

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

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8th December, 2004

Dear Councillor,

**MEETING OF CABINET
THURSDAY, 16TH DECEMBER, 2004 AT 2.15 P.M.
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD**

AGENDA (04/12)

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. REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT SETTLEMENT 2005/06

To note the provisional Revenue Support Grant (RSG) for 2005/06 and consider its impact on the budget strategy for 2005/06. *(Pages 1 - 12)*

4. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2005-08

To agree to the current draft Corporate Plan for 2005-08 being used immediately as the basis for the preparation of the Council's Annual Operating Plan and directorate and service plans for 2005-06. *(Pages 13 - 62)*

5. LOCAL AREA FORUMS

To receive feedback on the November 2004 round of Local Area Forums, Budget Consultation. To note issues raised by the community and to continue to identify ways to improve and develop public consultation at Local Area Forums. *(Pages 63 - 70)*

6. CORPORATE HEALTH PERFORMANCE

To receive an update on the Council's corporate performance in relation to our National and Local Best Value Performance Indicators from 1 April 2004 to 30 September 2004. *(Pages 71 - 76)*

7. LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL: STRATEGIC AREA REVIEW

To receive a report on the Strategic Area Review Herefordshire and Worcestershire currently being conducted by the Learning and Skills Council and to respond to the formal consultation. *(Pages 77 - 84)*

8. REFORM OF THE REGISTRATION SERVICE

To agree the approach required to ensure a successful transition of this service to the Council. *(Pages 85 - 88)*

9. HR STRATEGY

To consider progress against the Council's Human Resources (HR) Strategy including main findings from the 2004 Staff Opinion Survey, and 2003-04 Exit Surveys. *(Pages 89 - 94)*

10. IEG4 STATEMENT

To approve the Implementing Electronic Government Return 2004 (IEG4).

(Note: Due to technical difficulties the Return is enclosed as a separate document.) (Pages 95 - 96)

11. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW

To determine how best to take forward the recommendations contained in the Property Management Scrutiny Review which were considered by the Strategic Monitoring Committee. *(Pages 97 - 100)*

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

In the opinion of the Proper Officer, this appendix and the next item will not be, or are likely not to be, open to the public and press at the time they are considered.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12(A) of the Act as indicated below.

(a) PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW

The attached appendix to the report is exempt. *(Pages 101 - 142)*

This item discloses any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.

12. EXTRA CARE HOUSING PROVISION

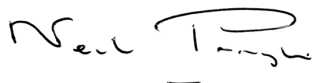
To note the actions taken to consider accommodating Unity Gardens on the former Nursery Site, Ledbury Road, Hereford and to agree to formally notify Unity Gardens of the outcome. *(Pages 143 - 152)*

This item discloses:

(a) information relating to any particular occupier or former occupier of, or applicant for, accommodation provided by or at the expense of the authority; and

(b) any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.

Yours sincerely,



**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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- 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 five 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.
- Have a reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports (relating to items to be considered in public) made available to the public attending meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees.
- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the Council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title.
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- Access to this summary of your rights as members of the public to attend meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees and to inspect and copy documents.

Please Note:

Agenda and individual reports can be made available in large print or on tape. Please contact the officer named below in advance of the meeting who will be pleased to deal with your request.

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- The nearest bus stop to Brockington is located in Old Eign Hill near to its junction with Hafod Road. The return journey can be made from the same bus stop.

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 Mrs Christine Dyer on 01432 260222 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.

COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire or emergency the alarm bell will ring continuously.

You should vacate the building in an orderly manner through the nearest available fire exit.

You should then proceed to Assembly Point J which is located at the southern entrance to the car park. A check will be undertaken to ensure that those recorded as present have vacated the building following which further instructions will be given.

Please do not allow any items of clothing, etc. to obstruct any of the exits.

Do not delay your vacation of the building by stopping or returning to collect coats or other personal belongings.

REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT SETTLEMENT 2005/06

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide.

Purpose

To note the provisional Revenue Support Grant (RSG) for 2005/06 and consider its impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan 2005/06-2007/08.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

- THAT (a) the details of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement be noted.**
- (b) the current budget strategy be maintained, thereby maximising the Council's room for manoeuvre in the final consideration of the budget for 2005/06 and**
- (c) Cabinet requests Council to defer the March meeting of Council to 11th March, 2005.**

Reasons

Final decisions on the budget are taken by full Council.

Considerations

1. The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) on 2nd December, 2004.
2. Preliminary analysis has been undertaken and whilst the settlement is more favourable than had been indicated from the figures provided as part of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 2004, the Government's assessment of level of council tax also appears to have been revised downward. It is important to emphasise at this juncture that the most significant change has been as a result of the additional resources provided by Government. However, there are also changes reflected in the settlement for transfer of funding both to and from local authority, Formula Spending Share (FSS), funded responsibilities. The County Treasurer will report at the meeting on any further significant issues emerging.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Mr. I. Hyson, County Treasurer, on (01432) 260235

3. Appendices 1-4 to this report provide details of the settlement. The key elements to draw to Cabinet's attention, in addition to the extra funding, are as follows:
- An increase in FSS (2004/05 adjusted base) from £173,193,164 to £182,373,188 or 5.3% taking account of the transfer of functions.
 - A corresponding increase in central funding of 5.3%.
 - A transfer of £75,000,000 nationally from the Schools Block to EPCS (Other Services).
 - Significant increase in capital financing block (under review).
 - Flood defence levies transferred to Environment Agency.
 - Lower than average increase in Highways.
 - Preserved rights funding (Social Care) transferred to local authorities significantly reduced/deferred.

Impact on budget strategy

4. On the basis of the work done thus far, the Council's net grant position, when compared with that previously reported, is some £2,000,000 better than had been indicated by CSR 2004. By far and away the most significant factor has been the additional resources put into the system, events which were forecast when at a late stage the settlement date was postponed. Although subject to further clarification, it seems clear that the additional resources are one-off for 2005/06 only. The additional resources should not, however, be seen as obviating the need for the current budget exercise because they will in part be required to meet an expectation by Government of lower increases in Council Tax.
5. A further major change to have developed over the last few weeks is the reduction in the amount of preserved rights expenditure (Social Care), currently funded by specific grants, to be transferred into mainstream FSS funding. Cabinet will recall the advice, given at the meeting on 21st October when the CSR 2004 was considered, and reiterated at Budget Panel, that the Revenue Support Grant settlement could be some £1,000,000 higher than forecast, from CSR 2004, but this was uncertain as the issue was still under review. The transfer of responsibility reflected in the settlement amends the clear statement about transfer made in conjunction with CSR 2004 by both postponing and phasing the original proposal. The sum involved is in the order of £1,000,000. The ODPM has now confirmed that further transfer to FSS funding will take place in 2006/07. On the basis of current information the Council should prudently anticipate the loss of the sum of £1,000,000 in 2006/07.
6. ODPM guidance has also been recently received regarding the approach to be taken in implementing the results of the triennial actuarial review of the Superannuation Fund. The essence of that advice is the adoption of a long-term perspective in the recovery strategy for such funds nationally. In applying the recommended criteria, stepped increases in contributions will now apply for the period 2005/06 to 2010/11. The consequence is a reduction in expected costs of £750,000 in 2005/06 with cost increases by some £200,000 per annum thereafter. Again, the estimates provided by the Superannuation Authority will have to be met as originally assessed but the revised advice allows the increase to be phased over a longer period.
7. Therefore, whilst the increase in funding reflected above might afford some short

term relief, and will help in bridging the “budget gap”, it should not be seen as providing a longer term solution to the budget position, merely providing further breathing space. The potential withdrawal of the additional resources in 2006/07 in effect just transfers part of the funding gap into later years.

8. The additional timeframe over which to optimise the Council's ongoing efforts to secure economies from procurement and the Service Improvement Programme is helpful but the need to drive forward these issues remains.
9. A further factor is the absolute necessity of avoiding capping. The most recent pronouncements talk in terms of average increases below 5%. The ODPM also refers to assumed average rises in Council Tax yield of 4.8% (compared to 6.7% in CSR 2004) reduced by increases in tax base equivalent to 1.2%. The equivalent figures for Herefordshire are 5.2% and 0.5% respectively but are subject to final confirmation.
10. The position regarding capping will, of course, become clearer as the budget proposals of other authorities, particularly Unitary ones with whom Herefordshire would be compared for capping purposes, emerge.
11. Cabinet is, therefore, advised to maintain the existing budget strategy on the basis that it will provide the most effective platform from which final budget decisions, informed by up to date information on the national position, can be considered by full Council in March. Accordingly, it is recommended that the date of Council is deferred by a week to 11th March, 2005.

Risk Management

Continuing with the existing budget strategy and planning for the medium term reduces the risk of setting a budget inconsistent with the Council's key priorities.

Consultees

None.

Background Papers

RSG Settlement 2nd December 2004.

SUMMARY OF LGA BRIEFING

Revenue Support Grant Settlement 2005/06

2 December 2004

1. Summary

The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2005/06 was issued by ODPM on 2nd December 2004. This briefing provides initial commentary and analysis.

Key points of the provisional Settlement are:

- Headline increase of 6.2% in Aggregate External Finance (AEF) and increase of 5.9% in Total Assumed Spending (TAS). This compares with increases of 7.3% in AEF and 6.2% in TAS in 2004/05;
- Increase of 5.6% in total Formula Grant and 5.4% in Formula Spending Shares;
- an extra £637m beyond the figures in Spending Review 2004 (SR2004). This includes:
 - an extra £358m in Revenue Support Grant and an extra £50m in police grant;
 - new money amounting to £100m for safeguarding children and £100m for access and systems capacity, for 2005/06 only;
 - £28m extra for fire to enable authorities not to repay transitional funding.
- Additional resources to deal with pressures as follows:
 - £100m relief of pensions pressures due to amended guidance;
 - £60m for additional planning and licensing fees income;
 - £50m for reprofiling of waste targets.
- No changes in total Formula Spending Shares beyond those announced in Spending Review 2004, but a shift of £75m from the Schools Block to EPCS.
- An assumed council tax yield rise of 4.8%, compared with 6.7% in Spending Review 2004; it is assumed within that the taxbase will rise by 1.2% and assumed Band D council tax by 3.6%.
- Reduction in ring-fenced grant to 9% of total grant; but with a prospect of it rising to around 50% with the introduction of a ring-fenced schools grant in 2006/07.
- No formula changes, however updated data used: 2003 mid-year population estimates and New Earnings Survey in the calculation of the Area Cost Adjustment.
- Damping arrangements as follows; no ceilings for any class of authority; floors of 4% for authorities with education and social services responsibilities, 3.75% for police authorities and 2.5% for shire districts and fire authorities. These are paid for by scaling down the grant increases to authorities within the same class above the floor.

Education

There is an FSS increase of 5.6%; compared with a figure of 5.9% in SR2004. This reduction is owing to a shift of £75m from the Schools Block to EPCS. The Schools Block has an increase of 5.8% and the LEA block is increased by 4.2%.

Total specific grants are projected to be £4,436m compared with £4,043m in 2004/05, an increase of 9.7%. Grants within the Standards Fund will be £1,540m compared with £1,296m in 2004/05. However, as announced on 15 October matched funding contributions on some IT grants have increased.

The Schools FSS block has a floor of 5.5% per pupil (5.8% in the Outer London pay area) and a ceiling of 8.75%. The LEA block also has floors and ceilings of 3.5% and 4.95%.

All authorities will receive sufficient formula grant to enable their Schools FSS increase to be passported in full. However for 4 authorities this will account for the whole of their formula grant increase. These authorities are: Richmond, Poole, Bromley and West Sussex.

The shift from Education to EPCS has eased passporting pressures on authorities; without it many more authorities would have been in a 100% passporting position.

Personal Social Services

PSS formula spending shares have increased by 6%; split into increases of 6.9% for Children's PSS, 6% for Elderly PSS and 5.2% for Other Adults PSS. These figures are as in SR2004 but now take into account the shift from specific grants into FSS.

The total of specific and special grants is £2,128m. The FSS baseline has been increased by £367m to take account of the shift in specific grants. This has led to reductions of £205m for residential allowances, £110m for preserved rights and £53m for training support.

There is a one off addition of £100m for access and systems capacity and £100m for childrens services allowing the safeguarding children grant paid in 2004/05 to be continued to 2005/06.

Full details are in Local Authority Social Services letters (2004)25 and (2004)26, available at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/LettersAndCirculars/LocalAuthoritySocialServicesLetters/AllLASSLs/fs/en#4908356>

Highways Maintenance

Total FSS has increased by £2.5%, in line with SR2004.

Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services

The EPCS increase is 2.5%; meaning an increase of 2.8% for county services and 2.4% for district services. There is £75m of new money compared with SR2004, a shift from the Schools Block, as noted above.

The Supporting People allocations for 05/06 have also been announced. Details can be found at <http://www.spkweb.org.uk/WhatsHappening/2.1News.asp> Most authorities have reductions of 5% in line with the reductions in national control totals.

Capital Financing

The figures for capital financing are £3,268.6m, reduced by £425m for PFI Special Grant. The elements for interest receipts and interest on capital receipts are £451m and £367m respectively, leaving £3,661.6m to be distributed as the debt charges element.

Further details of how these figures are worked out are at:
<http://www.lga.gov.uk/OurWork.asp?lsection=59&ccat=1022>

2. The Financing of Total Assumed Spending

Table 1 provides a summary of central government support for revenue expenditure for 2005/06 and how that support has changed since 2004/05.

Table 1: Financing of Total Assumed Spending 2005/06

	£ billion	% of TAS	% Change from 2004/05 adjusted
Total Assumed Spending	79,577	100%	5.9%
Specific Grants	15,406	19%	7.9%
RSG	26,653	33%	-2.2%
Government Grants	42,059	53%	1.3%
NNDR	18,000	23%	20.0%
AEF for receiving authorities	60,059	75%	6.2%
Assumed Council Tax yield	19,517	25%	4.8%

Note: Change is measured from 2004/05 adjusted TAS and adjusted AEF

The **national non-domestic rates** (NNDR) poundage will increase by 3.1% in line with the September 2004 Retail Price Index. The NNDR poundage (the multiplier) for England for 2005/06 is likely to be 42.2p compared to 45.6p in 2004/05. This takes account of a rise in gross rateable value of 17.7% due to revaluation and an adjustment for estimated losses from appeals.

Figures released for SR2004 indicated that the amount to be funded by councils, via the council tax, was anticipated to increase by 6.7%. This was in direct contradiction to the government's view that council tax increases should be in low single figures in 2005-06.

Today's pre-budget report recognised that the SR2004 failed sufficiently to recognise the pressures facing local authorities, and announced an additional £358m for RSG in 2005/06. Income from council tax is now assumed to increase by 4.8% on an adjusted basis. Assumed National Council Tax will increase by 3.6%, from £1061 to £1099, with taxbase growing by 1.2%.

Average council tax in 2004/05 was £1,167. Actual council taxes in 05/06 will depend upon decisions by authorities.

The Government have said they are "prepared to take even tougher capping action next year" than in 2004/05, to achieve their "low single figures" expectations. The LGA has made it clear our strong opposition to any such move.

3. Ring-fenced grants

The amount of grant that is ring-fenced has fallen to 9%, in line with government promises in Spending Review 2002. The LGA had urged that the level of ring-fencing be cut to 4.5%; the level it was at in 1997/98.

This reduction is welcome but it is expected to be sharply reversed in 2006/07, when, if the government go ahead with their proposals to ring-fence schools funding, the amount of grant that is ring-fenced will increase to over 50% of the total.

4. Formula Spending Shares changes

There is a formula freeze for 2005-06, so there are no formula changes, however:

- An amending report for 2003-04 was issued on 18th November 2004 to take account of updated data (primarily revised 2001 mid-year population estimates) and rerun the regressions underlying formulae for personal social services, highways and fire. The Assumed National Council Tax shares, set judgementally in 2003-04, were also changed in order to ensure that shire districts as a class do not suffer any grant loss. Effects have been taken into account in 2005/06, with the proviso that no authority receives a grant increase lower than the floor for that class of authority.
- New 2003 mid-year population estimates will have an impact, particularly in London, where numbers are estimated to have fallen.
- Using updated New Earnings Survey data in the calculation of the Area Cost Adjustment (ACA), produces small changes in the ACA calculated for each area, compared to 2004-05. However, these changes are large enough to alter the authorities which receive an ACA top-up e.g. Merseyside loses; Inner London gains.

Some data in the settlement will continue to come from the 1991 census. The Government take the view that, since many indicators have changed greatly from 1991 to 2001, it would be inappropriate to incorporate new data without changing the underlying formula, which would breach the freeze.

5. Damping Arrangements

Damping arrangements will continue to operate so that every authority will get at least the grant floor for that class of authority. This will be paid for by scaling back the grant increase above the floor for other authorities in that class. There will no longer be a grant ceiling for any class of authority.

The table below summarises the position compared with 2004-05

	Education/ Social Services	Shire Districts	Police	Fire
2004-05				
Floor	4.0%†	3.00%	3.25%	3.50%
Ceiling	7.50%	50.0%*	25.0%*	5.00%
Middle	-6.30%	-78.50%	-99.50%	-16.92%
2005-06				
Floor	4.00%†	2.50%	3.75%	2.50%
Ceiling	-	-	-	-
Middle	-11.37%	-59.20%	-55.93%	-42.23%

†this floor is higher for some authorities to enable them to have a sufficient grant increase to passport in full

*these were notional figures for ODPM modelling purposes. The floor was paid for wholly by scaling down the grant increase of authorities in the middle.

The LGA had been consistently opposed to ceilings, which penalise those authorities for which higher than average grant increases are due to increases in demand such as those reflected in pupil numbers and population figures, and therefore welcomes this change.

NATIONAL POSITION (£m)

	2004/2005 (LGFS)	Adjustments	2004/2005 Adjusted Base	2005/2006 (LGFS)	Cash Increase	'Real' Increase
EDUCATION	26,402	(22)	26,380	27,870	5.6%	5.6%
PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES	12,427	367	12,794	13,567	9.2%	6.0%
HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE	2,004	0	2,004	2,054	2.5%	2.5%
E P C S	11,152	(46)	11,106	11,385	2.1%	2.5%
CAPITAL FINANCING	2,387	0	2,387	2,844	19.1%	19.1%
	54,372	299	54,671	57,719	6.2%	5.6%
POLICE	4,355	0	4,355	4,554	4.6%	4.6%
FIRE	1,848	0	1,848	1,898	2.7%	2.7%
TOTAL	60,575	299	60,874	64,171	5.9%	5.4%

HEREFORDSHIRE POSITION (£000's)

	2004/2005 (LGFS)	Adjustments	2004/2005 Adjusted Base	2005/2006 (LGFS)	Cash Increase	'Real' Increase
EDUCATION	84,054	0	84,054	87,986	4.7%	4.7%
PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES	36,186	1,503	37,689	40,006	10.6%	6.1%
HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE	8,665	(0)	8,665	8,760	1.1%	1.1%
E P C S	36,603	(1,419)	35,183	36,036	(1.5%)	2.4%
CAPITAL FINANCING	7,595	6	7,601	9,584	26.2%	26.1%
	173,103	90	173,193	182,373	5.4%	5.3%

Adjustments, nationally:

Education	(£21.912m) Academies) Nil
Personal Social Services	£53.3m Training Support Programme)
	£204.74m Reservoir Allowances) £1,503k
	£110.049m Preserved Rights Grant)
	(£0.732m) Social Care Inspection)
EPCS (Environmental, Protective & Cultural Services)	(£80.014m) Magistrates Courts)
	(£0.146m) Reservoir Act Duties)
	£36.901 Civil Contingencies) (£1,419k)
	(£2.587m) Welsh Environment Agency Levies)
	(£0.585m) Critical Ordinary Waterways)

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT 2005/2006

	2004/2005	2005/2006		
	FSS	Provisional	Increase/Decrease	%
	£000's	£000's	£000's	
EDUCATION	84,054	87,986	3,933	4.7%
PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES	36,186	40,006	3,820	10.6%
HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE	8,665	8,760	95	1.1%
E P C S	36,603	36,036	(566)	(1.5%)
CAPITAL FINANCING	7,595	9,584	1,988	26.2%
	173,103	182,373	9,270	5.4%

The section, above, shows the position as it would be if Herefordshire received the same increases as the national increases.

Average National Increase (as per consultation)			
Increase	%	£000's	Variance
			£000's
5.6%		88,725	(739)
9.2%		39,507	499
2.5%		8,880	(120)
2.1%		37,366	(1,330)
19.1%		9,048	536
6.2%		183,526	(1,153)

The section, above, shows the position as it would be if Herefordshire received the increases announced in the Spending Review 2004.

Average National Increase (as per Spending Review)			
Increase	%	£000's	Variance
			£000's
5.9%		89,013	(1,027)
9.2%		39,515	491
2.5%		8,882	(122)
0.6%		36,822	(786)
16.7%		8,864	720
5.8%		183,096	(723)

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
PROVISIONAL FSS 2005/2006

APPENDIX 4

		Settlement 2004/2005 FSS £	Provisional 2005/2006 FSS £	Increase/ (Decrease) £	Increase/ (Decrease) %
Education	<i>Primary</i>	27,571,483	28,706,229	1,134,746	4.12%
	<i>Secondary</i>	29,456,372	30,744,468	1,288,096	4.37%
	<i>Under 5</i>	7,827,614	8,380,681	553,067	7.07%
	<i>High Cost Pupils</i>	6,842,961	7,367,202	524,241	7.66%
	<i>Youth & Community</i>	1,269,236	1,352,899	83,663	6.59%
	<i>LEA</i>	11,086,221	11,434,999	348,778	3.15%
		84,053,886	87,986,478	3,932,592	4.68%
Personal Social Services	<i>Children's</i>	7,842,525	8,375,390	532,865	6.79%
	<i>Younger Adult's</i>	9,594,487	10,436,417	841,930	8.78%
	<i>Older People's</i>	18,749,224	21,194,595	2,445,371	13.04%
		36,186,235	40,006,402	3,820,167	10.56%
Highway Maintenance		8,665,290	8,760,224	94,934	1.10%
E P C S	<i>District</i>	23,124,228	23,662,111	537,883	2.33%
	<i>County</i>	11,672,302	11,811,556	139,254	1.19%
	<i>Flood Defence</i>	1,502,802	259,789	(1,243,013)	(82.71%)
	<i>Continuing EA Levies</i>	3,326	3,022	(304)	(9.14%)
	<i>Fixed Costs</i>	300,000	300,000	0	0.00%
		36,602,657	36,036,478	(566,179)	(1.55%)
Capital Financing		7,595,252	9,583,607	1,988,355	26.18%
Totals		173,103,321	182,373,189	9,269,868	5.36%

SUMMARY

	Settlement 2004/2005 FSS £	Provisional 2005/2006 FSS £	Increase/ (Decrease) £	Increase/ (Decrease) %
EDUCATION	84,053,886	87,986,478	3,932,592	4.68%
PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES	36,186,235	40,006,402	3,820,167	10.56%
HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE	8,665,290	8,760,224	94,934	1.10%
E P C S	36,602,657	36,036,478	(566,179)	(1.55%)
CAPITAL FINANCING	7,595,252	9,583,607	1,988,355	26.18%
	173,103,321	182,373,189	9,269,868	5.36%
Revenue Support Grant	62,010,889	58,401,164	(3,609,725)	(5.82%)
Redistributed Business Rates	49,296,906	58,954,415	9,657,509	19.59%
TOTAL FORMULA GRANT	111,307,795	117,355,579	6,047,784	5.43%

DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2005-08

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To agree to the current draft Corporate Plan for 2005-08 being used immediately as the basis for the preparation of the Council's Annual Operating Plan and directorate and service plans for 2005-06.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendation

- THAT** (a) the draft Corporate Plan for 2005-08 at Annex 1 should be used immediately as the basis for the preparation of the Council's Annual Operating Plan and directorate and service plans;
- (b) the final versions of all these plans should reflect budget decisions and the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA2G) between the Council and the UK Government; and
- (c) the proposed final version of the Corporate Plan be approved in February, prior to its consideration by Council in March.

Reasons

The Corporate Plan establishes the Council's priorities and what will be done to achieve them. Its success depends on an Annual Operating Plan for the Council as a whole, and directorate and service plans, carrying the Corporate Plan objectives into detailed effect year by year. The Corporate Plan and the Annual Operating Plan for 2005-06 will need to be approved by the Council in March. In the meantime, there is a need to use the draft Corporate Plan to drive the preparation of the detailed plans for 2005-06.

Considerations

1. Cabinet agreed the new corporate planning process at its meeting on 9 September 2004. It also agreed the broad structure and content of the Corporate Plan for 2005-08. The draft Plan at Annex 1 has been prepared on this basis.
2. The Plan must be affordable. It has therefore been prepared using prudent assumptions about the financial resources that are likely to be available to the

Council over the next three years. These are explained in the draft Plan.

3. The final version of the Plan – and specifically the targets for what the Council aims to achieve by the end of March 2008 - will need to take into account the impact of this year's grant settlement and decisions on Council Tax for 2005-06. Given the annual basis of the settlement, it will be necessary for this Corporate Plan to rely on prudent assumptions about financial resources for 2006-07 and 2007-08. The Plan will, however, be updated annually so that it always looks forward three years.
4. It will be necessary for the Plan to take into account the new Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA2G) with the UK Government. Negotiations about the Agreement should be concluded during February 2005. The Plan will need to include the stretch targets, which may require some modification of those included in the draft Plan.
5. The final Plan will also need to reflect the emerging national framework within which the Council will implement the "Every Child Matters" agenda and the Children's Act

Financial Implications

The draft Plan is designed to be deliverable within the financial resources available to the Council. It will be finalised on the basis of up-to-date information.

Alternative Options

Cabinet has decided what kind of Corporate Plan it wants. In agreeing this draft Plan it is determining its priorities and rejecting alternative options. It will, nonetheless, be able to review the options in considering the proposed final Plan in February.

Risk Management

The Plan identifies the risks to its implementation and says how they will be managed.

Consultees

There has been extensive public consultation in recent months about future budget options. Cabinet will take the results into account, together with the advice of the Budget Panel on 2005-06 budgets, in considering the proposed final Plan in February.

It is intended to share the draft Plan with the members of the *Herefordshire Partnership* Board, and to take their views into account before finalising it.

Background Papers

None identified.



HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

CORPORATE PLAN 2005 to 2008

Action for a better Herefordshire

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Appendix 4 – Proposed expenditure 2005-08 by service/corporate area

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council shares a vision for a better Herefordshire with a wide range of partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors, and with those representing communities. It is set out in *The Herefordshire Plan*. This Corporate Plan says what the Council will do over the next three years to play its full part in turning that vision into reality.
- 1.2 *The Herefordshire Plan* will be reviewed during 2005. Any changes will be taken into account when this Corporate Plan is rolled forward next year.

This Corporate Plan:

- identifies the main challenges facing the county and the Council
 - reviews what has been achieved over the past 18 months
 - makes clear the Council's priorities for the future
 - sets out the improvements in services and in efficiency and effectiveness which are planned
 - identifies the main risks to the achievement of the Plan
 - shows how the Council's resources – human, financial, organisational and physical (including information and communications technologies - ICT) – will be deployed to bring about the planned improvements and manage the risks
 - is the Council's strategic Best Value Plan and Improvement Plan
 - incorporates the objectives and targets in the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) between the Council and the UK Government **[to be finalised once agreed with the Government]**
 - is the basis for leading and managing the Council's performance
 - is the basis for its individual directorate and service plans, and for the performance objectives and targets of every team and every individual member of staff
- 1.3 Everything in the Plan is intended to help deliver the Council's commitment to:
- understanding the needs and wishes of service users and Council Tax-payers, and doing all it can to respond to them - so it takes into account the views expressed during the biggest public consultation the Council has ever undertaken
 - community leadership and working in partnership with all sectors
 - diversity and equal opportunities for all
 - a sustainable environment

2.0 Setting the Scene

- 2.1 Herefordshire's population is about 176,900. It is sparsely populated, with one of the five lowest county population densities in England. About one-third of the population lives in Hereford City, a third in the market towns and a third in rural areas.
- 2.2 Between 1991 and 2003 the population increased by 10.3%, primarily due to net inward migration into the county, mainly from other parts of the West Midlands and the South East. This rate of growth was faster than that experienced by the rest of the West Midlands (1.7%) and England and Wales (4%).
- 2.3 Recent population movements have seen a considerable exodus from urban areas, mostly to recognisable villages within the immediate catchment of the main towns. Herefordshire has become a popular destination for the retired, for holiday homes and second homes and, in some areas, for out-of-county commuting.
- 2.4 The county's population has a considerably older age profile than that for England and Wales. 22.7% of the population is retired, compared with 18.5% nationally, and there are fewer persons of working age (58.5% compared with 61.8%). Despite this, people are on average healthier than nationally.
- 2.5 By 2011 the population is expected to grow by 3.1%, which is about the same as nationally. However, the number of under 18s is expected to fall by 11.9% (national fall 4.2%); the number of 18 to 64 year-olds to grow by only 2.8% (4.4% nationally); and the number who are 65 and over to grow by 20.7% (10.2% nationally).
- 2.6 Most dramatically, the number of people over 80 is expected to rise by a further 24.4%, to 11,800 residents, compared with a national increase of 13%.
- 2.7 Although the Government's 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks Herefordshire 192nd out of 354 local authorities, there are areas of poverty and deprivation within the county. Concentrations of the most deprived areas are within Hereford (South Wye and Central) and Leominster. Conversely, the least deprived areas are concentrated to the east of the county, in some of the fringes of Hereford and directly north and west of the city, and around Ross-on-Wye.
- 2.6 Average wages in the county are significantly below both the regional and national averages. Average house prices are high compared with elsewhere in the region.
- 2.7 Unemployment in the county is low. Manufacturing represents 19% of employment, with the service industry accounting for 75%; both agriculture and tourism are a more important source of jobs in the county than elsewhere in the West Midlands. Self-employment is more common in Herefordshire than in the rest of the UK.
- 2.8 Although Herefordshire performs well at GCSE level, there are relatively few people in the workforce with higher-level skills. There is limited higher education provision, and knowledge-based industries are under-represented in the county. There is net out-migration of young adults from the county in search of wider opportunities for employment and higher education.

3.0 What the Council can do

3.1 The Council has a wide range of powers and duties. These range from a general power to promote well-being to a host of specific legal obligations. These include such things as the provision of schools, the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, the safety of roads, waste collection and disposal, licensing and trading standards.

3.2 This means that the Council has limited or no discretion in some areas but more in others.

The challenges

3.3 The biggest single area of the Council's expenditure is school-age education, amounting to nearly half its annual recurrent spending. This expenditure is effectively ring-fenced by the Government, and most of it has to be passported to schools.

3.4 The Government has published plans that would increase the amount of funding ring-fenced for schools and reduce it for some other services, such as roads.

3.5 The Council has more, but still limited, discretion about its spending on Social Care, which accounts for about 20 per cent of its annual recurrent spending.

3.6 It already targets its services on the most vulnerable. Its responsibilities for the welfare of children are growing as a result of the new Children's Act. The disproportionate growth in the number of older people, particularly those over 80, will place significant additional demands on the Council.

3.7 Pressures are increasing in other areas too. For instance:

- spending has to rise to meet Government targets for the recycling of waste
- the costs of petroleum-based products have risen sharply with the cost of oil. This has a particularly severe effect on rural counties, like Herefordshire, with scattered populations to serve and a huge road network to maintain
- the Freedom of Information Act, which comes into effect from January 2005, requires the Council to devote more resources to responding quickly to public requests to see records

3.8 These pressures will not be matched by increases in the Council's budget:

- outside education, the rate of increase in Government grant income (the biggest single source of the Council's funding) will not be sufficient to match the increase in the Council's unavoidable spending commitments
- one-off funding of major projects by the European Union and other external sources are coming to an end

- in view of the high number of people living on fixed and low incomes, and the Government's rules on capping, the Council cannot make up the deficit by increasing Council Tax to the levels that would be required
- whilst the Council will continue to borrow prudently, this must only be done where it would produce long-term affordable benefits

3.9 In the first year of the Corporate Plan (2005-06), the Council estimates that, to continue running its current services in the way they are now and to meet unavoidable new commitments, the deficit could be some £5 million. This would be likely to rise in subsequent years.

The Council's response

3.10 The Council will continue to campaign, with other rural local authorities, for a fairer deal. That will not come quickly, if at all; until it does, the Council will take decisive action to live within its means and ensure the affordability of this Corporate Plan.

3.11 Its strategy to do so will involve:

- projections of grant from central Government and other sources of income, including moderate increases in Council Tax
- assessing unavoidable spending pressures, including inflation, ring-fenced education expenditure and the statutory minimum provision of services
- a balanced budget each year
- a comprehensive Service Improvement Programme (SIP) that will raise service standards and produce significant efficiency savings. This will include services such as schools and social care, where greater efficiency will pay at least part of the costs of improving these services
- cash-releasing savings of at least £2 million in 2005-06, and more in future years, from the SIP and more effective procurement of the goods and services we buy;
- a further £3 million of recurrent savings, beginning in 2005-06, by re-prioritising services
- targeted growth in priority services and essential infrastructure that will deliver service improvements and greater efficiency
- prudent, long-term affordable borrowing that delivers service improvements and greater efficiency, in addition to maintaining the Council's assets

4.0 Performance April 2003 – December 2004

4.1 The Council is building its plan for the next 3 years on a record of major improvements in services and the way it operates.

Improved Services

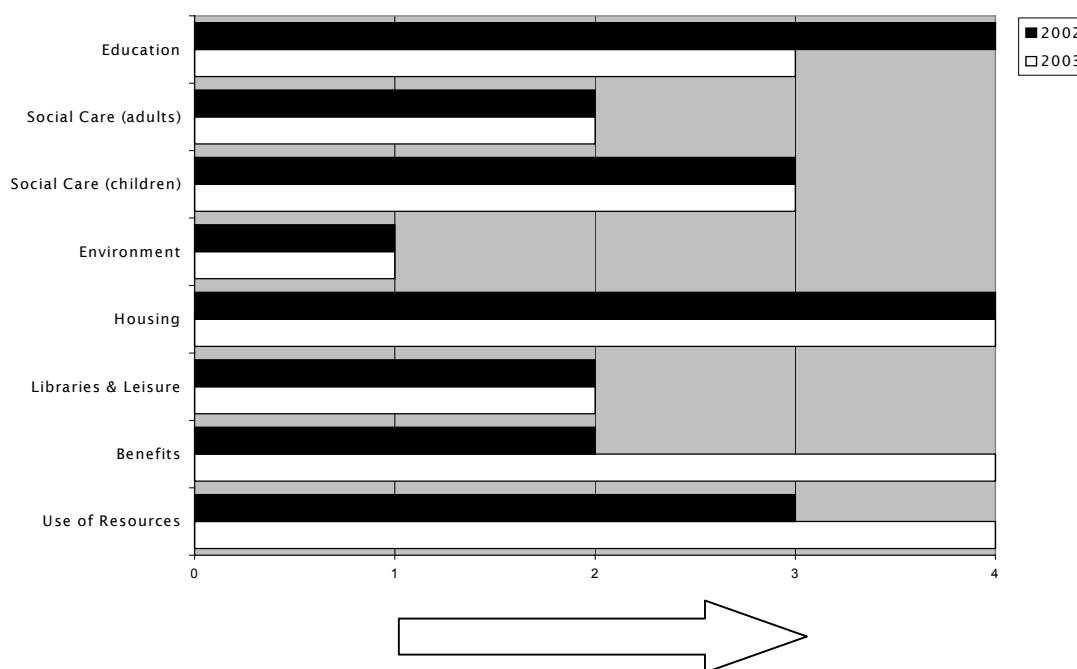
- Leominster Access Road – work began on the access road connecting the A49 to Leominster's soon-to-be-created £20m business park, a joint project between the Council and Advantage West Midlands, which is expected to create 600 jobs.
- Herefordshire Transport – the Government rated Herefordshire as a top performing authority in the delivery of local transport improvements, attracting an extra £1.2m for the service in 2004-05.
- Rural Transport Partnership – nearly £400,000 was attracted into the county to develop transport services through a number of projects, including a new community car scheme and a project to improve access to mental health services.
- Supporting People – the £7.5m programme, a working partnership between the Council's Social Care & Strategic Housing Directorate, the West Mercia Probation Service and the Herefordshire Primary Care Trust, aimed at providing housing related support for vulnerable people - was rated as "Good" by the Audit Commission.
- Opening of the Hillside Centre, Hereford – providing intermediate care in partnership with the Primary Care Trust
- Introduction of the STARRS service – additional Council investment to provide community-based rehabilitation for older people
- Jarvis Contract Signed – a long-term deal between the Council and Jarvis was signed, one of the first Strategic Delivery Partnerships to be established in the UK. The new company, Herefordshire Jarvis Services, should produce annual savings of £75,000.
- Postal Ballot Success – 50% more voters used their voice at local elections last year. A response rate of 58.3% was achieved through the postal ballot, compared to the 36.8% turnout when the county last went to the ballot boxes for a local election in May 2000.
- CCTV Launch – working with West Mercia Constabulary, the new control room was launched, monitoring Hereford, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye.
- Completion of new school buildings for Lea and Cradley Primary Schools.
- The Bromyard Centre – hosting a brand new library, Tourist Information Centre, INFO in Herefordshire, halo Leisure and Learndirect.

- Bridge Sollers Bridge – the replacement bridge was completed on schedule and officially opened on 31st March
- Asset Management Plan – in the Government’s assessment, the Council scored 42 out of 43 for the way its extensive property estate is managed.
- Recycling pilot starts – the kerbside/backdoor collection of recyclables was expanded, with 56% of Herefordshire’s population covered by the scheme.

External Assessment

- **Comprehensive Performance Assessment** – following re-assessment during Autumn 2003, the Council maintained its ‘Good’ status awarded by the Audit Commission in 2002.

The Audit Commission bases its annual assessment on how well Council services have performed during the year. The following scorecard shows how they considered the Council’s services to have performed:



[Add to diagram and text below full 2004 assessment results, when available]

- **Social Services Performance** – in the annual social services performance ratings for 2003, the assessment concluded that Services for Children were serving most people well, and Services for Adults were serving some people well. As an overall score, the Directorate was assessed, on a scale of zero to three stars, as delivering a two-star service. In 2004, the assessment concluded that Services for Children are serving some people well, and have promising prospects; and that Services for Adults have improved to being seen

as having promising prospects. This has resulted in these services as a whole being assessed as one-star.

- **Strategic Housing Assessment** – the service maintained its “Excellent” Audit Commission rating in 2004.
- **Audit and Inspection Annual Letter** – the overall assessment was that the Council’s financial standing was sound, recognising that improvements had been made to revenue and capital budgeting, and that the Council had a good record of delivering against financial targets.
- **The Community** – every 3 years each local authority carries out a survey of people in its area to seek their views on the Council and its services. The first survey was conducted in 2000, and another was carried out in autumn 2003.

The community’s overall perceptions of individual Council services improved between surveys, with particular rises in levels of satisfaction achieved in Environmental Services, including waste disposal and recycling.

Paradoxically, but in line with a national decline in public satisfaction with local authorities, satisfaction with the Council overall fell to 48%, from 59% in 2000.

Performance against Best Value Performance Indicators

- 4.2 A further measure of the Council’s performance is against performance indicators that measure people’s experience of services, cost and quality. Many of these are set by the Government. In 2003-04, the Council improved or maintained its performance against 62% of these indicators, compared to 59% in the previous year.

Improvement Plan Review

- 4.3 To improve its overall effectiveness and efficiency, since 2002 the Council has been implementing a three-year Improvement Plan.

- 4.4 Good progress has been made:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Leadership and Vision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of a comprehensive corporate planning process, driving priorities and performance management. • Service plans for 2004-05 have been reviewed and new guidance developed to ensure they deliver the Corporate Plan • Diversity impact assessments of services and policies have started. |
| Performance Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validation systems developed for Best Value Performance Indicators. • Management competencies evaluated and roll-out started. |
| Key Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic programmes and projects reviewed, with training in project management. |

- Revised Risk Management Strategy approved.
 - Procurement Strategy reviewed.
 - Property Review completed.
 - Edgar Street Grid proposals incorporated in the Unitary Development Plan.
 - Flexible working pilot underway in Revenues and Benefits.
- Organisational Development and Learning
- Reduction in sickness absence.
 - Learning and good practice continues to be shared through groups, including the Managers' Forum, Performance Leads and Performance Co-ordinators, the Diversity Group and the Race Equality Group
 - Training rolled-out to managers and key individuals to ensure a consistent approach, in areas such as Freedom of Information and Impact Assessments.
- Communications
- Roadshows, open meetings and work shadowing undertaken throughout the authority.
 - Customer Service Strategy agreed and launched.
 - Community Involvement Strategy approved.
 - New programme of Local Area Forums.

5.0 Priorities

5.1 The Council's **top priorities** for the period of this Plan are:

- to **maximise the health, safety, economic well-being, achievements and contribution of every child**, including those with special needs and those in care
- to build on the already strong performance of the county's schools and continue to improve **the achievement of pupils**
- to **enable vulnerable adults to live independently** and, in particular, to enable many more **older people** to continue to live in their own homes
- to meet Government targets for the **recycling of waste** and the **reduction of carbon emissions**
- to **improve the safety of roads**, reducing further the numbers of people killed or seriously injured
- to provide more efficient, effective and **customer-focused services for communities**, including clean streets
- to promote **diversity and community harmony** and strive for **equal opportunities** for all the people of Herefordshire, regardless of race, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation, income or age
- to develop its **community leadership** role, working with partners to achieve the *Herefordshire Plan* Ambitions and, in particular, deliver the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) with the Government

5.2 To make these things possible, **the Council's organisational priorities** are:

- to streamline its processes, assets and management structures, and **secure significant efficiency savings**, so as to keep down Council Tax increases and invest in priority service improvements
- to **ensure that its essential assets**, including schools, other buildings, roads and information and communications (ICT) infrastructure, **are in the right condition for the long-term cost-effective delivery of services**
- better to **understand the needs and preferences of service users and Council Tax-payers**, and to tailor services accordingly
- to **recruit, retain and motivate high quality staff**, ensuring that they are trained and developed so as to maximise their ability and performance
- to **embed corporate planning, performance management and project management systems** so as to continue to drive up service standards and efficiency

6.0 Identifying and Managing Risk

- 6.1 The Council has a comprehensive approach to the identification and management of the risks it faces. The main risks to particular services and major projects, and how the Council intends to manage them, are identified in the Action Plan that follows below.
- 6.2 All risks are recorded and monitored by means of a corporate register. Details for 2005-06 will be included in the Annual Operating Plan and in directorate and service plans.

Overarching risks

- 6.3 A number of risks have the potential to affect the Council as a whole and to have direct or indirect impacts on all its services. These are **financial, reputational** and in respect of its **organisation, staff and systems**. These categories of risk often overlap and interact one upon the other.

Financial

- 6.4 The Council faces major risks in respect of the **level of resources** available to it to provide services, the maintenance of a **balanced budget** and the **effective and efficient use of resources**.
- 6.5 The UK Government is placing tight constraints on local authority spending generally, at the same time as requiring councils to take on additional responsibilities and setting more demanding service targets. These bear disproportionately on rural authorities because of the extra costs of providing services to sparse populations.
- 6.6 The impact falls especially hard on Herefordshire Council, as an authority that receives a much lower than average Government grant per head of population.
- 6.7 The Council will manage these risks by:
- continuing to make the case to Government for a fairer deal, including the full use of up-to-date Census figures in the calculation of grant
 - ensuring that, whatever the level of resources realistically likely to be available, its forward plans are affordable
 - rigorous and robust systems of internal control, including in-year financial and performance monitoring and management, and a carefully targeted audit programme
 - an accelerated major programme of efficiency savings, including by:
 - getting better value from the goods and services the Council procures
 - rationalising property holdings and lowering the costs of using them
 - the Service Improvement Programme (SIP), to make savings and improve services to users

- reviewing priorities and focusing resources on what's most important. This will mean reducing some services, as others grow.

Reputational

- 6.8 The Council must ensure that it has a good reputation with the people of Herefordshire, with partner organisations and with the UK Government. This is at risk in view of the financial and service challenges described above, and the ever-higher standards demanded by the Audit Commission and the other Government-led inspectorates.
- 6.9 The Council will manage these risks by:
- explaining to the public and partner organisations, candidly and in plain English, the issues the Council faces
 - consulting the public and partners fully about the major choices it has to make, taking their views into account before making them, and explaining the reasons for its decisions
 - demonstrating that it is as efficient and effective as it can be, by means of its ambitious and continuous programme of efficiency savings and service improvement
 - consolidating and building on its Improvement Programme, drawn up following the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) in 2002
 - continuing the targeted improvement of individual services to achieve and maintain the highest possible CPA scores
 - intensifying its focus on serving its customers, and testing through regular surveys and the monitoring of complaints and compliments, levels of customer satisfaction with the Council as a whole and with individual services
 - implementing the Freedom of Information Act, at the same time as continuing to comply with data protection legislation
 - rolling out its comprehensive programme of diversity impact assessments and ensuring that its Race Equality Scheme and action plan reflect best practice
 - working with other organisations to achieve common goals for the people of Herefordshire, particularly by means of agreeing objectives and targets for the rolled forward *Herefordshire Plan*
 - maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance, propriety, integrity and impartiality

Organisation, staff and systems

- 6.10 The Council has embarked on a major programme of organisational change and development. This is designed to deliver better services, meet new statutory and regulatory requirements, and improve its efficiency.

- 6.11 It is of paramount importance that the Council rises successfully to the challenge of implementing the Children's Act, which will mean working in new ways across traditional service boundaries.
- 6.12 But this must be achieved at the same time as continuing to deliver to a high standard its other priorities and essential services; and do so with fewer staff, working in new structures, new management relationships and streamlined business processes. And it must have a high quality, motivated workforce, many members of which are coming to terms with the prospect of reduced salaries following job evaluation.
- 6.13 Underpinning the service and organisational improvements, there must be highly efficient and effective ICT: the Council's current systems need major up-grading and will require significant investment.
- 6.14 Organisational change and development of this scale and range is a huge challenge, with high inherent risks of failure.
- 6.15 The Council will manage these risks by means of:
- setting clear strategies, objectives, targets and timetables for all elements, taking into account their interactions one upon the other
 - PRINCE 2 project management, with each project led by the relevant members of Cabinet and the Chief Executive's Management Team
 - having a designated lead Cabinet member and Director for Children's Services
 - devoting dedicated staff resources to drive the programme and to safeguard affected areas during the transition period to fully operational new structures
 - a Pay and Workforce Strategy, including support for staff and comprehensive training and development opportunities linked to the Council's objectives
 - regular monitoring by the Chief Executive's Management Team and Cabinet of the overall programme and the individual elements, leading to vigorous action wherever necessary
 - regular reports on the progress of the overall programme and the individual elements to the Strategic Monitoring Committee and the relevant subject committees.

7.0 The Action Plan

- 7.1 The pages that follow set out what the Council plans do to achieve its service and organisational priorities, including the LPSA.
- 7.2 **Part One – Making a reality of the Herefordshire Plan: service targets** - shows what the Council intends to do to fulfil its contribution to achieving the ten Ambitions of the Herefordshire Partnership.
- 7.3 **Part Two - Making it happen through greater customer focus and organisational improvement** – shows what the Council intends to do to the way it operates to deliver better, more cost-effective services to users and Council Tax-payers.
- 7.4 Not least because the biggest single source of the Council's funding – grant from the UK Government – is determined annually and outside the Council's control, the intentions set out in this Plan will be kept under review. The Plan will be up-dated and rolled forward annually so that it always looks forward three years.
- 7.5 It is, nonetheless, clear from the Government's indicative plans for the period of this Plan, which were published in July 2004, that there will continue to be low levels of increase in Government grants to local authorities relative to those in recent years. It is also apparent that the lion's share of real growth will be in the ring-fenced schools budget. The Government has also said that it expects annual percentage increases in Council Tax to be in low single figures.
- 7.6 Even with the Council's commitment to making cumulative annual efficiency savings of at least 2.5 percent, the effect will be increasingly severe constraints on service budgets apart from education, many of which are likely to decline in real terms.
- 7.7 The details of what the Council will do in the first year of this Corporate Plan will be set out in its **Annual Operating Plan 2005-06**, which will be published in March 2005. This will include the budgets, targets and actions for individual services and organisational programmes.
- 7.8 Information on the Council's budgets and income is given in Appendices 1 – 5. **[to be added]**
- 7.9 The relationship of the various plans is shown in Appendix 6.

Part One – Making a reality of the Herefordshire Plan: service targets

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011		To 2008			
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Ambition: Improve the health and wellbeing of Herefordshire people									
Reducing deaths from heart disease, stroke and cancer by reducing the number of people smoking	Cllr Rule	Mr Dunhill	9.00%	% of 11-15 year olds smoking 1+ cigarettes per week	10.00%	1 Promote "Proof of Age" card; 2 Advisory & enforcement activity relating to sale of tobacco; 3 Work with other agencies	1 Secondary schools not signing-up to scheme & traders not having "due diligence" processes; 2 Insufficient deterrents; 3 Key agencies not engaged	1 Focus on 1 remaining school not signed-up; 2 Prioritising work to focus on sellers of "age-restricted goods"; 3 Formal engagement with partners, particularly Magistrates	Healthy Schools Partnership; proof of age scheme; Trading Standards Team
Helping older people to remain independent	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Supporting people to live independently The number of people aged 65 and over helped to live at home, per 1000 adults aged 65 and over		1 Reduce the waiting times for assessment and care packages & increase direct payments; 2 Trading Standards "Doorstep Crime" campaign; 3 Promote use of Signposting Scheme within Council & other agencies	2 Failure to appreciate effect on the lives of older people; 3 Lack of take-up of Signposting scheme Staffing Budget control Data reliability	2 Work with Community Safety Partnership; 3 Active support for & promotion of Signposting Scheme Recruitment and retention planning Budget monitoring clinics New Client Index system	2 Trading Standards Team; 3 Signposting Coordinator STAARS service Extra care housing Customer Services officers

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011	To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Supporting those who care for others	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	<p>Supporting people to live independently</p> <p>Adults with</p> <p>a)physical</p> <p>b)learning</p> <p>c)mental health disabilities helped to live at home per 1000 population aged 18-64</p>	<p>a) 3.4</p> <p>b) 2.5</p> <p>c) 1.8</p>	<p>a)Best Value Review Action Plan/Sensory Impairment Review</p> <p>b)Improved advice and support/new assessment tools</p> <p>c)Co-location of joint service/expand deliberate self-harm service/expand early intervention service and carers' support</p>	<p>Staffing</p> <p>Budget control</p> <p>Data reliability</p>	<p>Recruitment and retention planning</p> <p>Budget monitoring clinics</p> <p>New client index system</p>	<p>Social Care - Adults Division</p> <p>b) and c) - Partnership Boards</p> <p>Learning disability development officer</p>
Supporting those who care for others	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	<p>Fair access to care and support</p> <p>The percentage of assessments or reviews which lead to a service being provided</p>	53	<p>Monitoring of Customer Service Officers</p>	<p>Staffing</p> <p>Budget control</p> <p>Data reliability</p>	<p>Recruitment and retention planning</p> <p>Budget monitoring clinics</p> <p>New Client Index system</p>	<p>Social Care -- Adults Division</p>

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011	To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Supporting those who care for others	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Promoting inclusion through involving others The number of adults and older people receiving direct payments at 31st March per 100,000 population aged 18 years or over	200	Dedicated project resource	Staffing Budget control Data reliability	Recruitment and retention planning Budget monitoring clinics New Client Index system	Social Care – Adults Division
	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Promoting inclusion through involving others The number of informal carers receiving an assessment or review as a percentage of the total number of clients and carers receiving assessments or reviews	25	Further embedding of current procedures	Staffing Budget control Data reliability	Recruitment and retention planning Budget monitoring clinics New Client Index system	Social Care – Adults Division

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution			2011			To 2008		
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource	
Ambition: Reduce crime & disorder and make Herefordshire safer										
To reduce alcohol related crime and disorder	Cllr Phillips	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Violent offences committed in a public place per 1,000 population	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	CCTV	
To reduce alcohol related crime and disorder	Cllr Phillips	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Violent offences committed under the influence per 1,000 population	TBD	Implement new licensing regime; proof of age scheme; advisory & enforcement activity with regards to "age-restricted products"	Sale of "age-restricted products" not controlled	Prioritising advice and enforcement activity	Licensing Team, CCTV, Trading Standards Team	
To increase public awareness of the implications of domestic violence and victims' confidence in the effectiveness of reporting	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	The number of domestic violence refuge places per 10,000 population which are provided or supported by the authority	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	

Note: a Crime & Disorder Audit has been undertaken and a strategy (including measures & targets) for the period covered by this Plan is expected to be in place by March 2005. The Council's contribution to this Ambition will also be reviewed by March 2005

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution			2011			To 2008		
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource	
Ambition: Reduce poverty and isolation in Herefordshire										
Raising awareness of inclusion issues across the community	Cllr Phillips	Mrs Jones	TBD	Number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population	TBD	Implement Race Equality Scheme & new monitoring system	Action by the CRE	Fully implement the Race Equality Scheme	Race Equality Group	
Raising awareness of inclusion issues across the community	Cllr Phillips	Mrs Jones	100%	The % of racial incidents that resulted in further action	100%	Implement Race Equality Scheme & new monitoring system	Action by the CRE	Fully implement the Race Equality Scheme	Race Equality Group	
Tackling problems of social exclusion in rural areas	Cllr Mayson	Mrs Jones	TBD	% of respondents finding it easy to access a local shop; a supermarket; a post office; a doctor; a local hospital; a green space; public transport; shop selling fresh fruit & vegetables; chemist/pharmacy; bank/cash point; library; sports/leisure centre; council office; cultural/recreational facility	86%; 79%; 82%; 77%; 56%; 81%; 75%; 80%; 77%; 73%; 69%; 66%; 60%; 53%	Map needs (using Parish Plans) to inform priorities; support for Community Enterprise Development; affiliation to VIRSA; annual training event for rural shops; regeneration programmes funding mobile & outreach services; support actions arising from parish plans	Reduced support for the voluntary & community sector may impact on accessibility & service provision	3-year commitment to agreed level of support	Community & Economic Development division	

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011	To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Combating poverty	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	The total annual value (£) of additional benefit claimed as a result of advice received from the Council	£3.5m	Provide Welfare Rights Advice; support use of the Signposting Scheme; participate in the Department of Work & Pensions "Linkage" scheme	1 increasing demand; 2 changes to benefits administration; 3 loss of referrals	1 seek external funding & partnering arrangements; 2 maintain focus on benefits take-up; 3 continue support for Signposting Scheme	Welfare Rights Team; Revenues & Benefits Teams; Signposting Scheme

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011	To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Ambition: Encourage communities to shape the future of Herefordshire									
To improve community involvement in the process of decision making	Cllr Phillips	Mrs Jones	40%	% of Herefordshire Voice respondents who feel that the Council does enough to give local people the opportunity to influence important decisions	30%	Review the Community Involvement Strategy to establish measurable commitments & responsibilities	A lack of corporate commitment and consistent approach	Planned approach & measurable commitments and resourced action plan covering all areas of the Council's work	Committee & Member Services; Community Regeneration Team; Community Involvement Coordinator
To improve community involvement in the process of decision making	Cllr Phillips	Mrs Jones	40%	% of young people aged 13-19 who feel that the Council does enough to give young people the opportunity to influence important decisions	30%	Review the Community Involvement Strategy to establish measurable commitments & responsibilities	A lack of corporate commitment and consistent approach	Planned approach & measurable commitments and resourced action plan covering all areas of the Council's work	Committee & Member Services; Community Regeneration Team; Community Involvement Coordinator; Youth Service
To improve community involvement in the process of decision making	Cllr Phillips	Mr Pringle	TBD	% of seats where two or fewer candidates stood for election at the last local elections	TBD	Review the Community Involvement Strategy to establish measurable commitments & responsibilities	A lack of corporate commitment and consistent approach	Planned approach & measurable commitments and resourced action plan covering all areas of the Council's work	Committee & Member Services; electoral registration Team; Community Regeneration Team; Community Involvement Coordinator

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution					To 2008		
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
To improve community involvement in the process of decision making	Cllr Phillips	Mr Pringle	TBD	% of parishes uncontested in local elections	TBD	Review the Community Involvement Strategy to establish measurable commitments & responsibilities	A lack of corporate commitment and consistent approach	Planned approach & measurable commitments and resourced action plan covering all areas of the Council's work	Committee & Member Services; Electoral Registration Team; Community Regeneration Team; Community Involvement Coordinator
To improve community involvement in the process of decision making	Cllr Mayson	Mrs Jones	TBD	% of Herefordshire Voice respondents who are satisfied with their local community as a place to live	85%	Support for Parish Plans; support for an active, sustainable voluntary & community sector; welcome packs identifying and promoting local services	Failure to participate in the Parish Plan process; reduced support for the voluntary & community sector	Securing external funding	Community & Economic Development Division
To improve community involvement in the process of decision making	Cllr Mayson	Mrs Jones	TBD	% of Herefordshire Voice respondents who feel that their community has become a better place to live over the past 2 years or stayed the same (excluding those who have been resident in their community for less than 2 years)	75%	Support for Parish Plans; support for an active, sustainable voluntary & community sector; welcome packs identifying and promoting local services	Failure to participate in the Parish Plan process; reduced support for the voluntary & community sector	Securing external funding	Community & Economic Development Division

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011		To 2008			
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Ambition: Develop Herefordshire as an active, vibrant and enjoyable place to be									
To encourage participation in culture and leisure by breaking down barriers to involvement, meeting the wide-range of needs and aspirations of the Herefordshire community	Cllr Stockton	Mrs Jones	TBD	% of people who use sports and leisure facilities at least once a month	27%	Raise awareness of opportunities (e.g. e-communications); improve access (e.g. DDA) to facilities; bring new facilities on-stream	Loss of funding to support planned programmes; competition from other sectors; unexpected closure of facilities	Commitment to protect funding; support & encourage aggressive marketing by facility providers	£1.2m (2004-5)
To encourage participation in culture and leisure by breaking down barriers to involvement, meeting the wide-range of needs and aspirations of the Herefordshire community	Cllr Stockton	Mrs Jones	40%	% of people who use libraries at least once a month	38%	New integrated library & INFO facilities in market towns; increased marketing, expenditure on books & opening hours; revised mobile library schedules and new Community Access Point (CAP) network; improved targeting of services	No new resources or capital investment	Efficiencies from new integrated services & partnership arrangements	Capital financing; additional revenue budget for books; ERDF/SRB funding for CAP network; Libraries & INFO Team

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution					2011			To 2008		
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource			
To encourage participation in culture and leisure by breaking down barriers to involvement, meeting the wide-range of needs and aspirations of the Herefordshire community	Cllr Stockton	Mrs Jones	TBD	% of people who use museums or galleries at least once every 6 months	28%	Provide facilities free at point of entry; Update displays; Programme to raise awareness; Education & outreach programme	Reduction in opening hours and/or closure of facilities; Reduced quality for displays; Lack of investment for display improvement; Loss of Museum on the Move	Maintain current funding; Invest in displays; Secure capital investment in improvement; seek external funding	Heritage Services Team			
To encourage participation in culture and leisure by breaking down barriers to involvement, meeting the wide-range of needs and aspirations of the Herefordshire community	Cllr Stockton	Mrs Jones	TBD	% of people who use theatres or concert halls at least once every 6 months	36%	Provide financial support for The Courtyard; run programmes of arts development and education; Support & advise arts groups and social enterprises; Promote the County to visitors	Inadequate support for The Courtyard; Reductions in the core arts and tourism programmes; Short-term external funding for projects	Maintain current support; Maintain current level of funding; Develop projects with minimum 3-year funding	Arts Team			

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		To 2008							
The Council's Contribution		2011	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
To encourage participation in culture and leisure by breaking down barriers to involvement, meeting the wide-range of needs and aspirations of the Herefordshire community	Cllr Stockton	Mrs Jones	TBD	% of people who use parks, open spaces, play areas & other community recreational facilities at least once a month	55%	Facility growth through known acquisitions & planned open space in UDP; greater use of Section 106 agreements to secure community gain from planning developments; promotion of health & physical activity agenda	Reduction in funding for parks; facilities decommissioned when they fail to meet new compliances (e.g. DDA); rise in anti-social behaviour	Commitment to protect funding for parks & open spaces; grow capacity of community sector to improve provision; enforcement of anti-social behaviour measures	£1m (2004-5)

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011	To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Ambition: Protect and improve Herefordshire's distinctive environment									
To achieve sustainable development by integrating environmental issues into Herefordshire's strategies	Cllr Edwards	Mr Dunhill	60%	% of all new homes built on previously developed (brownfield) land	60%	Control development of the built environment	Retention of skilled staff	Implement Pay & Workforce Strategy	Planning Services & UDP
To achieve sustainable development by integrating environmental issues into Herefordshire's strategies	Cllr Edwards	Mr Dunhill	11	CO2 emissions in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per head of population/year	11.4	Develop & implement strategy	Targets may be imposed by government	Setting & achieving our own target	Environmental Sustainability Unit
To foster an understanding of the impact of individual and collective actions upon the environment and encourage positive measures	Cllr Edwards	Mr Dunhill	85%	% of schools registered as eco-schools	75%	Support schools through advice, training & small grants	Insufficient staff time & budget	Regular oversight, monitoring & action by Cabinet & CXMT leads	Environmental Sustainability Unit

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011		To 2008			
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
To foster an understanding of the impact of individual and collective actions upon the environment and encourage positive measures	Cllr Edwards	Mr Dunhill	0.27	Total tonnage of household waste arising – % recycled & % composted or treated by anaerobic digestion combined	0.24	Implement Waste Management Strategy	Infrastructure not in place as a result of legal action	Monitoring and consideration of alternative action as necessary	Waste Management Team, GEM, UDP
To foster an understanding of the impact of individual and collective actions upon the environment and encourage positive measures	Cllr Edwards	Mr Dunhill	530.8	Kg of household waste collected per head of population	530.8	Implement Waste Management Strategy	Failure of contract	Monitoring and consideration of alternative action as necessary	Waste Management Team, GEM, UDP

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011		To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource	
Ambition: Develop an integrated transport system for Herefordshire										
Improving pedestrian and cycle safety	Clr Wilson	Mr Dunhill	> 137	No. of people killed or seriously injured on Herefordshire roads	>157	Implement traffic & road safety schemes, deliver safer routes to schools & highways maintenance programmes	Late delivery of programmes and projects	Project management of the Joined up Programme	Service Delivery Partnership	
Providing better public transport in town and country	Clr Wilson	Mr Dunhill	3978	Local bus services (passenger journeys per year) (000's)	3948	Provide bus subsidies, bus lanes & other public transport infrastructure and introduce park & ride facilities	Reduced availability of public transport, reduced integrated transport funding	Review and retargeting of subsidy as necessary to protect priority services	Service Delivery Partnership	
Reducing traffic on our roads	Clr Wilson	Mr Dunhill	>6%	Change in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes	>3%	Provide bus subsidies, bus lanes & other public transport infrastructure and introduce park & ride facilities	Reduced availability of public transport, reduced integrated transport funding	Review and retargeting of subsidy as necessary to protect priority services	Service Delivery Partnership	

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011		To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource	
Reducing traffic on our roads	Clr Wilson	Mr Dunhill	130	No. of cycling trips (index)	123	Increase the number of cyclists using public cycle parking facilities by 5% every 2 years, Provide improved cycleways, traffic schemes, road safety schemes, deliver safer routes to schools programme, highway and footway maintenance	Late delivery of programmes and projects	Project management of the Joined up Programme	Public Transport team, sustainable transport team, transportation planning team, highway maintenance team	
Improving the quality of our roads	Clr Wilson	Mr Dunhill	10	Condition of non-principal roads -- classified	30	Deliver the highway maintenance JUP	Late delivery of programmes and projects	Project management of the Joined up Programme	Service Delivery Partnership	
Improving the quality of our roads	Clr Wilson	Mr Dunhill	3	Condition of principal roads by the TRACS (mechanised survey technique)	3	Deliver the highway maintenance JUP	Late delivery of programmes and projects	Project management of the Joined up Programme	Service Delivery Partnership	

The Council's Contribution				To 2008					
The Herefordshire Plan to 2011	2011								
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Ambition: Meet Herefordshire's accommodation needs									
Regularly identifying and responding to local accommodation needs	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Opportunities for choice and independence for all residents Average length of stay of households that include dependant children in bed and breakfast accommodation	0	Increase the supply of settled accommodation Improve resettlement support	Finance Staffing	TBD	Strategic Housing Division
Improving the condition of public and private housing	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Partnership to create a balanced and affordable housing market Proportion of unfit private sector dwellings made fit or demolished as a direct result of action by the Authority	3%	Carry out new private sector stock condition survey	Staffing	TBD	Strategic Housing Division

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011	To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Providing affordable and accessible accommodation	Cllr Mrs Barnett	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Provide decent homes and sustainable communities New & affordable homes built (net of replacements)	TBD	Work in partnership with registered social landlords and private developers Review existing schemes to ensure maximum effectiveness in procuring additional affordable units	Capacity, linked to central funding	TBD	Strategic Housing Division

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011	To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Ambition: Support business growth and create more and better paid work in Herefordshire									
To encourage sustainable indigenous business development and growth	Cllr Hyde	Mrs Jones	TBD	Average weekly earning in Herefordshire compared with the average in the West Midlands	Reduce gap by 20%	Ensure implementation of Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy, including encouraging post 16 learning	Subject to significant influences outside the Council's control	Regular monitoring of the Economic Development Strategy & effective action	Community & Economic Development Division
To encourage sustainable indigenous business development and growth	Cllr Hyde	Mrs Jones	TBD	Gross Value Added (GVA) per head in Herefordshire compared with the West Midlands average	Reduce gap by 20%	Ensure implementation of Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy	Subject to significant influences outside the Council's control	Regular monitoring of the Economic Development Strategy & effective action	Community & Economic Development Division
To encourage sustainable indigenous business development and growth	Cllr Hyde	Mrs Jones	TBD	% of working age in employment (average over year)	80%	Ensure implementation of Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy	Subject to significant influences outside the Council's control	Regular monitoring of the Economic Development Strategy & effective action	Community & Economic Development Division
To improve infrastructure, communication and workspace provision	Cllr Hyde	Mrs Jones	TBD	Completions of employment land (hectares)	15	Ensure implementation of Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy	Subject to significant influences outside the Council's control	Regular monitoring of the Economic Development Strategy & effective action	Community & Economic Development Division

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011		To 2008			
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
To foster innovation, including research and development	Cllr Hyde	Mrs Jones	TBD	No. employed in technology & knowledge intensive industries	TBD	Establish baseline & agree targets; ensure implementation of Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy	Subject to significant influences outside the Council's control	Regular monitoring of the Economic Development Strategy & effective action	Community & Economic Development Division

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution			2011		To 2008		
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Ambition: Provide excellent education, training and learning opportunities in Herefordshire for all ages									
Providing good quality education and learning opportunities for all	Cllr Rule	Ms Fiennes	85%	% of 3 year olds who have access to a good quality free early years education place in the voluntary, private or maintained sectors	5%	Promote & provide support for early years settings to obtain QA accreditation	Lack of take up of QA	Publication of information on accredited settings to parents	Early Years & Childcare Service
Providing good quality education and learning opportunities for all	Cllr Rule	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Proportion of pupils in LEA schools in the previous summer achieving Level 4 or above in the Key Stage 2 Mathematics test	82% (2005/6) 2007/8 TBD	Targeted support to schools to improve their score	Loss of skilled staff to give effective advice	Recruitment & retention policies	Inspection, Advice & School Performance Service
Providing good quality education and learning opportunities for all	Cllr Rule	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Proportion of pupils in LEA schools in the previous summer achieving Level 4 or above in the Key Stage 2 English test	81% (2005/6) 2007/8 TBD	Targeted support to schools to improve their score	Loss of skilled staff to give effective advice	Recruitment & retention policies	Inspection, Advice & School Performance Service
Providing good quality education and learning opportunities for all	Cllr Rule	Ms Fiennes	TBD	Proportion of pupils in LEA schools in the previous summer achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* - C or equivalent	63% (2005/6) 2007/8 TBD	Support curriculum flexibility & school partnerships	Lack of specialist expertise	Professional development of teachers	Inspection, Advice & School Performance Service

The Herefordshire Plan to 2011		The Council's Contribution		2011		To 2008				
Aims	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Indicator	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource	
Providing good quality education and learning opportunities for all	Cllr Rule	Ms Fiennes	TBD	% of young people leaving care aged 16 or over with at least 1 GCSE grade A* - G or a GNVQ	TBD	Provide Educational support for looked after children (MBSS Management Action Plan)	Continuing changes to a very small cohort	Partnership working with other agencies to ensure continuity of support to looked after children	Education Liaison Support Service	
Eliminating the barriers to education and training	Cllr Rule	Ms Fiennes	TBD	No. of new out of school hours childcare places provided	1125 (2005/6) 2007/8 TBD	Promote & provide support for out of school hours childcare places	Loss of Government funding	Review provision in the light of available resources	Early Years & Childcare Service	

Part Two - Making it happen through greater customer focus and organisational improvement

To 2008

Objective	Indicator	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
Improved Services								
To provide services for business, citizens and visitors that are more joined-up, more accessible, delivered or supported electronically, open and accountable (SIP)	The % of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by their authority	Cllr Phillips	Mr Pringle	55%	Establish and implement Service Improvement Programme; implement ICT Strategy; capital programme	Corporate commitment not sustained	Cabinet member and Director given power to enforce across the Council; regular monitoring and action by CXMT & Cabinet; oversight by Strategic Monitoring Committee	Cllr French; Mrs Jones; dedicated staff in each directorate/department
To provide an efficient request handling and information retrieval process which meets the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOI)	% of requests answered within the 20 day time limit % of appeals to the Information Commissioner that are upheld	Cllr Mrs French	Ms Rosenthal	100%	Implement FOI Publication Scheme	System deficiencies; inadequate staff understanding	Project management; staff training	Compliance Officer
To keep Herefordshire people, our staff and our partners involved and informed about what we are doing and why	% of Herefordshire Voice respondents who feel that the Council does enough to give local people the opportunity to influence important decisions	Cllr Mrs French	Marie Rosenthal	0	Implement FOI Publication Scheme	System deficiencies; inadequate staff understanding	Project management; staff training	Compliance Officer
		Cllr Phillips	Mrs Jones	30%	Review the Community Involvement Strategy to establish measurable commitments & responsibilities	A lack of corporate commitment and consistent approach	Planned approach & measurable commitments and resourced action plan covering all areas of the Council's work	Committee & Member Services; Community Regeneration Team; Community Involvement Coordinator

Objective	Indicator	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
To promote and uphold the fundamental right of everyone to be treated equally, with respect and dignity	level (if any) of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms	Cllr Phillips	Mrs Jones	2	Undertake impact assessments; keep schemes & policies under review	Failure to establish and implement an action plan which delivers measurable improvements	Regular monitoring and action by CXMT & Cabinet; oversight by Strategic Monitoring Committee	Corporate Policy Assistant, Diversity Group, Race Equality Group, Disability Group
					Implement Equality Opportunities Policy			
To develop the Council's leadership and the skills and capacity of its workforce	% personal development plans in place & % of planned activity implemented	Cllr Mrs French	Mr Johnson	100%	Implement Pay & Workforce Strategy; provide wider access to relevant training & development	Failure to establish and implement an action plan which delivers measurable improvements	Regular oversight, monitoring & action by Cabinet & CXMT leads	HR Team, all managers
					Conduct skills audit			
To ensure the Council's workforce is appropriately rewarded and recognised	The number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent employees	Cllr Mrs French	Mr Johnson	5.5	Key skills needed to improve performance are addressed	Failure to establish and implement an action plan which delivers measurable improvements	Regular oversight, monitoring & action by Cabinet & CXMT leads	HR Team, Local FE provider
					Continued line management monitoring & action; Provide improved access to Counselling Service			
	% staff turnover	Cllr Mrs French	Mr Johnson	6%	Continued line management monitoring & action	Failure to motivate & adequately reward staff	Implement Pay & Workforce Strategy	HR Team; line managers

To 2008

Objective	Indicator	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
To improve the delivery of services to children	Outcomes of Joint Area Reviews	Cllr Rule	Mr Pringle	Improve CPA scores for education and children's social care (or equivalent ratings under new all children's services regime)	Implementation Plan (for services and organisational development); Appoint Director of Children's Services	Fail to maintain and improve front-line services to children because managers distracted by organisational issues	Regular oversight, monitoring & action by Cabinet & CXMT leads	Additional staff for transition
Improved Efficiency								
To improve the efficiency of the Council's processes	Net reduction in cost of identified services (SIP)	Cllr Phillips	Mr Pringle	£1 million in year one (over and above procurement savings); to be determined for subsequent years	Establish and implement Service Improvement Programme; implement ICT strategy; capital programme	Corporate commitment not sustained	Cabinet member and Director given power to enforce across the Council; regular monitoring and action by CXMT & Cabinet; oversight by Strategic Monitoring Committee	Cllr French; Mrs Jones; dedicated staff in each directorate/department
	The number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent employees	Cllr Mrs French	Mr Johnson	5.5	Continued line management monitoring & action; Provide improved access to Counselling Service	Failure to motivate & adequately reward staff	Implement Pay & Workforce Strategy	HR Team; line managers

To 2008

Objective	Indicator	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
	Staff turnover	Cllr Mrs French	Mr Johnson	6%	Continued line management monitoring & action	Failure to motivate & adequately reward staff	Implement Pay & Workforce Strategy	HR Team; line managers
To obtain Best Value in respect of all goods, works and services through planned and skilful procurement	Cost of procurement - Note: ODPM are currently consulting on proposed efficiency indicators	Cllr Mrs French	Ms Rosenthal	-7.50%	Appoint procurement specialist(s); centralise procurement; establish and embed new procedures	Insufficient expertise and compliance	See Actions and Resources; management and staff training; regular monitoring and action by CXMT, Cabinet; oversight by Strategic Monitoring Committee	Procurement specialist(s)
To reduce the cost of accommodation through rationalisation of the property portfolio	Total cost of office accommodation at 2004/5 prices	Cllr Hyde	Mr Dunhill	-15%	Implement Accommodation Strategy	Failure to secure appropriate accommodation	Identifying alternative options	Accommodation Board
To maintain effective use of the Council's resources	Overall score on Auditor Scored Judgement (CPA use of resources)	Cllr Phillips	Mr Hyson	4	Focus on key areas of relative weakness within current judgement	Loss of focus on key strategic areas such as risk management	Meeting with Audit Commission at least annually to discuss how performance can be maintained	Treasurer's Department Management Team
To ensure that the Council has effective performance management systems	The status of the Council's Best Value Performance Plan	Cllr Wilcox	Mr Pringle	Unqualified	Action plan to ensure robust, auditable data	Inadequate management control	Regular monitoring and action by CXMT and Cabinet; oversight by Strategic Monitoring Committee	CXMT; Head of Performance Management; Corporate Policy; Internal Audit

To 2008

Objective	Indicator	Cabinet Lead	CXMT Lead	Target	Action	Risk	Mitigated by	Resource
	The % of those making complaints satisfied with the handling of those complaints	Cllr Wilcox	Mrs Jones	50%	Define customer service standards where they don't already exist; define complaints; systematic programme to encourage customer feedback; introduce unified customer relations management system; staff training	Insufficient expertise and compliance	See Actions and Resources; management and staff training; regular monitoring and action by CXMT, Cabinet; oversight by Strategic Monitoring Committee	Corporate customer service lead officer; Performance Leads in each directorate/department
To improve the overall performance of the Council	CPA score	Cllr Phillips	Mr Pringle	Improve service and corporate assessment scores	Action plan to maintain/achieve highest scores for individual elements; specific targets to be determined following announcement of CPA methodology	Inadequate management control	Regular monitoring and action by CXMT & Cabinet; oversight by Strategic Monitoring Committee	CXMT; Corporate Policy; Head of Performance Management
To maintain confidence in local democracy	% of complaints to the Standards Committee upheld	Cllr Phillips	Ms Rosenthal	0%	Ensure effective corporate governance maintained	Lack of awareness of up-to-date rules and standards by Members	Regular training & development	Member Services

Appendix 1

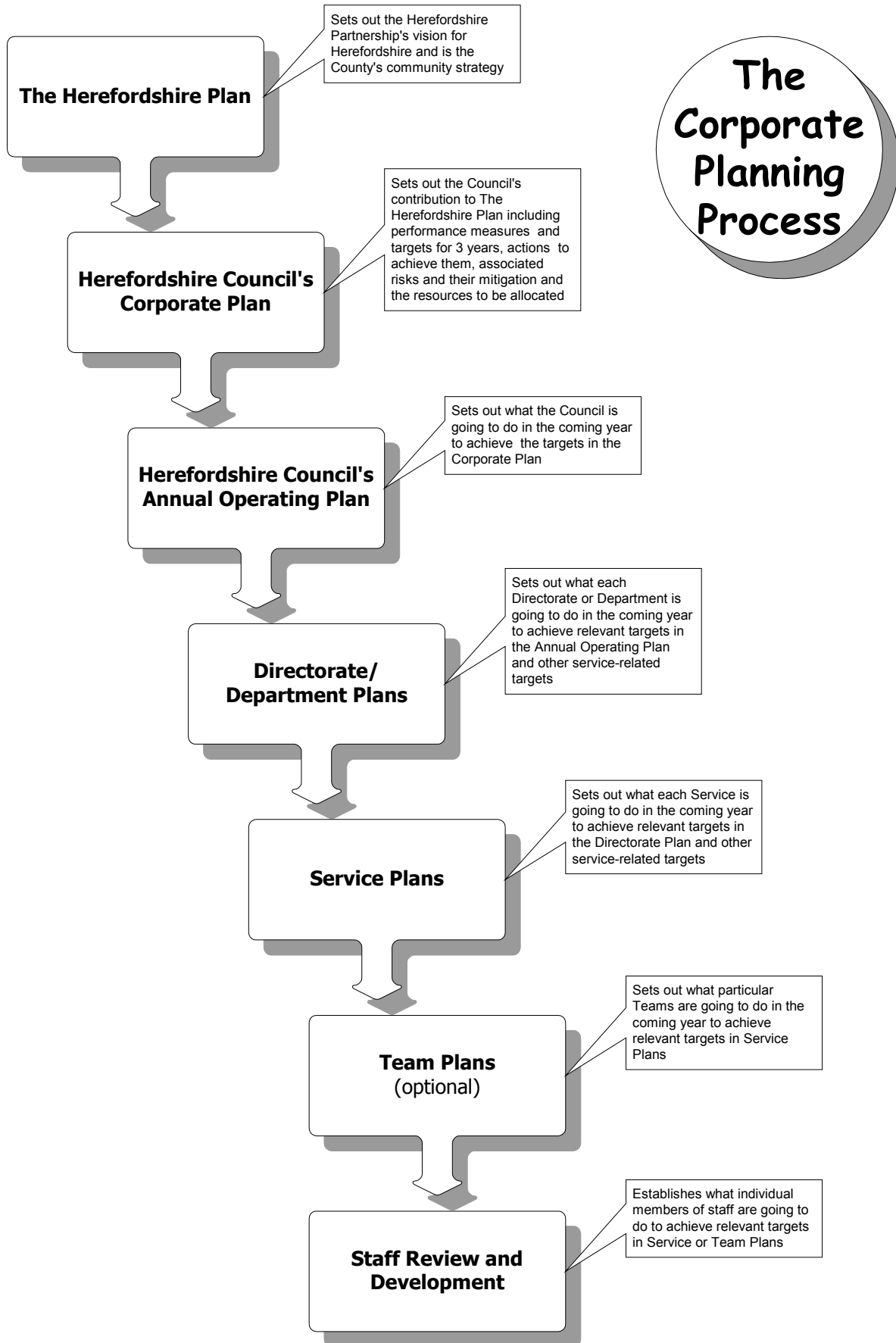
Income in 2004-05 by source

Budgets in 2004-05 by service/corporate area

Estimated income by source 2005-08

Proposed expenditure 2005-08 by service/corporate area

Capital programme 2005 –08





LOCAL AREA FORUMS

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To receive feedback on the November 2004 round of Local Area Forums, Budget Consultation. To note issues raised by the community and to continue to identify ways to improve and develop public consultation at Local Area Forums.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

Recommendation

THAT the report be noted.

Reasons

Cabinet agreed the principles for new arrangements for LAFs in October 2003. Issues raised at the meetings are to be relayed to Cabinet after each round of Local Area Forums.

Considerations

Background

1. The LAFs were held at a variety of locations over a three week period in November. The meetings were arranged through Member Services within the County Secretary and Solicitors Department. The Forums were solely dedicated to the budget consultation and each meeting lasted for approximately two hours. Public participation was very good at every meeting, but the numbers of attendees was lower than anticipated at some of the meetings, in particular Central Herefordshire where there were only 13 members of the public present.

General Issues

2. A meeting is to be held on 8th December, 2004 with all LAF Chairmen, Cabinet Members and the Leader, to discuss the recent round of Forums.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Sara Strong, Local Area Forum Co-ordinator on (01432) 260167

Summary of Agenda Item

3. *Budget Consultation* – Speakers; Councillor Roger Phillips (Leader of the Council), Mr Neil Pringle (Chief Executive), Mr Ian Hyson (County Treasurer).
4. Each meeting commenced with a short introduction from The Leader of the Council, who discussed the reasons for the budget consultation and the background events that had informed the consultative process. The main areas of discussion were the Council's obligation to consult, the budget deficit, areas of greatest challenge namely Adult Social Care and the ways in which the Council is considering addressing the shortfall. The Chief Executive then followed with a presentation (*copies of which are available on request*) that focused on the following topics;
 - Why the Council has to choose;
 - Building on success;
 - Getting more for your money;
 - What choices are there?
 - Your views matter;

The focus, in particular, was on the ways in which the funding gap could be met, outlining the internal areas where efficiency savings could be made and discretionary service areas which would need to be reassessed in the light of any deficit.

Local Interest Items

5. The Chairmen gave responses to questions that had been raised prior to the meetings and for those carried forward from the last round of forums. These are detailed at Appendix 1.

Summary of the Issues Raised at Meetings

6. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the issues raised at each of the Local Area Forums.

Alternative Options

There are no alternative options.

Risk Management

None.

Consultees

Local Area Forums' Chairmen and Cabinet Members and the Leader of the Council.

Background Papers

None identified.

Summary of the Issues Raised at Meetings

North Herefordshire – Lady Hawkins Leisure Centre, Kington

<i>Attendees</i>	<i>Councillors; S Bowen, Mrs J French, J Goodwin, J Hope, R Phillips, R Stockon, J Stone. 22 members of the public</i>
<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Queries/Comments</i>
<i>Update</i>	<p>Chief Executive gave response to two questions, which had been posed prior to the meeting;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassurance sought about the Herefordshire Jarvis contract. • What is the budget for implementation of the new Licensing Act?
<i>Budget Consultation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about the number of councillors (58.) representing a population of 177,000 and how councillors expenses can be justified given this ratio. • Similarly comments about the cost of Parish Councils. • Suggestion to sell off Wesleyan Chapel to raise capital. • Delay the proposed improvements to Kington Library. • Check for duplication of work by the voluntary sector. • Query about staffing levels for the Kington Regeneration Partnership. • Lower public expectation by educating residents about the disadvantages, as well as advantages, of living in a sparsely populated rural county, especially expectations relating to road systems. • Support canvassed for Community Transport Scheme, in terms of its contribution towards staying put objectives and its addressing of social/rural isolation issues, by CX of Herefordshire Voluntary Action Group. • Concern about the format of the consultation questionnaire, and the lack of monetary values attributed to choices. It was felt that without this it was impossible to make an informed selection of one service over another. This also gave rise to strong concerns about the quality of the data that will be collected. • Questions and concerns about Herefordshire Council's job evaluation process; the impact of this on staff, in terms of recruitment and retention of a quality workforce and the cost of the process. • An advocate spoke on behalf of Teme Valley Youth Services (Wigmore) and explained the importance of 'match funding' for the project. • Support canvassed for the Citizens Advice Bureau, and a request for the release of the 'Best Value Review of the Voluntary Sector' report. • Concern expressed about the cost of administering the Market Towns and any overlaps involved in this. • Query about the number of staff employed on short term contracts.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Query about £2million efficiency savings and who is involved in identifying these, and by what criteria. • How will the resulting budget decisions be presented to the public, given that monetary values have not been attributed to the questionnaire choices? • Concern about any possible closure of Leominster Leisure Centre.
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Central Herefordshire – Withington Village Hall

<i>Attendees</i>	<p><i>Councillors; J Guthrie, B Matthews, Mrs Robertson, B Wilcox, M Wilson.</i></p> <p><i>Apologies; Councillor Mrs J Pemberton</i></p> <p><i>13 members of the public</i></p>
<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Queries/Comments</i>
<i>Update</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Budget Consultation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was felt, that people had not been afforded the opportunity to make informed choices due to the lack of monetary values for the questionnaire choices. • Will Members be expected to make decisions in this way, i.e. without values given for their choice options? • Concern about the number of staff employed by Herefordshire Council and the ratio of this to the County's residents. • Is the Authority too small, has the break from Worcestershire been justified? • Given the problem of Government funding having been based upon outdated census figures, what is the Council doing to address this, and why can't the council simply refuse to meet Government set targets in protest? • Concern expressed about migrant retirees adding to the Adult Care budget total. • Councillors' expenses were raised as a concern • A justification for the cost of using specialist consultants was requested. • Concern over costs attached to the maintenance and running of numerous buildings/office accommodation. • What are the costs involved in running private taxis for school children? • The Council should consider a freeze on all new recruitment until the budget has been agreed. • What areas are being considered for the Council's internal cost cutting exercises? • Is the Herefordshire Jarvis partnership a cause for concern? • Have car parking charges provided a valid means of generating revenue? • Are waste recycling targets being met? • What are the costs involved in advertising in the City/Town papers?

Ross-On-Wye – John Kyrle High School

<i>Attendees</i>	<i>Councillors; G Davis, Mrs J Hyde, Mrs R Lincoln, G Lucas. Apologies; Councillor Mrs A Gray. 27 members of the public</i>
<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Queries/Comments</i>
<i>Update</i>	Brief comment by Cllr Davis in response to press articles and letters following the September Forum.
<i>Budget Consultation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving the relative value of the budgetary shortfall against the Council's total expenditure would have been helpful. • General comment about the questionnaire and questions about the wider consultative process. • Requests for conclusions of the 'Value for Money' survey of the Voluntary Sector. • What % of the budget is given in funding to the Voluntary Sector? • Comment from a Trustee of the Citizens Advice Bureau regarding funding levels to the charity. • Will the Heritage Centre close, as suggested by the press? • Comment about the importance of 'match funding' to voluntary groups. • The budget survey should reflect 'value for money' comparisons between various service providers. • Many comments about the importance of tourism and the valuable contribution of Tourist Information Offices and voluntary groups such as Ross in Bloom. • Questions and concerns about respite care and the reduction in this provision, along with the closure of some care homes. • What is the cost of the budget consultation? • Questions and comment about the computation of Council Tax and the perceived inequalities with the present system.
<i>Other Issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The disputed ownership of Gypsy Lane. • Question about a no waiting order for Brookfield Road/Brampton Street. • Question about grants for shop frontages; Hightown, Hereford.

East Herefordshire – John Masefield High School, Ledbury

<i>Attendees</i>	<i>Councillors; P Edwards, B Hunt, R Mills, D Rule, R Stockton. Apologies; Councillor T Hunt, Mr Len Huff (Chair Ledbury Independent Traders) 34 members of the public</i>
<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Queries/Comments</i>
<i>Update</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Budget Consultation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about budget questionnaire, as expressed at other area forums. • Various comments about Council Tax levying and calculation, banding and the perceived unfairness of the tax. • Comment about the importance of tourism and Tourist information Offices. • Falling standards of local services especially those for Older People. • Why no bus passes for Older People? • Representation from; Community Transport Schemes, Ledbury Shop Mobility, Ledbury Day Care Centre and concern about the impact of any cuts on the health and well being of local residents. • Affordable housing needed for local people. • Representation from Ledbury Youth Centre, to recognise the importance of this service to the local community. • Praise for the recycling initiatives. • Traffic congestion and a transport policy framed to address this. • Local Area Forums are poorly advertised and not many residents are aware of them, what is being done to improve this?

Hereford City – Shirehall

<i>Attendees</i>	<i>Councillors; Mrs P Andrews, Mrs E Bew, P Edwards, D Fleet, Mrs J French, G Hyde, Mrs M Lloyd-Hayes, Ms G Powell, Miss F Short , B Walling. 50 members of the public</i>
<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Queries/Comments</i>
<i>Update</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Budget Consultation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing levels queried. • Concerns about the ability to meet future demands upon social care services, given the projected increase of the older population. • How has Government funding for education been spent? • Concern about the low numbers of residents present at the Forum. • Reassurance needed about Jarvis and what would happen should they declare bankruptcy. • How is staff morale, given the current job evaluation process? • Is the Authority too small to be viable in the longer term? • More information is needed for the consultation to be meaningful and for residents to make informed choices. • The survey should also provide information about which services are statutory and which are discretionary. • Concern about the number of sites and buildings that the Council operates from. • Many comments about car parking and charges; is it fair for the City car parking charges to subsidise rural areas? there is not sufficient parking, charges at night impact on businesses. • Concern about any new development, i.e. new roads, if ongoing maintenance costs are involved. • Eign Gate improvements and associated costs. • Complaints about Traffic Wardens and perceived lack of discretion over cases where older or disabled people are delayed by as little as five minutes. • What is the Council's current borrowing commitment and associated repayment costs. • What areas (internal) have been identified for realising savings? • Queries about Christmas park and ride scheme, in the light of Sunday Bus service cuts. • Herefordshire Matters, is it value for money? • Request from Parish Councils for the minutes of the Forums to be put onto the Council Website.
<i>Other</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for future agenda items included; litter and cleanliness, feedback on the Budget Consultation, ways to improve Forum attendance.

Golden Valley - Peterchurch

<i>Attendees</i>	<i>Councillors; C Mayson, D Taylor. Apologies; P Turpin 32 members of the public</i>
<i>Presentation</i>	<i>Queries/Comments</i>
<i>Update</i>	Response prepared by Stephanie Canham (Head of Social Care) to a query regarding care assessments. Prepared reply given to three prior questions regarding the Budget Consultation.
<i>Budget Consultation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are independent assessments of the Council's performance really independent? • Concern about staffing levels and the appropriateness of these. • Numerous comments about poor information given on the questionnaires and the difficulty in making informed choices. Queries about why further background documentation wasn't available on line. • Why consult at all? Is it just an exercise in public relations? • Concern about possible cuts in Adult Care services and the increasing demands of an ageing population, • Bed blocking problems and the impact on Community Hospitals. • Will the Lengthsman's Scheme be cut? • Justification for job evaluation process? • Does 'Herefordshire Matters' provide value for money? • Can the Council afford to continue to provide services that are rated as good/excellent? • Requests for the continuation of rural library services. • If the consultative process identifies areas for cuts, how much will they be cut by? • Praise for frontline council services especially first point of contact. • Request for bureaucratic process to be streamlined rather than service cuts. • Comment about value for money services provided by the voluntary sector in particular Community Transport. • Eign Gate costs queried. • Concern at the lack of contributions from businesses towards Christmas lights and frontage improvements. • The importance of tourism to the area. • The necessity to continue to provide public conveniences. • Council tax, perceived inequalities. • The importance of youth services.

CORPORATE HEALTH PERFORMANCE

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To receive an update on the Council's corporate performance in relation to our National and Local Best Value Performance Indicators from 1 April 2004 to 30 September 2004.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

THAT performance in relation to the Council's National and Local Corporate Best Value Indicators, from 1 April to 30 September 2004 be noted.

Reasons

The Council has developed revised performance monitoring arrangements as outlined in the Comprehensive Performance Self-assessment document submitted to the Audit Commission. The revised arrangements ensure that the Chief Executive's Management Team, the Strategic Monitoring Committee, Scrutiny Committees, and Cabinet are all involved in the performance monitoring process.

Considerations

1. During 2004/2005 corporate performance is being reported to Cabinet at 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 monthly intervals, in line with the Council's Performance Management Framework.
2. Corporate performance for the 4 month period 1 April 2004 to 30 September 2004 has been reported on an exception basis and only those indicators where there is a variation on the target of at least + or – 10% are highlighted.
3. Cabinet last received a performance update against Corporate Health Performance Indicators in September. Appendix 1 contains the latest update and shows:
 - Comparative performance against target and against the previous monitoring report; and
 - Narrative explaining variances from target where applicable.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Kevin Lloyd, Policy Assistant, on (01432) 383401

Risk Management

Failure to review performance and improvement activity would undermine the implementation of the Council's Performance Management Framework.

Background Papers

- Herefordshire Council's Performance Management Framework
- Best Value Performance Indicators 2003/2004

APPENDIX 1

Above Target Performance

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS							
BV ref	Indicator	Actual outturn for 2003/04	Target for 2004/05	Actual Performance			Aim
				April – July	April – September	April – November	
BV 76b	Housing benefit security – number of fraud investigators employed per 1,000 caseload	0.34	0.33	0.39	0.37		High
BV 76c	Housing benefit security – the number of fraud investigations per 1,000 caseload	40.37	38	63	53		High
<p>Since April 2004 the Benefit Investigation unit has increased its resources by moving 2 benefit assessment officers into the unit to deal with initial fraud referrals including those that have been identified through the new interventions regime.</p>							
BV 76d	Housing benefit security – the number of prosecutions and sanctions per 1,000 caseload	5.64	7	9	8		High
<p>Since April 2004 the Benefit Investigation unit has increased its resources by moving 2 benefit assessment officers into the unit to deal with initial fraud referrals including those that have been identified through the new interventions regime. This has resulted in investigating officers being able to put more resources into prosecutions and sanctions</p>							

Below Target Performance

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS							
BV ref	Indicator	Actual outturn for 2003/04	Target for 2004/05	Actual Performance			Aim
				April – July	April – September	April – November	
BV 11b	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are from black and minority ethnic communities	2.4%	2.75%	2.4%	2.4%		High
BV 12	The number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent employees	7.16 FTE	7 FTE	6.9 FTE	7.8 FTE		Low
<p>The reduced number of full-time equivalent employees distorts these figures over the 12-month period. Calculating the sickness absence over a rolling 12-month period and then dividing by an average of the number of FTE employees during that period generates the data. The above figure does not necessarily reflect the true sickness absence of the Council's workforce as at 30th September.</p> <p>There are currently a number of employees on long-term sick that are returning to work through the 'rehabilitation and phased return to work' scheme, but are still classed as sick for those days which they don't work.</p>							
BV 76a	Housing benefit security – number of claimants visited per 1,000 caseload	174.25	255	203	104		High
<p>As mentioned in the monitoring report for April-July, a change to the visiting function with interventions has resulted in visits taking longer than previously. The service currently has vacant posts and expect an improvement in performance over the remainder of the year when fully staffed.</p>							

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS							
BV ref	Indicator	Actual outturn for 2003/04	Target for 2004/05	Actual Performance			Aim
				April – July	April – September	April – November	
BV 78a	Speed of processing – average time for processing new claims	52.34 days	32 days	49.6 days	38.5 days		Low
The average processing time for the last period has improved to 27.59 days, better than target. Unfortunately, when combined with the previous period performance is still below target. Maintained progress should ensure that the target is achieved at year-end.							
BV 78b	Speed of processing – average time for processing notifications of changes of circumstance	9.77 days	8 days	11.2 days	14.1 days		Low
As mentioned in the previous monitoring report, changes in the definition have resulted in processing times taking longer. The figure for April-September does not represent deterioration in real performance, but a reflection that the cases considered at the start of the year included applications from the end of the last financial year and were consequently processed against the old definition. Given that future applications will be considered against the new definition, the average time is likely to increase until a baseline is established. This year's performance, and comparison with national standards which become available later this year, will be used to determine targets for future years.							

LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS							
Indicator	Actual outturn for 2003/04	Target for 2004/05	Actual Performance				
			April – July	April – September	April – November	April – January	
Number of recorded complaints, both formal and informal	434	440	85 (147 interim target)	119 (220 interim target)	(293 interim target)	(367 interim target)	High

LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS							
Indicator	Actual outturn for 2003/04	Target for 2004/05	Actual Performance				Aim
			April – July	April – September	April – November	April – January	
Number of recorded formal complaints		250	58 (83 interim target)	98 (125 interim target)	(167 interim target)	(208 interim target)	High
Percentage of Staff Review and Development interviews completed in previous 12 months	71%	80%	61%	61%			High
Percentage of agreed training plans arising from SRD interviews	71%	80%	61%	61%			High
To fit in with the service-planning timetable, the majority of SRDs occur towards the end of the financial year. On this basis, performance is unlikely to change significantly until the next round of SRDs takes place early next year.							

LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL: STRATEGIC AREA REVIEW

**PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND
FINANCE; EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES; COMMUNITY AND
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MARKETS AND
PROPERTY**

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To receive a report on the Strategic Area Review Herefordshire and Worcestershire currently being conducted by the Learning and Skills Council and to respond to the formal consultation.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

Recommendations

THAT in responding to the Consultation Document, Cabinet endorses the overall approach to the Strategic Review and in relation to paragraph 11 of the Consultation Document which identifies the significant strategic issues and options for Herefordshire:

- (a) Cabinet strongly supports the pursuit of Option (c) involving the double dissolution of Herefordshire College of Technology and Herefordshire College of Art and Design in order to create a new corporation which would receive the assets and liabilities from both founder organisations;**
- (b) Cabinet supports the local Learning and Skills Councils in its wish to work closely with the Pershore Group of Colleges on the future of the Holme Lacy Campus to ensure better integration of its facilities with this new institution;**

and
- (c) Cabinet supports the view expressed by the Learning and Skills Council that all three existing colleges on the Folly Lane Campus need to make even greater efforts to support the new proposed institution through better shared utilisation of resources including premises and common services and funding.**

Reasons

To enable the Council to respond to the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Strategic Area

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
N.M. Pringle, Chief Executive on (01432) 260044

Background - College Provision - Folly Lane, Hereford

1. As part of the Strategic Area Review of provision in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire (LLSC) has undertaken a specific review of Herefordshire College of Technology and Herefordshire College of Art and Design in order to determine if the current structure meets the needs of individuals, employers and the wider community in the most cost-effective way.
2. KPMG, an independent consultancy, was engaged to undertake this work on behalf of the LLSC in 2002/03. As a result, the LLSC considered the potential alternatives and requested the Colleges to undertake a feasibility study into the dissolution of both institutions and the creation of a single new college. Unfortunately, despite ongoing discussion, no progress has been made in implementing this recommendation.
3. As part of the more recent Strategic Area Review activities, the LLSC has reconsidered the options and confirmed its original decision as its preferred option.

Strategic Options

4. The following strategic options have been considered:
 - A. Status quo
Continuation of separate colleges.
 - B. Wider collaboration
Both formal and informal.
 - C. Dissolution of Herefordshire College of Art and Design and Herefordshire College of Technology
Double dissolution of the two colleges, leading to a new corporation with a specialism in art and design and a higher education curriculum.
 - D. Dissolution of Herefordshire College of Art and Design and Herefordshire College of Technology.
Double dissolution of the two colleges leading to a new corporation with a specialism in art and design, but higher education programmes to be delivered by other providers.
 - E. Single dissolution and merger of one college with the other
Closure of either Herefordshire College of Technology or Herefordshire College of Art and Design, and activities transferred to the remaining institution.
 - F. Three way dissolution including Herefordshire College of Technology, Herefordshire College of Art and Design and Pershore Group of Colleges (Holme Lacy)
Three colleges are all dissolved leading to the creation of a new institution incorporating all further and higher education specialisms.
 - G. Tertiary solution.
Merger between Herefordshire College of Art and Design, Herefordshire

**College of Technology, Hereford Sixth Form College and Holme Lacy,
with 14+ and higher education collaborative links.**

Considerations

5. A summary of the benefits of the recommended strategic options and the reasons for the decision to support the double dissolution model as advanced by the LLSC are set out in Appendix 1.
6. Whilst the detailed information provided by the LLSC is important to the Council's consideration, the key strategic issue for the Council is to secure a high quality, sustainable offer of further education for all those Herefordshire students who wish to continue their further education in the County. That is a vital plank for the individual development of learners in Herefordshire but also has the capacity to support the Council's ambitions for the vibrancy of the local economy.
7. The Council also recognises the need for significant investment in the Folly Lane Campus if that ambition is to be realised.
8. It is not the intention of this report to detract in any way from the significant achievements of the individual colleges. The Council does, however, have to recognise that the site is currently occupied by three separate colleges which together with the Holme Lacy arm of the Pershore Group of Colleges seeks to provide further education to a population of 177,000. The Herefordshire College of Technology is considered to be a small to medium size college and the College of Art and Design a small college but as is indicated in the Appendix, both carry the fixed overheads of larger colleges. Even if the double dissolution was to be pursued, the new institution would still in national terms only be a medium sized further education college.
9. The Herefordshire College of Art and Design has sought to pursue a relatively high profile campaign for the retention of its institutional identity. Whilst it is possible to sympathise with the desire of individual institutions to continue in their current format, particularly where there is evidence of high quality work with their particular cohort of students, the Council has a wider responsibility to secure a viable future base for provision of further education. This needs to secure provision into the future and to ensure that a quality further education offer is available to the whole range of further education students.
10. That appears, at least in part, to be the key to securing future much needed investment in the Folly Lane Campus with the prospect, in the longer-term, of using that successful further education provision as a base for an extended higher education offering in the County.
11. This paper, whilst supporting the overall approach to the Strategic Area Review, concentrates on what are described as the significant issues and options for Herefordshire. There are other important recommendations in relation to the broader 14 - 19 agenda and particularly the role of sixth forms within our schools. These will be subject to continuing professional dialogue between the Council and LLSC. The more important issues will involve the relevant Cabinet Member.

Alternative Options

The strategic options are set out in the paper.

Risk Management

This is a consultation document and therefore only indirectly a specific risk to the Council. There is a wider risk, however, to the future stability of further education provision within the County.

Consultees

None.

Background Papers

Herefordshire and Worcestershire Strategic Area Review Strategic Issues and Options Consultation Document - Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire November 2004.

Summary of benefits of Recommended Strategic Option:

- ✓ Better integrated curriculum offer, improved curriculum planning, development and delivery.
- ✓ Better access to funding to support capital investment on the Folly Lane site.
- ✓ Reduced running costs and management costs.
- ✓ Improved long-term financial viability.
- ✓ Improved integration of accommodation usage.
- ✓ Improved employer engagement and development of responsive provision.
- ✓ Improved accessibility of provision and learner integration and easier student progression.

Reasons for decision to support the double dissolution model

- Not enough migration between the two colleges.
- Lack of common matrix of curriculum offer.
- Pre entry level/special needs requires strengthening at Herefordshire College of Art and Design.
- Reduction in overheads through central services - savings on Principal, Finance, Marketing Central Services.
- Need for better strategic planning and self-assessment reports for the campus.
- Need to improve/increase progression opportunities.
- Benefits of joint marketing and publicity and promotional opportunities, e.g. joint open days, awards events, careers events, enrichment opportunities etc.
- Benefits of combined market research to meet local and regional objectives.
- Benefits of shared student support services eg student accommodation, guidance and career information.
- Sharing of the Learning Resource Centre.
- Benefits of best practice sharing to tackle local initiatives linked to local LSC priority objectives of employer engagement, basic skills and the 14-19 agenda.
- Benefits of sharing lesson observations teams and best practice teaching and learning.
- Development of a Quality and Standards Unit with best practice opportunities shared across the campus, lesson plans etc in order to meet OfSTED and QCA requirements.
- Benefits of a common system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of programmes and student perceptions.
- Benefits of developing a joint Quality/Curriculum Review Panel, which would assist in improving curriculum planning and development.
- Benefits of developing a common virtual learning environment for student access - includes development of website access across the two college areas.

- Benefits of sharing retention and achievement strategies and Educational Maintenance Allowance systems and procedures to improve services to students.
- Benefits of joint staff development opportunities and joint curriculum development.
- Benefits of pooling part-time staff resources - register of part-time staff availability.
- Opportunity to develop a co-ordinated response to higher education needs in Herefordshire.
- The opportunity to change an operating deficit in each of the 10 years since incorporation for the Herefordshire College of Technology into a balanced budget or even a surplus through balancing the accounts of the College of Technology and the College of Art and Design, reduced overheads and new opportunities for curriculum development.
- To help remove the block on funding capital development of the Herefordshire Learning Village. Current block on grounds of financial viability, lack of coherence and integration of curriculum offer - funding from AWM, Europe and LSC currently on hold.
- Improved decision making by having one Board of Governors to make decisions not two thus leading to speedier and more strategic decision making.
- The ending of Specialist College uplift funding in 2006/2007 will provide greater pressures to the funding of the College of Art and Design.
- The proposed review of Specialist Colleges and their links to regional and local strategies creates a further concern for a small self standing college such as the College of Art and Design. The proposed development of FE Colleges with specialisms is likely to be of benefit to larger sub-regional colleges such as the merger of the College of Technology and the College of Art and Design.
- The College of Technology has only survived through the exceptional support funding that has been made available from the Learning and Skills Council. From 2005/2006 this funding will no longer be available, thus putting even greater pressure on the College of Technology to survive. This would have major implications for the residents and businesses of Herefordshire and surrounding areas.
- Less confusion for public and employers about the college provision. This would also assist Connexions staff in promoting further education for 14-19 group in particular.
- Herefordshire College of Technology is not able to subsidise its higher cost provision with standard classroom based courses that can attract higher group sizes and therefore more income because these are provided by the Hereford Sixth Form and the Herefordshire College of Art and Design.
- The Herefordshire College of Technology and the Herefordshire College of Art and Design have suffered from a lack of investment in the estate in recent years because of funding difficulties and this has effectively diminished

the asset base. A merged college would provide a better opportunity to address this shortfall.

- A merged college has the potential to offer improved working conditions for staff and harmonised terms and conditions.
- Merged colleges would provide better utilisation of capital assets and accommodation.
- Currently the College of Technology is considered to be a small to medium sized college and the College of Art and Design a small college, but both carry the fixed overheads of larger colleges.
- Demographic factors such as sparsity of population contribute to low class sizes which are difficult to operate economically. Demographic forecasting shows a reduction in the size of the main cohort in future years.
- Both colleges have much more to do in meeting the needs of local employers. A merged college would provide a greater opportunity to make a bigger impact on the agenda.
- The development of ICT based learning materials and their associated support systems is expensive. Pooled resources would enable more work to be undertaken in the development of this area if the colleges were merged.
- There are potential benefits of purchase and implementation of common MIS and Finance systems. The two colleges would enable a better system to be purchased at a more competitive price. This could be improved even further if linked to the Hereford Sixth Form College.
- A merged college would offer a new opportunity for re-branding of the campus and therefore a better opportunity to increase participation by both individuals and employers.
- Because of the financial difficulties there has been a focus on micro-management that prevented the colleges from taking a strategic view and reforming of provision.
- With a total county population of 170,000 sparsely distributed in a rural area, the College of Technology can only sustain its range of vocational programme by running small and low contribution courses in several curriculum areas. A static and future reducing 16-18 population with an existing participation rate of 84.6 per cent leaves the college little prospect of funded growth. Without major changes to the portfolio through merger or a revised funding mechanism, its long term viability is very questionable.

REFORM OF THE REGISTRATION SERVICE

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: HUMAN RESOURCES AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To agree the approach required to ensure a successful transition of this service to the Council.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendations

THAT (a) To provide a single Herefordshire Registration District with a central office in Hereford City by means of a scheme change;

Subject to public consultation:

(b) continue to provide register offices at Leominster and Ross which will remain open as full time permanent outstations and be used with the Hereford office, as bases to provide a peripatetic registration service to the County;

and

(c) continue to use the existing Register offices at Kington, Bromyard and Ledbury as by appointment caller offices, with their marriage rooms re-designated as “approved premises” thus achieving a “five day a week” service in these areas.

Reasons

To continue to ensure excellent registration services to the public and seamless transition during the new legislative changes to registration services.

Considerations

1. National plans are now well advanced to modernise the Civil Registration Service in England and Wales. The vision is to transfer the historic service over time from a heavily regulated and labour intensive service, whose roots lie firmly back in the 1800's, to a dynamic, customer focused service fit to meet the needs of the population into the 21st Century.

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

2. Staff within the Herefordshire Registration Service have been monitoring these change proposals for some time with a view to ensuring that the Council is well placed to respond as and when the necessary statutory framework is put into place.
3. A draft Regulatory Reform Order (RRO) setting out proposals for reforming the registration of birth and death procedures, access to records and the organisation of the Registration Service within England and Wales has been placed before Parliament. When enacted later next year it will provide for the transfer of the existing Crown staff to the employment of the Council.
4. Parliamentary committees are considering two separate Regulatory Reform Orders. It is expected that part 1 of the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO), relating to the organisation of the local registration service and the registration of birth and death events, will reach the statute book in mid to late 2005 with reforms introduced early/late 2006. Implementation of this RRO will mean that births, deaths and still births are registered onto a central database rather than the current practice of recording details in a register. All certificates produced or future access to the information will be from this centrally held electronic record.
5. The Civil Partnership Bill is expected to become law in early 2005 with the introduction of interim arrangements for the taking of preliminaries and registration of Civil Partnerships from October 2005. It is intended that these events will also be recorded on a central national database. Over time the public will be able to access these systems direct.
6. The RRO part 2 relating to marriage aspects, while expected to be on the statute books by late 2005, is now likely to be delayed with reforms being introduced in the last half of 2006. Full implementation of the Civil Partnership proposals are likely to be introduced at the same time as the marriage reforms.
7. The postponement of the presentation of the RRO provisions relating to marriage will cause significant administrative problems because although staff will be local authority employees by September 2005 they will also remain Crown Servants appointed as Superintendent Registrars with current powers and responsibilities and duties required under the current legislation. This situation will exist until the second RRO for Marriages is approved by Parliament sometime in last half of 2006. This means we will need to phase the new arrangements over the next two years with the existing staff group.

Constraints

8. RRO1 and RRO2 are enabling legislation only, which will be brought into being by the Registrar General by Order. Proposed dates for implementation are therefore “not set in stone” and are likely to be moveable. The Service has to be ready to continue under the present rules and regulations yet be ready to comply with the new procedures when required by the Registrar General. However, the existing “technical” registration requirements and law will not change. The RRO assumes that parliamentary scrutiny will go “according to plan”, however a general election held in 2005 could alter the proposed dates substantially.
9. The Council must consult regularly with its community on the services offered, delivery of modes, places and times that registration services will be available and the quality and level of service to be offered and on changes to those aspects. The Registrar General will issue guidance shortly on the form of consultation. Adequate consultation must be held prior to a scheme change. Once Cabinet have approved these proposals a consultation will take place.

10. Adequate accommodation must also be provided including interview rooms, marriage rooms and for the storage of and daily access to records etc.
11. The central database, to be established and controlled by the Registrar General, is key to these proposals and has to be in place before the RRO's can be brought into being. This aspect is still at an early stage.

Financial Implications

12. The Herefordshire Registration Service forms part of the County Secretary and Solicitor's Department. The Service is and will continue to be regulated by the Registrar General, although funded by the Council. In 2003/04, total expenditure was £312,339. Employee costs accounted for 63% of expenditure and the net cost of the service per head of population was 0.46pence. In recent years, annual income has increased year on year. Currently, there are 11 full time equivalent posts across the county. These employees will transfer to the Council in September 2005. It is expected that the income currently received across the Registration Service will fall once implementation of the National Review is fully complete. In that case, unless income from other sources has been identified, reductions in the current level of service would have to be considered. However, until the legislative framework and central database is fully in place, it is not possible to predict the financial implications for the Council. Certainly, there is sufficient funding to allow the service to continue at present service level for the next and possibly following financial years. The situation will be closely monitored and will be the subject of a further more detailed report once the statutory transfer is complete.

One District

13. The existing 6 Registration Districts for Births and Deaths will automatically be merged into one as part of the new proposals under the RRO. However Marriages will still retain existing District Boundaries until late 2006 or even later. If we retain the same structure as is currently in place i.e. 6 districts then we will need 6 SRs as each district requires a Superintendent Registrar (SR). If on the other hand a scheme change is implemented to amalgamate into one unified district, then only 1 SR need be appointed across the county supported by Deputy SRs. It is only following the implementation of RRO2 that district boundaries will no longer exist, as we know them now. Until then, people will have to continue to give notice to marry within the district in which they reside.
14. There are real operational advantages in moving to one district for marriages at the same time as RRO1 comes into being, especially involved with staffing. This can only be done by a Scheme change which is strongly recommended.

A Way Forward

15. These changes provide an opportunity to integrate some of the "front office" aspects of the service into the Info Service, as is already happening at Bromyard. Info Offices can also be used to carry out interviews. However, because of the expected delays and piecemeal introduction of the new legislation the Council will still have to continue to provide Register Offices, Marriage Rooms and adequate storage for records that require daily access.
16. It is proposed that the current Register Offices at Kington, Bromyard and Ledbury continue to provide local services by appointment pending the development of the Info Service across the county. The consultation exercise will seek views on the availability and range of services people require.

New Services

17. The new RRO will allow local authorities the power to provide new registration services as a way of maximising income. These will be developed in accordance with public consultation, a defined marketing strategy and plan in order to provide additional civil celebratory ceremonies, in particular civil baby naming, reaffirmation of vows, and possibly burial ceremonies.

Alternative Options

There are no viable alternative options.

Risk Management

The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that the service continues to be available throughout the transitional legislative period and beyond.

Consultees

Registration Officers are being consulted about these proposals. The public will need to be consulted before implementing any changes to the current levels of service.

Background Papers

None Identified

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY PROGRESS

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: HUMAN RESOURCES AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER, 2004

Wards Affected

None

Purpose

To consider progress against the Council's Human Resources (HR) Strategy including main findings from the 2004 Staff Opinion Survey, and 2003-4 Exit Surveys.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

THAT the report be noted.

Considerations

1. HR Strategy performance is tracked twice each year using employee data (available at financial year end), and Staff Opinion Survey data available in the autumn (see Appendix 1 for the full performance update). This report is concerned with HR Strategy progress in light of the Staff Opinion information and Exit Survey information. It is worth noting that the Survey was issued during September, seven weeks after announcements regarding Job Evaluation and Single Status.
2. The current HR Strategy lifetime expires in 2005. The Pay and Workforce Development Strategy 2005-8, currently being developed, will replace it.
3. The 2004 Staff Opinion Survey response rate was 38%, slightly down on 2003 (41%). Work will be done during 2004 to find ways to capture employee opinions, in particular in geographically disperse groups - where lack of affiliation to 'the corporate centre' traditionally results in low response rates. The response rate is, however, sufficient for the information to be relied on as indicative for the majority of employees.
4. Five key themes for action were identified in the 2003 Staff Opinion Survey. Two can be directly linked to indicators in the HR Strategy – Communications, Recognition. These are shown in Appendix A alongside the relevant HR Strategy performance indicators. The three improvement themes from the 2003 Staff Opinion Survey indirectly linked to the HR Strategy are
 - a. Increase confidence in senior management's leadership. *The majority of questions relating to confidence in senior management have seen a positive*

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
David Johnson, Head of Human Resources on 01432 383055

improvement over 2003 Survey; there were improvements in views on senior managers' concern with how employees feel, that their decision making is fair, that information is believable, and that relations are good; this may in part be due to the high profile of senior managers over the summer re Job Evaluation and Single Status; there is increased confidence that the Council is committed to supporting employees during Job Evaluation 30% in 2004 against 21% in 2003. Exit Survey information cites 'the way people are managed' as the second main reason people leave the Council (first is Job Content dissatisfaction). Clarity about job objectives and priorities was 85% in 2004, against 87% in 2003.

- b. Increase belief that the Survey results will be taken seriously and things done as a result; *There was no significant difference between 2004 and 2003 opinions in this area;*
 - c. Improve confidence that things are getting better. *Confidence that things are getting better has increased slightly - 20% in 2004, over 18% in 2003. Motivation to perform well has also improved - 51% in 2004 against 46% in 2003.*
5. Responses around 'equality of opportunity' remain static compared with 2003. This may be a result of increased awareness of these issues, however the Diversity Group will consider improvement actions for 2005. This area will form part of proposals in the new Pay and Workforce Development Strategy.
 6. Satisfaction with terms and conditions has not moved significantly, nor has satisfaction with earnings. Organisational changes appear to have had some impact with job security confidence 41% in 2004 compared with 52% in 2003; intentions to be working in the Council in 12 months time were 51% in 2004 against 55% in 2003.
 7. There has been a significant increase in employees agreeing that their contribution is recognised – 59% in 2004 against 43% in 2001.
 8. There is an indication that communications confidence may be increasing – 34% in 2004 against 32% in 2003 (27% in 2001), but still short of the 60% target. On the four questions regarding communicating change (the Health and Safety Executive HSE recommended follow up questions), the results are more positive. Responses were in the range 55%-64%. The HSE recommended target is 85%. A communications audit recently underway will bring forward recommendations on how to improve this position. Communications preferences clearly indicate face-to-face (team meetings and briefings) and email. This area will be addressed in the Pay and Workforce Development Strategy, with clear links to employee communications (Communications Strategy).
 9. Agreement that 'opportunities for development within the job are good' was 36% in 2004 against 54% in 2003. This is supported by Exit Survey information where career progression is cited as the most common attraction of the new employer (next were Pay, and Work Environment). Over a third of leavers rated career opportunities as 'poor', whilst training rated 'good' by more than half. Consistent with the employee focus groups held during the summer, the issue here seems less about 'training', and more about opportunities post-training. Proposals on this issue will form part of the new Pay and Workforce Development Strategy so that, as far as possible, the Council provides transparent and viable career opportunities to help employees develop.
 10. Agreement about opportunities to work flexibly (to balance work/home life) was 77% in

2004, against 73% in 2003 (65% in 2001). This area has risen year on year. Proposals in the Pay and Workforce Development Strategy will include promoting this aspect of Council employment (alongside improved 'packaging and presenting' of existing attractive benefits) to proactively tackle recruitment and retention issues, and to help meet Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) targets (part of the Council's IEG Statement).

Risk Management

Risks inherent in the above will be detailed in a new Pay and Workforce Development Strategy for the Council. They will centre on the need to generate capacity to deliver in areas identified for improvement, and the need for forward planning to deliver improvements. There are risks to the Council in terms of its ability to attract and retain suitably skilled employees to provide quality services if a Pay and Workforce Strategy is not developed by 31st March, 2005.

Consultees

Chief Executive's Management Team, Staff Opinion Survey Group, Human Resources Management Team, all employees via Staff Opinion Survey, Trade Unions (Joint Consultative Forum). Further consultation will take place with managers forum members.

Background Papers

- Exit Survey Report 2003-4
- Staff Opinion Survey 2004 Headline Report
- Human Resources Strategy 2002-5

HR STRATEGY PERFORMANCE AGAINST SELECTED TARGETS

* ***bold italics*** = one of the five priority areas from 2003 Staff Opinion Survey

Performance Indicator	Council 2001	Council 2002	Council 2003	Council 2004	Council Target	By When
<i>*% agree their work is valued in the organisation(see question on recognition)</i>	51%	59%	43%	See question below	50%	End 2005
% agree they know how their work contributes to organisational priorities	51%	60%	61%	(64%)	55%	End 2005
% agree they are treated equally and fairly whatever their religion	84%	80%	75%	75%	90%	End 2005
% agree they are treated equally and fairly whatever their race	81%	78%	73%	73%	90%	End 2005
% agree they are treated equally and fairly whatever their gender	76%	75%	72%	72%	85%	End 2005
% agree they are treated equally and fairly whatever their sexual orientation	73%	71%	66%	66%	75%	By end 2005
% agree they are treated equally and fairly whatever their age	N/A	N/A	68%	68%	Not set	Not set
% satisfied with terms and conditions	63%	73%	62%	{61%}	63%	End 2002
<i>* % agree communications in the organisation work well</i>	27%	39%	32%	(34%)	60%	End 2005
<i>* % agree managers communicate well</i>	48%	55%	48%	(49%)	60%	End 2005
% agree they can develop their skills and potential in their current job	60%	N/A%	59%	{36%}	75%	End 2005
% agree opportunities for developing and keeping job interesting are good (replaced by above question in 2004)	48%	60%	54%	See question above	75%	End 2005
% agree there is flexibility to help meet home/work commitments	65%	68%	73%	(77%)	80%	End 2005
<i>*% agree that their contribution is recognised</i>	43%	52%	n/a	(59%)	60%	End 2005
% agree they know when they have done a good job (see question on recognition)	58%	72%	74%	n/a	70%	End 2005
% agree their manager takes steps to reduce H&S risks	70%	80%	72%	72%	90%	End 2005

Performance Indicator	Council 2001	Council 2002	Council 2003	Council 2004	Council Target	By When
% agree they sometimes feel bullied/harassed by members	11%	12%	13%	13%	0%	By 2005 & beyond
% agree they sometimes feel bullied/harassed by managers	19%	17%	16%	(18%)	0%	By 2005 & beyond
% agree they sometimes feel bullied/harassed by colleagues	13%	12%	11%	(12%)	0%	By 2005 & beyond
% agree they sometimes feel bullied/harassed by clients/service users	38%	37%	41%	{39%}	0%	By 2005 & beyond

KEY

{ } = lower than 2003 Survey

() = higher than 2003 Survey

IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT (IEG4) STATEMENT

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: HUMAN RESOURCES AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER , 2004

Wards Affected

Countywide

Purpose

To approve the Implementing Electronic Government Return 2004 (IEG4). Please note that the text for local case studies and efficiency savings detailed may yet change as the process of validation progresses.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

THAT the IEG4 return be approved.

Reasons

The IEG4 return forms the basis of a distribution of a further £150,000 of local e-government capital funding from the ODPM in 2005 /06. Failure to complete any elements of the IEG4 proforma may result in the withholding of this funding.

Considerations

1. This is the fourth year the Council has been required to submit an IEG return to central government to set out how it has or plans to achieve improvements in customer focused services underpinned by information technology. The ODPM has provided a prescriptive format which cannot be changed. This year the ODPM has mandated that the IEG4 return be submitted through the use of an electronic toolkit (ESD-toolkit); this toolkit will be used to regularly monitor local progress in the delivery of e-government through to March 2006.
2. Self-assessment against priority outcomes appears in this year's IEG return for the first time. These priority outcomes provide a focus for reaching 100% e-enablement of services by December 2005 and shift the delivery onus onto senior management and service heads rather than the ICT department. Priority Outcomes are defined in a more specific way to overcome some of the interpretations possible under BVPI 157. During October 2004 an exercise was carried out to allocate responsibility for each priority outcome to the appropriate Director/ Head of Department.
3. Building on the work undertaken by Sir Peter Gershon, the ODPM has set a target on local government to improve its effectiveness and efficiency in delivering services by 2.5% per annum up to 2007/08. E-government is expected to make a substantial

contribution towards the achievement of this target and, for the first time, efficiency gains (both forecast and actual) from services in e-procurement, e-recruitment and e-payments are part of the IEG4 return.

Risk Management

1. Failure to complete any elements of the IEG4 proforma may result in the withholding of further £150,000 of capital funding in 2006/07, therefore clear ownership of the forecast and actual deliverables has been identified to ensure progress is monitored and issues flagged at an early stage.
2. Two key areas for IEG4 are those of customer service and e-procurement. To date our progress in both these key service areas has been slow. The customer service targets are being addressed with the clear commitment to the Service Improvement Programme with member sponsorship from Cabinet Member HR & Support Services and executive sponsorship from the Director of Policy & Community. Likewise the e-procurement challenges will be addressed with a greater emphasis placed on service efficiencies across the Authority.

Consultees

The IEG4 return has been produced as a consequence of a Council wide collaboration to collate and validate the information provided within the report.

Background Papers

None identified

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MARKETS AND PROPERTY

CABINET

16TH DECEMBER, 2004

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To determine how best to take forward the recommendations contained in the Property Management Scrutiny Review which recommendations were considered by the Strategic Monitoring Committee at its meeting on 4th November, 2004.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

Recommendations

- THAT (a) a wider reference group be established to approve the terms of reference of the groups referred to in (b) below and to drive forward the wider review of policies and strategies and management arrangements and to examine targets for performance and finance**
- and**
- (b) the following further groups be formed as detailed in the report below in line with the Audit Commission's publication "Hot Property".**
- (i) Service Property Group**
 - (ii) Administrative Property Group (Accommodation Board)**
 - (iii) Non Operational Property with consideration being given to the potential division of consideration of the smallholdings estate and the balance of non-operational property.**

Financial Implications

There are none arising out of this report but there will be financial implications for the Council arising out of the further work proposed in the report.

Reasons

The Property Management Scrutiny Review reported to Strategic Monitoring Committee on 4th November, 2004. Whilst the Strategic Monitoring Committee accepted the Review

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
N.M. Pringle, Chief Executive on (01432) 260044

report which contained some 27 recommendations, they also recognised that the nature and scope of the review meant that there were a number of areas where further work would be required. Some of that additional work, however, depended on the acceptance of key policy issues by the Executive and it was felt that little would be achieved by asking the Property Review Group to further refine their work.

The Chief Executive was asked to prepare a report for Cabinet to advise how the Executive might best take forward the Executive's consideration of the Property Review.

Considerations

1. A copy of the Property Management Scrutiny Review is attached as a confidential Appendix because it is necessary background information for Cabinet in reaching a conclusion on the recommendations set out in this report and does disclose terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services. The extent to which that report reveals commercial information is quite limited and it is felt desirable that the principles to be adopted in further pursuing the Property Review should be open to public scrutiny.
2. The Property Review has made a constructive start on identifying the issues but in very few areas has it been able to gather the evidence to enable it to make final recommendations. For the most part its recommendations are in the form of setting a framework for future work. Its recommendations, particularly in the policy areas, therefore tend to be in terms of urging performance measures and targets be established and/or that more explicit and transparent criteria should be created as a basis for supporting future prioritisation and decision making. Those approaches are perhaps most apparent in relation to the recommendations which relate to underlying policies and strategies, management arrangements and performance and cost.
3. Where the report provides a firmer basis for Executive action, however, is in its adoption from "hot property" of the categorisation of service property (e.g. property which supports service provision such as libraries, highways, depots, older people's accommodation, Info in Herefordshire points, administrative property (broadly speaking office accommodation) and non-operational property (e.g. industrial estates, smallholdings, markets, etc). That categorisation does provide the basis for breaking down the work identified in the Property Review into more manageable blocks of work. It is, therefore, suggested that the work on those blocks be undertaken on the basis of the groupings proposed below. The initial task of each of those groupings would be to establish the terms of reference within which their initial work would be undertaken reporting to the wider reference group described below which will examine issues of policy and strategy and examine the organisation and financial basis for the provision of Property Services.
4. It is proposed the group should be as follows:
 - (a) Service property - there will be a need for service representation on this group although there are also clear financial links and links to the Council's corporate planning process.
 - (b) Administrative property - the work of this group could be taken forward effectively by the existing Accommodation Board which comprises the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member (Economic Development, Markets and Property), the Chief Executive, the Director of Environment, the County Secretary and Solicitor and the County Treasurer.

- (c) Non-operational property - this is an important area and there is a need to distinguish between property which is held purely for investment purposes and property, which whilst constituting an investment, also fulfills some aspect of the Council's policy. The most obvious examples of such activity are industrial development property (where that property is held specifically against aspects of the Council's Economic Development Strategy) and the smallholdings estate (where it would be essential to identify criteria against which those investments could be judged). There would be a clear need for involvement from Economic Development and from those managing the smallholdings estate but it is important that that professional experience should be used to test the criteria against which the property is held currently and into the future not simply to endorse existing established policy. Once the general criteria for the working of that group is established, Cabinet may wish to consider whether in view of the specialist nature of the smallholdings estate, the consideration of the smallholdings estate and other non-operational property might more effectively be pursued separately.
5. Alongside the practical work in relation to those different aspects of the property function, there will be a need to establish a wider reference group to drive forward major strategic and policy issues, to establish appropriate performance measures and to consider the organisational arrangements for property. The wider reference group needs to be run in parallel to each of the property based groups and it is suggested that an appropriate membership might be the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member (Economic Development, Markets and Property), the Cabinet Member (Rural Regeneration and Smallholdings), the Chief Executive, a Director and the County Treasurer or his representative.
6. Given the difficulties referred to by the Property Review Group in obtaining accurate and consistent financial and management information, it is important that there is a single member of the County Treasurer's staff assigned to support each of the groups in obtaining that information.

Alternative Options

There are a whole series of options ranging from continuing the process as a single exercise as undertaken by the original Property Review Team, or differently grouping the basic groupings of property referred to in the Audit Commission's publication "Hot Property".

Risk Management

Whilst the Council's current Asset Management Plan is well rated, there is a risk that the Council's grasp of the strategic use of its property holdings will not be maintained unless the review is methodically pursued and implemented. There are also financial risks associated with the review.

Consultees

No immediate further consultation is envisaged. The Property Review Team consulted extensively through the many interviews which they undertook.

Background Papers

None identified.

Document is Restricted

Document is Restricted

Document is Restricted

