

MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	30 JULY 2009.
TITLE OF REPORT:	PROPOSALS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE LGA SELECTOR UNDER THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007.
PORTFOLIO AREA:	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To note the proposals put forward by Herefordshire citizens and organisations under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007, and approve the recommendations of the representative panel for submission to the Local Government Association (LGA) selector.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation

THAT:

- a) the proposals submitted by local people and organisations be noted; and**
- b) the recommendations of the representative panel be approved for submission to the LGA selector.**

Key Points Summary

- Approval is sought for proposals sent in by citizens, organisations and communities in Herefordshire under the Sustainable Communities Act and agreed by the representative panel of local people, to be submitted to the LGA Selector (the body selected by the Government to administer the process) on 31 July 2009.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Anthony Bush, Parish Liaison and Rural Services Officer on (01432) 260611.

Alternative Options

- 1 A response could be delayed until the next round, expected in late 2009 or early 2010. However, a more proactive approach demonstrates the Council's community leadership role.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 Participation in the process of submitting proposals under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 (SCA) has already been approved by Cabinet (18 December 2008). These recommendations are the result of the process agreed by Cabinet.

Introduction and Background

- 3 The Sustainable Communities Act 2007 sets up a new process whereby local communities and their councils (parish and unitary) are given the opportunity to influence central government policy and action. The decision to participate in the process was taken by Cabinet on 18 December 2008.
- 4 Local people, organisations, parish councils and Herefordshire Council officers have been invited to submit proposals under the Act in the period February to June 2009. In June the proposals that had been received, were evaluated as to whether they fell within the SCA. As required by the SCA, those that did, were put before a representative group of local people (which in the case of Herefordshire has been assembled into three focus groups, in mid-July with a view to reaching agreement as to which of the proposals to submit to the selector.
- 5 The process needs to be completed and the proposals delivered to the LGA Selector by 31 July 2009.

Key Considerations

- 6 The proposals outlined in Appendix 1 have been submitted by citizens, organisations and Parish & Unitary councils in Herefordshire. The proposals are being discussed and agreed in three representative focus groups in mid-July. Recommendations will be available for approval by Cabinet at the meeting of 30 July 2009.

Community Impact

- 7 The Council, by participating in this process, will be supporting communities and promoting local sustainability.

Financial Implications

- 8 Costs associated with seeking the proposals have been covered by existing budgets. There are no cost implications in submitting these proposals to the LGA Selector.

Legal Implications

- 9 The Council has no statutory duty to participate in this process. Care must be taken to avoid raising expectations of communities that their proposals will be selected by the LGA Selector for presentation to the Government and that the Government will deliver.

Risk Management

- 10 Failure to be proactive in co-ordinating proposals for submission to the Selector may affect the credibility of the Council in terms of its community role. Further, there is a risk that following this detailed process, the Government decides not to devolve any power to local communities and accept any of the proposals. Herefordshire Council has no influence on the outcome of this process; the acceptance of any proposal is the responsibility of both the LGA Selector and Central Government. It will be important to stress this to residents at each stage.

Consultees

- 11 All households in Herefordshire have been informed of the SCA process through an advertisement in the February Edition of Herefordshire Matters. 1200 organisations in Herefordshire have been advised of the process in March 2009 by mail. Individuals have also been advised on request. Proposals received have been assessed for eligibility under the Act and where necessary grouped together into one proposal. All eligible proposals will be the subject of discussions with the representative panel whose agreement to progress to the LGA Selector stage will be sought.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 List of proposals received
Appendix 2 Recommendations of the representative panel (TO FOLLOW)

Background Papers.

- None identified.