

Chief Executive's Office

Chief Executive: N.M. Pringle

**To: All Members of Cabinet:
R.J. Phillips (Leader)
G.V. Hyde (Deputy Leader)
Mrs. L.O. Barnett
P.J. Edwards
Mrs. J.P. French
J.C. Mayson
D.W. Rule MBE
R.V. Stockton
D.B. Wilcox
R.M. Wilson**

Your Ref:

Our Ref: NMP/CD

Please ask for: Mr. N.M. Pringle

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25th May, 2004

Dear Councillor,

**MEETING OF CABINET
THURSDAY, 3RD JUNE, 2004 AT 2.15 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBER, BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD**

AGENDA (04/01)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest by members in respect of items on this agenda.

3. HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT PLAN - MONITORING REPORT

To consider and agree a monitoring report on the Herefordshire Council Improvement Plan and to identify any action to be taken as a result. *(Pages 1 - 26)*

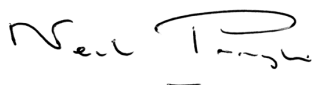
4. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

To note progress on the Performance Management Action Plan to April 2004 and to approve the Performance Management Action Plan to May 2005. *(Pages 27 - 38)*

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINTS AND COMPLAINTS PANEL - 2003/04

To note the figures for complaints determined by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Complaints Panel for the year ended 31st March, 2004. (*Pages 39 - 42*)

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Neil Pringle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "P".

**N.M. PRINGLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Copies to: Chairman of the Council
Chairman of Strategic Monitoring Committee
Vice-Chairman of Strategic Monitoring Committee
Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees
Group Leaders
Directors
County Secretary and Solicitor
County Treasurer

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COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD.

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HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT PLAN - MONITORING REPORT

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

3RD JUNE, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To consider and agree a monitoring report on the Herefordshire Council Improvement Plan and to identify any action to be taken as a result.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

Recommendations

- THAT (a) the monitoring report on the Council's Improvement Plan be agreed subject to any action Cabinet wishes to take, and**
- (b) the Improvement Plan be realigned with the Council's revised Corporate Plan, the foundations for which are due to be established during August 2004.**

Reasons

The Council was required to have an Improvement Plan in place following the outcome of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and to implement appropriate monitoring arrangements.

Considerations

1. During 2002, the Council was subject to CPA along with all other upper tier authorities in the country. The assessment resulted in a report outlining the Council's strengths and weaknesses under a number of headings and culminating in a series of recommendations. The final report was sent to the Council in November 2002.
2. One of the requirements of CPA was that the Council should draw up an Improvement Plan. Herefordshire Council's Improvement Plan is drawn from the recommendations outlined in the CPA report and those outstanding from the previous improvement plan arising from the Improvement and Development Agency's peer review in 2001. The Improvement Plan was agreed with the Audit Commission in February 2003 and forms the basis of the Council's current audit and inspection programme. The Plan was developed as a strategic plan for improvement with

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Tony Michael, Policy Officer on (01432) 261823

actions focused around five key areas: leadership and vision, performance management, key resources, organisational development and learning and communications.

3. The CPA process also required the Council to identify specific improvement priorities to be delivered over the 12 months to December 2003. The Council was keen, however, to focus on long term improvement and incorporated the so-called "CPA priorities" into the overall Improvement Plan. By way of clarity, a summary of the priorities up to December 2003 is appended at Appendix 1 and this indicates that the majority of actions have been completed although further work is required to meet the Council's targets in relation to communication.
4. Monitoring of the Improvement Plan was agreed on the basis of using "faces":
 - ☺ Smiling face indicates action completed or on track for completion
 - ☹ Straight face means that issues have arisen but which are not expected to impact on the achievement of the overall Plan
 - ☹ Sad face means that there are significant issues that could affect the timing or performance of the Plan
5. Cabinet considered the first Improvement Plan monitoring report on 25th September 2003 and it was decided that future reports should include appropriate milestones. As a result, a new column has been added to the reporting format to indicate milestones in relation to those tasks with longer time horizons.
6. The detailed progress report is appended at Appendix 2 and indicates that the majority of actions have a smiling face, being either completed or on track for completion by the target date. Highlighted below are those issues arising in each of the five areas which have a straight face:

Leadership and vision

- **Race Equality Scheme – straight face:** the first year's action plan was not completed and a revised action plan was developed for year two. An audit against the National Performance Indicator for the Council's duty to promote Race Equality suggests that the Council has now achieved a 47% score and further improvement targets will be set over the next three years for inclusion in the Best Value Performance Plan.

Performance management

- **Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) – straight face:** a number of issues have been highlighted in relation to the achievement of the LPSA targets in separate monitoring reports previously submitted to Cabinet.

Key resources

- **Scrutiny review of property – straight face:** the review of property was included in the work programme of the Strategic Monitoring Committee with a target date for completion of December 2003. The review was delayed because of the election and change of administration. A revised timetable is now in place and the review is on target for completion by June 2004.

- **Herefordshire in Touch Programme – straight face:** The original Broadband Plan has been revised in the light of a new Regional ICT Strategy and delays in securing external funding have now been resolved. A milestone target of achieving 80% broadband coverage within the county by December 2004 has also been established. Announcements by British Telecom, in relation to trigger levels for the provision of broadband, may influence the overall implementation of the programme across the county.

Organisational development and learning

- **Management of change/organisational development – straight face:** this element is being taken forward by a small group of officers. Some activities have been identified, although there is no formal work plan in place and no milestones have been identified.

Communications

- **100% penetration of Team Briefings - straight face:** survey evidence indicates 78% penetration. This target was identified as a key improvement to achieve by December 2003, following the Council's CPA assessment.
 - **Staff roadshows – straight face:** the Improvement Plan sets a target of undertaking two staff roadshows each year. During 2003/04 one major roadshow exercise was undertaken in relation to Council's Job Evaluation Programme.
 - **Review success of staff open meetings - straight face:** a review of staff open meetings was originally scheduled for completion by March 2004. The Public Relations Team will now undertake the reviews during 2004/2005.
 - **Opportunities for all staff to feed back ideas- straight face:** although some mechanisms exist within Directorates and Departments it is not clear how feedback is shared across the Council.
 - **Work shadowing – straight face:** work-shadowing commitments are in place for Directors/Heads of Department. However, the picture is less consistent at Head of Service level.
 - **Consistent use of corporate stationery – straight face:** revised corporate style guidelines were due to be issued during March 2003. New templates are now scheduled to be issued to all staff via the intranet/CD-Rom during the summer of 2004.
7. Cabinet originally approved the Council's Corporate Plan during January 2003. It is now proposed to revise the Corporate Plan, linked to a prioritisation exercise to be undertaken with Members during August 2004, and to realign the Improvement Plan accordingly.

Alternative Options

There are no alternative options

Risk Management

Failure to fulfil the actions identified in the Council's Improvement Plan may result in an increased programme of audit and inspection

Consultees

None identified

Background Papers

None identified

Progress to 31 December 2003...

In line with the outcome of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the Council identified improvements it intended to have in place by 31 December 2003.

<i>In this area...</i>	<i>We will have in place...</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Leadership and vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A three-year Corporate Plan linked to the medium term financial framework and key priorities 	☺
Performance management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council-wide performance management framework • Systems to validate key performance indicators 	☺ ☺
Key resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A corporate approach to project management • Risk management systems incorporating operational and insurance risk 	☺ ☺
Organisational development and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of actions in the Human Resources Strategy completed • Staff Review and Development process incorporating feedback and target setting linked to business planning • Systems for sharing learning across the Council 	☺ ☺ ☺
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of team briefings consistently and systematically deployed throughout the organisation • Opportunities for upward feedback 	☺ ☺



Committed to excellence...

***Improvement Plan
Review for Cabinet
meeting on 3 June 2004***

- ...**Putting** people first
- ...**Preserving** our heritage
- ...**Promoting** our county
- ...**Providing** for our communities
- ...**Protecting** our future

Quality life in a quality county

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- ☺ Smiling face indicates action completed or on track for completion
- ☹ Straight face means that issues have arisen but which are not expected to impact on the overall Plan
- ☹ Sad face means that there are significant issues that could affect the timing or performance of the Plan

Any revised targets are shown in **bold**

Leadership and vision

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress update
A clear understanding of the impact of Council activity on achieving the Herefordshire Plan ambitions	NA	Produce a Corporate Plan	Chief Executive	Chief Executive's Management Team Policy Team	January 2003	☺	Corporate Plan completed and approved by Council January 2003
	NA	Adopt a corporate planning template	Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team	January 2003	☺	Adopted as part of the Corporate Plan
	NA	Implement corporate planning template	Chief Executive's Management Team	Policy Team	March 2003	☺	Implemented through the performance management framework (see below)
	NA	Review corporate planning template	Chief Executive's Management Team	Policy Team	March 2004	☺	Review of 2003/2004 Service Plans being undertaken with Head of Performance Management. The results of the review will be used to improve 2004/2005 Plans

Leadership and vision

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress update
Elimination of prejudice within the council and in its dealings with others	100% of scheduled actions achieved in accordance with planned timescales by June 2004	Implement, in full, the Council's Race Equality Scheme	Head of Policy and Communication	Race Equality Steering Group	March 2005	☺	Revised action plan developed Workforce monitoring in place. Research on black and minority ethnic perceptions commissioned Awareness raising campaign underway Pilot monitoring exercise introduced alongside the comments and complaints procedure
	NA	Prepare a Disability Scheme to ensure the Council meets its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and other related legislation	Director of Housing and Social Care Director of Education Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team	June 2003 December 2003	☺	Draft Scheme prepared December 2003
	NA	Implement the Disability Scheme	Chief Executive's Management Team	Managers' Forum	December 2003 January 2004	☺	Impact assessments and training scheduled for January 2004

Leadership and vision

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress update
Elimination of prejudice within the council and in its dealings with others contd.	Autumn 2004 Staff Opinion Survey target for 80% of the workforce to report that they are treated equally and fairly whatever their race or religion. (Autumn 2003 baseline 73%)	Implement, in full, the <i>Promoting Equal Opportunities</i> section of the Human Resources Strategy	Director of Environment	HR Strategy Group	December 2005	☺	Disability Symbol gained Text for Personal Employment Pack for existing employees being put together Targeted equalities training currently being delivered

Performance management

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Focus on performance to drive corporate and service improvement	NA	Implement a corporate performance management framework	Chief Executive	Head of Performance Management Policy Team	March 2003	☺	Framework produced by March 2003; formal launch during May 2003 to Managers' Forum. Training Programme delivered to Service Managers during September 2003 to develop a consistent approach across the authority.
	Review reporting arrangements July 2004	Implement performance monitoring in line with agreed intervals at all levels in the organisation	Head of Performance Management	Directorate resources	March 2005	☺	Performance Coordinators group established by Head of Performance Management to ensure consistency and reporting at agreed intervals
	NA	Implement performance validation system	Head of Performance Management	Principal Internal Auditor	March 2003	☺	Validation systems underway on 16 key CPA indicators
	NA	Review corporate performance management framework in light of full outturns	Chief Executive	Chief Executive's Management Team Head of Performance Management	May 2004	☺	Review of service planning scheduled for May 2004

Performance management

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Focus on performance to drive corporate and service improvement Contd.	NA	Revise Staff Review and Development process to incorporate target setting in line with business planning	Head of HR Head of Performance Management	HR Services	March 2003	☺	Revised SRD implemented April 2003
	Pilot to be evaluated following completion in Jan 2004	Implement, in full, the <i>Achieving management excellence</i> section of the Human Resources Strategy	Strategic Head of HR	HR Strategy Group	December 2004	☺	Pilot run of management competencies underway from September 2003
Improved services for the community	Achievement of interim targets by September 2004	Deliver, in full, the Council's Local Public Service Agreement	Policy Officer Assistant Treasurer (Financial Policy and Audit)	Lead Officers	March 2005	☹	Regular progress reports to CXMT, Cabinet and Strategic Monitoring Committee

Key resources

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Corporate project management arrangements	NA	Review current models for project management	Director of Environment	Policy Team	January 2003	☺	Review completed
	NA	Implement agreed model for project management	Director of Environment	Managers' Forum	March 2003	☺	Agreed model (PRINCE2) implemented from March 2003
	NA	Develop and run bespoke training to support the agreed model for project management	Head of HR	HR Services	September 2003	☺	Training programme launched April 2003
	NA	Review and revise as required all current service and cross cutting strategies to incorporate agreed model	Lead officers	Performance Leads	September 2003	☺	Strategic programmes and projects reviewed
	NA	Review approach to project management	Chief Executive's Management Team	Policy Team	March 2005	☺	Incorporated in Policy Team Service Plan
	NA	Revise current Risk Management Strategy to incorporate operational risk and links with performance management	County Treasurer	Risk Management Strategy Working Group Performance Leads	March 2003	☺	Risk Management Strategy incorporated in performance management framework
Comprehensive risk management arrangements							

Key resources

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Comprehensive risk management arrangements contd.	NA	Implement revised strategy	Chief Executive's Management Team	Risk Management Strategy-Working Group Performance Leads	June 2003	☺	Risk Management Strategy incorporated in performance management framework
	NA	Develop and run bespoke training to support the Risk Management Strategy	HR Services	Risk Management Strategy-Working Group Performance Leads	June 2003	☺	Training incorporated into the performance management training
	NA	Review approach to risk management	Chief Executive's Management Team	Risk Management Strategy-Working Group Performance Leads	March 2005	☺	Incorporated in Work Programme

Key resources

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Improved Council-wide procurement	Strategy reviewed May 2004	Implement, in full, the Council's Procurement Strategy	County Secretary and Solicitor	Contract Officers' Group Procurement Officer	March 2005	☺	Awareness Training for all authorised purchasing officers delivered Central Purchasing Service set up in relation to paper, mobile phones, corporate travel. Compliance with EU procurement rules - complete
Improved asset management	NA	Undertake in-depth scrutiny review of property in line with scoping statement	Chief Executive	Environment Directorate Committee Manager (Scrutiny)	December 2003	☹	Review underway and due for completion June 2004
	Edgar Street Grid proposals to be incorporated in UDP March 2004	Develop and implement Regeneration/ Accommodation Strategy	Director of Environment	Accommodation Project Board Regeneration Project Board	March 2007	☺	Consultation underway on Edgar Street Grid proposals including debate regarding future office accommodation

Key resources

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Improved asset management contd.	Revenues and Benefits Pilot to be completed December 2004 Staff Opinion Survey: % of staff who consider there is healthy home/work balance 2003 baseline 73% 2004 target 75%	Implement, in full, the <i>Promoting Flexible Working</i> section of the Human Resources Strategy	Head of HR	HR Strategy Group	December 2005	☺	Preparations have been undertaken to enable a flexible working pilot to be carried out in Revenues and Benefits
Deliver a single broadband telecommunications infrastructure	80% broadband coverage within the County by December 2004	Implement, in full, the <i>Herefordshire in Touch</i> programme in e-Modernisation	Head of e-Modernisation	Programme Manager	December 2005	☹	Broadband plan revised in the light of the new regional ICT strategy and technical innovation Funding approved from regional and European bodies. Broadband campaign commenced Jan 2004

Organisational development and learning

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
A competent and effective workforce	December 2004 % attending corporate induction target 85% current 71% December 2004 % SRDs carried out target 85% current 64%	Implement, in full, the <i>improving recruitment, retention, making best use of skills and potential</i> section in the Human Resources Strategy	Head of HR	HR Strategy Group	December 2005	☺	Exit surveys in place Focus group from Herefordshire Voice being set up to consider Council's reputation as an employer Targeted survey regarding Essential Skills drafted

Organisational development and learning

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
A competent and effective workforce contd.	By end of March 2004 reduce sickness absence to 8.5 FTE days By end of March 2005 reduce sickness absence to 8FTE days Bullying and harassment policies and procedures implemented by December 2004	Implement, in full, the <i>Ensuring a safe and supportive working environment</i> section of the Human Resources Strategy	Head of HR	HR Strategy Group	December 2005	☺	Health and Safety induction for all new employees in place Revised bullying, harassment and grievance policies drafted Review underway of lessons to be learnt from complaints Lifestyle days taking place at selected premises to educate employees on diet and fitness Current sickness absence reduced to 9.03 FTE days at end of 2003

Organisational development and learning

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Better passporting of learning throughout the Council	NA	Develop systems for sharing learning across the Council through the use of existing mechanisms such as use of case studies, Managers' Forum and the Intranet	Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team HR Services Managers' Forum	June 2003	☺	Systems developed and launched at Managers Forum - January 2003 Best Practice Folder on Intranet
	NA	Implement systems for sharing learning	Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team PR Team	September 2003	☺	Systems currently being implemented
	NA	Review systems	Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team HR Services	December 2004	☺	Review incorporated in Policy Team Service Plans
Management of organisational change/development across the Council	No milestones identified	Implement, in full, the Change Management Programme in the Modernisation Programme Implement activities identified	Director of Environment and Director of Policy and Community Organisation Development Group	Organisation Development Group	March 2005	☹	Group established and some activities undertaken. No structured work plan in place.

Communications

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Timely communication of significant information to all staff	NA	Ensure 100% penetration of Team Briefings	Chief Executive's Management Team	Managers' Forum	January 2003	☺	August 2003 survey indicates 78% penetration
	NA	Carry out random spot checks of Team Briefings to ensure compliance every three months	Public Relations Officer	Public Relations Team	From March 2003	☺	First survey undertaken August 2003
	NA	Implement, in full, the <i>Improving communications</i> section in the Human Resources Strategy	Head of HR	HR Strategy Group Public Relations Team	December 2005	☺	Progress as per Connecting with Communities element
Opportunities for all staff to "have their say"	NA	Run two staff roadshows per year	Chief Executive	Chief Executive's Management Team	December 2004	☺	During 2003/04 one major roadshow exercise was undertaken in relation to Council's Job Evaluation Programme
	NA	Hold two open meetings annually for all staff within each Directorate/Department	Chief Executive's Management Team	Directorate/Departmental resources	December 2003	☺	Open meetings held in all Directorates/Departments
	NA	Review success of open meetings	Chief Executive's Management Team	Public Relations Team	March 2004	☺	Reviews scheduled by Public Relations Team 2004/2005

Communications

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Opportunities for all staff to "have their say" contd.	NA	Consider and implement other opportunities for all staff to feed back ideas	Chief Executive's Management Team	HR Services Directorate/Departmental resources	June 2003	☺	Mechanisms in place in Directorates/ Departments although not clear how feedback is shared across the Council
	NA	Directors and Heads of Service to undertake half-day work shadowing four times a year	Chief Executive's Management Team Heads of Service	Managers' Forum	March 2005	☺	Work shadowing in place for Directors but not for all Heads of Service

Communications

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Effective communications outside the Council	Progress report to CXMT. July 2004	Implement, in full, the recommendations of the Connecting with Communities project	Director of Policy and Community	Communications Network Public Relations Team	March 2005	☺	Draft Communications strategy completed Council-wide communications network formed Measures taken to improve communications around job evaluation. Herefordshire Matters relaunched from January 2004 New Members - media training External Media satisfaction survey undertaken

Communications

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
	Revenues and Benefits Service Improvement Pilot to be implemented June 2004	Implement, in full, the Access to services programme in e-Modernisation	Director of Policy and Community	Programme Board Top 10 customer services group Info in Herefordshire	March 2006	☺	New technology to enable more queries to be dealt with on the first contact. Telephone access also being improved Top 10 customer services group disbanded and its work being taken forward as part of the Service Improvement Project
	NA	Implement, in full, the Council's Customer Service Strategy	Customer Services and Development Manager Director of Policy and Community	Top 10 customer services group Service Improvement Project	March 2004	☺	Customer Standards agreed and launched in September 2003
	Issue revised templates to all staff via the intranet/CD-Rom. Summer 2004	Consistent use of corporate stationery across the Council	Director of Policy and Community	ICT Services	March 2003	☹	Revised corporate style guidelines have been produced and are being tested. New guidelines will be issued following feedback from the testing programme.

Communications

What we want to achieve...	Milestones	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Face	Progress to date
Improved consultation arrangements	NA	Implement, in full, agreed proposals to develop of Local Area Forums	Director of Policy and Community	LAF Lead Officers Policy Assistant	December 2003	☺	Proposals approved by Cabinet October 2003 New programme of meetings to be launched March 2004
	NA	Implement, in full, the Council's Community Involvement Strategy	Director of Policy and Community	Community Involvement Co-ordinator	March 2004	☺	Strategy approved December 2003

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

CABINET

3RD JUNE, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To note progress on the Performance Management Action Plan to April 2004 and approve the Performance Management Action Plan to May 2005.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

- That
- (a) **progress on the Performance Management Action Plan to April 2004 be noted;**
 - and
 - (b) **the Performance Management Action Plan June 2004 to May 2005 be approved.**

Reasons

Performance management is an important aspect of the Council's Corporate Performance Assessment Improvement Plan.

Considerations

1. The current Performance Management Action Plan was approved by Cabinet in November 2003, with the main focus being to ensure the basic building blocks of performance management are in place and better understood. Since the Performance Management Framework was launched in May 2003, and prior to the appointment of the Head of Performance Management a range of work had been initiated but required completion. In addition the more consistent approach the Council had adopted needed to be communicated and regular monitoring established. These objectives have formed the core of the activities of the Head of Performance Management over the last six to eight months

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Sue Griffiths, Head of Performance Management, on 01432 260476

Progress on the Action Plan to April 2004

2. The majority of actions in the plan have been completed on time (see Appendix I). This includes finalising the Chief Executive's Management Team commitments framework, and supporting the completion of the first interviews, and finalising the Risk Management Strategy and Herefordshire Driver. Two actions have been carried forward to the next Action Plan, i.e. redesigning the process of driving forward the Improvement Plan (which will need to be linked to the new Corporate Plan), and working with the Head of Human Resources on monitoring the Human Resources Strategy. The other actions remain ongoing as they are about embedding the approach within the Council. Key to the success of this will be monitoring and communication/support to managers.

Action Plan June 2004 to May 2005.

3. The proposed Action Plan for the next twelve months is attached as Appendix 2. The next stage of performance management is to embed it as the "way we do things" and it is important that managers are able to relate to it as a core activity rather than a "bolt-on". The approach adopted by the Head of Performance Management is to continue to simplify and help managers join up the range of activities necessary to good performance. A simple definition of performance management is at the heart of this approach to help engage employees at all levels.

"What we do to further improve the performance of employees and the Council to ensure the very best for the people of Herefordshire."

This Action Plan aims to create and support the environment in which this can take place. It places a proper emphasis on the Head of Performance Management continuing to work with other key individuals to achieve the objectives, in some cases as lead and others in a supporting role. The overall aim is to ensure wide ownership of performance management and not to dilute the responsibility for managing performance which rests with all managers. The Plan is intended to support a change of culture to one which is increasingly and consistently performance focussed in all parts of the Council. It will take account of the forthcoming changes to Corporate Performance Assessment methodology as required.

For performance management to become fully embedded two aspects will require particular attention over the next year. Firstly, service planning and review and the link to individual objective setting, will need to become a living and not a once a year activity. Considerable work will be necessary to achieve this and working with key managers to support them will be critical. Secondly the Council now needs to move from performance measurement to performance management by driving improvements based on evidence of under performance. A focus on using performance information in this way will need to be evident at all levels of management and at the political level. In order to facilitate this a revised approach to performance reporting will aim to simplify the information presented and, where possible, show trends and comparisons.

Conclusion

Progress on the first Performance Management Action Plan has been good. In addition to progress on the agreed activities, the role of the Performance Lead and Performance Coordinators Groups has developed well and good working links have been established between key colleagues who make a contribution in this area. The Action Plan for the next twelve months builds on these achievements and provides a robust basis for embedding performance management in Herefordshire in a real and tangible way.

Risk Management

The Council scored 2 out of a possible 4 for the performance management aspect of the Corporate Performance Assessment. The consequent Improvement Plan, which was approved by the Audit Commission, set out the need to have a more consistent approach to performance management. Performance Management is both an area of focus and a support to improving service scores in the Corporate Performance Assessment. There is a strong and significant correlation between Councils' score on performance management and their overall assessment by the Audit Commission. Improving our approach therefore is essential in supporting the Council to either maintain our Good status or receive an Excellent assessment in the next Corporate Performance Assessment. Without taking any action the assessment of risk is:

Likelihood: -Likely

Impact -Significant

This gives an assessment of **medium** risk.

An agreed and fully implemented action plan reduces the risk to **low** by changing the likelihood to unlikely.

Consultees

None.

Options

There are no alternative options.

Background Papers

Performance Management Framework

Performance Management Action Plan December 2003 – March 2004

Indicator	Action	Who	Expected Outcomes	Progress	Link
Leadership	Improvement Plan -Design overview and review process	Head of P M and Performance Leads	Ensure that targets are corporately owned and delivered	To 2004/5 action plan	CPA
	Design performance framework for CXMT and Heads of Service	Head of P M and Performance Leads	Clarity of expectations of Senior Managers	Complete	PMF
	Communication of P M framework in Directorates/Departments	Head of P M Leads and Directors	Understanding of framework and confidence to implement	Initial presentations to all Directorates/Departments Seminars for managers in place	PMF
People	Devise system to monitor HR Strategy	Head of P M and Head of HR	Key HR processes are fully embedded	To 2004/5 action plan	CPA
Partnerships and Resources	Devise/coordinate performance monitoring re: partnerships	Head of P M and relevant managers	That services delivered by partners perform to required standard	Partnership Performance Management meeting arranged	New
Processes	Finalise Herefordshire Driver	Head of P M, Policy Team Performance Coordinators	Final framework for use to support service planning	Complete	PMF

Indicator	Action	Who	Expected Outcomes	Progress	Link
	Finalise and implement risk management strategy and devise training	Head of P M, Performance Leads and Treasurer	Understanding of strategy and confidence to implement	Complete	CPA
People Results	Framework for use of staff survey	Head of P M, Personnel Manager and Research Team	Consistent use of 2003 information in service plans	Complete. Need to revise for 2004 survey	CPA
Key Performance Results	Monitor/report progress on LPSA	Head of P M, Andrew Tanner, John Eades	Consistent and proactive approach to supporting progress to targets	Ongoing	LPSA
	Devise validation process for KPI's	Head of PM, Audit, Performance Coordinators	Reliable and accurate data	Tony Ford leading internal audit of "high risk" indicators	BVPP
	Ensure frequency of performance monitoring reports is on target	Head of P M and Performance Coordinators	Agreed framework is implemented	Ongoing	PMF
	Devise and monitor consistent performance reporting framework	Head of P M and Performance Coordinators	Consistent framework which meets information needs of all stakeholder users	Draft approach completed To be in place for first 2004/5 reports	PMF

Second draft

Indicator	Action	Who	Expected Outcomes	Progress	Link
Innovation and Learning	Membership of IDEA/Audit Commission Performance Management Group	Head of PM	Influence on and advance notice of CPA criteria/good practice	<i>Ongoing. Managers Forum in May to focus on Performance Management with speaker from this project</i>	New

Key: CPA - CPA Improvement Plan, PMF - PM Framework, LPSA - Public Service Agreement, BVPP - Best Value Performance Plan

Performance Management Action Plan June 2004 – May 2005

Indicator	Action	Working with	Expected Outcomes	Measure	When
Leadership	Support Leadership work as required	Head of HR	Improve leadership capability	Participant evaluation	By 30/11/04
	Continued implementation /monitoring of commitments	CXMT/Performance Leads	Clarity of expectations of Senior Managers	Chief Executive assessment	Ongoing
	Ensure performance is focussed on as aspect of senior meetings	CXMT/Performance Leads/DMTs	Increased focus on performance across Council	Feedback from Performance Leads	Ongoing
	Revamp Improvement Plan/monitoring	Corporate Policy and Research Manager	Improve profile/delivery of improvements	Greater ownership outside CXMT	By 31/8/04
	Support development of Corporate Plan to meets PM requirements	Corporate Policy and Research Manager	Corporate Plan more focussed on performance	CPA	By 31/08/04
People	Monitor HR Strategy performance	Head of HR	Key HR processes are fully embedded	All targets delivered to timescale	By 30/11/04
	Deliver Rocket Science Workshops/Rocket Science Toolkit	Personnel Manager - Employees and OD	Better understanding by managers of P.M and their role	CPA	By 31/08/04
	Support Member development re: Performance Management	Member Development Adviser	Improve member capability	CPA	By 30/11/04
Processes	Revise Performance Management framework	Performance Coordinators	Wider ownership	Breakthrough Q/A	By 30/11/04

Indicator	Action	Working with	Expected Outcomes	Measure	When
Processes	Support Herefordshire Driver assessments	Performance Leads and Performance Coordinators	Assessments to support service planning	Evidence of use in audit of service plans	By 30/11/04
	Develop Herefordshire Partnership Performance Management framework	Partnership officers/partner agencies	Better evidence of benefits of partnership	CPA	By 30/11/04
	Support project management framework	Head of ICT	Successful projects to time/quality/cost	Project aims met	Ongoing
	Monitor risk management strategy and deliver training to support	County Treasurer/Performance Leads	Understanding of strategy and confidence to implement	Evaluation of various events	By 30/11/04
	Ensure Diversity Impact assessments are included in service planning	Performance Leads/CPR Manager	Statutory requirement met	Timetable for assessments on track	By 28/2/05
	Revise service planning framework and devise support for managers	CPR Manager and Performance Coordinators	Better service plans 2005/6	Service Plan Audit 2005	By 30/11/04
	Service Plan audit	Performance Leads/Coordinators	To assess compliance to 2004 guidance	Results audit	By 31/08/04
	Monitor communications strategy performance	Head of Policy & Communications	Internal/external communications have improved	Evidence of improvement eg SOS	By 31/05/05
Customer Results	Monitor customer service standards performance	Head of Customer Services and Libraries	Prompt/courteous services	Customer surveys/monitoring	By 31/05/05

Indicator	Action	Working with	Expected Outcomes	Measure	When
People Results	Ensure staff survey results available in time for service planning/commitments	Personnel Manager Employee & OD/Research Team	Consistent use of 2004 information in service plans	Evidence of use in audit of service plans	By 30/11/04
	Ensure SRD's completed on time and to quality	Head of HR/DMT's	Improved motivation and performance	SOS/performance monitoring	By 30/11/04
	Support Investors in People accreditation (Corporate or Top Ten)	Head of HR	Improved link between organisations objectives and people performance	Accreditation/CPA	TBC
Key Performance Results	Monitor/report progress on LPSA1 and ensure action plans in place	Assistant County Treasurer/CPR Manager	Consistent approach to supporting progress to targets	LPSA targets are met or within agreed shortfall	Ongoing
	Ensure LPSA2 targets are well owned and measurable	Assistant County Treasurer/CPR Manager	Close alignment LPSA/corporate objectives	CPA	By 31/08/04
	Provide support to poor score services	Performance Leads/Coordinators	Improved service scores	Audit Commission	Ongoing
	Ensure validation process focuses on high risk KPI's	Audit, Performance Coordinators	Reliable and accurate data	No qualified PI's	By 31/08/04
	Focus on action to move KPI's to top quartile	Performance Leads/Coordinators	Improved outcomes for customers	Audit Commission	Ongoing
	Ensure monitoring/action results essential to CPA score	Performance Leads/Coordinators	Move to Excellent status	CPA 2006	Ongoing
	Ensure frequency of performance monitoring reports is on target	Performance Leads/Coordinators	Agreed framework is implemented	Reports to Cabinet/Scrutiny Committees	Ongoing

Second draft

Indicator	Action	Working with	Expected Outcomes	Measure	When
Key Performance Results	Investigate need for corporate performance database	Head of ICT/Performance Coordinators	Analyse need and assess possible systems	Agreed system which meets Council's needs	By 30/11/04
Innovation and Learning	Membership of IDEa/Audit Commission Performance Management Group	IDEa/Audit Commission	Influence on and advance notice of CPA criteria/good practice	Improved CPA rating on PM	Ongoing
	Ongoing development of PCT and PLG (arrange awaydays)	Performance Leads/Coordinators	Better understanding/influence of key players	Improved CPA rating on PM	Ongoing
	Ensure good practice re: Performance Management is shared within Council	Performance Leads/Coordinators	Improved performance	Improved CPA rating on PM	Ongoing
	Identify good practice in other organisations	Performance Leads/Coordinators	Improved performance	Improved CPA rating on PM	Ongoing

Key: CPA - CPA Improvement Plan, PMF - PM Framework, LPSA - Public Service Agreement, BVPP - Best Value Performance Plan

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINTS AND COMPLAINTS PANEL - 2003/04

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

CABINET

3RD JUNE, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To note the figures for complaints determined by the Local Government Ombudsman and the Complaints Panel for the year ended 31 March 2004.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation

THAT the report be noted.

Reasons

To note the Council's performance.

Considerations

1. The Local Government Ombudsman's office investigates complaints about councils with the aim of putting things right if they have gone wrong : it is unbiased and independent. Ombudsmen have similar powers to the High Court to order anyone to produce information or documents for their investigation. Their investigations are carried out in private and there is no charge for their service. They provide an invaluable service to users of public services and are an independent means of monitoring aspects of council performance.
2. The Council's Best Value Performance Improvement Plan 2002/03 set targets for the number of complaints to the Ombudsman classified as maladministration. There have been no such findings against the Council since it was set up in 1998. The table below shows the total number of complaints determined by the Ombudsman for Herefordshire in 2003/04 and the three previous years.

	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Total number of complaints determined by the Ombudsman	37	27	36	35
Total number of complaints to the Ombudsman settled locally.	8	5	5	3

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Marie Rosenthal, County Secretary and Solicitor on 01432 260200

3. As shown above, the majority of the complaints were found by the Ombudsman to be unfounded. In three cases however, the Council did agree to take some further action to resolve the complaint.
4. The table below sets out the number of complaints received by the Ombudsman by Directorate for 2003/04.

Directorate	LS	NM	OD	OJ	Total
Environment	1	9	6	8	24
Education	1			1	2
Policy and Community			2		2
Social Care and Strategic Housing		3	1	1	5
Treasurers			1		1
County Secretary and Solicitor	1				1
Chief Executive					0
Total	3	12	10	10	35

Key: LS – Complaint settled locally (no report)
 NM – No or insufficient evidence of maladministration
 OD – Ombudsman’s Discretion (i.e. not proceeded with for a variety of reasons)
 OJ – Outside Ombudsman’s Jurisdiction

Response Times

5. The table below shows the average time the council takes to respond to the Ombudsman’s first enquiries on a complaint. It is measured in calendar days from the date they send their letter/fax/email to the date that they receive a substantive response from the Council.

	First Enquiries	
	No. of First Enquiries	Avg no. of days to respond
2003/04	16	36.7
2002/03	24	33.1
2001/02	21	29.4

Complaints Panel

6. The Complaints Panel meet to hear unresolved complaints from members of the public following review at level 1 (by the local manager) and level 2 (by Director). The Panel comprises the Chief Executive and two Group Leaders advised by the County Secretary and Solicitor. During 2003/04 it heard 8 complaints. One was upheld and one was partially upheld.

Directorate/ Department	No. of Complaints / Section	Outcome
County Treasurer’s	2 – Council Tax 1 – Revenue & Benefits Services	Not Upheld Partially Upheld
Environment	2 – Planning 2 – Engineering & Transportation 1 – Env. Health & Trading Standards	1 Upheld – 1 Not Upheld Not Upheld Not Upheld

Alternative Options

There are no alternative options.

Risk Management

Ombudsman findings of maladministration can result in compensation liability and risk the Council's reputation.

Consultees

None identified.

Background Papers

Ombudsman correspondence file.

