

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY

Report to MRG – 12 December 2002

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1. Purpose of the Report

To provide a summary of the Stakeholder Workshop held on 22 November 2002

2. Summary

2.1 The Best Value Review Stakeholder Workshop for Sustainable Development (Planning and Transport Policy) was held on 22 November 2002. The objective of the workshop was to engage and involve stakeholders in developing the initial thinking and documentation completed to date by the Core Team. The workshop commenced with a presentation on Best Value and an overview of the service. There were then three group sessions –

- 1 - What key challenges face the service?
- 2 - What are the key ideas that could tackle/address these challenges?
- 3 - What would those ideas mean in practice for HCC, stakeholders, district councils and the public?

2.2 After each session, the facilitators, Keith Shephard, Jo Aspin, John Wood and Sue Davidson met to assess and agree key messages. These were then fed back to the group to check direction and inform the next session.

2.3 The emerging key themes/ideas identified and explored by those attending the workshop were:

- **Engaging at a regional level – With HCC as the ‘custodian’**
- **Creating a ‘centre’ of excellence – utilising and sharing existing skills and experience**
- **Involving and engaging stakeholders and the public**
- **Herts County Council providing an advocacy role post structure plan changes in relation to community well-being**
- **Herts County Council *not* providing an advocacy role post structure plan changes**

Utilisation of IT/E-government was felt to play a necessary part in the delivery of the above.

3. **Outputs from each session**

How To's

- 3.1 **Background:** Prior to the workshop a list of How to's were sent to the attendees. These were based upon the key challenges headlined in the position statement. The groups were asked to add to these and then to cluster and name the group in order to identify key themes/challenges.

Below are the key themes identified by the group along with some examples of challenges presented by the group:

(How to utilise) Tool/Information/Intelligence

How to make the best use of technology and E-government

How to develop and monitor useful outcome indicators

How to support the districts and other stakeholders

Be more proactive – reduce reactive role

How to provide the range of specialist services which individual districts find hard to do on their own

Opportunities for joint working/sharing skills between districts/county

Leadership

Lead services

Influence/identify leadership at all levels

Relationships not structures

Overcome admin boundaries – District, County, Region

Resolve top-down versus bottom-up

Involving people (Communication and Engagement)

Involving staff at all levels

How to enable the public to engage on the key issues and how they impact (including 'hard to reach' groups)

How to get representative stakeholders at most local level

Quality of the environment

How to make the best use of scarce resources

How to improve the quality of development for our communities

How to organise for future demands – manage change

Vision (How to develop a vision/End Result/Balancing vision and Reality)

How to develop a clear vision

How to scope the county's role in development

How to lead and effect change at regional/interregional level (Regional dimension and integration)

How to make ourselves part of the region
How to support regional planning work
How to integrate transport and land use planning better

Common Themes/ X Cutting

How to preserve and enhance the environment in a sustainable way
Avoid too much bureaucracy

- 3.2 From these “How To’s” the following key themes/challenges were identified. The groups were then asked to develop and headline ideas to tackle each challenge. To follow are the key themes, the grouped ideas and some examples from the session:

Key challenge/Theme	Headline Ideas	Examples
How to lead and effect change at regional level	Innovation (Resources)	Innovate – Be more proactive – Commit resources to it now
	Stakeholders (Involving and utilising skills)	Establish a multi-agency multi-disciplinary team to work on regional issues
	Leadership	Create a Hertfordshire Partnership Group to champion Herts needs/issues at regional level
	Members (Education and Involvement)	Portfolio holders for regional planning at districts
How to develop/deliver quality sustainable environment for Herts?	Influencing travel/user/provider	Make a REAL impact on reducing traffic – not just talk on policies
	Influencing business/developers	Engage with developers and business during lifetime of projects
	Engaging communities and encouraging ownership	Engage local residents about aspirations for quality local environment
	Learning and Doing	Develop a pool of skills and experience that can operate county wide
	Vision and measuring, evaluating success	All to agree on what success looks like and who plays what role
	Definitions	Define what we mean by sustainable environment
How to develop an effective vision	Where are we now?	(Identify) What are the county’s strengths/weaknesses..what needs to be preserved/enhanced
	Where we want to get to?	In consultation take a view on what the County should look like in 10/20 years time
	Methodology	Consult stakeholders
	Constraints and Realism	Achievable aspirations
How to involve and Engage stakeholders/public to improve services	Identification of interests	Identify who stakeholders are
	Utilise resources	Work together where possible SHARE RESOURCES
	Methods and Techniques	Open days..Forums..Roadshows..Radio/TV..Posters

Key challenge/Theme	Headline Ideas	Examples
	Realistic time scales and quick wins	Gain confidence – deliver some early results
How to develop relationships (for Herts) to deliver the best service	Identify networks	Build relationships around ‘areas of influence
	Involve Communities	Develop a more proactive approach in resolving acheiving issues, aspiration
	HCC role	Leadership role/facilitator between region and districts – making the links – sub-regional planning

(Linked/common ideas are shown by colour/different typeface). We then identified emerging hypotheses and fed these back to the groups. The groups were then asked to develop the ideas by asking ‘How would *we* make it happen’/‘What would *we* be doing’ against four headings: Herts CC, District Councils, Other Stakeholders, and the Public. The groups were also asked to think of any implementation barriers.

To follow are the hypotheses and examples from each of the four headings.

<i>If we develop an organisational structure that ensured joint representation on regional issues it would:-</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exploit/Utilise better the technical skills that exist between all stakeholders</i> • <i>Promote effective member and officer working between County and Districts</i> • <i>Provide Herts with a ‘Big Voice’ within the region and represent the County’s ‘well being’ – Taking pro-active role</i> 			
Herts CC	Districts	Public	Other Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should take the lead • Identify the key issues for Hertfordshire • Co-ordinate sub-regional strategies/planning • Identify key skills/expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key skills • Raise public awareness • Dedicate resources – Don’t just rely on the county • Review.....existing structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use LSP’s as focus for community voice • Nominate community ‘champions’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key skills/expertise • Raise public awareness • Identify pertinent regional issues and feed through to HCC
<i>If HCC provided an advocacy role to fill void left by structure plan change.....</i>			
Herts CC	Districts	Public	Other Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resource planning • Co-ordinate/facilitate cross district/sub-regional working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources • Willingness at district level 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resource planning • Parish and Town councils would need to find advocate.....
<i>If HCC did not provide strategic advice and an advocacy role to fill void by structure plan.....</i>			
Herts CC	Districts	Public	Other Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to maintain ‘influence’ as planning body – even non-statutory • Develop a code of practise with input from all stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Districts could be faced with difficult decisions • DCs could form a group/pool resource to fill gap •Identify sub-regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to involve public voice at regional level • Sub-regions would further compound the above 	

<p><i>If we involve and engage stakeholders by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identifying who they are (targeting)</i> • <i>(Develop and)Select appropriate mechanisms</i> • <i>Communicating (What we've done, why, 'close loop' – initial consultation).....</i> 			
Herts CC	Districts	Public	Other Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting consultation • Improve lines of communication....keep it simple •Integrated and publicised programme of consultations • Strengthen media skills - Schools...TV...Supermarkets etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate/rationalise working and parish council • HCC and DCC to work more closely together • Agree information/consultation cascades with DC's and stakeholders • Single planning and transportation engagement team in the County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCC must engage groups who are normally excluded (not just the vocal ones) • Need to feel part of the identification of the project issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single consultation – Involve agencies • They have range of expertise – Use it! • Pro-active approach • Pool ideas/resources in order to crack issues identified by the communities

Examples of barriers were:

- **Political constraints**
- **Legislative changes**
- **Resources**
- **HCC agenda (short term)**
- **Skill shortage**
- **Territorial and split functions**
- **Conflicting interest**