

**Notes from the Economic Development Strategy Group Meeting
Wednesday 9th August held at Plough Lane, Hereford.**

The role of the group and its links with the Local Area Agreement.

This group has changed its name from Economic and Development Ambition Group (EDAG) to Economic Development Strategy Group (EDSG).

The LAA has been signed off but £1 million agreed funding to facilitate some of its objectives has been since withdrawn.

The main themes are with more and improved paid employment, better quality training and improved transport infrastructure.

The Edgar Street Grid and Rotherwas Relief Road are key elements in helping to deliver improved transport and access to services.

An update on the Edgar Street Grid was presented by Nick Webster (Economic Development Officer for HP).

Glyn West (Principal Policy Officer for HP) is working on the action plan in respect of the LAA which should be completed shortly and a draft will be sent out for comments.

This will then be forwarded to the County Council for approval.

There is still to be some work to be done on identifying keynote objectives for the LAA as this is not clear at present.

Glyn confirmed that there will be a representative from EDSG on the new Herefordshire Partnership management board.

The group also links with the Partnership for Social Enterprise.

A report from Clare Williams, from the Business Link Programme Development Executive discussed issues around the funding of Business Link and future contracts. They have been actively involved in providing business support to social enterprises.

Andy Thomas, Deputy Principal at Hereford College of Technology gave a presentation the new development of the Hereford learning Village and the new building works that has already commenced. Phase 1 should be complete by December 2007 and Phase 2 (funding permitting) by March 2009.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the merger of the three colleges (HCT, Sixth Form and the Art College) is not on the agenda.

The design and scope of the development is limited by amongst other things, car parking capacity and local residents concerns.