

## LOCAL AREA FORUMS

### PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

1ST JULY, 2004

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#### Wards Affected

County-wide

#### Purpose

To receive feedback on the latest round of the Local Area Forums, and note any issues raised by the community.

#### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

#### Recommendation

**THAT the report be noted and the recommendations set out in paragraph 5 be approved**

#### Reasons

Cabinet agreed the principles for new arrangements for LAFs in October 2003. Two rounds have now been completed. An important principle was that issues raised at the meetings would be fed back in to Cabinet after every round of Local Area Forums.

#### Considerations

1. Background

This round of LAFs ran over a three-week period in May/June 2004. This round was arranged through the Policy Team prior to responsibility moving to a LAF co-ordinator within County Secretary and Solicitor's Department. It is proposed that a review of the new situation should take place after a year. All the meetings commenced at 7.30pm and lasted approximately two hours at a variety of venues – village halls, schools, leisure centres. The agendas for this round were dealt with by the Council, but also took items from the public that were brought to the Council's attention. All the agendas included a presentation on the Unitary Development Plan, with a tailored presentation to each forum on changes in the UDP that would directly affect their LAF area. Additional local items were included with the opportunity for attendees to ask questions. All questions were dealt with at the meeting or followed up directly afterwards. Numbers attending ranged from 20 to 60.

## 2. General issues

- i. Accessibility of agendas – Agendas were available on the website, although it was suggested there should be a highlighted link from the Council’s homepage to the agendas. Agendas also went to all libraries, info shops, and parish councils.
- ii. Advertising the meetings – advertisements were placed in the Hereford Times and Journal, but several members of the public suggested they should also be advertised in the Admag, Ross Gazette etc. Parish Councils were directly contacted, and this has led to a large number of parish councillors attending. There was also coverage on the local BBC radio station.
- iii. The public wanted clarity on the Council’s key contact for LAFs – this will be the proposed LAF co-ordinator.

## 3. Issues raised at meetings

### i. **Ross on Wye**

- Employment Land proposals for Model Farm

Round 3 Agenda items:

- None raised at meeting

### ii. **North Herefordshire**

- Support for alternative library proposals (old library)
- Objecting to employment land proposal change – from Hatton Garden

Round 3 Agenda items:

- Road safety

### iii. **Golden Valley**

- Bridge Sollars road safety and weight limit
- Proposed Estech Development at Madley – very strong objections on grounds of safety of pressurised equipment and increased heavy vehicle use
- Affordable housing

Round 3 agenda items:

- Police in the Golden Valley
- Estech Site
- Peterchurch suggested as location

### iv. **Central Herefordshire**

- Affordable housing/sustainable development/land density

- Poly tunnels
- Recycling collections
- Date and venue for Round 3 to be decided dependent on local issues

**v. East Herefordshire**

- Grass cutting; poor HJS service
- Bypass/viaduct & sewage implications
- Infill developments

**vi. Hereford City**

- Cattle Market, particularly access if near Roman Road
- Bypass and transport generally. Bus Route on Westfaling Street.

Round 3 agenda items

- Litter in the city
- The future of the River Wye – Leisure, Tourism, Flooding etc
- The vision and future of the city's architecture
- HJS

4. The third and fourth rounds of the LAFs have been arranged for September 2004 and January 2005 respectively.

5. The Future

- Although publicity for the second round was more comprehensive than Round 1 the comments about using more local papers and improving the accessibility of the website would be positive improvements
- Presence of Councillors seems to be appreciated, especially Cabinet Members who chose to attend several of the forums. This should be continued.
- Clarity is required as to who takes responsibility when questions require follow up. This would most sensibly be advised by the LAF co-ordinator working with the senior officer present.

**Alternative Options**

There are no alternative options

**Risk Management**

None

**Consultees**

Local Area Forums

**Background Papers**

None identified