constitution, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services pointed out to Council that the functions in the later part of the Motion were executive functions for Cabinet and not ones that the Council had power over.

Proposed Amended Motion:

- 1 *The Council resolves to ensure that no irreversible action be taken that would prejudice the preservation or the potential for access, if appropriate, to what as currently advised is a site of archaeological importance.*
- 2 *That Council notes that work on the construction of the Rotherwas Relief Road in that area is currently suspended (NB some works are being undertaken to protect the site) and that Cabinet be asked to address the issue of the appropriate approach to completion of the Rotherwas Relief Road in the context of the advice to be received from English Heritage as to the best method of preserving the archaeological remains.*
- 3 *Council requests Cabinet to address the issue of the financial consequences of the delay to date on the Rotherwas Relief Road, as part of the fuller considerations, and to quantify the financial impact of further delays and make recommendations to Council as to how those issues might be addressed within the Council's budget.*
- 4 *That Council be invited to note that any decision made by Cabinet on this issue would be a key decision within the Constitution and will therefore be liable to call-in for scrutiny. If Scrutiny express any significant concerns about the action proposed by Cabinet, which action will only be taken on the advice of English Heritage, and Cabinet is minded to proceed without addressing those concerns then the Leader gives an undertaking to approach the Chairman to call a special meeting of Council.*

Councillor Jarvis, Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) reiterated that he agreed with the principal statement that the remains needed to be preserved and that the Council needed to take the advice of English Heritage. In order to reassure Members he stated that any decision on the Rotherwas Ribbon would be treated as a key decision and therefore subject to call-in through the Scrutiny Committee.

In response to the queries as to the sites value as a tourist attraction, the Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Community Services) stated that he had asked the Director of Visit Herefordshire if they felt it was a viable tourist site. It was stated they had not and added that it was felt it was purely of interest to a specialist minority.

The Leader paid tribute to Dr Ray and his team. He added that Worcester archaeology and English Heritage had visited the site many times to see the work being carried out.

Councillor Lloyd-Hayes reiterated the points raised in the original Motion and welcomed the points made by fellow Councillors, but did not feel that the amendment to the Motion was acceptable and that the focus should not be on the cost of the relief road but on the protection of the site. Councillor Lloyd-Hayes raised concern on the separation of the Council's role in relation to planning matters.

The Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) stated the importance of working with and through the statutory bodies like English Heritage and emphasised that the Head of Planning and his officers had clearly followed Planning Policy And Guidance 16 procedures.

Members then voted on the amended Notice of Motion. There were 38 votes for the amendment and 7 against.

Councillor MAF Hubbard referred to the site and proposed a further amendment to the amended Notice of Motion by way of an addition, that:

*The Council requests Cabinet to commission an independent and external enquiry to the extent of the archaeological find to ensure that any future decision with regard to the development of the Rotherwas Access Road is taken with complete knowledge of what we are dealing with.*

In response to a query regarding the setting up of an independent enquiry the Chief Executive advised that advice could be sort through the usual market channels or could be commissioned through English Heritage.

A vote was taken on the amendment to the amended Motion put by Councillor Hubbard, but this was lost. The Substantive Motion, which was put forward by the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing), was agreed with a clear majority.

At this point in the meeting it was agreed to adjourn for five minutes.

## 24. CABINET

The Leader of the Council, Councillor R.J. Phillips, presented the report of the meetings of Cabinet held on 21st June, and 12th July, 2007.

**In relation to Item 4.1(i) – Herefordshire Connects** – In response to question as to whether the Herefordshire Connect Programme was on course, the Cabinet Member (Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources) advised that some savings had been made in the programme and these savings would be put into the contingency fund for next year. The Cabinet Member referred Members to the answer provided for the Herefordshire Connects question.

**In relation to Item 5.1(iv) – Pay and Workforce Development Strategy** – Councillor AM Toon commended the Human Resources department on the commitment to provide an overarching structure and Investors in People.

**In relation to Item 8.1(i) – Final Revenue and Capital Outturn 2006/07** – in response to a query on the overspend in the capital budget for schools the Leader advised the over spend had been on projects.

**In relation to Item 10.1(i) – Local Development Framework Core Strategy** – Councillor PJ Edwards pointed out that the timetable for consulting with Members had been reported to Cabinet on 12th July.

**In relation to Item 9.1(ii) – Children and Young People’s Plan Annual Review 2007 and Annual Performance Assessment** – Councillor SJ Robertson noted the evidence of improvement and asked that staff be thanked for their hard work. In response the Cabinet Member (Children Services) advised that the improvement in staffing levels was significant and to be welcomed and the situation would continue to be monitored.

**RESOLVED: That the reports from the meetings of Cabinet held on 21st June, and 12th July, 2007 be received.**

**25. STRATEGIC MONITORING COMMITTEE**

Councillor P.J. Edwards presented the report of the meeting of the Strategic Monitoring Committee held on 13th June, and 16th July, 2007. He drew Council’s attention to paragraphs 4, 6 and 9 of the report relating to the corporate risk register, pressures on budgets and the pay and workforce development strategy in relation to attaining the Investors in People Standard to help support continuous performance.

**RESOLVED: That the report of the meeting of the Strategic Monitoring Committee held on 13th June, and 16th July, 2007 be received.**

**26. REGULATORY COMMITTEE**

Councillor P. Jones CBE, presented the report of the meeting of the Regulatory Committee held on 13th June and 3rd and 11th July, 2007.

**RESOLVED: That the report of the meeting of the Regulatory Committee held on 13th June and 3rd and 11th July, 2007 be received.**

**27. CASINO PREMISES LICENCES IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 166 OF THE GAMBLING ACT 2006**

Councillor P. Jones CBE, presented the report on the Casino Premises Licences in Accordance with Section 166 – Gambling Act 2005 and asked Council to support him in passing a resolution not to issue any casino premises licences.

**RESOLVED: That the Council, under Section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005 do not issue any casino premises licences.**

**28. AUDIT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Councillor A.C.R. Chappell presented the report of the meeting of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee held on 29th June, 2007. Councillor Chappell drew Council’s attention to paragraph 9 of the report on telephone usage, which forms part of the current cost savings review being carried out and added that mobile phone usage and contracts were being looked into along with costs for postage.

**RESOLVED: That the report of the meeting of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee held on 29th June, 2007 be received.**

**29. STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Mr Robert Rogers presented the report of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 11th May and 6th July, 2007.

**RESOLVED:** That the report of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 11th May and 6th July 2007 be received.

**30. REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT**

Mr. Robert Rogers presented the report of the Standards Committee on the revised code of conduct for Members. He stated that the Committee had looked at the practical implications and felt that it was an improvement on the previous code. He added that it was now possible for Members who might have a prejudicial interest to make a representation at a Committee, which they were unable to do so before.

**RESOLVED:** That Council adopt the revised Code of Conduct and the additions to the revised Code of Conduct as set out in the report.

**31. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Councillor T.W. Hunt presented the report of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13th July, 2007.

**RESOLVED:** That the report of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 13th July 2007 be received.

**32. WEST MERCIA POLICE AUTHORITY**

Councillor B. Hunt presented the report of the West Mercia Police Authority held on 12th June, 2007. Councillor Hunt welcomed Councillor K Grumbley as a new Member and drew Council's attention to paragraph 36 of the report regarding the 40th anniversary of the formation of West Mercia Police Authority and West Mercia Constabulary. He outlined that there would be a series of events to celebrate the 40th anniversary. In answer to a query on crime reduction figures Members' attention was drawn to pages 110 – 115 of the report for the total number of crimes reported. He added that the number of police officers was at an all time high and the number of Community Support Officers was also increasing.

Councillor JP French paid tribute to PC Richard Gray who had died on 6th May, 2007 in the line of duty whilst responding to a firearms incident at Shrewsbury.

**RESOLVED:** That the report of the meeting of the West Mercia Police Authority held on 12th June, 2007 be received.

**33. HEREFORD & WORCESTER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

Councillor P. Jones CBE, presented the report of the meetings of the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority which were held on 11th June, 2007. He said that it had been a very busy time for the Fire and Rescue Authority with the extensive flooding in Hereford and Worcester. He added that in addition to the flooding problems the authority had had to face, it was also responsible for the inland waterways across the country. In addition to the flooding across the two counties the authority had also had to deal with a serious fire.

The Chairman agreed to send a letter on behalf of the Council to the Chief Fire Officer to thank them for their professionalism and efforts during the floods.

The Leader of the Council also congratulated Councillor Jones CBE, on his recent

**COUNCIL**

**FRIDAY, 27TH JULY, 2007**

election to Chairman of the Regional Fire and Rescue Authority.

**RESOLVED: That the report of the meetings of the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority which were held on 11th June, 2007 be received.**

The meeting ended at 1.40 p.m.  
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**CHAIRMAN**