

A G E N D A

Environment Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Friday, 23rd January, 2004**

Time: **10.00 a.m.**

Place: **Council Chamber, Brockington**

Notes: Please note the **time, date** and **venue** of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

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**County of Herefordshire
District Council**

AGENDA

for the Meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee

To: Councillor J.H.R. Goodwin (Chairman)
Councillor W.L.S. Bowen (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors B.F. Ashton, P.J. Dauncey, G.W. Davis, Mrs. A.E. Gray,
K.G. Grumbley, T.W. Hunt, R. Mills and J.W. Newman

	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
To receive apologies for absence.	
2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)	
To receive details any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.	
4. MINUTES	1 - 8
To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st November, 2003.	
5. HUMAN RESOURCES	9 - 14
To report on the sickness absence and other matters for the Environment Directorate.	
6. ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING	15 - 24
To advise members of Budget Monitoring the position for the Environment Programme Area budgets for the period to 30 th November 2003. The report lists the variations against budget at this stage in the year.	
7. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING	25 - 30
To advise Members on the progress of the 2003/04 Capital Programme for Environment areas within the overall context of the Herefordshire Council Capital Programme.	
8. BEST VALUE REVIEWS - IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVEMENT PLANS	31 - 38
To report the exceptions of the programmed progress on the actions in the improvement plans resulting from the reviews of Development Control, Public Conveniences, Public Rights of Way and Highway Maintenance.	
9. MONITORING OF 2003/2004 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - APRIL	39 - 42

2003 TO NOVEMEBR 2003

To update Members on progress made by the Environment Directorate for the eight months April to November 2003 towards achieving all of the performance indicators / targets which appear in the Council's Performance Plan.

10. REVIEW OF PARKING STRATEGY

43 - 44

To agree the terms of reference and membership of a working group to review the countywide car parking strategy.

11. HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

45 - 48

To consider the performance of the Highway Maintenance Service since the completion of the Best Value Inspection Review in 2002.

12. ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2004/5

49 - 50

To consider the work programme for the Committee and proposed terms of reference for the review of the policy on Poly tunnels. Terms of reference to follow.

Item 12 Work Programme - Review of Polytunnels

This report was made available since the publication of the agenda and prior to the meeting.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Council has established Scrutiny Committees for Education, Environment, Social Care and Housing and Social and Economic Development. A Strategic Monitoring Committee scrutinises Policy and Finance matters and co-ordinates the work of these Committees.

The purpose of the Committees is to ensure the accountability and transparency of the Council's decision making process.

The principal roles of Scrutiny Committees are to

- Help in developing Council policy
- Probe, investigate, test the options and ask the difficult questions before and after decisions are taken
- Look in more detail at areas of concern which may have been raised by the Cabinet itself, by other Councillors or by members of the public
- "call in" decisions - this is a statutory power which gives Scrutiny Committees the right to place a decision on hold pending further scrutiny.
- Review performance of the Council
- Conduct Best Value reviews
- Undertake external scrutiny work engaging partners and the public

Formal meetings of the Committees are held in public and information on your rights to attend meetings and access to information are set out overleaf

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- Inspect agenda and public reports at least three clear days before the date of the meeting.
- Inspect minutes of the Council and all Committees and Sub-Committees and written statements of decisions taken by the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members for up to six years following a meeting.
- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
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COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD.

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COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Environment Scrutiny Committee held at Brockington, 35 Hafod Rd, Hereford on Friday, 21st November, 2003 at 10.30 a.m.

Present: Councillor J.H.R. Goodwin (Chairman)
Councillor W.L.S. Bowen (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs. P.A. Andrews, P.J. Dauncey, G.W. Davis,
Mrs. A.E. Gray, K.G. Grumbley, T.W. Hunt, R. Mills and J.W. Newman

In attendance: Councillors P.J. Edwards (Cabinet Member - Environment),
P.E. Harling and R.M. Wilson (Cabinet Member – Highways and
Transportation).

31. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor B.F. Ashton.

32. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

Councillor Mrs. P.A. Andrews substituted for Councillor B.F. Ashton.

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

34. MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of meetings held 26th September, 2003 and 21st October, 2003.

Referring to the minutes of 21st October, the Chairman reported that he had recently received an invitation from the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) for the Committee to undertake a full review of the car parking strategy and he sought the views of the Committee.

The Committee agreed that a Car Parking Strategy Review Panel be formed and that a scoping statement and timetable be produced for consideration at the next meeting. The Committee considered that the Panel should comprise members from both City and Rural areas.

The Chairman invited the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) to give a brief update on the position concerning the revised car parking charges. The Cabinet Member reported upon a number of meetings with Town and Parish Councils. The Chairman reminded Councillors of the importance of communicating important issues with Town and Parish Councils.

RESOLVED:

That

- (a) **subject to recording that apologies were received from Councillor R.M. Wilson (Cabinet Member), at the meeting held on 26th September, the minutes of the meetings held on 26th**

September and 21st October 2003 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman; and

- (b) the Committee accept the invitation by the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) to undertake a full review of the car parking strategy and the Director of Environment produce a scoping statement and timetable for consideration at the next meeting.**

35. HUMAN RESOURCES

The Committee received a report on the sickness absence and other human resources matters for the Environment Directorate.

The Personnel Manager, Well-being, reported upon the absence statistics for the Directorate, which covered the financial period 1st November 2002 to 31st October 2003. The report indicated the number of people in each division and the full time equivalent (FTE) together with the FTE days lost for each division and the average days lost per FTE. The report also contained reasons for sickness absence and a breakdown of accidents by division. He commented that overall the Council was still showing a remarkably low number of accidents.

The Committee scrutinised the statistics and noted that the number of accidents and stress related incidents had reduced; training was being planned for front line staff in dealing with physical abuse/assault situations and that regular meetings were taking place between personnel and managers to discuss issues.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

36. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee were advised on the progress of the 2003/04 Capital Programme for Environment Areas within the overall context of the Herefordshire Council Capital Programme.

The Assistant County Treasurer reported that the total Capital Programme for 2003/04, shown in Appendix 1 to the report, totalled £10,719,941. This was an increase of £219,000 from the original budget due to the receipt of a capital grant from WyeSMoves, to fund bus purchases, which would be spent in the financial year. The committed budget for the capitalised assessment and strength of bridges exceeded the original budget by £283,000. The budget from other schemes would be decreased in order to fund this commitment in the next round of capital monitoring. The capital receipt reserve position had become overdrawn by £60,000 as funding relating to the Ross Flood Alleviation scheme had not been approved as expected.

In the course of scrutinising the programme the following principal points were noted:

- Ross-on-Wye Flood Alleviation - The Head of Engineering and Transportation confirmed that discussions on this scheme were continuing with DEFRA and partner agencies and project funding may be approved in the New Year.
- That traffic calming schemes and Safer Routes to Schools schemes were progressing in accordance with agreed criteria.

- The Director of Environment reported that a number of budgets indicated either a nil or very low spend. This could be due to a number of factors e.g. the contract was unable to progress or that the contract payments were not expected until late in the financial year.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

37. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee were advised of the position for the Environment Programme Area budgets for the period to 31st October, 2003 and informed of variations against budget at this stage in the year.

The Assistant County Treasurer reported that generally spending was in line with the budget. However, some budget pressures had been identified and these were described in the report. A budgetary analysis was attached at Appendix 1.

The Committee noted the position outlined by the Director regarding staff vacancies in Building Control. He commented that this seemed to be a national problem and a number of initiatives on a national and local level were being considered.

The Head of Planning Services briefly updated the Committee concerning the functionality of the MVM system. He commented that consideration was being given to the major issue concerning the amount of historical data required to be captured. The upgrading of desktop equipment would need to be addressed. Consideration also needed to be given to the linking of information to the e.gov programme.

RESOLVED: That the Revenue Budget Monitoring report be noted.

38. BEST VALUE REVIEWS - IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVEMENT PLANS

The Committee received a report on the exceptions of the programmed progress on the actions in the improvement plans resulting from the reviews of Development Control, Public Conveniences, Public Rights of Way and Highway Maintenance.

The Director of Environment reported that the exceptions to the programmed actions had been listed in appendix 1 to the report.

During discussion of the exceptions report the following principal comments were made:

- Development Control - In relation to the cost of planning per head of population it was reported that the figures would be compiled once the October time sheets had been processed.
- Public Conveniences - It was reported that a capital bid for the refurbishment programme had been submitted to the Council's Budget Working Panel. The refurbishment of the conveniences at the Bus Station, Leominster were progressing as part of the Bus Station improvement contract.
- Highway Maintenance – the synopsis leaflet of standards in highway maintenance, including basic information on winter gritting, graffiti and street cleansing, was very close to being published.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

39. MONITORING OF 2003/2004 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - APRIL 2003 TO SEPTEMBER 2003

Members were updated on progress made by the Environment Directorate for the six months April to September 2003 towards achieving all of the performance indicators/targets appearing in the Council's Performance Plan.

The report of exceptions to the targeted performance was attached to the report at appendix 1.

The Committee debated the performance figures and noted that regarding penalty charge notices, all except one staffing post had now been filled and the performance had improved.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

40. HEREFORDSHIRE PLAN AMBITIONS - PROGRESS TO DATE

The Committee received a report on progress towards the ambitions of "protecting and improving Herefordshire's distinctive environment" and "developing an integrated transport system for Herefordshire" and were invited to identify how the Council's work might be integrated more effectively with the Herefordshire Plan.

The Director outlined the background to the Plan and emphasised that the work of the Directorate impinged directly or indirectly on many of the ambitions in the Plan, but in particular the two relating to the environment and transport.

In respect to protecting and improving Herefordshire's distinctive environment he reported that an environmental strategy had been produced and an action plan was drawn up annually. The Directorate's activities in relation to this Ambition Group were detailed in the report. Two important issues concerning the Directorate's involvement with the Group were the level of staff resources able to be committed to both meetings of the groups and then perusing actions and projects arising from their Action Plan. The second was making financial resources available to contribute to such actions and projects.

The Committee noted the achievements in relation to the ambitions in the plan, which were also detailed in the report. In response to questions concerning progress to the Rotherwas Access Road and Roman Road schemes, the Head of Engineering and Transportation reported that both schemes had received planning consent and were, subject to government funding, continuing in accordance with expectations.

The Director of Environment reported that half yearly reports would be made to Committee on the Directorate's input to the ambitions in the Plan.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

41. SIX MONTH REPORT ON KERBSIDE COLLECTION OF RECYCLABLE MATERIALS

The Committee received a progress report on the kerbside collection of recyclable materials scheme during the first six months of operation.

The Director of Environment reported that the scheme was based on a bag collection. Seven of the twenty-four rounds in the County were designated for the scheme and involved 50% of properties which were concentrated in the urban areas to provide the greatest return for the lowest outlay. One semi-rural round had been

included incorporating Credenhill. Ross-on-Wye was already served by a popular kerbside scheme operated by a charitable organisation.

The Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards highlighted the performance to date which needed to be viewed with some caution due to the implementation periods. However, he acknowledged there were variances in the participation rate, with some areas being as low as 15%.

The Committee questioned whether any enforcement methods were available and were informed that Local Authorities across the Country were looking at the issue.

They noted that while higher participation rates were achieved in areas with schemes using rigid containers, the capital costs involved in implementing such schemes were high.

The recycling scheme at Ross-on-Wye were looking to expand and a 'blue box' collection system may be considered if this could be supported by grant funding.

The Director reported that these various issues would need to be looked at before the next contract period.

RESOLVED: That the six-month report on kerbside collections of recyclable materials be noted.

42. REVIEW OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MINOR HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE SCHEME (THE LENGTHSMAN SCHEME)

The Committee were invited to consider the performance of the Parish Council Highway Maintenance Scheme and options for its future development.

The Director of Environment outlined the present 'Lengthsman' scheme, as being to devolve specified minor highway maintenance duties to Parish Councils. As a result of the successful pilot scheme the scheme now needed to be reviewed and a number of considerations were detailed in the report.

The Head of Engineering and Transportation reported that from comparisons with other authorities, Herefordshire funding appeared to be far in excess of comparable schemes. A full list of participating parishes and parish groups was attached to the report at Appendix 1. Details of the 38 councils participating in amenity grass cutting were detailed in Appendix 2.

He reported that discussions with participating parishes and the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) had indicated strong support for the scheme to continue. However, if it were to continue the Council needed to consider how best to promote the local 'ownership' of highway maintenance which had proved so effective at raising standards without disproportionate delegation of budgets in ways which might adversely affect the standards of maintenance to non-participating parish councils. In 2003/04 the total cost to the Council was estimated to be £144,450 of which £50,000 had been provided through the one off LPSA pump-priming grant. To maintain the scheme at the current level the £50,000 would need to be replaced from the revenue budget.

A package of measures for the future of the scheme were described in the report, including the possibility of eventually 'capping' funding to parishes. Parishes would be expected to be in a position to precept for the balance or find alternative sources of funding. Further discussions on the suggestions would be undertaken with HALC prior to adoption.

The Committee noted the benefits of local prioritisation of works; the method of payment and monitoring of the works; that to save on administration costs, small parishes could share resources to minimise administration costs and that this partnership between the Council and Parish Councils was working well.

In response to the suggestion that from 2006/07 an indexed linked cost adjustment be applied each year based on the Council's revenue budget variation for highway maintenance, the Committee questioned whether, in view of the effect on budgets, the indexing should be brought forward one year.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) be advised that the Committee expressed general agreement with the proposals presented in the report for the future development of the scheme.

43. GEM PERFORMANCE

The Committee were invited to consider GEM (Good Environmental Management) Performance issues and developments for the first 6 months of 2003/4.

The Environmental Sustainability Officer reported that a full year surveillance visit to audit the Council's continued adherence to the standards required by ISO 14001 had been undertaken in July. As a result a number of Corrective Action Requests or observations had been made and these specific points would be addressed locally or tackled corporately as appropriate. A summary of progress in relation to the first half of 2003/4 GEM objectives was attached to the report at appendix 1. A half-year report on GEM targets due for completion by October was attached at appendix 2. She reported that during the year the profile of several issues had increased which affected the work of more than one directorate and these were detailed in the report. It was likely that these would feature in the GEM programme for 2004/5. Good GEM links had been established between the Council and the Herefordshire Plan.

The Committee noted that due to the vacancy in the post of Procurement Officer, problems may occur in relation to ensuring that goods and services supplied to the Council complied with environmental standards. It was also noted that following the acquisition of an appropriate software programme, progress was being made to co-ordinate energy management data from the many sites throughout the Council.

In relation to Genetic Modification (GM) the Committee noted that the Cabinet Member (Environment) would be invited to consider whether to review the Council's current position, which did not support the growing of GM commercial crops in the County.

RESOLVED: That subject to the above comments the report be noted.

44. A STRATEGY FOR THE PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY SERVICE IN HEREFORDSHIRE - CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the draft strategy for the Public Rights of Way (PROW) Service.

The Director briefly reported upon the work of the services and expressed some concern regarding the resources available to the service particularly in view of the backlog of work and the implications of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

The Public Rights of Way Manager gave a short presentation on the work of the

PROW Service outlining various current and future issues concerning the budget; maintenance and enforcement; changes and improvements; publicity and promotion and environmental management of the network. He reported that the Best Value Improvement Plan for the service identified the need for the adoption of a comprehensive strategy to guide the future development of the services. A summary of the draft strategy had been attached to the report at Appendix 1. A full copy of the strategy had been previously sent to Committee Members. He further reported that consultation on the strategy would be undertaken with the Local Access Forum for Herefordshire, as the appropriate statutory body.

The Committee appreciated the complex matters involved, particularly in relation to the backlog of diversion and modification orders, many of which dated back to Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Council. In an effort to further understand the issues it was suggested that a seminar for all Members be arranged. The Director of Environment reported that a bid had been made to the Budget working party for resources to start to prioritise and tackle the backlog.

The Committee discussed issues concerning maintenance responsibilities, particularly to stiles and the use by 4x4 vehicles of unclassified roads.

The Committee briefly discussed the draft strategy. In relation to the diagram of the current organisation at 1.4.1 it was suggested that it be augmented by an indication of the proposed organisation.

RESOLVED:

That

- (a) the draft strategy be noted and Members invited to relay any issues of concern directly to the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) by the end of December 2003;**
- (b) that the Director of Environment arrange a seminar in early 2004 for all Members concerning the work of the PROW section and issues it faced in the future.**

The meeting ended at 1.27 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

HUMAN RESOURCES

Report By: Personnel Manager, Well-being

Wards Affected

None

Purpose

1. To report on the sickness absence and other matters for the Environment Directorate

Considerations

2. Attached at appendix 1 is the human resources report taken from the Computerised Human Resources Information System (CHRIS).
3. The report covers the year 1st December 2002 – 30th November 2003. The figure's include all permanent employees and does not include casuals. This means the numerator and denominator are the same as BV PI 12. BV PI 12 is the national standard for sickness absence whereby the average FTE for the year is taken for the denominator but excludes certain categories of employees such as temps who have been working for less than a year.
5. The report shows the number of people working in each division of the Directorate and the full time equivalent (FTE). The next column shows the FTE days lost for each division followed by the average days lost per FTE.
6. The days lost at 6.94 per FTE compares well with last year and is less than the current overall figure for the Council of 9.3 FTE days lost per employee
7. Below the chart are other statistics that show the breakdown and staff turnover etc.
8. The Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) target for ethnic employment of 1.06% is only being met by Engineering & Transportation but overall the Directorate is below the Council Target at 0.47%
9. The Council target for employing people with disabilities is 1% and the Directorate on the whole is meeting this target easily with 1.42%.
10. Turnover over the previous 9 months has slowed to 6.85% and this is being repeated Council wide. Two years turnover was at 13%.
11. The second page shows the reason for sickness absence. Accident absence is now shown separately. During the year 53 days were lost because of the two accidents that were reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

Recommendation

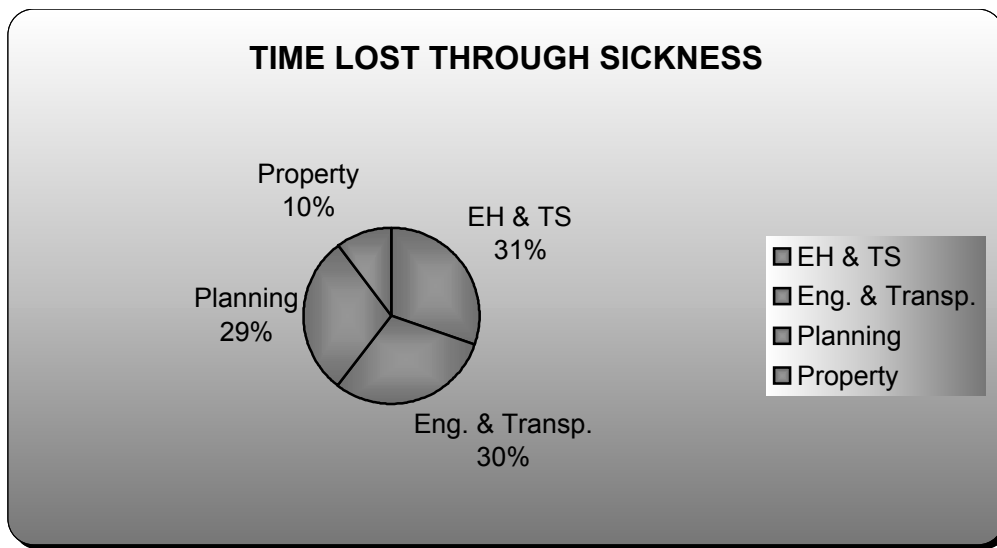
That the report is noted.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from (John Clarke) on 01432 260448

ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Division	Section	Perm. Employees	FTE Employees	Sickness FTE Days Lost	Ave days sickness lost per FTE
EH & TS	All sections including Director	110	103.69	812.5	7.84
Eng. & Transp.	All sections	145	127.64	808.5	6.33
Planning	All sections	116	103.87	777.5	7.49
Property	All sections	52	49.81	273.5	5.49
Total		423	385.01	2672	6.94

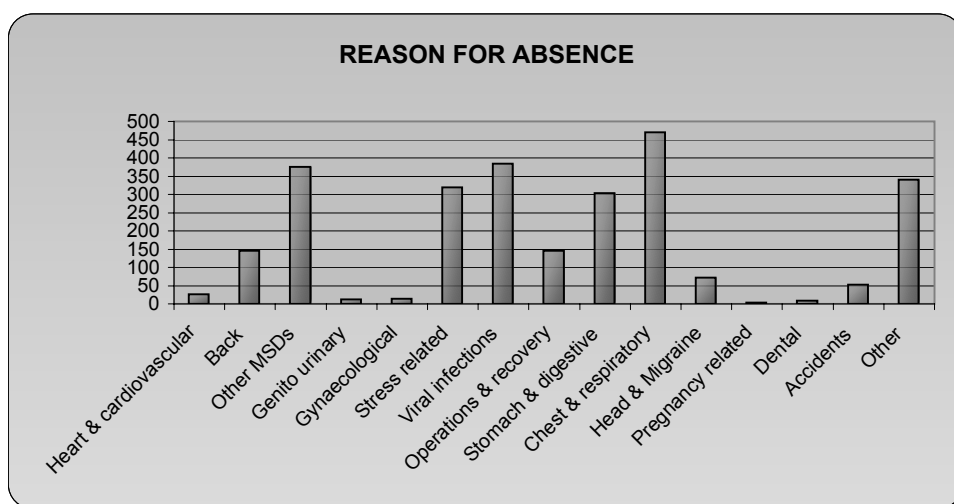
TIME LOST THROUGH SICKNESS



		Jobs filled by people with disabilities	Annual turnover	% Ethnic minorities	Accidents/ incidents	Reportable accidents F2508 raised
EH & TS	All sections incl. Director	1.82%	4.54%	0.00%	14	1
Eng. & Transp.	All sections	2.07%	8.27%	1.38%	6	1
Planning	All sections	0.00%	8.62%	0.00%	4	0
Property	All sections	1.92%	3.84%	0.00%	3	0
Total		1.42%	6.85%	0.47%	27	2

ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Absence Reason	EH & TS FTE days lost	ENG. & TRANSP. FTE Days lost	PLANNING FTE Days lost	PROPERTY FTE Days lost	DIR. TOTALS
Heart & cardiovascular	0	26	0	0	26
Back	71.5	46	11	17	145.5
Other MSDs	124	206	26.5	18.5	375
Genito urinary	3	7	3	0	13
Gynaecological	0	0.5	11	2	13.5
Stress related	28	19	268	4.5	319.5
Viral infections	60	124	157.5	43.5	385
Operations & recovery	67	11	47	21	146
Stomach & digestive	74	107.5	85.5	37	304
Chest & respiratory	182	131	78	78.5	469.5
Head & Migraine	21	14	31	5.5	71.5
Pregnancy related	0	2	1	0	3
Dental	5	2	0	1	8
Accidents	33	20	0	0	53
Other	144	92.5	58	45	339.5
Total	812.5	808.5	777.5	273.5	2672



ACCIDENT CAUSE	EH & TS	ENG. & TRANSP.	PLANNING	PROPERTY	DIR. TOTALS	F2508
Hit By A Moving Object	1	0	1	0	2	
Hit By A Moving Vehicle	1	3	0	0	4	1
Injured By An Animal	2	0	1	1	4	
Injured While MHO	2	0	0	0	2	1
Physically Assault	4	2	0	0	6	
Slipped	1	1	2	0	4	
Other causes	3	0	0	0	3	
Struck something fixed	0	0	0	2	2	
Total	14	6	4	3	27	2

ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

Report By: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

Purpose

1. To advise members of Budget Monitoring the position for the Environment Programme Area budgets for the period to 30th November 2003. The report lists the variations against budget at this stage in the year.

Financial Implications

2. It is expected that all budget variances will be contained within the overall 2003/04 revenue budget 2002/03 for Environment. Some pressure areas have been identified below but where necessary, management action will be taken to contain these pressures.

Considerations

3. The report on Budget Monitoring is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.
4. The overall Environment Budget for 2003/04 is £22,148,000, which is the budget notified to the last meeting of the Committee including the carry forward of £220,000 from 2002/03 plus an additional budget transfer of £50,000 in respect of shopmobility. The budget also includes £1,047,200 for Central Support charges.
5. The Environment projected outturn for the year is £22,043,000 which is a net underspending of £105,000. Virtually all this underspending relates to Planning.

Environment General

6. The latest information suggests spending will be in line with the budget at present although there are pressure areas which will have to be contained within the overall budget.
7. The Waste Collection contract is expected to be overspent because of the recent contract indexing although this is being offset by improved Trade Waste income.
8. A recent court judgement on new street works charges has gone against local authorities. This means that the income received is now expected to be some £70,000 below the budget. The income will also be below budget in future years unless the ruling is overturned.
9. Although the income from rents is coming rather more consistently this year, a net overspending of some £30,000 is expected on the Travellers Budget.

Environment Regulatory

10. The spending on these services looks very much in line with the budget at present. Most services are showing very modest underspending at present. It is expected

that budget pressures in respect of landfill and contaminated land and licensing can be contained within the overall budget.

Environment Planning

11. A net underspending of in excess of £100,000 is likely due to additional Building Control and Development Fee income together with staff vacancies. Building Control staff are, for example, proving very difficult to recruit. The report assumes the Planning Development Grant of £320,000 will be spent during the year.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for 2003/04 be noted subject to the comments which members may wish to take.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None identified.

Appendix 1

Environment Budget Monitoring as at 30th November 2003

<u>Page No.</u>		2003/2004 Budget £	Actuals to Period 8 £	Budget to Period 8 £	Variance to period 8 £	Estim. Out turn
1	Environment Regulatory	2,275,870	1,301,427	1,517,247	-215,820	2,270,000
2-4	Environment General	16,674,230	8,651,029	11,088,413	-2,437,384	16,675,000
5	Planning	2,150,700	779,976	1,433,800	-653,824	2,051,000
		<u>21,100,800</u>	<u>10,732,432</u>	<u>14,039,460</u>	<u>-3,307,028</u>	<u>20,996,000</u>
	Central Support Charges	<u>1,047,200</u>				<u>1,047,200</u>
		<u>22,148,000</u>				<u>22,043,200</u>

Analysis of period 1-8 2003/04

Areas of Activity	2003/04 Budget £	Actuals to period 8 £	Budget to period 8 £	Variance to period 8 £	Estimated Out-turn £
Environment Regulatory:					
Air Pollution	8,310	-15,060	5,540	-20,600	6,000
Landfill and Contaminated Land	251,270	113,820	167,513	-53,693	245,000
Water Pollution	52,750	24,559	35,167	-10,608	48,000
Pest Control	55,270	8,243	36,847	-28,604	48,000
Dog Control	82,210	46,000	54,807	-8,807	78,000
Animal Health and Welfare	147,030	109,576	98,020	11,556	155,000
Licensing	10,560	-8,189	7,040	-15,229	-2,000
Trading Standards	503,350	306,135	335,567	-29,432	503,000
Street Trading	-71,660	-35,154	-47,773	12,619	-48,000
SMSS Head of Env. Health/Trading Standards	381,850	196,342	254,552	-58,210	381,000
SMSS Commercial team	429,960	273,598	286,640	-13,042	426,000
SMSS Pollution Control	424,990	281,557	283,327	-1,770	430,000
Environment Regulatory:	2,275,870	1,301,427	1,517,247	-215,820	2,270,000

Areas of Activity	2003/04 Budget £	Actuals To Period 8 £	Budget to Period 8 £	Variance to Period 8 £	Estimated Out-turn £
<u>Environment General</u>					
Highways:					
Highways - Prof. & Engineering Staff	2,381,590	1,612,956	1,587,727	25,229	2,360,000
Highways Information Technology	104,510	0	0	0	105,000
Highways - Roads Maintenance	3,636,310	1,830,492	2,424,207	-593,715	3,636,000
Highways - NRSWA	-111,850	-86,042	-74,553	-11,489	-40,000
Highways - Winter Maintenance	534,820	228,204	356,546	-128,342	530,000
Highways - Drainage/Flood Alleviation	132,130	90,268	88,087	2,181	140,000
Highways - Street Lighting	739,870	224,323	493,247	-268,924	740,000
Highways - Bridgeworks	63,700	-19,036	42,467	-61,503	20,000
Highways - Public Rights of Way	212,700	160,487	141,800	18,687	224,000
Highways - Shopmobility	50,000	22,865	33,333	-10,468	50,000
Highways- Car Parking	-1,082,410	-783,036	-721,606	-61,430	-1,055,000
Highways- DeCrim. of Parking enforcement	12,950	-78,129	8,633	-86,762	-55,000
Highways-Licensing	-5,340	-42,274	-3,560	-38,714	-20,000
Highways Cleansing	761,960	474,802	507,973	-33,171	770,000
Public Conveniences	289,160	205,780	192,773	13,007	310,000

Areas of Activity	2003/04 Budget £	Actuals to Period 8 £	Budget to period 8 £	variance to Period 8 £	Estimated Out-turn £
Transportation:					
Transport - Prof. & Engineering Staff	703,270	662,651	468,847	193,804	710,000
Transport - Public Transport (incl. Rural)	773,190	633,354	674,813	-41,459	785,000
Transport - Other Funded schemes	0	25,387	0	25,387	0
Transport - Design/Planning staff	53,070	-6,452	35,380	-41,832	30,000
Transport - Traffic management	102,090	42,882	68,060	-25,178	115,000
Transport - Road Safety	5,260	11,146	3,507	7,639	8,000
Transport - School Crossing Patrols	43,590	22,739	29,060	-6,321	36,000
Transport - Bus Stations	-13,100	-6,815	-8,733	1,918	-15,000
Transport - Concessionary Travel	295,660	139,146	197,107	-57,961	295,000
Transport - Searches	-1,530	6,531	-1,020	7,551	12,000
Highways - S.38 Fees	-40,540	-90,955	-27,027	-63,928	-60,000

Waste Management/Other:									
Waste Collection (Domestic)	2,699,350	1,668,566	1,799,566	-131,000					2,830,000
Waste Collection (Trade)	-30,110	-219,013	-20,073	-198,940					-135,000
Waste Management	229,230	172,097	152,820	19,277					255,000
Waste Disposal	3,825,100	1,698,960	2,550,066	-851,106					3,825,000
Recycling	164,300	121,195	109,533	11,662					170,000
Admin. Support Team	23,010	30,841	15,340	15,501					25,000
Travellers Sites	-1,530	2,348	-1,020	3,368					28,000
Cemeteries	114,530	28,725	76,353	-47,628					50,000
Crematorium	-166,860	-133,964	-111,240	-22,724					-180,000
Information Technology	176,130	0	0	0					176,000
Environment General:	16,674,230	8,651,029	11,088,413	-2,437,384					16,675,000

Planning Budget Monitoring Report

Analysis of Periods 1 - 8 2003/04

Areas of Activity	2003/04 Budget £	Actuals to period 8 £	Budget to period 8 £	Variance to period 8 £	Estimated Out-turn £
Planning					
Building Control:					
Building Control Fees	-574,810	-440,103	-396,540	-43,563	-575,000
Building Control Staff	576,742	344,940	397,828	-52,888	527,000
Development Control:					
Development Control Fees	-830,187	-600,740	-553,458	-47,282	-880,000
Development Control Staff	1,384,966	922,402	923,311	-909	1,385,000
Forward Planning	414,618	262,816	276,412	-13,596	414,000
Conservation Grants	77,770	-11,603	51,846	-63,449	78,000
Conservation Management	546,148	366,546	364,099	2,447	546,000
Management and Administration	416,123	290,000	277,415	12,585	417,000
Information Technology	139,330	0	92,887	-92,887	139,000
Environment Planning:	<u>2,150,700</u>	<u>1,134,258</u>	<u>1,433,800</u>	<u>-299,542</u>	<u>2,051,000</u>
Totals - Environment:	<u>21,100,800</u>	<u>11,086,714</u>	<u>14,039,460</u>	<u>-2,952,746</u>	<u>20,996,000</u>

CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

Report By: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Purpose

1. To advise Members on the progress of the 2003/04 Capital Programme for Environment Areas within the overall context of the Herefordshire Council Capital Programme.

Financial Implications

2. Capital Budgets for the Environment Programme Areas for 2003/04 are shown on an individual basis, with funding arrangements indicated in overall terms.

Considerations

3. The report has been largely based on the third round of capital monitoring, which involved an examination of all schemes at the end of November 2003. Care is being taken to ensure the forecast spend accurately reflects the expected spend in 2003/04. The overall spending position is being kept under careful review by the Environment General capital-working Group.
4. The actual spend against each scheme is shown as at 30th November 2003.
5. The total value of the Capital Programme shown in Appendix 1 totals £10,822,941 which is as reported to the last meeting of this Committee plus an additional £103,000 for "Completing the Jigsaw" for extra public transport in rural areas.
6. The total spent to date is £5.298 million or 49% was at 31st December 2003. The scheme total amount spent and committed as at 31st December was 81% of the Budget or £8.685 million.
7. The capital receipts reserves position is still shown as being overdrawn by £60,000 as funding relating to the Ross Flood Alleviation was not approved as expected. We are now, however, expecting that a proportion of this initial expenditure will at least be funded. This should almost eliminate the amount overdrawn.
8. Whilst the proportion of the Capital Programme committed at 81% is reasonable, the level of actual spending is well below this level. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the programme is fully spent and that no conditional resources are lost. The flexibility to carry amounts forward into 2004/05 is very limited.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report be noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None identified.

Scheme	Original budget for 2003/04	Revised Budget for 2003/04	Spend per Cedar	Unposted Recharges & Commitments	Total Spend to date	% of Budget Spent	Forecast for 2003/04	Change in Forecast
	2003/04	at 1/10/03	at 30/11/03	at 30/11/03	2003/04	2003/04	at 30/11/03	2003/04
	£	£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Non LTP:								
Minor Highways Schemes			(22,021)	22,021			0	
Bye Street			(1,864)	1,864			0	
Completing the jigsaw			50,000	53,000	103,000	100%	103,000	103,000
Sec 106 Agree - Friar St	37,630	37,630		37,630	37,630	100%	37,630	
LPSA improving road safety	7,036	7,036		7,036	7,036	100%	7,036	
LPSA improving road safety	96,054	96,054				0%	96,054	
Urban Bus Challenge - WyeSMoves		219,000	30,000	189,000	219,000	100%	219,000	
Countywide Safety Strategy:								
LTP - Review/Upgrade Speed limit signing	40,000	40,000	26,583	31,106	57,689	89%	65,000	25,000
LTP - Low cost Safety Schemes	150,000	150,000	23,883	6,580	30,463	20%	150,000	
LTP - Traffic Calming	75,000	75,000	1,262	6,022	7,284	24%	30,000	(45,000)
LTP - Minor Safety Improvements	50,000	50,000	37,080	20,355	57,435	96%	60,000	10,000
LTP - Safety Cameras	10,000	10,000	16,173	(6,173)	10,000	100%	10,000	
LTP - Village Speed limit reductions	10,000	10,000						(10,000)
LTP - 20 mph Zones at Schools	100,000	100,000	11,902	(11,902)	0			(100,000)
LTP - Vehicle activated Signs	10,000	10,000				0%	10,000	
Hereford Integrated Transport Strategy:								
LTP - Travel Awareness Campaign	15,000	15,000	15,000		15,000	100%	15,000	
LTP - Bus Priority Schemes	45,000	45,000				0%	11,000	(34,000)
LTP - PTI - Bus	40,000	40,000						(40,000)
LTP - PTI - Rail								
LTP - PTI 2000	10,000	10,000						(10,000)
LTP - Passenger Waiting Facilities	25,000	25,000	17,053	3,581	20,634	83%	25,000	
LTP - Park and Ride	19,000	19,000		15,131	15,131	80%	19,000	
LTP - Cycle Network Development	70,000	70,000	13,893	54,712	68,605	98%	70,000	
LTP - Safer Routes to Schools	150,000	150,000	87,030	77,439	164,469	97%	170,000	20,000
LTP - Safer Routes to Schools Training Support	10,000	10,000				0%	6,000	(4,000)
LTP - Pedestrian Crossing Improvements	5,000	5,000				0%	5,000	
LTP - Pedestrian Route & Disabled Access Imps	25,000	25,000	23,494	8,188	31,682	99%	32,000	7,000
LTP - Rotherwas Integrated Access	50,000	50,000	4,164	11,548	15,712	31%	50,000	
LTP - Monitoring	5,000	5,000	16,905	14,475	31,380	98%	32,000	27,000

Scheme	Original budget for 2003/04		Revised Budget for 2003/04		Spend per Cedar		Unposted Recharges & Commitments		Total Spend to date		% of Budget Spent		Forecast for 2003/04		Change in Forecast	
	2003/04	£	at 1/10/03	£	at 30/11/03	£	at 30/11/03	£	2003/04	£	2003/04	%	at 30/11/03	£	2003/04	£
LTP - Multi Modal Study		20,000		20,000		499	(499)	0								(20,000)
LTP - WyeS Moves		5,000		5,000		5,000			5,000		100%			5,000		
Rural Areas & Market Towns Int Trans Strat:																
Transport Strategy		75,000		75,000							0%			75,000		
LTP - Travel Awareness Campaign		5,000		5,000		5,000			5,000		100%			5,000		
LTP - PTI - Rail		70,000		70,000			80,000		80,000		80%			100,000		30,000
LTP - Public Transport Information Access Points		5,000		5,000												(5,000)
LTP - Passenger Waiting Facilities		40,000		40,000		2,416	5,383	7,799	7,799		26%			30,000		(10,000)
LTP - Network of Cycle Routes and Cycle Pkg		88,000		88,000		62,936	12,539	75,475	75,475		86%			88,000		
LTP - Pedestrian and Disabled Access Imps		20,000		20,000		15,493	1,964	17,457	17,457		87%			20,000		
LTP - Safer Routes to Schools		125,000		125,000		41,949	117,874	159,823	159,823		91%			175,000		50,000
LTP - Safer Routes to Schools Training Support		15,000		15,000												(15,000)
LTP - Rural Footway Improvements		50,000		50,000		14,210	3,528	17,738	17,738		30%			60,000		10,000
LTP - Leominster Bus Station Improvements		180,000		180,000			162,000	162,000	162,000		90%			180,000		
LTP - Quiet Lanes																
LTP - Monitoring		10,000		10,000												(10,000)
Major Minor Schemes:																
LTP - Rotherwas Access Road		250,000		250,000		112,074	16,752	128,826	128,826		54%			240,000		(10,000)
LTP - Roman Road		800,000		800,000		155,227	53,113	208,340	208,340		36%			580,000		(220,000)
LTP - Rural Low floor Bus Project		1,267,000		1,267,000		721,252	529,748	1,251,000	1,251,000		99%			1,267,000		
LTP - Staff costs to be allocated over LTP		301,000		301,000			301,000	301,000	301,000		100%			301,000		
Capitalised Maintenance:																
Capitalised Maintenance of Principal Roads		910,000		910,000		364,009	242,490	606,499	606,499		67%			910,000		
Capitalised Maintenance of Non-Principal Roads		3,090,000		3,090,000		2,059,628	735,648	2,795,276	2,795,276		90%			3,090,000		
Footways - Footways		425,000		425,000		52,128	77,510	129,638	129,638		31%			425,000		
Capitalised Ass'ment & Strength of Bridges		1,591,000		1,874,000		1,335,614	506,247	1,841,861	1,841,861		98%			1,874,000		354,000
Other schemes				(283,000)										71,000		
Gross Expenditure		10,396,720		10,615,720		5,297,971	3,386,910	8,684,882	8,684,882		81%			10,718,720		103,000
Year End Creditors b/fwd		104,221		104,221										104,221		
Year End Creditors c/fwd																

Scheme	Original budget for 2003/04		Revised Budget for 2003/04		Spend per Cedar		Unposted Recharges & Commitments		Total Spend to date		% of Budget Spent		Forecast for 2003/04		Change in Forecast	
	2003/04	£	at 1/10/03	£	at 30/11/03	£	at 30/11/03	£	2003/04	£	2003/04	%	at 30/11/03	£	2003/04	£
Expenditure to be Financed	10,500,941		10,719,941		5,297,971		3,386,910		8,684,882		80%		10,822,941		103,000	
Financed By:																
BCA	(9,821,000)		(9,821,000)										(9,821,000)			
SCA																
Objective 2 Rotherwas Integrated Access	(160,000)		(35,000)										(35,000)			
Objective 2 Rural Transport Startegy			(75,000)										(75,000)			
Objective 2 Rotherwas Access Road			(50,000)										(50,000)			
LPSA	(103,090)		(103,090)										(103,090)			
Advantage West Midlands Multi Modal Study	(20,000)		(20,000)										(20,000)			
Private Developers Bus Priority Scheme	(15,000)		(15,000)										(15,000)			
Capital Receipts Reserve	(63,952)		(303,952)										(303,952)			
Corporate Capital Receipts Reserve (op cred)	(40,269)		(40,269)										(40,269)			
Section 106 Friar St	(37,630)		(37,630)										(37,630)			
Urban bus chall wyes moves grant			(219,000)										(219,000)			
Completing the jigsaw													(103,000)		(103,000)	
Legion Way bus stop conts																
Safety cameras conts																
Historic Bldg Grants other income																
Countryside Agency-Rural Low Floor Bus Pilot	(240,000)															
	(10,500,941)		(10,719,941)										(10,822,941)		(103,000)	
Capital Receipts Reserve Position:																
B/Fwd as at 1 April	357,231		357,231		n/a				n/a		n/a		357,231			
Capital Receipts in year - expected	450,000															
Adjustment as 2002/03 SCA funding not receivable			(113,461)										(113,461)			
Transfer from CCRR	40,269		40,269										40,269			
Capital Receipts applied	(104,221)		(344,221)										(344,221)			
C/Fwd as at 31 March	743,279		(60,182)										(60,182)			

BEST VALUE REVIEWS – IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Report By: Best Value Officer

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

- 1 To report the remaining actions and the exceptions to the programmed progress in the improvement plans resulting from the reviews of Development Control, Public Conveniences Public Rights of Way and Highway Maintenance.

Financial Implications

- 2 There has been no variation to the financial implications identified in the individual Improvement Plans.

Background

- 3 In response to comments from Members and Officers, the reporting arrangements have been developed by consolidating the reports and only reporting on exceptions to the programmed actions. That is, where actions have been completed earlier than programmed or where the timetable has not been met.
- 4 In order to help assess the current potential of the services, it was thought that Members would find it useful to have an outline the remaining actions in the improvement plans.
- 5 Appendix 1 of this report covers the following improvement plans:
 - Development Control
 - Public Conveniences
 - Public Rights of Way
 - Highway Maintenance

RECOMMENDATION

THAT members note and comment on, where appropriate, the implementation of the improvement plans.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Bob Barker, Best Value Officer
on 01432 260985

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	By When	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
High	Improved speed of applications and responsiveness of service	Produce IT strategy for Development Control	Include use of web and Herefordshire website, MVM, GIS, potential of document management system Exchange of information with internal consultees	Head of Service in liaison with IT	September 2002	Project plan to update MVM and improve functionality currently being implemented. Working to develop use of MVM. GIS, and improve web capabilities underway in accordance with IEG programme	BV109 – Determine applications within 8/13 weeks
Medium	Improved speed of applications and responsiveness of service	Customer care training	Arrange in-house course for all staff	Head of Service	December 2002	Ongoing - further training to be arranged	BV109 – Determine applications within 8/13 weeks
High	Develop the most effective method of service delivery	Assess various methods of delivering each of the individual Development Control functions. Assess against benchmark authorities who have previously externalised all or part of the Development Control function.	Identify detailed cost of individual services	Head of Service/ DC Manager	Dec 2002 June 2003	Evaluation of time recording exercise under way. Ongoing appraisal of other authorities experience in alternative methods of delivery. Examples are limited.	BV107 Cost of planning per head of population (proposed to be dropped for 2004/5, to be replaced by a quality of service checklist PI.

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	By When	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
High	Improved speed of applications and responsiveness of service	Review and update Highway Design Guide		Lead Planner Transportation / Consultant	December 2003	Investigate use of Owen Williams. Awaiting outcome of changes to Government guidance.	BV109 – Determine applications within 8/13 weeks

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	By When	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
High Priority – 2003/5	Improved provision of facilities	Refurbishment programme which will include survey of each PC site, determine level of provision and cost, consultation with local members, submit capital bid for the programme spread over 5 years	Westbury St, Leo, will be picked up in 2003/4	HOS Property	Starting in 2003 and completed in 2007	In line with the new Jarvis Partnership and Directorate Restructure. Capital bid for Improvement Programme considered by CXMT 6 January 2004. Investigate potential for match funding.	Public perception indicator
	Review of the Blackfriars street and Cattle Market Facilities	Provision to be reviewed in light of ongoing development	Decision on provision	S Oates / C Birks	To be determined by the development of Hereford Market site	Awaiting decisions on the development of the Edgar Grid area.	

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Priority	Outcome	Action	Comment	Officer(s)	By when	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
High	Improved focus of resources	<p>Write policy and strategy for future delivery of the service to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where resources should be focussed How to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act Business plan with targets An enforcement policy and strategy The creation of an Asset Register How to promote PROW 	<p>Resource Implications - Identify funding to pay for consultancy work, DDA cost implications, promotion of network, creation of asset register.</p>	SO/MJ / and others	December 2002	<p>Final draft strategy prepared and will be put before the Cabinet Member before going out to the new Access Forum as part of further consultation with the public.</p> <p>A presentation to Scrutiny in November 2003.</p> <p>Action Plan to be complete to support strategy</p> <p>Initial research started on Enforcement Strategy. Now in draft early form.</p> <p>Strategy to be put out to the public in February 2004.</p>	BV178 Ease of use of Rights of Way
High	Improved focus of resources	<p>How to comply with the 2026 definitive map requirements of the CROW Act.</p> <p>Also requirements for Access Forum</p> <p>Phasing in of requirements: explanation required for members</p>	<p>No additional resources identified in 2002/3 budget. Could require circa £75k p.a. depending on regulations. Staff time.</p>	MM/RH and others	Include in service plans	<p>The CROW Act 2000 has been evaluated for the impact on PROW provision. Local Access Forum regulations come into force 7th August 2002.</p>	
High	Increase throughput of Diversion	<p>Research, devise and write a fast-track method for determining</p>	<p>Staff time – possible offset through income</p>	RH/MMM	1/7/02	<p>Have trialed simplified, time-limited process of pre-order consultation and less protracted</p>	

Priority	Outcome	Action	Comment	Officer(s)	By when	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
	Orders	applications for Diversion Orders	generation. Now part of strategy.			negotiation with applicants. Also need to develop a clear Diversion Policy as part of the PROW Strategy. Priority for diversions in the public interest. New date set for March 2004	
High	Digitised Definitive Map	Complete digitisation of Definitive Map IT Section to install purchased historical data as an overlay on GIS.	Towards e-gov	PROW Section	2004	Now an objective in the strategy. Target date moved to December 2005. Some historical overlays installed. Will be an ongoing process as historical data is digitised	
Medium	Improve usage of IT	Use lap-tops and portable printers to produce reports/letters in the field	Needs agreement with IT	IT	April 2003	Unlikely at present time due to resource issues	
Medium		Assess extending Parish Path Partnership and review progress annually – including investigating the possible part funding from Parishes through precept		RH / TMW / Herefordshire Association of Local Councils	31/3/02	Lengthsman pilot scheme link to PROW to be reviewed after consultation in January 2004.	
High	More effective use of resources	Increase involvement of Parish Footpath Officers by New guidelines Better guidance and training Annual PFO seminar		RH/MM and others	1/3/02 1/4/02 31/3/02	2003/4 Annual meeting with the PFO's has now been arranged for April. The seminar has been deferred pending availability of the draft strategy. A meeting of PFOs will be included in the consultation on the Strategy. 2003/4 meetings completed. Moved to High priority in order help improve results and make	BVPI 178

Priority	Outcome	Action	Comment	Officer(s)	By when	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
						better use of resources. Potential for training in conjunction with HJS. 2 Newsletters produced per year.	
Low	Improved understanding of how PROW fits into the Council as a whole	Set up shadowing exercises with Members		RH	September 2003	Part completed through production of strategy which links PROW with Herefordshire and Corporate plans. Seminar to Local Members to be carried out in February 2004	
Low		Make Digitised Definitive Map available on web site	Towards e-gov	RH	2005	This is subject to e government ambitions.	
Low	Contribute to sustainable transport	Write a walking strategy for inclusion in the next Local Transport Plan to include PROW		RH	2005	Now known as the Rights of Way Improvement plan which will be incorporate into the LTP. Will be wider than a walking strategy.	
Low	Improve usage of IT	Carry out cost/benefit exercise of using Digital National Framework – assess on a basis of where we could be in 5 years time	Towards e-gov	MJ/MM/JB /IT	April 2005		

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Priority	Improvement Area	Action	Targets and Outcomes	Officer(s)	Start Date	Programmed completion date	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
High	Customer Focus	Set Clear service standards. Publicise standards, fault reporting, service achievements and future disruption to the network to the public. Management of customer expectations. [Best Value Inspection Recommendation]	Presentation of Highway Maintenance Plan to all Local Area Forums. Outcome - Better public understanding of service standards and reporting mechanisms.	SO/M/J/ Divisional Officers	Apr-02	December 2003	Synopsis of standards in new Highways Maintenance Plan to be prepared for distribution as leaflets. These will include information on winter gritting (completed January 04), graffiti and street cleansing (being prepared for end January 2004).	Improved public perception PI
High	Best Practice procedures	Develop integrated IT systems including reporting via the "web". - in liaison with IT section (contribution to e-government). Links to "Info in Herefordshire". [Best Value Inspection Recommendation]	Target - all service areas covered in compliance with e-government targets. Outcome - Improved customer responsiveness. Efficiency improvements in responding to defects to achieve higher maintenance standards.	BH/IT/FM/ RH/DJP	Apr-02	April 2004	Part of the LPSA target to achieve e-gov by April 2004. Works management systems have now been closely integrated with Herefordshire Jarvis Services to improve ordering/invoicing procedures. Web based Highways Works information system being prepared.	Improved public perception PI
Medium	Best Practice procedures	Long term bridge maintenance plan in line with LTP. Develop database of bridges to include * Results of inspection, * Programme of works identified by inspection, * Criteria for prioritising works	Target – LTP targets for bridges to be achieved by 2005. Outcome - Greater reliability and safety of travel and fewer restrictions.	SFB/DE/ AM	Jan-02	December 2004	2003/04 inspections are in hand and to programme according to structural transportation and highway maintenance needs. On target for completion by December 2004.	

MONITORING OF 2003/2004 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – APRIL 2003 TO NOVEMBER 2003

Report By: Director of Environment

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To update Members on progress made by the Environment Directorate for the eight months April to November 2003 towards achieving all of the performance indicators / targets which appear in the Council's Performance Plan.

Financial Implications

2. All expenditure in respect of performance indicators / targets is from approved budgets.

Content

3. The report of exceptions to the targeted performance is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.
4. Also included, for comparative purposes, are the out-turns for 2002/3 and the targets for 2002/3 and 2003/4 and performance April to July and April to September 2003.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the exceptions monitoring report in relation to the 2003/2004 local and national performance indicators be noted, subject to any comments which Members may wish to raise.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

ENVIRONMENT

National: Best Value

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2002/2003	Actual Out-turn 2002/3	Target 2003/4	Performance Apr-Jul	Performance Apr-Sept	Performance Apr-Nov	Comments
	Strategic objective							
BV82b	Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which has been composted	5%	5.12%	5.74%	7.69%	7.91%	7.42%	Seasonal fluctuation. Will reduce over the winter.
	Fair access							
BV199	Local Street and Environment Cleanliness – percentage of sites below Grade B – i.e. light	New Indicator		36%				Training completed. Inspections to commence Feb 04

Local:

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2002/2003	Actual Out-turn 2002/3	Target 2003/4	Performance Apr-Jul	Performance Apr-Sept	Performance Apr-Nov	Comments
	Number of missed bins per week – all rounds (not including trade) based on 2 per round per week	46	27.51	46	29.66	32.5	33.22	
	% of days public conveniences facilities closed	2%	0.97%	.87%	1.079%			Information not yet available

ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORTATION

Local:

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2002/2003	Actual Out-turn 2002/3	Target 2003/4	Performance Apr-Jul	Performance Apr-Sept	Performance Apr-Nov	Comments
	Percentage of Penalty Charge notice appeals cases “lost” at appeal	Baseline	0.24%	0.25%	0.08%	0.04%	0.04%	As a % better than target

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2002/2003	Actual Out-turn 2002/3	Target 2003/4	Performance Apr-Jul	Performance Apr-Sept	Performance Apr-Nov	Comments
	Number of Penalty Charge Notices issued – amended indicator	21,000	21,329	21,000	7,746	11,776	15,991	End of year projection is 14% above original estimate due to increased effort and higher levels of staffing than anticipated
	Street Lighting							
	The average length of time in repairing street light faults compared with the authorities policies and objectives	10 Days	3.49 days	4.5 days	3.68 days	3.57 days	3.84 days	Time to repair faults increases during winter months therefore end of year figure expected to be close to 4.5 days

PLANNING

National: Best Value

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2002/2003	Actual Out-turn 2002/3	Target 2003/4	Performance Apr-Jul	Performance Apr-Sept	Performance Apr-Nov	Comments
	Service delivery outcome							
BV109a	Determine major commercial and industrial applications within 13 weeks	60%	42%	60%	54%	47%	53%	

REVIEW OF PARKING STRATEGY

Report By: Director of Environment

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To agree the terms of reference and membership of a working group to review the countywide car parking strategy.

Reasons

At their meeting on 21st October, the Environment Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) that the Countywide Parking Strategy be reviewed. This recommendation was subsequently endorsed by Cabinet and the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) has asked this Committee to carry out that review.

Considerations

1. It is suggested that the following terms of reference be adopted:

“To review the present Countywide Parking Strategy, in particular the appropriateness of the policies and charges in relation to the aims and objectives of Herefordshire Council as part of an integrated transport policy and addressing the social and economic well being of the people of Herefordshire whilst maintaining a net financial contribution to the Engineering and Transportation budget no less than the existing”.
2. Membership is a matter for this committee to determine but it is suggested that membership be confined to a small number but including representatives from the differing areas of the county. It may also be desirable to achieve a cross section if not a balance of political parties. It could also be reasonable to give more weight to those areas that generate the greatest net income for the council.
3. A possible composition along these lines might be:

The Chairman of this Committee together with a member representing:	
Hereford	1
North west (Kington / Leominster)	1
East (Bromyard & Ledbury)	1
South (Ross-on-Wye)	1
4. It is suggested that the group hold their first meeting in February 2004 and report back to this committee no later than October 2004.

Recommendations

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
John Colyer, Transportation Manager on 0579

- THAT (a) The terms of reference for the Parking Strategy Review Group be agreed;**
- (b) Committee nominate members to the working group
and**
- (c) A timescale for carrying out the review be agreed**

Background Papers

- Countywide Parking Strategy

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Report By: Director of Environment

Wards Affected

County wide

Purpose

To consider the performance of the Highway Maintenance Service since the completion of the Best Value Inspection Review in 2002.

Reasons

In March 2002 a Best Value Inspection of Highway Maintenance concluded that the service was rated as Fair with uncertain prospects of improvement. A series of performance improvements have since been implemented to address the issues raised in the inspection. A review of performance was agreed as part of this Committee's programme for 2003/04.

Considerations

1. In March 2002 the Audit Commission carried out a Best Value Inspection of the Council's Highway Maintenance Service. A Best Value Review of the service had been completed in 2001 and an Improvement Plan produced to address the issues identified.
2. At the time of the inspection the condition of Herefordshire's highways was poor, reflecting the historical under-investment in maintenance inherited from the predecessor authority. That investment pattern had continued until 2001/2002 when additional capital funding was allocated as part of the Government's Local Transport Plan settlement. The settlement supported the Government's national transport targets which included the achievement of halting the deterioration in local road condition by 2004 and eliminating the maintenance backlog by 2010.
3. The Council's policies for Highway Maintenance are set out in the Highway Maintenance Plan. The Local Transport Plan 2001/02 – 2006/07 describes the strategy for managing the highway network and contains estimates of the maintenance funding requirements. When the LTP was published in July 2000, the backlog of highway maintenance was estimated to be £26 million, with an annual funding requirement of £14.1 million for a "standstill" position. To eliminate the backlog over 10 years would raise this to £16.7 million each year. These figures exclude bridge maintenance. In 2003/04, the highway maintenance budget is £11.3 million.
4. Among the recommendations of the Best Value Inspection were:
 - The development of an effective performance management and monitoring culture within the Service;
 - Links between the Highway Maintenance Plan and the Local Transport Plan;
 - Linking actions in the Improvement Plan to individual targets and monitoring of progress

- The use of consistent and recorded methods of prioritising work
 - Sharing good practice
 - Setting clear service standards and making these known to the public.
5. Substantial progress has been made since then in addressing these identified weaknesses, in particular:
- A new Highway Maintenance Plan published in 2003, setting out service standards, linkages to other Council policies and containing details of forthcoming maintenance schemes. The Plan will be republished later this year with details of the annual programme for 2004/05;
 - The Best Value Improvement Plan was revised to incorporate the recommendations of the Best Value Inspection and to include more details of targets;
 - The creation of the new Partnership for service delivery between the Council, Herefordshire Jarvis Services and Owen Williams. The Partnership agreements contain specific performance targets to drive continual improvement of the service. Performance is monitored through mechanisms set out in the agreements;
 - The Council has joined the Midlands Benchmarking Group (for highways and transportation) and the National Highway Maintenance Benchmarking Club;
 - Annual maintenance programmes targeted at defined improvements in highway condition, set out in the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA);
 - A review of the structure of the Service (in progress) to introduce a “Streetscene” based approach to service delivery during 2004;
 - Publication of service information. For example, previous editions of Herefordshire Matters contained details of forthcoming roadworks, a new leaflet is being published in January 2004 outlining the Winter Gritting service and a leaflet with contact information and some service standards is due to be published in February 2004.
6. The key measure of progress is the condition of the county’s highways. The LPSA target is to achieve a 3% reduction by 2005 in the amount of the non-principal road network exceeding national intervention “thresholds”. This target is measured by visual condition surveys of the carriageways (coarse visual inspections “CVIs”) but monitoring has been disrupted by changes in the national methodology for undertaking these surveys since the target was set. The Government remains concerned about the relative inconsistency of this style of survey and has announced an intention to move to an automated system of surveying within the next few years (2004/05 for principal roads).
7. The strategy adopted for achievement of Herefordshire’s LPSA target has been to place greater emphasis on preventive maintenance of the non-principal roads at an early stage of deterioration, rather than concentrating maintenance resources on roads where deterioration is at an advanced state and intervention will be substantially more costly. This strategy is designed to maximise the use of maintenance resources across the county and to contain the backlog of “failed” roads. Although one consequence of the strategy is that some of the worst roads are left in a safe but relatively poor state, the significant benefit is that overall condition of the network should improve more rapidly to ensure that the LPSA target is met by 2004.

8. As explained above, the national Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) for road condition have proved to be very poor comparators of performance over time, with the basis of calculation repeatedly changing. For 2002/03 and 2003/04 the BVPIs for road condition, based on CVI survey results, can be compared by recalculating the audited and agreed results for 2002/03. This is illustrated in the following table:

BV Indicator Ref	Description	2002/03 Published results	2002/03 Adjusted results to compare with 2003/04 surveys	2003/04 (Provisional)	Change
BV96	Condition of Principal Roads – percentage exceeding threshold	2.49%	2.49%	3.86%	+1.37%
BV97a	Condition of non-principal roads (classified) – percentage exceeding threshold	35.13%	74%	40%	-34%
BV97b	Condition of non-principal roads (unclassified) – percentage exceeding threshold	28.59%	42%	39%	-3%

9. These figures have to be viewed with considerable caution at this stage but do appear to confirm that the condition of the county's non-principal road network is improving, as required to achieve the LPSA target. The results are not yet directly related to the LPSA target, which relies on figures compiled under a former survey methodology. Special surveys were commissioned in 2003 to provide monitoring data for the LPSA and the outputs from these surveys are due in January. Further surveys of this type will be undertaken in October/November 2004 to provide the final results on which achievement of the LPSA target will be judged.
10. The decline in condition of the principal road network to 3.86% in 2003/04 is slightly worse than the target of 3% but is not unexpected given the diversion of resources to the non-principal network.
11. The maintenance programme for 2004/05 provides the last opportunity to achieve the LPSA target and it will have to be compiled with a strong focus on achievement of the target. Unfortunately, in the recent announcement of the LTP settlement for 2004/05 the Government rejected this Council's bid for exceptional maintenance funding towards the Roman Road Improvement scheme. As a result, some of the maintenance budget will have to be diverted to resourcing this scheme in 2004/05 and 2005/06 and this will constrain options for highway maintenance programmes in these years.

Financial Implications

Covered in the report above. Costs arising from the introduction of the new Highway

Maintenance Plan will be contained within the agreed maintenance budgets.

Risks

There are no specific risks associated with this report.

Alternative Options

There are no alternative options.

Recommendations

THAT the report be noted.

Background Papers

Best Value Inspection of Highways Maintenance in Herefordshire – Audit Commission March 2002

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2004/5

Report By: Director of Environment

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

- 1 To consider the work programme for the Committee and proposed terms of reference for the review of the policy on Poly tunnels.

Financial Implications

- 2 None

Background

- 3 The 2003/4 work programme has now been completed and Environment Scrutiny Committee are requested to consider the proposed work programme for the period to the end of March 2005 indicating the date when reports should come to committee.

Proposed Date	Items
2 April 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness Absence • Capital Budget 2004/5 • Revenue Budget 2004/5 • Best Value Reviews Improvement Plans • Performance Indicators • Poly tunnels
June 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness Absence • Capital Budget 2004/5 • Revenue Budget 2004/5 • Best Value Reviews Improvement Plans • Performance Indicators • Car Parking • Waste Management
September 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness Absence • Capital Budget 2003/04 • Revenue Budget 2003/04

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Bob Barker, Best Value Officer on 01432 260985

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Value Reviews Improvement Plans • Performance Indicators • LTP
November 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness Absence • Capital Budget 2004/5 • Revenue Budget 2004/5 • Best Value Reviews Improvement Plans • Performance Indicators • GEM
14 January 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness Absence • Capital Budget 2004/5 • Revenue Budget 2004/5 • Best Value Reviews Improvement Plans • Performance Indicators • Contribution to Herefordshire Ambitions
30 March 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness Absence • Capital Budget 2004/5 • Revenue Budget 2004/5 • Best Value Reviews Improvement Plans • Performance Indicators

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the work programme be approved and recommended to Strategic Monitoring Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2004/05

REVIEW OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE USE OF POLYTUNNELS IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Report By: Director of Environment

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To agree the terms of reference for the review of the Council's Voluntary Code of Practice for the use of polytunnels in Herefordshire and to agree the membership of a working group to review the code.

Reasons

At their meeting on 6th February 2003, Cabinet agreed to adopt a voluntary code of practice to control the use of polytunnels. The agreed policy provided for the operation of the voluntary code to be reviewed after 12 months. There has also been a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman about the council's approach to this issue. The Ombudsman has indicated that he will consider a review of the current arrangements as a satisfactory settlement of the complaint. In accordance with the 2004/05 Environment Scrutiny Committee work programme to be considered at this meeting it is proposed that this Committee carry out the review.

Considerations

1. It is suggested that the following terms of reference be adopted:
 - To review the voluntary code of practice for regulating the extensive use of polytunnels in Herefordshire,
 - To consider the appropriateness of the code and associated processes in the light of relevant current planning policy, case law and guidance
 - To consider how best to strike a balance between sustaining a key sector of the agriculture industry whilst protecting the landscape of Herefordshire and the interests of the wider community.
 - Following the review to advise the Cabinet Member (Environment) on the best framework to put in place to regulate extensive polytunnel use in Herefordshire and whether the Development Plan requires amendment

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Jonathan Barrett, Head of Planning Services on 01432 383098

2. The desirability of the establishment of a working group is a matter for this committee to determine but it is suggested that an Officer/Member working group be set up to include Members whose Wards are specifically affected by the use of polytunnels or who have the appropriate expertise or interest in agricultural issues. This working group would be tasked with gathering the evidence concerning the success or otherwise of the current voluntary code and presenting proposals for the amendment of the policy and code as considered to be appropriate.
3. Members are asked to note that the issue of the use of polytunnels potentially cuts across the areas of responsibility of the Environment and Social and , Economic Development . Agreement is therefore required from Strategic Monitoring Committee that the Environment Scrutiny Committee lead this review.
4. It is suggested that the working group hold their first meeting as soon as possible.

Recommendations

- THAT (a) The terms of reference for the Polytunnels Review Working Group be agreed**
- (b) Committee nominate members to the working group**
- (c) The means of gathering evidence and views from external bodies and individuals be agreed**
- and**
- (d) A timescale for carrying out the review be agreed**

Background Papers

- Voluntary Code of Practice to Control the Siting of Polytunnels in Herefordshire