

# A G E N D A

## Environment Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday, 28th February, 2005**

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Time: **2.00 p.m.**

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Place: **The Council Chamber,  
Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,  
Hereford**

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

*For any further information please contact:*

*Paul James, Members' Services, Tel:01432  
260 460 Fax:01432 260286*

***e-mail [pjames@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:pjames@herefordshire.gov.uk)***

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**County of Herefordshire  
District Council**



# AGENDA

## for the Meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee

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

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

	Pages
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
To receive apologies for absence.	
<b>2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)</b>	
To receive details any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
<b>3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.	
<b>4. MINUTES</b>	1 - 12
To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th December, 2004 and 24th January, 2005.	
<b>5. TRUNK ROADS IN HEREFORDSHIRE</b>	13 - 16
To consider the management of Trunk Roads in Herefordshire by the Highways Agency.	



## **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

### **HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

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

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

The principal roles of Scrutiny Committees are to

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

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- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
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## **COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD.**

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COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the meeting of Environment Scrutiny Committee held at Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Wednesday, 8th December, 2004 at 10.00 a.m.**

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

Councillors: P.J. Dauncey, Mrs. A.E. Gray, K.G. Grumbley, J.G.S. Guthrie, J.W. Hope, J.W. Newman and Miss F. Short

**In attendance:** Councillor P.J. Edwards,(Cabinet Member - Environment)  
Ms. G.A. Powell, J. Stone and R.M. Wilson (Cabinet Member – Highways & Transportation))

**28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors W.L.S. Bowen, G.W. Davis, T.W. Hunt and R. Mills.

**29. NAMED SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor J.W. Hope substituted for Councillor T.W. Hunt and Councillor J.G.S. Guthrie substituted for Councillor R. Mills.

**30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**31. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September, 2004 be approved and signed by the Chairman.**

**32. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING**

The Committee were advised of progress with the 2004/05 Capital Programme for Environment Areas within the overall context of the Herefordshire Council Capital Programme.

The Director of Environment reported that, while there had been marginal changes to the Capital Programme due to increases or decreases in specific funding, the total for the Programme had increased from £12,009,519 notified to the previous meeting, to £12,044,105. Appendix 1 to the report set out the actual spend against each scheme to 30th September, 2004.

The Assistant County Treasurer reported that the total spent or committed to date was £6.249 million or 51.9% of the revised forecast. Due to the need to obtain a compulsory purchase order, spending on the Rotherwas Access Road would be significantly less than originally forecast and the spending forecast had been amended to reflect the change.

In relation to the level of prudential borrowing, Members were informed that

£395,000 had been included in the budget as a forecasted borrowing level to cover expected expenditure. In relation to the North West Herefordshire HGV Study concern was expressed over the accuracy of figures being used, and presented to Parish Councils in the Leominster area, by the consultants undertaking the study. On questioning the cost of installing a bus shelter, to Department of Transport standard, the Transportation Manager reported that in many instances the cost was split between Herefordshire Council and the relevant Parish Council.

**RESOLVED: That the report on Capital Budget Monitoring be noted.**

### 33. ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee were advised of the budget monitoring position for the Environment Programme Area budgets for the period to 30th September 2004 including any variation against budget.

The Assistant County Treasurer reported that the total Environment budget for 2004/05 was £24,015,000. A net underspend of £1,030,000 was anticipated during 2004/05 from Environment General (£650,000), Regulatory (£30,000) and Planning (£350,000). With the exception of any underspend on the Waste Management PFI contract, any underspending would be carried forward into 2005/6. He expressed a degree of caution in relation to the building control and development fee income which was currently higher than expected and could not be relied upon to continue. The monitoring report was attached to the agenda report at appendix 1.

The Director of Environment reported that a number of staff vacancies in Planning Services had been filled and, in the circumstances, the Service was performing well.

Responding to questioning concerning changes to Part P of the Building Regulations, relating to legal requirements for safety upon electrical installation work in dwellings, the Head of Planning Services reported that this would generate additional work due to the registration of contractors.

**RESOLVED: That the report on Environment Revenue Budget monitoring be noted.**

### 34. A49 TRUNK ROAD - ROAD SAFETY ISSUES

The Committee discussed road safety issues concerning the A49 trunk road in Herefordshire.

The Head of Highways and Transportation reported that the Highways Agency had been invited to the meeting but were unable to attend. The Highways Agency had produced a statement entitled; "A49 Trunk Road: accidents at Ashton and A49 Route Management Strategy Between Ross-on-Wye and Shrewsbury". This was issued to Members at the meeting.

The statement outlined the position taken by the Agency following the accidents at Ashton in the North of the County. It stated that inspections at the site of the accidents had concluded that that particular section of the A49 did not have a high accident record. The statement also briefly outlined the undertaking of a Route Management Strategy Study (RMS) for the A49 between Ross-on-Wye and Shrewsbury. The Strategy also detailed safety schemes undertaken since April 2002 and further schemes valued at £650,000 for completion by April 2005.

The Chairman invited Councillor J. Stone (Upton ward) to speak as Local Member for the Ashton area. Councillor Stone reported upon the number of recent accidents,

both fatal and unreported, at Ashton. He highlighted not only the devastating effect accidents had upon the families and local community, but the consequential disruption caused to the local transport network due to the closure of the road; the effect upon villages due to resultant diversions and the damage caused to roads and verges by HGVs using the diversions.

Councillor J.G.S. Guthrie (Sutton Walls ward mainly adjoining the A49) raised a number of issues including: the reinstatement of the vehicle restraint barrier and provision of escape space at "Bungalow Bend" Dinmore Hill; the siting of speed restrictions at Burghope; siting of a speed camera on the south side of Dinmore Hill; the reinstatement of Deer warning signs at Queenswood; the reconsideration of the Dinmore Hill and Wellington Marsh avoidance route; the direction signage at Burghope Lane (U92623); the latest position concerning the provision of a roundabout at the northern end of Morton Park and the redesigning of the Morton Road, A49, the Morton Village Road and Ordnance Close.

Councillor J.W. Newman highlighted various problem areas including the speed of vehicles on the Callow and overgrown hedges which impeded pedestrians.

Councillor P.J. Edwards (Cabinet Member – Environment) commented that there were issues with other trunk roads and highlighted the need to extend the 30 mph speed limit near Tesco, Belmont.

Comment was also made regarding the difficulty in contacting the Highways Agency, both by telephone and by e-mail.

The Committee noted that the RMS, being a technique to provide a strategic framework for managing individual trunk roads over a ten-year period, was due to be published before Christmas.

In the absence of the Highways Agency from the meeting, the Committee requested that the Head of Highways and Transportation collate from all Members the various issues concerning the A49 and request the Highways Agency to attend a meeting of the Committee to answer the issues raised.

**RESOLVED: That following consultation with all Members the Head of Highways and Transportation collate the various issues raised and request the Highways Agency to attend a future meeting.**

### **35. GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (GEM) PERFORMANCE 2004/5 HALF YEAR**

The Committee considered the Council's environmental management / ISO 14001 system at the half year to ensure that it continued to be suitable, adequate and effective and delivered improvement in environmental performance.

The Director of Environment reiterated that the Committee played an important role in providing top level scrutiny and feedback on the GEM system, which supported the Council's commitment to protect the environment. He also reported that the current Environmental Policy (June 2002) needed to be updated to reflect the major environmental commitments already made in Statutory Plans and other key documents. In addition an Environmental Strategy was being drafted which currently focused on the Environment Directorate. The document will link to next year's Good Environmental Management (GEM) programme.

The Environmental Sustainability Officer commented in relation to a number of issues raised in the report. These principally concerned: the GEM external audit

results, from which a number of corrective actions had resulted, detailed in Appendix 2 to the report; performance against targets, which had been detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and the tracking of legal compliance and the future development of GEM.

During discussion the following principal points were raised:

- Glass recycling – the Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards reported that to undertake the collection of glass from households would, due to health and safety, involve major investment in collection containers and collection vehicles. Glass from trade establishments, restaurants and pubs, used to be undertaken, however, problems had arisen over the sorting of glass types, (brown, green and clear) which affected the ultimate value of the cullet. Glass was currently collected under the Trade Waste scheme.
- In the near future retailers of household type batteries should make provision for the collection and recycling of dead batteries in response to new legislation.
- Members requested that statistics concerning the take up of 'Car Sharing' be included in the next GEM report.
- The effectiveness of the ground source heat pump, installed at Marshfield Centre, Leominster, was being monitored.
- Investigations were underway into the feasibility of generating electricity from gas given off from the closed Stretton Sugwas landfill site.
- Salt Storage Barns – the Head of Highways and Transportation reported that planning permission had been received to locate a central salt storage barn at Rotherwas. When the central storage facility was operational the small storage units around the County would be closed. This would enable greater control over any environmental impact.

**RESOLVED: that the report be noted.**

### **36. SUPPORTING LOCAL BUS SERVICES**

The Committee was advised of the Council's policy on the allocation of bus subsidies and informed of the level of passenger use of subsidised bus services.

The report described the current policy in relation to the determination of the subsidised network; the capital measures introduced through the Local Transport Plan programme to improve the attractiveness of bus travel in the County; the method of securing subsidised services, including the criteria for the award of contracts and indicated the numbers of people benefiting from the service. Appendix 1 to the report set out the cost and patronage levels on subsidised local bus services contracts.

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

- Subsidies to cross-boundary services were apportioned according to mileage and number of users
- The number referred to in Appendix 1 related to the contract number not the service route number. This was due to some contracts only covering part of a service route.
- In response to comments concerning the number of empty seats and the size of bus used, the Public Transport Manager reported that individual contracts specified the minimum number of seats required to be provided for the subsidy. The contractor then decided what size of vehicle he had available to fulfil the contract. He acknowledged that difficulties arose from a contractor's point of view in that during peak times e.g. fulfilling school transport contracts,

large vehicles were needed whereas during off-peak times smaller, more environmentally friendly vehicles could be considered.

- Any expansion of the Community Transport System, mainly provided by volunteers in the Leominster area, must recognise that the cost of provision per passenger was more expensive than many bus services.
- Questioned on the use of Bio-diesel the Public Transport Manager reported that contracts assumed the use of low sulphur diesel. The availability and use of Bio-diesel would be discussed with service operators.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**37. HEREFORDSHIRE PLAN AMBITIONS - CONTRIBUTION MADE BY THE ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE**

The Committee considered the Environment Directorate's contribution to the work of the Environment Ambition Group and the Transport Wider Reference Group in relation to the Herefordshire Plan and Partnership.

The Conservation Manager reported that both Groups, supported by the Directorate, had had lengthy discussions with the Herefordshire Partnership Research Team about indicators in the State of Herefordshire report. The Environment Ambition Group had taken forward the Herefordshire Climate Change strategy. Work had also been undertaken on assessing alternative markets for apples in order to retain Herefordshire's orchards; reviewing the Herefordshire bio-diversity Plan (HBAP) and lobbying for changes to the Single Farm Payment Scheme. Work on the Transport Wider Reference Group had concentrated on the strategic issues of transportation. The Group had also considered the development of the next Local Transport Plan and had contributed to the County-wide Parking Strategy review.

In the course of debate the Committee noted that the Groups mainly comprised of voluntary representatives from a wide range of organisations and were very enthusiastic about the Environment Ambitions.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**38. HUMAN RESOURCES**

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

The Personnel Manager, Well-being, reported upon the absence statistics for the Directorate. The report provided a comparison for the year ending 31st March 2004 against the year ending 30th September 2004 by sickness type.

He highlighted that following action taken by management in relation to the current number of days lost (9.52 per FTE), it was expected that the overall figure would be close to the target of 7 FTE days lost per employee. The Council's target for employing people with disabilities was 1%. On the whole the Directorate was meeting this target with 1.5%. Indications were that the staff turnover figure had increased slightly to 10.8% due to the recent Directorate restructure and the decreasing overall numbers employed within the directorate.

The Committee scrutinised the statistics and noted that the recent high levels of staff vacancies, many of which had now been filled, and the increased number of planning applications had been a contributory factor to the higher levels of stress related sickness, particularly in Planning Services.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

**39. BEST VALUE REVIEWS - IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

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

The remaining programmed actions in the improvement plans were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

**RESOLVED: That the report on the implementation of the Best Value Review Improvement Plans be noted.**

**40. MONITORING OF 2004/2005 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - APRIL 2004 TO SEPTEMBER 2004**

The Committee received a report on the exceptions to the targeted progress made by the Environment Directorate for the six months April to September 2004 towards achieving the performance indicators/targets which appear in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Exceptions to the targeted performance were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

In relation to BV82a – household waste arisings – Members requested that 'headline statistics' be provided on the cost of household waste. The Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards undertook to provide statistical information for Members to use in constituency newsletters.

**RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the 'headline statistics' on the cost of household waste be provided to Members for use in highlighting the issue in constituency newsletters.**

**41. UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S PARKING STRATEGY**

The Committee received an update on the review of the Council's Parking Strategy.

The Chairman of the Review, Councillor J H.R. Goodwin, reported that the review was progressing. A number of meetings had been held, one of which had been to hear evidence from invited representatives and the public. He anticipated that one further meeting of the Review Group would be held to consider the draft report. It was intended that the report on the findings of the review would be presented to a special meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 24th January, 2005.

**RESOLVED: That the position concerning the Review of the Council's Parking Strategy be noted.**

The meeting ended at 12.05 p.m.

**CHAIRMAN**

**MINUTES of the meeting of Environment Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Monday, 24th January, 2005 at 10.00 a.m.**

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

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

**In attendance:** Councillors B.F. Ashton, A.C.R. Chappell, J.W. Edwards, P.E. Harling, R.I. Matthews, Ms. G.A. Powell, Mrs. S.J. Robertson, J.P. Thomas and R.M. Wilson (Cabinet Member – Highways and Transportation)

**42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor P.J. Edwards (Cabinet Member – Environment) and Councillor G.V. Hyde (Cabinet Member – Economic Development, Markets & Property)

**43. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)**

There were no substitutions.

**44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**45. REVIEW OF THE COUNTY-WIDE PARKING STRATEGY**

The Committee considered the findings of the Parking Strategy Review Group following the review of the County-wide Parking Strategy.

The Chairman of the Review Group, Councillor J.H.R. Goodwin, reminded the Committee that at its meeting on 21st October, 2003, when the call-in of the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) decision on Parking Charges was considered, the Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member that the County-wide Parking Strategy be reviewed. This recommendation was subsequently endorsed by Cabinet and the Cabinet Member requested that this Committee carry out the review. On 23rd January, 2004 this Committee formed the Parking Strategy Review Group and approved the terms of reference for the review.

The Chairman of the Review Group took the Committee through the report on a page by page basis and particularly highlighted the following:

- a) The scope of the review was detailed in Annex 1 to the report. The methodology used in the review was referred to in section 3 and the current Parking Strategy had been attached at Annex 2 to the report.
- b) Details of the consultation techniques employed and the results were contained in a separate document issued to Members – entitled The

Consultation Report.

- c) Financial Overview (section 4). Income from off-street parking (car parks) contributed over £1m to keeping the Council tax lower. On-street parking enforcement (decriminalised parking) was intended under the Business Plan to be self-financing with any surplus ring-fenced to transport related purposes. It was appreciated that a balance needed to be struck between the financial worth (income generated) and the strategic worth (long-term benefits of the property within the Council's property portfolio) of any individual car park. During the course of the review it became apparent that current data collection methods made it difficult to obtain data on each car park notably that administration was charged across the whole service.
- d) The Review Group's comments in relation to the key questions raised in the Scoping Statement were detailed in section 5 of the report.
- e) Park & Ride (section 6). From the evidence collected and comments from users concerning the pressure on parking, the Review Group concluded that the Cabinet Member should continue with the ongoing work into the financial and operational viability of a Park and Ride scheme for Hereford.
- f) Policy Linkages (section 7.2) The Review Group agreed with the Policy Linkages identified in the current Strategy. However, it was highlighted that they should be reviewed or updated, particularly in relation to the Council's Corporate Plan.
- g) Supply and Quality (section 7.3). From evidence received the Review Group concluded that car parks in central Hereford were effectively full. Parking issues may also arise as a consequence of changes to the Government's Planning Policy & Guidance concerning new planning development. Evidence also indicated that car parks should be safe, well signed, attractive, easy to use and well maintained.
- h) A new Local Transport Plan, of which the Parking Strategy forms a part, was currently being prepared.
- i) Charging (section 7.5). The Review Group agreed that parking charges should be reviewed (but not necessarily increased) on an annual basis, in accordance with current principles but this should not rule out periodic reviews. The Review Group recognised that there may be benefits to "Pay on Exit" systems and this method of fee collection should be kept under review. However, the current cost of installation etc. could be significant and therefore currently could not be justified.
- j) Town Specific Statements (section 7.6). The Review Group had considered the relevant Town Specific Statements in the current Strategy and generally supported the statements for inclusion into a new Strategy. A number of points were also raised for consideration by the Cabinet Member as detailed in the report.
- k) Hereford (section 7.6.1). Additional parking supply should be in the form of Park & Ride. On-street charging should only be introduced to support the business case for Park & Ride.
- l) Ross-on-Wye (section 7.6.1). An area should be identified for free parking.
- m) Bromyard (section 7.6.1). New parking provision should be identified.
- n) Leominster (section 7.6.1). To enable proper control of the former staff car park in Etnam Street this area should be incorporated into the main Etnam Street car park.
- o) Kington (7.6.1). The charge time at Mill Street should commence at 9.00 a.m. on the grounds that this would greatly benefit school traffic and that little financial benefit was gained from starting at 8.00 a.m.
- p) Residents Parking (section 7.7). The Review Group supported the current scheme. They wished to highlight that the current scheme provided for two passes to be issued to residents. One was for the resident - 'the resident pass', and one that can be issued by the resident for use by any visitor or tradesmen to the property - 'the visitor pass'. The Review Group considered



it inappropriate to introduce an additional scheme for issuing temporary passes for trade vehicles visiting the area. The current scheme should however be amended to allow for partial refunds of returned passes to encourage residents who move house to return their passes so that they can be issued to the new resident, or property owner in the case of renovating their property prior to re-letting.

- q) Disabled People (section 7.8.2). National regulations govern the Blue or Orange Badge holder schemes. However, from the evidence received, the Review Group recommended that enforcement, from within current resources, should be targeted to ensure the availability of disabled parking spaces.
- r) VIPs, Councillors and Council Staff Parking (paragraph 7.8.3) In view of the potential effect on staff accommodation arising from the Property Management Scrutiny Review and the adoption of the Council's Green Travel Plan, the Review Group recommended that the concession be kept under review.
- s) Pensioners Concession (section 7.8.4). The Review Group considered the operation, cost and take-up rate of the 'Home Town' parking concession scheme and questioned whether this concession could be seen as encouraging the use of the car which was contrary to the Council's aim of encouraging public transport use. The Review Group suggested that the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) consider the withdrawal of this concession.
- t) Tourism (section 8). Having considered evidence based on tourist issues, the Review Group made a number of recommendations and these were set out in the report.
- u) HGV Parking (section 9). In view of the M50, A49 and other arterial roads in the County, the Review Group considered that the identification and provision of suitable HGV parking should be included in any future parking strategy.
- v) The recent 'Property Management Scrutiny Review' (section 10) identified a need to ensure that the Council takes the current and future property needs into account when planning the future of car parking services. The Review Group supported this and recognised the importance of ensuring that car parks were located in suitable places and that they continued to meet needs. The Review Group highlighted the continued importance of retaining the current level of supply in Hereford and ensuring that car parks were convenient and met the needs of shoppers, visitors and commuters. In considering this issue at a strategic level the Review Group were of the opinion that a more in-depth review was necessary to examine in detail the property requirements of the parking service. In addition the review should take into account the development of Park and Ride for Hereford and the identified additional parking requirement in Bromyard.

The Chairman thanked the public and the many organisations that had taken part in the review.

The Committee debated the report during which the following principal points were noted:

- 1) The Director of Environment clarified a number of budgetary issues concerning the difference between car park income and decriminalised parking income and the use of the two forms of revenue. He emphasised that surplus car park income contributed to the overall budget and was not ring fenced whereas decriminalised parking enforcement income offset the cost of enforcement with any surplus being ring fenced for transportation measures.
- 2) While aware of the principals of 'Pay on Exit', the Review Group had not explored the likely costs involved but believed these to be significant due

to the equipment and manning costs and the loss of parking spaces through the installation of the equipment. The Head of Highways and Transportation advised that 'Pay on Exit' was more suited to large high turnover car parks.

- 3) In relation to the suggested withdrawal of the parking concession for pensioners, concern was expressed regarding the recent reduction in bus services, the lack of bus shelters and the high percentage of elderly in the County. In response to why the Review Group had only suggested that the Cabinet Member consider the withdrawal of the pensioner parking concession (see 7.8.9 (d) rather than making a firm recommendation, the Chairman explained that the Review Group recognised that the Cabinet Member would have a more up to date knowledge of the Council's overall budgetary position.
- 4) The Review Group had considered that no further comment had been necessary concerning the Key Actions referred to in paragraph 1.2 and Annex 3, as many actions had been achieved or work was ongoing.
- 5) Responding to a request for a definition of 'strategic worth' (paragraph 4.5) the Chairman of the Review commented that wherever possible all costs and income relating to individual car parks should be ascertained. Added into the equation should be the capital value of the site and the value to the Council of holding that site e.g. for long-term development, or the specific function it served e.g. its contribution to the local economy or facilities.
- 6) The Transportation Manager clarified the statement at paragraph 7.3.1 concerning Hereford car parks being effectively full. Traffic levels had risen since the parking surveys at Annex 4 & 5 had been undertaken. In essence the higher the occupancy levels the more time people spent searching for spaces. In operational terms over 85% occupancy inferred the car park was effectively full. It was agreed that in this instance the report should have referred to Central Hereford car parks.
- 7) Responding to a question concerning managing the availability of parking spaces the Chairman commented that there should be clear signage on approach routes and these should be clear about the type of parking available. The possible future introduction of 'intelligent signs' to advise that a car park was full could assist in reducing the amount of circulating traffic searching for a space. The Review Group had not specified the cost of 'intelligent signage as this would be dependent on the scale of implementation.
- 8) The administration cost of partial refunds for residents passes, referred to in paragraph 7.3.4 [1.3], was considered to be minimal and such an amendment to the scheme would facilitate the early sale of new passes to new residents.
- 9) In response to comments concerning maintenance issues (referred to at 7.3.4 [1.3]), the Committee noted that the Environment Directorate held a list of car parks requiring maintenance.
- 10) The Review Group clarified the reference to 'a need for more time limited parking restrictions in shopping areas', referred to in paragraph 7.5.5. [3.1], as the need to generally improve the turnover of on-street spaces in the Market Towns, particularly when traffic orders are revised.
- 11) The Committee noted that overall parking provision in Bromyard had reduced following the recent development of a number of sites (see 7.6.1[Bromyard]). The Review Group had identified the need for new provision in Bromyard as part of the review of the service property requirements, referred to at paragraph 10.1. Reference was made to the difficulty in parking in the Rowberry Street free car park, due to long-term parking, including it was thought by Council staff. The Committee questioned whether implementing time restrictions, rather than charging,

on Rowberry Street could improve the turnover of spaces.

- 12) The Chairman explained that establishing the 'strategic worth' of a car park (paragraph 4.5) should inform the review of Property Needs (paragraph 10.1). The Review Group felt that this suggested action should then assist in identifying performance management objectives for the service, as referred to in the 'desired outcomes' for the review specified in Annex 1 to the report.
- 13) In clarifying the statement at 7.6.1 [Ross] recommending consideration of the identification of free parking in Ross, the Committee were informed that unlike the other Market Towns in the County, Ross had no designated free car park.

The Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) thanked the Committee for undertaking the review. In relation to a Park and Ride scheme he informed the Committee that initial work on identifying potential operators and parking locations was underway. However, problems were being experienced in identifying suitable routes for park and ride busses to use. He also informed the Committee that at this point in time he did not intend to withdraw parking concessions for the elderly, but appreciated the Review Group raising the issue in the report as a possible option for future consideration.

**RESOLVED: That subject to including that the Cabinet Member consider the possible implementation of time restrictions on Rowberry Street car park at Bromyard, the conclusions contained in the Parking Strategy Review report be endorsed and the report be submitted to the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) for consideration.**

The meeting ended at 11.30 a.m.

**CHAIRMAN**



## TRUNK ROADS IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Report By: Director of Environment

### Wards Affected

County wide

### Purpose

To consider the management of Trunk Roads in Herefordshire by the Highways Agency.

### Reasons

In response to concerns from Local Members about safety on the A49 in the Ashton and Wellington areas, the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 8 December 2004 requested the opportunity to discuss the management of Trunk Roads with representatives of the Highways Agency.

### Considerations

1. Trunk Roads and Motorways are managed by the Highways Agency as an operating agency of the Government. In Herefordshire, these roads are:
  - a. M50 Motorway
  - b. A40
  - c. A49
  - d. A465 (Welsh border- Pontrilas to Hereford)
2. Within the national hierarchy of trunk routes, the A465 and A40 (from the Gloucestershire boundary to Over Ross roundabout) are designated as "non-core" routes and are expected to be de-trunked. The section of the A40 is likely to be de-trunked in 2005 or 2006. A decision on the future of the A465 is subject to continuing discussions with the Welsh Assembly Government to agree the future status of this route in Wales. Within the current Local Transport Plan (LTP), the Council has accepted the principle of detrunking these routes, subject to the A465 also being detrunked in Wales.
3. The Highways Agency has initiated a national programme of trunk road reviews to produce Route Management Strategies (RMS). The RMS for the A49 (Ross-on-Wye to Shrewsbury) was published on 17 December 2004, a copy of which was placed in the Members room library. An RMS for the M50/A40 is currently being developed. The RMS sets out a framework within which the operational management of the route will be developed but does not generally define site-specific actions. The Highways Agency will follow procedures set out in their Programme Objectives Guide to identify and deliver individual projects.
4. During the development of the RMS for the A49, Herefordshire Council stressed that safety was a high priority. Although, trunk roads in Herefordshire represent only 3% of

the total highway network, approximately 23% of all personal injury accidents occur on the trunk roads. As confirmed within the A49 RMS, the accident rate on several sections of the A49 is above the national average for the class of road.

5. The Government has set out national targets for casualty reduction. These targets apply to Herefordshire Council, as local highway authority, and the Highways Agency. There is a national Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI99) which records progress against the casualty reduction targets.
6. The indicator is based on data from all roads within the county, including trunk roads. There have been significant reductions in the number of Killed and Seriously Injured Casualties (KSIs) on Herefordshire's roads in recent years, at a level well ahead of the national targets. In part, the improvement in road safety is due to the success of targeted programmes of road safety measures by both the Council and Highways Agency.
7. Because the two highway authorities are working across different geographical areas with very different network characteristics, there are some significant differences in the way that the Council and the Highways Agency set priority rankings for delivering road safety programmes. The Highways Agency assesses priorities based on the whole of its operating region (the West Midlands) and not simply across its network within Herefordshire.
8. This difference in approach will become an issue of increasing concern for Herefordshire if the delivery of casualty reduction on the trunk roads in the county fails to keep pace with the local application of the national targets.
9. The 23% of injury accidents that occur on trunk roads count against Herefordshire Council's BVPI 99 target. However, Herefordshire Council has little or no responsibility for this 3% of the highway network. This will also impact on the Council's target for reducing accidents, contained in the second Local Public Service Agreement.
10. Officers of the Council and the Highways Agency have begun discussions to identify options that might be considered if the delivery of casualty reduction schemes on trunk roads in Herefordshire were to be accelerated. There may be an opportunity to promote additional resources for the trunk roads through the second Local Public Service Agreement or the second Local Transport Plan but there is not yet any indication that the Highways Agency itself would consider adjusting its resources to provide greater local emphasis to casualty reduction.
11. Following the discussion about safety on the A49 at the meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 8 December 2004, the Highways Agency has agreed to make a presentation to the Committee at this meeting. Member's questions arising at and subsequent to that meeting have been forwarded to the Highways Agency for their comment. There will be an opportunity for the members of the Committee to put questions to the representatives from the Agency.

## Financial Implications

If the Council wished, consideration could be given to diverting LTP resources to casualty reduction schemes on trunk roads in the county. This would require corresponding reductions in other LTP programme areas. Failure to meet the LPSA target could adversely affect the potential for performance improvement grant.

## Risks

The Council does not currently include personal injury accidents on trunk roads within its assessment procedure for developing annual road safety programmes. The council is not under a duty to assess those risks on trunk roads but does have powers that would allow consideration to be given to the introduction of schemes to reduce those risks.

## Recommendations

### THAT:

- a) **the Committee consider the information provided by the Highways Agency and note the Route Management Strategy for the A49 and;**
- b) **the Committee consider whether there are any issues they wish to suggest that the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) raises with the Highways Agency and the Department for Transport.**

## Background Papers

- A49 Route Management Strategy (Highways Agency 2004)

