

A G E N D A

Environment Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday, 6th June, 2005**

Time: **10.00 a.m.**

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

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

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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,
J.G.S. Guthrie, R. Mills, J.W. Newman and Miss F. Short

	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
To receive apologies for absence.	
2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)	
To receive details any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.	
4. MINUTES	1 - 4
To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th March, 2005.	
5. HEREFORDSHIRE PROVISIONAL LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2006/7 TO 2010/11	5 - 18
To consider the draft Herefordshire Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/7 - 2010/11 and enable Members to make comments for consideration by Cabinet.	
6. CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY & REVISED POLICY	19 - 42
To comment on the consultation draft of the Corporate Environment Strategy, summarising the policy aims, objectives and action plans that the Council has adopted and to comment on the proposed revision of the Council's current Environmental policy, passed in June 2002 before certification to ISO 14001.	
7. BIODIVERSITY	43 - 50
To consider the actions taken in relation to biodiversity conservation and proposals for the development of a related strategic framework directing the future work of the Council upon this activity.	
8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/06	51 - 58
To inform Members of the latest position with regard to the Environment Capital Programme for 2005/06.	

9.	ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET 2005/06 AND OUTTURN 2004/05	59 - 60
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10.	BEST VALUE REVIEW OF COMMERCIAL ENFORCEMENT - STAGE 3 REPORT	61 - 84
	To consider the Stage 3 Report of the Commercial Enforcement Review.	
11.	GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (GEM) REPORT FOR 2004/05	85 - 114
	To review the Council's environmental management / ISO 14001 system over 2004/05 to ensure that it continues to be suitable, adequate and effective and deliver improvement in environmental performance.	
12.	BEST VALUE REVIEWS - IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVEMENT PLANS	115 - 118
	To report the remaining actions and the exceptions to the programmed progress in the improvement plans resulting from the reviews of Development Control, Public Conveniences, and Public Rights of Way.	
13.	MONITORING OF 2004/2005 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - APRIL 2004 TO MARCH 2005	119 - 126
	To update Members on the exceptions to the targeted progress made by the Environment Directorate for the full year April 2004 to March 2005 towards achieving the performance indicators / targets which appear in the Council's Corporate Plan.	
14.	TRUNK ROADS IN HEREFORDSHIRE	127 - 142
	To consider the written response from the Highways Agency to the issues raised by Members at the meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 28 February 2005.	

PUBLIC INFORMATION

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Council has established Scrutiny Committees for Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing; Children's Services; Community Services; Environment and Health. 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
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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, 30th March, 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

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

Councillors: 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 P.J. Edwards (Cabinet Member), Ms. G.A. Powell and
R.M. Wilson (Cabinet Member)

51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor P. J. Dauncey.

52. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

There were no substitutes.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

54. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That subject to the deletion of the penultimate paragraph, "The Chairman thanked..." in minute number 50, the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th February, 2005 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

55. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee was advised of progress of the 2004/05 Capital Programme for Environment areas within the overall context of the Herefordshire Council Capital Programme.

The Director of Environment outlined the Capital Programme budgetary position and commented that as part of the budgetary process a number of minor changes to the programme had occurred.

The Assistant County Treasurer reported that the total of the Capital Programme had decreased from £12,044,105 notified to the previous meeting to £11,927,015, indicated in appendix 1 to the report. The total spent or committed to 31st January 2005 was £10.825 million or 90% of the revised forecast.

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

- The Marlbrook Cycle Way, being an extension off the Great Western Way, had attracted a £30,000 grant which in turn had resulted in an underspend in budget.

- The budget for Rural Footway Improvements provided for new footways, the schemes for which were selected according to predetermined priorities.
- Due to difficulty in identifying an appropriate site, the budget for Vehicle Activated Signs had been re-allocated.
- The budget allocation for the Hereford Crematorium scheme had now been utilised.
- The Pedestrian Crossing Improvement budget had now been utilised.
- Any underspend in the Bus Priority Measures budget would be used to improve the SCOOT system (traffic signal management system).

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

56. ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee was advised of the position on the Environment Programme area revenue budgets for the period 31st January, 2005, including any variations against budget at this stage of the year.

The Director of Environment and the Assistant County Treasurer reported that the total Environment budget for 2004/05 was £24,015,000 as reported to the last meeting. A net underspending of £1,515,000 was anticipated during 2004/05 from Environment General (£1,055,000), Regulatory (£40,000) and Planning (£420,000). With the exception of any underspending on the Waste Management PFI contract any underspendings would be carried forward into 2005/6. In addition it was expected that approximately £100,000 of the Planning Development Grant would be carried forward into 2005/06, and may be used to offset any reduction in planning income. A detailed report on budget monitoring was attached to the report at appendix 1.

The Committee debated staff issues in relation to meeting targets, particularly in planning, and noted that a balance needed to be struck between resourcing the current high level of planning activity and the future staffing levels for the perceived normal workloads.

The Committee also debated the Government proposals for increasing the level of fees paid for both domestic and business planning applications. The Committee noted the Cabinet Member (Environment) response concerning the need for business applications, particularly the major applications, to reflect the true cost to the Council.

The Public Conveniences improvement programme was proceeding. The refurbishment of Public Conveniences at Tenbury Road, Bromyard, and East Street, Hereford had commenced. However, the realisation of capital receipts from the sale of sites identified in the review had been slower than anticipated.

A review was underway into the complex issue of Schools being designated trade waste sites and their involvement, particularly Eco-schools, in the recycling initiatives.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

57. MONITORING OF 2004/2005 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - APRIL 2004 TO JANUARY 2005

The Committee was updated on the exceptions to the targeted progress made by the Environment Directorate for the ten months April 2004 to January 2005 towards

achieving the performance indicators/targets which appeared in the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Committee noted that unfortunately the estimated outturn for BV84 (Kg of household waste per head per annum) continued to indicate a year on year increase. However, the current performance for BV82b (household waste composted) was above the target and compared very favourably with the target for 2006/07. In response to views that the Government be lobbied to do more to reduce waste e.g. a reduction in packaging materials or imposing a tax on carrier bags, the Committee noted the Government lobbying undertaken by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Joint Waste Forum.

In relation to BV166, the Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards reported that performance by housing health inspection had improved thereby contributing to the improvement of the estimated outturn figure. However, he expressed a degree of scepticism over how the BV166 target reflected the service in practice. He acknowledged that, in general, various factors affected target performance e.g. the calculation of the number of households, the inclusion of street sweepings or an early or late growing season.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

58. 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.

During the course of debate the Committee noted that:

- A draft Highway Design Guide had been produced by Owen Williams, which was currently subject to consultation.
- The refurbishment of Public Conveniences at Tenbury Road, Bromyard, and East Street, Hereford had commenced. However, the realisation of capital receipts from the sale of sites identified in the review had been slower than anticipated. The Committee also debated issues relating to maintenance costs and facility closing times. The Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards acknowledged that in view of changes to late night opening hours for licensed premises, the operating hours of public conveniences, particularly in Hereford City centre may need to be revised.
- The Public Rights of Way Strategy had been approved by Cabinet on 24th March, 2005.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

59. ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2005/2006

The Committee considered a new work programme as set out in the report.

During the course of discussion the following additional subjects were suggested for inclusion in the programme:

- Highways Agency Update - Following the meeting with the Highways Agency on 28th February, 2005 the Committee wished to receive at its meeting in June 2005 an update on any outstanding issues from that meeting and an

indication of the working relationship between the Highways Agency and the Council.

- PROW Strategy - A number of issues were raised in relation to the implementation of the Public Rights of Way (PROW) Strategy which had been approved by Cabinet on 24th March, 2005. Appreciating that an update report was programmed for March 2006, the Committee requested that an interim report on the impact of the introduction of the PROW Strategy be programmed for September, 2005.
- Flooding issues in the County – in view of the various issues concerning riparian management and ownership and changes to the local drainage boards, the Committee requested that an additional meeting be programmed to discuss with the Environment Agency the various County-wide flooding issues. It was proposed that the Head of Highways and Transportation co-ordinate Councillors comments and arrange a meeting with the Environment Agency as soon as convenient.

RESOLVED: That subject to the inclusion of the above three items the Environment Scrutiny Committee work programme be approved and recommended to the Strategic Monitoring Committee.

The meeting ended at 11.42 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

HEREFORDSHIRE PROVISIONAL LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2006/7 TO 2010/11

Report By: **DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT**

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To consider the draft Herefordshire Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/7 - 2010/11 and enable Members to make comments for consideration by Cabinet.

Financial Implications

2. None as a result of this report. However, the Local Transport Plan (LTP) will be submitted to Government and the quality of the Plan will contribute to overall funding available for Highways and Transportation capital on future years spend. Current indications from Government are that this will be in the region of £11M per year and approximately £55M over the whole period (excluding major/exceptional scheme bids). LTP policy also has an influence on a range of revenue programmes including highway maintenance and supported bus services.

Background

About the LTP

3. The second Local Transport Plan will constitute the Council's transportation policies and strategy for the five year period 2006/7 to 2010/11. It will include a costed programme of transport improvement schemes for the period which have been developed with the aim of delivering key outcomes including improved accessibility, safer roads, reduced congestion and a safeguarded environment. This is Herefordshire's second Local Transport Plan (LTP2) and will follow on from the first LTP which covers the period 2000/1 – 2005/6.
4. A copy of the Executive Summary for the draft Local Transport Plan 2006/7 to 2010/11 is provided at Appendix 1 to this report and a copy of the current draft of the full plan has been placed in the Members' Room and can also be viewed on the Council's website at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ltp.
5. A Provisional Local Transport Plan must be submitted to Government by 29 July 2005 and the Council will have the opportunity to make further revisions and submit a finalised Local Transport Plan by 31 March 2006.

Achieving the core objectives of the first LTP

6. We have made good progress in working towards the core objectives of the first LTP and this has been recognised in the award of Centre of Excellence in Local Transport Delivery status. Our progress in working towards the objectives is summarised below:

- ***Support access to services in urban and rural areas***

We have invested in a number of important public transport initiatives which have improved both urban and rural access. Key schemes include

- the introduction of 50 new low floor buses;
- refurbished bus stations in Hereford and Leominster;
- improvements at Leominster rail station; and
- an ongoing programme of upgrading stops to enable full access.

Overall bus patronage has increased by over 500,000 from 2001/2 to 2003/4 and bus user satisfaction has increased from 47% to 61%. We have also seen a 30% increase in rail use at local stations (from a 1999 base).

We have also supported Community Transport provision throughout the County and have worked closely with the Herefordshire Rural Transport Partnership. to develop projects which meet local needs and the needs of specific user groups such as the elderly, young people and people with physical and mental disabilities. Over 45,000 journeys using community transport are supported each year providing people with door to door access to key services such as shops, health facilities, leisure and employment.

Effective maintenance of the highway network has also been very important to maintaining access for County residents and longer distance travellers. The extent of the asset is significant – over 3000km of publicly maintained highway, nearly 700 bridges and 13,000 street lights. In 2003/4 we carried out of 210km of highway maintenance schemes and 130 bridges received maintenance treatment.

- ***Create a safe environment and support healthy lifestyles***

Our targeted road safety improvements schemes, speed management programme and a comprehensive programme of road safety education, training and publicity working with schools and local communities have brought significant improvements in road safety across the County resulting in a 43% reduction in the most serious casualties (from 1994-98 average to 2004). Serious road traffic casualties amongst children have also been reduced from an annual average of 21 (1994-98) to below 10 for the past four years (2001-04).

In addition to tackling road safety accidents we have also continued to make improvements for pedestrians and cyclists, enabling the promotion of more active lifestyles and reducing reliance on the car. Pedestrian improvements include new controlled crossings, dropped kerbs and rural footway schemes. We have developed the cycle network with on and off-road routes, advanced stop lines at signalised junctions and a comprehensive programme of cycle parking provision at key destinations. We have also signed the long distance National Byway route through County between Leominster and Ledbury. Cycling levels have increased by 13% (from 2001/2 to 2003/4) and monitoring of pedestrian movements across in Hereford City Centre have increased by 48% from 1999/2000 to 2003/4.

We have now assisted over 40 schools in developing School Travel Plans and have made good progress in halting the trend for more and more children to be driven to school and have seen a slight increase in walking and cycling. Key schemes which we have implemented to help support sustainable transport on school journeys include 20mph zones, new footway links, parents waiting areas, improved cycle parking and new signal controlled crossings.

- ***Support sustainable economic growth and support the vitality and viability of urban and rural centres***

Implementation of the Local Transport Plan strategy has played an important role in supporting sustainable economic growth within the County particularly through support for sustainable transport modes such as public transport, walking and cycling. We have provided direct assistance to local businesses and employees through a programme of behavioural change initiatives which help demonstrate how each business/employee can reduce their transport impacts.

Key initiatives include:

- establishment of the www.twoshare.co.uk car sharing database;
- provision of promotional material including the Hereford mini map which identifies the City's sustainable transport infrastructure; and
- establishment of the Business Travel Fund which provides small levels of funding to assist businesses implementing Travel Plans.

So far, over 30 businesses have been supported in their development of travel plans and over 14% (4,387) of employees in Hereford City are now covered by a travel plan.

We have delivered several important infrastructure projects which have facilitated more efficient traffic movements around the County and help support the viability of urban and rural settlements:

- Leominster Industrial Estate Access Road;
- replacement of the bridge at Bridge Sollers;
- reconstruction of the Bromyard Station Railway Bridge; and
- the upgrading of 2.5km of the A4103 Roman Road.

- ***Protect and enhance the natural and built environment***

In addition to supporting sustainable transport modes, as summarised above, which has enabled us to protect the environment from un-restrained traffic growth we have also taken all opportunities to incorporate enhancement as part of schemes where possible. Examples include:

- reconstruction of the bridge in Ewyas Harold which incorporated a bypass route for otters and the upgraded A4103 Roman Road which has incorporated badger underpasses;
- the highway verge maintenance regime has been modified to reduce the extent of the verge which is cut, ensuring safe visibility is maintained at junctions and protected verges are cut by hand;
- townscape enhancements have been achieved through the use of more attractive materials, improved signing and lining and the replacement of damaged materials as key elements of the refurbishment of Leominster Bus Station and Hereford Country Bus Station; and
- the Eign Gate refurbishment scheme in Hereford which will make a significant improvement to the city centre environment and improve the attractiveness of Eign Gate as a retailing location.

The LTP2 Strategy

7. The second LTP strategy marks a continuation of that developed and implemented for the first LTP which has resulted in the Council being awarded Centre of Excellence in Local Transport Delivery status. The development of the strategy has been informed by a number of studies which have been carried out to develop key areas of policy:

- Hereford Transport Review – this enabled a complete review of the transport strategy for the City and recommended a long term strategy which looks as far forward as 2031
 - Hereford Park and Ride Study – the study assessed feasibility of developing two sites, one to the north and one to the south of the City, and adjacent to the A49
 - North West Herefordshire HGV Study – this has identified the need for traffic management improvements in several rural communities in the north west of the County where HGV levels are having a detrimental impact on quality of life.
8. The provisional LTP2 has also had to take into account developing areas of national transport policy. Policy statements are included for the following:
- Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan;
 - Accessibility Planning;
 - Bus and Community Transport Strategy which includes an Information Strategy;
 - Transport Asset Management Plan; and
 - Network Management Duty
9. The priorities for investment are set out in four investment strategies:
- Hereford Transport Strategy (which includes Hereford City and adjoining parishes);
 - Rural Herefordshire Transport Strategy;
 - Road Safety Strategy; and
 - Maintaining the Transport Network.
10. The Major Scheme priorities are:
1. Implement the Rotherwas Access Road scheme by 2008;
 2. To develop proposals and submit a major scheme bid for the A49 Ross Road to A465 Abergavenny Road link 2008-11. This scheme will incorporate further assessment of the Hereford Outer Relief Road and will need to be coordinated with a review of the County's land use planning policies for the period after the current Unitary Development Plan;
 3. Continue to monitor traffic levels and HGV movements through the North West Herefordshire communities (Eardisley, Pembridge, Lyonshall and Shobdon) to ascertain if a road scheme would be justified for the period beyond LTP2; and
 4. To support an extension to the Ledbury Bypass to be funded through private developer contributions and linked to the Unitary Development Plan's proposals for employment land allocations.
11. Government has indicated that authorities may also make separate Exceptional Scheme Bids for schemes which cost up to £5M if they can demonstrate that the scheme is

innovative and could develop best practice for other authorities to follow. The LTP will include proposals for an Exceptional Scheme Bid for the Hereford Intelligent Transport System. More work will be needed to develop the bid which will consider the introduction of new IT systems for Hereford City which will provide us with better control of traffic signals, enable bus priority at signals, provide real time information for car drivers and bus users and real time information on car parking spaces and can assist in enabling the emergency services attending incidents. A package of applications of this type could enable more efficient use of the City's existing transport network and could help tackle air quality problems related to the A49 trunk road.

The Executive Summary at Appendix 1 provides additional details about the key proposals included in these four investment strategies.

Consultation and Involvement

12. A seminar for all Members to help with the review of the first LTP was held in February 2004 and a second seminar to outline the key elements of LTP2 to Members was held on 30 March, 2005. Members were also able to comment on major scheme priorities. Members' views have been considered in preparing the Provisional LTP.
13. Comprehensive consultation has been conducted during the autumn of 2004 when all households received an informative leaflet explaining the need to review the LTP and a questionnaire was provided allowing residents to make comments on their priorities. Presentations were also given to all Local Area Forums and the feedback was also encouraged through the website. Extensive consultation and involvement has also been carried out with stakeholders through the Herefordshire Partnership Transport Ambition Group and sub groups including the Herefordshire Cycle Forum, Bus Operators Forum and Pedestrian Access Forum.

What happens next

14. The Provisional Plan will be further revised taking into account comments from this Committee and to ensure that it fully addresses all aspects of Government guidance prior to submission in July.
15. The Provisional Plan will be considered by Cabinet and then by Full Council as part of the Council's Policy Framework.
16. After submission of the Plan in July, Government will undertake a detailed assessment which will be published late in 2005 at which time the financial settlement will also be announced. The Council will then have the opportunity to revise its strategy and delivery programme in accordance with the confirmed funding guideline and this will be dealt with in the revised submission in March 2006.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT;

- (a) Members note the content of this report.**
- (b) Make comments for the consideration of the Director of Environment and the Cabinet Member for Highways and**

Transportation when finalising the Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix 1: Final draft Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11 Executive Summary
- Final draft Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11 (Hard copy in the Members' Room and available on the website – www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ltp)

Appendix 1: Final draft Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11

Executive Summary

Herefordshire’s second Local Transport Plan covers the period 2006/7 to 2010/11. It sets out the Council’s strategy for developing an integrated transport system that supports the County’s sustainable economic growth and provides for greater social inclusion. This Plan builds upon our successful first LTP, which covered the period 2001/2 to 2005/6, and marks an increased focus on delivery to achieve a range of outcomes that reflect local and national priorities.

The Plan is seeking to work towards the following vision:

“A sustainable and integrated transport system which recognises the distinctive characteristics of Herefordshire’s rural and urban areas and provides for the transport needs of residents, visitors and the business community”

In working towards this vision it is focused on delivering important outcomes which will improve the quality of life for local people and help safeguard the local environment and support sustainable development. Priorities are summarised in the following table:

Key Priorities for the Local Transport Plan

Shared Priorities (Agreed between Government and the Local Government Association)	Key Outcomes (Developed in consultation with local stakeholders)
Delivering Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to jobs & services • Increased use of sustainable modes of travel
Tackling Congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced congestion • Assets maintained well • Supported and enabled economic development • Increased use of sustainable modes of travel
Safer Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved safety • Increased use of sustainable modes of travel
Better Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarded environment • Reduced congestion • Increased use of sustainable modes of travel

Building on Success – Centre of Excellence in Local Transport Delivery

We are proud of the progress we have made through the first Local Transport Plan that has resulted in us being awarded Centre of Excellence status for Local Transport Delivery. The award acknowledges particular expertise in terms of road safety and public transport in rural/urban areas.

Key successes during the first LTP period include:

- 50 new low floor buses which have helped achieve an 11% increase in patronage through increased quality and accessibility
- Bus station refurbishments in Leominster and Hereford providing full access for disabled people and personal security improvements
- Targeted road safety improvements and a comprehensive programme of road safety education, training and publicity working with schools and local communities resulting in a 43% reduction on the most serious casualties
- New rural footways and pedestrian access improvements in Hereford and the market towns
- More cycle routes throughout the County and cycle parking in Hereford and all market towns
- A successful Rural Transport Partnership that has helped support the work of the seven community transport projects throughout the County.
- A programme of behavioural change initiatives that has supported over xx businesses implementing their travel plans
- School travel initiatives which have supported over a third of schools with travel plans
- A replacement bridge at Bridge Sollers which has provided a vital link to help support the local agricultural economy and extend access between communities either side of the River Wye
- A4103 Roman Road improvement scheme which has included the rebuilding of over 2km of the road and the provision of a new pedestrian and cycle route improving access between the City and Credenhill.

Priorities for Investment – Delivering Outcomes

Government has indicated that we are likely to attract around £11M per year for capital investment for the County's transport network over the LTP2 period. Approximately three quarters of this amount will be allocated towards maintaining the transport network (the Maintenance Block) and the remainder will be allocated towards new transport infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements (the

Integrated Transport Block). This level of funding is broadly in line with that received for the first LTP.

Our key priorities for Investment are summarised in line with the LTP's 4 investment strategies:

Hereford Transport Strategy

The Hereford Transport Strategy, which has developed from the strategy in LTP1, has been informed by the Hereford Transport Review and has been subject to rigorous option testing to ensure that measures meet environmental, social and economic objectives and fit within a longer term strategy for the City. The main priorities in Hereford have been identified in consultation with local stakeholders and include tackling congestion, improving access and safety. Key investment proposals to help deliver these priorities include:

- **Behavioural change** – we acknowledge that we will not be able to build our way out of all of Hereford's transport problems and a key element of our strategy is to encourage behavioural change, reducing the need to travel where possible and encouraging the use of sustainable modes. We have stepped up our programmes for supporting school and workplace travel plans and will continue to promote the sustainable transport infrastructure which we are developing as part of our overall strategy. We have reviewed our approach to Safer Routes to School and now require schools to commit to developing and implementing their own travel plans before infrastructure improvements are implemented.
- **Ongoing public transport improvements** – including continued upgrading of bus stops and shelters to improve accessibility and quality for passengers, ongoing development of proposals for a single, centrally located interchange in coordination with proposals for Edgar Street Grid. We also will seek to work in partnership with the rail industry to provide step free access at Hereford Rail Station.
- **Improving and extending the cycle network** – we will continue to develop the City's cycle network and will seek to extend the Great Western Way route to the north of the City providing safe and direct access to large employment, retailing and leisure facilities adjacent to Holmer Road.
- **Permanent Park and Ride** – development of permanent sites to the north and south of the city centre to provide first class public transport access into the central area. This will reduce traffic congestion in the central area and will

improve access for residents from the rural areas travelling in to Hereford for work, retailing, health and leisure based trips.

- **City Centre Pedestrian and Townscape Improvements** – we have implemented a trial pedestrianisation scheme for Widemarsh Street and, subject to further assessment, intend to take forward this scheme and implement permanent proposals with significant townscape improvements for other parts of the central area. These proposals will bring real improvements for pedestrians and will incorporate better access for people with mobility difficulties. Enhancements to the central area will help sustain the viability and attractiveness of Hereford as an important retailing destination.
- **Hereford Intelligent Transport System (Exceptional Scheme Bid)** – development of an intelligent transport system to provide traffic control, bus priority, traffic and traveller information and car park guidance to enable more efficient use of our existing network and help reduce congestion. We intend to submit an Exceptional Scheme Bid to Government in 2007/8 to secure the funding required to develop this system.
- **Rotherwas Access Road and the A49 to A465 link (Major Scheme Proposals)** – we have re-submitted the major scheme bid for the Rotherwas Access Road and aim to complete this important scheme, which will bring both transport and regeneration benefits, by 2008. In working towards the longer term strategy for Hereford we will develop major scheme proposals for the A49 Ross Road to A465 Abergavenny Road link which would form the next stage of a possible outer relief road for the City. We aim to secure major scheme funding approval for this scheme towards the end of the LTP2 period.

Rural Herefordshire Transport Strategy

Our main priorities for the market towns and rural areas are to improve access, road safety and safeguard the environment. We have undertaken further work to help identify how best to address these priorities including a complete review of the Bus and Community Transport Strategy, the Rural Transport Partnership has prepared a new action plan covering the same period of LTP2 and we are using Accessibility Planning software (Accession) to provide better information about accessibility needs. In addition, the North West Herefordshire HGV Study has enabled us to prioritise investment proposals to reduce the impact of freight traffic and we have also incorporated elements of the emerging Rights of Way Improvement Plan into LTP particularly in respect of access improvements. The key investment proposals for Rural Herefordshire are:

- **Improving public and community transport** – we are committed to providing the best possible public transport service and will undertake a comprehensive review of the supported bus network, examining feasibility of replacing conventional bus services with demand responsive or Community Transport services. We will use Accessibility Planning software Accession to help carry out this review and identify areas of under-provision. We will also seek to develop a range of multi-operator tickets to make journeys easier to plan. Following the success of service frequency increases on the Hereford-Abergavenny service, we will seek to work in partnership with operators to develop high frequency routes and bid for funding through ‘Kick-Start’.
- **Better access to rail** – a study is being carried out during 2005/6 to assess feasibility for step free access at Leominster and Ledbury rail stations. We will seek to work in partnership with the rail industry to establish technical and funding support for these important schemes which we aim to take forward during LTP2 period.
- **Cycle network development** – we will continue to develop cycle networks in the market towns including providing more cycle parking and, in partnership with Sustrans, will develop longer distance rural routes (Routes 44&46) which will help us promote more cycling and encourage healthier lifestyles.
- **Pedestrian access improvements and rights of way** – we have an ongoing programme to provide new rural footways to ensure that residents in rural settlements can access local facilities, safely on foot. The emerging Rights of Way Improvement Plan is being incorporated into the LTP and will enable us to identify further opportunities for pedestrian access by upgrading the rights of way network to improve links to shops, schools and other facilities in rural areas.
- **North West Herefordshire HGV Traffic Management Improvements** – our study into HGV impacts on the communities of Eardisley, Pembridge, Lyonshall and Shobdon has highlighted the need for sensitive traffic management improvements which will reduce speeds through these historic villages. We have identified a number of local freight operators and will establish a Freight Quality Partnership with local representatives to help prioritise proposals to include speed reductions, gateway treatments and traffic calming features in keeping with high quality local environments over LTP2 period. We will be seeking to increase funding for these proposals through contributions resulting from local developments.

Road Safety Strategy

We wish to maintain the excellent progress made during LTP1 in reducing the most serious road safety casualties and stabilising slight casualties and will continue to implement a wide range of road safety improvement measures, supported by a vigorous education, training and publicity campaign. An important element of our progress to date has been the establishment of effective partnerships with other organisations including West Mercia Constabulary, the Safety Camera Partnership and the Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership. We will seek to work closely with the Highways Agency to ensure that road traffic accidents on the trunk road network are properly addressed and help us meet our stretched targets. We have also achieved real improvements through closer coordination of road safety and highway maintenance projects and will continue to develop this approach during the LTP2 period. Road safety measures for LTP2 include:

- **Engineering schemes** – comprising mass actions sites combining safety and maintenance improvements, route improvements where several low cost engineering projects are combined to bring a greater overall benefit and minor highway improvements which treat specific problems such as substandard junctions.
- **Speed management** – we have updated our Speed Limit Policy since publication of LTP1 and currently await the outcome of Government consultation before conducting a further review. We will continue to work through the Safety Camera Partnership to identify sites where safety cameras will help reduce collisions and casualties.
- **Education, training and publicity** – continuing our well developed campaign which targets young road users through initiatives such as on and off road cycle training, junior road safety officers and working with pre-driver age groups in the form of attitude awareness training. Working with adult road users through the National Driver Improvement Scheme, Plus Pass aimed at novice drivers and promoting safer motorcycling through the Herefordshire Advanced Rider Training Scheme.

Maintaining the Transport Network and Transport Asset Management

The transport network is one of the County's most important assets and it is vital that it is properly maintained, ensuring that people can move around the County safely and enabling the efficient movement of goods and services to help sustain the local economy. With over 3000km of public highway, 688 bridges and 13000 streetlights this presents a considerable challenge. Whilst we managed to improve the condition

of the network during LTP1 we want to continue improving our performance and we are currently developing the Transport Asset Management for the County. This will be completed in time for the full LTP2 in March 2006 and will provide us with better information to improve decision making and achieve greater efficiencies.

Managing Performance and Value for Money

In seeking to deliver an ambitious programme of transport improvements which range from relatively small schemes such as installing new cycle parking to larger complex projects such as a new road it is important that we effectively manage our performance and ensure value for money.

Indicators

In focusing on delivering outcomes such as reducing congestion, improving access and safer roads we have adopted a range of indicators which will form the basis for performance management and will be reported through Annual Progress Reports (as has been the case with LTP1) so that overall progress is transparent and enables us to review our programmes if required.

A number of these indicators will follow on from LTP1 including:

- improving road condition;
- reducing the most serious road traffic casualties;
- bus patronage and bus satisfaction;
- reducing growth in road traffic volumes; and
- increasing the level of cycling.

We have also adopted new indicators for LTP2 including:

- improving bus punctuality;
- reducing congestion; and
- improving access via the public transport network.

Delivering Value for Money

We are committed to making best use of our limited resources for transport improvements and will continue to improve efficiency in the implementation of schemes. The Herefordshire Strategic Delivery Partnership which combines the

resources of Herefordshire Council, Owen Williams and Herefordshire Jarvis Services contains a suite of key performance indicators with the aim of securing continuous improvements in delivery from all partners. The contract also provides for annual efficiency reductions in works prices which should ensure continual improvements through the LTP2 programme.

In addition, we will ensure that as we develop our approach to emerging initiatives such as the Transport Asset Management Plan, Accessibility Planning and the new Network Management Duty we will take all opportunities to improve our services and where possible form effective partnerships with other service providers.

CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY & REVISED POLICY

Report By: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Purpose

1. To comment on the consultation draft of the Corporate Environment Strategy, summarising the policy aims, objectives and action plans that the Council has adopted and;

To comment on the proposed revision of the Council's current Environmental policy, passed in June 2002 before certification to ISO 14001.

Financial Implications

2. No additional implications.

Considerations

3. The Corporate Environment Strategy provides partners and managers across the Council with an overview of major environmental commitments that have already been made by the authority. Some are mandatory while others are led by the need to control costs. All are linked through the agreed ambitions of the Herefordshire Plan and the Corporate Plan (2005/08), which states that one of the Council's top eight priorities for the period of the Plan is "to protect the environment, including recycling much more waste and significantly reducing carbon emissions."
4. Internally the Council is committed to tackling its own environmental impacts, such as waste, energy and transport, right across Council services through its certification to ISO 14001 the international environmental management standard. Externally the authority makes a major contribution to Herefordshire's environment through working in partnership with other organisations and the wider community.
5. The strategy is backed by an integrated action plan that aligns the aims and objectives described in the strategy with the timed targets adopted for each action.
6. The proposed revision of the policy takes account of:-
 - ◆ The certification to ISO 14001 of numerous Council services and functions since the policy was passed,
 - ◆ The change from the initial focus on the Council's direct environmental impacts out to include public facing services such as Waste Management and Transportation,
 - ◆ Revisions to the ISO 14001 standard in 2004.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the strategy and policy are noted, subject to any comments the Committee may wish to refer to the Cabinet Member (Environment) before its approval.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None



CONSULTATION DRAFT

Herefordshire Council Corporate Environment Strategy

2005 to 2010

May 2005

Environment Directorate
P.O. Box 167
Plough Lane
Hereford
HR4 0WY

Telephone:
Hereford (01432) 260000
<http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk>



FORWARD

This Environment Strategy seeks to place environmental issues on an equal footing with economic and social concerns within the context of sustainable development, to which the Council is committed through the Herefordshire Plan.

This is a tough challenge, as it requires us all to become more aware of the environmental issues that we face and the consequences of our actions. Everything we do has environmental consequences and the consequences of the choices we make for our shared environment are becoming more obvious as we learn more about the world around us. The Environmental Strategy supports people - both members of the public, Council staff and partner organisations - in changing their behaviour to make better choices to help protect our local environment. We are motivated to move towards a clean, green and sustainable future, not just for today's generations but also for many more to come.

The Council is already applying decisive strategies, policies and actions across a wide range of areas that directly contribute to this challenge; some are derived from legislation and central government initiatives, while others are motivated by our own commitment. Taken together, these will help safeguard our environment. People will recognise that their waste is being managed effectively and that streets and public spaces are cleaner and more attractive. We aim to provide transport options that are also healthy options, becoming more accessible through an evolving network of cycleways and paths, and to cut pollution from transport through a steadily developing integrated transport network that is clean, safe, well maintained and well lit. And these changes also make a clear contribution to a continuous reduction in the number of people injured through transport related accidents.

These are high profile, defining elements of the Council's Environment Strategy, but over the next few years the Council also has to lead through example in addressing how global challenges like climate change and biodiversity impact locally, and how we can respond to protect our natural resources and enhance our environment. The adoption of the Unitary Development Plan is an essential component in ensuring that Herefordshire's land-use development is sustainable, which in turn will help to ensure that the diversity of Herefordshire's natural assets are safeguarded for the future.

I believe that this Environment Strategy reinforces the Council's commitment to the Environment and contributes substantially to the principles of sustainable development. It also recognises the role that the Authority must play - not only as a leader of the community, but also in moving forward itself and setting an example for others to follow.

Cllr Phil Edwards

Cabinet member for the Environment



ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the county as the unitary local authority.

The Council shares a vision for a better Herefordshire with a wide range of partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors. This is set out in *The Herefordshire Plan*, within which sustainable development is a guiding principle. The Council will play a full part in realising the Plan.

As part of its commitment to sustainable development, Herefordshire Council recognises the need to protect the environment in which we live and work and use natural resources prudently to safeguard them for future generations. The Council is therefore committed to demonstrable and continuous improvement of its environmental performance and full compliance with all relevant legal and other requirements.

To meet this commitment Herefordshire Council will:

- Maintain certification of its environmental management system to ISO 14001, the recognised international standard, and extend this to cover all activities and services across all directorates
- Lead by example and use its influence to actively encourage responsible environmental practice and raise awareness and understanding of environmental issues among its staff, suppliers, contractors, partners and the public
- Set formal objectives across all directorates and provide the necessary resources and training to ensure continuous improvement of overall environmental performance across the Council
- Make efficient use of natural resources including water, heat and electricity and promote the use and development of appropriate sources of renewable energy
- Take action to prevent pollution and minimise environmental risks
- Promote sustainable and integrated transport solutions that meet the needs of the county
- Implement a waste strategy to reduce the amount of waste entering the waste stream and increase recycling, while ensuring that all waste generated is dealt with in a way that reduces its impact on the environment
- Respond to the challenges posed by climate change by significantly reducing carbon emissions from its own activities and acting, where possible, to address and mitigate wider potential impacts
- Protect natural habitats and species to maintain and improve the wealth of biodiversity in the county
- Promote the benefits of a healthy and attractive environment to community well being
- Provide a planning system that ensures that development is sustainable
- Make this policy available to all staff, suppliers, contractors, partners, and the public, for example by training, notice boards, libraries, info-shops and websites.

Final version will be agreed by Chief Executive and Cabinet Member for Environment
(Date of agreement, 2005)

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this summary is to provide partners and managers across the Council with an overview of major environmental commitments that have already been made by the authority. Some are mandatory while others are led by the need to control costs. All are linked through the agreed ambitions of the Herefordshire Plan and the Corporate Plan (2005/08), which states that that one of the Council's top eight priorities for the period of the Plan is [Link Corporate Plan](#) "to protect the environment, including recycling much more waste and significantly reducing carbon emissions."

The strategy summarises the policy aims, objectives and action plans that the Council has adopted. Internally the Council is committed to tackling its own environmental impacts, such as waste, energy and transport, right across Council services through its certification to ISO 14001 the international environmental management standard. Externally the authority makes a major contribution to Herefordshire's environment through working in partnership with other organisations and the wider community.

The strategy is backed by an integrated action plan that aligns the aims and objectives described in the strategy with the timed targets adopted for each [Link Action Plan](#) action.

ORGANISATION OF INFORMATION

The information is organised under the following headings:

- [Waste](#)
- [Transport](#)
- [Climate Change and Energy](#)
- [Water and Flooding](#)
- [Natural and Built Environment](#)
- [Planning and Development](#)
- [Environmental Risks and Pollution](#)
- [Community Involvement and Partnership](#)

The information is presented in the form shown below:

HEADING

Background information...

KEY DOCUMENT: ([with hyperlink](#))

LEAD: (department or partner organisation)

(Arrows represent desired outcome and not necessarily the current trend)



WASTE



Herefordshire Council is committed to tackling the problems associated with the production and disposal of waste. The Council believes that the most efficient way to address this issue is to implement a waste strategy focussed on reducing the amount of waste that enters the waste stream while ensuring that all waste generated is dealt with in a way that reduces its impact on the environment. This means reducing waste production,

as well as encouraging reuse, recycling and composting of waste products. Linked to this is the need to decrease reliance on landfill for waste disposal and to ensure that the overall cost of waste management provides best value for local people. The overall aim is to ensure that Herefordshire has a sustainable waste management system that allows prosperity whilst reducing harm to the environment and preserving resources for future generations.

KEY DOCUMENT: [Joint Municipal Waste Strategy \(2004 – 2034\)](#)

LEAD: [Waste Management](#)

Decrease the amount of waste generated per person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease the amount of household waste collected per head Decrease the amount of Council generated trade waste per employee 	<p>↓</p> <p>↓</p>
Decrease the proportion of waste going to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease both the percentage and tonnage of household waste arisings sent to landfill Decrease the amount of Council generated trade waste sent to landfill by 1% a year 	<p>↓</p> <p>↓</p>
Increase the proportion of waste recycled or composted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase both the percentage and tonnage of household and schools waste arisings that are recycled Increase both the percentage and tonnage of household waste arisings that are composted Increase the amount of Council generated trade waste recycled through the office recycling scheme 	<p>↑</p> <p>↑</p> <p>↑</p>
Increase the proportion of people with access to recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the percentage of household residents served by the collection of recyclables Increase the number of Council employees with access to recycling 	<p>↑</p> <p>↑</p>
Decrease the cost of waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease the cost of waste collection per household Decrease the cost of waste disposal per tonne 	<p>↓</p> <p>↓</p>

TRANSPORT



Herefordshire Council is committed to developing sustainable and integrated transport solutions that meet the needs of the County as well as addressing environmental issues such as congestion, pollution and climate change. Central to the overarching

Local Transport Plan are the key objectives of maintaining existing infrastructure, improving facilities for public transport, walking and cycling and managing the demand for car use.

KEY DOCUMENTS: [Local Transport Plan \(2001/02 – 2005/06\)](#)
[Highways Maintenance Plan 2004/05](#)
[Staff Travel Plan](#)

LEAD: [Highways and Transportation](#)

Promote walking and cycling	• Increase the percentage of children walking or cycling to school at schools participating in the Safer Routes to School scheme	↑
	• Increase the number of schools with Adopted School Travel Plans that encourage walking and cycling and reduce car dependency	↑
	• Encourage businesses within the county to address issues of transportation	↑
	• Improve the public right of way network and promote its use by the public	↑
	• Increase the number of cycle trips by the public	↑
	• Increase the number of Council staff cycling to work and meetings	↑
Increase the use of public transport	• Increase the number of passenger journeys per year on public transport	↑
	• Increase the accessibility of public transport services	↑
	• Increase the number of staff members travelling to work and meetings by public transport	↑
Reduce the dependence upon the car	• Restrict the growth of the annual average daily traffic volume in Herefordshire	↔
	• Decrease the number of children travelling to school by car at schools participating in the Safer Routes to School scheme	↓
	• Reduce car mileage claims from Council staff by 1% per year	↓
Improve the county's roads and footpaths	• Improve the condition of principal, non-principal and unclassified roads	↑
	• Improve the condition of surface footways	↑
	• Increase the number of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people	↑
	• Rectify street lighting faults	↑
	• Decrease the number of temporary road closures	↑
Reduce accidents on the county's roads	• Decrease the number of road accident casualties	↓

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY



Scientific evidence showing that climate change is happening is more compelling than ever, and this points to the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere by human activity as the primary cause. We are seeing a significant change in weather patterns and sea levels, and the energy that we use everyday contributes to this change. Some degree of further climate change is inevitable, because of

emissions that have already taken place, and this will have an impact on our economy, society and environment. We must therefore also focus on adaptation to climate change. However, although adaptation measures may limit the impact of climate change to some extent, the most effective response, and the only sustainable long-term approach, is to significantly reduce the use of energy and the associated emissions of greenhouse gases.

KEY DOCUMENTS: [Herefordshire Partnership Climate Change Strategy \(2005/06–2011/12\)](#)
[Asset Management Plan \(2004\) \(internal\)](#)
[Carbon Management Action Plan \(2005/06– 2011/12\)](#)

LEAD: [Herefordshire Partnership – Environment Ambition Group](#)
[Environment Directorate](#)
[Property Services](#)

Reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases	• Decrease emissions of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions per head of population per year	↓
	• Reduce the fossil fuel and electricity consumption of operational council properties	↓
	• Reduce carbon dioxide equivalent emissions from activities directly controlled by the Council or upon which it has an influence by 1.25% per year to 2012.	↓
Support and promote energy efficiency measures	• Reduce the average street lamp circuit wattage	↓
	• Improve the energy efficiency of all housing sectors	↑
	• Reduce the energy consumption of operational Council properties	↓
Support and promote the use of renewable energy	• Support the use of renewable energy sources where they economically and environmentally sustainable through the Unitary Development Plan	↔
	• Continue to secure 100% renewable electricity for operational Council properties	↔

WATER AND FLOODING









The Environment Agency is charged with working to mitigate and prevent the incidence of flooding in the County. The Council, in conjunction with partner agencies, is responsible for responding to flooding when it occurs and has put in place emergency measures that ensure

an effective and comprehensive response. Major Council responsibilities include closing roads and diverting traffic, disseminating traffic information, assisting with provision of sandbags plus provision of rest centres, social workers, transport and co-ordination of the voluntary sector.

KEY DOCUMENTS: [Unitary Development Plan 1996 –2011](#)
 [Asset Management Plan \(2004\) \(Internal\)](#)
 [Herefordshire County Flood Plan](#)

LEAD: [Environment Directorate](#)
 [Emergency Planning Unit](#)

<p>Promote more efficient use of water resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where relevant all developments will be required to minimise resource use, including water and energy  • Reduce the cost of water in Council operational buildings per square metre gross internal area 
<p>Mitigate flood risk through the adoption of the Unitary Development Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure the County's environmental resources by taking a precautionary approach to flood risk and the effect of flooding elsewhere, having regard to the major flood plains of the Rivers Wye and Lugg and their tributaries  • Ensure that where development is proposed in locations at risk of flooding, it should be demonstrated that there are no reasonable options available at a lower risk category, consistent with other objectives 
<p>Respond effectively to major flooding incidents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively manage the emergency response to flooding events 
<p>Improve the quality of the County's rivers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to improvement in the proportion of the County's rivers in 'very good' or 'good' categories for both biological and chemical quality 

NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Herefordshire's environment is renowned for its quality and variety. The protection and enhancement of the county's habitats, landscapes and historic buildings through an integrated approach to land management is essential to maintain the quality

of life in Herefordshire. Furthermore, the heritage and biodiversity of the county is crucial to the success of its tourism industry and therefore needs to be safeguarded to protect the income that it generates for the local economy.

KEY DOCUMENTS: [Unitary Development Plan 1996 –2011](#)
[Herefordshire Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

LEAD: Planning Services - Conservation
 Parks and Countryside

<i>Protect and enhance the county's biodiversity assets</i>	• Improve the condition of Council owned Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) ↑
	• Prepare and maintain a Biodiversity Action Plan complete with an effective monitoring and reporting system ↔
	• Protect and enhance the biodiversity on Council owned land ↑
	• Develop and issue planning advice on landscape character, biodiversity conservation and trees ↔
<i>Preserve the built and historic heritage of the county</i>	• Promote good practice in relation to the conservation and issue planning guidance on the historic environment ↔
	• Increase the percentage of Conservation Areas with character appraisals and management proposals ↑
	• Expand the Buildings at Risk Survey ↑
	• Review Council owned historic environment assets, issue and enact guidance for their management ↔









PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Herefordshire Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment whilst accepting planned development in sustainable and appropriate locations. This is demonstrated in the Unitary Development Plan, the principal land-use framework guiding development in the County, which contains commitments to promoting a sustainable pattern of development and protecting and enhancing the environment.

KEY DOCUMENT: Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 – Revised Deposit Draft

LEAD: Forward Planning

<p>Implement a Unitary Development Plan which contains clear principles to protect the environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote forms of environmental management which minimise the depletion of scarce non-renewable resources, reduce energy consumption and waste, and encourage use of recycled and renewable resources (P5) 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Favour those forms of land use and development which work within the environmental capacity (P6) 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect, restore and enhance environmental assets giving special attention to irreplaceable resources and the distinctive character of local environments (P7) 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote sustainable land use and management, especially through the restoration, re-use and enhancement of degraded environmental assets (P8) 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote better accessibility to work, services and facilities in ways which reduce the overall need to travel and promote the use of non-car based transport (P9) 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote high design standards in the location, setting, layout and construction of both new development and improvements to existing developments. High priority will be given to energy efficiency in terms of design, use location and transport (P10) 
<p>Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the amount of development that takes place on brownfield land 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the time in which planning applications are determined and searches are completed 

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND POLLUTION









Herefordshire Council is committed to taking action to prevent pollution and minimise environmental risks. As well as posing a potential threat to people’s health, environmental risks threaten the health of local ecosystems and Herefordshire’s distinctive biodiversity. To guard against these risks, the Council has

a comprehensive prevention, mitigation and monitoring procedure based upon ISO 14001.

KEY DOCUMENT: [Air Quality Management Areas \(AQMA\)](#)
[Council Risk Register \(internal\)](#)

LEAD: [Environmental Health \(AQMA\)](#)
[Environment Support Services \(ISO 14001\)](#)

Reduce levels of pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the annual mean level of nitrogen dioxide at sites in Hereford and the market towns 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the percentage of pollution control improvements on existing permitted industrial installations completed on time 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the percentage of new reports on abandoned vehicles investigated 24 hrs and removed within 24 hrs of being confirmed as abandoned 
Improve environmental health and trading standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health and trading standards 
Investigate and take action to deal with contaminated land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify sites of potential concern in terms of contamination and increase the percentage of those sites for which sufficient details are available to decide if remediation is necessary 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify contaminated land under the control of the Council 

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP



Herefordshire Council recognises the need to provide information and education to help people live more sustainably and make positive environmental choices. The Council is consequently involved in a number of initiatives that seek to support communities, children, businesses and staff members to become involved

with recycling, energy and water conservation, green travel plans and environmental initiatives.

KEY DOCUMENT: [GEM system \(internal\)](#)
[State of Herefordshire Report](#)

LEAD: [Environment Support Unit](#)

Promote the use of environmental management systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of local businesses with an accredited environmental management system (EMAS or ISO 14001) ↑
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the Council's environmental management system certification to ISO 14001 to cover all activities and directorates ↑
Promote the awareness of environmental issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of schools registered on the Eco-Schools programme and increase the number that have achieved one of the award levels ↑
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage householders to improve the energy efficiency of their homes ↑
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff awareness of GEM and environmental issues ↑ Support and contribute to the work of the Herefordshire Partnership Ambition Groups covering environment and transport ↔
Improve the cleanliness of the local environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease the proportion of relevant land and highways with unacceptable levels of litter and detritus, graffiti and fly posting ↓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease the number of incidents and decrease the number of enforcement actions taken to deal with fly-tipping ↓

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WASTE

/AIM	EXTERNAL OBJECTIVE	Monitoring / Indicator	TARGET	DELIVERY MECHANISM	LEADS	PARTNERS
	INTERNAL OBJECTIVE					
Decrease the amount of waste generated per person	Decrease the amount of household waste collected per head	BV 84a & b	530kg by 2006/07	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
		JMWS Target 2	Reduce the kg per head collected/disposed to 2001/02 levels by March 2006	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
	Decrease the amount of Council generated trade waste per employee	GEM	Decrease by 1% per annum	GEM	EH&TS	Officers in Charge of Buildings
Decrease the amount of waste sent to landfill	Decrease both the percentage and tonnage of household waste arisings sent to landfill	BV 82d (i) & (ii)	74% by 2006/07	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
		GEM	Decrease by 1% per annum	GEM	EH&TS	ESU
Increase the amount of waste recycled or composted	Increase both the percentage and tonnage of household waste arisings that are recycled	BV 82a (i) & (ii)	15.2% by 2006/07	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
		JMWS Target 4	Achieve 75% active participation in household recycling by 2006	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
	Increase both the percentage and tonnage of household waste arisings that are composted	BV 82b (i) & (ii)	7.4% by 2006/07	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
		JMWS Target 5	Achieve minimum recycling & composting levels of: 50% by 2005/06 and 55% by 2010/11	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
		JMWS Target 1	Achieve Government targets for recycling and composting of domestic waste by the end of 2003/4, 2005/6 and 2010/11 and 2015/16.	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
		JMWS Target 6	By 2015 or earlier if practicable, a minimum of 33% of waste to be recycled and/or composted with a maximum of 22% to be landfilled as per the Best Practicable Environmental Option.	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
	Increase the amount of Council trade waste that is recycled through the Office Recycling scheme per employee	GEM	Cover all major offices & increase uptake	GEM	EH&TS	Officers in Charge of Buildings
Increase the number of people with access to recycling	Increase the percentage of household residents served by the collection of recyclables	BV 91 (also JMWS Target 3)	59% by 2006/07	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
	Increase the number of Council employees with access to recycling	GEM	Cover all major offices & increase uptake	GEM	EMSU	Property Services
Decrease the cost of waste management	Decrease the cost of waste collection per household	BV 86	£45.14 by 2006/07	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council
	Decrease the cost of waste disposal per tonne	BV 87	£68.57 by 2006/07	JMWS	EH&TS	Worcestershire County Council

TRANSPORT

AIM	EXTERNAL OBJECTIVE INTERNAL OBJECTIVE	Monitoring / Indicator	TARGET	DELIVERY MECHANISM	LEADS	PARTNERS
Promote walking and cycling	Increase the percentage of children walking or cycling to school at schools participating in SRTS	SOH G8(ii) LTP T7	Increase cycling and walking to school by 5% over 5 years	LTP/ Safer Routes to School	H&T	Sustrans
	Increase the number of schools with Adopted School Travel Plans	SOH G8(i) LTP T5	Increase by 3 new projects per year till 2010	LTP	H&T	Sustrans
	Encourage businesses within the county to address issues of transportation	LTP T8	To advise 20 major employers per year on travel plans	LTP	H&T	
	Improve the public right of way network and promote its use by the public	BV 178a PI	Increase the public rights of way that are easy to use to 48% by 2006/07 Construct at least 1km of rural footways per annum	LTP LTP	H&T H&T	
	Increase the number of cycling trips by the public	LTP T3	To increase cycle usage from 2002 baseline by 20% by 2010	LTP	H&T	
	Increase the number of Council staff cycling to work and meetings	GEM	Increase staff public transport & cycling claims by 5% per annum	Staff Travel Plan	Transport Planning	GEM group
Increase the use of public transport	Increase the number of passenger journeys per year on public transport	SOH G3(i) LTP T11 LTP T13 BV 102	Increase the number of bus journeys by 2% per annum from 2001/02 baseline Increase the number of rail passengers by 2% per annum from 1999 baseline Increase the number of passenger journeys on the local bus network to 3,498,000 by 2007/08	LTP LTP LTP	H&T H&T H&T	Public Transport Operators Public Transport Operators Public Transport Operators
	Increase the accessibility of public transport services	PI	Increase the proportion of subsidised bus services operated with disabled accessible vehicles to 85% by 2006/07	LTP	H&T	Public Transport Operators
	Increase the number of staff members travelling to work by public transport	GEM	Increase staff public transport & cycling claims by 5% per annum	Staff Travel Plan	H&T	GEM group
	Reduce the dependence upon the car	Restrict the growth of the annual average daily traffic (AADT) volumes in Herefordshire	SOH G6 PSA 1 LTP 14 & 15	Restrict growth in AADT volumes to 1% per year to 2010 (from 2001/02 baseline)	LTP	H&T
Decrease the proportion of children travelling to school by car at schools participating in SRTS		LTP T6	Decrease journeys to school by car by 5% over 5 years	Safer Routes to School	H&T	
Reduce car mileage claims from Council staff		GEM	1% reduction in business mileage claims per year	Staff Travel Plan	H&T	GEM group
Improve the County's roads and footpaths	Improve the condition of the County's roads: Principle roads Non-principle roads Unclassified roads	BV 223 224a 224b	Reduce % worse than thresholds to: 3% by 2007/08 30% by 2007/08 35% by 2006/07	LTP	H&T	HJS
	Improve the condition of surface footways	BV 187	33% or less falling below required standards by 2006/07	LTP	H&T	HJS
	Increase the number of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people	BV165	99% by 2006/07	LTP	H&T	HJS
	Rectify street lighting faults	BV 215a&b	New Performance Indicator	LTP	H&T	HJS
	Decrease the number of temporary road closures	BV 100	Reduce road works per km of traffic sensitive roads to 1.1 by 2005/06	LTP	H&T	HJS
Reduce accidents on the County's roads	Decrease the number of road accident casualties	BV 99 (a, b, c, d & e) SOH G1 & G2	Decrease the number of people killed per 100,000 to: <178/year by 2007/08 & <138/year by 2010/11	LTP	H&T	Highways Agency, West Mercia Police, Safety Camera Partnership

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

AIM	EXTERNAL OBJECTIVE	Monitoring / Indicator	TARGET	DELIVERY MECHANISM	LEADS	PARTNERS
	INTERNAL OBJECTIVE					
Reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases	Decrease carbon dioxide emissions in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per head of population/year	Corp PI	11.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per person/year by 2007/08	CMAP	Property Services	
	Reduce the fossil fuel and electricity consumption for operational Council property	BV 180a	Discontinued Indicator. Use for reference only.		Property Services	
	Reduce carbon dioxide equivalent emissions from activities directly controlled by the Council or upon which it has an influence.	CMAP PPI 4d	Achieve a 12.5% reduction in the 2002 carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 2012 and a reduction of 20% by 2020. <0.05 tonnes carbon dioxide per m ² Gross Internal Area by 2007/08	CMAP AMP	Property Services Property Services	
Support and promote energy efficiency measures	Reduce the average street lamp circuit wattage	BV 180b	Discontinued Indicator. Used for reference only.		H&T	
	Improve energy efficiency for all housing sectors	SOH H7	30% reduction in domestic energy consumption (from 1996 amounts) by 2011 (HECA 1995)	HECA	Strategic Housing Services	
	Reduce the energy costs of operational Council property per square metre Gross Internal Area	PPI 4b	£7.64/m ² by 2006/07	AMP	Property Services	
Support and promote renewable energy.	Support the use of renewable energy sources where they are economically and environmentally sustainable through the Unitary Development Plan	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy			
	Continue to purchase 100% renewable electricity for operational Council properties.	GEM	N/A	GEM	Property Services	WMS

WATER & FLOODING

AIM	EXTERNAL OBJECTIVE	Monitoring Indicator	TARGET	DELIVERY MECHANISM	LEADS	PARTNERS
	INTERNAL OBJECTIVE					
Promote more efficient use of water resources	Where relevant, all new developments will be required to minimise resource use, including water and energy	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy	UDP	Planning	
	Reduce the Council's water costs per square metre Gross Internal Area (GIA)	PPI 4c	£2.84/m2 by 2006/07		Property Services	GEM
Mitigate flood risk through adoption of the Unitary Development Plan	Secure the County's environmental resources by taking a precautionary approach to flood risk, having regard to the flood plains of the Rivers Wye and Lugg and their tributaries	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy	UDP	Planning	
	Ensure that where development is proposed in locations at risk of flooding, it should be demonstrated that there are no reasonable options available in a lower risk category, consistent with other objectives.	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy	UDP	Planning	
Respond effectively to major flooding incidents	Effectively manage the emergency response to flooding events	N/A	N/A – Flood Plan	County Flood Plan Major Emergency Response Plan	Emergency Planning H&T	Environment Agency Emergency Services Highways Agency Various other parties
Improve the quality of the County's Rivers	Increase the % of the County's rivers in 'very good' or 'good' quality (for both Biological & Chemical General Quality Assessments)	SOH F6			Environment Agency	HPEAG

NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

AIM	EXTERNAL OBJECTIVE	Monitoring / Indicator	TARGET	DELIVERY MECHANISM	LEADS	PARTNERS
	INTERNAL OBJECTIVE					
Protect and enhance the County's biodiversity assets	Prepare and maintain a Biodiversity Action Plan with an effective monitoring and reporting system.	N/A	N/A	Biodiversity Action Plan	Planning Services	Parks & Countryside
	Develop and issue planning guidance on landscape character, biodiversity conservation and trees	N/A	N/A	UDP	Planning Services	Parks & Countryside
	Increase the proportion of Council owned land without a nature conservation designation but managed for Biodiversity purposes	Corp PI (& GEM?)	To increase from baseline of 2.5%	Biodiversity Action Plan	Planning Services	Service Managers managing land
	Improve the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) owned by the Council					
Conserve the built and historic heritage of the County	Increase the percentage of Conservation Areas with: Character Appraisals Management Proposals	BV 219 219b 219c	New Targets – Baselines to be set		Planning Services	
	Develop and issue planning guidance on the historic environment	N/A	N/A			
	Review conservation areas and carry out buildings at risk surveys	N/A	N/A			
	Review Council owned historic environment assets and issue guidance for their management	N/A	N/A			

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

AIM	EXTERNAL OBJECTIVE INTERNAL OBJECTIVE	Monitoring / Indicator	TARGET	DELIVERY MECHANISM	LEADS	PARTNERS
Implement a Unitary Development Plan which contains clear principles to protect the environment	Promote forms of environmental management which minimise the depletion of scarce non-renewable resources, reduce energy consumption and waste, and encourage use of recycled and renewable resources (P5)	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy	UDP	Planning	
	The UDP will favour forms of land use and development which work within the environmental capacity (P6)	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy	UDP	Planning	
	Protect, restore and enhance environmental assets giving special attention to irreplaceable resources and the distinctive character of local environments (P7)	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy	UDP	Planning	
	Promote sustainable land use and management, especially through the restoration, re-use and enhancement of degraded environmental assets (P8)	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy	UDP	Planning	
	Promote better accessibility to work, services and facilities in ways which reduce the overall need to travel and promote the use of non-car based transport (P9)	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy	UDP	Planning	
	Promote high design standards in the location, setting, layout and construction of both new development and improvements to existing developments. High priority will be given to energy efficiency in terms of design, use location and transport (P10)	N/A	N/A – UDP Policy	UDP	Planning	
Promote those forms of development that have a positive impact upon the environment	Increase the percentage of development taking place on brownfield land	SOH F1	60% by 2005/06	UDP	Planning	
Improve the efficiency of the planning process	Reduce the time in which planning applications are determined: Major Applications: Minor Applications: Other Applications: Standard searches:	BVPI 109a 109b 109c 179	60% within 13 weeks 65% within 8 weeks 80% within 8 weeks			
	Reduce the number of planning applications going to appeal	109d				

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND POLLUTION

AIM	EXTERNAL OBJECTIVE INTERNAL OBJECTIVE	Monitoring / Indicator	TARGET	DELIVERY MECHANISM	LEADS	PARTNERS
Reduce levels of pollution	Reduce the annual mean levels of nitrogen dioxide at sites in Hereford and the Market Towns	SOH G7	<21 parts per billion by 31 December 2005		EH & TS	
	Increase the percentage of pollution control improvements on existing permitted industrial installations completed on time	BVPI 217	90% of upgrading improvements to be made to industrial permitted installations by the time specified in statutory guidance		EH & TS	
	Increase the percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles that are (a) investigated within 24hrs of notification and (b) removed within 24hrs of being entitled to.	BVPI 218a & b	218a - 85% by 2007/08		EH & TS	
Investigate and take action to deal with contaminated land	(a) Identify sites of potential concern in terms of contamination and (b) increase the percentage of those sites for which sufficient detail is available to decide whether remediation is necessary	BVPI 216a & b	New Indicators			
	Identify and address contamination of land controlled by the Council.	GEM 3.2	Review potentially contaminated Council owned land		EH & TS and Land Managers	Environment Agency
Improve the score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health	Improve the score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health	BVPI 166a	100% by 2007/08		EH & TS	
	Improve the core against a checklist of enforcement best practice for trading standards	BVPI 166b	100% by 2007/08		EH & TS	

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

AIM	EXTERNAL OBJECTIVE	Monitoring / Indicator	TARGET	DELIVERY MECHANISM	LEADS	PARTNERS
	INTERNAL OBJECTIVE					
Promote environmental management systems	Increase the number of local businesses with an accredited environmental management system (either EMAS or ISO 14001).	SOH F7			Adult & Community	Bridge-It (Groundwork)
	Extend the Council's environmental management system throughout all services and directorates.	GEM	All Council services and directorates to be accredited to ISO 14001 by June 2006.	GEM	EMSU	
Promote awareness of environmental issues	Increase the (a) proportion of schools registered on the Eco-Schools programme and (b) the number that have achieved one of the award levels	SOH F8	75% of schools within the County to be registered Eco-Schools by 2007/08	EcoSchool Scheme	EMSU	Encams
	Encourage householders to improve the energy efficiency of their homes					
	Increase staff awareness of GEM and environmental issues	Staff Opinion Survey			GEM	EMSU
	Support and contribute to the work of the Herefordshire Partnership Ambition Groups covering environment and transport	N/A	N/A			
Improve the cleanliness of the local environment	Decrease the proportion of relevant land and highways with unacceptable levels of: Litter & detritus Graffiti Fly posting.	BV 199 199a 199b 199c	 31% by 2006/07 New Indicator New Indicator	Street-scene Strategy	H&T	HJS
	Decrease the number of incidents and decrease the number of enforcement actions taken to deal with fly-tipping.	BV 199d	New Indicator	Street-scene Strategy	H&T	HJS

KEY TO ACTION PLAN

Monitoring

BV – Best Value Performance Indicator
SOH – State of Herefordshire
LTP – Local Transport Plan
JMWS – Joint Municipal Waste Strategy
PSA – Public Service Agreement
PI – Performance Indicator (local)
PPI – Property Performance Indicator
CMAP – Carbon Management Action Plan
GEM – Good Environmental Management (the Council's Environmental Management System)

Delivery Mechanism

JMWS – Joint Municipal Waste Strategy
GEM – Good Environmental Management
UDP – Unitary Development Plan
LTP – Local Transport Plan
Staff Travel Plan
Street Scene
CMAP – Carbon Management Action Plan (2002 – 2012)
AMP – Asset Management Plan
HECA – Home Energy Conservation Act
BAP – Biodiversity Action Plan

Leads

EMSU – Environment Management Support Unit
EH&TS – Environmental Health and Trading Standards
H&T – Highways and Transportation

Partners

HJS – Herefordshire Jarvis Services
HPEAG – Herefordshire Partnership Environment Ambition Group
WMS – West Mercia Suppliers

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION WITHIN HEREFORDSHIRE

Report By: Director of Environment

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To consider the actions taken in relation to biodiversity conservation and proposals for the development of a related strategic framework directing the future work of the Council upon this activity.

Financial Implications

2. There are no additional costs arising from this report. A further report is called for which may need to address financial matters when the matter is considered again.

Background

3. Biodiversity means the variety of plant and animal life. One of the Council's key objectives is to enhance the quality of life and conserving biodiversity makes a considerable contribution to this. Biodiversity also contributes to the distinctive character of the County, which is one of its major assets.
4. A number of important factors now need to be taken into account that should influence the Council's activities in relation to biodiversity conservation. These include:
 - i) A review of the Herefordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was started in 2004 and is close to reaching completion.
 - ii) ODPM has issued a consultation on Planning Policy Statement (PPS9) - biodiversity and geological conservation (to replace PPG9).
 - iii) The draft PPS9 was accompanied by a draft circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System.
 - iv) The West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership, in association with the West Midlands Regional Assembly, has launched the "Regional Biodiversity Strategy for the West Midlands".
 - v) A review of the Herefordshire Plan has commenced. Biodiversity was previously an element within that plan, and is expected to continue to be so.
5. In addition, and most importantly, advice has been received that biodiversity activities by the Council will be audited within the Environment Block of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).

6. Recent achievements by the Council in the area of biodiversity conservation include:
- i) The adoption of Supplementary Planning Guidance on biodiversity.
 - ii) The completion of the second year of the 3-year establishment phase for the Herefordshire Local Biological Record Centre (HLBRC):
 - Over 200 requests for information have been received over the past twelve months from agencies, consultants, researchers and individuals.
 - Regional links have been developed and HLBRC will be working with the Forestry Commission on regional data supply to inform their Forestry Strategy.
 - Voluntary recorders have provided data sets on fungi, botanical information and mammal records.
 - Volunteers assist in transferring the data onto a computer database, but at the moment the amount of records are increasing faster than the ability to transfer them to the computer database.
 - iii) Assistance was given to the preparation of the Herefordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) in 2000, and the Council is now contributing to its review:
 - The Council is lead partner in undertaking some 101 actions within the County BAP, of which 89 are either complete or underway.
 - An example of one of the Council's activities was to survey the presence of 'black poplar' as part of a 'Species Action Plan'. Black poplar was historically an important species in wet woodland habitat. Some 152 such trees were located through the survey of which only 5 were female trees. Herefordshire Nature Trust is now propagating some 300 new trees to be planted on selected sites, including 5 areas of wet woodland in order to contribute to a provisional target set out in the BAP review.
 - The Council is also a partner to a further 112 actions, of which 96 are completed or underway.
 - The completion of the BAP review is awaiting the appointment of a replacement BAP Officer.
 - iv) The Council has contributed to the carrying out of a Phase 1 Habitat Survey for the County by Herefordshire Nature Trust, and the data is now being placed on the Council's GIS system:
 - There are five 'natural areas' defined by English Nature that cover the County. Data has been transferred onto the GIS for the Wye valley, Malvern Hills and Clun and North West Herefordshire Hills. That for the Black Mountains is in the process of being transferred, leaving information for the Herefordshire Plain still to do.
 - The information will then be available through the HLBRC for various purposes, including supporting bids under the new environmental

stewardship scheme, and to inform planning decisions. It should also assist with any review of Special Wildlife Sites, which will be needed for the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

- v) A pilot project entitled "Herefordshire Lifescapes" within the LEADER+ area is reaching a conclusion:
- This project, funded substantially by LEADER+ and English Heritage is a mapping exercise to assist local action in terms of landscape and biodiversity.
 - It has assisted work on Parish Plans, supporting four consultation events (Kingsland, Luston Group, Stapleton Group and Kings Caple).
 - So far local groups have been established in Stapleton and Kingsland to undertake environmental projects.
 - Pond restoration works and permissive footpath creation have been undertaken in Stapleton.
 - A group in Kingsland proposes a biodiversity audit of the Parish.
 - The project is being promoted regionally (West Midlands Biodiversity Strategy) and nationally (English Nature publication; presentation to a conference in Manchester) as an example of good practice.
- vi) The Council has adopted a biodiversity conservation performance indicator relating to "land owned or managed by the Council, that does not have any nature conservation designation, but is managed for biodiversity purposes". This is included in the Corporate Plan.
- A baseline figure of 2.49% has been estimated from highway land, school playing fields, commons, smallholdings, parks and open space, and cemeteries and crematoriums. This proportion equates to 695.882ha from a total of 27,946.554ha of such land.
- vii) The Council's draft Environmental Strategy includes an aim to protect and enhance the County's biodiversity:
- This draft strategy includes the objective to protect and enhance the County's biodiversity assets. In addition to the vi) above, indicators will cover the status of land covered by the SSSI designation; progress in relation to Biodiversity action Plans; and the issuing of appropriate guidance for planning and other purposes.
- viii) A successful Local Voluntary Recorders (Biodiversity) event recently took place to promote greater involvement through the Local Record Centre:
- Some 90 ecological and natural history recorders attended this event. They comprise a major intellectual resource in terms of measuring the ecological health of the County, possessing some 90% of records maintained on the issue.

- ix) The Director of Environment is the Local Government representative on “Sustainability West Midlands” which produced “A Regional Sustainable Development Framework” for the West Midlands Regional Assembly. A Regional Biodiversity Strategy for the West Midlands has also been produced as a supporting document and this was launched at the beginning of March.
 - x) Regular meetings are held at a high level with representatives of English Nature and Herefordshire Nature Trust to discuss strategic matters and projects.
 - xi) A system of defining “Roadside Verge Nature Reserves” is in place:
 - Some 2.532 ha out of a total of 973.554 ha of highway verge has been designated Roadside Verge Nature Reserves. This is an informal local designation although the verges concerned have to meet certain ecological criteria to qualify for this status. The purpose is to retain the particular characteristics that exist through a particular management regime. Appendix 1 to this report sets out the criteria for determining whether a verge qualifies for the designation, together with some examples of the plant species which have been found in the verges concerned.
 - The areas concerned are monitored and reported upon annually by Herefordshire Nature Trust so that any changes in management can be introduced where necessary.
 - xii) Pressures on the regulatory regimes are increasing as a consequence of the CROW (Countryside and Rights of Way) Act and other regulations.
 - The number of planning applications where detailed ecological comments have been necessary has averaged 90 per annum over the past three years although the numbers show a slight increase year on year.
 - Since 2000, some 105 Hedgerow Removal Notices (total length – 7994m) have been received. Of these 73% by length (5804m) have been retained. The majority of removals have been permitted on highway safety grounds.
7. The Council has a number of roles and responsibilities in relation to biodiversity conservation, including the need to promote work in partnership with other organisations and agencies. It now needs to draw these together within the form of a strategic framework. The Cabinet Member for the Environment has agreed that the following strategic objectives should be used as a basis for developing such a framework.
- i) To work in partnership with other organisations to add value to all our biodiversity conservation activities at regional, sub-regional and local levels.
 - ii) To ensure that biodiversity conservation is integrated into the Community Strategy (Herefordshire Plan).
 - iii) To promote co-ordinated action to benefit nature conservation by taking a lead role in developing, maintaining and implementing a Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Herefordshire.

- iv) To set an example to others through managing as much of our land as possible for the benefit of biodiversity.
 - v) To provide a high quality advisory service enabling planning and other regulatory systems to be operated responsibly and effectively.
 - vi) To maintain effective recording, monitoring and reporting mechanisms, including contributing to regional commentaries.
 - vii) To provide access to information upon the priority biodiversity habitats and species occurring in the County.
 - viii) To promote the benefit of biodiversity conservation and associated actions to local communities throughout the County.
8. The next stage will be to develop a programme of actions and systems to support these objectives within the resources available. This should involve consultation with partners and other appropriate organisations. It is proposed that the strategic framework and associated action plan will be considered at the next meeting of this Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT

- a) **the Committee notes the changes that are taking place in relation to biodiversity conservation and the Council's achievements to date;**
- b) **the Committee comment on the proposed objectives, as set out in paragraph 7, that should form the strategic framework for future work by the Council;**
- c) **the Cabinet Member for the Environment is asked to report further upon the next stage in the development of the Strategic Framework at the next meeting of this Committee.**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Herefordshire Biodiversity Action Plan; Herefordshire Biodiversity Partnership, 2000.
- Consultation on PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation; ODPM 2004.
- Draft Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system; DEFRA, Sept 2004
- Restoring the Region's Wildlife – Regional Biodiversity Strategy for the West Midlands: West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership, 2005.
- The Herefordshire Plan – Revised Plan 3; The Herefordshire Partnership, Sept 2003.

APPENDIX 1

Selection criteria for the identification and selection of Roadside Verges Nature Reserves

1. Verges that support a nationally scarce or county BAP priority species
2. Verges that support a locally scarce plant species ie occurring in 24 or fewer tetrads
3. Verges that support a local plant species occurring within 24 to 60 tetrads
4. Verges that support unimproved neutral grassland where it is a minimum size of at least 50m in length and/or calcareous grassland of at least 30m in length

Examples of plants present in verges	Atlas (tetrad records)	Status/Audit
1. Stinking hellebore/ <i>Helleborus foetidus</i>	15 sites	NS/P
1. Spreading bellflower/ <i>Campanula patula</i>	22 sites	NS/P
2. Common blue sow thistle/ <i>Cicerbita macrophylla</i>	7 sites	S
2. Sweet Cicely/ <i>Myrrhis odorata</i>	11 sites	S
2. Green hellebore/ <i>Hellebore viridus</i>	16 sites	S
2. Elecampane/ <i>Inula helenium</i>	16 sites	S
2. Dusky crane's-bill/ <i>Geranium phaeum</i>	24 sites	S
3. Water Avens/ <i>Geum rivale</i>	27 sites	C
3. Leopard's-bane/ <i>Doronicum pardalianches</i>	32 sites	C
3. Greater butterfly orchid/ <i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>	47 sites	C
3. Lady's mantle/ <i>Alchemilla vulgaris</i>	50 sites	CC
3. Adder's tongue fern/ <i>Ophioglossum vulgatum</i>	56 sites	CC
Hedgerow crane's-bill/ <i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>	113 sites	C
Meadow crane's-bill/ <i>Geranium pratense</i>	149 sites	C

NS -Nationally scarce (appears on national list of species of conservation concern)

P – Priority species in Herefordshire BAP

CC – Species of Conservation Concern in Herefordshire BAP

LR – Local rarity – 4 or fewer tetrads

S – scarce – 24 or fewer tetrads

C – Common – more than 24 tetrads

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/06**Report By: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT****Wards Affected**

County-wide

Purpose

1. To inform the members of the latest position with regard to the Environment Capital Programme for 2005/06.

Considerations

2. The Capital Programme for 2005/06 is set out in the attached Appendix 1, which gives details of the individual schemes.
3. The programme has been largely based on the 2004/05 Local Transport Plan.
4. The total amount available for the Capital Programme shown is £13,460,610.
5. The largest element of funding comes from the S.C.E (R) or supported capital expenditure (Revenue).
6. The Capital Programme for 2005/06 will inevitably change during the year as the sums allocated for individual schemes are reviewed and revised. The first 2005/06 full monitoring exercise is due to take place as at 31st July 2005. The monitoring has been tightened up to give more emphasise to the profiling and spending on individual schemes.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report confirming the Environment 2004/05 budget be noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None identified.

ENVIRONMENT GENERAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/6

**Original
Budget
2005/6**

£000

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

**Hereford Integrated Transport
Strategy**

Walking and Access

Pedestrian Crossing Improvements
Pedestrian Route & Disabled Access Imps

5
70

Cycling

Cycle Network Development

200

Public Transport Minor Schemes

Bus Priority Measures
Passenger Transport Initiative Rail
Passenger Waiting Facilities

50
35
30

Park and Ride

Christmas Park and Ride
Park and Ride Sites analysis

20
40

	Original Budget 2005/6 £000
Rotherwas Minor Schemes	
Rotherwas Integrated Access	50
Rotherwas Access Road	
Rotherwas Access Road	260
Roman Road	
Roman Road	933
Hereford Strategy Development	40
Rural Towns and Market Towns Transport Strategy	
Walking and Access	
Pedestrian and Disabled Access Imps	20
Rural Footway Improvements	60
Cycling	
Network of Cycle Routes and Parking	200
Public Transport Minor Schemes	
Public Transport Information Access Points	50
Rural Bus Improvements	40
Passenger Waiting Facilities	40

Original
Budget
2005/6
£000

North West Herefordshire HGV Study (Formerly Pembridge Bypass)

North West Herefordshire HGV Study

46

**Countywide Strategy
Hearts and Minds**

Travel Awareness

35

School Travel Support

25

Minor Safety Schemes

Minor Safety Improvements

300

Traffic Calming

Traffic Calming

150

Safer Routes to Schools

Safer Routes to Schools inc 20mph zones
zones

380

**Original
Budget
2005/6
£000**

Speed Control

Village Speed Restrictions
Vehicle Activated Signs

40
20

Monitoring

Monitoring
Accessibility Planning and Development Work

40
20

Highways Maintenance

Capitalised Maintenance of
Principal Roads

2,610

Capitalised Maintenance of
Non Principal Roads

3,309

Footways

390

Bridge Maintenance

Capitalised Assessment
& Strength of Bridges

650

Transport Staff costs allocated
over LTP

301

	Original Budget 2005/6 £000
Non LTP SCHEMES	
Hereford Crematorium	547
Leominster Closed Landfill Monitoring Infrastructure	220
Extension to Hereford Cemetary	20
Public Convenience Improvements	215
City Centre Enhancements	2,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	13,461

FUNDING	Original Budget 2005/6 £000
Supported Capital Expenditure Revenue	10,459
Prudential Borrowing	2,875
Prudential Borrowing Slippage carried over from 2004/5	127
TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABLE	13,461

ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET 2005/06 AND OUTURN 2004/05

Report By: Director of Environment

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To inform Members of the latest position with regard to the Environment Budget for 2005/06 following the formal approval of the Council's budget.

Considerations

Outturn 2004/05

2. The budget for 2005/06 will be adjusted to take account of any carry forward from 2004/05. Although the outturn figures for 2004/05 are not yet finalised, an underspending of approximately £1,400,000 is expected. This underspending is slightly lower than the £1,515,000 predicted at the end of January 2005. A significant proportion of this carry-forward (£241,000) is in respect of the 2004/05 Planning Development Grant which must be used for planning purposes.
3. A full report on the Council's outturn position will go to Cabinet on 23rd June. The Planning carryforward, excluding the Planning Development Grant, is expected to be sufficient to meet in full the budget reduction of £400,000 in the 2005/06 Planning Budget.

Budget 2005/06

4. The Council approved a 2005/06 budget of £23,892,000 for the Environment Programme Area, including allocations of £1,127,000 for Central Support Services.
5. In addition to the effects of inflation, the following adjustments were made to the 2005/06 Environment budget approved by the Council.

(a) Budget Adjustments	£000
Addition for the increase in property related insurance costs	21
Waste Management PFI Contract	911
Contribution from Education towards Public Transport costs	-50

Further information on the subject of this report is available from David Keetch on (01432) 260227

(b) Budget Reductions***Environment General***

Roads Maintenance	-730	
Public Conveniences	-50	
Waste Collection (Trade) Charges	-40	
Cemeteries Fee Increase	-10	
Crematorium Fee Increase	<u>- 40</u>	
		-870

(c) Budget Reductions***Environment Regulatory***

Landfill Sites – contaminated land	-9	
Trading Standards – Analysts Fees	-17	
Trading Standards – Promotions	<u>-4</u>	
		-30

(d) Budget Reductions***Planning***

Planning Fees	<u>-400</u>	
TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS TO THE BUDGET APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL ON 11th MARCH 2005		<u>-418</u>

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report confirming the Environment 2005/06 budget be noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None identified.

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF COMMERCIAL ENFORCEMENT – STAGE 3 REPORT

Report By: Performance Officer

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To consider the Stage 3 Report of the Commercial Enforcement Review.

Financial Implications

2. The financial implications vary with each option for future provision. However, the preferred option is thought to be cost neutral.

Background

3. The review commenced in 2001 with the Stage 1 report being approved by Environment Scrutiny Committee in April 2002.
4. A progress report which outlined the changes in the scope of the review and the need to assess more up to date information was approved by Environment Scrutiny Committee in September 2003.
5. The Stage 3 report includes:
 - An appraisal of how the Challenge element of Best Value has been addressed
 - Information gathered from the consultation exercises
 - Information gathered from the benchmarking exercises
 - An analysis of the Strengths and Areas for Improvement
 - The options appraisal part of the process
6. This report summarises the conclusions from the review as follows;
 - The workloads for the services being reviewed are continuing to rise either through consumer demand or through the introduction of new legislation.
 - There is an ongoing need to ensure the Council's Corporate Objectives are reflected in service provision along with the need to meet the demands of the governing National Regulatory Agencies.
 - There is a need to create greater capacity to deliver increased and better services to meet customer and stakeholder demands. To ensure this capacity it is necessary to re-engineer the services using the Council's SIPs project to develop a Contact Centre and to improve the IT to deliver better on line services.

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

- There is a need to re-engineer the current “Front Office” and “Back Office” functions to maximise the principle of dealing with service requests in one transaction and by minimizing referrals to the “Back Office”.
- There is a need to create a Divisional recruitment plan to ensure professional staff can be recruited and retained by the Division.
- A Gap Analysis be undertaken on areas where Risk Assessment has not been undertaken.
- Undertake a review of possible joint working arrangements with neighbouring authorities.
- Review the current working practices to maximise the potential for joint working between the three teams.
- Review the funding made available through the fee income from Liquor Licensing to expand the service and to help deliver an out of hours service (this would be cross Division service, including Environmental Protection).
- To ensure that there is integration of the Regional Consumer Direct Service into the Trading Standards Service and the Council’s SIPs programme
- There will be a need to review the impact of the proposed provisions contained in the Bill announced in the Queens Speech to implement the recommendations of the Hampton review on Regulatory Services.

7. The review team, having considered all of the options recommend:

That Environmental Health (Commercial Enforcement), Trading Standards and Licensing are re-engineered to deliver more efficient services

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Members consider the outcomes and findings of the review and recommendation of the preferred option, contained in the Stage 3 Report at Section 8, with a view to making recommendations to the Strategic Monitoring Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Commercial Enforcement Stage 3 Report.
- Hampton Review.

COMMERCIAL ENFORCEMENT REVIEW –STAGE 3 REPORT

STAGE 3 REPORT

This Stage 3 Report covers:

- An analysis of the Strengths and Areas for Improvement
- An appraisal of how the Challenge element of Best Value has been addressed
- Information gathered from the consultation exercises
- Information gathered from the benchmarking exercises

The options appraisal part of the process

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 REVIEW PROCESS

The Stage 1 Report covered the initial data collection stage of the process together with the proposed consultation action plan and benchmarking information plan. This was completed and approved by Environment Monitoring and Review Committee on 11 April 2002.

The Environment Scrutiny Committee were invited to consider the progress of the Commercial Enforcement Review on the 26 September 2003 by means of a situation report which concluded that Markets and Fairs did not easily sit within the rest of the services under review and the need to collect more up to date data.

The continued delay in progressing this review has been the result of many factors, including;

- Ongoing pressure of work on key officers both on the review team and in terms of the services managers increased operational rather than strategic or managerial activities;
- Outbreak of Legionnaires Disease in affecting performance in 2003/4;
- The restructuring of the Directorate during the summer of 2004.
- The introduction of the Licensing Act 2003.
- The Report of the Hampton Review

Progress has also been influenced by the lack of clarity in the approach by the Council as to what should happen with existing reviews following the CPA Inspection in 2002. It has been unclear as to the future of the programme of reviews; should they be suspended or revisited or continued. There is still no corporate approach or guidance and this had led to hesitation in progressing the review.

In addition, the services in this review have been subject to other improvement activities and quality assurance methods, such as Herefordshire Driver Assessments and achieving ISO9001, consequently the services have been improving whilst the review had been going on, so much so that it was felt that the potential added value of the review has been diluted.

1.2 MAJOR CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS

The main impact of the Directorate-wide restructure on this review is the transfer, in 2003, of taxi licensing from Highways/Transportation Division to the Licensing section in Environmental Health and Trading Standards which has been radically expanded to deal with the new Licensing Act 2003.

Whilst the Directorate restructure in June / July 2004 did not fundamentally affect the structure of the services being reviewed (apart from the Licensing Section), there was a considerable amount of effort and resource needed to inform the restructure of the Division as a whole. Whilst the functions stayed

broadly the same the restructure meant that of the three sections that are subject to review Trading Standards and Licensing both had new section managers appointed.

ISO 9001 accreditation has been achieved across the Division with the Quality Management Systems Audit in February 2005. The Audit revealed no non-conformances and made a small number of observations including;

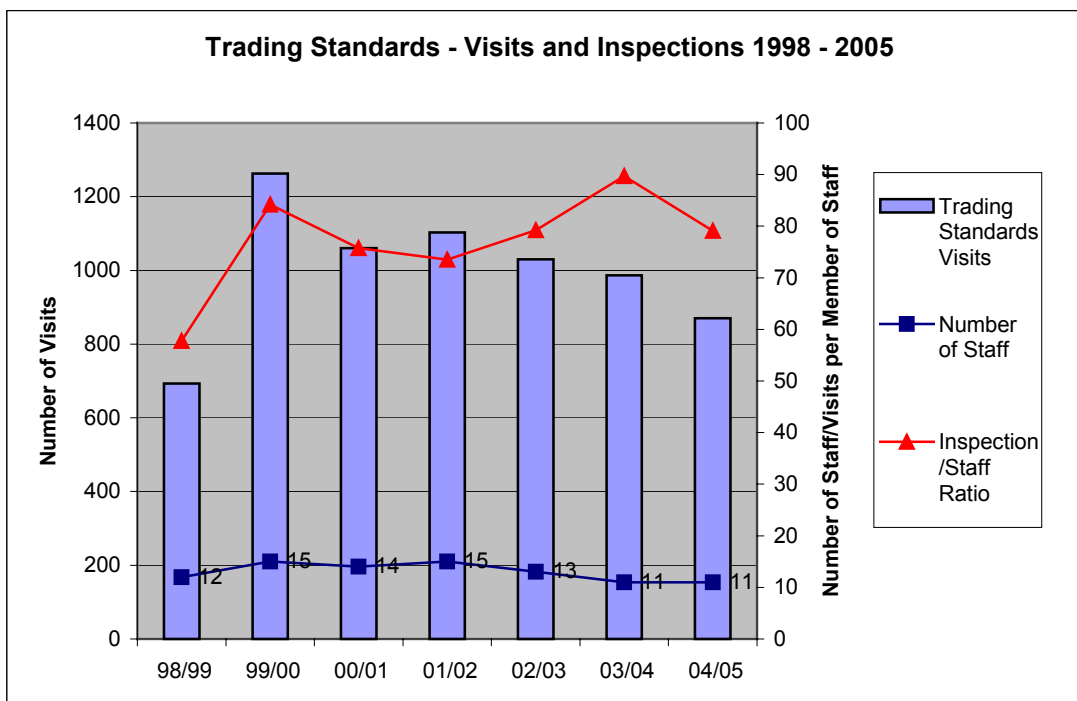
- Quality Objective requires documentation (good objectives exist but need codification).
- More work is required on risk assessments related to the work environment.
- Good examples of continual improvement which should be documented.
- Target response time for planning consultations (July 2004) no evidence that this has been resolved.
- No evidence that Service Level Agreements relating to Professional Services support has been resolved since July 2004.

The Service has now been moved from a six monthly audit to an annual audit because of the auditors' confidence in the Service Quality Management System.

Service Trends (1998 onwards)

Trading Standards

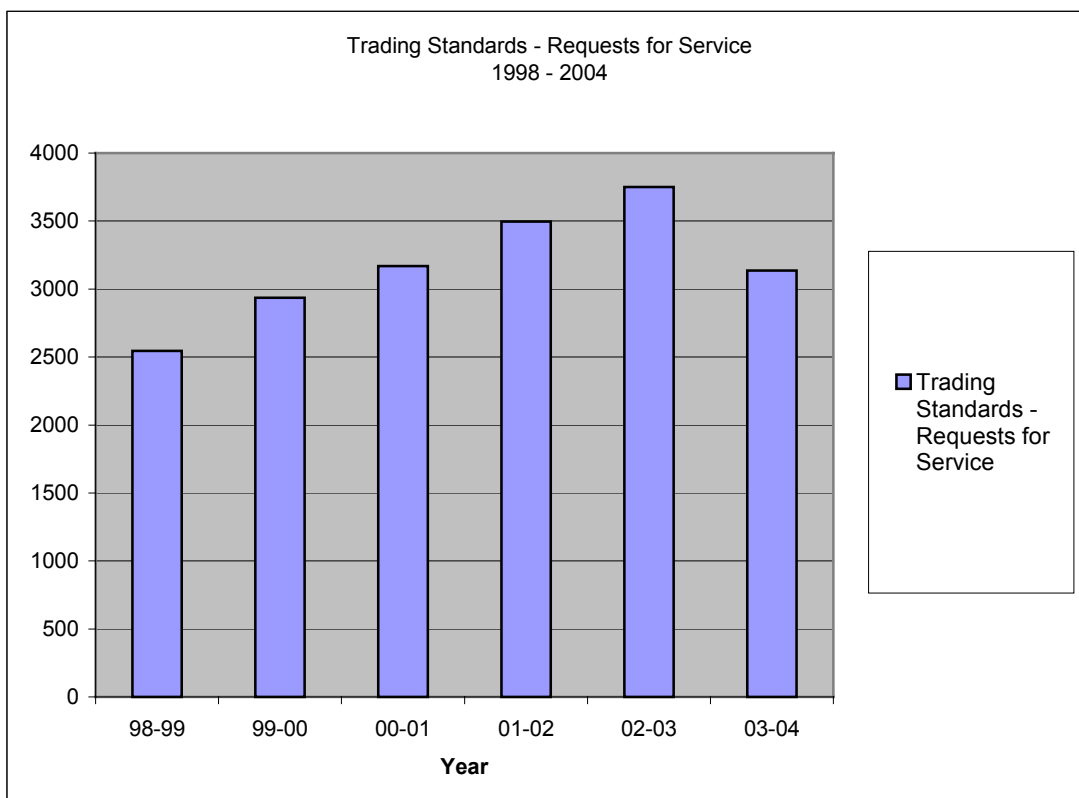
The Chart below shows the overall number of Trading Standards Visits from 1998 to an estimated number of visits for 2004/05. As can be seen the staffing levels for the team have varied considerably during the last seven years and the highest level of inspection work has consistently coincided with the highest levels of staffing, although 2003/04 produced the highest levels of visits per officer. The trend for inspections has, since 1999/00 been downward, however this trend is in direct relation to the number of staff within the Trading Standards Team.



The Trading Standards service has, because of staffing shortages, cut down the Consumer Advice Line from 5 full days per week to 5 half days per week. This reduction in service has considerably reduced the number of enquiries being made to the service however it is understood that there has been a

corresponding increase in consumer advice complaints received by the CAB. These figures and assertions need to be viewed with some degree of care because there is evidence from across the West Midlands that there has been a marked reduction across the region in Consumer Advice complaints.

This reduction in complaints has assisted in managing the Teams workload, which may be seen as positive, but has of course had other impacts for the service and our clients. The increase in Consumer Advice work by the CAB has assisted the Council but has resulted in increased pressure on the CAB. In addition, because of the CAB's strict policy on confidentiality the intelligence generated by handling Consumer Advice line calls is lost to the Division meaning that targeting our inspections and proactive work may be lost. In addition because CAB look to Civil remedies Consumers are unable to take advantage of our ability to use the Criminal Law, which means that traders may be more reluctant to comply with their legal duties when confronted by CAB than they would be if Trading Standards were dealing with the matter.



The Chart above graphically demonstrates the steady increase in Consumer Advice enquiries across the first 5 years of the authority and that the reduction in service by the Consumer Advice Line in 2003/04 can be seen to have had a dramatic impact on the number of requests for service received by the Team.

Environmental Health (Commercial)

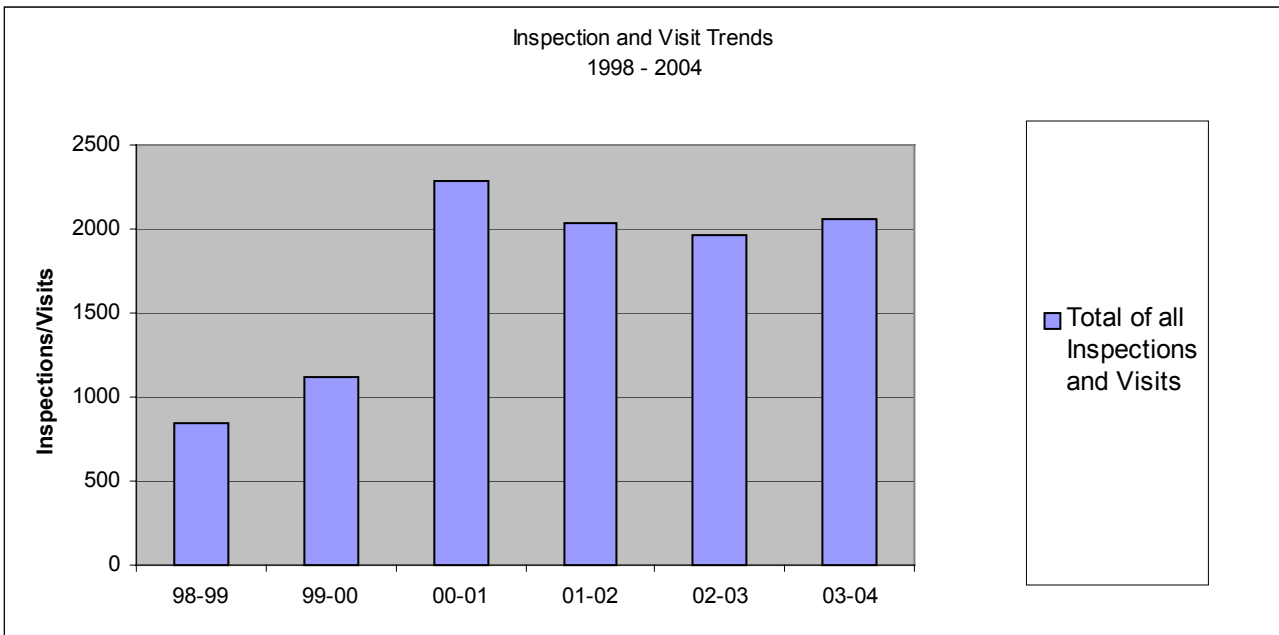
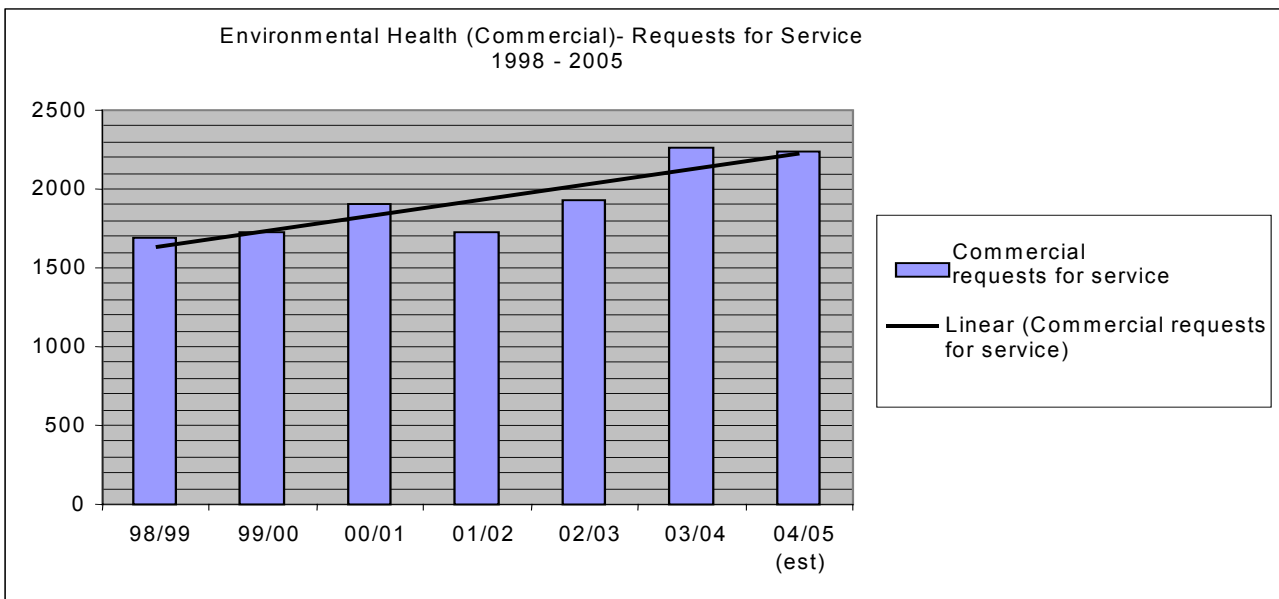
The chart below demonstrates the increase in requests for service relating to the Environmental Health Commercial Team Service. The chart shows a steady rise across the period of some 30% in enquiries. This amounts to just above 5% per annum. The increase in this area is remarkably consistent with only 2003/04 showing a substantial increase over the trend – this is wholly accounted for by a substantial increase in enquiries relating to the Hereford Legionnaire's Disease Outbreak.

The handling of enquiries has been given the highest priority and from 1st December 2003 there has been a dedicated duty officer system in place to help ensure that sufficient resources are available when

required. From 1st April 2004 additional monitoring of enquiries took place with more regular reviews of the progress of enquiries utilising a 'WIP bin' or "work in progress" listing for officers at the beginning of each week, reviewed at each team meeting.

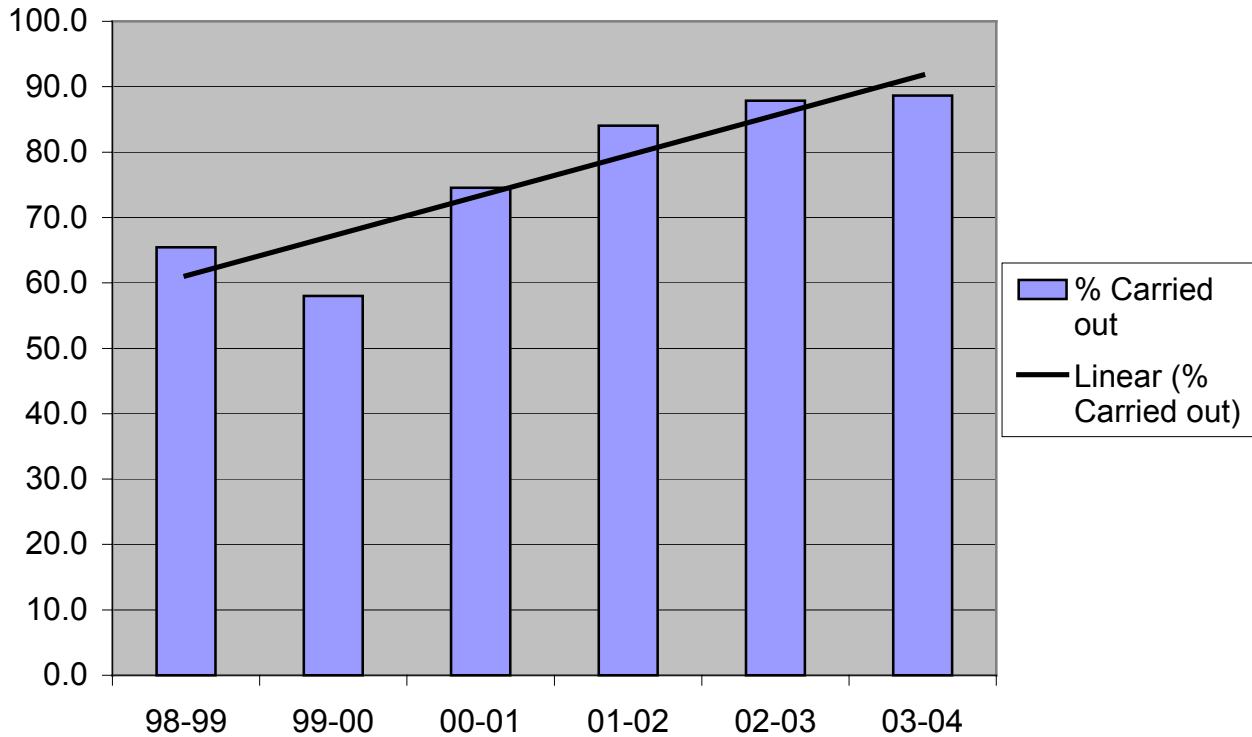
Enhancements to the management reporting facilities within the electronic systems used will have provided accurate reporting for all categories of enquiries rather than a single figure as in previous years. The movement of certain types of enquiries from B to A or in some cases C, D or E will ensure that the most urgent enquiries will receive the necessary prominence.

No external comparison has been made with respect to the number of enquiries or the speed of response. It is not therefore possible to establish whether or not the Service is providing a value for money service as compared against other similar organisations.



In addition the teams proactive work (i.e. inspections and visits under Food Safety and Health and Safety legislation) also shows an upward trend. The improvement in this service area is further demonstrated, not only by the increasing workload but by the Teams ability to improve the Council's performance when measuring actual inspections against programmed inspections for Food Safety.

Programmed Food Hygiene Inspections



Planned Inspections – Food Safety

The number of planned inspections on the programme was broadly similar to the years 2001-02 and 2002-03. The number of inspections not undertaken has again fallen as a total. More importantly, the number of A, B and C (high Risk Premises) inspections not undertaken has fallen to 16. A decision was taken at the beginning of the year (April) to utilise alternative inspection methods for D, E and F (Lower Risk) rated premises. Questionnaires were sent to the vast majority with 136 of 310 being 'inspected' at desktop with most of the others being visited. 23 were not inspected. For the first time in 3 years contractors were not used.

Planned Inspections – Occupational Health and Safety

Last year was only the second year that a programme was drawn up and undertaken. The number of inspections carried out during the first half of the year was disappointing and a contractor was brought in the new year. The initial target number of inspections was achieved. Programmed inspections have not traditionally commanded the level of prioritisation that reactive work and food safety inspections have. The coming year's programme will be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure that inspections are undertaken at an even frequency.

One factor that led to the situation was the inability to recruit a Safety Enforcement Officer as the post is only a temporary post i.e. its funding does not form of the salary allocation.

The achievement of this last year's programme was a considerable improvement on the year 2002-03 albeit achieved with the use of contracted labour. As with food safety and reactive work, staff shortages and work on outdoor events placed pressures upon the Service.

An aid memoir relating to the 5 priority inspection topic areas was introduced and the scoring collated on a database. Analysis of the scores will, in future, assist in the determination of improvements at premises inspected and augments the LAC67/1 scoring system.

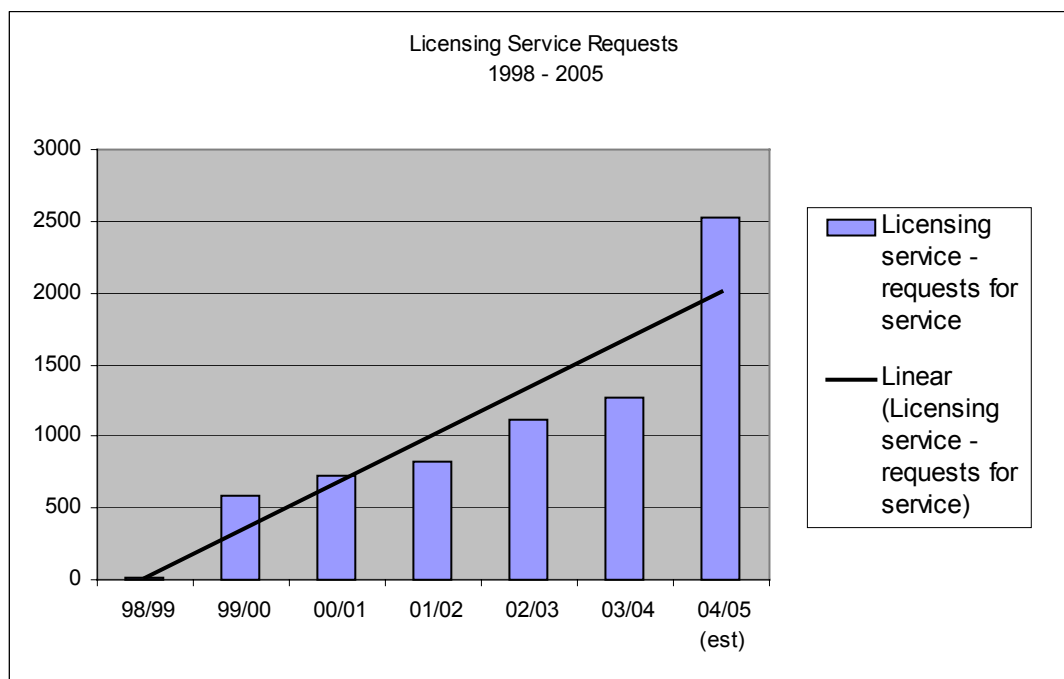
It is worth noting that, like food safety, other indicators are looked at including non-programmed inspections and visits carried out in connection with complaints and accidents.

Main issues highlighted in Environmental Health (Commercial)

- All three areas of work showed continued improvement but at a cost in terms of heightened pressure being placed upon visiting officers and administrative staff alike.
- Achievement of ISO 9001 accreditation was a source of satisfaction however, the real challenge begins this year in ensuring the accreditation is maintained and that more procedures are developed and implemented.
- Occupational health and safety enforcement still remains a reactive service despite successes in achieving a modest programme of inspections.

Licensing Services

Of all the data the service holds on its reactive work these data is not considered to be wholly reliable. Particularly as for the first three years of the authority, the data collection was somewhat hit and miss. The last three years data are considered to be much more reliable and there are clear trends showing a huge increase in service requests on the service. The leap in service requests for 2004/05 can almost exclusively be apportioned to the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003.



The effective introduction of the Licensing Act 2003 in February 2005 has meant there have been radical alterations to the structure of the service and the number of staff working in the Division. From February 2005 to November 2005 the service will be managing the transfer of licences from the Magistrates court to the Local Authority. This particular piece of work requires a high level of staff input and will dominate the work of the Team until the transfer process is complete. The Team currently has a relatively high

level of temporary staff and following the completion of the transfer process the staffing of the Team will need to be reconsidered.

The Team also has started to lead on the development a Strategy to deal with the issues relating to the extension of licensing hours and the impact on other services across the County. The Licensing Manager is the lead officer on this Strategy Development with sponsorship from the Director of Policy and Community and the Director of Environment.

1.4 ISSUES FACING THE SERVICES

Hampton Review

One of the most significant issue currently facing the service is the newly published Hampton Review. The review's aim was to identify ways in which the administrative burden of regulation on businesses can be reduced, while maintaining or improving regulatory outcomes. In undertaking the review the work of 63 national regulators and 468 local authorities was considered. The Executive summary to the Hampton review is appended to this report at Appendix 1. The review felt the current regulatory system contains much that is good, and many examples of excellent, innovative practice. However, the review believes that:

- the use of risk assessment is patchy;
- regulators do not give enough emphasis to providing advice in order to secure compliance;
- there are too many, often overlapping, forms and data requirements with no scheme to reduce their number;
- regulators lack effective tools to punish persistent offenders and reward compliant behaviour by business;
- the structure of regulators, particularly at local level, is complex, prevents joining up, and discourages business-responsive behaviour; and
- there are too many interfaces between businesses and regulators.

In considering how to tackle the problems found in the UK's regulatory system, the Hampton Review set out a number of principles for regulatory enforcement, which appear below. The Review believes the regulatory system should move towards these goals.

- Regulators, and the regulatory system as a whole, should use comprehensive risk assessment to concentrate resources on the areas that need them most;
- Regulators should be accountable for the efficiency and effectiveness of their activities, while remaining independent in the decisions they take;
- All regulations should be written so that they are easily understood, easily implemented, and easily enforced, and all interested parties should be consulted when they are being drafted;
- No inspection should take place without a reason;
- Businesses should not have to give unnecessary information, nor give the same piece of information twice;
- The few businesses that persistently break regulations should be identified quickly, and face proportionate and meaningful sanctions;
- Regulators should provide authoritative, accessible advice easily and cheaply;
- When new policies are being developed, explicit consideration should be given to how they can be enforced using existing systems and data to minimise the administrative burden imposed;
- Regulators should be of the right size and scope, and no new regulator should be created where an existing one can do the work; and

- Regulators should recognise that a key element of their activity will be to allow, or even encourage, economic progress and only to intervene when there is a clear case for protection.

The Hampton Review poses some difficult questions for the service. There is a strong emphasis in the report on the use of risk assessment to concentrate resources on the areas that most need them. The report also highlights the structure of regulatory services – particular reference is made to the number of regulatory bodies that exist and the poor interface between these bodies. The services need to establish an action plan to accommodate the recommendations of the Hampton review.

The Hampton Review throws into sharp focus the difficulties for local authorities in balancing the needs of the regulatory agencies and the needs of our customers/users (i.e. residents, businesses and visitors in Herefordshire). Considerable progress has been made by the service in risk assessing businesses in Herefordshire, this is particularly so for Food Law Enforcement, much work has been done to Risk Assess for Health and Safety and for Trading Standards and the Service Action Plans make commitments to carry out further work in this area. However, to date, these Risk Assessments are used to determine inspection levels within that individual “silo”. Currently inspection work is further prioritised by which agency controls that area of work. This has meant that Food Law Enforcement work has consistently taken priority over all other inspection work because the risks to the authority of not complying with Food Standards Agency (FSA) Codes of Practice on inspection levels are higher than the risks associated with failing to comply with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance on inspection levels. Whilst this process protects the authority against intervention from the FSA it does not necessarily meet the Corporate objectives of the authority or, necessarily, the needs of the community of Herefordshire.

This dilemma can be tackled through a number of ways, resourcing the service to ensure it can undertake all its duties is of course one mechanism, however the costs would be prohibitively high. Alternatively the Council could establish its own priorities and undertake inspection programmes to meet the priority needs of the community of Herefordshire, this of course invites the risk of intervention from the regulatory agencies.

One of the major recommendations of the Hampton Review is to create 7 major regulatory agencies to oversee the various components of the National Regulatory establishment. The Hampton review believes that consolidation should take place around key regulatory themes. The review expects integrated agencies to be more effective and efficient in delivering regulation and interacting with business. The principal themes around which regulators should be grouped are:

- Consumer protection and trading standards;
- Health and safety;
- Food standards;
- Environmental protection;
- Rural and countryside issues;
- Agricultural inspection; and
- Animal health.

Such an approach has clear benefits for businesses but it may well require the reshaping of services to meet the requirements of the regulators as well as the corporate needs of local authorities.

One difficulty posed by the Hampton review is the conflict between National regulatory requirements and the importance of shaping regulatory services to meet local needs and priorities. The Council’s current corporate priorities on Alcohol Related Disorder exemplify this problem. The new Licensing Act has introduced a completely new regulatory regime for liquor licensing. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has introduced a new regime that has led to a huge increase in the regulatory burden on businesses. There does appear to be an indication from the DCMS that the law should be applied by local authorities with a light touch. A light touch approach may make the achievement of the Council’s

corporate objectives difficult and the Council could have to take an approach that differs from national guidelines, thereby introducing levels of inconsistency with other local authorities.

The difficulties of consistent enforcement can be worsened by the differing priorities applied by National Agencies. This problem is probably best exemplified by the difficulties the service has in prioritizing between Health and Safety Enforcement and Food Safety Enforcement. Both the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) monitor the work undertaken by local authorities. The Health and Safety Executive has frequently expressed concern that local authorities consistently prioritise Food Safety inspections above Health and Safety inspections. Food Safety inspections are closely monitored by the FSA and are reported to the European Union. Authorities who fail to meet targets run the risk of intervention by the FSA (and possibly the EU), this intervention could result in service provision being removed from the local authority. Whilst powers for intervention also rest with the HSE, the HSE, unlike the FSA, do not currently have audit teams who would instigate such work. On the basis that the greatest threat to the removal of services from local authorities comes from the FSA, local authorities tend to make Food Safety work a higher priority than Health and Safety. This prioritization is not based on the risks that businesses pose to the community as a whole but on the risk to the local authority of poor performance. This situation is not restricted to Herefordshire but reflects the national position and results in the general under resourcing of Health and Safety work.

Whilst risk assessment is an extremely useful tool in ensuring the proper and efficient targeting of resources, it will in itself require resources to undertake a full risk assessment of the three teams functions and to maintain this process. Where risk assessment is used properly it can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the teams functions. The Environmental Health Commercial Team undertake risk assessments for Food Safety inspections which in turn sets inspection frequency. By using follow up inspections the team has succeeded in reducing the perceived risk in many of the Food premises in the County and in turn reducing the number of inspections that need to be undertaken, in turn this has improved the team's performance when examining its ability to complete the Food safety Inspection Programme.

Service Improvement Programme

The Division, as a whole, has made a commitment in its Service Plan to deliver a contact centre to deal with as many enquiries as possible without referring them through to the "back office". The basis behind this process is to provide the customer with quicker resolution to their request for services, to relieve back office staff from dealing with mundane and routine enquiries allowing these more specialist staff greater time and scope to deal with more complex issues and to potentially increase the amount of proactive work undertaken and enable a reduction in the costs of implementing the Licensing Act 2003. In addition a guiding principle of the Programme will be to improve the service to the clients by using the call centre to monitor progress of requests for service and to update clients on the progress of their enquiry. This area has been consistently highlighted through customer satisfaction surveys as an area that needs strengthening.

The service re-engineering is extremely important to create greater capacity to allow the Council's Corporate Objectives to be prioritised alongside National Regulatory Agencies' priorities.

Recruitment

Staffing levels in trading standards offices are in decline. Fewer staff are being employed than in previous years, and the average age is high. Thirty-one per cent of officers are aged over 50 and a further 27 per cent are aged 40 to 50. Herefordshire is fortunate in having a relative young officers in the Trading Standards Service compared to national figures with 64% of the team being below 40, 22% between 40 and 50, and 14% over 50.

Authorities and the professional bodies have expressed concern over persistent low levels of recruitment and retention. Trading Standards currently has one long-standing vacancy for a Trading Standards Officer, which has proved impossible to fill on the current salary and terms and conditions. Whilst Market supplements are being sought for this post, there are concerns that it will still be difficult to

recruit. The Division has invested in training Trading Standards Officers however when the student qualified the Division was not allowed to make an appointment and the officer moved on to a better paid job, even though a vacancy was expected to be created out of the restructure. This situation demonstrated that considerably more forward thinking and more flexibility in staffing structures is needed if the authority is to keep staff it has trained.

A similar profile exists in environmental health. The Environmental Health workforce survey 2002 showed 52.4 per cent of local authorities reporting one or more unfilled posts. The main reasons authorities gave for retention and recruitment problems were general lack of suitably qualified applicants (74 per cent) followed by problems around pay (53 per cent). The Environmental Health teams have had more success in recruiting Environmental Health officers and currently have no vacancies. This position should not be viewed complacently as the authority only pays an average salary and tends to have poorer terms and conditions than other authorities. Out of the last three appointments two were internal; one officer qualified as an EHO and filled a vacancy created in the Licensing Team, one moved from Strategic Housing and the final one moved to Herefordshire for personal reasons. The service currently has four Technical Officers training as EHOs and has two student EHOs training with the authority on an unpaid basis (although one has received a match funded bursary through the Employers Organisation).

The Division as a whole needs to consider its retention and recruitment practices to maximise its potential to retain and recruit Trading Standards and Environmental Health staff, in one of the most difficult areas of staffing in local government in which to recruit.

Information Technology

The Division has two principal IT systems. Mayrise is the system used by Waste Management and has no practical application for the Commercial Enforcement Services. The Commercial Enforcement Services use the joint Environmental Health and Trading Standards system Masterware. The system was primarily a Trading Standards package but Masterware have, in partnership with Herefordshire, developed an Environmental Health and Licensing package. This partnership has slowly brought together the two service areas into joint databases. There is still quite a lot of work to undertake with regard to "cleaning up" data. The Division is reviewing its current IT systems with a view to ensuring they can meet the requirements of a Contact Centre. In addition there is a need to ensure that the system is capable of delivering "on line" forms to ensure IEG requirements are met or exceeded. Finally the service recognises that greater efficiencies can be delivered if the service is able to provide a framework that supports flexible working to ensure staff can maximise their time "in the field" rather than travelling and undertaking "paperwork".

Advice Functions

Advice functions can be broadly split into two areas: Business Advice and Consumer Advice.

Business Advice

Trading Standards, Environmental Health (Commercial) and Licensing provide extensive levels of advice to Businesses. All three teams operate with the philosophy that it is better to help businesses to "get it right first time" by advice, rather than "get it right eventually" by enforcement. Such an approach is more efficient as enforcement is frequently a much more resource intensive process than advice. The staff from all three teams provide advice to businesses Licensing have staff dedicated to helping businesses with the new Liquor Licensing regime. Trading Standards' Principal Trading Standards Officer specialises in Business advice and works very closely with Businesses for which Herefordshire is the Home Authority. Environmental Health (Commercial) staff all provide business advice as part of their day-to-day duties.

Consumer Advice

Both Licensing and Environmental Health (Commercial) provide advice to the public on complaints however this interaction tends to be characterised by complaints about non compliance with relevant legislation which involves an investigation by officers to assess whether there have been legislative breaches.

Consumer Advice in Trading Standards is a much more complex process than the other teams. Trading Standards provides a dedicated Consumer Advice Line which is staffed for the public to receive consumer advice. The Advice Line was staffed between 9.00 and 17.00 for five days a week, however due to staff shortages and increased demands the service was reduced to the hours of 9.00 to 13.00. This reduction in service has seen a reduction in the number of enquiries and whilst there is undoubtedly some correlation between the reduction in hours there is evidence that there has been a reduction in enquiries across the West Midlands over the same period. This part of the service will be subject to considerable restructuring over the next 12 months as Consumer Direct (a Consumer Advice Call Centre) is introduced across all the local authorities in the West Midlands. Consumer Direct will handle all initial enquiries and will provide the public with information on consumer rights, however this advice will not be detailed and more complex issues will be referred on to the relevant local authority. The Consumer Advice line is an invaluable source of intelligence to Trading Standards on businesses that operate in an illegal manner that assists in Risk Assessing those businesses.

Joint Working

The Best Value review process identified a number of authorities who have undertaken moved some regulation undertaken by Trading Standards to Environmental Health and vice versa. This work has predominantly been done in the area of Food Standards, which in two tier authorities has generally resulted in Food Standards work from Trading Standards being undertaken by Food Safety teams of Environmental Health staff. Some joint working between Environmental Health and Trading Standards is already undertaken with Trading Standards staff undertaking Environmental Protection Act inspections. There are potential areas of Joint Working between the Environmental Health (Commercial Team) and Trading Standards. This area of work will closely mirror the work undertaken in other authorities in relation to Food Law Enforcement work. It is important however that such an arrangement does not compromise the authorities legal duties and requirements and does not compromise the quality of service currently delivered.

There is a need to accurately cost the services provided, not only in terms of enabling benchmarking and better understand how the services can compete in the external market, but also to control costs and become more efficient.

The implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 has highlighted the lack of an out-of-hours service for the Division (particularly Environmental Health). Bids for extra resource have been made over previous years and the Division has found itself in lower priority categories and has not received resources.

The Division is under increasing pressure to deliver more and more services within fairly constrained budgets, the Divisional budget has seen very low levels of growth over the life of the Council despite the introduction of much new legislation. Where funding has been available through income (e.g. Liquor Licensing, the service has been able to grow the service. Where funding has been directly through Central government to the local authority (e.g. the Enterprise Act) funding does not reach the service.

The Service continues to have to manage customer expectations. Demand for services frequently outstrips the Division's capability to deliver. This lack of capacity is most acute in three areas, one of which is Consumer Advice.

The Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service, as a whole, is strongly committed to the Council's SIPs process and is committed to introducing a call centre approach to handling incoming telephone calls during 2005/06. The Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service handle some 20,000 requests for service each year. There is currently no dedicated individual to handle incoming calls and the technical staff share the responsibility of answering the calls. This situation

leads to interrupted working for professional and technical staff whose skills are being underutilised in answering such queries. By handling calls more efficiently it has been determined that the Division can reconfigure the back office and the front office to deliver improving service to even though service demands are increasing at 5% per annum.

Main Issues Highlighted

Requirement to accurately the costs of the services provided.

Lack of prioritisation given to planned health and safety inspections.

External Influences

The local economy continues to be a significant influence. There has been a growth during 2004-05 of the number of food businesses starting up and therefore wanting advice and requiring inspection above and beyond the programme. The national shortage of and demand for Food Safety Officers and EHOs causes concern should the Section lose current staff.

2 STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The SWOTs have been summarised into the main issues facing Commercial Enforcement. Many of the SWOTs are contradictory as can be seen by the summary.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>The staffs' experience and skills along with a stable structure and close working relationships with other Divisions and organisations e.g Police and Fire.</p> <p>Have good customer satisfaction levels</p> <p>A review of flexible working has been regarded as positive</p> <p>Age profile – relatively young</p> <p>Flexible and adaptable service</p> <p>ISO 9001 2000 Accredited</p> <p>Sampling Budget relatively well financed</p> <p>Local provision of service</p> <p>Good Consumer Advice provision</p> <p>Good Business Advice</p> <p>Good track record of being a Regulatory Enforcement body</p>	<p>No out of hour's service.</p> <p>Office accommodation is in 2 locations making communication difficult and causing inconsistencies in approach.</p> <p>Links between Environmental Health and Trading Standards are not close enough.</p> <p>No dedicated specialist 'in-house' IT Officer provision</p> <p>ICT facilities have hindered greater progress and improvement – particularly around flexible working.</p> <p>No career development grades</p> <p>No trainees</p> <p>Poor stakeholder consultation</p> <p>Mainly reactive rather than proactive</p> <p>Often operating at or below 'critical core mass' of staffing levels</p> <p>Lack of opportunity/resource to plan and review and undertake strategic development of service</p>

Opportunities	Threats
<p>Look at the structure to see if there is a more holistic approach to Commercial Enforcement.</p> <p>Relocating to a single office to improve communication and working practices.</p> <p>E-technology providing a service through the Internet.</p> <p>Increase in staffing resources.</p> <p>Improved IT.</p> <p>Better and quicker information and advice to individuals and businesses</p> <p>More effective and efficient investigation of alleged breaches of the law</p> <p>Implementation of a SIPs-initiated solution will help bring about such improvements as will the digitising of hard copy data (this too is resource dependant).</p> <p>Changes in food law in 2006 bring not only threats but opportunities to reconfigure the service, the way it delivers services and the relationship and image with customers.</p> <p>Potential to engage and contribute to 'cross cutting' themes and agendas within the Service and beyond, e.g. PCT, Community Safety.</p> <p>New resources introduced by income from Liquor Licensing</p> <p>Division's commitment to SIPS</p> <p>Consumer Direct</p> <p>Ability to influence Corporate Plan</p> <p>LPSA's</p> <p>Increased use of Partnership working</p> <p>Regionalisation/Nationalisation</p> <p>Consumer Education</p> <p>PR</p> <p>Hampton Review</p>	<p>Lack of resources to cope with potentially increasing workload caused by the change in liquor Licensing regulations.</p> <p>Recruitment and retention of staff.</p> <p>Accommodation restricts work</p> <p>Fees from new legislation may not meet the cost of implementation.</p> <p>Increase in appeals to the magistrates' court.</p> <p>Opportunities to achieve aims rely upon improving the flow of requests for service through the Division and the Section ICT, flexible working and accommodation heavily influence the attainment of these aims</p> <p>Budget cuts</p> <p>Consumer Direct</p> <p>Closure of Consumer Advice provision</p> <p>Increased consumer and business demand and expectation</p> <p>Reduction/standstill in resources provided</p> <p>Demographics of National workforce</p> <p>Regionalisation/Nationalisation</p> <p>Hampton Review</p> <p>Are the new resources introduced by income from Liquor Licensing adequate?</p>

3 CHALLENGE

The review was set up with Members whose remit was to challenge the authenticity of the information being gathered and the analysis of the information. It was on this basis that the Stage 1 Report was approved.

Following the local elections in 2003, Councilor Mills has acted as Board Member with the review being project managed using Prince2 methodology.

The services being reviewed have been the subject of several improvement activities over recent years. All of these activities have challenged various aspects of the services, e.g. leadership, strategy, people, resource, and processes. All of the improvement activities have resulted in action plans.

4 COMPARE

Obtaining data from other organisations is difficult where there are no Audit Commission, Best Value or other National Performance Indicators. Such PIs not only require local authorities to collect the data but also to collect it in a manner consistent with others and make that data available.

Alternatives to National PIs have emerged over the past few years namely the Hampshire Benchmarking Club and the New Unitaries Benchmarking Club (NUB). However, participation in such schemes has proven difficult and has not been well developed.

Other alternatives such as identifying single local authorities with which to compare have been considered (Carmarthenshire) but rejected on the basis that potential partners were unwilling to participate.

BVPI 166a is the sole BVPI at present. As it is a compound score covering all parts of environmental health it is not possible to make comparisons at specific service levels and therefore only overall scores can be compared.

The requirement to provide BVPI 166 data commenced in the year 2002-03 therefore the only comparison data relates to 2002-03 and 2003-04 during which Herefordshire's score rose from 48.3% to 66.3% and now stands at 86.6%. This now falls just below the top quartile for Unitary Authorities.

In 2003 a great deal of work was put into looking at NUB organisations in order to obtain comparison data for reactive as well as planned work. The quality and usefulness of reactive work data has been poor and no conclusions could be drawn from the activities.

Attention has been paid to Food Standards Agency and Health and Safety Commission data in order to make comparisons for planned inspections.

No external comparison has been made with respect to the number of enquiries or the speed of response. It is not therefore possible to establish whether or not the Service is providing a value for money service as compared against other similar organisations.

There has been some comparisons for the Division as a whole made within Herefordshire Council through the EFQM Excellence Model Assessments, Staff Opinion Survey and Herefordshire Driver assessments. The results for the Division have been positive.

Little or no reliable bench marking data is available for the Trading Standards Service. CIPFA stats are available from the website, however the figures include Animal Health & Welfare and comparisons with other authorities are difficult if not meaningless. The East Riding of Yorkshire has been contacted and no benchmarking data is available. They are hoping to restart a benchmarking club in the near future. The roll out of Self Assessment & Peer Review which is currently being undertaken by Trading Standards throughout the Country over the next three years will address this issue.

There is clear evidence from other Unitary Councils that some services have been delivered outside the normal professional boundaries of Environmental Health and Trading Standards, particularly in the area of Food Law enforcement. Whilst there are some issues that would need to be resolved around maintaining appropriate skills there are opportunities to improve FSA performance by the three teams sharing some joint enforcement work whilst maintaining the skills to deal with more complex and technical areas requiring detailed professional skills. Such an approach has already been adopted with Trading Standards taking on Vapour Recovery Inspections, at Petrol Stations, on behalf of the Environmental Protection Team ensuring the Council delivers the suggested inspection programme.

The disadvantages are relatively minimal with some potential for professional jealousies but this process already works without such problems on vapour recovery inspections.

Trading Standards

Benchmarking Information

Attempts have been made to benchmark the service against other local authorities in the following areas:

1. The number of requests for service received
2. the percentage of requests for service responded to within defined periods
3. the number of food premises
4. the number of food premises (by risk categorisation) requiring inspection
5. the percentage of inspections carried out
6. the number of health and safety premises
7. the number of health and safety premises (by local prioritisation) requiring inspection
8. the percentage of inspections carried out

1, 3 and 6 are intended to provide contextual comparators although the categories of request for service may differ from LA to LA. Population is also used. Resource comparators such as number of FTE staff and the costs to the service have been sought but there are difficulties in obtain these and making bona fide comparisons.

Financial Comparisons

Data on the financial performance of these services on an authority-by-authority basis are extremely difficult. CIPFA do undertake work to assess the overall performance of each authority, however these are done right across the full environmental health service and therefore include areas of environmental health work such as private housing and pollution control work. Trading Standards comparisons include Animal Health and therefore comparisons between the part of the Trading Standards reviewed and the data on other authorities are virtually impossible. Using raw comparison data from the last available CIPFA data for 2002/03 (the last available data) Herefordshire's Trading Standards had lower net expenditure per thousand population than the average for other Unitary Authorities in England. The CIPFA figures show expenditure per thousand population standing at £2,859, the average being £3,236. The lowest spending authority according to the CIPFA data shows was Bristol at £1,931; the highest spending authority was Middlesborough at £8,273. This data on Trading Standards has to be viewed with considerable caution.

A comparison on Environmental Health Data is even more unreliable. Whilst comparisons have been drawn on expenditure per thousand population basis on the 2002/03 CIPFA data it is impossible to disaggregate the data into the Licensing and Environmental Health (Commercial) therefore comparisons are extremely unreliable.

Using raw comparison data from the last available CIPFA data for 2002/03 (the last available data) Herefordshire's Environmental Health Services had higher net expenditure per thousand population than the average for other Unitary Authorities in England. The CIPFA figures show expenditure per thousand population standing at £11,093, the average being £9,836. The lowest spending authority according to the CIPFA data shows was York at £4,507; the highest spending authority was Halton at £21,900.

It is interesting to note that the recent CIPFA document analysing the performance of Trading Standards Services in the UK made no assessment of financial comparisons of local authorities.

5 CONSULT

The EHTS Service uses its Customer Satisfaction Survey as a key means of feedback from customers and stakeholders. The system is part of the Division's ISO9001 Quality Management System and has been undertaken in both 2002/03 and 2003/04. The survey for 2004/05 is currently being undertaken.

	2002/03	2002/03	2003/04	2003/04	2004/05	2004/05
	Enquiries	Inspection s/ Visits	Enquiries	Inspection s/ Visits	Enquiries	Inspection s/ Visits
Highly Satisfied	38.25%	43.4%	38.4%	38.9%	Awaited	35.6%
Satisfied	37.5%	50.9%	38.6%	53.5%	Awaited	58.4%
Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	7.25%	3.8%	9.4%	4.2%	Awaited	4.0%
Dissatisfied	7.5%	0%	6.3%	2.1%	Awaited	0.0%
Very Dissatisfied	4.75%	0.94%	5.5%	0.7%	Awaited	0.7%
TOTAL SATISFIED	75.75%	94.3%	77%	92.4%	Awaited	94%

The service shows high levels of Customer Satisfaction, which has remained consistently high over the three years that the Customer Satisfaction Survey has been undertaken.

The Service uses the Council's own complaints system to monitor complaints, comments and compliments about the service. The service has seen a steady decline in complaints from nearly 20% in 2002 to nearly 10% in 2004. In addition there has been about a 16% rise in the percentage of compliments received by the service.

	2002	2003	2004
Complaints	19.8%	10.5%	9.7%
Comments	16.5%	10.5%	10.6%
Compliments	63.7%	78.9%	79.6%

The Council operated a customer complaint/compliment system. Each complaint/compliment is investigated and if changes are felt appropriate are acted upon. Complaints are reviewed as part of the ISO 9001 process and reported to the Divisional Management Team.

Non-service users have not been considered to date.

Other stakeholders such as the FSA, HSC/HSE, Department of Health and other governmental departments communicate with the Service through mechanisms such as consultative documents. The Service responds individually to such documents and also via the Chief Environmental Health Officers' Food group and Health and Safety group. These groups meet between 6 and 10 times per year and discuss, amongst other things, matters relating to service delivery.

Direct contact with the public is certainly made e.g through Consumer Advice and Education, provision of talks etc., resolving and investigating complaints from the public. In addition to consumers and staff, an additional list of stakeholders for TS is included below.

Herefordshire Business Partnership

The Service has established a Local Business Partnership, in line with other partnerships running nationally between businesses and Regulatory Services. The Partnership is used as a means of consulting with local businesses, particularly over the way in which the Service enforces legislation.

Staff

Consultation with staff occurs via the annual Council Staff Opinion Survey and via the EFQM/Herefordshire Driver process. A staff consultation group has been established to review the outcome of these surveys and to assist management in developing responses to issues that have been raised.

It was from this process that ISO 9001 was developed with the staff identifying inconsistency of procedures as an issue for the service. The service has introduced and rolled out ISO 9001 and last year's Herefordshire Driver indicated high levels of confidence in the Divisions systems and processes.

Liquor Licensing

The licensing service records all the customer complaints and compliments. In light of the new liquor licensing legislation the service has carried out meetings with the largest occasional public entertainment licence holders to discuss the working relationship and to establish where improvements can be made to the service. In addition the service has completed a session of workshops for businesses and voluntary organizations likely to be affected by the Licensing Act 2005. These workshops served the purpose of informing businesses of the changes and for the Council to help shape its services to meet the needs of our customers.

Taxi Licensing Forum

There are regular meetings of drivers at the Taxi Licensing Forum for Herefordshire, however there is no evidence of any changes as a result of these meetings nor any assessment of the impact of those meetings on the taxi drivers or operators or the community at large.

6 COMPETE

The majority of functions are statutory ones delivered on behalf of the Council. There are instances in some other local authorities where some of the functions have been/are delivered by individuals and/or organisations outside the respective local authority. In addition, there are private sector individuals and organisations that offer services such as inspection of premises, training and sampling.

The Council effectively operates within a 'monopolistic' environment not having to compete with other organisations for business. As most enquiries relate to alleged non-compliance with legislation, it follows that the Council, in its role as one of policing the legislation, does not face competition. The provision of advice on compliance, for example, need not be a role that only the Council may fulfill. Business Link and the Federation of Small Businesses are two organisations that offer advice to businesses.

The advice roles and receipt of allegations have traditionally been very closely linked and complement each other in terms of nature, authority and quality of response. There may be room for improvement in these services and lessons could be learned from other providers of advice and recipients of allegations.

7 OPTION APPRAISAL

The options considered were;

- ***Retain the existing services in their current format.***
- ***Stop Delivering the Service***
- ***Externalise the Service***
- ***Expand the Service***
- ***Re-engineer the current services to deliver more efficient services.***

Retain the existing services in their current format.

Increasing demand from both Consumers and Businesses requiring advice and assistance is creating an ever-increasing workload. This together with new legislation such as the Licensing Act and changing European Law is placing an unsustainable demand on the Service. A higher public profile serves to fuel this increase in demand. In addition, the increasing role that these services now play in contributing to the important 'cross cutting' agendas and themes in areas such as:-

- Community Safety: Bogus Tradesmen/Bogus Callers and Doorstep crime/Distracted Burglary. Anti-Social behaviour issues relating to controlling the sale of Age –Restricted products e.g. Alcohol, Knives, Tobacco, Solvents Fireworks and Videos / DVD's.
- The reduction of Alcohol Related Disorder
- The Heath Agenda: Healthy eating, Food Standards, Composition and Quality. Reduction in under age smoking of 11-15 year olds through enforcement action and advice.
- Consumer Education: including consumer issues, civil law contract rights doorstep selling rights for school age children, adults, excluded and vulnerable groups
- Economic Regeneration: providing assistance to businesses especially SME's. ensuring a fair and equitable trading environment and preventing and tackling 'Rogue Trading and Traders'.
- Consumer Direct: Implementation of Consumer Direct is now scheduled for late 2005. This will undoubtedly lead to an increase in referrals to the TSS requiring some form or degree of intervention by the Service. 'Back Office enquiries are likely to increase sevenfold.
- Gershon Report: requirement / need for the Service to show annual improvement / cost savings.
- Hampton Review: likely to affect the manner in which service delivery is undertaken especially with regard to Enforcement & inspection, Partnerships and Structure i.e Regionalisation and Nationalisation – are also placing a strain on the current structure.

These factors reinforce the view that to retain these services in their current format, is not a viable option.

Stop Delivering the Service

Most of the services delivered by the Division are statutory and have to be provided by the Council. Failure to do so would result in intervention by outside regulatory agencies or Central Government . This would result in external intervention to ensure its continued provision at local authority expense.

The Health, Safety & Economic well being of Consumers, Businesses, the Local Authority and local environment would be put in jeopardy. Those who are socially excluded, the vulnerable, the elderly and the young would be the ones who would suffer most from the abolition of the service.

Corporate Priorities and the implementation of the Herefordshire plan would be severely affected, curtailed and damaged as a result.

Externalise the Service

External Contractors

There is virtually no existing market to externalise these services to, whilst contractors do exist they are purely geared up to handle routine inspections – all other areas of work tend to be regarded as too difficult to specify in contracts and therefore too difficult to quote for. No local authority in the country has successfully externalised these services.

The service has in recent years bought in inspection services for food safety, health and safety and Trading Standards. The cost of each inspection is not regarded as unreasonable in itself but the cost does not include any element of follow up or enforcement activity. Additional monies may be spent to

cover these aspects but the costs are far greater than inspection alone and become comparable with the cost of employing existing staff but with drawbacks associated with flexibility, consistency and a high input is required to monitor contractors.

Being able to utilise contracted labour as and when necessary is an important tool already used from time to time and should continue to be available especially to cover unforeseen situations.

Contracting out either in part, or in whole to another Local Authority

Such an approach could lead to considerable difficulties as all the neighbouring English Authorities are two-tier and none could take on all three service areas as Environmental Health and Licensing are District Council functions and Trading Standards is a County Council function. On this basis it would not be possible to contract out the services collectively to a neighbouring authority.

The disadvantages of such an approach may lead to a loss of day to day control of the services. It may also involve a reduction in a local presence in the County of these services. With such a limited number of possible local authorities capable of undertaking the services for Herefordshire there is a huge potential to be 'held to ransom' over future contract costs.

The advantages of such an approach are that they may reflect some of the ideas contained in the Hampton review. Economies of scale are potentially possible however some the bigger savings may be in central support costs and would not, therefore necessarily be made by the service itself.

Consideration should be given to a review of some the potential to share some service delivery, this is most likely to include very specialist services but could also include areas such as training.

Scope exists and significant work has already been undertaken to identify key partners and to engage in joint working e.g MidCOTS / CEnTSA Regional TS Group, the Police, CABx, the Consumer Support Network (CSN's) and Community Legal Partnerships (CLP's) and other local authorities. Potential to bid for other authorities functions have arisen, the service has bid to provide Petroleum Licensing in a neighbouring authority and has provided staffing support to another authority investigating an outbreak of Legionnaires Disease. Different types of partnership working are regularly considered as a means of service delivery.

Expand the Service

Clearly under current circumstances it is unlikely that additional resources would be found to fund an expansion of these services and whilst it would enable the service to make greater contributions to the Council's corporate objectives it is recognised that this is not a realistic option. However the Service does need to create extra capacity to deliver new services and meet increasing demands on the service.

Re-engineer the current services to deliver more efficient services

The service can, through a combination of measures improve its overall efficiency. The use of the Council's SIPs process and the introduction of a contact centre may enable the current relationship between the "Back Office" and the "Front Office" to be re-engineered. By re-engineering these services greater capacity should be created to deliver services to the public and businesses alike. Greater capacity also allows the service to target more resources on meeting the Council's Corporate Objectives as well as meeting the requirements of the various Regulatory Agencies.

Whilst this approach does provide scope for greater capacity it will not deliver enough capacity for any of the services to deliver comprehensive enforcement services across the full range of regulatory services. This would mean the Council needs to be quite specific not only about what it will do with this extra resource but also what it will not be able to do. Therefore Service Plans will need to be explicit about which work is high priority and which work is lower priority. The Service Plans will need to be explicit about the risks associated with such prioritisation and how such prioritisation fits with the Council's Corporate Objectives and the requirements of Regulatory Agencies.

To achieve these efficiencies the Services will need to undertake the following tasks:

- Create a Contact Centre to handle incoming service requests.
- Re-engineer the current “Front Office” and “Back Office” functions to maximise the principle of dealing with service requests in one transaction and by minimizing referrals to the “Back Office”.
- To maximise the service’s capacity to provide “on-line” forms and advice for businesses.
- Facilitate through the use of IT – flexible working for staff.
- To create a Divisional recruitment plan to ensure professional staff can be recruited and retained by the Division.
- A Gap Analysis be undertaken on areas where Risk Assessment has not been undertaken.
- Undertake a review of possible joint working arrangements with neighbouring authorities.
- Review the current working practices to maximise the potential for joint working between the three teams.
- Review the funding made available through the fee income from Liquor Licensing to expand the service and to help deliver an out of hours service (this would be cross Division service, including Environmental Protection).
- To ensure that there is integration of the Regional Consumer Direct Service into the Trading Standards Service and the Council’s SIPs programme
- The Council will need to review the provisions of the Bill announced in the Queens Speech to implement the recommendations of the Hampton review.

8 PREFERRED OPTION

The review team, having considered all of the options recommend that:

That Environmental Health (Commercial Enforcement), Trading Standards and Licensing are re-engineered to deliver more efficient services

9 THE NEXT STEPS

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The improvement plan should:

- Identify Outcomes
- Set key tasks
- Allocate responsibilities
- Set “stretching” targets and performance measures and indicators
- Specify a timetable
- Identify the financial and environmental impacts of the actions
- Ensure the implications of the Hampton Review as it progresses should be taken into account

This plan will be put before the Executive for approval.

The Environment Scrutiny Committee will monitor the implementation of the plan.

Appendix 1 – Details of minor changes and issues

Amalgamation of Environment Health and Trading Standards IT systems and the creation of a new Licensing System has created initial problems which will be solved and should, during 2005, result in improved data entry, storage, access and reporting. Issues surrounding data quality remain as both a weakness and a threat that need resolving but only through an input of resource.

Assets and Equipment

Since the end of March 2004 Environmental Health Commercial has not had officers working out of Leominster. The opportunity was taken to encourage flexible working for the 4 officers who were based there. 'Hot desking' facilities are available at Grange Court and approximately a third of the Section's files are still currently located there.

Commercial Enforcement

The directorate wide restructuring in June 2004 resulted in an improvement to the structure with the establishment of 2 Principal EHOs instead of 2 Senior (Specialist) EHOs. This structural change resulted from pressures and desires to deliver and manage performance, and to provide a form that best delivers functions.

In addition, an administration post has been left vacant since January 2003 in order to accommodate any changes envisaged by the Service Improvement Programme (formerly the Access to Services project); one EHO post is now part time; the part time Technical Officer's post has been vacant since October 2004, and, a post to carry out Health and Safety inspections and investigations established although not filled. Two EHOs have resigned and been replaced in March 2004.

The creation of the Safety Enforcement Officer post was considered to be a significant step in helping to rationalise health and safety inspections and improve performance. However, funding difficulties and the temporary status of the post led to difficulties in recruiting and the funding was used (in 2003-04 and 2004-05) to bring in external staff with a mixture of success.

As preliminary work to SIP, processes were again examined but from a different perspective. This (and customer comments) resulted in further changes (e.g. duty officer system; setting up of common EHCNet contacts system).

Working toward ISO accreditation meant that processes, systems and procedures had to be written, or amended and certainly improved.

The QMS system has been introduced and, along with the 'Rocket Science' initiative, has resulted in better and more focused performance management.

The speed of response to requests for service has improved and overall means that over 90% of requests are dealt with within target.

The number and percentage of programmed food safety inspections has improved.

A programme for health and safety inspections has been established and the number and percentage of inspections carried out against that target improved (although there is still scope for further improvement).

Measurement systems have been improved and where necessary, set up. These will assist in the more accurate measurement of the use of resources and achievement not just of targets but of contribution to outcomes.

Flexible working has been developed to reduce the need for accommodation, to reduce overall work-related travelling and to provide wins for individuals and for the service and therefore customers.

Introduction of a duty officer system (greatest prioritisation being given to requests of service, notification etc);

Adoption of an alternative inspection regime for DEFs;

The carrying out of revisits was given a higher priority;

Trading Standards

There has been a re-alignment of the Service to deal accommodate the increased demand for Consumer Advice and the re-designation of vacant post to post of Consumer Advisor.

Consumer education Strategy developed and implemented – targeting the young.

Increased partnership working with the following organisations:

- MIDCOTS/CEnTSA regional group
- Police
- Community Safety Partnership
- Social Care
- Community Support Network / CABx / CLSP's

The creation of a post to understudy the Petroleum & Explosives Licensing Officer to meet demand.

Engagement in cross cutting themes and agendas such as Community Safety e.g. 'Doorstep Awareness Campaign' and 'Operation Liberal'. TS now contributing to the wider agenda.

The use of new technology to enhance Service provision. All Officers have access to the Internet. Legal reference material is accessible on-line and legal updates are also provided by this method as well.

The use of Good Practice Guides and undertaking a 'Self Assessment' for Trading Standards Authorities to identify and drive through Service improvement for Trading Standards.

Ensuring that staff undergo appropriate professional & management training to ensure continuous staff development and to meet future Service needs e.g Management development , Lead Auditor training, undertaking the Diploma in Consumer Affairs (DCA) and DCA Food Module.

Merging both the Environmental Health & Trading Standards Service databases to improve both data storage and retrieval and ultimately, service provision and delivery.

Licensing

The introduction of the new Licensing Act 2003 has lead to a complete restructure of the Licensing Team. The team has a large number of temporary staff and the staffing will need to be reviewed after the completion of the Transfer Period, currently expected to be in November 2005. The completion of the Transfer Period will also mark a point where the longer term funding from fee income will become clear and the scope to provide funding to expand services and to fund an out-of-hours service.

GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (GEM) REPORT FOR 2004/5

Report By: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Purpose

1. To review the Council's environmental management / ISO 14001 system over 2004/05 to ensure that it continues to be suitable, adequate and effective and deliver improvement in environmental performance.

Financial Implications

2. Objectives and targets are met within set budgets and resources.

Considerations

3. The attached report gives summary information on Council performance against its nine objectives. It also covers progress with ISO 14001 certification, developments during the year and plans for 2005/06.
4. The proposed GEM objectives & targets for 2005/06 are set out at Appendix IV. The GEM group agreed earlier this year to reduce the number of objectives and targets, as it was felt that last year's set was too detailed. The plan to extract GEM commitments from Service Plans to create the 05/06 programme proved difficult as Service Plans tend to focus on larger scale initiatives and so did not produce the full range of commitments required to progress our objectives.
5. Other appendices give more detailed information on performance against each target for 2004/5 and corrective actions raised internally and externally (by our certifiers) during the past year.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report be noted and any comments by the Committee on the Council's performance for 2004/05 and objectives for 2005/06 be forwarded for consideration by the Cabinet Member (Environment).

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None



GEM

Environmental Report

2004/05



INTRODUCTION

Protecting the environment has always been one of the authority's top priorities and is also central to the Herefordshire Plan. Herefordshire Council has been committed to registering all its activities and services to an environmental management standard since May 1998.



GEM (Good Environmental Management) covers the whole Council. In addition, all office administration and land management across the Council has been certified to ISO 14001, the international environmental management system) since July 2002. Other services are steadily joining the scope. Standards are checked twice a year by our external certifier, SGS Yarsley.

The work of GEM forms an integral part of the Council's commitments to delivering sustainable development. The sustainability agenda received a further boost in 2004/05 with the publication of both the revised national sustainable development strategy "Securing the Future" and the revised West Midlands regional Sustainable Development Framework "The Future Starts Here". Effective environmental management is key to the delivery of sustainable development and through the GEM programme the Council can demonstrate that it is leading by example in this area.

GEM Objectives for 2004/05

- WASTE - Reduce waste generated by Council services by 1% and increase levels of recycling and the use of recycled material**
- PROCUREMENT - Improve environmental performance of the Council by working with partners, suppliers and contractors**
- COMMUNICATION - Promote the Council's environmental initiatives and increase the awareness of Council staff of their environmental impact and role in GEM**
- ENERGY - Achieve a 1% reduction in energy use in operational council property and maintain the use of energy from renewable sources**
- TRANSPORT - Reduce the environmental impact of Council transport use through the Staff Travel Plan and other initiatives**
- PROPERTY RISKS - Reduce environmental risks relating to the Council's property portfolio and tenant management**
- BIODIVERSITY - Build on existing work to protect and enhance biodiversity on Council owned land**
- CORPORATE PLAN - Further integrate GEM into corporate performance management**
- CERTIFICATION - Roll out scope of ISO14001 certification to cover all Council activities and services by Feb 2005.**

WASTE

“Reduce waste generated by Council services by 1% and increase levels of recycling and the use of recycled material”

Waste capacity and cost

The amount of trade waste generated by Council services has reduced from 5940.8kg per week in 2003/04 to 5872.8kg in 2004/05 (based on notional figures for the volume of Sulobins and trade sacks), a decrease of 1.14%. This represents a reduction of over 3.5 tonnes per year and a decrease in the cost of waste removal of around £350 per year.

Council Office Recycling Scheme

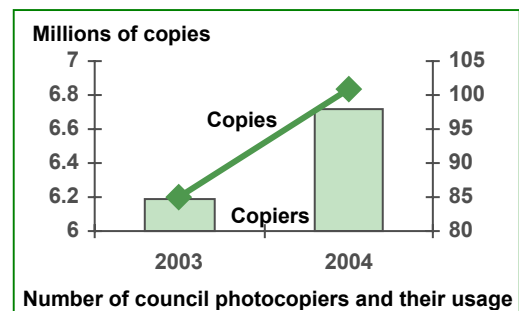
The Council recycling service operated by Dave Baker, covering paper, plastic bottles, cans and cardboard, collects weekly from 26 offices in Hereford, covers all 19 major Council offices (over 20 staff) and monthly from 10 further offices in the county. In addition a further four Council premises have alternative recycling procedures in place.

During 2004/05 collections totalled 49.18 tonnes of paper and 526 bags of plastics, cans and cardboard. This represents roughly 14.35% of the total Council waste output of 364 tonnes per year (based on industry estimates of weights for different sized containers). This figure is therefore just short of the 14.4% target set for household recycling in the County and represents a significant increase on the previous year, although the figures are not complete enough to present a formal comparison.

Resource Efficiency

Paper – recent West Mercia Supplies figures show 93% of paper bought by Council offices was from recycled stock.

Photocopiers – Both the number of photocopiers and their usage has increased substantially over the last year. Figures show that the Council now owns 16 more photocopiers than last year and the number of copies made has increased by over 500,000. This increase reflects both the move to larger premises and the use of networked photocopiers as default printers in the larger offices rather than conventional desktop printers. The rationale behind this is the improved efficiency associated with using networked photocopiers as printers.



Waste Management

Waste Management joined the Council’s ISO 14001 certification in July 2004. The team undertook considerable work over the winter to determine the baseline for households participating in the kerbside recycling schemes as the first stage of work on “Target 75”.

Council printing jobs undertaken by HJS

During the last quarter of the year HJS successfully piloted the use of recycled paper for printing Council agendas. This is now standard practice. In the last quarter 66% of paper bought by In-Print was recycled.

Computers sent for refurbishment by ICT

Redundant ICT equipment is sent to Worcester Lifestyles for refurbishment & recycling. During 04/05 this included 335 monitors, 270 base units, 107 printers and 28 laptops. Suitable items are reissued within the authority. The Council has around 2050 PCs in its offices & 150 servers.

PROCUREMENT

“Improve environmental performance of the Council by working with partners, suppliers and contractors”

Partners working towards ISO 14001

Several key partners/contractors now have ISO 14001. These include: -

- ◆ Severn Waste Services, our waste disposal contractor (2001)
- ◆ Herefordshire Jarvis Services (April 2004)
- ◆ FOCSA, our waste collection contractor (Summer 2004)
- ◆ Owen Williams, our highways and transportation consultants (April 2005)

HJS Performance Indicators

Performance indicators have been agreed for waste arisings, certified wood, recycled paper usage, recycled highways materials, recycling of paper and energy consumption. Owen Williams are collecting baseline data for 04/05 and it is then expected that targets or ranges of acceptable performance will be set for the indicators for 2005/06.

Certified Timber

During the year the availability of certified timber has greatly improved and it is now stocked by a number of local suppliers. Property Services reiterated the Council's policy on certified timber in December and have sent out guidance to contractors and partners.

West Mercia Supplies

WMS have a 'green list' of products with reduced environmental impact. Environmental officers from the 4 partner authorities met with WMS in February to discuss extending this list.

- ◆ WMS purchase gas and electricity for the Council - they supply 100% renewable electricity for our offices and schools.
- ◆ Refurbished print cartridges – these are proving much more reliable with the new WMS supplier. They save money and cut down waste and have been recommended to managers.

Fairtrade

The Council has been testing the level of community support for Fairtrade. A motion recommending support will go to Full Council in May 2005. Once agreed, the Council will serve Fairtrade tea and coffee at its meetings and work with community groups to secure Fairtrade status for the County.

Joint Purchasing

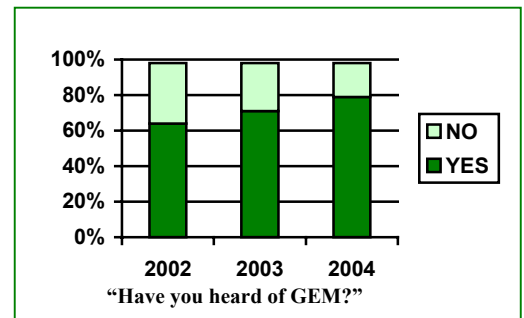
Environment and Policy & Community Directorate staff based at Plough Lane now order and store their stationery jointly. This has led to considerable cost savings, increased efficiency and a reduced requirement for storage space.

COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES

“Promote the Council’s environmental initiatives and increase the awareness of Council staff of their environmental impact and role in GEM”

Staff Opinion Survey Results

The results of the Staff Opinion Survey since 2002 (the year in which GEM was rolled out) shows that the levels of awareness of GEM have consistently increased, as has the understanding amongst Council staff of how their own job impacts upon the environment. Only 1 respondent in 6 thought that enough was being done to reduce the Council’s environmental impacts – giving a mandate to set considerably stronger targets.



GEM Group

The corporate GEM group continued to meet throughout the year. Quarterly meetings include further representatives of key services.

GEM Newsletter

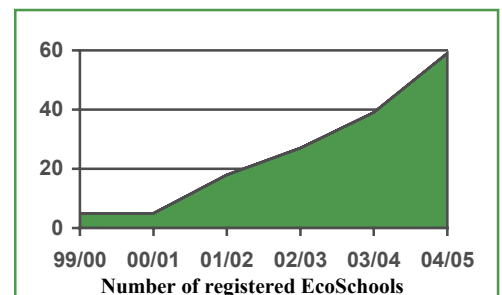
The GEM monthly newsletter aims to provide a succinct and colourful update. It now has a circulation of over 100 and is an invaluable vehicle for disseminating the latest news and information about GEM initiatives and encouraging feedback.

Bridge-It

Economic Development has supported the Bridge-it Programme, which has given advice and training on environmental matters to local small and medium size businesses, since its launch in 2003. So far the programme has run 8 seminars in the county attended by over 100 delegates, trained 18 delegates on 2 Practical Environmental Management Courses and provided initial advice to over 55 companies.

EcoSchools

The EcoSchools scheme continues to go from strength to strength in Herefordshire. This international scheme, set up by Encams, promotes environmental awareness and the principles of environmental management within schools through teaching and pupil/staff committees, reaching over 15,000 children. 59 of the 105 schools in the county are now registered EcoSchools and 17 have achieved one of the award levels. This year, grants were awarded to thirteen schools for projects contributing to their EcoSchool programmes.



Staff training on environmental issues

Two Managers’ training sessions took place in the autumn and the Managers Forum in November 2004 was devoted to environmental issues.

Other Initiatives

Plan-it Green: A ground source heat pump has been installed at Marshfield Centre, Leominster, part of Learning Disability Day Opportunities.

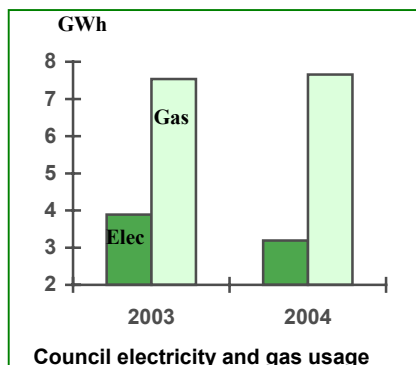
Shopmobility now have an environmental policy

E-Wise - energy software for schools was developed and distributed to 32 EcoSchools in a Home Energy Conservation Act pilot scheme.

ENERGY

“Achieve a 1% reduction in energy use in operational Council property and maintain the use of energy from renewable sources”

Council Energy Usage Data

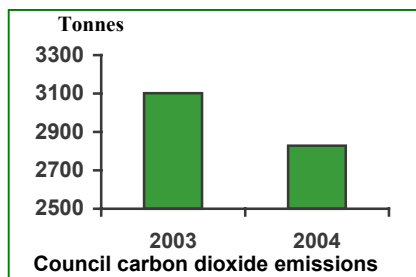


Electricity consumption has reduced dramatically (17.8%) during the year in larger Council buildings. Gas consumption has risen slightly over the last year (1.8%): this is likely to be due to problems reconciling actual and estimated consumption, though there is also scope to strengthen control of local heating settings and timings. Overall the Council's carbon emissions have decreased by almost 300 tonnes over the last year.

NB This data has been taken from offices for which the Council has reliable consumption information and thus does not entirely represent the full extent of the Council's energy use and carbon dioxide emissions.

The decrease is predominantly due to property rationalisation measures that the Council has taken and therefore represents a one-off gain.

More work to improve energy efficiency will be needed in order to continue this trend – see *CMAP below*.



Carbon Management Action Plan

The Council participated in Phase 2 of the Carbon Trust's national Carbon Management Initiative. As a result, the Council formally adopted a Carbon Management Action Plan (CMAP) in March 2005, committing to a reduction of 1.25% carbon dioxide equivalent each year till 2012. The Council has also agreed to sign the Nottingham

Declaration on Climate Change; this requires local authorities to work with the community to develop an action plan to tackle climate change at a local level. Of particular note in the CMAP is the recommendation to establish an Invest-to-Save scheme during the first phase to 2008.

Climate Change

A Climate Change strategy for Herefordshire is in preparation under the auspices of the Herefordshire Partnership. A Herefordshire greenhouse gas inventory has been assembled which establishes baseline emissions for the main sectors of interest in Herefordshire. A separate inventory for Council activities has also been drawn up.

Consultation on the main themes of the Herefordshire Partnership strategy is being undertaken using the DEMOCs climate challenge, developed jointly by the Herefordshire Partnership and the New Economics Foundation.

The greenhouse gas emissions inventory for Herefordshire as a whole has reported a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 2.9 million tonnes in 2000 to 2.7 million in 2002, a reduction of 100,000 tonnes per year. This is mainly the result of the reduction in livestock following the outbreak of foot-and-mouth.

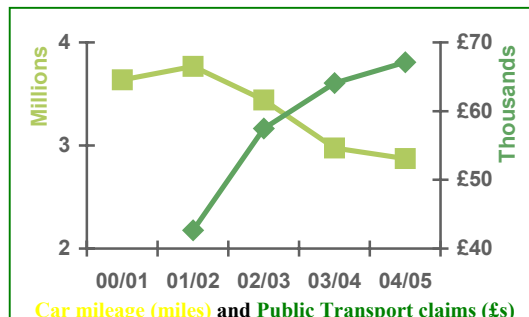
TRANSPORT

“Reduce the environmental impact of Council transport use through the Staff Travel Plan and other initiatives”

Staff Travel

The Chief Executives Management Team passed the Staff Travel Plan in September 2004. This sets out a programme to promote the uptake of more sustainable transport options.

Business mileage figures continue to show a clear decline in the mileage claims for car journeys, falling from 2.97 million miles in 03/04 to 2.87million, a reduction of around 3%. This period has also seen public transport mileage claims rise from £64k in 03/04 to £67k, a rise of 4.7%.



A total of 19 Pool Bikes are now available at 13 Council offices. Of 14 bikes surveyed (8 of which had incomplete or no data), there were 245 registered bookings totalling an estimated 980 miles (based on an average of 4 miles per trip).

Single status negotiations led to increases in cycle mileage allowance (increased from 6.5p to 20p per mile) and an allowance for taking passengers (5p a mile) from April 2005. Staff received daily updates in Green Transport week in September 2004 and Staff Travel Plan information is now available on the Intranet.

Transportation

As well as joining the ISO14001 scope in July 2004, the Transportation team achieved an “Above Average” rating for their Local Transport Plan and have been selected as a Centre of Excellence for the next 3 years

Local Transport Plan Revision

The Local Transport Plan is currently being revised and, in line with forthcoming EU requirements, the Transportation team is undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Scheduling of contract transport – Education

During 2004/05 10% reductions in the number of contract vehicles at Kington High School and John Kyrle (Ross) were achieved.

School Travel Plans

The aim of the School Travel Plan scheme is to decrease the use of the private car for transporting children to school. 22 School Travel Plans were signed off in March 2005 and sent to the DfES for approval. When these have been approved, it will bring the total number of schools with adopted travel plans to 41, representing 39% of the County’s schools.

Biodiesel

A Rotherwas firm is now reprocessing waste cooking oil as fuel. One of their suppliers is HJS, who collect oil from county schools.

PROPERTY RISKS

“Reduce the environmental risks relating to the Council’s property portfolio and tenant management”

Tenant Questionnaire

A short questionnaire is now sent to all new tenants to assess environmental risk and current levels of environmental management.

Property Rationalisation

The movement of staff out of a number of smaller offices and into larger more modern units, particularly at Plough Lane should help to reduce the environmental impacts of the Council. It is predicted that savings will be made in energy and water usage: transport costs and time spent travelling between offices should also be reduced. Closure of some less modern depots has reduced exposure to risk.

Capital Bids

The process for bidding for Prudential capital projects has been amended and applicants for funds for 2005/06 were required to: -

- ◆ Assess the environmental impacts of their proposal and the controls in place (Chapter 8)
- ◆ Map the wider impacts on sustainability, using the Guiding Principles Appraisal based on the Herefordshire Plan.

These were then factored into the overall score for each bid.

Capital bids for 2005/06 were approved in August 2004 for:

- ◆ Renewal of the Crematorium (new build) to meet incoming standards on mercury emissions
- ◆ Upgrading a rural Sewage Treatment Works to ensure its discharge meets the standards required by the Environment Agency
- ◆ Work on Leominster’s Broad Street Car Park drains to reduce the risk of a spill reaching the main river
- ◆ Treatment of soil contaminated by previous industrial use at the new Aylestone County Park

Salt improvements

The new salt barn is nearing completion at Rotherwas. Current stores at Burcott and Ross will be phased out during 2005/06 when this becomes operational. A number of minor repairs on current stores were also undertaken this year.

Prudential Capital Programme: progress in 2004-05

Energy conservation measures in Council buildings included flush controls in Ross public toilets, cladding and reroofing of primary schools and updating Boiler Management System software

Hereford crematorium rebuild: feasibility study in progress

Hereford cemetery: extension for further burials completed

Castle Green Pool: preparatory boreholes drilled & analysed prior to desilting (now scheduled for autumn 2005).

BIODIVERSITY

“Build on existing work to protect and enhance biodiversity on Council owned land”

Indicators

New local biodiversity indicator is included in the new Corporate Plan: Land owned or managed by the Council without a Nature Conservation designation, managed for biodiversity. The baseline figure for this is 2.5%. Other indicators will cover the status of land designated as SSSI and the issuing of appropriate guidance for planning and other purposes.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Biodiversity and Landscape Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) was adopted as Interim Planning Guidance. An SPG on “Trees and Development” was drafted.

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Review

The review of the Herefordshire BAP, started in 2004, is nearing completion.

Commons Research

Parks & Countryside have undertaken habitat surveys on 81 commons owned by the Council and Section 9 commons. This includes entries on land use/habitat type, conservation value and whether or not a Management Plan is in place.

Survey work

Information from the Phase 1 Habitat survey of the county undertaken by Herefordshire Nature Trust is being entered onto the Council’s GIS. A comparison of Council-owned land against land with Nature Conservation designations using GIS software has identified Council sites that either include or are next to land with formal nature conservation designations, identified on the UDP constraints layer. These are: -

- Establishments (mainly Highways & Transportation land plus Household Waste Sites) - 36 matches totalling 10 hectares
- Schools - 34 matches totalling 50 hectares
- Smallholdings - 20 matches totalling 536 hectares
- Policy & Community, including Parks - 100 matches totalling 643 hectares

The managers of the matched land will be asked to consider any changes needed to management in 2005/6.

Biodiversity Training

Three training sessions took place in March, one for Highways and Owen Williams, one for HJS and another for Public Rights of Way. These provided a general introduction to biodiversity as well as dealing with various more specific ways in which these groups have an impact upon biodiversity in the course of their work.

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE

“Further integrate GEM into corporate performance management”

Corporate Plan

The recently agreed Corporate Plan for 2005-8 clearly reiterates the Council’s commitment to the environment

“1.5 Everything in the Plan is intended to help deliver the Council’s commitment to...(bullet 4 of 5) a sustainable environment”

“5.1 The Council’s top priorities for the period of this Plan are...(bullet 5 of 8) to protect the environment, including by recycling much more waste and significantly reducing carbon emissions”

The Corporate Plan sets out explicit targets that the Council is committed to achieve as its contribution to meeting the ambitions of the Herefordshire Plan. The sections on Environment and Transport are relevant to this report.

Audits

A full programme of GEM audits monitors the standards in place for services and sites certified to ISO 14001. The focus of the audits is to drive improvements to the system.

During the year 9 new auditors were trained and 9 auditors left.

At the end of year 35 auditors were available.

Summary of GEM audit programme

Audits scheduled	72	Completed	64	In progress	4
Non conformances	39	Signed off	34	Overdue	3
		NCs still within date	2		

Internal Corrective Action

Ten internal corrective actions were raised during the year. Three of them have not been closed out. These relate to the new salt barn (completion due June 05), the Stretton Sugwas landfill gas flare (now included in the CMAP) and a noise complaint (due for a further visit in the summer before close out).

Reporting

Progress against the GEM objectives (9) and targets due in 04/05 (61) has been regularly reported to Environment Management Team and the GEM group. Corrective Actions are recorded for all targets delayed or changed.

Targets completed on schedule	39	56%
Targets completed (delayed)	16	23%
Total targets delayed or changed	36	

West Midlands Environmental Index

Herefordshire Council participates in the West Midlands Environmental Index, a survey co-ordinated by Business in the Community designed to provide public and private organisations with a benchmark of best practice. In the last round 2003 (published at the end of April 2004), Herefordshire Council scored very highly and was placed within the top quintile of the 22 West Midlands Councils that took part.

CERTIFICATION

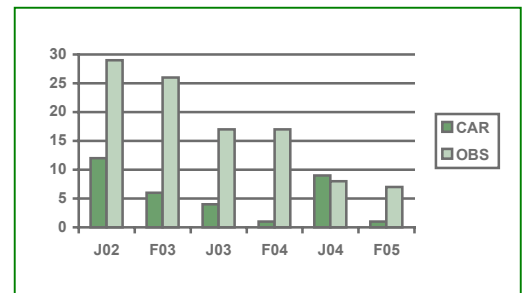
“Roll out scope of ISO 14001 certification to cover all Council activities and services”

Current scope of ISO 14001 certification

Office administration, land and property management across the council, the crematorium, LEA Pool, highways maintenance and management, ICT Services, learning disability day opportunities, transportation and waste management.

External Inspections

Our certifiers, SGS Yarsley, carried out two external inspections during the year. The first, in July 04, returned a total of nine non-conformances and eight observations. As a result of this, a decision was taken by the GEM group to focus on strengthening the existing system and to delay further extension of the certification for one year. At the second visit in Feb 2005 only one non-conformance and eight observations were raised, so a timetable was put in place for rolling out certification to cover all remaining activities and services.



Additions to scope

Waste Management and Transportation achieved the standards required for ISO 14001 certification and were added to the scope in July 2004.

Before this extension, the GEM programme focused almost entirely on the Council's direct impacts on the environment, e.g. amount of energy used by Council offices.

This extension of scope starts the important move to including services that are outwardly focused and reach into the public sphere.

Timetable for achieving full ISO 14001 certification

(Some adjustments may need to be made to this timetable in the light of reorganisation)

July 2005: Strategic Housing, County Treasurers, Environmental Health & Trading Standards (areas not already covered)

February 2006: Planning (Development Control & Building Control), Adult Services, County Secretary & Solicitors

July 2006: Planning (Forward Planning & Conservation), Children's Services, Community Services (areas not already covered)

In order to enter the ISO 14001 scope services go through the following stages: -

- Identify the environmental impacts of their operations with their managers then record the controls and /or improvement targets in place, plus identify any gaps in controls
- Undertake GEM audits to test that the controls in place are robust in practice
- Respond to any weaknesses identified in the Audits (3 months)

The external certifiers then undertake a desktop study & visits to check the impacts and controls before agreeing extensions to the scope.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE YEAR

Gershon

Sir Peter Gershon's review of public sector efficiency was published in June 2004. This sets out a comprehensive plan for efficiency savings throughout the public services in order to release more funds to front-line services. The subsequent Spending Review builds on existing best practice and proposes efficiency savings in local government of 2.5% per annum to deliver £6.45 billion of efficiencies and productivity improvements by 2007-08. The links with the GEM objectives and targets are numerous and GEM will be one of the mechanisms through which Herefordshire addresses its efficiency requirements.

Environmental Information Regulations

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations Act 2004 (EIR) came into force on 1 January 2005, making much more information held by the Council available to the public. To date, Environment Support Service has received 17 FOIA requests and 43 EIR requests. The requests have been varied and from all over the UK and abroad. Many employees and some Members have received training in FOIA / EIR and a training programme is being developed to ensure all new employees are aware of this important legislation.

ISO 14001 revision

The ISO 14001:2004 revisions were published in November 2004 with the aim of increasing the ease of use, providing clearer requirements, further emphasising the importance of compliance and making the standard more compatible with ISO 9000 (Quality Management System). Formal auditing of Council Services against the new standard will take place in July 2005.

Other New Legislation

Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 - Part 3 s39 of the Act states that regional & local plans have to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive 2001 - Came into force July 2004. The objective of the SEA is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of various plans, with a view to promoting sustainable development.

PLANS FOR 2005-06

Triennial Review of Certification to ISO 14001

The triennial review is scheduled for 13th and 15th July 2005.

Rollout Scope of Certification

See timetable given earlier (p10)

New GEM Objectives and Targets for 2005/06

See Appendix IV.

Formal Environmental Reporting

When the scope of the ISO 14001 certification has been extended to cover all of the Councils services, it has been proposed that the Council move on to certification to EMAS (the European Eco-Management & Audit Scheme). As a prelude to the formal annual reporting system required by EMAS, the Council has produced this Environmental Report, which it plans to extend next year. It is also looking into the possibility of producing a Triple Bottom Line report in the style of that required for FTSE 100 companies.

Events

EcoSchool Day – June 9th 2005 – This event will celebrate and support the success of the EcoSchool scheme in Herefordshire and allow children to take part in exciting themed activities, learn more about EcoSchools and network with other schools from around the county.

Carbon Management Action Plan Implementation

The following projects are scheduled for 2005/06, as part of the CMAP Action Plan: a consumption monitoring trial linked to billing of schools and other Council buildings, completion of the landfill gas design, addition of contracted transport emissions, completion of the fuel poverty strategy, continued property rationalisation, identification and implementation of “no and low cost” measures and the identification of medium cost measures (3-5 years payback).

Environment Policy & Strategy

The Herefordshire Council Environmental Policy and Corporate Environment Strategy will be formally adopted in 2005.

Resource Efficiency Code of Practice

Subsequent to its approval by Cabinet, a resource efficiency code of practice will be published and circulated to all Council Staff. This document will provide clear guidance for staff to help the Council meet both its environmental and efficiency targets.

Appendices

- I. **Performance against each 2004/05 GEM target**
- II. **Corrective actions on GEM targets**
- III. **Corrective actions raised by external certifiers and internally (since half year)**
- IV. **Objectives & targets for 2005/06**

Appendix I Performance on GEM 2004/5 targets due during 2004/5

O T	Target text	Due date	Progress	Done?	Completed
/ 2	Finalise leases and monitoring arrangements with HJS and FOCSA for all depots	01/04/2005	Decision to grant licences rather than leases for commercial reasons. Discussions with Severn Waste and Focsa in progress re change of site in the event of contract extension.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1 0	Reduce waste generated by Council services by 1% and increase levels of recycling and the use of recycled material (WM)	01/04/2005	Target publicised at Officer in Charge of Buildings meeting in Oct. Half year: 23 tonnes of paper, card, plastic bottles & cans recycled from offices, a recycling rate of 14.8% . Full year: 49.18 tonnes of paper for year + 526 bags plastics and cans + cardboard. Email to OICs re bin size review in March. Trade contracts currently being finalised. (4/5)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
1 1	Publicise and expand office recycling scheme to cover 90% of major Council sites.	01/04/2005	All offices with over 20 staff have recycling arrangements in place. The majority are covered by a weekly collection by Fast Lane Freight.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
1 3	Extend Council requirements re use of recycled paper to HJS printing service	01/03/2005	Proposed KPI presented to PPMG in June 04 but not included in Dec 04 set. Printing spec agreed. GEM Audit undertaken. HJS asked to respond to 60% recycled target in Dec 04. PI included in set to be reported quarterly in March 05. HJS reported 66% recycled purchase in last quarter 05/6.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
1 4	Scope feasibility of extending use of on-screen authorisation, thus reducing need for paper forms	01/03/2005	On-line ordering now poss with WMS. Forms in Portable Document Format are being developed which can be completed on-line: this will reduce double inputting but still require signing and paper copy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1 5	Pilot networking photocopiers at Brockington and Plough Lane	01/10/2004	Complete and working well at Plough Lane. Complete at Brockington - some difficulty programming order of jobs. 23/9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17/09/2004
2 3	Work with Herefordshire Jarvis Services (HJS) and Owen Williams (OW) to develop tender specs, Key Performance Indicators and monitoring regimes relating to sustainability	01/03/2005	Set of KPIs including a number relating to sustainability submitted to PPMG in June 2004. KPIs agreed 6th Dec 04 now include two Environmental KPIs. Four additional EPIs agreed in March 05.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2 6	Work with our suppliers, including WMS, to improve the range of products meeting Council environmental requirements and increase purchasing of them	01/10/2004	New greenlist from WMS publicised in GEMgen, also improved supplier for remanufactured cartridges. Meeting between WMS and env officers in March 05 to further this work.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	05/09/2004
2 9	Establish effective links between partner EM systems to agreed standards	01/01/2005	HJS achieved ISO 14001 certification in April 04, OW in April 05. Meetings have been held with EM leads in HJS & OW. Recommendation re setting up extranet through CXMT May & Nov 04 but not implemented due to ICT issues. HJS & OW Leads now invited to GEM+ quarterly standing agenda meetings plus informal liaison as required. OW also have local rep based in their office.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2 10	Review winter service plan and procedures including footways and secondary routes, salt storage and provision (see 2.3)	05/02/2005	Review complete - Draft Plan produced and undergoing consultation (14/02)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3 0	Promote the Council's environmental initiatives and increase the awareness of Council staff of their environmental impact and role in GEM (TA)	01/04/2005	GEMgen. Key managers emailed re CXMT GEM recs + 2 training sessions. GEM slot at Oct OIC meeting. Managers Forum on environmental issues in Nov. E-wise (energy software for schools) developed and distributed to Eco-schools via HECA.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3 1	Run CRIS report on GEM related training requirements identified through SRD and address needs.	01/11/2004	Report run - 15 requests identified. Two training slots ran in Oct at Castle Green. (26/10)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	25/10/2004
3 2	Report to Cabinet Member for the Environment and Environmental Scrutiny on performance against GEM objectives & targets in 03/04	01/06/2004	Complete, 18th June 04. Half year report on 8th December 04.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	18/06/2004

O T Target text	Due date	Progress	Done?	Completed
3 3 Improve accessibility and user friendliness of GEM information on the intranet and web site	01/06/2004	New front page installed and content reviewed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	21/05/2004
3 5 Encourage Council employees to consider 'green' alternatives for their homes and gardens through initiatives like 'Plan it Green' in Leominster.	01/03/2005	Considerable work developing Plan It Green, including installation of a groundsource heat pump and partnership with Kingspan. However focus has been on information for the public rather than Council staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3 6 Arrange seminars relating to environmental issues and initiatives for staff	01/04/2005	Biodiversity seminar (MOHL), Property CPD seminars. See also 3.1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3 7 Increase the number of Eco-schools with awards from 25% to 35%	01/03/2005	59 schools are currently registered, an increase of 20 (over 50% increase) since April 04. These schools currently hold 7 Green Flags, 7 Silver awards and 3 Bronze awards in total - 29%	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4 0 Achieve a 1% reduction in energy use in operational council property and maintain the use of energy from renewable sources; (ECW)	01/04/2005	Available figures for larger properties show a 4% overall reduction in energy use last calendar year, though gas use rose slightly. Use of renewable energy in Council buildings and street lights has reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 10%. Receipt of consumption data from utilities via WMS is still slow so automatic meter reading for larger properties is being investigated. Council is participating in Phase 2 of the national Carbon Management Initiative. (15/11)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4 1 Achieve a 1% decrease in energy use (BVP1 180a; per meter squared and weather corrected) from 2002/3 baseline across all operational properties.	01/04/2005	See 3.0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
4 3 Work with WMS to continue the supply of 100% renewables via the energy supply agreement	01/01/2005	WMS have confirmed that electricity supplies on the contract are 100% renewable and will continue to autumn 05.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	02/10/2005
4 6 Roll out energy star requirements across Council IT hardware purchases	01/03/2005	Monitors and some other equipment, eg Dell laptops, meets Energy Star requirements. Monitors meet requirements of TCO 99. HP Printers have Blue Angel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4 7 Investigate feasibility of generating electricity from gas at Stretton Sugwas closed landfill site.	01/02/2005	Completed Feb 05 - project is considered feasible and has been included in the agreed Carbon Management Action Plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	02/01/2005
5 0 Reduce the environmental impact of Council transport use through the Staff Travel Plan and other initiatives (TU)	01/04/2005	Considerable progress in awareness. Focus groups held, physical improvements such as pool bikes (19 pool bikes at 13 sites) & stands, cycle training officer in post & route planning under development. Travel Plan on Intranet and considerable publicity out to staff during Green Transport week in September 04.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5 1 Develop and adopt Staff Travel Plan	01/12/2004	Plan to CXMT 17/8. Draft Plan on Intranet to be further developed by staff input before adoption. Plan adopted by CXMT 3/9/04. Intranet updated - featured under 'Initiatives'.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	03/09/2004
5 4 Undertake a flexible working pilot in Revs & Benefits and evaluate the environmental impact	01/03/2005	3 people undertaking trial and initial feedback good. Rollout will be delayed until restructure and funding issues resolved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5 6 Reduce the total number of vehicles deployed at two high schools by 10%, with effect from the start of the new school year in Sept 04.	01/10/2004	Reduction achieved at Kington High School and John Kyrle (Ross).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	03/08/2004
6 0 Reduce environmental risks relating to the Council's property portfolio and tenant management (PIM)	01/04/2005	Transfer of older people's homes to SHAW. Jays Green depot closed down and contaminative material removed. Burcott Rd depot phased out and ready for sale. Removal of contaminative material at Grafton Depot. Responsibility for Peterchurch returned to landlord. HJS monitor the depots they operate. Housing Sewage Treatment Works put onto Mayglothing maintenance contract, capital improvement bid approved.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
6 1 Develop a framework for environmental issues relating to industrial estates management and lettings.	01/06/2004	Framework agreed by Lead Valuer. Posted on Property/Master docs. Information item at Property Managers meeting 8/7/04	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30/04/2004

O T	Target text	Due date	Progress	Done?	Completed
6 5	Review salt storage and provision in all locations and seek funding for storage improvements.	01/01/2005	Conversion of building at Thorn approved, due complete for 05/06 season. Minor repairs undertaken at Burcott and Kingsland and sheeting at Ross. Burcott and Ross will be phased out when Thorn store operational.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	05/12/2004
6 7	Submit capital bid to improve drainage at Broad St Car park, Leominster	01/03/2005	Not submitted for 2004/5 - programme already oversubscribed. Submitted in Nov 2004. Bid approved in March 05 for action in 05/06.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	24/11/2004
6 8	Submit capital bid to members to replace crematorium	01/05/2004	Bid for £100K for feasibility study in prioritised list for consideration by members 15/7. Decision delayed for reasons connected to capping. Bid approved in August. (3/8) and in 05/06 programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	03/08/2004
6 9	Consider environmental impacts when consolidating deployment of staff & link to acquisitions/disposal policy.	01/03/2005	4 offices vacated this year: Kemble House and Broad St in Hereford, Grange House and MEB Building in Leominster. 14 more closures set out in CMAP in next 2 years to focus staff in Hereford & market towns.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7 0	Build on existing work to protect and enhance biodiversity on Council owned land. (B)	01/04/2005	Biodiversity and Landscape SPGs adopted as Interim Planning Guidance. 'Trees and Development' SPG drafted. Bracken crushing on Coppett Hill. Otterholt constructed at Bodenham Lakes. Review of Biodiversity Action Plan underway. Conservation ran training sessions in March 05 for Highways/Owen Williams, HJS & PROW. Also sessions on MOHL (landscape classification) for external agencies and Council staff in early 05.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
7 1	Digitise the establishment boundaries of properties the Council owns or has an interest in (excluding Highways land)	01/06/2004	Complete	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	31/05/2004
7 2	Scope the extent of environmental management in place on Council owned land	01/02/2005	Linked to target for biodiversity contained within Corporate Plan. 2.5% of Council owned land without a formal nature conservation designations is managed for biodiversity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	02/10/2005
7 3	Enlarge database of flora and fauna on commons	01/03/2005	All 81 commons in the first phase (HC owned + Section 9) now surveyed to a methodology agreed between Property, Parks & PROW. Site reports written up by April 05. Further survey of private/parish owned commons is now planned: see 05/06 programme.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	15/02/2005
7 5	Review hedge cutting /nesting bird protocol for PROW and Highways and undertake any training required.	01/06/2004	Revised procedure agreed by Head of Highways & Transportation and circulated in June 2004.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	23/06/2004
7 6	Clarify responsibilities for Roadside Nature Reserves	16/12/2004	H&T drafting SLA and offering to HNT by 16/12. Agreement will include update of survey data and ensuring posts in place. 23/9 Action plan agreed between H&T, HNT, Conservation & Highways Teams. HNT to undertake survey on proforma (info will be sent to H&TJ) and redo posts in April pre cut in May.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
8 0	Further integrate GEM into corporate performance management. (CPM)	01/04/2005	Liaison with Policy Manager. Proforma for Corporate Plan sets targets linking to all HP ambitions including environment. Discussions with Performance Lead Managers at GEM meeting. Service managers emailed re need to include env issues in service plans in Feb 05.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
8 1	Review Capital Scheme Selection Process and strengthen appraisal of environmental issues.	01/09/2004	New process using electronic form in use from Sept for 05/06 round. Includes section (Chapter 8) on environmental impact and controls, which feeds into overall score. (30/10).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	02/08/2004
8 3	Integrate GEM into Risk Assessment rollout	01/02/2005	Revised description of Environmental Risks incorporated into Risk Management Strategy. References to GEM included in Service Planning Guidance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	02/10/2005
8 5	Undertake sustainability appraisal of the Revised Deposit UDP	01/05/2004	Completed and signed off by the Cabinet member in April.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	26/04/2004
9 1	Review significant environmental aspects and their control at Directorate level	01/06/2004	Progress made. Completed set agreed at GEM meeting on 13th July.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	13/07/2004

O T Target text	Due date	Progress	Done?	Completed
9 2 Waste Management and Transportation join ISO 14001 scope	01/07/2004	Achieved as extension to scope on July 23/24 2004.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	24/07/2004
9 4 Close out 80% of non-conformances identified within 2 months (Internal Audit and CAFs)	01/04/2005		<input type="checkbox"/>	
9 5 Achieve 80% of GEM targets by due date.	01/04/2005	56% of targets & objectives achieved on schedule. An additional 23% of targets and objectives delayed but achieved within year. Total of 79% of targets achieved within the year. Aim to simplify 05/06 programme.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix II Corrective Actions to GEM programme 2004/05

<i>CA ref</i>	<i>Ob</i>	<i>Targ</i>	<i>Target text</i>	<i>Original co</i>	<i>Rev. comp</i>	<i>Comp</i>	<i>CA reason</i>
04536	6 R	4	Review other potentially contaminated Council owned sites over 5 year rolling programme in accordance with the adopted Inspection Strategy	01/07/2006	01/07/2009	<input type="checkbox"/>	Complex due to number of land holders within Council and requirement to address priority areas of land not owned by Council.
04535	6 R	3	Implement action plans for the 3 closed waste disposal sites for which the Council has currently known environmental liability with regard to contaminated land	01/03/2005	01/06/2008	<input type="checkbox"/>	Delay due to consultant skills gap.
04534	3 P	7	Increase the number of Eco-schools with awards from 25% to 35%	01/03/2005	01/03/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Achieved 29% awards - below target due to surge in schools registering for the scheme.
04533	1 R	4	Scope feasibility of extending use of on-screen authorisation, thus reducing need for paper forms	01/03/2005	01/03/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	CT focus on improvements to intranet and web means target not achieved within 04/05.
04532	2 I	8	Further develop use of the Herefordshire Partnership Appraisal tool, which includes environmental considerations as part of HP review	01/12/2004	01/07/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Process of review now clearer - due to complete by July 05.
04531	4 A	4	Use Stark to identify worst performing buildings; explore potential improvements and funding options to carry these out	01/03/2005	01/06/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Delays in receiving and inputting data.
04530	9 R	3	Remaining Council activities and services join ISO 14001 scope	02/01/2005	01/08/2006	<input type="checkbox"/>	Target not feasible in period specified but timetable agreed for rollout running to July 06.
04529	8 F	6	Establish way forward for SEA requirements across the authority, when government guidance released, starting with report to CXMT	01/08/2004	01/05/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guidance still draft.
04528	5 R	5	Review staff car parking, as agreed in the county wide car parking strategy	01/12/2004	01/03/2007	<input type="checkbox"/>	This is a sensitive issue which will not be tackled until JE and Single Status is completed..
04527	5 R	3	Increase expenditure on public transport/ cycling claimed by staff by 5% per head (BVPI Golden Threads/ Resources)	01/04/2005	15/05/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Figures will be available approximately 6 weeks in arrears.
04527	5 R	2	1% decrease in staff business mileage per head claimed (BVPI Golden Threads/ Resources)	01/03/2005	15/05/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Figures will be available approximately 6 weeks in arrears.

<i>CA ref</i>	<i>Ob</i>	<i>Targ</i>	<i>Target text</i>	<i>Original co</i>	<i>Rev. comp</i>	<i>Comp</i>	<i>CA reason</i>
04526	6 R	6	Develop plan for new depot at Bromyard with improved specifications for lorry washing, storage etc	01/12/2004	01/05/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncertainty about operational requirements and UDP status. Decision will be taken once UDP zoning is confirmed. I
04525	9 R	0	Roll out scope of ISO 14001 certification to cover all Council activities and services by Feb 2005.	1/10/2004	01/08/2006	<input type="checkbox"/>	GEM group recommended focus should be to strengthen existing system and therefore no further extension be considered for Feb 05 visit.
04524	3 P	4	Train in-house CEEQUAL assessor and put forward major engineering capital project for award.	01/12/2004	01/05/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	CEEQUAL trained assessor has now changed post to ESS in reorganisation of Env Dir. Construction Team will review this target in April 05.
04523	8 F	2	Computerise PS01s to improve monitoring of environmental incidents and near misses	01/09/2004	01/05/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	No work is currently being done on Intranet as it is migrating to a new more stable platform in January 2005. Manual system will therefore continue until IT issues can be addressed on new platform. Still no capability on new platform (3/05)
04522	7 B	4	Obtain FSC certification for Council commercial and countryside woodlands	01/09/2004	01/05/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Delayed due to pressures on Forestry Commission (Feb 05)
04521	4 A	7	Investigate feasibility of generating electricity from gas at Stretton Sugwas closed landfill site.	01/09/2004	01/02/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Complexity of project and involvement of new consultants slowed programme.
04520	2 I	10	Review winter service plan and procedures including footways and secondary routes, salt storage and provision (see 2.3)	01/09/2004	05/02/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Slowed by reorganisation and move of H&T to Thorn.
04519	7 B	3	Enlarge database of flora and fauna on commons	01/08/2004	01/03/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Surveys have been undertaken more thoroughly than first planned.
04518	7 B	2	Scope the extent of environmental management in place on Council owned land	01/10/2004	01/02/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Decision to wait for completion of data entry before rerunning exercise (first done last year). Target now transferred to Conservation who are developing PI.
04517	7 B	6	Clarify responsibilities for Roadside Nature Reserves	01/07/2004	16/12/2004	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Awaits drafting of SLA and decision from HNT on whether to undertake work.
04516	6 R	5	Review salt storage and provision in all locations and seek funding for storage improvements.	01/10/2004	01/01/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Decision making process plus negotiations with interested parties, including Highways Authority
04515	4 A	2	Co-ordinate the Herefordshire Partnership Climate Change Strategy for Herefordshire.	01/09/2004	01/09/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Process involves partnership working and outside funding. In addition errors in national data slowed process.
04514	3 P	1	Run CRIS report on GEM related training requirements identified through SRD and address needs.	01/09/2004	01/11/2004	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Decided that October would be a good time to run sessions.
04513	2 I	0	Improve environmental performance of the Council by working with partners, suppliers and contractors (CP)	01/10/2004	01/05/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will be delayed until revised Procurement Strategy agreed (due for agreement by Cabinet by 1/10) and Procurement Officer in post. PS now due mid April. Target will be considered for 05/06 programme.

<i>CA ref</i>	<i>Ob</i>	<i>Targ</i>	<i>Target text</i>	<i>Original co</i>	<i>Rev. comp</i>	<i>Comp</i>	<i>CA reason</i>
04512	2 I	9	Establish effective links between partner EM systems to agreed standards	01/06/2004	01/01/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No formal commitment from wider partnership to developing shared extranet. Extra time therefore needed to develop alternative means of communication.
04511	2 I	1	Undertake survey of major suppliers, then provide information to relevant contractors on Council environmental requirements	01/09/2004	01/05/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will be delayed until revised Procurement Strategy agreed (due for agreement by Cabinet by 1/10) and Procurement Officer in post. New Proc Strat due out by mid April (22/3) and target will be considered for 2005/6
04510	2 I	7	Evaluate environmental policies of central Herefordshire Partnership organisations to feed into HP Review	01/09/2004	12/07/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Poor response rate to requests for information. Forced to follow up organisations repeatedly to enable completion.
04509	2 I	3	Work with Herefordshire Jarvis Services (HJS) and Owen Williams (OW) to develop tender specs. Key Performance Indicators and monitoring regimes relating to sustainability	01/06/2004	01/03/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reorganisation in Env directorate, plus national Jarvis situation. New KPIs will take some time to bed down so no more likely to be added this year. Revisit for 05/06.
04508	1 R	2	Map waste reduction initiatives within Learning Disability then further develop & publicise them	01/07/2004	01/05/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Target deleted from programme - responsible officer on sick leave until end of year
04507	1 R	3	Extend Council requirements re use of recycled paper to HJS printing service	01/06/2004	01/03/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Board referred proposed KPIs back for further work. Not in core set agreed in Dec 04 so will ask Xerox re 60% recycled content target and work with HJS to set up meeting with subcontract printers. quarterly.
04506	1 R	5	Pilot networking photocopiers at Brockington and Plough Lane	01/07/2004	01/10/2004	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ICT found it hard to complete to schedule to original timescale due to pressure of work
04505	2 I	2	Ensure revision of Procurement Strategy sets clear environmental standards.	01/06/2004	01/05/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strat & Action Plan due back to CXMT by end of August and then on to Cabinet in Sept. Further 2 month extension required as no Procurement Officer in post. Strategy now due mid April (22/3)
04504	5 R	1	Develop and adopt Staff Travel Plan	01/06/2004	01/12/2004	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Redraft of Plan requested by Lead Director for project. Extension of 3 months. Plan now on intranet but not yet adopted. Further extension of 3 months.
04503	6 R	7	Submit capital bid to improve drainage at Broad St Car park, Leominster	01/05/2004	01/03/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Capital programme oversubscribed. Submit for consideration for 05/06 spending round (delayed from May 04).
04502	8 F	4	Develop Environmental Strategy for the Council, drawing on Herefordshire Partnership strategies	01/06/2004	11/06/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Task more complex than anticipated and included corrections to data so date extended. Will need to go to EMT and Cabinet Member + Env Scrutiny June meeting.
04501	/07	2	Finalise leases and monitoring arrangements with HJS and FOCSA for all depots	01/06/2004	01/04/2005	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negotiations with HJS temporarily suspended due to national issues. Negotiations with FOCSA complicated by decisions on site. HJS will hold depots on license for commercial reasons.
	1 R	0	Reduce waste generated by Council services by 1% and increase levels of recycling and the use of recycled material (WM)		01/04/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	1 R	1	Publicise and expand office recycling scheme to cover 90% of major Council sites.		01/04/2005	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix III CARs completion report from Feb 05

<i>Resp</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Corrective Actions /Observa</i>	<i>Action Planned</i>	<i>Sig Asp</i>	<i>Progress</i>	<i>Date due</i>	<i>Done</i>
Lead Surveyor, PS	CAF 04/05 9	Resident (8, Powell Croft) rang to report Sewage Treatment Works failure at Upton Bishop on 24/1.	Lead Surveyor (PS) rang Mayglothing, service contractors for the plant, with instructions to attend the same day. It is expected they will remedy the problem while on site and then notify Lead Surveyor if any further works are required. A capital bid has already been submitted to upgrade the works.	Pollution	Capital bid agreed on March 11th.	07/02/05	07/02/05
PS	CAF 05/06 1	Chairperson for the Three Elms Action Group, rang at 8.55am on behalf of herself & neighbours on the Three Elms road, to log a complaint. She says the Contractors, were this morning since 8.30am, carrying out some works on site (she says painting) that was causing a white dust that is now depositing on the houses, as the wind is blowing due west in their direction. She is also concerned that the wind will be blowing their way again tomorrow & that the contractor should have picked a less windy day to carry out the painting.	See below	Pollution & nuisance	The problem was related to the dry cutting of some pre-cast concrete units. The work created dust that blew on to the complainants property. The problem was reported to the site agent who instructed that dry cutting must cease and "wet" machinery must be used. An apology was given and the matter has now resolved itself.	06/05/05	06/05/05
H&T, PS, HJS	CAF 04/5 2	Email from HJS Operational Manager (Highways), on 16/7 saying " HJS have written to the Council Project Manager setting out the position with regards to Salt this Winter - in short, we will not be operating from Burcott Road or Ross. Head of Highways & Transportation is aware of our concerns and is actively working to get a salt barn in Thorn - we wait to hear confirmation. There is also an issue on the storage of the gritters. They need to be parked on other than contaminated land.	GEM Audit of salt storage procedure - visits to depot sites on 19/7.	Discharges to ground/water	Lease for salt barn at Thorn finalised in Nov 04 for use in the 05/06 season. Pontrias Development are converting the building (having received planning consent in Feb 2002) and works are well underway, with planned completion in June. Burcott Rd, Kingsland and Bromyard to be used this year, with emergency stocks at Pontrias (in barn) and Ross (sheeted). Maintenance undertaken on stores at Burcott and Kingsland. Once Thorn store is operational, stores at Ross and Burcott will be phased out and Burcott sold.	01/08/05	

<i>Resp</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Corrective Actions /Observa</i>	<i>Action Planned</i>	<i>Sig Asp</i>	<i>Progress</i>	<i>Date due</i>	<i>Done</i>
LD/EH/PS	CAF 04/5 3	Noise complaint re EnviroAbility recycling operations at Old Station Yard, Ross in August 04, also further complaint in May 05 including resident petition with 20 names.	Env Health enquiry/complaint number Open Insight 79163, recorded on 9/8. EH officer has visited operation & sent memo to Property Services, who negotiated the terms on which EnviroAbility use the site. 18/8. EH and PS now leading. Complaint only notified to GEM as result of audit. Need to remind managers of need to report such occurrences to their GEM leads. Ongoing monitoring planned after May complaint.	Nuisance	Soundproofing works undertaken in October 04. Noise levels were found to be acceptable in November by Env Health - further checks to be made in summer when doors may be open and more residents outside. EH in correspondence with Property Services re action after May complaint.	01/08/05	
GEM group	Obs 3	GEM objectives should be reviewed to ensure they are auditable. For example the objective to reduce waste generated by council activities by 1% seems actually intended to mean a reduction in office waste sent to landfill by 1% - is this an 1% reduction in absolute tonnage or a reduced % compared to % recycled?	Address when drawing up objectives for 05/06			01/07/05	
Waste Man/FOCSA	Obs 4	FOCSA method statements are to be reviewed by April 2005 to reflect current practice - review at next visit	Info emailed to Waste Management and FOCSA 24/3.	Contractor Man	Meeting to action this has taken place between Waste Management & FOCSA. Proposed changes will be taken to Head of EHTS in May.	01/07/05	
ESS/Properly/variou	Obs 7	Review at next visit progress on Carbon Management Initiative action plan	Carbon Management Plan agreed by Cabinet 24th March: commits Council to 1.25% reduction per year till 2012 and signing the Nottingham Climate Change Declaration. ESU speaking to GEM group on move to CM Action Plan implementation on 22nd June 05.			01/07/05	01/03/05

<i>Resp</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Corrective Actions /Observa</i>	<i>Action Planned</i>	<i>Sig Asp</i>	<i>Progress</i>	<i>Date due</i>	<i>Done</i>
Strat Housing, Property Services	CAR 1	1 Fire alarm function tests have not been carried out weekly in accordance with Fire Certificate requirements, eg no test between 1/3/04 and 17/05/04 and 16/8/04 and no tests in December. The last quarterly check of the fire alarm system does not confirm that heat and smoke detectors were tested. 2. There is no evidence that the new Officer in Charge at Garrick House has had any formal training for the task.3. Whilst energy consumption is monitored, there is no feedback to the office and there is little evidence that measures to control energy usage have been implemented, eg hot radiators at 5pm and A/C switched on.	<p>Email to Officer in charge, Prop Services 24/3 asking for information on action to be taken.</p> <p>2. Presentation for OICs to work through has been prepared and needs to be finalised and flagged up to OICs</p>	Air pollution	1(DJ). The last quarterly check on heat and smoke detectors was done on 27 Jan 05 and signed by the tester. Its in the book SGS looked at under "automatic door release" and "automatic detectors". 3 (DJ). System is Air Conditioning, not just air cooling, designed to move air around the building. It is switched on in winter as it has a warm air facility for the winter months and if it is not left switched on the air becomes muggy etc. There was a problem during the SGS visit as the thermometer governing outside to in temperatures was broken. It has since been replaced. The radiator that was left on was in the main social care section, which becomes very cold - the visit was undertaken in mid winter.	01/06/05	
Waste Man/ESU	SAT SW	Next visit will include visit to Worcester and to HWS to see how the env elements of the Method statements/working Plan/Waste Management Licence are monitored in practice	Undertake visit to Severn Waste once 2004/5 reports, including env reports, are out.	Contractor Man	Reports now with HC (May 05); reviewed and email sent to Waste Monitoring Officer at WCC.	01/06/05	
Education/ Property Services	CAF 04/05 11	Serious fire at Kingstone & Thrupton primary school	The Fire Officer report suggests that the fire was caused by plugging an item from a private home into the school circuit without unravelling the lead. Ask Martin Danks to reduce future risk by sending information round to schools reminding them of the need to PAT test all electrical appliances and to ensure that privately owned and non PAT tested items are not used in schools.	Air pollution	Schools Health & Safety officer, included info in bulletin sent to all schools on PAT testing, particularly of private items bought in, and correct use of extension reels.	01/06/05	01/01/05
GEM auditors	Obs 2	Ensure the compliance/non-compliance column of the internal audit checklist is filled in for all audits and is attached to the audit report in all cases, eg Transportation 16/7/04	Addressed at Auditors meeting on March 14th 2005 and reminder included in the minutes. Will also be included in future GEM auditor training planned for June 23rd 05			01/06/05	14/03/05

<i>Resp</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Corrective Actions /Observa</i>	<i>Action Planned</i>	<i>Sig Asp</i>	<i>Progress</i>	<i>Date due</i>	<i>Done</i>
Property Services & other services managing contracts	Obs 5	At the Leominster swimming pool construction site, the CDM H&S plan was referred to as the main method of environmental control. However it was not clear that this plan had systematically evaluated environmental risks and their method of control. The EMS should give clear guidance to Planning Supervisors (be they council staff or consultants) on minimum requirements for the H&S plan to assist them in its review	Email to Head of Prop Serv & Head of H&T 24/3. Info to be sent out to Planning Supervisors.	Contractor Man	List of Planning Supervisors being drawn up and memo drafted. Property Services to send.	01/05/05	
Waste Man	Obs 6	FOCSA have had a number of incidents involving loss of hydraulic fluid from vehicles. It is acknowledged that these will occur periodically even in a well maintained fleet. However it is recommended that Waste Management review with FOCSA whether there is reasonable scope to improve current arrangements for spill response	Info emailed to Waste and FOCSA 24/3. Will be referenced in review.	Contractor Man	Discussed at review. Current arrangements are deemed to be sufficient for the scale of potential spill from vehicles.	01/05/05	01/04/05
Waste/Property Services	CAF 04/05 10	Drain mapping at Grafton depot in Jan 05 showed that water from FOCSA's refuse lorry washing is going to the storm drain without going through the interceptor.	FOCSA are currently washing their refuse lorries at Severn Waste. However this is a short term arrangement. Property Services and Waste managers will meet to look at options once drain map of depot received from contractor and then decide with FOCSA how to proceed.	Discharge to water	Further investigation has revealed a second interceptor. A final map of the area investigated is awaited from the contractor. Email 24/3. No problems reported from FOCSA re current washing arrangements.	01/04/05	28/02/05
EH/ESS	CAF 04/05 8	The existing landfill gas flare at Stretton Sugwas is of poor design and does not burn the gas at the correct temperature to ensure the products of combustion are safe. Landfill gas is deemed a waste within the terms of the landfill directive and flaring of gas per se is a waste management activity controlled by Waste Management Licensing Regulations, even on an unlicensed site. The flare does not comply with Environment Agency guidelines which would be applicable to licences.	A capital bid was submitted in November 2004 for a new flare, compliant with current Environment Agency guidance on landfill flares. The flare is still in use because otherwise the gas would migrate, posing a danger to properties and residents around the perimeter of the site.	Air pollution	The capital bid was unsuccessful but the matter will be taken forward as part of a Carbon Management Plan project to generate electricity from the landfill gas. Design work will start shortly and is due for completion in 05/06.	01/03/06	
CXMT	Obs 1	Consider recording responsible person and a target date against each of the recommendations made in the management review minutes	Follow observation for future CXMT reports				

Appendix IV: Proposed GEM Objectives for 2005/6 (38 targets in total)

The corporate GEM group will monitor progress in line with the Performance Management framework (at 4, 6, 8, 10 & 12 months).

Ref no	Target	Lead Officer Lead Manager	Start date	Due date	Lead Dir	Other Dir's /agencies
1	Improve resource efficiency					
1.1	Establish the water cost in major Council properties per metre ² GIA	J Burton C Eldridge	Apr 05	April 06	PS	Managers/ OiCs
1.2	Decrease the amount of Council trade waste generated per employee by 1% a year, thus reducing amount landfilled	Waste/ESS	Apr 05	April 06	Waste	Managers/ OiCs
1.3	Increase the amount of Council trade waste recycled through the Office Recycling scheme	M Clark L Preece	Apr 05	April 06		Managers/ OiCs
1.4	Track progress on Staff Travel Plan & SOS travel-related results	R Ball A Barton	Apr 05	Dec 05	Transportation	GEM gp
1.5	Achieve a 1% decrease in business mileage claimed per head	A Smith M Foster	Apr 05	April 06	CT	Managers
1.6	Achieve a 5% increase in expenditure claimed by staff for public transport/cycling	A Smith M Foster	Apr 05	April 06	CT	Managers
1.7	Reduce the total number of vehicles deployed at 2 further High Schools by 10%	G Salmon A Blackman 0927		Jan 06		
1.8	Increase efficiency of ICT equipment supplied and extend number of sites where PCs are networked to print to photocopiers	F Nicholls Procurement Team/Desktop Top Support	Apr 05	April 06	ICT	Managers
2	Achieve a 12.5 % reduction in Council carbon dioxide emissions by 2012, as set out in the Carbon Management Plan, to contribute to the emerging Herefordshire Climate Change Strategy					
2.1	Reduce carbon dioxide equivalent emissions from activities directly controlled by the Council /on which it has an influence (including schools) by 1.25% per annum	C Birks R Wood	Apr 05	April 06	PS	OiCs/ Heads

2.2	Integrate progress report on Carbon Management Action Plan into six monthly GEM reports to Cabinet Member and Environment Scrutiny	T Marsh R Wood	Apr 05	Oct 05/ Apr 06	E	Various inc Property, Env Health
2.3	Reduce the energy usage of operational Council properties per square meter GIA	C Birks J Burton	Apr 05	April 06	PS	OiCs/ Heads
2.4	Reduce the fossil fuel consumption for operational Council property (including schools) by, for instance, improving boilers and control systems	C Birks J Burton	Apr 05	April 06	PS	OiCs/ Heads
2.5	Work with WMS to continue to purchase 100% renewable energy for Council properties via the energy supply agreement	C Birks J Burton	Sept 05	Nov 05	PS	-
3	Reduce and control environmental risks					
3.1	Implement action plans for the 3 closed waste disposal sites for which the Council has known environmental liability with regard to contaminated land	A Tector B Chartres 0542	Apr 04	July 08	EHTS	-
3.2	Review other potentially contaminated Council owned sites over 5 year programme in the adopted Inspection Strategy	A Tector B Chartres 0542	Dec 02	July 09	EHTS	Various land holders
3.3	Declare Bargates AQMA (as required by DEFRA)	A Tector Marc Willimont	Apr 05	Apr 06	EHTS	-
3.4	Thorn Salt barn operational and stores consolidated	Property/ Highways	Aug 05	Nov 05	H&T	HJS
3.5	Review pesticide use across the authority to ensure good practice	ESU	June 05	April 06	ESS	PS, ChS, H&T
3.6	Review management of trees in the light of recent development re case law and liability	ESU	July 05	April 06	E/P&C	H&T, PS, ChS
3.7	Monitor the environmental performance of approved Prudential & Reserves funded Capital Programme bids	S Cameron T Marsh	Apr 05	Dec 05	CT	Managers of capital projects
3.8	Prepare a Heatwave Plan, covering vulnerable adults in the Council's care	S Canham L Libetta	Apr 05	April 06	SC	

4 Improve the environmental performance of the Council and realise environmental benefits for Herefordshire by working with partners, suppliers and contractors							
		D Stewart	May 05	Dec 05	CX	Managers	
4.1	Build sustainability into the Council's procurement strategy, processes and contracts ¹	F Smith S Hillstead	June 05	1/4ly April 06	Env	GEM SA	
4.2	Finalise baselines and acceptable ranges and monitor performance on Environmental & Key PIs in HJS contract (quarterly)	T Marsh M Turner/M Burton	May 05	April 06	Env	CSS	
4.3	Work with the voluntary sector to progress Fairtrade status for Herefordshire	D Stewart	May 05	Mar 06	Env	HJS	
4.4	Explore feasibility of increasing purchase of locally produced food and supplies	P Jones G Jones	Apr 05	April 06	P&C	Env	
4.5	Work with Bridge-It to encourage local businesses to improve standards of environmental management and performance.	T Marsh M Burton/ G Perrott	Sept 04	Dec 05	HP	Env	
4.6	Ensure that sustainability is integrated into the reviewed Herefordshire Plan	T Marsh M Burton	Apr 05	April 06	Env	ChS	
4.7	Increase number of Eco-schools ² with awards from 29% – 35% (BVPI)						
5	Build on existing work to protect and enhance biodiversity on Council owned land		1783				
5.1	Complete BAP Update 2005	B Bloxsome J Hackman 0128	Sept 04	May 05	Env	Trustees	
5.2	Increase the land owned or managed by the Council without a Nature Conservation designation, managed for biodiversity, from 0.33% to 0.35%.	B Bloxsome	April 05	April 06	Env	All land holders	
5.3	Run training session on Biodiversity for Development Control officers	B Bloxsome J Hackman 0128	Apr 05	Apr 06	Env	-	
5.4	Undertake survey of flora and fauna on private & parish owned commons	G Thompson T Hulme	April 2005	April 2008	P&C/Env	PROW	

¹ As required by the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government

² Figure will be calculated on number of schools registered at start of year

5.5	Obtain FSC certification for Council commercial and countryside woodlands	T Featherstone J Bissett	April 05	Jan 07	P&C	Env (PS)
5.6	Resurvey & re-mark Roadside Nature Reserves & consider extensions to scheme where appropriate	P Jobson HNT	April 05	Aug 05	Env	HCS/HNT
5.7	Work with managers of Council land with a Nature Conservation Designation or adjacent to it to review potential to change management to enhance biodiversity.		Sept 05	June 06	Env	Land managers
6	Maintain ISO 14001 certification and roll this out to cover all Council activities and services by July 2006					
6.1	Strategic Housing, County Treasurers and remainder of EHTS to join the scope	Managers/ESU	Jan 05	July 05	SCSH, CT, Env	-
6.2	Planning (DC and BC), Adult Social Care and CSS to join the scope	Managers/ESU	Aug 05	Feb 06	Env, SC, SCSH	-
6.3	Forward Planning & Conservation, Children's Services and remainder of Adult & Community prepare to join scope	Managers/ESU	March 05	July 06	Env, Ch S, P&C	-
7	Complete the Environment Strategy and disseminate its requirements across the authority					
7.1	Adopt Environmental Strategy and Action Plan	ESU	July 04	July 05	EMSU	Various
7.2	Bring results of all themes together into a combined environmental report for 04/05, moving towards meeting the requirements of EMAS and triple bottom line accounting	T Marsh R Wood	Apr 05	Dec 05	EMSU	GEM, HR

The end of year Environment Report for 05/06 will also include information relating to:-

- ◆ Targets referenced in the Environment Strategy that are not being reported elsewhere (plus see target 7.2)
- ◆ Relevant targets in finalised 05/06 Service Plans
- ◆ Information on relevant BVPIs
- ◆ Other relevant initiatives started after this programme is finalised
- ◆ WM Spatial Strategy – data commitment

BEST VALUE REVIEWS – IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Report By: Performance Officer

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

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

Financial Implications

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

Background

- 3 In response to comments from Members and Officers, the reporting arrangements have been developed by consolidating the reports and only reporting on exceptions to the programmed actions. That is, where actions have been completed earlier than programmed or where the timetable has not been met.
- 4 Appendix 1 of this report covers the following improvement plans:
 - Development Control
 - Public Conveniences
 - Public Rights of Way

RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	By When	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
High	Improved quality and accessibility of highways design advice Improved speed of applications processing and responsiveness of service	Review and update current Highway Design Guide	Adopt Manual for Streets when published by DfT in November 2005	Team Leader Transportation	December 2003 Date revised to July 2005	In progress by Owen Williams	BV109 – Determine applications within 8/13 weeks

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Priority	Outcome	Action	Milestones	Officer(s)	By When	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
High Priority – 2003/5	Improved provision of facilities	Refurbishment programme in progress	Tenbury Road, Bromyard scheduled for Summer 2005. 2 further facilities to be refurbished in 2005/6. Accelerated closure programme to be agreed.	HOS Property	To be completed 2004/5	Refurbishment of East St completed in May 2005.	Public perception indicator

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Priority	Outcome	Action	Comment	Officer(s)	By when Revised Dates	Progress	Indicator for Improvement
High	Increase throughput of Diversion Orders	Research, devise and write a fast-track method for determining applications for Diversion Orders	Staff time – possible offset through income generation. Now part of strategy.	RH/MMM	1/7/02 – Date revised to November 2004	Consultation finished 13 May 2005.	

MONITORING OF 2004/2005 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – APRIL 2004 TO MARCH 2005

Report By: Director of Environment

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To update Members on the exceptions to the targeted progress made by the Environment Directorate for the full year April 2004 to March 2005 towards achieving the performance indicators / targets which appear in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Financial Implications

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

Content

3. The report of exceptions to the targeted performance is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.
4. Performance against all other indicators is within 10% of target.
5. Also included are the targets and out-turns for 2003/4, the targets for 2004/5, 2005/6 2006/7 and 2007/8.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the exceptions monitoring report in relation to the 2004/2005 local and national performance indicators be noted, subject to any comments which Members may wish to raise.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

2004/5 Out-turns exceptions and PIs 2005/6 with 3 year Targets

ENVIRONMENT

National:

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Actual 2004/5	Target 2006/7	Actual 2004/5	Target 2007/8	Comments
	Cost/efficiency										
BV86	Cost of waste collection per household	£36.22	£38.99	£37.13		£38.06		£45.14			
BV87	Cost of waste disposal per tonne for municipal waste	£68.38	£59.23	£59.82		£62.81		£68.57			
	Fair access										
BV199a	The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level	36%	34%	33%	27%	31%	27%	29%		27%	Stretch targets being negotiated in LPSA2G

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

National:

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Actual 2004/5	Target 2006/7	Actual 2004/5	Target 2007/8	Comments
BV96/223 Corp PI	Condition of principal roads - % worse than condition threshold	3%	3.86%	Indicator being amended	Results deferred pending resolution of data processing difficulties at national level	3	Results deferred pending resolution of data processing difficulties at national level	3		3%	Targets not required by Audit Commission

2004/5 Out-turns exceptions and PIs 2005/6 with 3 year Targets

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
BV97a/ 224a Corp PI	Condition of non-principal roads - % worse than condition threshold - classified	32%	58.01%	51%	29.05%	26%	23%	20%	Targets revised. New guidance shows targets not required by Audit Commission
BV97b/ 224b	Condition of non-principal roads - % worse than condition threshold – unclassified	28%	38.74%	44%	19.9%	20%	20%	20%	Targets not required by Audit Commission
	Road safety								
BV99a(i) Corp PI	Number of Casualties All KSI	Indicators changed			146	<197	<187	<177	Actual figures relate to Calendar Year 2003.
BV99a(ii)	Percentage Change over previous year - All KSI			-6%	-3%	-6%	-5%	-5%	Targets for casualties are "no more than".
BV99a(iii)	Percentage Change over 1994-8 average All KSI			-16%	-41%	-21%	-25%	-29%	The percentage increases in slight injuries are less than the anticipated increase in traffic volumes.
BV99b(i)	Number of Casualties Children KSI			19	6	18	17	15	
BV99b(ii)	Percentage Change over previous year Children KSI			-6%	-25%	-6%	-6%	-7%	
BV99b(iii)	Percentage Change over 1994-8 average Children KSI			-15%	-73%	-20%	-25%	-30%	
BV99c(i)	Number of Casualties All Slight Injuries			738	719	744	750	756	
BV99c(ii)	Percentage Change over previous year All Slight Injuries			+1%	-15%	+1%	+1%	+1%	
BV99c(iii)	Percentage Change over 1994-8 average All Slight Injuries			+3%	0%	+3%	+4%	+5%	
BV100	Local authority road works per kilometre of traffic sensitive road	0.1	0.4125	0.2	1.8612	1.1	1.0	0.9	Target for 2005/6 in line with Joined Up Programme

2004/5 Out-turns exceptions and PIs 2005/6 with 3 year Targets

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
BV102 Corp PI	Local bus services (passenger journeys per year)	3,810,000	3,946,746	3,820,500	3,447,528	3,928,000	3,938,000	3,948,000	Commercial decision of operators to reduce services.
	Fair Access								
BV186a	Percentage of principal road network not needing major repair by cost per km	150	166	168					PI Deleted
BV186b	Percentage of non-principal road network not needing major repair by cost per km	400	235	237					PI Deleted

Local:

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
	Kilometres of rural footways constructed	1.5km	0.39km	1.25 km	1.5km	1.0km	1.0km	1.0km	
	% of days public conveniences facilities closed	0.87%	1.15%	1.15%	2.15%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	Last quarter increase due to problems with water management systems
	Percentage (Number) of Penalty Charge notice appeals cases "lost" at appeal as a percentage of those taken to adjudication	<50%	30% (17 out of 56)	<50%	17%	<50%	<50%	<50%	
	Network Serviceability								
	The percentage of major roadwork schemes that over-run the published completion date.	0%	0%	0%		0%	0%	0%	Two projects overrun Folly Lane and Newtown Crossroads. Both traffic signals schemes required re-programming to accommodate greater complexity than envisaged when completion dated were first published.

2004/5 Out-turns exceptions and PIs 2005/6 with 3 year Targets

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
	Network Sustainability								
	The annual expenditure for reactive maintenance to running surfaces compared with the annual expenditure for programmed structural maintenance	17.5%	17%	17%		16%	15%	15%	
	Street Lighting								
	The average length of time in repairing street light faults compared with the authorities policies and objectives	4.5 days	3.9 days	4.0 days	2.51 days				Deleted as a local indicator – replace by BVPI 215
	Bridges								
	Number of bridges inspected to safeguard structural integrity (two year rota).	463	463	395	428	395	395	395	

PLANNING

National:

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
	Strategic objective								
BV106 Corp PI	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land	60%	69%	60%	68.3%	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%	
	Service delivery outcome								
BV109a	Determine major commercial and industrial applications within 13 weeks	60%	53%	60%	46%	60.00%	60.00%	60.00%	Action plan to address issues has been formulated and in progress.
BV109b	Determine minor commercial and industrial applications within 8 weeks	65%	67%	65%	51%	65.00%	65.00%	65.00%	
BV109c	Determine other applications within 8 weeks	80%	76%	80%	64%	80.00%	80.00%	80.00%	

2004/5 Out-turns exceptions and PIs 2005/6 with 3 year Targets

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
	Quality								
BV204	Percentage of appeals allowed against authorities decision to refuse planning application				21%	<25%	<25%	<25%	

Local:

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
	Percentage of applications invalid on receipt (919 out of 3686)	<25%	24.9%	<25%	30%	<25%	<25%	<25%	Based on sampling undertaken in September
	Percentage of appeals where the Council's decision was overturned	<40%	29%	<40%	21%				Deleted as a local indicator – replaced by BV204

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND TRADING STANDARDS

National:

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
BV166a	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health	56%	55.3%	56%	90%	90%	90%	100%	
BV166b	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for trading standards	72%	68.3%	72%	86.6%	90%	90%	100%	

TRUNK ROADS IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Report By: Director of Environment

Wards Affected

County wide

Purpose

To consider the written response from the Highways Agency to the issues raised by Members at the meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 28 February 2005.

Reasons

The Highways Agency has provided a written response to the many issues submitted to them in writing for consideration at the special meeting of the Committee on 28 February 2005.

Considerations

1. When representatives of the Highways Agency attended the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in February, they undertook to provide the Council with full, written responses to the questions which were tabled at the meeting. That reply has now been received and is attached as Appendix 1. Copies are being sent to the relevant local Members.
2. Since that meeting, the former Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) has written to the Secretary of State for Transport, Alistair Darling, expressing concern about the management of the A49. The Secretary of State has been asked to consider a change in the method of management of this trunk road to allow Herefordshire and Shropshire to undertake management on behalf of the Highways Agency. At the time of preparing this report, no reply had been received.
3. The second Local Public Service Agreement is currently being prepared by the Council in negotiation with the Government. A Road Safety target has been included to reduce further the annual number of killed and seriously injured casualties in Herefordshire to 130 by 2007 from the figure of 141 in 2004. To achieve this level of reduction, the Council is making clear to Government that there will have to be greater engagement of the Highways Agency to deliver more safety schemes on the trunk roads in the county. This Council is recommending that a substantial "pump priming" grant be allocated to support the implementation of more accident prevention measures on the trunk roads.

Risks

The Council could be at risk of failing to deliver the proposed road casualty reduction target if the Highways Agency does not fully participate in delivery of the second Local Public Service Agreement.

Recommendation:

THAT Members consider the written responses provided by the Highways Agency.

Background Papers

- A49 Route Management Strategy (Highways Agency 2004)

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ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 28TH FEBRUARY

AGENDA ITEM 5 - TRUNK ROADS IN HEREFORDSHIRE
ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

ROUTE	MEMBER AND ISSUE/QUESTION
M50	No issues raised
A40	No issues raised
A49 Ross-on-Wye to Hereford City	<p>Cllr Mrs U Attfield</p> <p>Councillors for Hinton and St Martins ward are concerned about the position of the 30 mph sign on the A49 as it enters Hereford.</p> <p><i>HA response; The speed limit extension at this location was implemented following the development of the Ross to Hereford Environmental and Safety Improvement Study. The decision notice that included this scheme, was issued on 15 February 2002 followed extensive consultation and support for the proposal.</i></p> <p>There has been correspondence between the Highways Agency and myself and a local resident. (Detailed plan provided location illustrating local features).</p> <p><i>HA response; The correspondence referred to cannot be located. If there are issues still to be considered then please let us know</i></p>
A49 Ross-on-Wye to Hereford City	<p>Cllr Stuart Thomas</p> <p>The chief concern re the A49 is the lack of effective controls at the Belmont roundabout. This leads to the cutting off of the A465 at the roundabout in the mornings and the rat running of our lanes as traffic comes off the A465 at Belmont, or Tram Inn, to join the A49 and get preferred access into Hereford. That the situation is largely reversed in the evening is of little comfort.</p> <p><i>HA response; A scheme to increase the circulatory carriageway and provide signal control at this location is being developed as part of a planning application and the indications are that the works will start on site before the end of 2005. Due to constraints to Highway land earlier schemes considered could not deliver the benefits that have been identified by the proposed Asda scheme. A traffic signal control and widening scheme to accommodate a dedicated right turn facility at St Martins Street implemented in the summer of 2001 has helped reduce congestion in the area by controlling traffic movements.</i></p> <p>The other point to make is that all consultations would be better routed through the Council in the future. Those who have tried to liaise with the Agency, people or parishes, end up not wishing to do so again.</p> <p><i>HA response; We appreciate the time that the parish councils and members of the public take to draw concerns to our attention and would hope that they continue to communicate with HA directly.</i></p> <p>Callow and Grafton would like to know why the re-design of the road at The Grafton was undertaken, losing a good bus stop, and tractor/trailer pull in.</p>

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	<p><i>HA response; The access to Grafton Inn was amended to comply with a planning condition to enable development to be carried out. The Highways Agency had not been advised about any formal bus stop facilities at this location.</i></p> <p>Does the Agency have regard to the traffic flows on non trunk roads? The inability of the A roads to carry the load has a serious spin off across the whole of my ward. Can we look to the support of the Highways Agency to solve this?</p> <p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency has regular liaison meetings with officers from Herefordshire Council to consider maintenance and improvement works, in particular on and nearby the trunk road network.</i></p> <p>We need the Rotherwas Access Road, the A465-A49 link to the Rotherwas Access Road and a Bridge!</p> <p><i>HA response; The Rotherwas Access Road is the subject of a Major Scheme "Annex E" submission to DfT as part of the LTP process. The HA therefore has no direct involvement with the Scheme's progress. However, the HA's consultants have been working closely with the Council's regarding the proposed junction with the A49 and agreement in principle has been reached regarding the required capacity.</i></p> <p><i>The HA has no plans for an A465-A49 link to the Rotherwas Access Road or a new bridge. If it is the Council's policy to develop these schemes the appropriate method for securing Government funding is the LTP process</i></p>
<p>A49 Hereford City</p>	<p>Cllr Mrs P Andrews</p> <p>In the A49 Route Management Strategy the Highways Agency acknowledges that the A49 is both a strategic link road and a regional spine. In section 5.7.5 they acknowledge that 'local road improvements ' will be needed. Can they not accept that routing all the traffic on this trunk road through the city is not acceptable?</p> <p><i>HA response; It is widely recognized that the highways network suffers congestion and delays. A crucial element is the need to redesign the network to address these issues. The HA has for some time been working closely with Herefordshire Council on the Edgar Street Grid regeneration project. Detailed discussions continue regarding a partnership to validate traffic modeling completed to date. It is intended to extend this work to include A49 junctions for which the HA is responsible. This joint approach will be of great use to both the HA and the Council in identifying and developing potential solutions.</i></p> <p><i>The HA has also indicated its support in principle to the council's approach to potential Park and Ride sites and will continue to work closely with the Council on these developments</i></p> <p>Also, more specifically - the plan is very light on information as to improvements to traffic flow in the city - especially from the Starting Gate down to Belmont roundabout. Are they awaiting the changes at the roundabout necessitated by the ASDA development (and money from Asda) before coming up with ideas?</p> <p><i>HA response; A scheme to increase the circulatory carriageway at Belmont and provide signal control at this location is being developed as part of a planning application and the indications are that the works will start on site before the end of 2005. Due to constraints to Highway land earlier schemes considered could not</i></p>

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	<p><i>deliver the benefits that have been identified by the proposed Asda scheme. A traffic signal control and widening scheme to accommodate a dedicated right turn facility at St Martins Street implemented in the summer of 2001 has helped reduce congestion in the area by controlling traffic movements. Further study work is being carried in liaison with Herefordshire Council to determine what other improvements may be feasible through the city.</i></p>
A49 Hereford City	<p>Cllr Roger Phillips</p> <p>Suggestions have been made to me, which may have been explored regarding congestions on the A49 and A465 in the City. These are:</p> <p>That the HA and ourselves plus the police should have a process for the quick removal of any breakdowns on these roads.</p> <p><i>HA response; Although the HA's Managing Agents (AmeyMouchel) regularly patrol the network the HA currently has no legal powers to remove broken down vehicles from the Trunk Road Network and has to rely on the Police to deal with these matters. The HA has regular liaison meetings with Officers from Herefordshire Council and the Police regarding day to day operational issues and issues of this nature are given due consideration.</i></p> <p><i>In 2004 the HA introduced its Traffic Officers (TOs) to the Motorway network in the West Midlands. TOs will patrol the roads looking for and dealing with broken down vehicles. They will also help police manage traffic around accidents to reduce congestion. Current plans are to introduce TOs to the rest of the Motorway Network by the end of 2005. No decision has been taken on whether TOs will be extended to the Trunk Road network</i></p> <p>Secondly, any agency/services doing work on the roads should be encouraged to work more than 8 hours or stagger their workplan to times of the day that cause least congestion.</p> <p><i>HA response; Highways Agency planned works are designed to have the minimum impact and carried out during off peak periods or overnight. We also liaise closely on third party works (i.e. utilities) to try to ensure that any planned works follow the same principles. Emergency works are managed as effectively as possible as they arise.</i></p>
A49 Hereford City	<p>Cllr J P Thomas</p> <p>Concern about the growing need for traffic control during peak hours at the Holmer roundabout.</p> <p><i>HA response; This observation is gratefully received and noted but there are currently no proposals for a study or scheme at this location. The need for study work at this location will need to compete with other locations considered of higher priority and programmed as resources permit. Study work is already being carried out for the A49 from Belmont to Newmarket Street Roundabout, in close liaison with Herefordshire Council.</i></p>
A49 Hereford to Leominster	<p>Cllr K Grumbley</p> <p>I offer the following specific concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the proposed 50 mph speed limit on the South side of Dinmore Hill. I cannot understand why sound judgment cannot inform a simple decision to start the speed limit to the South of the Burghope/Greenacres accesses. The Agency's own criteria would seem to support this move. The present proposal to

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	<p>start it near the C1121 junction does not satisfy their criteria, as there is no change in the character of the road at that point. Also Mr Wheeler publicly assured local residents that the limit would extend to give them protection.</p> <p><i>HA response; The proposal for a 50mph speed limit over Dinmore Hill has been given full consideration following consultation with the West Mercia Police Authority and the necessary legislative requirements have been followed. I recollect discussing the issue with a number of Parish Council representatives and members of the public but was unable to offer any guarantees given the legislative processes required to deliver these type of schemes.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The performance of AmeyMouchel on routine maintenance tasks might be raised. Last August, Tom Davies reported trees infringing visibility to the North of the U94001 junction at Hope-under-Dinmore after the problem was raised at a Parish Council meeting. It was particularly relevant to slow-moving agricultural vehicles turning right to go up the hill. I have since reported it 3 more times - most recently on 1 Feb. The call centre is always very helpful but this unfortunately does not lead to any action. Their Reference Number is 24468. <p><i>HA response; Records show that reference 24468 was logged, investigated, programmed and works completed.</i></p>
<p>A49 Hereford to Leominster</p>	<p>CIlr JGS Guthrie</p> <p>Over the period of the RMS I have represented the population living alongside the A49 from Holmer to Dinmore (Queenswood Country Park). Concern has been expressed by the parishes of Holmer & Shelwick, Pipe & Lyde, Dinmore, Sutton (St Nicholas and St Michael), Moreton on Lugg, Marden, Bodenham, Wellington.</p> <p>I would first like to make it quite clear that the Highways Agency have responded to some of the issues brought forward by local people and have taken action.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> They introduced a safer road lay out at the Queenswood Country Park entrance. A new protected right turn bay was provided for traffic turning from Hereford to Bodenham. After many letters they provided double white lines to restrict traffic to one lane on the down slopes of Dinmore Hill on both sides of the hill. A protected right turn was introduced for traffic from Leominster turning to Burghope Lane. The Bus Stop bay at Burghope had the footway replaced and its markings renewed after these had been deleted by resurfacing work and large lorries were parking in this bay causing danger to bus passengers. An emergency telephone was provided in the northern lay by at Burghope. Footpath work between Upper and Lower Lyde has now been completed. <p>It is unfortunate that many requests made at the time of the RMS have not been carried forward, they include:-</p> <p>1 STARTING GATE ROUNDABOUT, HOLMER. Hereford.</p> <p>That the Highways Agency provide some action to control the traffic on the roundabout at peak times due to heavy congestion and a build up on the trunk road as far back as Lyde Church. This causes a rat run through Lyde using the narrow lane to Munstone which Pipe & Lyde Parish Council wished to stop.</p>

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	<p>Nothing has been done to date to ease congestion at the Starting Gate Roundabout</p> <p><i>HA response; The observations are gratefully received and noted but there are currently no proposals for a study or scheme at this location. The need for study work at this location will need to compete with other locations considered of higher priority and programmed as resources permit. Study work is already being carried out for the A49 from Belmont to Newmarket Street Roundabout, in close liaison with Herefordshire Council.</i></p> <p>2 PARKING between Church Way & Starting Gate Roundabout Holmer</p> <p>Holmer and Shelwick Parish Council requested in 2001 that double yellow lines parking restrictions be introduced between Church Way Holmer and the roundabout to ease traffic flow at all times..</p> <p>Vehicles are still parking outside the houses on this stretch of road causing more congestion, no action has been taken by the Highways Agency to date.</p> <p><i>HA response; Legislative processes are required to promote parking restrictions and given that there is no off street parking facilities available at this location, any orders would receive objections that could not be reasonably overturned. The proposal is therefore not feasible.</i></p> <p>3 SPEED LIMIT at Holmer</p> <p>That the 40mph limit at Holmer be extended around the bend towards Lyde and that the speed limit be restricted to 30mph between Church Lane and the roundabout.</p> <p>It is noted that since may 2001 the speed limit south of the Starting Gate Roundabout has been reduced to 30 mph but no action has been taken on the northern part of the trunk road.</p> <p><i>HA response; This will be considered as part of the Speed Management Strategy Study programmed for 2005/2006</i></p> <p>4 FOOTPATH Lyde to Holmer</p> <p>Pipe & Lyde Parish Council called for a footpath to be provided along one side of the A49 from Lyde Church to Holmer.in 2001.</p> <p>To date no action has been taken.</p> <p><i>HA response; This will be considered as part of the ongoing development of studies and schemes for Non Motorised Users. It is not currently scheduled due to the commitments already made, following extensive consultation with stakeholder representatives, to consider priorities for Non Motorised Crossing facilities in the MAC9 area.</i></p> <p>5 ROAD CLOSURE SIGNS A49 (T)</p> <p>Moreton on Lugg, Sutton, Marden and Wellington Parish Councils have asked for the signs showing ROAD CLOSED at the Starting Gate Hereford to say where the road is closed in order that residents of the villages on the route in light vehicles can go home direct when there is an accident on Dinmore Hill. Such a sign showing the location was provided back in 1998 following the tanker accident on the hill in September 1997 but does not appear to be</p>
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	<p>used forcing villagers to take to the lanes when there is no need for them to do so.</p> <p>All the parish councils are concerned about the volume of traffic which suddenly can come on to their C or unclassified roads when an accident blocks the A49. They would all like to see the Highways Agency signpost the approved diversion route to a much higher standard.</p> <p>Will the Highways Agency ensure in future that full information is given when a diversion is required?</p> <p><i>HA response; West Mercia Police initiate traffic diversions following an incident on the network and depending on the scale of the incident liaison takes place between the police, the Highways Agency and Herefordshire Council to determine any longer term diversions necessary that have not previously been agreed. It is acknowledged that there are limited alternatives on some sections of the A49 and our Agents AmeyMouchel wrote to Morton-On-Lugg Parish Council on 22 February 2005 suggesting a possible way forward and requesting feedback. A reply has not yet been received. However, when an incident occurs the area is under the control of the police authority and the highways authorities will be guided by their requirements with respect to access to the area under control.</i></p> <p>6 TRAFFIC ISLANDS LYDE</p> <p>Pipe & Lyde Parish Council called for traffic islands to be placed at Lyde Church to assist local people to cross the road. At that time they also called for a footway from the Upper Lyde turn to the Lower Lyde turn. This latter part of their request has now been completed but there are still no traffic islands at the junction.</p> <p>Will the Highways Agency place islands at this point to help people cross the road and stop traffic overtaking on the hatched area?</p> <p><i>HA response; This will be considered as part of the ongoing development of studies and schemes for Non Motorised Users. It is not currently scheduled due to the commitments already made following extensive consultation with stakeholder representatives to consider priorities for Non Motorised Crossing facilities in the MAC9 area.</i></p> <p>7 VEHICLE RESTRAINT BARRIER DINMORE HILL (Queenswood Bend)</p> <p>Following the accident in 1977 when a tanker left the road on the notorious “Bungalow Bend” on Dinmore Hill, we were informed that a new safety barrier was being designed and would be installed in Spring 1998.</p> <p>Now nearly 8 years later we are advised by AmeyMouchel that a new barrier is being prepared and will be put in place during a 12 week period starting on 14th Feb 2005.</p> <p><i>HA response; Following an extensive period of remediation and monitoring, a permanent replacement barrier has been designed and started on site on 14 March following the earlier utilities diversion and environmental clearance works that were carried out in December 2004 and January 2005. All of which were publicised through press notices.</i></p> <p>8 SAFETY ON BUNGALOW (QUEENSWOOD) BEND</p> <p>Wellington Parish Council has pressed for better safety provision on this dangerous</p>
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bend and have called for some escape space to be provided for vehicles coming down the hill on the bend. The fireball accident just before Christmas where a turbo charged car travelling far too fast to take the bend and entered the down lane and collided with a car which had nowhere to go with everyone concerned killed is a nightmare waiting to happen again unless the three lane layout is cut to two giving people on the single lane a hard shoulder.

The Highways Agency say they have no plans to alter the layout.

Can the Highways Agency **reconsider this as a matter of urgency?**

HA response; The Highways Agency would not promote such a scheme. By removing the climbing lane capacity would be reduced and the opportunity to overtake slower moving vehicles would also be eliminated. This would be likely to cause frustration for following drivers who may well take risks and overtake at inappropriate locations resulting in an increase in accidents.

9 SPEED LIMIT FOR BURGHOPE

The residents of Burghope were informed by Highways Agency Route 9 Manager Mr Wheeler at the Route Management Strategy bendy bus exhibition in Wellington that the then temporary 50 mph speed limit from a point on the Leominster side of the Dinmore Manor turning U 72624 would be retained when a permanent restriction was introduced in 2004 giving protection to the residents and business users at Burghope.

We are now informed that the Highways Agency are to disregard the safety of Burghope people by introducing the restriction half a mile nearer to Leominster bringing in the restriction on the hill just before the junction with the Bodenham Road C 1121.

According to the Road Traffic Act Sections 81-85 where a speed limit would end on a gradient, bend or other hazard the proposed speed restriction should be extended. This should provide high visibility for the speed limit signs.

Traffic speeds coming down the hill and traffic from Hereford speeds up to get a run at the hill making it very difficult for local people to have time to cross this very busy road which they need to do to reach the bus stop, post box, Green Acres Shop and to visit the mobile library which parks opposite to the post box.

The County Trading Supplies have lorries turning in to their premises off the road and there is turning traffic to Burghope Court via U 92623. Traffic also turns to reach the shop, the livery stables and the farm.

To date the Highways Agency and AmeyMouchel have refused to include Burghope in the new 50mph limit. **Wellington Parish Council will therefore not withdraw their objection.**

HA response; The objections received have been acknowledged by the Highways Agency and clear reasons given why the proposed speed limit cannot be extended as requested. The reasons included the requirement for police agreement as enforcing authority to the extension. The police confirmed at the Scrutiny Committee Meeting that they could not agree to the extension.

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10 SAFETY CAMERA South side of Dinmore Hill

Wellington Parish Council asked the police and the HA to place a fixed camera on the South side of the hill at Burghope in 2000. The HA said it would not meet the conditions.

The Parish council asked again in 2004 when the rules were relaxed. They requested that a suitable site be identified and prepared by the West Mercia Safety Camera Partnership. Nothing has been done.

Can some action on this be expected?

HA response; It has been agreed that within 12 months of the implementation of the 50mph speed limit for Dinmore Hill, the Safety Camera Partnership will be reviewing the need for a safety camera at this location.

11 PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE - Deer Posts

The Chief Ranger reported to the Queenswood Country Park Committee that he had requested many times over the past 3 years for the Deer reflector posts to be put back on the hill and the stretch of road through Burghope but nothing had been done.

The deer are now crossing the road far more often and are causing considerable damage to the market garden business on the Lugg River side of the road. There have already been 48 road traffic accidents involving deer in 2004.

Will the Highways Agency arrange for these posts to be put back up without delay?

HA response; The number of Deer Reflector Posts missing on the A49 over Dinmore Hill is relatively small and it is programmed to replace those as part of the Dinmore Hill Barrier Replacement Scheme. There has only been 1-recorded collision in the last 5 years involving a vehicle swerving to avoid a deer. The side road through Burghope is the responsibility of Herefordshire Council.

12 DINMORE HILL and WELLINGTON MARSH AVOIDANCE ROUTE

A scheme was put forward to take the trunk road away from Dinmore Hill and Wellington Marsh in the 1960's. The northern section would have taken the route over the railway line and the River Lugg to Saffron Cross where it would have joined the A417 to Hope under Dinmore. In 1972 the first part was built, the short dual carriageway alongside the garden centre at Wellington where the northern end of the road was built to bend towards Bodenham but this section was covered over when it was abandoned through lack of funding.

The route was also supposed to extend in a southern direction to take traffic away from the built up area of Wellington Marsh passing behind the Almshouses to link up with the present line of the road at the main gates of Moreton Park (formerly Moreton Camp). This was originally designed as an extension to the dual carriageway but after representation by the then owners of the camp, the Ministry of Defence it was modified to a single carriageway and finally dropped in the 1980's. The Vice Chairman of Wellington Action Group has been to the Record Office and seen copies of the plans for the relief road and has said that the land behind the almshouses is still in the ownership of the Highways Agency.

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	<p>The Highways Agency have informed Wellington Parish Council that they have no intention of looking at the original plans and are not prepared to discuss them.</p> <p>Will the Highways Agency now reconsider the matter before more lives are lost?</p> <p><i>HA response; There is no scheme identified in the Governments Targeted Programme of Improvements for a bypass as suggested. It would be for the Council to promote the scheme as part of the wider Regional Spatial Strategy, if it was considered appropriate.</i></p> <p>13 WELLINGTON MARSH ACCIDENTS ON BEND</p> <p>Wellington Parish Council have asked the Highways Agency to provide double white lines and extensions to the metal safety barriers on the bend in Wellington Marsh as an urgent requirement but their requests have always fallen on deaf ears.</p> <p>The January 27th 2005 edition of the Hereford Times main front page featured the crash, which wrecked Brick House Wellington Marsh for the third time in six years. The Wilson family were out at the time, If the avoidance route had been built these accidents would have been avoided but nothing has been done and the extensions to the barrier and double white lines are still awaited.</p> <p>It was also agreed in 2004 that Wellington Marsh should have a 40mph speed limit introduced through the built up area from Wellington Turn to the Moreton Park Gates.</p> <p>The Highways Agency advised Wellington Parish Council and the Wellington Marsh Action Group in 2003 that it had no plans to develop either parts of this route. The Highways Agency have still done nothing to provide the 40 mph limit or the barriers and double white lines in Wellington Marsh.</p> <p>Will the Highways Agency arrange to look at the whole avoidance route again and in the meantime at Wellington Marsh restrict the speed to 40 mph limit extend the barriers and put in the double white lines?</p> <p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency acknowledges the distressing incident that resulted in the destruction of part of Brick House in Wellington. The provision of a safety barrier on the highway has been considered but could not be provided without closing the footway on the east side of the carriageway. It is programmed to carry out a Speed Management Strategy Study during the 2005/06 financial year and Wellington Marsh will be considered as part of that process. Wellington Marsh already has a system of prohibitory road markings to deter overtaking. These markings are enforceable and can only be provided in accordance with strict criteria. Any variation to the criteria would result in enforcement falling into disrepute.</i></p> <p>14 SIGNS AT BURGHOPPE</p> <p>The residents of Burghope Lane (U92623) complained to Wellington Parish Council that heavy goods vehicles were mistakenly turning into the lane, which was signed off the A49 to Burghope in search of businesses, which were located in Burghope on the main road. These vehicles were unable to turn round at the end of the lane and had to reverse out on to the trunk road.</p>
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	<p>In order to resolve the issue the Highways Agency agreed to remove the advance direction signs to Burghope on the trunk road. They then stated that they did not consider that the distance length of the village was 600 meters and therefore village name plates could not be erected.</p> <p>Mr P Moore, Traffic Engineer for Herefordshire Council said that the removal of signing for small isolated villages similar to Burghope had generated complaints about the difficulties encountered by visitors to the area and recommended that some form of signage for Burghope should remain. AmeyMouchel, agents for the HA wrote back to say that signage could not be justified.</p> <p>In the 1962 review of signs on this route by the then Ministry of Transport place name signs were ordered for Burghope but instead directional signing was installed pointing to Burghope Lane. Residents pointed to the problem that the signs were inappropriate when giving evidence to the RMS but when a new protected right turn was provided new signs were erected again pointing to Burghope down Burghope Lane. The three business owners in Burghope want some form of sign to remain, one thought that the arrowheads could be cut off the existing signs!</p> <p>At present AmeyMouchel are to remove all the Burghope signs. Will the Highways Agency rectify what was their mistake in the first instance and put up suitable place name signs at Burghope?</p> <p><i>HA response; The signing for Burghope has been amended and works incorporated as part of the Dinmore Hill Barrier Scheme.</i></p> <p>15 WELLINGTON MARSH Roundabout</p> <p>Herefordshire Council Central Area Planning Committee last year gave permission to Tarmac Western to develop a track at the northern end of Moreton Park to provide a new entrance with the A49 at a new roundabout. To date there has not been any action.</p> <p>Will the Highways Agency advise Herefordshire and Wellington Councils when this new roundabout is scheduled to be built?</p> <p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency is not able to confirm when this roundabout is scheduled to be built. Planning legislation allows for a period of up to 5 years for a developer to implement an approved scheme and the Highways Agency will only be informed when the developer wishes to proceed. Herefordshire Council will have approved the development and may be better placed to answer this question.</i></p> <p>16 MORETON CROSS ROADS and JUNCTION with ORDNANCE CLOSE</p> <p>In 2002 Herefordshire Council Central Area Planning Committee granted extended permission for the Upper Lyde Quarry to extract minerals providing certain conditions were met, one of these being a redesigned junction with Moreton Road, the A49, the Moreton Village Road and Ordnance Close, Moreton-on-Lugg.</p> <p>Moreton Parish Council considers that regardless of any quarry operations the junction on the A49 is dangerous and should be redesigned to include Ordnance Close.</p>
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	<p><i>HA response; The recent collision cluster site analysis has not identified this location as a site for further investigation. However, it will be considered as part of the programmed Speed management Strategy Study for 2005-2006</i></p>
<p>A49 Hereford to Leominster</p>	<p>Cllr JP Thomas</p> <p>Concern about the speed limit arrangements and lack of a proper crash barrier on Dinmore Hill</p> <p><i>HA response; A 50mph speed limit will be implemented for Dinmore Hill subject to satisfactory completion of statutory processes and the temporary barrier at Queenswood Bend is being replaced.</i></p>
<p>A49 Leominster to Shropshire border</p>	<p>Cllr J Stone</p> <p>Please will the following questions be considered in relation to Ashton and the A49</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ludlow, Leominster and Brimfield all have successful bypasses, which assist traffic flow and reduce congestion and pollution in towns and villages. What has happened to plans for a by-pass in Ashton, which have been discussed over a long period of time? <p><i>HA response; There is no scheme identified in the Governments Targeted Programme of Improvements for a bypass as suggested. It would be for the Council to promote the scheme as part of the wider Regional Spatial Strategy, if it was considered appropriate.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Personal injury collisions in the section of the A49 between Ludlow and Leominster are seen as above the national average (Page 18 of A49 RMS). What measures are being considered to reduce accident levels? <p><i>HA response; The route is regularly monitored and where clear causes of collisions can be established and justifiable improvements identified, remedial measures are implemented.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. What criteria are used by the Highways Agency when compiling accident statistics? Some accidents do not seem to be included in the official figures and local residents in Ashton claim that there is a higher accident rate there than the figures shown. <p><i>HA response; The West Mercia Police Authority attend collisions and only keep records of collisions involving injury. The Highways Agency uses these statistics to determine priorities.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. What is the Highways Agency policy on installing speed cameras in accident cluster sites like Ashton on the A49? <p><i>HA response; Safety Camera sites are identified by the Safety Camera Partnership in West Mercia in accordance with specific criteria set by the Department for Transport. A mobile safety camera site has already been provided at a location on the A49 north of Ashton.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. What criteria do the Highways Agency use when assessing the case for a lower speed limit in settlements like Ashton? Has a 30 or 40mph limit been considered for Ashton and if not why not when there are speed limits in many similar villages?

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	<p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency follows the guidelines set in the Department For Transport Circular Roads 1/93 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984: Sections 81-85. Previous studies have focused on more densely populated areas or other locations identified through the regular monitoring processes, as finances have allowed. Future studies will be based on the programme set in the Route Management Strategy as agreed with the key stakeholders consulted.</i></p> <p>6. At present there are very limited overtaking opportunities in Ashton. In view of the “narrow and twisty alignment” of the route (Page 17 of A49 RMS), would it not be safer to have double white lines throughout this two-mile stretch of the A49?</p> <p><i>HA response; Ashton already has a system of prohibitory road markings to deter overtaking. These markings are enforceable and can only be provided in accordance with strict criteria. Any variation to the criteria would result in enforcement falling into disrepute.</i></p> <p>7. On a more general level, what timetable is envisaged in preparing “appropriate actions to deliver the route outcomes”?</p> <p><i>HA response; Schemes associated with The Route Outcomes identified in A49 RMS have been implemented along the A49 for some considerable time. Further schemes have been identified for implementation this financial year and future schemes will be identified as studies develop.</i></p> <p>8. What levels of funding will be available, presumably from the Department of Transport in “planning and optimizing investment in the trunk road network and in the delivery of Highways Agency Strategic plans and the ten year transport strategy? (Page 1 A49 RMS)</p> <p><i>HA response; Funding is determined and allocated by the Department for Transport on an annual basis. Works are evaluated through value management processes and prioritised on the basis of need.</i></p> <p>9. The A49 is the main north-south route through Herefordshire and Shropshire and when it is closed due to a major accident there are widespread repercussions. Does the Highways Agency have a policy for managing diversions with the Police and local Councils and minimising disruptions? Road users often feel they are being left to their own devices.</p> <p><i>HA response; Emergency incidents on the network fall under the control of West Mercia Police who liaise with the Highways Agency and local highway authority to determine the best method of traffic management to minimise disruption to traffic.</i></p> <p>10. The Wooferton Junction by the Salway Arms Hotel and near the county boundary is widely regarded by local residents as very dangerous. Does the Highways Agency still rule out a roundabout in this area and if so what are their plans for making this confusing and complex junction safer?</p> <p><i>HA response; There are no proposals for a roundabout at this junction but it is programmed to carry out further analysis of the collisions occurring at the junction during the 2005/06 financial year.</i></p> <p>11. Safety was overwhelmingly ranked as the most important objective by 83% of respondents in the Public Consultation in 2002. What importance does</p>
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	<p>the Highways Agency attach to the results of the questionnaires received in this consultation?</p> <p><i>HA response; We appreciate the time taken to complete the questionnaires as part of that consultation and they were given due consideration together with the views of all the other stakeholders. The programme for the continuing delivery of studies in the Route Management Strategy clearly demonstrates that safety has been given a high priority.</i></p> <p>I hope that the Highways Agency will respond to some if not all of these questions when they appear on 28 February and I hope they will show us a clear way forward (clearer than the RMS) for the management of the A49. I also hope that the “no improvements” message on Ashton will not be their last word when MPs, Parish Councils and local residents are adamant that safety improvements are needed.</p> <p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency understands the concerns expressed and a study to determine a strategy for speed limits through and between settlements is programmed for the 2005/06 financial year and will include Ashton and other similar small settlements along the route.</i></p>
<p>A49 Leominster to Shropshire border</p>	<p>Cllr J P Thomas</p> <p>Concern about the Highways Agency's attitude to the situation at Ashton - just north of Leominster</p> <p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency understands the concerns expressed and a study to determine a strategy for speed limits through and between settlements is programmed for the 2005/06 financial year and will include Ashton and other similar small settlements along the route</i></p>
<p>A465</p>	<p>Cllr R Preece</p> <p>Can the Agency put in a crossing in the area of the new shops in Belmont Road? The developer has made a 106 agreement to fund such a crossing.</p> <p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency has considered the provision of a crossing facility at this location but it could not be accommodated without detriment to others in the local area.</i></p>
<p>A465</p>	<p>Cllr P Edwards</p> <p>a) Repeated requests from Local Member for the A465TR for speed limit reduction to be extended from Tesco to beyond the Abbey complex (including new housing development) are ignored.</p> <p>b) Pedestrians wishing to cross from Northolme To Southolme (at non-busy times) are faced with 60 + mph light & Heavy vehicles descending on the roundabout dropped kerb crossing point!</p> <p>c) Requests from Community groups (South Wye Walks to Fitness, Belmont Rural Parish Council, S Wye Regeneration Transport & Highways Committee) all ignored.</p> <p>d) Local Member request for Trunk Rd safety paving adjacent to Lake Cottage, Belmont, not progressed (after many months site visit took place but proposal costed up beyond a small works job) and no programmed date offered.</p>

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	<p>(Note 1. Regular organised walk to fitness route users leap across the TR twice within short distance to access the woodland walks. Note 2. Apparent paving similar works took place in another location although, I am advised, such works were not requested in that locality.)</p> <p><i>HA response for items a) to d); It is still the Highways Agency's intention to detrunk the A465 and for that reason the we can only undertake safety related work. We are advised that the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) position is that it intends to retain Trunk Road status for the section between the Welsh border and Abergavenny. Furthermore, we understand Herefordshire Council's position to be that if it remains a national route in Wales the Council cannot accept the Highways Agency's proposals.</i></p> <p><i>Discussions with WAG continue regarding detrunking policy.</i></p> <p>e) When will HA take reasonable steps to keep the A465TR Tesco roundabout in reasonable order (such as reasonable mowing & tree care)?</p> <p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency does take reasonable steps to ensure the soft estate is kept in reasonable order.</i></p> <p>f) Why did it take a major length of time to arrange for a broken down truck to be removed during the run up to Christmas? This is a general issue affecting Belmont Ward + other traffic.</p> <p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency does not have the authority to remove broken down vehicles from the trunk road network. It would be for West Mercia Police to consider if a vehicle is causing an obstruction and needs to be removed.</i></p> <p>g) What is the HA doing to press for flood alleviation works at the A49 & A465TR junction?</p> <p><i>HA response; The Environmental Agency (EA) have responsibility for flood alleviation measures and identify priorities nationally. It is understood that Herefordshire Council are liaising with the EA to determine measures for flood alleviation in Hereford.</i></p> <p>h) Why does it take the HA (sometime months) an unreasonable length of time before replying to genuine concerns raised by District Councillors and other Community leaders?</p> <p><i>HA response; The Highways Agency replies to all correspondence within 15 working days. If there are any specific examples that can be provided then they can be investigated.</i></p>
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