

# ***Report to the Council***

**Portfolio:** Leader

**Date:** 24 April 2007

**Leader:** Mrs D Collins

**Item:**

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## **1. REPORT OF THE LEADER**

I wish to refer to five main items for my report to this meeting:

### **(a) Department for Communities and Local Government - Planning Standards**

I am pleased to advise the Council that the authority has now been formally notified that it is meeting all the targets for development control and related issues set by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

### **(b) East of England Plan**

Members will be pleased to note that a formal response has now been sent to the Government regarding the latest stage of the East of England Plan Consultation.

### **(c) Audit and Inspection - Annual Letter**

The Council has now responded to the various points made in this document.

### **(d) Loughton College**

I attended a very interesting session with students at the College which dealt with a wide range of issues relating to democracy and local government. I hope that members will be able to engage with this kind of event more regularly in future.

### **(e) H M Forces Stationed Overseas**

I have received a letter from the Chief Executive of Tewkesbury Borough Council concerning a decision of the Government to withdraw the facility whereby British Forces and their families who are stationed overseas cannot receive parcels free of charge as they could in 2003. I am asked by Tewkesbury Borough Council to support their call to the Government to reinstate this service as a matter of urgency. If the Council is happy for me to do so, I will write to the relevant Minister expressing our support for the Tewkesbury initiative.

I have also been advised that the British Legion are currently lobbying Government for a grant towards the cost of a veterans march in London on a date to be agreed.

I would like to ask the Council whether they would wish me to associate them with these initiatives.