

INTRODUCTION

This Cabinet Bulletin covers the meeting held on Thursday, 9th June, 2005 and reviews the agenda for the forthcoming meeting to be held on Thursday, 23rd June, 2005.

Please note that meetings of Cabinet will start at 2.15 p.m. until further notice.

CABINET MEETING – 9th June, 2005

- (a) **Annual Efficiency Report 2004/05** – The Cabinet has approved the Council's Annual Efficiency Report for 2004/05, which needed to be submitted to the ODPM by 15th June, 2005. The forward-looking Annual Efficiency Statement approved in April concentrated largely on cash releasing savings in order to deliver the Corporate Plan. The backward-looking Annual Efficiency Statement (BLAES) has had to take a more balanced approach between cash savings and performance gains, predominantly because there was no formal corporate savings exercise carried out as part of the 2004/05 budget. The expectation at that time was for services to continue ensuring performance improvement but operating within cash limited budgets and to manage resources accordingly.

Cabinet, whilst recognising the efforts of staff to deliver efficiencies in services, has expressed concern about Herefordshire's position in the national league table of efficiency savings. It has noted that a number of services could not be included in the Government's framework.

- (b) **Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Submission of Self-Assessment** – The Council will be one of the first eight authorities to undergo a revised Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) during the autumn of 2005. The Corporate Performance score will arise out of the Corporate Assessment (CA) and the Joint Area Review (JAR). Whilst the CA focuses on the corporate capacity of the Council, the JAR is an inspection of Children's Services in Herefordshire, whether or not they are delivered by the Council. Additionally because there has been no Ofsted inspection of the Youth Service, this will receive particular attention and needs a separate self-assessment. Self-assessments are the initial requirement in preparation for the CPA. In the case of the JAR, the submission needs to be made by 13th June, and the CA must be completed by 18th July. Cabinet has agreed the self-assessments relating to the JAR and Youth Services as the first stage of preparation for the CPA and paid tribute to the staff involved in the process.
- (c) **Pay and Workforce Development Strategy 2005-08** – The Council has put in place a corporate planning process linked directly to its performance management framework that enables it to be clear about its priorities and how they will be achieved. An important element to achieving these priorities is the implementation of the Pay and Workforce Development Strategy, which sets out the Human Resources themes and actions to be addressed. The Strategy aims to ensure that the Council:
- has the right people in the right places, with the right skills, to deliver the agenda and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan – improved services with greater efficiency and better customer focus;

- is well-placed to respond to environmental and societal changes, and emerging technology;
- meets its statutory obligations as an employer, and where possible exceeds those to demonstrate best and leading edge practice as the largest local employer;
- becomes an employer of choice amongst those seeking employment and career opportunities.

The Strategy replaces the former Strategy for Developing and Improving Human Resources 2002/05 which set the human resources agenda for the past three years. 79% of planned actions were completed, with 10% no longer relevant and 11% to be carried forward as part of the new Strategy. Cabinet has approved the Council's Pay and Workforce Development Strategy 2005/08, together with the Operating Plan for 2005/06.

- (d) **Homelessness Budget** – Cabinet has received a report on the budget provision for homelessness, which shows the budget is under extreme pressure in terms of meeting statutory provision and will overspend unless additional resources are allocated. This is due to the increasing numbers of people requiring support and the costs associated with the use of temporary accommodation.

Cabinet has agreed that funds can be vired to the homelessness budget 2005/06 from other budgets within the Council which are not scheduled to spend as initially planned when the budgets were set.

The position will be kept under review and reported within existing performance reporting arrangements and revisited as part of the budget process for 2006/07. In the unlikely event that underspendings occur, then these would be returned to corporate funds. A further report, including a comprehensive Improvement Plan, setting out short- and long-term solutions is expected in July.

- (e) **Review of Denominational Transport** - Cabinet has been informed that this matter will be discussed at the next meeting on 23rd June. Each Cabinet Member was given a complete set of letters to consider during the consultation period which has now closed.

FORTHCOMING CABINET MEETING – 23rd June, 2005

- (a) **Amalgamation of Hunderton Junior and Infants Schools** – Cabinet are to receive a report on the outcome of the consultations on the statutory notice to close the existing Junior and Infant Hunderton Schools on 31st August 2006, and open a 3 Form of Entry 3 – 11 age range Primary School on 1st September 2006.⁷
- (b) **Review of Denominational Transport** – Cabinet are to receive a report on the outcome of the consultations on the future of denominational transport, to advise on policy options, and to recommend a policy to adopt in the future.
- (c) **Integrated Annual Outturn 2004/05** – Cabinet are to consider the 2004/05 outturn information for Best Value Performance Indicators, the Capital Programme and Revenue Budget and to provide an update on strategic risks facing the Council.

- (d) **Destination Hereford** – Cabinet are to consider a proposal to establish a Destination Management Partnership (DMP) for Herefordshire in line with the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy 2004.
- (e) **Youth Justice Plan** – Cabinet are to consider the Youth Justice Plan and to recommend to Council for approval.
- (f) **Performance Management Framework** – Cabinet are to consider and approve the revised Performance Management Framework.
- (g) **Health and Safety Annual Report** – Cabinet are to receive a report on actions taken during the last year to progress addressing Health and Safety issues.
- (h) **Office Accommodation** – Cabinet are to consider any reference from the Strategic Monitoring Committee following the Call-in of Cabinet's decision on 19th May in relation to office accommodation.
- (i) **Social Care Budget 2005/06** – Cabinet has received a confidential report on the management action proposed to manage the Social Care budget in 2005/06 and the implications this may have on service delivery, particularly for services for people with learning disabilities.

N.M. Pringle
Chief Executive

(01432) 260044

*Copies of the agenda are available at the meeting or on request from:
Mrs. C. Dyer, Members' Services Manager and Executive Officer on (01432) 260222.*