

REPORT OF THE MEETINGS OF CABINET

HELD ON 19 MARCH, 2 APRIL and 7 MAY 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 No motions to Council were considered by Cabinet during the reporting period covered by this report.

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

3.1 No key decisions were made by individual Executive Members which were not included in the Forward Plan.

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

Report on Decisions Taken

4.1 Local Area Agreement Refresh

4.1.1 Cabinet considered the refreshed Local Area Agreement and were provided with an opportunity to comment on the proposed finalised and revised LAA targets. It was agreed that the approval of the refreshed Local Area Agreement be delegated to the Chief Executive.

4.2 Office Accommodation Strategy Options Appraisal

4.2.1 Cabinet considered a report which outlined the outcome of the options appraisal for back office accommodation following a long standing determination to rationalise the existing office accommodation to provide a suitable, modern office environment to support the delivery of back office services to the Council and NHS Herefordshire.

4.2.2 Cabinet noted the progress made in the development of a business case supporting an integrated back office accommodation strategy for the council and NHS Herefordshire; endorsed Plough Lane as the preferred option; reaffirmed the decision taken by Cabinet in 2005 to purchase Plough Lane and delegated authority to the Chief Executive to conclude negotiations for the property acquisition; further delegated authority to the Chief Executive to proceed with the preparation of a detailed design specification, subject to a satisfactory business case and the development thereafter of shared office accommodation at Plough Lane; the overall

Accommodation Strategy, which should include the retention of the Shire Hall and Town Hall, be brought to Cabinet by the end of 2009; and proposals for the long term use of the Shire Hall and Town Hall be brought back to Cabinet in four months.

4.3 Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2008

4.3.1 Cabinet considered and noted the Audit Commission's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter for 2008 which provided an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council following their audit, inspection and performance assessment work over the last year. The assessment was positive with the Council assessed to be 'improving well' which is reflected in the performance in most priority areas. The Direction of Travel judgement confirmed the council's improvement since last year. The Audit Commission identified five issues that it felt required action with the Council response to these issues presented in an action plan which was approved by the Cabinet.

4.3.2 The Cabinet noted that due to the timing of the submission of the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter meant that the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee were not able to receive this action plan. It was further noted that the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) framework would provide an overall local area assessment drawing on the findings of various public service inspectorate, the results of which would be published in Autumn 2009. It was clarified that in the future the areas covered by the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter would form part of the CAA reporting framework.

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

5.1 **Report on Decisions Taken**

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

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

Report on Decisions Taken

6.1 Workforce Strategy for 2009-12

6.1.1 Cabinet endorsed a joint Workforce Strategy for Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire for 2009-12 and emphasised the strategy's importance for the success of both organisations' future.

6.2 Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Direction of Travel

6.2.1 Consideration was given to the comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and Direction of Travel assessment of the Council published by the Audit Commission on 5 March 2009 and it was noted that the Council was improving well with the capacity to improve further over the next year.

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

Report on Decisions Taken

7.1 Swimming Provision for Primary Schools in Hereford City – see paragraph 10.1.

7.2 Hereford Open Retail Market

7.2.1 Cabinet's decision of 19 February 2009 on Hereford Open Retail Market was called in and considered by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee. Cabinet considered the recommendations of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee in relation to the proposed relocation of the Hereford Open Retail Market to the St Peter's Street / High Town interface and Commercial Street each Saturday and Wednesday.

7.2.2 Five specific additional actions were considered and agreed by the Cabinet in relation to the Hereford Open Retail Market; that the relocation of the open retail market be for an initial one year trial; that the strategy for new stalls including the location be revisited and adjusted where necessary (in consultation with the Hereford City Partnership); that the Experion software package for measuring footfall be procured to assess the potential impact of the relocation of the open retail market to the Butter Market; that a detailed review of stall allocation be carried out in conjunction with the Hereford City Partnership; and that a retail impact study be conducted as soon as practicable.

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

Report on Decisions Taken

8.1 Waste Collection Contract

8.1.1 Cabinet considered a confidential report on the selection of a new waste collection contractor for Herefordshire Council.

8.2 Review of Council Owned Land Proposed Options Appraisal for the Provision of Affordable Housing.

8.2.1 Cabinet considered a confidential report on the Review of Council Owned Land Proposed Options Appraisal for the Provision of Affordable Housing.

8.3 Proposed Options Appraisal for Providing Affordable Housing at the Site Known as Elmhurst

8.3.1 Cabinet received a confidential report on the Proposed Options Appraisal for Providing Affordable Housing at the Site Known as Elmhurst.

8.4 Response to the Review of Community Engagement in Community Safety and Drugs Partnership

8.4.1 Cabinet considered a response to the Community Services Scrutiny Review of Community Engagement with the Community Safety Drugs Partnership which outlined a number of recommendations for both the Environment and Strategic Housing, and Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources portfolios.

The Cabinet approved the proposed response to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review.

**9. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION
(Cabinet Member - Councillor DB Wilcox)**

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 Swimming Provision for Primary Schools in Hereford City

10.1.1 Cabinet considered a report on the future of the LEA Swimming Pool and arrangements for school swimming in Hereford. Consideration was also given to the longer term requirements for swimming across the whole county. This issue had been considered by Cabinet in the Autumn of 2008 when it was agreed not to re-open the LEA Swimming Pool, and, as agreed, the item was referred back for further discussion by Cabinet prior to Easter 2009.

10.1.2 It was agreed by Cabinet that the LEA Pool remain permanently closed and that disposal of the site be considered as part of the council's Property strategy; that HALO continue to work closely with schools to deliver safe, cost effective, quality assured swimming provision that would enable to support achievements of curriculum targets; and that the Council, in partnership with HALO, would develop a long term strategy to support the development of swimming provision across the county.

**11. RESOURCES
(Cabinet Member - Councillor H Bramer)**

Report on Decisions Taken

11.1 Office Accommodation Strategy Options Appraisal – see paragraph 4.2

**12. SOCIAL CARE ADULTS AND HEALTH
(Cabinet Member Councillor LO Barnett)**

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

**COUNCILLOR RJ PHILLIPS
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Agenda papers for the meetings of Cabinet held on 19 March, 2 April and 7 May 2009.