

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>17 MARCH 2011</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>LOCALITY STRATEGY FOR HEREFORDSHIRE</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO AREA:</b>	<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>

**CLASSIFICATION:** Open

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

To approve the Locality Strategy for Herefordshire.

### **Key Decision**

This is a not a Key Decision.

### **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT: Cabinet approves the Locality Strategy.**

### **Key Points Summary**

- Early in 2010, the following nine localities were identified within the county by Herefordshire Public Services: Hereford City, the five market towns and three rural areas (Weobley, Golden Valley and Mortimer). This tiered approach has been endorsed by the Herefordshire Partnership and a number of partners are actively working to shape how services can be delivered and communities engaged, on the basis of these nine areas.
- The Locality Strategy sets out our vision and objectives for locality working within the county. It is about developing local solutions and empowering and working in partnership with our communities.

### **Alternative Options**

- 1 Not implementing the Locality Strategy could result in a lack of a joined-up approach to service delivery and a lack of co-ordinated engagement at a locality level. If a uniform approach is taken to service delivery across the county, this may not necessarily reflect the needs of local communities.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 2 The Locality Strategy and the identified nine areas give structure to a joint approach to service

delivery and seek to ensure that we are able to support as many valued local services as we can. Better engagement with communities will help to create opportunities that are relevant to them and their area.

## **Introduction and Background**

- 3 The Locality Strategy builds on the range of approaches that have already been tested in relation to improving delivery of services to communities and the role that local people play in this.
- 4 In line with national policy developments and the 'Big Society', the Locality Strategy promotes a tiered approach to devolving services or budgets. The Strategy will help us to understand how devolution (of decisions, budgets or services) could work and what this means in relation to local people and communities having a say about services that matter to them.
- 5 A similar report is being presented to the NHS Herefordshire Board on 30 March.

## **Key Considerations**

- 6 Localities form part of the Communities First work stream of the Rising to the Challenge Transformation Programme. This work stream provides and brings together key strands to deliver joined up working with communities and service providers at a local level. The outcomes intended to be delivered as part of the Communities First work stream include Localised Services, Better Engagement and Empowered Communities.
- 7 The Locality Strategy forms part of the Localised Services work and is based on the nine localities which are deemed to be key in meeting the aims set out in the HPS joint Customer Strategy. Locality Profiles for each of these areas are currently being developed to help inform the implementation of this Strategy. Such an approach is intended to help us to develop local solutions and enable us to empower and work in partnership with our communities.
- 8 The objectives of the Locality Strategy are.
  - Strengthened community leadership;
  - Services meeting the needs of communities;
  - Joined up local services; and
  - Working in partnership with empowered communities.
- 9 A review of the Herefordshire Partnership is currently underway and aims to not only streamline partnership structures and processes, but also integrate and share services in relation to intelligence, commissioning and engagement. It will also seek to establish Locality partnership arrangements. This tiered approach to devolving services or budgets through a corporate and partnership policy framework will be a key part of the Locality Strategy and to achieving its aims and objectives. A partnership approach to decisions being made at the closest possible point to communities will be instrumental in gaining an understanding of how devolution (of decisions, budgets or services) could work and what this means in relation to local people and communities having a say about services that matter most to them. This is captured in the draft engagement framework also being considered at Cabinet today.
- 10 The important role that Elected Members play in the localities agenda is recognised, not least as one of the key learning points from the Reaching the Hearts of Herefordshire pilots was the positive difference made through Elected Members working with their Parish and Town Councils. A further seminar is planned for Elected Members (Localities and Localism Bill) as part of the programme of training and support planned for May-December 2011. Further work

will also be undertaken in conjunction with Parish and Town Councils to ensure that they are also aware of and engaged in this work. Regular updates on the Localities work will be given to Senior Managers as part of the Leadership Forum.

## **Community Impact**

- 11 A collaborative approach to engagement will have a significant and positive impact on Herefordshire's communities – offering a range of local solutions relevant to the different identified communities for local people to have their say about what happens in their area. An approach for Herefordshire is articulated in the draft engagement framework.
- 12 The implementation of a Locality Strategy will help us to achieve greater connection with communities, as well as strengthening the role of citizens, enhancing local democracy and encouraging service providers to work better together, so that we achieve better outcomes for people and places together.

## **Financial Implications**

- 13 The adoption of the Locality Strategy will have no direct financial implications.

## **Legal Implications**

- 14 None identified.

## **Risk Management**

- 15 The risk is that we do not get sufficient commitment from key stakeholders and partners. The mitigation for this is that this work on localities has been built into the Communities First work stream and we have engaged with key stakeholders and partners.

## **Consultees**

- 16 Work on Localities has been developed through the Communities First work stream, as well as the Stronger Communities Policy & Delivery Group of the Herefordshire Partnership. A draft of the Locality Strategy was presented to the HPS Joint Management Team and the Herefordshire Partnership Board in February and following this, wider consultation was held with other key stakeholders. Where appropriate, comments received have been incorporated into this draft.

## **Appendices**

- 17 Locality Strategy for Herefordshire.

## **Background Papers**

- None identified.