

A G E N D A

Social & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Thursday, 5th February, 2004**

Time: **10.30 a.m.**

Place: **The Council Chamber, Leominster**

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

Map of venue enclosed

For any further information please contact:

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**County of Herefordshire
District Council**

AGENDA

for the Meeting of the Social & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee

To: Councillor A.C.R. Chappell (Chairman)
Councillor J. Stone (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors H. Bramer, M.R. Cunningham, Mrs. S.P.A. Daniels, J.G.S. Guthrie, B. Hunt, Mrs. R.F. Lincoln, P. G. Turpin and A.L. Williams

Co-opted Members G. Jones (Tourism Sector), Mrs E. Newman (HALC), D. Stevens (Chamber of Commerce), P. Thomas (NFU).

	Pages
Map of Council Chamber, Leominster	
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 - 4
To approve and sign the Minutes of the meetings held on 27th November, 2003 and 14th January, 2004 (to follow)	
Minutes of 14th January, 2004	
This set of minutes were issues after the agenda but before the meeting.	
5. UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE COMMUNITY YOUTH SERVICE TOWARDS NEW STANDARDS	5 - 8
To advise Members on the restructuring of the Community Youth Service and progress towards the revised planning guidance (December 2003), and the national standards and performance indicators in youth work.	
6. CONSIDERATION OF THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF HEREFORD	
The Director of Policy and Community to report on the Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held 14th January, 2004 relating to the economic impact of recent events in Hereford City and update the Committee on a report to Cabinet Members.	
Report - Consideration of the Economic Position of Hereford	
This report was issued after the agenda but before the meeting.	

7. ADULT LEARNING INSPECTORATE REINSPECTION	9 - 10
To inform the Committee of the Adult Learning Inspectorate's proposals for the reinspection of the Council's Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded Adult and Community Learning (ACL) provision.	
8. POLICY AND COMMUNITY DIRECTORATE 2003/04 FIRST EIGHT MONTHS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	11 - 18
To inform Members of the performance of the non-corporate functions of the Policy and Community Directorate against their national and local performance indicators for the first eight months of 2003/04, and to detail the main areas of activity undertaken by those services during the two months since the last report.	
9. HUMAN RESOURCES	19 - 24
To report on the sickness absence and other matters for the Policy & Community Directorate	

PUBLIC INFORMATION

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Council has established Scrutiny Committees for Education, Environment, Health, 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

The Public's Rights to Information and Attendance at Meetings

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:-

- Attend all Council, Cabinet, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings unless the business to be transacted would disclose 'confidential' or 'exempt' information.
- 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.
- Access to a public Register stating the names, addresses and wards of all Councillors with details of the membership of the Cabinet, of all Committees and Sub-Committees.
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Please Note:

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If you have any questions about this Agenda, how the Council works or would like more information or wish to exercise your rights to access the information described above, you may do so either by telephoning Mr Paul James on 01432 260460 or by visiting in person during office hours (8.45 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. Monday - Thursday and 8.45 a.m. - 4.45 p.m. Friday) at the Council Offices, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford.

Council Chamber , Leominster



Enter car park from Etnam Street. Council Chamber is the portakabin behind the large wall, accessed by the gate from the car park.

COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Social & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held at Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Thursday, 27th November, 2003 at 10.30 a.m.

Present: Councillor A.C.R. Chappell (Chairman)
Councillor J. Stone (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs. P.A. Andrews, H. Bramer, M.R. Cunningham,
Mrs. S.P.A. Daniels, J.G.S. Guthrie, Mrs. R.F. Lincoln and P. G. Turpin
Non-Voting Members Mrs. E. Newman (HALC), Mr. Maddy (NFU), D. Stevens (Chamber of Commerce)

In attendance: Councillors P.E. Harling, Mrs. M.D. Lloyd-Hayes, and R.V. Stockton (Cabinet Member – Community and Social Development)

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors J.C. Mayson (Cabinet Member – Rural Regeneration & Smallholdings) and A.L. Williams.

35. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Councillor Mrs P.A. Andrews substituted for Councillor A.L. Williams. Mr Maddy for Mr P. Thomas (NFU).

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs S.P.A. Daniels declared a personal interest in agenda item No 5 – Presentation by HALO – as she was the Council’s appointed member on the HALO Ltd management board.

37. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October, 2003 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

38. PRESENTATION BY HALO (THE LEISURE TRUST)

The Committee received a presentation by Mr J. Argent, Chief Executive of HALO Ltd (the Leisure Trust).

The Director of Policy and Community informed the Committee of the background to the setting up of the Trust.

Mr Argent outlined the rationale and the original objectives for the Trust. He then described progress made since April 2002 which included a review of staff structures and the development of a Human Resources strategy; work on preventative maintenance programmes and work flow asset management; and a review of the pricing strategy. He reported that the Board had now approved a 5 year Strategy

and would continue to work with the Herefordshire Partnership Ambition Groups. The challenges for HALO included managing ageing assets; the impact of the Disability Discrimination Act; increased maintenance costs and competition from new leisure facilities. He reported that following completion of a feasibility study there was a positive opportunity to invest for the medium to long term to get improved, modern, safe facilities. HALO would also continue to develop partnerships with the Council and other partners and attempt to improve the quality of life for residents of the County.

During the course of discussion the following principal points were noted:

- In response to a question regarding the repair and renewal of equipment and the possible closure of facilities eg as had happened at Leominster Pool, Mr Argent responded that the planned approach to maintenance should reduce equipment failures.
- He acknowledged that following the review of the pricing strategy a number of pricing elements had been removed to make the system simpler. However, the strategy would be continually reviewed.
- Existing facilities would be managed and improved. However, while the wider issue of commissioning of new facilities was outside the remit of Halo, the Leisure Services Manager reported that Halo would inform and feed back to the Council on future plans in the leisure area.
- It was noted that while leisure facilities at Kington and Wigmore were not managed by Halo, they were subject to local trust agreements.

The Chairman thanked Mr Argent for his informative presentation.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation and comments be noted.

39. FESTIVALS REVIEW

The Committee were invited to consider a report from the Festival Review Group.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that following a request from the Cabinet Member (Community and Social Development) the Committee had established a Festival Review Group to look at the Council's policy towards Festivals.

The Group had conducted a review with the objective of giving guidance to the Cabinet Member (Community and Social Development) to find common solutions to investment requirements of festivals taking place in Herefordshire, restricting the review to festivals which received investment of over £5,000 pa from the Council. The Review Group's report setting out its approach to the task; its findings; conclusions and recommendations had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

The Chairman outlined the process adopted for undertaking the review, which had included interviews with 11 key witness groups. He took the Committee through the report section by section and highlighted a number of key issues arising from the review.

The Committee acknowledged the effect that enthusiasm and local pride had on a community and how important local arts provision was in the County.

In relation to Recommendation 6, concerning transport infrastructure with reference to the direct rail link from Birmingham Airport to Hereford, it was suggested that the Manchester air/rail link should not be ignored.

The Chairman thanked the witnesses for their contribution to the review and the Councillors and staff for the work involved.

The Cabinet Member (Community and Social Development) thanked the Review Group for undertaking the review and for producing a very readable report which he would consider in due course.

RESOLVED: That the key finding and additional recommendations contained in the report be accepted and the report be submitted to the Cabinet Member (Community and Social Development) for consideration.

40. MONITORING OF 2003/2004 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVENUE BUDGETS PERIOD 1-7

The Committee were advised of the actual net revenue expenditure against budgets for Social and Economic Development service areas to period 7 of the financial year 2003-2004.

The Principal Accountancy Manager reported upon the revised budget, including over and underspends carried forward from 2002-03, with actual expenditure, variances and projected out-turns for the main service areas within Social and Economic Development. The monitoring report for period 7 was attached to the report at appendix 1.

In reply to a question concerning Youth Services funding, The Director of Policy and Community reported that this was a statutory service provided by the Council. Due to the difficulty in recruitment rather than service provision, an underspend was likely in this area. A restructure of the service would be undertaken to modernise the service and take account of government targets. Services would move to the whole time rather than sessional work and there would be a need to benchmark salaries.

RESOLVED: That the position outlined in the report be noted and an update report on the review of the Youth Service be presented to the next meeting.

41. POLICY AND COMMUNITY DIRECTORATE 2003/04 FIRST SIX MONTHS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Committee were informed of the performance of the non-corporate functions of Policy and Community Directorate against their national and local performance indicators for the first six months of 2003/04, and received details of the main areas of activity undertaken by those services during the two months since the last report. Variances from key local indicators and national best value indicators were detailed, together with an overview of the wider performance of the individual service area, at appendix 1 to the report.

The Director of Policy and Community highlighted that the number of pupils visiting museums and galleries had already exceeded the annual target by 778. She also commented that: the Funding Fair had been well received; a report on the North Herefordshire replacement pool was due to go to Cabinet the same day; the Anne

Frank Exhibition had been a success, particularly in furthering the Race Equality Partnership; Bromyard Library INFO centre would soon be completed and that work on the Leominster Access Road had commenced.

The Committee noted that any plans for improvements at Belmont library would be considered as part of the review of library services.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

42. PAYMENT OF INVOICES WITHIN 30 DAYS

The Committee considered the performance against this performance indicator during the period 1st April 2003 to 31st October, 2003.

The Director of Policy and Community reported that since the Council's dramatic improvement in meeting this target, only the Strategic Monitoring Committee would normally receive reports on this target. However, the Directorate figures for September showed a drop to 89.8%. She reported that this had been due to staff absence during the holiday period in August, which would need to be anticipated in the future. Also that the further roll-out of the Purchase Order Processing system would have a beneficial effect.

In response to a question concerning the cost of compiling these statistics the Director of Policy and Community reported that systems were now in place to capture the relevant data.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

43. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman requested that the next meeting of the Committee be held on Thursday 5th February, not Thursday 29th January as originally planned. He also suggested that, in the interests of taking the meeting to the public, the Committee be held on this occasion in Leominster.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee be held at 10.30 a.m. on Thursday, 5th February, 2004 in the Council Chamber, Leominster.

The meeting ended at 12.25 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

MINUTES of the meeting of Social & Economic Development Scrutiny Committee held at Maylord Orchards Meeting Room, Hereford on Wednesday, 14th January, 2004 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor A.C.R. Chappell (Chairman)
Councillor J. Stone (Vice Chairman)

Co-opted Members Councillors: Mrs. P.A. Andrews, H. Bramer, Mrs. S.P.A. Daniels, J.G.S. Guthrie, B. Hunt, G. Lucas and A.L. Williams
D. Stevens (Chamber of Commerce).

Councillor G.V. Hyde, Cabinet Member (Economic Development, Markets and Property), Councillor J.C. Mayson, Cabinet Member (Rural Regeneration and Smallholdings) and Councillor R.M. Wilson, Cabinet Member (Environment Highways & Transportation) were in attendance.

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr. M .R. Cunningham, Mrs E. Newman (HALC), Mr P. Thomas (NFU), Cllr P.G. Turpin, Cllr R.V. Stockton (Cabinet Member – Community & Social Development).

45. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)

Councillor Mrs P. A. Andrews substituted for Councillor M. R. Cunningham and Councillor G. Lucas substituted for Councillor P.G. Turpin.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

47. CONSIDERATION OF THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF HEREFORD

The Committee considered the economic impact of recent events in Hereford City and invited comments on possible ways forward.

The Chairman explained the remit of the Scrutiny Committee and outlined the format of the meeting.

The Chairman invited **Mr A. Tector, Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards**, to report upon the first notification of the outbreak of Legionnaires disease and subsequent events.

Mr Tector reported that the outbreak had been notified on 6th November with 4 confirmed cases. He briefly described the method of contracting the disease and likely sources. He stated that Legionnaires disease was not a 'notifiable disease' to the local authority. However, having been informed of the outbreak the Authority, which had some level of expertise in this field, had worked jointly with the Primary Care Trust (PCT), the Health Protection Agency and the Health and Safety Executive.

He informed the Committee that a large inspection and sampling programme had commenced on 7th November which had included cooling towers at Bulmers. Results from the samples had only taken up to one week to get back from the laboratories. During this time the Local Authority had brought in a leading microbiologist and Bulmers had also employed a leading expert. Bulmers had been extremely co-operative throughout.

A cooling tower at Bulmers was identified as a suspected source and was closed down on 12th November. However, the tower could not be confirmed as the source until the results of a second sample were known. The outbreak was controlled through the Local Authority Emergency Planning Team and a press contact centre was established at a very early stage. Except for one or two press releases specific to the Local Authority, all press releases were co-ordinated and issued as joint statements with the other agencies.

When questioned about the attitude and level of the press involvement, Mr Tector reported that from the outset the various agencies were conscious that the facts should be made public. Generally the press reporting had been good and supportive. However, a number of regional articles and radio broadcasts were less helpful.

He thought the other agencies had worked well, particularly as this had been the first major outbreak for the newly formed Health Protection Agency to deal with. He did, however, express serious concerns that the Legionnaires disease was not a 'notifiable disease, and that new legislation may move the control and co-ordination of such an outbreak to a regional body. He commented that the IT expertise in the Council, particularly the use of the Geographical Information System (GIS) system, had considerably reduced the time searching for the source. The Cabinet Member (Rural Regeneration and Smallholdings) commented that this contrasted with the national action in relation to Foot and Mouth demonstrating the benefits of local management.

Recognising that the first few hours of such an outbreak were crucial the Committee questioned how soon the emergency policy had been implemented. Mr Tector replied that the Local Authority had reacted within hours in getting inspections and testing underway and set up the press centre.

The Chairman thanked Mr Tector for his detailed report.

The Chairman then invited **Juliette Coard, Manager of The Maylord Orchards Shopping Centre and Chair of the City Centre Retail Group**, to give an over view of the impact on the retail sector following the outbreak of Legionnaires disease and subsequent economic events affecting the City.

Ms Coard reported that within days of the outbreak, City centre traders were reporting a 30 to 40 % drop in trade, which was particularly significant for the small trader. She acknowledged that there had been a national reduction in trade figures. However, locally the drop in shopper numbers had been confirmed by the reduced car parking and footfall figures. The City Centre Retail Group had decided to support publicity events to attract trade back. She commented that once trade was lost to other centres i.e. Gloucester or Worcester, it was very difficult to get back.

When asked about the number of Welsh shoppers and visitors to the market she commented that, while no statistics were available, retailers across the retail sector had reported significantly reduced numbers of customers.

When asked for her suggestions on the way forward she suggested that the various sectors e.g. retail and tourism, should co-ordinate their publicity to market Hereford as a whole package.

Acknowledging that a parking concessions had been made on Merton Meadow car park, the increase in car parking charges, coupled with the doubts over significant regeneration projects, did not encourage a positive economic outlook.

The Chairman thanked Ms Coard for her views.

The Chairman invited **Mr G. Anstee, trading as Ambience, Church Street, Hereford** to give his views on the economic impact of recent events.

Mr Anstee was one of 300 plus small independent retailers in the City. Mr Anstee commented that, based on a straw poll of the Church Street area, traders were reporting a drop of between 20 and 50% in trade. This had a dramatic effect, particularly on the small trader. Profits during the run up to Christmas helped to sustain a business during quieter times.

When asked whether this drop in trade would affect his Business Plan he commented that it would be affected as his profits for the year were probably down by 10%.

The Chairman, referring to comments received prior to the meeting, invited Mr Anstee to comment on the Christmas entertainment in High Town. Mr Anstee's personal view was that, while it may bring a degree of income, he was not in favour of the fairground type of entertainment particularly at this time of year. He also thought there was no collective input to the use of High Town or the promotion of Hereford. He wished to see the further promotion of Farmers Markets.

The meeting acknowledged the efforts of the City Centre Retail Group and in particular the work of Juliette Coard as Chair of the Group.

The Chairman thanked Mr Anstee for his views.

The Chairman invited **Mr W. Lyons, The Chamber Area Manager for Hereford**, to comment on the discussion so far and the Chamber of Commerce perspective.

Mr Lyons thought that following the disease, Hereford was left with the psychological problem of persuading the public that it was safe to come to the City. This was on top of the already fragile state of the local economy. He referred to an article printed in August 2003 in which he painted an optimistic picture for Hereford, referring to the many projects or schemes such as the City of Living Crafts, Rotherwas Access Road, Flood Defence that were promised. However since Advantage West Midlands (AWM) had cut back its funding, the economy of the City was now hanging by its fingernails. Herefordshire had some good businesses but part of the economy was based on declining industry. Projects such as the Rotherwas Access Road provided an impetus with out which the business economy would contract.

He wanted to see the whole community unified behind the economic business case for Herefordshire. A balance needed to be struck between the rural nature of the County and the need to improve the infrastructure, attract 21st Century businesses and generate economic prosperity. Herefordshire had a strong partnership philosophy, which should be built on and used to ensure Herefordshire's future prosperity, particularly through agencies like AWM.

He agreed that transport improvements were crucial for the development of business and tourism.

The lack of success with the City of Living Crafts project would force a rethink on the management of the City Centre.

The Director of Policy and Community commented upon the AWM funding position and acknowledged that some of the projects hadn't fully met the AWM criteria and had therefore missed out on funding. She also commented that constructive discussions were continuing with AWM in moving other projects forwards.

The Chairman thanked Mr Lyons for his remarks.

The Chairman invited **comments from the floor of the meeting**. The following are the principal comments made:

- In response to questions regarding improvements to the infrastructure and pedestrian areas of High Town/Eign Gate, the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) reported that part of the funding for the City of Living Crafts would have enabled improvements to be made to the City Centre. The Authority were still looking to make the improvements, however, funding would be at the expense of other projects.
- The Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) reported that a Major Scheme funding bid for Rotherwas Access Road had been made in July 2003 but failed to obtain a commitment from government. Government had raised a number of questions and therefore a revised bid would be submitted in July 2004. If the revised bid were successful it would provide funds from April 2005, ensuring work could continue to the original programme.
- That Arctic Circle had invested in its business at Rotherwas in the expectation that a bypass would be built. The business now wished to create a further 25 jobs at the Rotherwas site but had decided, on business grounds, to locate the jobs in South Wales.
- In response to questions regarding the funding of the City Centre Partnership, and the employment of a City Centre Manager, Mr G. Hughes, Head of Community and Economic Development, reported that the Authority were working with the partnership and contributed to its funding. Mr Lyons reported that the Partnership had intended to employ a Manager as part of the City of Living Crafts. The Partnership were now looking to generate income from other sources.
- While the economy of the retail centre of the City was important this could only be improved if the public could gain better access to it otherwise shoppers would go elsewhere. A new bridge or bypass was essential.
- Businesses, the general public and the Authority needed to lobby the government on the issues which had been raised.

The Chairman introduced Mr N. Hudson from Advantage West Midlands (AWM) Western Region and invited him to comment on behalf of AWM.

Mr Hudson reported that significant funding had come to this part of the region and that AWM were funding a lot of good local projects. However, from AWM's perspective these projects portrayed a mixed message. There did not seem to be a clear vision of the direction for Herefordshire over the next 10 to 15 years.

Regarding the Rotherwas Access Road he commented that a case had to be made that it would provide 'value added' benefits.

**SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WEDNESDAY, 14TH
JANUARY, 2004**

The Chairman spoke of the difficulty of reviving a depressed local economy and commented that it wasn't only the inner-City areas that had deprived areas. He repeated the call for the County to work together to lobby AWM and the government for further economic assistance.

In closing the Chairman thanked everyone for their contribution to the meeting and stated that the issue would be discussed at the next Scrutiny meeting and that a report would be presented to Cabinet.

The meeting ended at 8.05 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE COMMUNITY YOUTH SERVICE TOWARDS NEW STANDARDS

Report By: Community Youth Service Manager

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To advise Members on the restructuring of the Community Youth Service and progress towards the revised planning guidance (December 2003), and the national standards and performance indicators in youth work.

Financial Implications

2. The Community Youth Service has a predicted underspend in the region of £120,000; this is primarily due to a vacancy rate of twenty five percent within the staff team and the inability to deliver associated projects and their planned expenditure. The Youth Service will require £50,000 underspend to be carried forward to assist with recruitment and retraining activities. The remaining £70,000 is committed expenditure that will not be spent before the year-end.

Considerations

New Planning Guidance

3. The first national planning guidance and performance standards for all local authorities was first published in December 2002, it set out the governments expectations for local authority youth services in both terms of:
 - ◆ Numbers, range and key targets groups of young people with whom the service should work
 - ◆ The quality and range of the curriculum that is delivered
 - ◆ The standard and range of outcomes and outputs.
 - ◆ The resources allocated to Youth Service (set through funding matrix)
 - ◆ Inspection and intervention framework for local authorities not meeting the standards set
4. Revised guidance and definitions have been received in December 2003, which place further emphasis on four key targets and particularly on the accreditation of young peoples' learning. It also introduces a four-year cycle of Ofsted inspections to coincide with LEA inspections (due autumn 2004).

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Jon Ralph, Community Youth Service Manager on (01432) 383377

5. The Youth Service is achieving four out of the five key performance targets however it is not achieving the accreditation target, which is one of the government's most important indicators. Additional support and training has been provided for staff, all systems and structures are in place and more accreditation activity is happening but the service is not making fast enough progress to achieve the target by the year-end. This is partly due to the high vacancy rate and not having enough staff on the ground to deliver new programmes.
6. The Youth Service has restructured in light of these changes to provide more face-to-face work hours by staff with higher and or more training required to deliver this intensive work. More full time staff will be employed through the reduction of part time staffing which will allow for further training and development of staff, this will be delivered with no redundancies.

Recruitment

7. Nationally recruitment for youth workers is very difficult with all local authorities experiencing high vacancy rates and inability to recruit suitable qualified and experienced staff. Locally this picture is repeated and currently we have a vacancy rate in excess of twenty five percent. Our restructuring and subsequent recruitment campaign is aimed at addressing this, but within the national climate it is unlikely that we will achieve a full compliment of staff without further recruitment activity placing significant extra cost on the service. We have engaged consultants to help us to develop a range of recruitment activity beyond the standard adverts and have developed partnership with other agencies to employ trainee youth workers (see next section).

Partnerships

8. The service has developed good working relationships with a range of key partners particularly with Herefordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services (HCVYS) and has in place agreements for delivery of a range of youth work programmes and work including the management and delivery of a grant programme through funding drawn down from DFES. Similarly we have established joint working with the Connexions Service on a number of programmes at both a strategic and operational level. In 2004 we have started a joint funding arrangement to employ and train trainee youth workers with The Rural Media Company. The first two trainees have been appointed to Ross on Wye and Kington Youth Centre and take up post in January.

Funding and Resources

9. The Youth Service receives funding through the Education Formula Spending Share (FSS) based on the numbers of 13-19 years old resident in the county. The amount indicated is the level of funding the government calculates sufficient to run a youth service and funding below this level may result in the loss of additional funding e.g. Transforming Youth Work and SENDA Grants. Ofsted inspections include resources allocated as an indicator of commitment by the local authority and in calculating the final assessment of the service.
10. The Youth Service has been successful in attracting external funding through the use of current resources and underspends as match funding for a range of work areas e.g. Ross Creative Learning Centre, Dinedor Youth Camp, SRB S Wye Youth Forum, Rural Media Youth Work trainees, Youth Portal / e gateway and others. This success

distorts the financial picture of the service as large elements of the underspend is funding for specific pieces of committed work.

Risk Management

11. The Youth Service has undergone considerable changes since the De Montfort review in 1998: - taking on the transforming youth work agenda, the creation of the Connexions Service, new planning guidance and targets, high vacancy rates in most staffing teams this coupled with the current restructuring process and a Ofsted inspection in the autumn term will leave the service with a concern over capacity particularly if we are not successful in our first round of recruitment for the majority of posts. We are currently exploring using temporary or consultancy staff to assist with Ofsted planning and covering other areas of work.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee note the report.

6 CONSIDERATION OF THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF HEREFORD

Report By: Director of Policy and Community

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To consider the issues emerging from the Special Meeting of the Committee held in Maylord Orchards, Hereford on 14th January, 2004.

Financial Implications

2. None.

Considerations

3. 2003 was a difficult year for the local economy of the City. 2003 saw the takeover of Bulmers by Scottish and Newcastle with the resultant loss of some 250 head office jobs from the company. Other well established businesses in the manufacturing sector also saw reductions in their labour force. At the end of the year the outbreak of Legionnaires disease also had significant economic impacts on the City, with in particular the retail sector being hit by a downturn in trade at the very time of the year when businesses most rely on increased turnover. This is against a background of national media reports, which indicated some changes in some shopping patterns generally.
4. Within this context a special meeting of the Council's Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee was organised for the 14th January, 2004 at Maylord Orchards Shopping Centre, Hereford. The meeting provided an opportunity for representatives of the business community in the City centre to give evidence to the Council on the economic impacts of recent events and to make suggestions about initiatives which could be undertaken to improve the situation. The meeting was open to the public and contributions were invited from the floor after nominated business representatives had given evidence. The minutes of the meeting have been circulated along with the remainder of the papers for this Scrutiny Committee.
5. A useful and constructive debate took place at the meeting with the following key issues emerging:
 - The importance of local management in addressing recent crises such as Foot and Mouth and the Legionnella outbreak was noted. It was agreed that such local management was essential if such outbreaks were to be effectively tackled.
 - The need for the public, private and voluntary sectors in the City to work in a more co-ordinated fashion to promote the County and City as a shopping and visitor location.

- The need to provide additional capacity/resource to the Hereford City Partnership to enable it to properly fulfill such a co-ordination role in the City Centre.
 - The need to review the range/impact of activity in and around High Town such as Street Trading, Farmers Markets and Fair rides.
 - The importance of the success of the wider economy of the City in driving up income levels which would support expenditure in the City Centre. In particular the essential requirement for a Rotherwas Access Road to ensure the competitiveness of the large number of businesses on Rotherwas Industrial Estate.
6. The issues raised relate to the portfolio's of a number of Cabinet Members including Economic Development, Markets and Property, Community and Social Development, Environment, Highways and Transportation and Rural Regeneration and Smallholdings. It is therefore recommended that this report is referred to them for further consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Members note the content of the report for referral to the appropriate Cabinet Member(s).

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Report to Scrutiny Committee on 14th January, 2004.

ADULT LEARNING INSPECTORATE REINSPECTION

Report By: Director of Policy and Community

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To inform the Committee of the Adult Learning Inspectorate's proposals for the reinspection of the Council's Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded Adult and Community Learning (ACL) provision.

Financial Implications

2. None

Considerations

3. The Council's adult learning provision was inspected for the first time by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) in January 2003. A number of significant strengths were identified, principally within the areas of learning. There were however a number of key weaknesses which resulted in the ALI considering that the quality of provision was not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Under these circumstances the Council was advised that its service would be subject to a re-inspection.
4. An initial planning meeting was held with the Lead Inspector and relevant Officers on 6th January 2004 to discuss the re inspection process.
5. Officers were informed that the ALI process for reinspection will take the format of quarterly monitoring visits, culminating in a full reinspection of the whole of the LSC funded ACL provision.
6. The quarterly monitoring visits will commence end of March 2004 and will be conducted by the Lead Inspector, with the support of other appropriate inspectors, and will focus on the Council's progress against its Post Inspection Action Plan.
7. The full reinspection will take place over four days of one week within the period of September to December 2004. The inspection team will consist of one inspector each for Leadership and Management, Equality of Opportunity, Quality Assurance and one inspector for each of the curriculum areas which form the Council's provision. The number of curriculum inspectors required will be identified during the monitoring process. The Lead Inspector has indicated that he is keen to interview Council Members as part of the Inspection process.
8. Peter Ding, Principal Learning Officer, will be the Council's nominee for the reinspection process and will be the primary contact between the Lead Inspector and the Council for the purposes of the reinspection. An ALI Working Group, consisting

of officers of the Council, is being formed to support and guide the reinspection process.

9. As part of its annual planning and development of the service the Lifelong Learning Development Unit facilitates meetings with all stakeholders involved with identifying and delivering its learning provision. The next meeting is being planned for early February and it is proposed that in addition to its original remit this forum can be used as an initial opportunity in preparing for the future reinspection.
10. It is further proposed that the findings and issues identified from the stakeholder meeting, together with supporting information from the local Learning and Skills Council on the current situation regarding funding, form the basis of a report to a future meeting of the Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee notes the proposed timescales, scope and programme of reinspection.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Post Inspection Action Plan

POLICY AND COMMUNITY DIRECTORATE 2003/04 FIRST EIGHT MONTHS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Report By: Directorate Support Manager

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To inform Members of the performance of the non-corporate functions of the Policy and Community Directorate against their national and local performance indicators for the first eight months of 2003/04, and to detail the main areas of activity undertaken by those services during the two months since the last report.

Financial Implications

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

Considerations

3. As reported previously, Service Managers across Policy and Community (with the exception of Economic Investment and Development) are providing information on sets of key local indicators for their services. Information on those key local indicators, and any national Best Value indicators, where actual performance varies from the target significantly (more than plus or minus 10%) is detailed in Appendix 1.
4. As previously, Members also have an overview of the wider performance of individual service areas, as each Service Manager has provided a brief narrative that summarises the key activities/achievements of their service during the months of October and November 2003/04.
5. It is proposed that the report be read in conjunction with the 2003/04 Guide to Performance Indicators which has been published under pilot status as an attempt to provide Members with meaningful background information to this report and its appendix. The guide has been issued separately to Members of the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Directorate's first eight months 2003/04 performance indicator information be noted, subject to any comments which Members may wish to make.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None identified

Service News

Incorporating Performance Indicator Outputs where 'Exceptional'

Exceptional P.I. Performance

Percentage of Objective 2 grant claims submitted which are accepted first time—performance against this target is currently running at 100% against the target of 90%. This success rate is due to the revision of practices within the team

Herefordshire Plan receives Exciting New Look

The all new look third edition of the Herefordshire Plan was formally launched during this period. The Partnership Conference on the theme of 'Achieving the Plan Ambitions with Information and Communication Technology' took place.

On 29th October, the third annual Funding Fair was held at Aylestone School and was attended by over 120 people. There were 20 stallholders from grant giving bodies and information providers. Over 100 people attended 6 workshops.

In October, the Heritage Lottery Fund announced that as a result of a seminar hosted by the Project Development Team, four projects in the County received funding of over £100,000 through the Young Roots Programme. Several other grant applications, assisted earlier in the year were also successful; including the St. Katherine's Ledbury HLF Project Planning grant (£35k) and Longtown Village Shop (DEFRA).

The Delegated Grants Team has achieved 100% committed spend in the Small Projects Fund, which ends March, 2004. The Team has also been acting as administrators for the Community Pride Schemes for Bromyard, Ledbury and Kington during a temporary internal team restructure.

The Board for the new Learning Partnership has now been set up and the Lifelong Learning Team will shortly commence working from within the Partnership.

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New look Herefordshire Plan

LIFT Scheme Makes a Splash in Ledbury

The independent service review of the exercise referral scheme (LIFT) has now been commissioned and Health Expertise Ltd have commenced work, which is due to be completed by March 2004. Meanwhile, the development of alternative physical activities for the LIFT scheme has continued with the introduction of Aqua classes at the Ledbury sites.

Within the Sports Development Unit, appointments were made to the vacant posts of Football and Rugby Administrators and the partnership post of Sports Referral Co-ordinator has been successfully filled to enable the development of the project between Sports Development, Community Safety and the Drug Action Team.

Record Summer attendances for Parks & Countryside



New play area attracts huge numbers to Queenswood

Following the completion of the first phase of site enhancements, record attendances were recorded at Queenswood and Bodenham Lake Country Parks.

During this period, Council approval was granted to proceed with tenders for the replacement pool for North Herefordshire.

The reinstatement of King George V Playing Fields in Hereford was completed, including the demolition of the decommissioned paddling pool. Reinstatement and landscaping of Sydonia

Park in Leominster, following the demolition of the pool, decommissioned tennis courts, public toilets and youth centre has been undertaken.

Leominster Grange Play Area enhancement works were completed (in partnership with Sure Start).

During this period, a grant of £100,000 was also secured from the Living Spaces Fund which will allow work to start at Aylestone Park, Hereford.

Local Development prepare for Market Towns Initiative

Exceptional P.I. Performance

Percentage of customer's rating the service provided by the Local Development Team as 'good' or 'excellent' - the team are disappointed in the result of 80% (compared to an outturn of 91% last year) and are currently working to resolve this. However, it is not possible to make a direct comparison between the two years because as previously reported, last years result was based on 44 responses from 100 surveyed. This year's figure was obtained from 110 responses from 440 surveys sent out.

Kim Hart joined the team as the Leominster Market Towns Support Officer and is now working with the Leominster Partnership to create a strategic action plan in preparation for the Market Towns Initiative funding that Leominster will receive in 2004/05.

The Voluntary Sector Grants Panel awarded an additional £10,000 of emergency funding to an additional four voluntary sector organisations.

The five market towns were approached and reminded of the Christmas Lights in the Market Towns Grant Scheme, where funding of up to £600 is available to assist



Market towns reminded of Christmas lights grants scheme.

with the erection/dismantling of the Christmas lights and any switch-on events. All five market towns applied for this funding.

Location, Location, Location

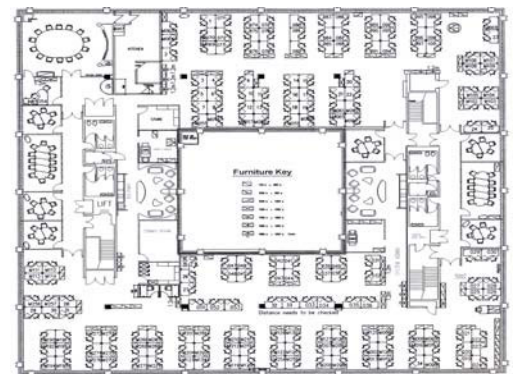


Plough Lane—Policy & Community's new home

During this period, the staff from the Directorate Support Unit concentrated upon the work required in order to prepare the Directorate for its relocation to the offices in Plough Lane, Hereford. As previously mentioned in Service News, the project plan for the move required the completion of over 600 tasks.

Exceptional P.I. Performance

The percentage of customers who rate the administration service they receive as excellent is currently running at 89% - against the target of 80%.



Floor plan of second floor

Designer Label for Herefordshire Tourism

October and November were a mixture of planning and project work for Cultural Services.

During the period, the Contemporary Crafts Fair took place, which is one of the Service's key annual events. The Festivals Forum was held to advise and support the festivals in the County and Cultural Services supported the Festivals Review.

A mid-term evaluation of the Creative Industries Programme was commissioned to assess the work of this externally funded project which supports arts-based businesses in the County. Meanwhile, Creative Industries work continued with training events, business advice, community based projects and grants to arts businesses. In addition, the Arts Service was successful in negotiating funding for the HEARTS Partnership to develop arts projects in schools.

A major initiative for Tourism was the development of a new brand for Herefordshire. This was officially launched

at the Tourism Forum in November. This links to the production of the 2004 Visitor Guide, which although produced by Association for the Promotion of Herefordshire (APH), the local authority is involved in its concept and design. The Winter Walking Festival was launched in November and a new design for the Visitor Links web-site was being formatted and tested. Officers were involved in the consultation of the Regional Tourism Strategy which has implications for the delivery and funding of Tourism in Herefordshire for the foreseeable future.

The Records Office closed for two weeks for stock taking, which allowed the opportunity to undertake some physical improvements, upgrading the toilets, fitting new automatic doors and decorating the entrance hall. A new Principal Archives Officer was appointed from within the Service, which means that additional recruitment is now needed to cover staff shortages.



New logo for Herefordshire Tourism

Libraries go Multifunctional in Bromyard

Preparation for the opening of the new multifunctional service facility at The Bromyard Centre continued and included the procurement of new stock and equipment, staff training and service planning. A new library management system interface was installed and tested for live implementation at the new site.

Another ever popular book sale was held at the Shirehall to dispose of old discarded stock.

A public meeting was held in Kington to consult on the proposals for developing the Wesleyan Chapel into a multifunctional service site.

Consultation also commenced on the draft strategic framework for libraries in Herefordshire, named 'An eye on the future'.

Also during this period, a new and improved public online library catalogue

went live on the internet, allowing greater online interactivity for customers.

Work also continued on the integration of Customer Service, Libraries and Information services and the divisional restructure.



SNEAK PREVIEW OF PERFORMANCE *The results so far after just two weeks opening:*

321 new borrowers. Which is almost as many as the total number of new borrowers for the whole of the last two years put together!

Number of issues for January so far 3856. In the first two weeks of opening we have issued more items than the whole of January last year.

Opening hours - Last year 18 hours, now 80 hours, some of the longest in the country.

Well done to all concerned, more updates will follow.
Statistics on all areas will be available at end of month.

Economic Investment and Development have New Scheme



Improving the County's infrastructure, employment land and workspace provision

Work was taking place to set up a new scheme to provide financial assistance towards the conversion or upgrading of buildings for business use. When established, the team will administer the scheme on behalf of the RRZ Partnership within the eligible areas of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire. The scheme will operate with an initial budget of £1.3M over the first three years. A manager and monitoring officer for this redundant building grant scheme have been appointed and the formal launch is planned for early this year.

In December, work was completed on the construction of Twyford Court on Rotherwas Industrial Estate. The £1.3M scheme has created six high quality industrial units with a total floor space of 2000 sq metres. Funding for the scheme was secured from the European Objective 2 Programme and Advantage West Midlands. The site will be formally launched in early February.

During this period, WM Enterprise Consultants were contracted to produce the business plan for the Rotherwas Business Centre, which will be completed this month. A planning application for the scheme is also due to be submitted this month.

Officers have been working with AWM on the development and marketing of the new 14ha site south of the existing Leominster Industrial Estate. Leominster Enterprise Park will be serviced by the Leominster Access Road. At the time of writing, 20 or so companies had expressed an interest in plots. Planning has been given for a major business centre and managed workspace units to help pump-prime the site.

A study was commissioned to look at potential alternative employment sites in Kington to assist the UDP process. The current allocation to extend Hatton Gardens Industrial Estate has been affected by objections from the Environmental Agency and high development costs.

The new Herefordshire 'Bridge-It' Environmental Business Programme was set up. Funded through the West Midlands Objective 2 Environmental Action Programme and working in conjunction with Groundwork Birmingham and local partners including Business Link, the Environment Agency and Business in the Community, the scheme will provide environmental advice and support to businesses in the County.

65 business property enquiries were received during October and November, these included 18 from outside the County, 14 of which were via AWM. 3 enquirers reported that they were successful in finding a property in the County.

A series of Herefordshire Business Roadshows took place during November, visiting market towns and Rotherwas. These generated a pleasing number of enquiries regarding the availability of grants as well as broadband—as being publicised by the Herefordshire In Touch project. A newsletter was also produced and sent to all businesses in the Business Directory in October, updating them on broadband, Pro-Grata grants and other services.



One of the broadband campaign's promotional pictures

Exceptional P.I. Performance

Percentage of the total youth population in contact with the youth service—target for year of 2,291 has already been over achieved by 280, reducing the ability to deliver accredited targets.

Percentage of contact target who achieve accredited learning— currently 316 individuals or 12% against the target of 25%. In order to address this, additional training has been provided for staff and new systems have been introduced to help staff and young people access accreditation routes. This will be piloted in some areas next period.

Percentage of total work that actively involves young people in Youth Forums and the management or delivery of a Youth Project—currently running at 33% against the target of 25%, this area continued to show development over the period with a steady increase of young people becoming engaged in the development and management of projects and activity.

Youth Service Address Difficulties

During this period, the Youth Service focussed on restructuring its service in order to address the recruitment difficulties it has been experiencing, as well as addressing weaknesses in some areas of its organisation, as identified in its improvement plan. All staff were involved in the development of a new structure and a consultation period for key stakeholders remained open until December. Implementation will take place early this year.

Music programmes and activities continued well during this period.

Draft results of the Youth Survey showed some high satisfaction levels with the youth service provision, but many stated that they wanted to know more about what is going on in their area. Full results of the survey will be published in the next issue.

Under the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, youth workers, teachers and volunteers commenced training programmes to become expedition supervisors (BETA), and began preparing for their expedition camp outs during



Music programme has been well received

January and February. Bromyard Youth Centre remained busy preparing for its move into the new Bromyard Centre in January.

In October the Youth Service had its first joint staff meeting with the Connexions service to look at joint working. This event was very successful and a follow-up is planned for early this year.

Mixed bag for Heritage Services

October's visitors figures were good. This was assisted by hArt week and the Photographic Festival, staged at Broad Street. Ross-on-Wye enjoyed a record breaking month. However, November figures for the Hereford sites were down, seriously affected by the Legionella outbreak. Ross-on-Wye remained unaffected and again performed well.

The staffing difficulties at Bromyard, which were reported last time, continued. There are no longer sufficient volunteer staff to run the Centre, which meant that there were days during the period that the facility was unable to open. Heritage Services are addressing this issue by targeting more volunteers for the new season.

Staff shortage and sickness amongst Museum on the Move staff resulted in

disappointing figures for November. Vacancies have now been filled and this should not happen again.

Project planning for the redisplay of Ledbury, Bromyard and Museum on the Move commenced.

It should be noted that 20% of Kington Museum's figures are now being counted (as required under the definition of the P.I. where a premises is provided for a 'peppercorn rent').

As Heritage Services enters its quietest part of the year, it remains confident that in spite of recent difficulties it will meet its target figures and is planning ahead to deal with staffing issues at Bromyard and stepping up the marketing of sites whose figures are dropping.

Exceptional P.I. Performance

Heritage/museum sites rated as good or excellent—satisfaction rates against this indicator are currently running at 98% against the target of 60%

Heritage /museum staff rated as good or excellent—again high satisfaction rate of 87% against the target of 70%



Ross Heritage Centre receives high numbers of visitors

HUMAN RESOURCES

Report By: Personnel Manager, Well-being

Wards Affected

None

Purpose

1. To report on the sickness absence and other matters for the Policy & Community 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 January, 2003 – 31st December, 2003. The figures include all permanent employees excluding casuals. This means that the numerator and denominator are the same as BVPI 12. BVPI 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 5.76 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 target for ethnic employment of 1.06% is being met by the Directorate's performance of 1.3%.
9. The Council target for employing people with disabilities is 1% and the Directorate on the whole is meeting this target easily with 3.11%.
10. The reasons for sickness absence are shown in Appendix 1. Accident absence is now shown separately. During the year no days were lost because of accidents.

Recommendation

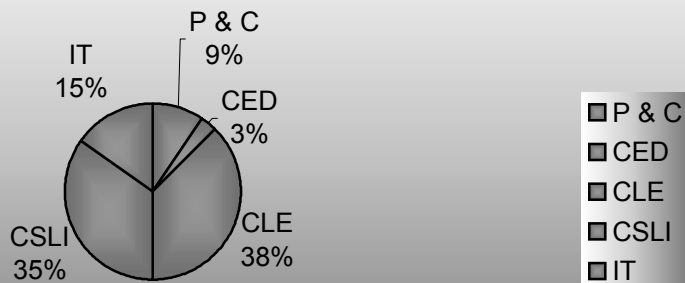
That the report is noted.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
John Clarke, Personnel Manager Employee Well-Being and Systems on (01432) 260448

POLICY & COMMUNITY DIRECTORATE

Division	Section	Perm. Employees	FTE Employees	Sickness FTE Days Lost	Ave days sickness lost per FTE
P & C	All sections including Director, Mod	30	28.92	158.5	5.48
	All sections	40	36.79	51	1.39
CED	All sections	152	98.21	632	6.44
CLE	All sections	100	65.46	580.5	8.87
IT	All sections	63	62.11	257	4.14
Total		385	291.49	1679	5.76

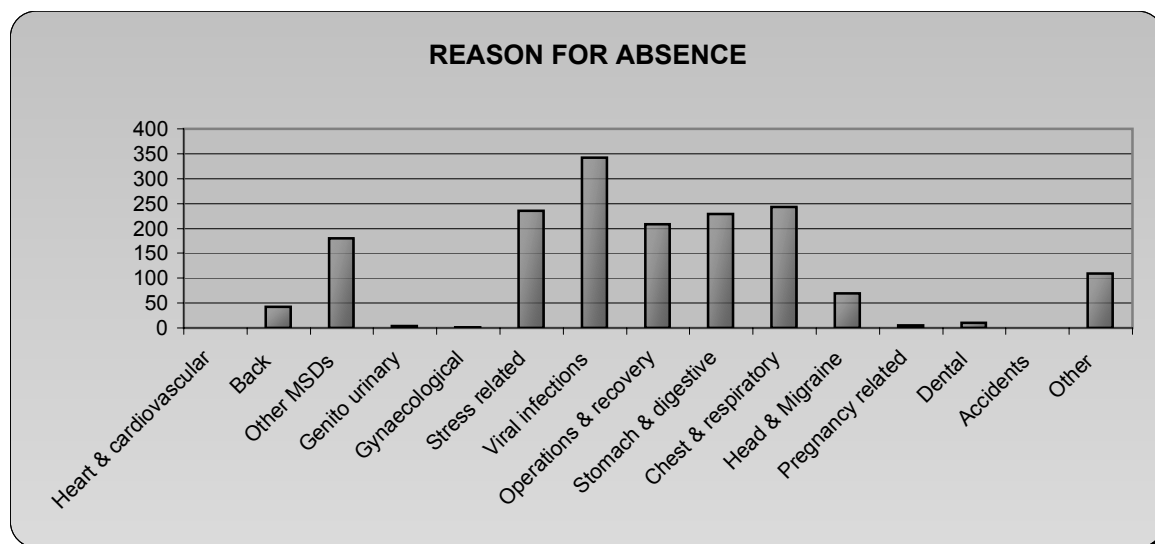
TIME LOST THROUGH SICKNESS



	Jobs filled by people with disabilities	% Ethnic minorities	Accidents/ incidents	Reportable accidents F2508 raised
P & C	All sections incl. Director & MOD	3.30%	3.30%	2
CED	All sections	5.00%		2
CLE	All sections	3.94%	1.30%	8
CSLI	All sections	3.00%	1.00%	5
IT	All sections	0.00%	1.59%	1
Total		3.11%	1.30%	18
				0

Policy & Community Directorate

Absence Reason	P & C FTE days lost	CED FTE Days lost	CLE FTE Days lost	CSLI Days lost	IT FTE Days lost	DIR. TOTALS
Heart & cardiovascular	0	0	0	0	0	0
Back	3	0	20.5	3.5	16	43
Other MSDs	0	2	66.5	111	0	179.5
Genito urinary	0	0	0	4	0	4
Gynaecological	0	0	1.5	0	0	1.5
Stress related	39	0	39	96	62	236
Viral infections	12.5	11	152	118	48	341.5
Operations & recovery	61	2	93	33	19	208
Stomach & digestive	11	4	111.5	90.5	12.5	229.5
Chest & respiratory	13	22	81.5	85	41	242.5
Head & Migraine	8	3	27.5	8	22.5	69
Pregnancy related	0	0	0	5	0	5
Dental	10	0	0	0	0	10
Accidents	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	7	39	26.5	36	109.5
Total	158.5	51	632	580.5	257	1679



ACCIDENT CAUSE	P & C	CED	CLE	CSLI	IT	DIR. TOTALS
Hit By A Moving Object	1	0	0	2	0	3
Hit By A Moving Vehicle	0	0	0	0	0	0
Injured By An Animal	0	0	1	0	0	1
Fell from Height	0	0	1	0	0	1
Injured While MHO	0	0	0	2	0	2
Physically Assault	0	0	2	0	0	2
Slipped	0	1	1	0	1	3
Other causes	1	0	1	0	0	2
Struck something fixed	0	1	2	1	0	4
Total	2	2	8	5	1	18

F2508

0