

REPORT OF THE MEETINGS OF CABINET

HELD ON 16 OCTOBER, 20 NOVEMBER, 18 DECEMBER 2008
AND 22 JANUARY 2009

Cabinet Members: RJ Phillips (Leader of the Council),
JP French (Deputy Leader),
LO Barnett, AJM Blackshaw, H Bramer,
JA Hyde, JG Jarvis, DB Wilcox and PD Price.

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

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

1.1 None were considered during the time period covered by this report

2. NOTICES OF MOTION

2.1 Cabinet considered no motions to Council during the time period covered by this report.

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

3.1 **Broadband Bandwidth to Schools.** The Cabinet Member ICT, Education and Achievement considered this item as an urgent key decision, as defined in the constitution. This report outlined the award of £1.1m to Herefordshire Council from the Department for Children, Schools and Families and sought approval to accept the funding to be used to increase broadband width to Herefordshire schools, which was given by the Cabinet Member.

4. CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE Chairman of Cabinet – Councillor RJ Phillips

Report on Decisions Taken

4.1 **Proposal and Action Plan to Address the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 –** Cabinet considered a report which provided an update on the Sustainable Communities Act 2007. Cabinet agreed to accept the invitation from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to submit proposals under section 2(1) of the Sustainable Communities Act and further approved the commencement of a local process for identifying the proposals for submission to the ‘Selector’. A briefing note would be circulated to all Members which identified any potential proposals for submission.

4.2 **Amey Service Delivery Review –** Cabinet considered a report which sought agreement to conclude the service delivery review, which, following negotiations have secured commitment for Amey to key principles which would achieve the objectives of a minimum of £1million savings per annum and improved service delivery. The principles outlined in the report were agreed by Cabinet and it was further agreed that the detailed negotiations be concluded under the authority of the

Chief Executive. Cabinet agreed that the staff in the scope of the review (as identified in the report) be given formal notification of a potential TUPE transfer.

- 4.3 Herefordshire Partnership Governance Review** – The report informed Cabinet of the outcome of the Herefordshire Partnership Governance Review and outlined the impact of the new structure on performance management and achievement of outcomes for the local community. Whilst Cabinet noted the content of the report, it was requested that Herefordshire Partnership clarify the role of elected members within the structure and that a review of the effectiveness of the new governance structure be undertaken within two years.

5. CHILDREN'S SERVICES
Cabinet Member: Councillor JA Hyde

Report on Decisions Taken

- 5.1 Call in of Cabinet Decision on Swimming Provision for Primary Schools in Hereford City** – Cabinet considered the recommendations made by the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee in relation to the call in of the Key Decision on swimming provision for primary schools in and around Hereford City and the future of the LEA swimming pool. Cabinet reconfirmed that the LEA swimming pool was not to be reopened and that alternative provision from September 2008 would be offered at Hereford Leisure Pool and that this provision by HALO be monitored to ensure that the needs of schools and other users continued to be met. Cabinet confirmed the need for close collaboration and partnership working be undertaken between the Council and HALO with schools, clubs and other users of the LEA pool to ensure that available and efficient services was provided. Cabinet requested that the local community submitted a feasibility/business case to cover several years on the viability of the use of the LEA pool. Cabinet would consider a further report by Easter 2009 outlining the outcome of the process.

- 5.2 Joint Scrutiny Review of the Transition From Leaving Care to Adult Life** – Cabinet considered the response to the recommendations arising from the Joint Scrutiny Review which overlapped the responsibilities of both Children's Services and Adult Social Care portfolios. Cabinet approved the proposed response to the recommendations arising from the Joint Scrutiny Review of the Transition from Leaving Care to Adult Life and agreed that a report be submitted to Cabinet in May 2009, detailing the actions taken on the recommendations. It was also agreed that the report considered in May 2009 would encompass a more holistic approach to the health and environment culture.

- 5.3 OFSTED APA Outcomes for Children's Services 2008** – Cabinet received a formal report on the outcome of the recent 2008 Annual Performance Assessment (APA) inspection of Children's Services. Members noted the content of the report and commended staff and partners on the progress made during the year. The Cabinet noted the areas for improvement for the coming year, in particular safeguarding and the preparation for the forthcoming anticipated CAA inspection in 2009.

6. CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES
Cabinet Member - Councillor JP French

Report on Decisions Taken

- 6.1 Comprehensive Equality Policy and Associated Equality Schemes** – Cabinet considered a report that provided progress on the work the Council had done with

regard to its Comprehensive Equality Policy and Associated Equality Schemes. It was highlighted that the Council had received recognition at both regional and national level and that Shropshire County Council had visited the authority to receive training from Herefordshire Council Officers. Members noted that the MeWe film on Race Equality had been used for the training of officers and Members and would be circulated to all schools. The external assessment on the Council's Comprehensive Equality Scheme was expected to be confirmed for February 2009. The Cabinet noted progress made in implementing the Comprehensive Equality Policy and associated schemes. It endorsed the continued work of the Corporate Diversity Team and the implementation of the Equality Standard and the transition to the new Equality Framework. The Cabinet confirmed the importance of maintaining progress and commitment to equality schemes in ensuring compliance

- 6.2 Data Quality – Six Month Update –** Cabinet was updated on progress against the data quality action plan, as was required by the Council's data quality policy. The report outlined that demonstrable progress had been made with the action plan, which had been confirmed by the preliminary findings of the Audit Commission's 2008 audit. It was recognised that not all targets for the six months had been met and more attention was being given by all Directorates to particular actions detailed within the report. The Cabinet noted the progress made against the data quality action plan and agreed that the plan be fully completed by the time of the annual review.
- 6.3 Integrated Corporate Performance Report for April to September 2008 –** Cabinet received a report outlining the performance for the first six months of 2008-2009 against the Corporate Plan 2008-11 and national performance indicators used externally to measure the Council's performance, which also took into account the separate but complementary financial performance report, risk and progress against the action plans produced following the Crookall review. Cabinet noted that the appendices to the report had been enhanced to include additional information so as to provide more insight into issues. The Cabinet considered the Council's performance to the end of September and the measures that were being taken, where necessary to improve it. The Cabinet additionally noted progress in implementing the action plans produced following the Crookall review.
- 6.4 Ombudsman Letter and Complaints and Compliments Monitoring 2007/08 –** Cabinet considered and noted a report which informed Members of the Ombudsman Annual Letter 2007/08 and the figures of complaints recorded and determined by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Complaints Panel for the year ending 31 March 2008. Members were informed that the Ombudsman had commented favourably on several aspects of the Council's complaints handling arrangements. Cabinet was also updated on other governance matters relating to the Standards Committee.
- 6.5 Council Employee Opinion Survey 2008 –** The Cabinet received a report which provided feedback on the Council's eighth Council Employee Opinion Survey which took place throughout October and into November 2008. Members noted the decision of the Joint Management Team that the key corporate themes for action would be captured and addressed in the action plan of the Organisational Development strategy for 2009/2010, that the model adopted by the Resources Directorate for communications and action planning be implemented by all Directorates, and that all Directorates needed to take action to address employee feedback in those areas which showed significant deterioration in responses from the 2007 survey.

7. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
Cabinet Member - Councillor AJM Blackshaw

Report on Decisions Taken

- 7.1 There were no decisions by Cabinet relating to this portfolio during the reporting period.

8. ENVIRONMENT AND STRATEGIC HOUSING
Cabinet Member: Councillor JG Jarvis

Report on Decisions Taken

- 8.1 **West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revision** – Cabinet received a report which sought to determine a response to the update Phase Two Revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy in light of the proposed revised housing allocations published on 7 October 2008. Cabinet re-affirmed its previous representations made in May 2008 to the Panel Secretary confirming its general support for the Phase Two Revision with the reservations as previously set out. Cabinet agreed that it did not object to the allocation of 1,200 additional dwellings in the rural areas during the plan period to 2026 as proposed in the Nathaniel Lichfield study, and expressed concern that the increase in housing allocations suggested in the Nathaniel Lichfield Partnership study for the Region might have adverse consequences for the overall regional strategy.
- 8.2 **Annual Monitoring Report 2007-2008** – Cabinet considered and approved the Annual Monitoring Report 2007-2008 for submission to the Secretary of State in accordance with the requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 8.3 **Local Development Scheme** – The approval to the revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) was sought from Cabinet. The report outlined the need for the Council's LDS, a statutory requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to be up to date and stated that it was a requirement placed on local planning authorities to publish a statement of how their forward planning work would be organised over a three year period. Cabinet approved the revised Local Development Scheme which would take effect from 28 February 2009.
- 8.4 **Herefordshire and Worcestershire Waste Arrangements** – The Cabinet considered an exempt report on proposals brought forward by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Councils Waste Disposal Contractors. Cabinet agreed, without prejudice to the outcome of the current review of the Joint Municipal Strategy and any future variations of the Waste Management Contract, and noting that similar approvals had been given by Worcestershire County Council, to the recommendations.

9. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION
Cabinet Member - Councillor DB Wilcox

Report on Decisions Taken

- 9.1 There were no decisions by Cabinet relating to this portfolio during the reporting period.

10 ICT, EDUCATION AND ACHIEVEMENT
Cabinet Member – Councillor PD Price

Report on Decisions Taken

10.1 Data Centre / Modern Records Unit (MRU) Relocation and Corporate ICT Strategy Update – The Cabinet agreed to the relocation of the Thorn Office Data centre and the Modern Records Units (currently at Merchants House and Blueschool House) to a co-located facility at Wallbrook Court, Rotherwas and approval was given to begin work on the relocation project and to the funding of the project. Cabinet additionally noted the update and follow-up actions from the Corporate ICT strategy.

10.2 Herefordshire Connects Programme – Cabinet considered two reports on this subject area since the last Council meeting. The first report provided an update on the progress of the Herefordshire Connects evaluation of ICT system solutions, which had been managed in compliance with the Council's Procurement Policy and recommended the consideration of a new system for Environment and Planning. Cabinet approved Civica as the technology system for an integrated solution for Environment and Planning and agreed for Joint Management Team (JMT) to conclude negotiations with Deloitte (within the Framework Agreement between the Council and Deloitte) and to plan and commence the implementation of the Civica system by November 2008. The second report considered the recommendations of new systems for an Integrated Support Services (back office) and a new system for Performance Management and Risk Management together with a toolset to integrate systems. Cabinet approved Afresso as the preferred technology system for Integrated Support Services (ISS), approved Microsoft as the solution for a toolset for integration and approved Inphase as the technology system for Performance Management and Risk Management. Approval was additionally given for the Interim Deputy Chief Executive to have delegated responsibility to conclude negotiations with Deloitte (within the Framework Agreement between the Council and Deloitte), to plan and commence implementation of the systems by January 2009. The third phase planned for the new Social Care system, Core Logic, was approved by Cabinet.

11. RESOURCES
Cabinet Member - Councillor H Bramer

Report on Decisions Taken

11.1 Budget Monitoring 2008/09 – Cabinet considered and noted a report on the Council's performance against revenue and capital budgets as at 30 September 2008 which provided an indication of the estimated outturn for 2008/09 financial year. The report additionally included the numbers and amounts written off for individual debts exceeding £1,000 for the period 1 April – 30 September 2008.

12. SOCIAL CARE ADULTS
Cabinet Member Councillor LO Barnett

Report on Decisions Taken

12.1 Joint Scrutiny Review of the Transition From Leaving Care to Adult Life – see paragraph 5.2.

12.2 Scrutiny Review of Day Services for Older People – Cabinet considered the response to the recommendations arising from the scrutiny review of day services for older people. The Review Group produced a number of specific recommendations

aimed at improving day care provision for older people. Cabinet welcomed the principles underlying the recommendations however requested that the action list be reframed to provide clarity of actions and outcomes required, which would be considered by Cabinet at a future meeting. It was further stated that service configuration of specific day care centres would be subject to a report to a future meeting of Cabinet, following consultation with staff and service users, with a report on day care contracts proposed for consideration by Cabinet during March 2009.

**COUNCILLOR RJ PHILLIPS
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**