

**RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY REVIEW
OF THE EDGAR STREET GRID SCHEME****Report By: HEAD OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY
SERVICES****Wards Affected**

Countywide

Purpose

1. To inform Members of the Cabinet Member's response to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee Review of the ESG scheme.

Financial Implications

2. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Background

3. The Community Services Scrutiny Committee conducted a review of the ESG scheme as a major project taking place in Herefordshire which will have significant impact on the county.
4. The interviews for the review took place on the 30th September, with a subsequent meeting on the 2nd October for Members to formulate key considerations, themes and recommendations.
5. All of the recommendations are accepted by the Cabinet Member as a reasonable assessment of consideration and concerns arising from the ESG scheme.
6. Recommendation 1: The Expanded City Centre – that the scheme is referred to as the expanded City Centre to reflect the “one city” approach in creating benefit for and linkages between the whole of the city centre area.
7. Response: that this recommendation is accepted and currently being enacted through the Hereford City Centre Regeneration Strategy.
8. Recommendation 2: Consultation – The importance of full consultation is recognised both to ensure the best result for the people of Herefordshire, but also to ensure compliance with all planning regulations. ESG to continue with its current consultation (both giving and receiving) and to investigate and use of other innovative methods of consultation as appropriate.
9. Response: This recommendation is accepted. That consultation on the ESG development continues and specific consultation on individual elements is conducted through the planning procedure.
10. Recommendation 3: Town Centre Impact Study – That the Town Centre Impact Study, commissioned by Stanhope as part of the planning process, is independently verified or conducted.

11. Response: This recommendation is agreed. Stanhope will commission the Town Centre Impact Study from a third party to be submitted to the Council as part of the planning application for the development. Herefordshire Council, as local planning authority, will commission an independent assessment of the Study as part of the processing of the planning application.
12. Recommendation 4: Business as Usual – that a partnership approach lead by the City Partnership is taken to address any down turn in use of the City Centre during construction work.
13. Response: The recommendation is agreed. The Hereford City Partnership has a key role to play in the promotion of the City to address the current down-turn in the economy as well as the construction phase of key projects. Taking this lead role, the Hereford City Partnership will be requested to work on marketing and promotion of the City, supported by ESG (Herefordshire) Ltd, Herefordshire Council and other relevant partners.
14. Recommendation 5: Linkage to the Courtyard – consideration is given to creating better linkage to the Courtyard Centre for the Arts for the venue to be part of the wider leisure offer presented as part of the expanded city development;
15. Response: This recommendation is agreed in giving consideration to ensuring linkage with the Courtyard and reported back to Scrutiny Committee when proposals have been formed.
16. Recommendation 6: Hereford City Centre Regeneration Strategy - The Hereford City Centre Regeneration Strategy is a ten-year ambition is endorsed. The strategy should be presented to Committee specifically outlining the implementation of schemes through a partnership approach.
17. Response: This recommendation is agreed. A report is to be presented to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 12 December 2008.
18. Recommendation 7: Support for Businesses - For the committee to fully understand via written report the current and intended support to businesses to relocate from the ESG site.
19. Response: This recommendation is agreed. A report is to be presented to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 12 December 2008.
20. Recommendation 8: Inclusion of the Football Ground – For officers of the council to submit a report to committee on the current legal position and options available to enable the development of the Football Ground.
21. Response: This recommendation is agreed. A report is to be presented to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee.
22. An action plan on the implementation of recommendations is enclosed and will be reported to Community Services Scrutiny Committee at every-other meeting. The action plan contains a joint response from Herefordshire Council, ESG Herefordshire Ltd, and the Hereford City Partnership. This is reflected of the combined approach adopted to implement the ambitions of the City Centre Regeneration Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report and action plan be accepted in response to the Review of the ESG scheme.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix 1 : The Action Plan