

COUNTY SECRETARY AND SOLICITOR
Marie Rosenthal

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Your Ref:

Our Ref: MR/CD

Please ask for: Mrs. C. Dyer

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20th July, 2005

Dear Councillor,

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend the meeting of the County of Herefordshire District Council to be held on **FRIDAY, 29TH JULY, 2005** at **The Shirehall, Hereford** at **10.30 a.m.** at which the business set out in the attached agenda is proposed to be transacted.

Please note that 30 car parking spaces will be reserved at the Shirehall and 10 car parking spaces at the Town Hall for elected Members.

Yours sincerely,



M.E. ROSENTHAL
COUNTY SECRETARY AND SOLICITOR



A G E N D A

COUNCIL

Date: **Friday, 29th July, 2005**

Time: **10.30 a.m.**

Place: **The Shirehall, Hereford**

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

For any further information please contact:

*Christine Dyer, Members' Services
Manager and Executive Officer*

**Tel: 01432 260222, e-mail:
cdyer@herefordshire.gov.uk**

**County of Herefordshire
District Council**

AGENDA

for the Meeting of the COUNCIL

To: All Members of the Council

	Pages
1. PRAYERS	
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive apologies for absence.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on this Agenda.	
4. MINUTES To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th May, 2005.	1 - 12
5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS To receive the Chairman's announcements and petitions from members of the public.	
6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC To receive questions from members of the public.	
7. QUESTIONS TO THE CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN UNDER STANDING ORDERS To receive any written questions.	
8. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDERS To consider any Notices of Motion.	
9. CABINET To receive the report and to consider any recommendations to Council arising from the meetings held on 19th May, 9th and 23rd June and 14th July, 2005.	13 - 28
10. REGULATORY COMMITTEE To receive the report and to consider any recommendations to Council arising from the meetings held on 24th May and 19th July, 2005.	29 - 30
11. PLANNING COMMITTEE To receive the report and to consider any recommendations to Council arising from the meetings held on 3rd June and 15th July, 2005.	31 - 34
12. STRATEGIC MONITORING COMMITTEE To receive the report and to consider any recommendations to Council arising from the meetings held on 9th June and 1st July, 2005.	35 - 38
13. STANDARDS COMMITTEE To receive the report and to consider any recommendations to Council arising from the meetings held on 17th June and 8th July, 2005.	39 - 48
14. STATUTORY ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE To receive the report and to consider any recommendations to Council arising from the meeting of the Statutory Accounts Committee held on 11th July, 2005.	49 - 52
15. WEST MERCIA POLICE AUTHORITY To receive the report of the meeting of the West Mercia Police Authority held on 7th June, 2005. Councillor B. Hunt has been nominated for the purpose of answering questions on the discharge of the functions of the Police Authority.	53 - 58

The Public's Rights to Information and Attendance at Meetings

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO:-

- Attend all Council, Cabinet, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings unless the business to be transacted would disclose 'confidential' or 'exempt' information.
- Inspect agenda and public reports at least five clear days before the date of the meeting.
- Inspect minutes of the Council and all Committees and Sub-Committees and written statements of decisions taken by the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members for up to six years following a meeting.
- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
- Access to a public Register stating the names, addresses and wards of all Councillors with details of the membership of the Cabinet, of all Committees and Sub-Committees.
- Have a reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports (relating to items to be considered in public) made available to the public attending meetings of the Council, Committees and Sub-Committees.
- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the Council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title.
- Copy any of the documents mentioned above to which you have a right of access, subject to a reasonable charge (20p per sheet subject to a maximum of £5.00 per agenda plus a nominal fee of £1.50, for postage).
- Access to this summary of your rights as members of the public to attend meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees and to inspect and copy documents.
- A member of the public may, at a meeting of the full Council, ask a Cabinet Member or Chairman of a Committee any question relevant to a matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the County as long as a copy of that question is deposited with the County Secretary and Solicitor more than seven clear working days before the meeting i.e. by close of business on a Tuesday in the week preceding a Friday meeting.

Please Note:

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

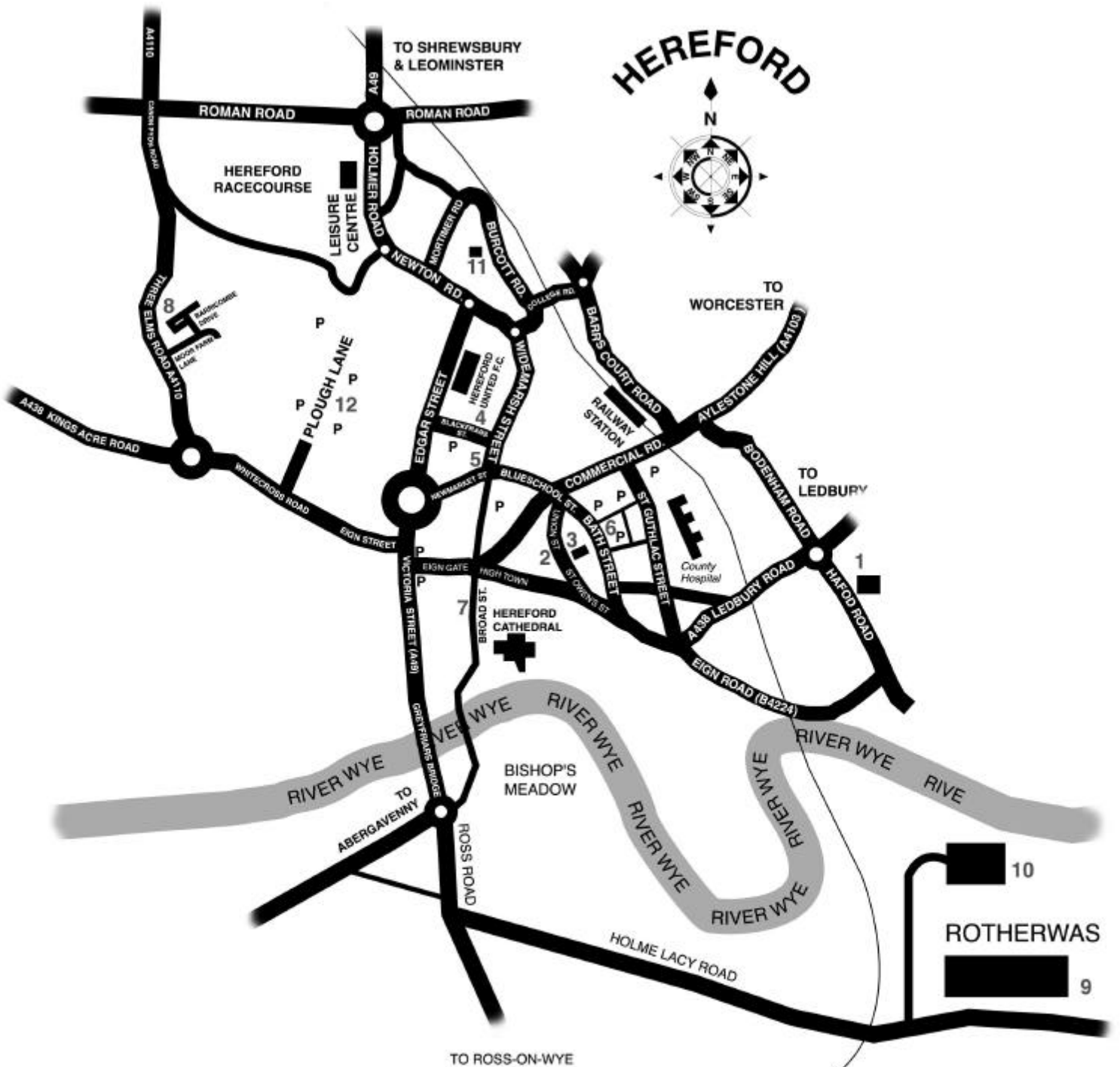
The meeting room is accessible for visitors in wheelchairs via the main entrance by prior arrangement. Please telephone 01432 272395

A map showing the location of the Shirehall can be found opposite.

If you have any questions about this Agenda, how the Council works or would like more information or wish to exercise your rights to access the information described above, you may do so either by telephoning Mrs Christine Dyer on 01432 260222 or by visiting in person during office hours (8.45 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. Monday - Thursday and 8.45 a.m. - 4.45 p.m. Friday) at the Council Offices, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford.



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|---|------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Brockington | 7 | Kemble House |
| 2 | Town Hall | 8 | Trinity House |
| 3 | Shire Hall | 9 | Thorn Office Centre |
| 4 | Education Centre | 10 | Herefordshire Commercial Services |
| 5 | Garrick House | 11 | Merchant House |
| 6 | Bath Street | 12 | Plough Lane |

FIRE AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

IN CASE OF FIRE

(no matter how small)

1. Sound the Alarm
2. Call the Fire Brigade
3. Fire party - attack the fire with appliances available.

ON HEARING THE ALARM

Leave the building by the nearest exit and proceed to assembly area on:

GAOL STREET CAR PARK

Section Heads will call the roll at the place of assembly.

MINUTES of the meeting of COUNCIL held at the The Shirehall, Hereford on Friday, 13th May, 2005 at 10.30 a.m.

Present: Councillors: Mrs. P.A. Andrews, B.F. Ashton, Mrs. W.U. Attfield, Mrs. L.O. Barnett, Mrs. E.M. Bew, W.L.S. Bowen, H. Bramer, R.B.A. Burke, A.C.R. Chappell, M.R. Cunningham, Mrs. S.P.A. Daniels, P.J. Dauncey, N.J.J. Davies, Mrs. C.J. Davis, G.W. Davis, J.W. Edwards, P.J. Edwards, D.J. Fleet, Mrs. J.P. French, J.H.R. Goodwin, Mrs. A.E. Gray, K.G. Grumbley, J.G.S. Guthrie, P.E. Harling, J.W. Hope MBE, B. Hunt, T.W. Hunt, G.V. Hyde, Mrs. J.A. Hyde, T.M. James, Brig. P. Jones CBE, Mrs. R.F. Lincoln, Mrs. M.D. Lloyd-Hayes, G. Lucas, R.M. Manning, R.I. Matthews, J.C. Mayson, R. Mills, J.W. Newman, Mrs. J.E. Pemberton, R.J. Phillips, Ms. G.A. Powell, R. Preece, Mrs. S.J. Robertson, D.W. Rule MBE, Miss F. Short, R.V. Stockton, J. Stone, D.C. Taylor, J.P. Thomas, W.J.S. Thomas, Ms. A.M. Toon, P.G. Turpin, W.J. Walling, D.B. Wilcox, J.B. Williams and R.M. Wilson

1. CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor J.W. Edwards, be elected Chairman of the Council until the annual meeting of Council in May 2006.

Councillor Edwards made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Edwards took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

The Chairman and Group Leaders paid tribute to the outgoing Chairman who was presented with a Past-Chairman's medal.

Councillor Harling responded by thanking the Council for its support during his term of office. A bouquet of flowers was presented to Mrs. Harling in recognition of her assistance during the Chairman's term of office.

Councillor Edwards advised that Councillor Harling would leave the meeting early in order to represent the Council at the Memorial Service for Sir Piers Bengough the Former High Sheriff of the County.

2. PRAYERS

The Very Reverend Michael Tavinor, The Dean of Hereford led the Council in prayer.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

The Chairman reminded Members of their obligation to notify the County Secretary and Solicitor of any changes affecting their Declaration of Financial or Other

Interests within 28 days of any change taking place. He asked them to complete and return the necessary forms to the Members Support office as soon as possible

5. VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor J. Stone be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council until the annual meeting in May 2006.

Councillor J. Stone made and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

6. MINUTES

The Chairman proposed a slight amendment to the penultimate sentence of Minute 70, which should read: "The Cabinet *Member* said he was well aware of the costs but that the A49 was the responsibility of the *Highways Agency*".

RESOLVED: That, subject to that amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March, 2005, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7. APPOINTMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED: That Councillor R.J. Phillips be appointed Leader of the Council until the annual meeting in May 2006.

8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed the members and guests to the meeting and advised that lunch would be served at the Town Hall at the end of the meeting

He thanked the Very Reverend Michael Tavinor, the Dean of Hereford, for leading the annual meeting in prayer and told the meeting that the Dean had agreed to continue to act as Chaplain to the Council for another year.

The Council joined the Chairman in congratulating Louise Whitesman, Assistant Solicitor with the Council, on her national award as Young Solicitor of the Year from the Law Society's Solicitors in Local Government Group. The award recognised the range of work covered by Louise over the past 12 months, which included project managing the contract phase of the new Whitecross High School scheme and promoting the Hereford Markets Act.

The Chairman congratulated the County's two recently re-elected MPs, Paul Keetch and Bill Wiggins, on their success at the recent Parliamentary Elections. He said he was looking forward to working with them both in the best interests of the County.

He announced that the group photograph of Councillors would be taken at the next meeting of Council in July.

There were no petitions.

9. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Under the Council's Constitution, a member of the public can ask a Cabinet Member or Chairman of a Committee any question relevant to a matter in relation to which

the Council has powers or duties, or which affects the County, as long as a copy of the question is deposited with the County Secretary and Solicitor more than six clear days before the meeting. No such questions had been received.

10. **QUESTIONS TO THE CABINET MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN UNDER STANDING ORDERS**

The Chairmen reminded Council that anyone wishing to ask a formal question at Council should do so by ensuring that the question is lodged with the County Secretary and Solicitor and/or Mrs. Dyer, the Members Services Manager, before 10.30 am. on the day before Council. Recently, questions had been received in a number of different offices within the Council, which had caused delays.

The Chairman ruled that a question from Councillor W.L.S. Bowen on Carbon Management would be taken during the Cabinet Report.

He also ruled that the answer to Councillor Bowen's questions about Plough Lane would also answer Councillor Mrs. Lloyd-Hayes questions on the same subject.

Councillor R. Manning asked:

"In view of the shortfall in Herefordshire Jarvis Services' budget for the provision of school dinners for 29 Primary schools and 2 Secondary schools, does the cabinet member for children's services feel that it is appropriate to pressurise these schools to make up the shortfall created by Jarvis?"

Councillor DW Rule, thanked Councillor Manning for his question. He advised that officers had been helping Herefordshire Jarvis to offer revised contract terms for the school meals service to approximately a third of Herefordshire schools. A number of proposals had been offered to schools, one of which represents an increase in cost for the continuation of the current contract with Jarvis, other options include either re-tendering the contract or providing meals from the local high school.

He said that school catering contracts are predominantly for three years, at the end of which tenders are invited off a selected list of approved contractors. In recent years the tendency has been to provide meals for primary schools from high school kitchens, as these are commercially more viable.

He stated that no pressure has been put upon schools to accept any option. Funding for school meals is fully delegated to schools and Governing Bodies are legally required to choose the option that provides best value for money for the school. Schools have been asked to inform the Council of their meals preference by May 23rd so that there would be sufficient time to implement alternative arrangements should it be necessary for the autumn term

He confirmed that the Council had increased the free meal allowance paid to schools from £1.05 to £1.25, an increase of 19% at a cost of £58,000 for the 2005/06 financial year as it recognised the cost pressures faced by contractors.

He spoke of the continuing difficulty the Council faces in providing an economic school meals service in a very rural county, and welcomed a wider debate at a future Children's Services Scrutiny Committee on how to provide an efficient and effective school meals service.

Councillor Manning responded by saying he thought the quality of the school meals provide by Jarvis was excellent. However, he was concerned that because Jarvis needed to charge more for the meals they were able to renege on their three-year

contract. He asked for a review of the tendering process to prevent this happening again.

Councillor Rule said he would encourage the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee to carry out a review of the matter.

Questions asked by Councillor J.P. Thomas of the Cabinet Member (Environment)

"In the interests of public confidence in this Council's stewardship of the environment, is it not time that - in common with the majority of other planning authorities - we require all polytunnel development, above some de minimus level, to be subject to planning permission?"

Councillor Edwards reminded Council that, in consultation with interested parties, it had adopted a Code of Practice, which requires growers to submit information about temporary polytunnels consisting of metal frames covered in polythene and where crops are grown in the existing soil to enable the Council to determine if planning permission is required. Based on the facts of individual cases, the Council may consider planning permission is not required.

The Code of Practice incorporates measures aimed at protecting the countryside and residential amenity but does not establish a threshold in relation to the area covered by polytunnels over which planning permission would be required, as it is the impact of each particular proposal which needs to be evaluated.

In response to a further question by Councillor Thomas, he reminded the Council that the Code was subject to annual review.

Question asked by Councillor J.P. Thomas of the Cabinet Member (Environment)

"Is there some way that this Council's waste disposal function can operate in such a way that skips of rubbish (including organic matter) collected from Leominster market on Friday afternoons, can be expeditiously removed from Etnam Street car park; instead of hanging around to rot for up to four days, as is now the practice? Does he not agree that the current practice is unacceptable in the context of the needs of public health and tourism?"

Councillor Edwards said that officers were aware of the problems associated with Trade Waste Collections from Leominster Market on Friday evenings and were endeavouring to secure the removal of the waste on Saturday, rather than Wednesday. There were considerable financial implications to having Saturday collections and negotiations are continuing with our Contractor. If it is not financially feasible to collect on Saturday, officers are trying to have the collection date brought forward to Monday.

Whilst it is agreed that the current arrangements are not ideal, the waste is of a similar nature to household waste and therefore, like other household waste, does not pose a Public Health Nuisance from being stored in proper Trade Waste bins (with close fitting lids) for several days.

Councillor Thomas said that the lids on the bins were not close fitting leading to waste spilling over. Councillor Edwards said he would ask officers to investigate the matter further and hoped for a rapid improvement.

Question asked by Councillor W.L.S. Bowen of Cabinet Member (Economic Development, Markets and Property)

"Has a lease been agreed for the use of the Bulmer building in Plough Lane? What are its terms? (including length of lease and repairing obligations)?"

Councillor Hyde said that the Council had taken a lease of the top floor and part of the ground floor at Plough Lane on 1st January, 2004. The lease was for a period of five years and was not "excluded" under the Landlord and Tenant Act; therefore the Council had a right to renew. The Council is in commercial negotiations with the owners. He advised that a confidential report had been despatched with the agenda for Cabinet to be held on 19th May, 2005. He said that no further lease had been agreed at this stage.

In response to a question about the use of the building as a civic centre Councillor Hyde said that there were no definite plans and any future use of the building would be subject to the owner's plans for the building.

Question asked by Councillor WLS Bowen of Cabinet Member responsible for Schools

"How many school meals does Herefordshire Jarvis provide and how many are provided by either schools' own kitchens or by other means? Will all providers of school meals be asked to use Fairtrade products where appropriate and source other supplies from local suppliers and, preferably, organic producers? What is the average cost of a school meal in Herefordshire? What nutritional standards are required?"

Councillor Rule replied that Herefordshire Jarvis provides approximately 2,700 meals or 30% of the total 9,000 free and paid meals served on a daily basis. This figure is an average based on a full year and will vary throughout the year. Fairtrade terms and conditions are already included in the tender specification for the school meals service which all contractors must comply with.

The average daily spend in a self service high school cafeteria is £1.75 however this will vary depending on the individual selection made by pupils from the choices available from the menu. The average cost of a meal transported into primary schools is £1.60 and for a meal cooked on site £1.50. This includes a dessert.

Compulsory nutritional standards for school lunches came into effect on 1st April, 2001. These healthy eating guidelines include reduced fat, sugar and salt, increased fibre, a wide range of salad, vegetables, fresh fruit and yoghurt available daily. DfES have proposed tough new minimum nutritional standards developed by a national expert panel will be rolled out to primary and secondary schools from September 2005 and becoming mandatory in September 2006. Additionally from September 2005, Ofsted will review the quality of school meals as part of regular school inspections and report to governors and parents.

The Council participates in the national "Healthy Schools" initiative, which encourages pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles including the importance of adequate physical exercise and how to eat and drink healthily. Initiatives include grow your own vegetables and "five a day" portions of fruit and vegetables. In June all schools will be invited to attend a training session on the new Food in Schools toolkit. The Council is also working with the Bulmers Foundation to source local sustainable food.

Question asked by Councillor Mrs M.D. Lloyd-Hayes

"Will the Cabinet Member for Property please inform me as to the current position regarding Herefordshire Council taking a further lease of accommodation at the former Bulmers site? When was the lease agreed, what are the terms i.e. length, rent and repairing obligations? From which company or individual has the lease been granted? Who has approved the taking of such a lease?"

The Chairman ruled that the answer to Councillor Bowen's question on the same subject would be a sufficient response, and invited Councillor Mrs. Lloyd-Hayes to ask a supplementary question.

Councillor Mrs. Lloyd Hayes asked why an item regarding Office Accommodation had been removed from the Forward Plan and asked if the Chairmen of the Scrutiny Committees could be informed if items were removed from the plan in the future.

The County Secretary and Solicitor explained that the Forward Plan is prepared on a four monthly rolling basis and is reviewed each month to inform the Cabinet's agenda. Items may need to be moved from the agreed due date given the early planning period. She would investigate if it was practical to notify Scrutiny Chairmen of any such changes.

Note: All Scrutiny Chairmen receive full Cabinet agenda and reports, which clearly state if the item was a key decision and whether it was included on the Forward Plan. If a key decision has not been included in the Forward Plan, the Chairman of the relevant Scrutiny Committee is normally sent a separate notification letter with the agenda.

11. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDERS

There were no notices of motion.

12. CABINET

The Leader of the Council, Councillor R.J. Phillips, presented the report of the meetings of Cabinet held on 17th and 24th March and 14th and 28th April, 2005.

In relation to Item 1.1, the Herefordshire Crime, Disorder and Drug Reduction Strategy – Councillor Phillips said that the Strategy was now ready and recommended its approval. In response to a comment about the lack of involvement of young people in the Council's decision making process and lack of accommodation for them to meet safely, Councillor Phillips advised that a Youth Council was being set up, and that although accommodation was an on-going problem, the Council was working with other partner organisations to try to resolve the issue.

In relation to Item 1.2, Review of the Constitution – In response to a query. Councillor J.C. Mayson, confirmed that, as Cabinet Member (Rural Regeneration and Strategy) he would have responsibility for Farmers' Markets throughout the County including Hereford City.

In relation to Item 2.1, Notices of Motion - Councillor Mrs. J.P. French, Cabinet Member (Human Resources and Corporate Support Services) moved the recommendation, which included an amendment to the original motion.

Councillors Bowen and Mrs. Lloyd Hayes thanked the Cabinet Member for her support.

In relation to Item 6 – Children's Services – although there was no item on the agenda specifically relating to denominational school transport, a number of Councillors had been lobbied on the matter, prior to the Council meeting. Councillor D.W. Rule, the Cabinet Member (Children's Services) agreed to consider extending the consultation period if, having considered all the facts, he considered it necessary.

In relation to Item 8.1(i) – Leominster Industrial Estate Access Road – In response to a query about empty premises on the Industrial Estate, the Leader said that the Council would be working with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) who were responsible for marketing the site. He acknowledged that it was important for the town and the County for the business park to be a success. Councillor A.C.R. Chappell, the Chairman of the Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee, stated that he intended to invite AWM to appear before the Committee to answer questions and that he would invite all Members to that meeting. Mention was made of Rotherwas Industrial Estate, which would benefit greatly from having a new access road.

In relation to Item 9.1(i) – Carbon Management Action Plan – The Chairman had previously ruled that Councillor Bowen 's written question relating to carbon management be taken at this point. The questions were:

"Is the Council making full and proper attempts and measure to become carbon neutral – both for the Council itself and also for the whole of Herefordshire?"

Can we be informed as to the energy efficiency of all heating and lighting systems within Council Property?

What efforts are we making to reduce fuel usage and increase energy efficiency in Council properties?"

Councillor Edwards, Cabinet Member (Environment) stated that the Council was making every effort to measure the carbon it produces and that the Council now has a Carbon Management Plan. The targets for carbon reduction are 12.5% by 2012 and 20% by 2020, and Herefordshire is one of the few Councils who have been proactive in this area.

All the electricity consumed by the Council comes from renewable sources, which has a significant and positive effect on reducing the Councils impact of the environment. He said that he did not have the level of detail to answer the question in full but whenever systems are replaced the best available technology is used. Staff are educated in the efficient use of energy and the Council manages its energy consumption and promotes energy efficiency. We do all that is reasonably possible to reduce energy consumption.

In inviting a supplementary question, the Chairman warned that very detailed questions required more time for officers to research the answers. In response to a question about the Council's energy costs, Councillor Edwards said he would have to research that information and invited Councillor Bowen, as Vice-Chairman of the Environment Scrutiny Committee to assist in the process.

In relation to Item 10.1(iv) – Widemarsh Street – Proposed Experimental Pedestrianisation Scheme – In response to a number of queries from the local Member regarding pedestrian safety, traffic flow and traffic orders, Councillor R.M. Wilson, Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation) advised that there were three phases to the closure of Widemarsh Street to traffic: The May Fair; the refurbishment of the High Street at Eign Gate and the experimental Pedestrianisation of Widemarsh Street. He acknowledged that there would always be difficulties with

interim measures. He assured the local Member that appropriate traffic orders would be in place and advised that new signs prohibiting parking in High Town were to be erected once they had been authorised by the Secretary of State. He confirmed that taxis would continue to have legal access via Bewell Street. In response to a question about bus stops he advised that it would be up to the bus companies to decide on both the bus routes and where bus stops should be relocated. He confirmed that there was no intention to carry out roadworks at the junction of West Street and Broad Street until a decision was made about whether to make the scheme permanent.

RESOLVED:

- That
- (a) the recommended Herefordshire Crime, Disorder and Drug Reduction Strategy be approved;
 - (b) Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report to Council, dealing with revisions to the Constitution, be approved;
 - (c) The County Secretary and Solicitor be authorised to make any necessary textual amendments to the Constitution, including changes arising from the national review of responsibility for the Youth Service;
 - (d) Council supports Fairtrade, and serves Fairtrade coffee and tea at its meetings and in offices and canteens;
 - (e) Council seeks to attract popular support for the campaign across Herefordshire to ensure that:
 - Fairtrade products are used by a number of local work places and community organisations; and
 - Fairtrade produce is readily available in local shops and serviced in local cafes and catering establishments.
 - (f) The local Fairtrade Steering Group be supported; and
 - (g) The Council's procurement Strategy and Code of Practice for the regulation of contracts for works, services and suppliers be revised to reflect the commitment to Fairtrade and that local Herefordshire producers and their products be used where they offer good value for money and their selection is in accordance with the Council's legal obligations.

13. APPOINTMENT TO OFFICES RESERVED TO COUNCIL, ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

A revised Appendix 1 to the report, containing proposed appointments to the posts listed, was circulated at the meeting.

In presenting the report, the Chief Executive reminded Members that in order to maintain the status quo in relation to seats held on the Strategic Monitoring Committee, Council would have to approve alternative arrangements to strict proportionality for appointments to Committees in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. This could only be carried if a resolution was passed without anyone voting against it. If there was any vote against it, it would be necessary to recast the proportionality across all bodies covered by the Regulation.

RESOLVED: (unanimously)

- That
- (a) the arrangements for appointments to Committees and other bodies be agreed;
 - (b) Councillors be appointed to the offices described in Appendix 1

- to these minutes, for a term of office which will expire at the next Annual Meeting of Council; and
- (c) **The Chief Executive be requested to exercise his delegated powers to make, following consultation with the political group leaders, any adjustment to the number and allocation of seats to give effect to the rules on proportionality and to make appointments, as necessary, in accordance with the nominations of the political group leaders.**

14. STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Mr Robert Rogers, presented the report of the meetings of the Standards Committee held on 4th February and 1st April, 2005. He thanked the County Secretary and Solicitor and staff for their assistance with the two hearings held under the Local Authority (Code of Conduct) (Local Determination) Regulations 2003.

The Chairman moved the Recommendation.

RESOLVED: That the report of the meetings of the Standards Committee held on 4th February and 1st April, 2005 be received and the recommendation approved.

15. REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Councillor R.I. Mathews presented the report of the meetings of the Regulatory Committee held on 15th February, 1st and 15th March, and 12th April, 2005.

RESOLVED: That the report of the meetings of the Regulatory Committee held on 15th February, 1st and 15th March, and 12th April be received.

16. STRATEGIC MONITORING COMMITTEE

Councillor T.M. James presented the report of the meetings of the Strategic Monitoring Committee held on 15th and 28th April, 2005.

RESOLVED: That the report of the meetings of the Strategic Monitoring Committee held on 15th and 28th April, 2005 be received.

17. PLANNING COMMITTEE

Councillor T.W. Hunt presented the report of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 22nd April, 2005.

RESOLVED: That the report of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 22nd April, 2005 be received.

18. WEST MERCIA POLICE AUTHORITY

Councillor B. Hunt presented the report of the West Mercia Police Authority meeting held on 15th February, 2005.

He reminded Members that the Police Authority was not responsible for operational matters and asked them to let him have any questions about operational matters in writing so that he could make the appropriate enquiries.

He agreed to follow up a number of queries and include them in his next newsletter.

RESOLVED: That the report of the meeting of the West Mercia Police Authority held on 15th February, 2005 be received.

19. HEREFORD & WORCESTER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Councillor G.W. Davis presented the report of the meetings of the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority held on 16th December, 2004 and 16th February, 2005.

In response to a query he agreed to find out if it was possible to include a contact number on the Fire Authority report.

RESOLVED: That the report of the meetings of the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority held on 16th December, 2004 and 16th February, 2005 be received.

20. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That the dates for Council meetings in 2005/06 be confirmed as follows:

Friday, 29th July, 2005

Friday, 4th November, 2005

Friday 10th February, 2006

Friday, 10th March, 2006 (To set the Council Tax)

Friday, 12th May, 2006 Annual Council (Shirehall)

All meetings to commence at 10.30 a.m. and be held in the Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford unless advised otherwise.

The meeting ended at 12.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

Cabinet Member (Children's Services)	D W Rule, MBE	Ind
Cabinet Member (Community Services)	RVS Stockton	Con
Cabinet Member (Corporate and Customer Services and Human Resources)	Mrs. JP French	Con
Cabinet Member (Economic Development)	GV Hyde	Ind
Cabinet Member (Environment)	PJ Edwards	Id
Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation)	DB Wilcox	Con
Cabinet Member (Resources)	RM Wilson	Ind
Cabinet Member (Rural Regeneration and Strategy)	JC Mayson	Ind
Cabinet Member (Social Care Adults and Health)	Mrs LO Barnett	Con
Chairman of Planning Committee	TW Hunt	Con
Vice-Chairman of Planning Committee	JB Williams	Ind
Chairman of Regulatory Committee	RI Matthews	Ind
Vice-Chairman of Regulatory Committee	Brig P Jones, CBE	Con
Chairman of Strategic Monitoring Committee	TM James	Lib Dem
Vice-Chairman of Strategic Monitoring Committee	Mrs P A Andrews	Lib Dem
Chairman of Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee	Mrs MD Lloyd-Hayes	Lib Dem
Vice-Chairman of Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee	Mrs PA Andrews	Lib Dem
Chairman of Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	BF Ashton	Lib Dem
Vice-Chairman of Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	JP Thomas	Lab
Chairman of Community Services Scrutiny Committee	ACR Chappell	Lab
Vice-Chairman of Community Services Scrutiny Committee	H Bramer	Con
Chairman of Environment Scrutiny Committee	JHR Goodwin	Con
Vice-Chairman of Environment Scrutiny Committee	WLS Bowen	Ind
Chairman of Health Scrutiny Committee	WJS Thomas	Lib Dem
Vice-Chairman of Health Scrutiny Committee	TM James	Lib Dem
Chairman of Central Area Planning Sub-Committee	DJ Fleet	Lib Dem
Vice-Chairman of Central Area Planning Sub-Committee	R Preece	Lab
Chairman of Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee	JW Hope, MBE	Con
Vice-Chairman of Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee	K Grumbley	Con
Chairman of Southern Area Planning Sub-Committee	Mrs RF Lincoln	Ind
Vice-Chairman of Southern Area Planning Sub-Committee	PG Turpin	Ind

REPORT OF THE MEETINGS OF CABINET

HELD ON 19TH MAY, 9TH AND 23RD JUNE AND 14TH JULY, 2005

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

This is the first report submitted to Council for the current year and covers proceedings of the meetings listed above.

1. DECISIONS RESERVED TO COUNCIL UNDER PART 4 OF THE CONSTITUTION

- 1.1 **Youth Justice Plan** – Cabinet has endorsed the Youth Justice Plan which, as part of the Policy Framework, requires approval by Council. The Plan is enclosed as a separate document and is available in the Members' Room, on the Council's website or on request. The Youth Justice Plan is prepared on an annual basis on behalf of Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council. The basic plan preparation is undertaken by the Youth Offending Team. The format is closely prescribed. Once completed, the Youth Justice Plan is submitted to the Youth Justice Board.

Cabinet recommends to Council that the Youth Justice Plan be approved.

- 1.2 **Herefordshire Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/07-2010/11** – The Council's second Local Transport Plan constitutes the Council's transportation policies and strategy for the five year period 2006/07 to 2010/11. It includes 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 better air quality. It follows on from the first LTP that covers the period 2000/01 – 2005/06. A Provisional Local Transport Plan must be submitted to Government by 29th July, 2005 and the Council will have the opportunity to make further revisions and submit a finalised Local Transport Plan by 31st March, 2006.

A Summary of the Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/07 to 2010/11 is enclosed as a separate document and a copy of the final 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.

When considering the report Cabinet proposed a number of amendments to the draft plan, including

- Additional text to highlight the need for an the extension of the Roman Road west and improvements to the eastern skew bridge;
- Additional text to further highlight the need for improvements to the Air Quality at the Bargates, Leominster
- Clarification of the importance of providing an outer distributor road

and the need for a second crossing over the River Wye at Hereford;

- Confirmation be included that the Council's Speed Limit Policy aims for village speed limits to be 30 mph.

Cabinet recommends to Council that the Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/07 to 2010/11, as amended, be approved for submission to Government, and that minor editorial changes to the draft be delegated to officers with any significant changes being subject to the approval of the Director following consultation with the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation).

- 1.3 **General Reserves, Provisions and Balances** – Cabinet has received a report on the Council's current level of Reserves together with a review of the Council's policy regarding the maintenance and application of such Reserves.

Cabinet has noted the level of the Council's reserves, provisions and balances and the purposes for which they are held, and endorsed the following policy.

Cabinet recommends to Council:

- That the current level of minimum prudent reserves be maintained at £3,000,000 and continues to be reviewed annually as part of the budget process. The level of balances will continue to be assessed and influenced by the formal risk management process, which includes the corporate and service risk logs and the nature of council expenditure.
- That general balances be maintained at a level between 1½% and 3% of net revenue budget.
- That, in line with current practice, general balances be utilised in support of one-off, non-recurring items of expenditure rather than for recurring expenditure.
- That, notwithstanding the above, reserves be only utilised in exceptional circumstances, to mitigate increases in Council Tax.
- the application of reserves, amounting to £175,000, to meet exceptional property related expenditure, primarily as a consequence of dilapidation works and other costs associated with rationalising the Council's office accommodation.
- the establishment of a new provision in 2004/05, amounting to £108,000, in respect of the likely repayment of European Social Fund Grant to the Learning and Skills Council in respect of project work for disaffected pupils.

2. NOTICES OF MOTION

- 2.1 No motions to Council were considered by Cabinet during the reporting period.

3. KEY DECISIONS BY INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS WHICH WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE FORWARD PLAN

- 3.1 **Phase 3 of the Friar Street Museum Resource and Learning Centre** – Following confirmation by the Heritage Lottery Fund of an award which would set aside up to £1,223,000 or 65.62% of the total development costs to Herefordshire Council, the Cabinet Member (Community Services) approved match funding of £640,000, spread over the next three financial years, to be allocated to this project to allow it to proceed. The award was subject to Herefordshire Council confirming its matchfunding position as soon as possible. The decision was not called in and took effect on 3rd June, 2005.

4. CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE (Chairman of Cabinet – Councillor R.J. Phillips)

4.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Social Care Budget** - Cabinet has received a report of the review into the overspend in the Social Care Budget which has risen, for the period April 2004 to the end of February 2005, to £1,514,000. Although the overspend was mainly in the area of Learning Disabilities, the review also looked at budgetary control processes in place across all service areas. The review showed that there was no one single factor that had resulted in the untimely reporting of the overspend, rather a combination of factors had been responsible.

Cabinet was concerned to know whether the budget was insufficient for the demands of the service or if it needed better management.

Whilst noting the imminent restructure of the Senior Management Team and reallocation of budgets between the Children's and Adult Social Care budgets, Cabinet has decided to carry forward the maximum amount of overspend permitted within financial regulations (£800,000). Cabinet has agreed to support the action proposed to manage the Social Care budget in 2005/06 and the implications this may have on service delivery, particularly for services for people with learning disabilities.

The budget will continue to be monitored on a monthly basis until the new Senior Management structure is in place, with remedial action being taken before then if the situation deteriorates; and the position for the write-off of the overspend will be reviewed in the context of the above.

- (ii) **Corporate Planning Process** - The Council has put in place a corporate planning process, linked directly to its performance management framework that enables it to be clear about its priorities and how they will be achieved, including the management of risk and the deployment of financial and other resources. Significant progress has been made in 2004-05, but to ensure

that it is fully effective, there is a need to build on the experience of the first round and tailor the 2005-06 round to current and foreseeable circumstances. Cabinet has agreed that the corporate planning process for 2005-06 should be along similar lines to that operated over the past year, subject to some modifications.

- (iii) **Local Area Agreements** - Local Area Agreements (LAAs) are a key element in the Government's long-term strategy for local government. The Government's clear intention is that every authority will conclude an LAA over the next few years. The first stage of the process is to register interest with the Government Office of the West Midlands. A letter of in-principle support has been secured from a number of partners. Cabinet has given consent for interest to be registered with Government Office West Midlands in obtaining a Local Area Agreement and the Council has been selected as one of the early pilot schemes.
- (iv) **Race Equality Scheme 2005-2008** - The Race Relations Amendment Act came into force in April 2001. The subsequent statutory Code of Practice, the Duty to promote Race Equality, was issued by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) to help public authorities meet the general and specific duties under the Act. One of the specific duties required public authorities to assess their policies and functions and publish a Race Equality Scheme and Action Plan (RES) by May 2002 and review it at least every three years. Cabinet has approved the Race Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2005-08; and arrangements for its delivery.
- (v) **Annual Efficiency Report 2004/05** – The Cabinet has approved the Council's Annual Efficiency Report for 2004/05, which needed to be submitted to the ODPM by 15th June, 2005. The forward-looking Annual Efficiency Statement approved in April concentrated largely on cash releasing savings in order to deliver the Corporate Plan. The backward-looking Annual Efficiency Statement has had to take a more balanced approach between cash savings and performance gains, predominantly because there was no formal corporate savings exercise carried out as part of the 2004/05 budget. The expectation at that time was for services to continue ensuring performance improvement but operating within cash limited budgets and to manage resources accordingly.
- (vi) **Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Submission of Self-Assessment** – The Council will be one of the first eight authorities to undergo a revised Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) during the autumn of 2005. The Corporate Performance score will arise out of the Corporate Assessment (CA) and the Joint Area Review (JAR). Whilst the CA focuses on the corporate capacity of the Council, the JAR is an inspection of Children's Services in Herefordshire, whether or not they are delivered by the Council. Additionally because there has been no Ofsted inspection of the Youth Service, this will receive particular attention and needs a separate self-assessment. Self-assessments are the initial requirement in preparation for the CPA. In the case of the JAR, the submission had to be made by 13th June. Cabinet has agreed the self-assessments relating to the JAR and Youth Services as the first stage of preparation for the CPA.

Cabinet has received a subsequent report on the Corporate Assessment which had to be submitted by 18th July. It has agreed the self assessment, noting the prescribed format and the detailed Key Lines of Enquiry. It has agreed that all sections of the Self Assessment should be awarded a score of 3 (out of 4) except for the section on Ambitions for the Community which it awarded a score of 4 following the outcome of the peer challenge. Cabinet has paid tribute to all staff involved in the process.

- (vii) **Homelessness Budget** - A report on this item is to be found at paragraph 13.1(ii) of this report.
- (viii) **Integrated Annual Outturn 2004/05** – Cabinet has considered the 2004/05 outturn information for Best Value Performance Indicators, the Capital Programme and Revenue Budget and received an update on strategic risks facing the Council. The integration of these key areas into a single report mirrors the structure and approach of the Corporate Plan adopted by Council in March 2005 and is central to achieving an effective performance management system. The report marks a significant change to the approach to corporate performance reporting, bringing together performance indicators, risk management and financial information into a single report to provide a coherent picture of the Council's performance. The report included annual information for 2004/05 for formal Cabinet approval. Progress on performance for 2005/06 will also be reported in an integrated format at 4, 6, 8, and 10 months.

Cabinet has approved the Best Value Performance Indicators for 2004/05 for publication, subject to any necessary detailed textual amendments, and has noted the key areas of variance of performance from agreed targets. It has also noted the final Revenue Outturn and approved the transfers to and from Reserves, together with the Capital Programme Outturn and the current position in relation to key corporate risks.

- (ix) **Statement of Internal Control** – Formal consideration and adoption of the Statement of Internal control by Cabinet is considered to be best practice. The Statement was also considered by the Statutory Accounts Committee as part of the review and approval of the Council's Statement of Accounts. The following elements of the Statement were drawn to Cabinet's attention:
 - The improvements made to and continuing development of, the Council's arrangements for effective risk management reporting;
 - Introduction of integrated performance reporting;
 - Continued development of the performance management framework;
 - Improved anti-fraud awareness activity; and
 - Continued timely closure of accounts.

A key feature of the process behind putting the Statement together is that senior managers will be required to sign assurances that all risks within their areas of responsibility have been considered.

Cabinet has approved the Statement of Internal Control for 2004/05, and noted that the Statutory Accounts Committee will recommend to Council the setting up of a new Audit Committee to replace the Statutory Accounts Committee.

- (x) **Procurement Strategy** – A report on this item is to be found at paragraph 11.1(i) of this report.
- (xi) **The Herefordshire Strategic Service Delivery Partnership Annual Report 2005** – Cabinet has received a confidential report on the performance of the Partnership which commenced on 1st September 2003 with the award of initial 10 year contracts to Herefordshire Jarvis Services Ltd (HJS) and Owen Williams Limited (OW). It has noted the progress made to date in implementing the Partnership arrangements and recognised that a number of inherent cultural and performance issues across the Partnership are still to be addressed. It supports the Partnership's long-term commitment to seeking solutions to these issues, through maximising its collaborative advantage and has requested a regular annual report upon the performance of the Partnership.
- (xii) **Herefordshire Jarvis Limited (HJS)** - Cabinet has received a confidential report on a proposal by the majority shareholder (a Jarvis plc group subsidiary) to transfer its shares to a new owner. The Council has been consulted on the proposal in accordance with the Shareholder Agreement.

4.2 **Report on Items of Interest**

- (i) **Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA)** – Cabinet has received a report detailing progress in developing the second Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA2) together with an update on performance against the targets agreed in the first round LPSA (LPSA1).

The projected Performance Reward Grant (PRG) level is 50% of the maximum available (approximately £1.6 million). Cabinet has noted that the PRG will be used to fund the Council's high priority objectives within LPSA2.

The Council stands to earn up to a maximum of £4.4 million for LPSA2, equating to £366,000 per target. The Council remains confident that a final sign off can soon be reached on LPSA2 despite the delays in reaching agreement on outcomes and performance measurement. The next report to Cabinet will contain recommendations and options for funding and on what the money will be used for.
- (ii) **Community Forums** – Cabinet has received a report on the June 2005 round of Community Forum Meetings. It has welcomed the report and noted the concerns and views of the public on the matters discussed but expressed concern at the poor attendance at some of the Forums.
- (iii) **Strategic Monitoring Committee** – Cabinet has received and noted the report of the Strategic Monitoring Committee which is the subject of separate report to Council.
- (iv) **Herefordshire Jarvis Services** – Cabinet has received a confidential report on the financial results of Herefordshire Jarvis Services (HJS) for the period to 31st March, 2005.

5. CHILDREN'S SERVICES
(Cabinet Member: Councillor D.W. Rule, MBE)

5.1 Report on Decisions Taken

(i) **Consultation on New School Funding Arrangements** - The Council has received a consultation paper from the DfES on new school funding arrangements. The proposals include three broad changes to the current school funding system to be introduced from April 2006: a change to the way central government provides funding for schools to local authorities; three year budgets for schools aligned to the academic year, to support effective long-term planning; and streamlining the current standards-related grants from DfES to schools. The consultation paper was sent to all schools. Cabinet has noted the technical response prepared by officers. It has agreed that a further letter based upon the Local Government Association leaflet "don't fence us in!", aimed at ensuring that ring-fencing does not undermine the choice and quality of local services for children, parents and the whole community, should be sent on behalf of the Council.

(ii) **Change for Children in Herefordshire** – Cabinet has received a progress report on the Change for Children agenda in Herefordshire. It has noted a number of actions and events including:

- a Children's and Young People's Partnership Board has been set up and is ready to set out on a programme of work to achieve a Children's and Young People's Plan for Herefordshire by April 2006;
- the first children's centre in Herefordshire has opened;
- extended Schools development continues;
- the Children's Safeguarding Board is being developed.

An assessment of performance on key indicators and a review of improvement plans are being undertaken as part of the self-assessment for the Joint Area Review.

Challenges still to be faced include the provision of six new Children's Centre between April 2006 and March 2008; the forthcoming Joint Area Review; and consultation/involvement of Children and Young People.

Cabinet has agreed the proposed neighbourhoods for South Wye, Golden Valley and Leominster, and preference for Golden Valley to reflect the rural agenda for Herefordshire; and asked for a further report on the strategy for Children's Centres and sustaining the extended school programme.

(iii) **Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Submission of Self-Assessment** - A report on this item is to be found at paragraph 4.1(vi) of this report.

(iv) **Amalgamation of Hunderton Junior and Infants Schools** – Cabinet has received a report on the outcome of the consultations on the statutory notice to close the existing Junior and Infant Hunderton Schools on 31st August 2006, and make other arrangements for Primary School provision from 1st September, 2006. It has decided that an amalgamated school in new buildings will improve significantly the quality of teaching and learning at this school and benefit considerably the area it serves. Cabinet has, therefore,

approved the closure of the two existing schools and agreed that a Three Form of Entry Primary School covering the 3-11 age range be opened on 1st September, 2006. It has also agreed that priority be given in the Children's Services (Education) Capital Budget to replace the existing buildings with new accommodation at a total cost of £6,004,500.

- (v) **Review of Denominational Transport** – Cabinet has received a report on the outcome of the consultations on the future of denominational transport, and advice on policy options.

There had been a six week county-wide consultation ending on 5 June 2005 and 776 responses had been received. The Cabinet Member thanked everyone who had contributed to the review and confirmed that Cabinet had listened to all the points made during the consultation period and carefully read the responses to the proposal.

These considerations included:

- The important historic role played by the church in providing schools in Herefordshire. This is a partnership which has been valued and will continue to be valued. There are 25 aided schools in the county and also 20 voluntary controlled schools and the Church of England Schools also have a catchment area.
- The investment the Council has made in those schools since 1998 and the sums raised by the governors of aided schools.
- The commitment to maintain the balance between places in aided schools and in voluntary controlled and community schools as embedded in the School Organisational Plan.
- The need to adopt a discretionary transport policy that was not discriminatory.
- The review was not instigated for financial reasons but this did not preclude financial matters being considered.
- Any change to the policy could only become effective from September 2006, as parents had already expressed their preferences for school places for September 2005 on the basis of information given to them in the autumn of 2004.
- The need to complete the review to inform parents in September 2005 to allow them to express preferences for the following year.
- The policy of other councils.
- Environmental implications and the need to encourage more use of public and group transport.
- The need to seek to achieve fairness in relation to secular families who did not want their children to attend Church schools.
- The need to seek to achieve fairness in relation to parents who

choose to send their children to non-catchment schools for reasons other than denominational belief.

- The legal position.

After carefully considering all the options Cabinet agreed that:

- the Council adopts a policy which provides transport for pupils occupying genuine denominational places on the basis that parents contribute;
- the new policy should be effective from September, 2006;
- pupils currently benefiting from free transport will retain that benefit for the duration of their attendance at their current school, i.e. if pupils currently benefiting from free transport then change their school for whatever reason, that entitlement is to cease;
- the Director of Children's Services be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Children's Services), to introduce a process to ensure fair and effective implementation of the new policy especially in relation to low income families; and
- the Cabinet Member (Children's Services) and the Director to report back to a future meeting of Cabinet to provide an update on progress.

The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee has called in the decision to consider the criteria for low income families. It met on 13th July, 2005 and discussed a number of concerns:

- the policy needs to be easily understood by parents;
- the policy needs to be easy to administer
- the use of existing eligibility criteria for State Benefits (ie the use of Council Tax and Housing Benefits and Free School Meals entitlements) as opposed to setting up a local system of entitlement assessment;
- the time factors for the introduction of the policy and the need to involve the voluntary aided schools to ensure a smooth transition;
- the proposed level of parental contribution (£100) and whether this should reflect the lower levels set by some other rural councils;
- the proposal to keep the parental contribution under the Vacant Seats Policy and the Denominational Policy in line; and
- the need for a 'sliding scale' of charges, depending on the family circumstances, and supported the suggested three banded system (full rate, free and 50%).
- It also proposed that further discussion be held with the Church Authorities over the implementation of the policy and that the policy should be reviewed after one year of operation.

Having considered the concerns of the Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet has endorsed its original decision and authorised the Director of Children's Services to introduce a policy on contributions for denominational transport as set out above and to take account of the needs of larger and/or low income families. This would entail:

Contributions would be required towards the cost of the first two children attending school from any one family at the same address, towards denominational transport with any subsequent children having a denominational place entitled to free transport;

Contributions being set at three levels reflecting the income level and family situation. The levels would be:

- (a) Full Rate – related to the payments made under the vacant seat policy;
- (b) Free transport for those entitled to free school meals, free prescriptions (on income related criteria) and full housing or Council Tax benefit;
- (c) A 50% contribution from those not entitled under (b), but who would be entitled to some Housing and/or Council Tax benefit. The level of this is to be the subject of further work between Children's Services and Resources and Benefits.

This advice will be incorporated into the Information to Parents handbook. The new policy will be introduced in September 2006 and reviewed in January 2007.

6. COMMUNITY SERVICES (Cabinet Member - Councillor R.V. Stockton)

6.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Destination Herefordshire** – Cabinet has considered a proposal to establish a Destination Management Partnership (DMP) for Herefordshire in line with the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy 2004.

The West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy has recommended that each destination in the West Midlands should be represented by a Destination Management Partnership, a private/public sector organisation to be a single body delivering tourism in the destination.

This is the first stage in the process with the private sector currently being consulted on the proposal to set up one autonomous body to deliver tourism in the County by April 2006. There is still work to be undertaken on the financial cost of operating the DMP and this work will be done during the preparation of the Action Plan. In particular, commitment and involvement of other directorates will need to be secured and any additional resourcing implications quantified.

Cabinet has supported, in principle, the establishment of a Destination Management Partnership for Herefordshire by April 2006. It has also agreed that the shadow partnerships (currently the Tourism Co-ordination Group) be requested to develop an operation Action Plan for the DMP by September 2005. This plan will include the requirements for: funding; staffing; the delivery mechanism; the membership and timetable for delivery. The funding for the DMP will be raised from the existing Council Tourism budget, membership from the private sector, sponsorship from companies and

funding from public sector bodies. The service areas responsible for planning; environment; trading standards; street cleansing; transport and licensing will be invited to participate in the development of the DMP and to be involved in the Partnership thereafter.

7. CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES (Cabinet Member - Councillor Mrs. J.P. French)

7.1 Report on Decisions Taken

(i) **Pay and Workforce Development Strategy 2005-08** – The Council has put in place a corporate planning process linked directly to its performance management framework that enables it to be clear about its priorities and how they will be achieved. An important element to achieving these priorities is the implementation of the Pay and Workforce Development Strategy, which sets out the Human Resources themes and actions to be addressed. The Strategy aims to ensure that the Council:

- has the right people in the right places, with the right skills, to deliver the agenda and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan – improved services with greater efficiency and better customer focus;
- is well-placed to respond to environmental and societal changes, and emerging technology;
- meets its statutory obligations as an employer, and where possible exceeds those to demonstrate best and leading edge practice as the largest local employer;
- becomes an employer of choice amongst those seeking employment and career opportunities.

The Strategy replaces the former Strategy for Developing and Improving Human Resources 2002/05 which set the human resources agenda for the past three years. 79% of planned actions were completed, with 10% no longer relevant and 11% to be carried forward as part of the new Strategy. Cabinet has approved the Council's Pay and Workforce Development Strategy 2005/08, together with the Operating Plan for 2005/06.

(ii) **Integrated Annual Outturn 2004/05** - A report on this item is to be found at paragraph 4.1(viii) of this report.

(iii) **Performance Management Framework** –The Council first adopted a Performance Management Framework in May 2003. Since then and following the appointment of a Head of Performance Management later that year there have been significant developments and improvements made to elements of the framework. These have been brought together into one document, the revised Performance Management Framework, which Cabinet has now approved.

- (iv) **Health and Safety Annual Report** – Cabinet has received a report on a series of actions the Council has put in place to improve the health, safety and well-being of its workforce. These actions have been effective in identifying sickness absence issues to be addressed and reducing the employee turnover.
- (v) **Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Return** – The IEG Return is an essential part of the national monitoring process for assessing electronic local service delivery capability against central government's 2005 target and supports the delivery of priority outcomes for local e-government. It is an important feedback mechanism for assessing progress towards realising the benefits from the investment in e-government and the use of IEG funding in individual local authorities. The Council is on target for a 95% completion rate by March 2006. The Cabinet Member emphasised that the onus is on all staff in all directorates across the Council to assist in the process of IEG Delivery. Cabinet has noted that efficiency savings of £500,000 are expected in the coming year. In approving the Implementing Electronic Government Return 2005 Mid Term (IEG4.5) Cabinet has complimented the staff involved for their work and for their use of plain English throughout the document.
- (vi) **Joint Team with the Pension Service** – A report on this item is to be found at paragraph 13.1(v) of this report.
- (vii) **Members' ICT Policy** – the Cabinet Member has received a report setting out a draft ICT Policy to support members in their Work. This has been designed to complement the Protocol on the Use of Resources being recommended by the Standards Committee elsewhere on this Agenda. A copy of the Policy has been sent as a separate document. All Members have been consulted on the Policy and given an opportunity to raise any concerns.

8. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Cabinet Member and Deputy Leader - Councillor G.V. Hyde)

8.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Property Strategy** - A Property Strategy has been drawn up which has identified the need for a review of the Council's property and land assets.

Cabinet has received a confidential report on the matter and has agreed that the Property Strategy be adopted for the future management of the Council's property and that Property Working Groups be established.
- (ii) **Office Accommodation** – Cabinet has received and agreed a confidential report setting out the business case for an Office Accommodation Strategy to address the operational and business issues of dispersed office accommodation.

The decision was called in by the Strategic Monitoring Committee because of concerns about the business case; amount of detail; need for independently costed (alternative) proposals; and traffic implications. The Committee met on 9th and 15th June, 2005 to consider the matter further.

After due consideration of the issues the Committee requested that Cabinet did not commit itself to the development of the preferred site as a permanent solution to the Council's office accommodation needs without further consideration; that it satisfied itself that the comparison between the options was valid from a strategic as well as a financial aspect; and that it continues to examine alternative options.

Having carefully considered these points, Cabinet has re-confirmed its original decision and agreed the recommendations of the Strategic Monitoring Committee and will proceed with that support.

9. ENVIRONMENT (Cabinet Member: Councillor P.J. Edwards)

9.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Environment Strategy and Revised Environmental Policy** – Cabinet has approved the Corporate Environment Strategy which provides partners and managers across the Council with an overview of major environmental commitments that have been made by the Council. These are linked through the agreed ambitions of the Herefordshire Plan and the Corporate Plan 2005/06 which states that one of the Council's top priorities is "to protect the environment, including recycling much more waste and significantly reducing carbon emissions". The Strategy is backed by an integrated action plan that aligns the aims and objectives described in the Strategy with the time targets adopted for each action.

Cabinet has also approved a revision of the Council's Environmental Policy to take account of:

- The certification to ISO 14001 of numerous Council services and functions since the policy was passed in 2002;
 - 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.
- (ii) **Grafton Travellers' Site** – Cabinet has considered a report setting out options for the future of the Grafton Travellers' Site in Hereford.

The Council's current Travellers' Policy is to refurbish or replace sites through exploring the sale of land to facilitate the refurbishment or redevelopment of Travellers' sites in Herefordshire. The Grafton site was identified as a site that could possibly be disposed of, allowing the Capital receipt to be used to provide a new site. At the time the Policy was drawn up no grants for site refurbishment were available and the entire refurbishment would have needed to be undertaken using the Council's own resources. The Grafton site has been closed since 2001 following a series of serious vandalism incidents.

In 2003/04 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) made grants for refurbishment available. Despite searching for replacement sites for Grafton it became clear that finding a suitable replacement site would be difficult, therefore a grant application for refurbishing the Grafton Site was made as an alternative option. Although the grant application was initially unsuccessful the ODPM eventually announced in December 2004 that Herefordshire had been successful in its bid for a grant, which amounted to 75% of the £400,000 necessary to refurbish the Grafton Site. Capital support will be needed to meet the Council's contribution.

The Council currently has three other grant applications outstanding with the ODPM: for two new Transit sites and to refurbish and improve the existing Watery Lane Travellers' site.

After careful consideration of alternative sites Cabinet has agreed that the ODPM grant be used for its original intention and that the Travellers Site at Grafton be reduced from 20 pitches to 10 pitches, refurbished, and the remainder of the site sold.

10. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION **Cabinet Member - Councillor D.B. Wilcox)**

10.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Herefordshire Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/07-2010/11** - A report on this item is to be found at paragraph 1.2 of this report.
- (ii) **Dishley Street Car Park, Leominster** – Cabinet has considered a confidential report and authorised the Director of Environment, in consultation with the County Secretary and Solicitor, to dispose of an area of Dishley Street Car Park, Leominster for the construction of a new dentistry practice scheme, subject to the agreement of acceptable lease terms and conditions and the provision of additional replacement public car parking spaces at Etnam Street.

11. RESOURCES **(Cabinet Member - Councillor R.M. Wilson)**

11.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Procurement Strategy** – It is a requirement of the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government that Councils adopt a procurement strategy. This Council is unusual in having outsourced a significant amount of its activities, or in other ways developed strong working partnerships, and in part-owning West Mercia Supplies, a purchasing organisation. The Council's significant procurement activity takes place by either of these means. The Council's revised Procurement Strategy, which the Cabinet has now approved, will continue with this pragmatic and successful approach.

**12. RURAL REGENERATION AND STRATEGY
(Cabinet Member - Councillor J.C. Mayson)**

12.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) There were no decisions by Cabinet relating to this programme area during the reporting period.

**13. SOCIAL CARE ADULTS AND HEALTH
(Cabinet Member Councillor Mrs. L.O. Barnett)**

13.1 Report on Decisions Taken

- (i) **Social Care Budget** - A report on this item is to be found at paragraph 4.1(i) of this report.
- (ii) **Homelessness Budget** - Cabinet has received a report on the budget provision for homelessness, which shows the budget is under extreme pressure in terms of meeting statutory provision and will overspend unless additional resources are allocated. This is due to the increasing numbers of people requiring support and the costs associated with the use of temporary accommodation.

Cabinet has agreed that funds can be vired to the homelessness budget 2005/06 from other budgets within the Council which are not scheduled to spend as initially planned when the budgets were set.

The position will be kept under review and reported within existing performance reporting arrangements and revisited as part of the budget process for 2006/07. In the unlikely event that underspendings occur, then these would be returned to corporate funds.

- (iii) **Home Improvement Agency Service** – Cabinet has received a confidential report confirming that the current service provider, Anchor Staying Put, has given notice of withdrawal of the service from September 2005. The existing service has been reviewed, and a detailed option appraisal and re-specification of the service to meet current and future needs in Herefordshire, undertaken. As a result of this review Cabinet has agreed that the Home Improvement Service be operated as an in-house service.
- (iv) **Homelessness and Housing Advice** – Cabinet has received a confidential report confirming the decision by Herefordshire Housing Ltd to withdraw from the Housing Agency Agreement in respect of Homelessness and Housing Advice Agency Services. Having reviewed all options Cabinet has agreed that the Homelessness and Housing Advice Agency Services be operated as an in-house service. It has also recommended that Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee consider a review of the current state of homelessness within the County.

- (v) **Joint Team with the Pension Service** – Cabinet has approved the setting up of a Joint Team, an integrated partnership between the Department of Work and Pensions and the Council, potentially incorporating the Welfare Rights, Housing Benefit and Fairer Charging Teams. The Joint Team will support the local community to access benefits and entitlements including Pension Credits, carry out assessments on an individual's ability to contribute to the cost of social care and provide information and advice to meet the needs of older people and their carers.

- (vi) **Green Paper on Adult Social Care: "Independence, Well-being and Choice"** – The Green Paper is the Government's consultation paper setting out its proposals for the future direction of social care for all adults of all age groups in England. It is, itself, the outcome of consultation of a range of stakeholders inside and outside Government, including service users. The Government's new vision for adult social care is based on the principle that everyone in society has a positive contribution to make and that they should have a right to control their own lives. Cabinet has approved a response welcoming and supporting the vision. It has also identified issues for greater emphasis and others for further exploration and development. It was particularly concerned that the initiative is properly resourced.

- (vii) **Homelessness Improvement Plan** – Cabinet has considered a confidential report and approved a Homelessness Improvement Plan which sets out a range of objectives and actions for the purpose of tackling the current homelessness problem in Herefordshire. It has also approved the provision of Invest to Save resources of £100,000 to tackle homelessness and agreed that the Bed and Breakfast budget be used for preventative activities where investment will save money and avoid the use of bed and breakfast accommodation.

**COUNCILLOR R.J. PHILLIPS
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**



Youth Justice Plan 2005 – 2006

Draft for review/consultation 1.07.05 v8

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A. SUMMARY

2004/5 has been a year of fundamental review and change for Worcestershire & Herefordshire Youth Offending Service. The last twelve months have consisted of three distinct phases: a review phase, a preparation and development phase and an implementation/ improvement phase. The YOS, with the support of the Chief Officers Steering Group, has undertaken a comprehensive review of the way Youth Justice Services are delivered that has led to the development of a new operational model of service delivery within a re-configured organisation. Full implementation of a new risk led approach within the restructured YOS will occur from the 4th July 2005. The goal of both the restructuring and revised delivery model is to enable more focussed and effective delivery of high quality targeted interventions to young people who offend. This has required a significant commitment from managers and staff of the Service who have participated fully in the development of the new model and structure.

The YOS was subject to a multi-agency YOS Inspection during early 2005. In preparation for this process, the Service undertook a self assessment against the Inspection Standards and implemented a development plan to address areas identified. The formal YOS Inspection took place in January and February 2005 and resulted in a 'satisfactory' assessment being made against each of the 5 Inspection areas. The YOS was awarded an overall 'good basis for further development' rating at the end of the inspection process, with a clear indication that a small amount of additional progress would take us to a "good" assessment. The report accurately reflects the achievements of the YOS to date and sets out a clear pathway to implement the improvement actions identified within the report. An action plan is being developed in response to the YOS inspection report which will be implemented over the next 12 months.

In addition to the re-structuring and introduction of the risk led approach, several other service areas have been reviewed including: (i) A 'Sustaining the Success' review – this was undertaken by the Chief Officers Steering Group and identified a range of actions to be taken to ensure the ongoing successful delivery of Youth Justice Services; (ii) An audit of National Standards compliance - this identified a range of improvements that need to be implemented including covering both operational processes and recording issues; (iii) An ISSP quality assurance review – this assessed the West Mercia ISSP scheme as 'good' scoring 20/33; and (iv) the 'Race Audit & Action Plan' - this is included within this plan and sets out a range of actions to ensure improved outcomes for Black and Minority Ethnic young people within the Youth Justice System.

Improvements to the quality of service delivery have been achieved in 2004/5. The final review of the Effective Practice Quality Assurance process in April 2005 showed progress in all four service areas for which their were improvement plans (Final Warnings, Assessment/Planning/Intervention/Supervision, Education [APIS], Training & Employment [ETE] and Parenting) despite the overall improvement target score not being met for two of the areas (draft and subject to external verification). In APIS, target scores were met or exceeded in 12 of the 16 KEEPs, in Final Warning's 14 of the 16 KEEPs, in ETE in 14 of the 16 KEEPs and in Parenting for 10 of the 16 KEEPs. Changes to the YJB scoring criteria towards the end of the process have been a barrier to overall improvement.

The YOS progress in relation to performance measures has been effected by changes in key personnel within this period with a new performance management team (Deputy Head of Service and Information & Performance Manager) coming into post. However, the high levels of performance have been maintained across a range of key performance measures. This can be summarised as follows:

Hitting or Exceeding the YJB Target

- Intervene Early; Effective and Rigorous Assessment Practice; Swift Administration of Justice; Support access to Mental Health Services

Close to achieving the YJB Target

- Preventing Offending; Preventing Re-Offending (see below); Reduce the use of Custody; Support access to Substance Misuse Services; Support access to Appropriate Accommodation; Support Parenting Interventions;

Significant progress required to achieve the YJB Target

- Support Young People engage in Education, Training and Employment; Provide effective Restorative Justice Services

For those areas where improvement is required, the Chief Officers Steering Group is confident that effective processes are in place to make progress on these issues at both a strategic and operational level.

In terms of assessing the effectiveness of the YOS, the most important performance measure relates to the reduction of re-offending rates. An analysis of the 2002 YOS cohort (that is those receiving a substantial outcome between October and December 2002) compared with the 2001 cohort over a two year follow up period shows that re-offending levels have dropped by 4%. This is close to the YJB target of a 5% reduction. A more detailed breakdown shows that offending levels have:

- Reduced by 13% for the pre court population
- Increased by 6% for the First Tier population
- Not changed for the Community Penalty population
- Shown a very slight reduction for the Custodial population

The reduction achieved in the pre-court population, which significantly exceeds the YJB target, is encouraging and reinforces the importance of the ongoing development of the YOS prevention agenda. The YOS will do more to target those members of the first tier population that it works with (referral orders) and those subject to community penalties and custody. The introduction of the risk led approach should lead to more targeted and effective interventions with high risk young people receiving intensive contact from the Service. It is an ongoing frustration of recidivism analysis that the impact of new initiatives on re-offending can not be demonstrated until after the two year follow up period, particularly as developments in youth offending services have been so rapid in the last three years. Further comparisons of re-offending levels in Worcestershire and Herefordshire with those across the West Midlands area and within its 'family' of Youth Offending Services shows variable performance and reinforces the need to have a service delivery model that delivers high quality youth offending services within a risk led approach that targets those young people at highest risk of offending.

It remains a priority action in the Management Board work programme to consider the aggregate use of ASSET data to establish service need. Findings from analysis of completed YOS assessments continue to identify young people's thinking and behaviour, attitudes to offending, ETE, substance misuse and mental health difficulties as key factors in increasing the risk of further offending. The YOS are attempting to move beyond this basic analysis of information to provide the Management Board with more specific data to facilitate more focussed planning in these areas. For example, for young people scoring two or more on ASSET (indicating a significant link with offending) with regard to Education, Training and Employment provision, the following issues were apparent:

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS – identified in 95% of cases; EXCLUSION 65%; TRUANCY 64%; NEGATIVE PARENTAL/CARER ATTITUDES 64%; BULLYING 60%

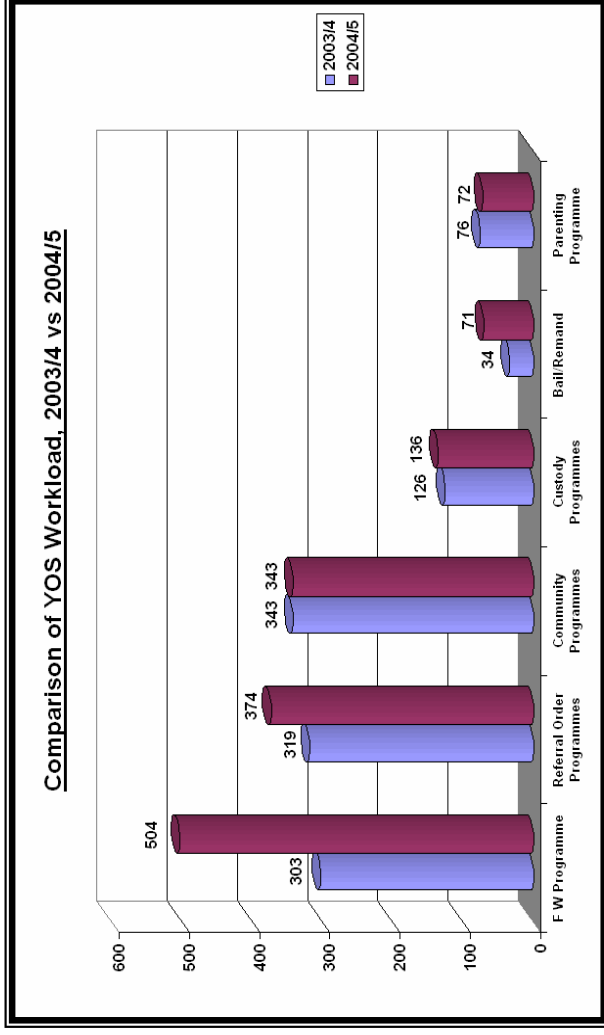
This evidence reveals some recurring themes which should provide a focus for ongoing strategic and operational planning across the partnership. The Management Board will be provided

with ongoing ASSET commentaries relating to specific delivery areas in 2005/6 with priority being given to those areas where YOS performance is lowest.

The above progress should be viewed in the context of a substantial increase in YOS workload in 2004/5 compared to 2003/4. Overall, there was a 28% increase in the number of start interventions. Of particular significance was:

- a 66% increase in the number of final warning interventions commenced
- a 15% increase in the number of referral order interventions
- an 8% increase in the number of custodial interventions
- a 109% increase in Bail/Remand interventions (this is partly due to improved capture and recording of this work which, during this reporting period, was contracted out to YSS)

There was no significant change in the number of community penalties or parenting interventions. In addition to the workload changes identified above, Worcestershire YISP also commenced over 100 hundred interventions in 2004/5. The YOS is currently applying a 'YOS workload formula' to compare current levels of workload and resourcing of the Service. The outcome of this exercise will be feedback to the Chief Officers Steering Group early in 2005/6.



It is evident that 2005/06 will be a period of implementation and improvement for the YOS with an emphasis on the following objectives:

- *Implementation of the YOS Inspection Action Plan.*
- *Full implementation of the YOS restructuring and risk led approach.*
- *Action to address the low levels of young people (aged 16 plus) accessing appropriate full time training and employment opportunities.*
- *Implementation across the YOS of revised intervention programmes.*
- *the development of stronger links with key partner agencies at operational levels in the support of YOS interventions.*
- *Improvements in levels of restorative justice and victim work undertaken within the YOS.*

Assessment of the Chair of the Steering Group

The Chief Officers' Steering Group recognises the important role undertaken by the Youth Offending Service in working to prevent offending, re-offending and anti-social behaviour by children and young people within Worcestershire & Herefordshire. This is demonstrated by the high level of personal and organisational commitment at a strategic level and the significant level of resource commitment provided to the YOS. We recognise that the Chief Officers Steering Group has a critical role to play in addressing the strategic and partnership issues impacting on the success of the YOS as identified within the YOS inspection report, particular in ensuring appropriate access to mainstream service provision. We acknowledge the effective contribution that the YOS has made to other strategic partnerships within Worcestershire & Herefordshire and note the importance of this continuing. In particular we recognise the importance of continuing to build a relationship between the YOS and the developing Children's Services to ensure that the issues affecting children and young people are addressed in an integrated manner.

We are pleased that the YOS Inspection report reflected the excellent work undertaken at all levels within the service as well as accurately identifying the areas where further improvement is required. We are confident that the Youth Offending Service, with the support and engagement of all members of the Steering Group and the wider involvement of other partner agencies, will continue to make progress during 2005/06.

B. LOCAL PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

The YOS is currently located within the Worcestershire County Council Chief Executive's Department with the Head of Service reporting to the Head of the Chief Executives Unit (director level). It is anticipated that this arrangement will change as a result of the restructuring of Worcestershire County Council resulting in the YOS being located within the Children's Services Directorate and the YOS Head of Service reporting to the Director of Children's Services.

Worcestershire & Herefordshire YOS is involved in a complex range of partnerships due to the fact that it covers 2 Local Authority Areas, 7 Community Safety/Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships, 2 DAAT's and links with the West Mercia (Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin) Criminal Justice Agencies. This challenging context was noted in the YOS Inspection Report which highlighted the 'onerous amount of meetings that the YOS manager and deputy had to attend'. It went on to state that 'we were impressed by the importance the YOS manager placed on representing the YOS at a senior level on a wide range of partnerships over both counties...the YOS manager played a strategic role in partnerships'. At an operational level the Inspection report noted that 'appropriate protocols existed that were reviewed on a rolling basis'.

The YOS is well placed within relevant Criminal Justice strategic groups with the Head of the Service sitting on the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB). In addition he is responsible for the LCJB 'Breaking the Cycle' subgroup which has a performance management role for Anti Social Behaviour, Prolific and Other Priority Offenders (POPOs) strategy, Enforcement and Fines across West Mercia. The YOS has taken the lead on the development of the Prevent & Deter aspect of the POPOs strategy and has used this as a vehicle for enhancing existing relationships with local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. At a regional level this has been seen as a model of good practice by Government Office West Midlands. The YOS is also represented at the West Mercia Anti Social Behaviour forum and is seeking to work with this forum, at a strategic level, to develop an effective performance management framework. At a local level, the YOS Area Teams are linked effectively with partners associated with Anti Social Behaviour work.

MAPPA arrangements are an important aspect of YOS work and consequently the YOS is involved at a West Mercia level with the MAPPA Strategic Management Board. West Mercia Probation is currently subject to an 'Effective Supervision' Inspection which will look at the effectiveness of these MAPPA arrangements. The YOS is also linked in to a range of criminal justice agencies/ partnerships including Youth and Crown courts and LCJB sub groups (performance, race etc).

From a Children's Services perspective the YOS is actively involved in Children's Strategic Partnerships within both counties and is leading on early intervention & prevention and Common Assessment Framework (CAF) themes within Worcestershire as well as being actively involved within Herefordshire. As a member of the Area Child Protection Committee in both counties, the YOS has been involved in the development and direction of Safeguarding arrangements and sits on shadow Local Safeguarding Children's Boards. At a strategic and operational level the YOS links in with key agencies across the area, for example YOS/ Children's services strategy groups, Connexions Local Management Committee's & Connexions Board, Substance Misuse commissioning groups, operational groups and strategic groups (SMAT/ Community Safety and Drugs Partnership) etc. In addition, the YOS is leading work on looking at bringing together and coordinating services such as 'Mentoring within Worcestershire'.

The YOS has restructured to allow the full range of youth justice services to be provided at a local level and ensure that there are strong links with developments within Children's Services/ Children's Trusts. Through having a strategic overview across Worcestershire & Herefordshire, and to a considerable degree, across West Mercia, the YOS is also able to maintain a strong integration with the Criminal Justice agenda. This balance allows the YOS to help facilitate the integration and coordination of aspects of the Criminal Justice agenda (e.g. POPO/ Prevent & Deter) with the Children's Service agenda (CAF/ Early Intervention & Prevention).

The prominent and active role that the YOS undertakes within the range of strategic and operational partnerships ensures that mechanisms exist to address issues arising from complimentary and competing targets. Whilst the majority of partner targets directly support the work of the YOS, certain targets and initiatives are potentially competing (e.g. Narrowing the Justice Gap). At an operational level, the Youth Justice Forum, which comprises of senior managers/ staff from a variety of agencies with an involvement in youth justice related issues, provides an effective mechanism to address operational and thematic issues. The YOS Chief Officers Steering Group (COSG) is also important in supporting and facilitating this process and, where issues are not resolved within partnership settings, the COSG is the vehicle by which this can be achieved. The YOS inspection report comments that the COSG is 'composed of appropriate representation at a senior level from both counties...the group commented that they were able to hold honest and challenging discussions with each other'.

Priority actions that will be undertaken in relation to the above issues are as follows:

- Continuation the high level of representation from YOS Head of Service at strategic groups (Criminal Justice and Children's Services).
- Further of the relationship with Shropshire Telford & Wrekin YOS to ensure that a common approach is taken with West Mercia Criminal Justice Agencies.
- Continued engagement with developing Children's Services arrangements for both counties.
- Reviewing the composition of the YOS Chief Officers Steering Group to consider widening representation to include Connexions/ LSC.
- Reviewing the preventative work of the YOS within Worcestershire (YISP) to ensure that it is congruent with developing early intervention & prevention approaches.

C.1 GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The YOS Chief Officers Steering Group (COSSG) is made up of senior representation from most appropriate statutory services and includes equivalent representation from both Worcestershire and Herefordshire. Consideration will be given in 2005/6 to inviting the Chief Officer of Connexions to join this group and to strengthening strategic linkages with the LSC. The COSSG has been joint-chaired since the inception of the YOS by the Chief Executive Officers of the two authorities who work well together both on the Board and within their respective authorities. This enables the Board to provide a clear framework for the YOS which is integrated with the local authority performance management framework. The majority of members have been on the group for several years, attending regularly and meeting with each other in additional forums. All members are white, an issue throughout the YOS at all levels. The COSSG link regularly with the Worcestershire and Herefordshire Youth Justice Forum, which has a broader representation, including courts and voluntary agencies. Forum meetings are held quarterly and chaired by a member of the COSSG. Despite this link, further work will be undertaken in 2005/6 to ensure there is clarity regarding the respective roles of the two groups.

COSSG meetings are held three times a year with the venue and chair alternating between counties. The Group also hold an annual planning day to agree strategic priorities for the coming year. As Worcestershire is the larger authority, it typically takes the lead where dual issues are to be decided to avoid duplication and wasted resources.

The COSSG play an important role in overseeing the implementation of the annual Youth Justice Plan and define their role as offering strategic oversight and direction to the YOS Head of Service. The Group balance national priorities with local need and where required develop strategic solutions to local problems. It places strong emphasis on performance management receiving regular performance updates from the YOS Head of Service. The COSSG attempt to provide solutions to service areas where improvements in performance are required and are responsible for developing partnership work at a strategic level to facilitate forward movement in the operational delivery of youth offending services.

The recent YOS joint inspection highlighted the following strengths and areas of improvement of the current leadership and governance arrangements:

Strengths:

- The Management Board comprised of appropriate representation at a senior level from both counties
- Meetings, and the chair, alternate between both counties
- The Board give a clear strategic lead to the YOS and focus on performance management

Areas for improvement:

- The respective roles of the Management Board and the Youth Justice Forum required further clarification
- Communication between the Board and operational staff required attention

Whilst continuing to build on its strengths, the Management Board will identify a 2005/6 work programme that addresses these areas of development and other strategic priorities for the coming year.

TABLE A: COMPOSITION OF MANAGEMENT BOARD

Name	Agency representing	Post in agency	Ethnicity	Gender
Chair: Rob Sykes (Alternating)	Worcestershire County Council	Chief Executive	White	Male
Chair: Neil Pringle (Alternating)	Herefordshire Council	Chief Executive	White	Male
Diane Tilley	Chief Executive's Unit Worcestershire	Head of Chief Executive's Unit	White	Female
Ann Binney	Social Services Worcestershire	Head of Children's Services (SSD)	White	Female
Sue Fiennes	Children's Services Herefordshire	Director of Children's Services	White	Female
Ruth Chiva	Education Worcestershire	Head of Services to Schools	White	Female
Yvonne Clowsley	Herefordshire PCT	Head of Planning & Modernisation Support	White	Female
Erica Smiter	3 PCT's Worcestershire	Head of Mental Health & Substance Misuse Commissioning, Worcestershire	White	Female
John Molloy	West Mercia Constabulary	Det. Supt. (Strategic Partnerships)	Mixed	Male
Helen Allen	Probation Service, West Mercia Area	Assistant Chief Officer	Asian	Female
Andrew McConnochie	Worcs. & Herefds. YOS	Head of YOS	White	Male

C.2 PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS

The COSG have overall responsibility for performance management and receive written reports identifying progress against the 14 KPIs from the YOS Head of Service. Particular attention is paid to areas where improvements in performance are required and the COSG work together to attempt to address barriers to progress at a strategic level.

Within the YOS, the Head and Deputy Head of Service routinely review performance against the 14 KPIs and these are discussed following the publication of YJB quarterly returns at the YOS Management meeting. Areas of performance that are amber or red within the traffic light system are monitored more frequently and decisions on changes to YOS practice and improvements to monitoring are made at this meeting. Increased focus on performance should be reinforced in 2005/6 with a named operational manager taking a lead responsibility on each of the fifteen delivery areas defined in this plan. For areas of service delivery that require significant development (e.g. ETE, RJ Services) or those that might be most effected by the re-organisation of the Service (e.g. ISSP, Final Warning delivery), the YOS are scheduling formal quarterly reviews in 2005/6 when lead managers and appropriate practitioners will meet to review progress against the 2005/6 Delivery Action Plan.

The Information and Performance Manager, who is part of the YOS Management Team, is responsible for the overall quality of data held by the Service. She pro-actively co-ordinates a range of quality assurance and data checking procedures aimed at producing reliable and valid information. The most important of these are:

- Monthly data cleaning by administrators using both YOIS and internally devised information system wizards
- Dip-sampling of intervention and Asset information which is passed to the appropriate manager to feedback in supervision
- Completion of Quality Assurance checklists by the case manager at the end of every intervention. These are passed to the Area Team Manager for checking and are passed back to the worker if information is missing, and signed off by the Manager once completed.
- Additional dip sampling whenever a new process is introduced e.g. the revised victim recording process.
- Early generation of the quarterly return tables immediately following the end of the quarter. This is used to identify areas where full recording has not taken place and needs to be followed up (e.g. chasing missing ETE or accommodation suitability data).
- Feedback of performance against the KPIs to operational managers at operational managers meetings.
- Circulation of KPI quarterly reports to all staff containing area breakdowns. This is to encourage understanding and ownership of performance across all staff levels within the YOS.
- Regular identification of staff training needs regarding evidencing and recording. A single sheet guidance on recording on YOIS and wizard operation is being produced. In addition YOIS PLUS training has been purchased and will be undertaken following implementation of the upgraded system in July.

All of these systems are geared towards ensuring individual staff members have the knowledge, confidence, experience and skills to perform their roles competently within defined national standards and ensure that this is well evidenced and recorded whether electronically or manually. Staff are responsible for checking the quality of their own work (via recording checklists), each others work (via gate keeping processes) and will also have the results of the routine monitoring feedback to them via their line manager or from the Information and Performance Manager. As part of the new supervision policy, staff are accountable for specific areas of work and progress is recorded in appraisal and goals set in future plans. Results from the recent National Standards Audit show that there are still a number of areas where both practice and recording need to be improved. This is exacerbated by regular changes and additions to YJB counting rules and the associated changes and developments in software that accompany this.

Improvements in the quality of work in specific areas of service delivery are underpinned by the implementation of the YJB Effective Practice Quality Assurance (EPQA) Processes. The detail of these are commented on in individual sections of this plan but the framework is increasingly recognised by managers and staff as an integral element of the Service and has led to demonstrated improvements in the quality of assessment and intervention planning, final warning delivery, the provision of education, employment and training services and the delivery of parenting interventions.

In 2005/6 the YOS will consolidate the progress already made in these areas and implement outstanding actions from the EPQA Action Plans to continue to improve practice. In addition the YOS will carry out initial EPQA audits associated with the delivery areas of resettlement in the community and substance misuse (not remand management?).

The recent inspection has identified a number of areas of performance that the YOS needs to monitor and improve in 2005/6. These are: variable practice in the identification and management of risk of harm, inconsistent referral processes to some specialists (e.g. health), insufficient content in some supervision plans, inconsistent enforcement and insufficiently developed systems for monitoring outcomes. The implementation of the risk led approach brings with it an increased focus on the quality of service delivery particularly in the areas of assessment practice and intervention planning. Report gatekeeping procedures have been modified and extended to include gate keeping of assessments and the introduction of the Case Planning Forum for high risk cases has several associated quality assurance checks (e.g. checks on the accuracy of the YOS Risk Register, completion of all assessment documentation, completion of risk management plans and checks that appropriate referrals have been made). In addition to this, the YOS will consider the feasibility of introducing a comprehensive evaluation strategy in 2005/6 that will focus on outcomes for young people and partners and ascertain stakeholder and user views of the Service.

In 2005/6 the Information and Performance Manager will produce a 'Performance Improvement Plan' to ensure improvements in quality and performance management move forward in a coordinated way.

C.3.1 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Worcestershire and Herefordshire use a locally agreed funding formula that determines the percentage contributions from each agency. The following tables (26,27,27a& 27d) provide a breakdown of funding for 2005/06.

The management Board have agreed the budget for 05/06 based on the 04/05 budget plus inflation as follows:

- West Mercia Probation 0.5% uplift (national funding agreement of 3.5% - 3% efficiency saving)
- Worcestershire Social Services 3.5% cash uplift
- Herefordshire Social Services 3.5% cash uplift
- Worcestershire Education 3.5% cash uplift
- Herefordshire Education 3.5% (In addition, Hereford Education have increased staff hours).
- Worcestershire Health (from Table 27d) 3.5% cash uplift
- Herefordshire Health (from Table 27d) N/A
- Local Authority Chief Executive N/A

In addition the Children's Fund grant allocation to Worcestershire for 05/06 is £389,158 (core funding, additional project funding and carry forward). This is an overall reduction of core YISP funding of 11.3% and has resulted in the Restorative Justice in Schools project ending in March 2005. The YOS have received an above inflation uplift of 9.9% from the Youth Justice Board in 2005/06 to take into account the results of the recalculation of geographical boundaries and ONS population figures.

A variety of funding streams came to an end on the 31st March 2005 including LPSA1 (Local Public Service Agreement) funding which supported Mentoring Services across both counties. Short term funding has been obtained to maintain a very limited mentoring service within Herefordshire however, despite submitting a number of funding bids, at present we have been unsuccessful in securing additional funding to enable mentoring to be sustained across the service. In addition, it has not been possible to mainstream the mentoring service within the overall YOS budget. The loss of this service is a significant gap in provision and will impact on the ability of the YOS to provide robust exit strategies, a key element of the POPO strategy. Efforts are ongoing to identify potential sources of funding and, in the interim, the YOS is working with partners to link with existing mentoring services. In addition, European Social Fund (ESF) funding obtained through the LSC, which was directed towards a Learning Mentors project ended in December 2004.

An LPSA2 bid has been submitted within Worcestershire containing two elements. The first is focussed on extending the YISP to enable full geographical coverage within Worcestershire. The second is to secure additional dedicated Personal Advisor resources to address post 16 training and employment issues. Timeframes for LPSA2 suggest that, if successful, the funding streams will not come online until late 2005.

As can be seen within this Youth Justice Plan, the YOS has experienced a significant increase in workload compared to 2004/05 which has been managed within current resources as a result of a determined effort to identify and implement internal efficiencies at all levels of the service. This has been achieved whilst maintaining a good overall level of performance as can be seen by the annual performance measures and the YOS Inspection report. The YOS will continue to seek operational efficiency savings, however, the improvements required by the YOS, as identified within this plan and the YOS inspection report, can only be achieved with the ongoing support (financial, infrastructure, in-kind etc) of partner agencies and, importantly, by ensuring an appropriate level of access to mainstream service provision in critical areas such as Education, Training and Employment and Mental Health services. The Chief Officers Steering Group have also noted that YOS infrastructure needs, particularly around access to appropriate office premises, are likely to become an issue in 2005/06 and are considering the potential implications of this through close liaison with the YOS Head of Service.

TABLE 26: SERVICES PLANNED FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2005/6

CORE ACTIVITY	BUDGET EXPENDITURE (£)
Preventive services	460,285
PACE Services	21,251
Pre-court services	275,829
Court-based services	327,235
Remand services	106,254
Community-based services	1,371,163
Through care / after care	131,328
Other orders	451,741
Total:	3,145,086

TABLE 27: YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM BUDGET FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2005/06 – SOURCES

AGENCY	STAFFING COSTS (£)	PAYMENTS IN KIND – REVENUE (£)	OTHER DELEGATED FUNDS (£)	TOTAL (£)
Police	125,723	137,088		262,811
Probation	104,792	69,295	28,479	202,566
Worcestershire Social Services	280,122	455,577	-	735,699
Herefordshire Social Services	99,591	135,087	-	234,678
Worcestershire Education	53,896	77,013	-	130,909
Herefordshire Education	26,035	23,144	-	49,179
Worcestershire Health (from Table 27d)	33,101	61,630	-	94,731
Herefordshire Health (from Table 27d)	37,867	-	-	37,867
Local Authority Chief Executive	-	-	-	-
Additional Funding (from Table 27a)	-	1,396,646		1,396,646
Total	761,127	2,355,480	28,479	3,145,086

TABLE 27a: ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INCOME	
ADDITIONAL SOURCE	AMOUNT (£)
Single Regeneration Budget	
European Funding	
Youth Justice Board	874,534
Other (YPSMS grants, Children's Fund Worcestershire to be added)	522,112
Total (for inclusion in Table 27)	1,396,646

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TABLE 27d: HEALTH SERVICE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE YOS	
HEALTH CONTRIBUTION: Funding source	
South Worcestershire PCT *	94,731
Wyre Forest PCT	
Redditch & Bromsgrove PCT	
Herefordshire PCT **	37,867
Total (for inclusion in Table 27)	132,598

* Budget for 3 contributing PCT's held by South Worcestershire PCT

** Contribute a seconded member of staff

C.3.2 PROGRAMME RESOURCES

The YOS has a strong commitment to work with its partners to achieve the ongoing development of appropriate resources to meet the identified needs of young people. This can have a considerable impact on the Services ability to work effectively and there is a direct link between progress against the YJB KPIs and the availability of appropriate resources. For example, where resource development is evident (e.g. CAMHS and Substance Misuse Services), the YOS progress can be demonstrated. Conversely, where resource difficulties are apparent (e.g. ETE, appropriate accommodation), the YOS continues to struggle in performance terms. The COSG have an increased awareness of these relationships and continue to pursue strategic solutions on behalf of the Service. In summary, the following specialist resources are key:

- Drug Treatment Programmes – progress is evident in this area via the YOS specialists and their link back to SPACE and ZIGZAG. ZIGZAG is currently subject to an effectiveness review.
- Mental Health Services – progress has continued in this area in 2004/5 with access to a CAMHS Nurse specialist. Accessing appropriate transition services remain the biggest difficulty.
- Accommodation Services – there is steady but slow progress in this area. Whilst the YOS has established positive links with many county and district housing services/providers, there are still considerable difficulties in accessing appropriate accommodation with access to appropriate bail and remand placements a particular barrier to progress.
- ETE Provision – pre-16 provision is improving and the YOS has good working relationships with local integration services. Accessing post-16 provision is more problematic and the YOS needs to improve its partnership working with Connexions. A lack of suitable training and employment opportunities remains a considerable barrier.
- Parenting and Victim Services – whilst the YOS has made some progress in both these areas, an increase in the number of parents and victims worked with are desirable in 2005/6.

The YOS are also active in programme resource development. One of the most important of these for 2005/6 is the integration of the ISSP Service into the local Area Teams. This move should bring greater integration and allow for the development of additional resources (e.g. exploring options for replicating the ISSP 'Top Barn' resource in other parts of the county). The YOS also aims to build on current intensive supervision for young people who do not meet the ISSP criteria via enhanced specified activity programmes. The YOS will ensure any development of programmes and resources is achieved within the risk led framework so that interventions are delivered based on the presenting levels of risk of the young person. Furthermore, the YOS will be undertaking an overall review of programme provision within the service with a view to establishing a more coherent and structured approach to programme delivery within risk led interventions. This will include the identification of a standard YOS intervention programme that can be tailored to individual risk levels and training for staff in specific intervention methods.

In terms of promoting equality and diversity, the YOS Inspection Report highlighted that 'interventions were exemplary in their sensitivity to diversity... staff worked in a very sensitive way with diversity issues'. This extended not only to work with children and young people who offend but also to young people at risk of offending and victims of youth crime. Further progress will be made in 2005/6 with the development of more formalised policies around diversity, the establishment of a YOS diversity group and a focus on diversity at local team levels.

The YOS has worked effectively with Youth Support Services (YSS) over a number of years to provide appropriate adult, mentoring and mediation, bail and remand, ISSP and Specified Activity Programmes and this partnership will continue in 2005/6. The reconfiguration of these services within a new contract between the two partners and the associated secondment of YSS staff into the YOS should achieve the aim of more integrated local service provision within a stronger performance management framework.

The YOS also work in partnership to provide, or have access to, a number of other programmes targeted at the range of young people's risk factors and needs identified through ongoing assessment practice. Of particular importance are:

- Family Support Services (delivered by Relate); PAYP (multi-agency delivery); Children's Fund mentoring (YSS); 'Positive Parenting Programme' (trained YOS staff); RJ in Schools (YOS preventative services); Jigsaw Offending Behaviour Programme (trained YOS staff); Sex Offender Programmes (NSPCC); Intensive cognitive-behavioural programmes (delivered by trained YOS staff);

The programmes identified above highlight the extent to which the YOS are constantly seeking to move forward provision with its local partners. The development of appropriate resources is a strong theme throughout this plan.

C.4.1 WORKFORCE PLANNING

The YOS comprises of 161 staff and an additional 113 volunteers. The majority of staff within the service are white with Black and Minority Ethnic groups not consistently represented through all levels of the service. The Youth Justice Plan 2004/05 recognised this and identified that work would be undertaken with the local Race Equality Council (REC) to address this issue. Unfortunately, the local REC has not been in a position to support the YOS with this work. Despite this, the YOS has been involved in raising the profile of employment opportunities for BME staff within the service through linking with Worcestershire County Council initiatives such as attending the Asian Mela festival in Birmingham. In addition the YOS has been involved in setting up and running a LCJB conference on 'Employment opportunities for BME staff within the criminal justice system'. The YOS has also developed links with the Worcestershire County Council Black Colleagues Group (BCG) and commissions external mentoring support for BME staff/ managers within the service.

In 2004/05 arrangements for providing HR support to the YOS by Worcestershire County Council were amended with HR support being provided by 'support services' rather than the 'Children's services' team. Workforce management mechanisms have now been greatly improved by WCC HR recently starting to provide enhanced levels of HR management information regarding sickness and staff turnover. This is monitored in monthly meetings between the YOS and the WCC HR representative. Staff turnover across the YOS is at 10.6% and sickness is at 1.41 episodes per person. Overall the YOS is adequately staffed although significant difficulties have existed within the North Worcestershire team which has carried vacancies on a regular basis due to market forces issues arising from its close proximity to Birmingham. With the exception of the North Worcestershire Area Team, the YOS is not experiencing difficulties in the recruitment and retention of staff or volunteers and continues to work to ensure that policies, procedures and practices are in place to ensure that this continues. This includes a focus on developing staff skills through training and development opportunities, mentoring/ support for BME staff and managers, regular staff surveys, team building/development opportunities and staff care events.

From the 4th July 2005, the YOS will be moving to a revised service delivery structure with all youth justice services being delivered from 3 geographically based teams in Redditch (covering North Worcestershire), Worcester City (covering South Worcestershire) and Hereford (covering Herefordshire). Each Area Team will comprise of a Case Planning and Intervention Unit and a Court, Bail and Assessment Unit with each being managed by an Area Team Manager. This revised structure is intended to support the delivery of the risk led intervention model, ensure responsiveness to local need, help facilitate the closer integration between all aspects of youth justice services and enable the YOS to maintain better links with other local agencies. It is recognised that the restructuring of the YOS and the introduction of the risk led approach are significant developments for the YOS. Throughout this period of change, care is being taken to ensure a high level of consultation with staff, partner agencies and other key stakeholders is maintained. An initial review of the change process is scheduled to take place within 6 months.

The YOS continues to benefit from the support of partner agencies with several directly seconding staff. However, some agencies have previously had difficulty in seconding staff to the service due to internal difficulties which has resulted in 'technical secondments' where secondment vacancies are being filled by staff recruited from outside the seconding agency. Whilst this has been a pragmatic response to staffing difficulties within parent agencies, it would be particularly beneficial to be able to second staff with relevant local knowledge and contacts. Renewed efforts will be made during 2005/06 to ensure that secondment opportunities are fully publicised within parent agencies.

The YOS continues to receive significant funding within Worcestershire from the Children's Fund which enables it to deliver preventative services to young people at risk of crime and anti-social behaviour. The YOS is currently bidding for LPSA2 funds to expand the YISP further within Worcestershire. Alongside this, the YOS, through its role on the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, is leading on the development of 'early intervention and prevention' work within Worcestershire. At present the YOS is working with the Children's Fund Board on commissioning opportunities for the YISP from April 2006 when the current funding ends. Although at an early stage, initial plans are being developed to ensure that the YISP can be integrated with the developing early intervention and prevention model whilst retaining a clear service for young people at risk of crime and anti-social behaviour with external consultants supporting this work.

The YOS has an established partnership with Victim Support which seconds three 0.5 FTE Victim Liaison Officers to the YOS (1 based in each area). This arrangement has worked well to date with the VLO's being able to bring a range of valuable skills and experience of victim working to the YOS. The independent nature of the VLO's has ensured that victims that come into contact with the YOS are given impartial advice. It is hoped to build further on this working arrangement during 2005/06 and explore possibilities to develop wider victim resources within the YOS. The

revised contractual arrangements between the YOS and YSS will result in YSS staff, who previously delivered services off site, being seconded into the YOS and line managed by YOS Area Team Managers. This will ensure a more integrated model of service delivery across the full range of youth justice services whilst ensuring that the benefits gained from the valuable skills, knowledge, experience and culture of YSS staff is maintained.

TABLE 25a: STAFF IN THE YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE (by headcount)

	Managers Strategic	Managers Operational	Senior practitioners (FT)	Senior practitioners (PT)	Practitioners (FT)	Practitioners (PT)	Administrative	Sessional	Students/trainees	Volunteer	Total
Permanent	(2)	(5)	(1)		(4)		(6)				18
Fixed Term					(11)	(2)	(10)	(1)			24
Secondee Social Services					(7)	(1)					8
Secondee Probation						(2)					2
Secondee Police					(3)						3
Secondee Health					(1)	(1)					2
Secondee Education					(1)	(2)					3
Secondee Connexions											
Secondee Other		(1)			(1)	(2)		(60)			64
Outsourced					(10)			(17)		(46)	73
Temporary						(1)	(3)			(67)	71
Vacant					(1)	(1)	(4)				6
TOTAL	2	6	1		39	12	23	78		113	274
Gender/Ethnicity											
White Male	2	3	1		14	6	2	25		36	89
Black Male		1			1					2	4
Asian Male											
Mixed Race Male											
Chinese/Other Male								1			1
White Female		2			22	5	17	51		72	173
Black Female										2	2
Asian Female					1					1	2
Mixed Race Female											
Chinese/Other Female								1			1
TOTAL	2	6	1		38	11	19	78		113	268
Welsh Speakers											0

C.4.2 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The YOS has allocated approximately 1.5% of its total budget for workforce training and development in 2005/6. This represents a substantial increase on 2004/5 when 0.5% was allocated. Training is also accessed from the corporate training programmes provided by Worcestershire County Council and Herefordshire Council. Some training is provided by partner agencies. The YOS is well represented at the YJB regional HR & Learning steering and working groups and has been active in influencing the HR & Learning Strategy in the region. In both 2004/05 and 2005/06 the YOS has provided financial systems support for the YJB regional HR & Learning advisor.

Training Needs identified for 2005/6: These are set out in the table below. It is unlikely that all these needs will be met within the budget allocated and the priority needs are highlighted.

Training	Managers	Practitioners	Sessional Staff	Volunteers	Administrators	Links to Performance Management
Management	•					
Induction	•	•	•	•	•	
Risk Assessment	•	•	•	•	•	EPQA – APIS, Management of Risk
Assessment/APIs	•	•				EPQA – APIS
Motivational Interviewing		•				EPQA – APIS
Restorative Justice	•	•	•			EPQA – RJ
Breach	•	•				National Standards
Offending Behaviour Programmes	•	•				EPQA – Offending Behaviour Programmes
Diversity	•	•	•	•	•	RAAP
Team Building/Development	•	•			•	
Legislation (CJA)	•	•				
Parenting		•			•	EPQA – Parenting
ETE		•				EPQA – ETE
Substance Use		•				EPQA – Substance Misuse
Conflict Resolution		•				EPQA – Offending Behaviour Programmes/APIs
Personal Safety	•	•	•	•	•	
YOIS+	•	•			•	Performance monitoring
Compell					•	Performance monitoring
Xhibit					•	
Community Panel Member				•		
Mentor				•		
Child Protection	•	•	•	•	•	Management of Risk

Overview of workforce development including volunteers and staff in outsource agencies

National Qualifications Framework: The YOS continues to encourage staff to undertake the Professional Certificate in Effective Practice (PCEP), and it is a requirement that all assistant YOS Officers undertake this qualification. During 2005/06 it is likely that the YOS will utilise up to 10 PCEP places. There has been considerable interest in the Foundation Degree from staff who hold the PCEP with 7 staff having formally expressed an interest to the Regional HR and Learning Co-ordinator. However take up of this will be limited by the number of places made available in the region.

Staff will attend the INSET training (Risk, Substance Misuse and Mental Health) planned for delivery during 2005/06.

Links to staff Appraisal Systems: The YOS has adopted Worcestershire County Council's appraisal system (SRD). The training needs identified in the table above have been informed by aggregate data from the SRD reviews.

Training for Specialist Staff: Specialist staff attend the general training opportunities provided for YOS staff. Individual training needs within their specialist area are met either through training provided by their parent agency or through utilising part of the training budget to purchase places on externally provided courses (e.g. DANOS Training for the substance misuse workers).

Management Training: There are a range of management training opportunities offered through the Worcestershire County Council corporate training programme. Some specific management development and support is commissioned directly by the YOS.

Volunteer Training: The YOS is committed to the development of volunteers and sessional workers and training is provided in house (by YOS Staff) and through commissioning. A partner organisation will be providing mentoring training during 2005/06.

Links with Local Providers: The YOS continues to maintain links with local HFE institutions by providing student placements and with Nottingham Trent University in terms of the PCEP. The YOS additionally has staff registered on courses with the Open University and with Birmingham University and is represented on the reference group for the development of a foundation degree in work with young people at the University College Worcester. Some staff and managers are involved in the delivery of lectures to various HFE institutions.

C.5 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Strategic links with partners have been identified in section C1 and the shared financial contributions in C4. The details of partnership working across the 15 areas of effective practice are identified in the delivery plan.

The YOS has a firm commitment to the ongoing development of partnership working and this has been identified as one of the key priorities for 2005/6. Evidence from youth justice research and from the outcomes of practitioners' assessments, clearly indicate that many of the solutions to youth crime will only be tackled if effective partnership working underpins the delivery of youth offending services. This is reinforced by progress against the YJB KPIs which shows performance at its lowest where barriers exist to young people accessing appropriate mainstream services (e.g. ETE). In its review of partnership working in 2004/5, the inspection highlighted the following strengths:

- The YOS manager played a strategic role in all key area partnerships
- Appropriate partnership protocols existed that were reviewed on a rolling programme
- Relationships between the YOS and all courts were positive and effective.

The COSG are committed to finding creative strategic solutions to some of the complex challenges which need to be addressed to move forward partnership working. In 2005/6 the Group will consider the use of short term focus groups which could be strategic or operational to act as vehicles for overcoming difficulties or barriers to progress. The YOS fully participates in a wide range of both strategic and operational multi-agency forums. Where possible partnership meetings are combined for both counties (e.g. Connexions, children's services planning groups, area child protection committees) whilst others (e.g. the DAAT) are on a county basis. The YOS is also fully represented at all West Mercia Strategic Forums. Coverage of the seven CDRPs across the two counties is demanding but considered a priority given the ongoing need to integrate the work of the YOS and the Community Safety Partners.

On an operational level, 15 staff are seconded to the YOS from probation, health, Victim Support, education, police and Hereford Council. These staff bring valuable skills and experience to the Service and also provide an important link back to their partner agencies. In addition, YOS managers and practitioners are continually seeking opportunities to develop joint working. Examples of positive developments in 2004/5 include joint work with local substance misuse services, involvement of the MAAPA coordinator in the development of the YOS MOR policy, YOS involvement in CAMHS strategy development in Worcestershire and the roll out of Final Warning surgeries across both counties. Opportunities for joint training are continually explored.

During 2004/05 the YOS carried out a self evaluation which revealed a specific need to improve against targets associated with education and employment, accommodation, CAMHS and the use of the secure estate. The joint inspection particularly commented on the need to improve partnership working with the Connexions Service and highlighted inconsistencies of practice across geographical areas.

The YOS has continued its substantial partnership work with Youth Support Services, an external voluntary agency who have been contracted to deliver many of the YOS services, including appropriate adults, bail and remand support, reparation work on community sentences (other than referral orders), victim work and mentor training. A new contract had recently been agreed between the YOS and YSS which has led to YSS staff being seconded into and supervised by the YOS. This should enhance greater integration of service delivery and improved monitoring of performance and quality.

Underpinning the extensive range of partnership working, the YOS has developed protocols and service level agreements with nearly all its key partners which are reviewed on a rolling basis as practice develops. In 2005/6 the CAHMS protocol in Worcestershire needs to be revisited and renewed as does the Connexions agreement. In addition SSD/Education protocols will need to be reviewed in light of the integration agenda. The YOS also recognises the importance of effective information exchange and has separate information sharing protocols with the Police and MAPPA. All other YOS protocols have information exchange sections within them.

There is a substantial partnership working development agenda for 2005/6 identified in the delivery plan which will build on the positive work identified above.

DELIVERY PLAN

PREVENTING OFFENDING

PERFORMANCE 04/05

04/05: % of YP Targeted for Prevention	78% (155/200)
05/06: Target reduction of Direct/First Time Entrants	2% (= 10 YP)

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

2004/5 was the first (and last) year that the YOS has been measured against this target. The Service has performed well to target 155 young people for assessment and intervention in the first full year of operational practice of the two Youth Inclusion Support Panels (YISPs). Provision of YISPs differs across the two counties with an independent Children Fund Service in Herefordshire and a YOS co-ordinated Service in Worcestershire. Both Services have been the subject of recent independent evaluations, the results of which indicate that they have established solid operational bases and are delivering high quality assessment and intervention services to young people at risk of offending. The recommendations from each of these reviews will be fully implemented in 2005/6. An important development issue identified in both reviews is the need to enhance targeting of young people at risk of offending both at an operational level (via the development of more sophisticated targeting tools and processes) and at a strategic level (ensuring the YISP targeting strategy is integrated with developing POPOs, ASB and Early Intervention strategies). In 2005/6 both Services will investigate opportunities for diversion at reprimand/final warning stage as one important aspect of this strategy. The need to prioritise young people based on risk becomes increasingly important as demand for YISP Services starts to exceed capacity. The ongoing evaluation of YISPs will also be a priority for 2005/6 with the first formal 12month conviction studies being undertaken.

Neither authority has a standing multi-agency panel as originally envisaged within the YJB guidance. Nevertheless, operational groups of partners meet to discuss the circumstances of individual young people and this appears to work well. Where possible both the young person and their parents are invited to these panels. Opportunities to develop a standing panel lie with the integration of YISP services with Prevent & Deter, Anti-Social Behaviour and Early Intervention initiatives in both counties. It is essential that the YOS is active and fully involved in the development of prevention strategies in both authorities in 2005/6. Of particular importance is the integration between YISPs and the Child Concern Model (Herefordshire) and Team Around the Child (Worcestershire) developments. It is also essential to ensure YISP Services continue to develop within the framework of Every Child Matters and that integration with the Common Assessment Framework is achieved at an early stage. Both Services are ensuring they are linked directly into the Prevent and Deter Strategy via representation on the P&D Management Boards.

The new national target for 2005/6 identifies that youth offending services should reduce the number of first time/direct entrants into the youth justice system by 2%. Whilst considered a more appropriate target, the impact the two YISPs will have is dependent on a range of factors that are not necessarily within the control of the YOS. For example, police initiatives and targets will impact on detection and arrest rates and the Children Fund criteria (both age and geography) restrict the number of young people that the YISP can target. The current LPSA2 bid for funding to extend the YISP in Worcestershire to cover young people up to the age of 17 across all geographical areas is crucial if the YOS is to have a real impact on this target. Ongoing uncertainties regarding longer term funding may prove a barrier to service development. The YOS needs to work with all appropriate partners to explore options for mainstream funding of prevention services post 2008.

In addition to the YISPs, the YOS has a range of other initiatives that contribute towards its prevention strategy and support the work of both Services. Important developments in 2004/5 have been the partnership work to provide Restorative Justice models in schools, the provision of children fund mentoring, parenting and family support services. The effectiveness of these will be reviewed in 2005/6 in preparation for the allocation of new contracts in April 2006.

PREVENT OFFENDING ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS : MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMs
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Integrate future YISP strategy with developing Prevent and Deter, Anti Social Behaviour and Early Intervention strategies	Head of Service	March 06	Duplication of effort, lack of integration: YOS involvement in ASBI Children's Service agenda.	CYPSP Strategy, POPO Strategy, CF Plans
Ensure future YISP development is integrated with the Every Child Matters and Common Assessment Framework	Head of Service	March 06	As above	Prevention PM
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Implement the recommendations from the two independent reviews	Head of Service/YISP Co-ord/CF Panel Co-ord	July 05	Management capacity: support from senior managers & external consultants.	Prevention PM CF Plans
Enhance targeting of young people at risk of offending and introduce processes to target those at highest risk	Head of Service/YISP Co-ordinator / CF Panel Co-ordinator	July 05	Geographical/age boundary issues : liaison / negotiation with CF/YISP	Prevention PM
Conduct 12 month conviction studies on the first YISP cohorts	Head of Service / Information & Performance Mgr	March 06	None	PPO, Prevention PM
RESOURCES				
Seek LPSA2 or other funding sources to expand the YISPs to cover all areas and ages	Head of Service	ongoing	Time lag for project to start: Close liaison with ODP/MWCC.	PPO, Prevention PM
Investigate opportunities to introduce diversionary YISP processes at reprimand/final warning stage.	Police (John Dickinson) YOS Head of Service	Sept 05	YISP / CD Panel capacity: management transition and piloting	Prevention PM
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Ensure all YISP staff are trained to implement revised targeting procedures	YISP / CF Panel Co-ord	Aug 05	None	YOS training plan
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Explore funding paths for the provision of mainstream YISP Services post 2008.	Head of Service / CYPSP/CF Board	March 06	Budget pressures post 2008: YOS representation at CYPSP's / CF Board.	CF Plans, CYPSP's.
Review the effectiveness of current prevention support services in preparation for contract renewal in March 2006	Head of Service	Feb 05	None	Prevention OM

INTERVENE EARLY

PERFORMANCE 04/05

04/05: Percentage of Final Warning with YOS Intervention	84% (375/446)	2003 Effective Practice QA Rating	2
05/06: Target	80%	2005 EPQA Result	2

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

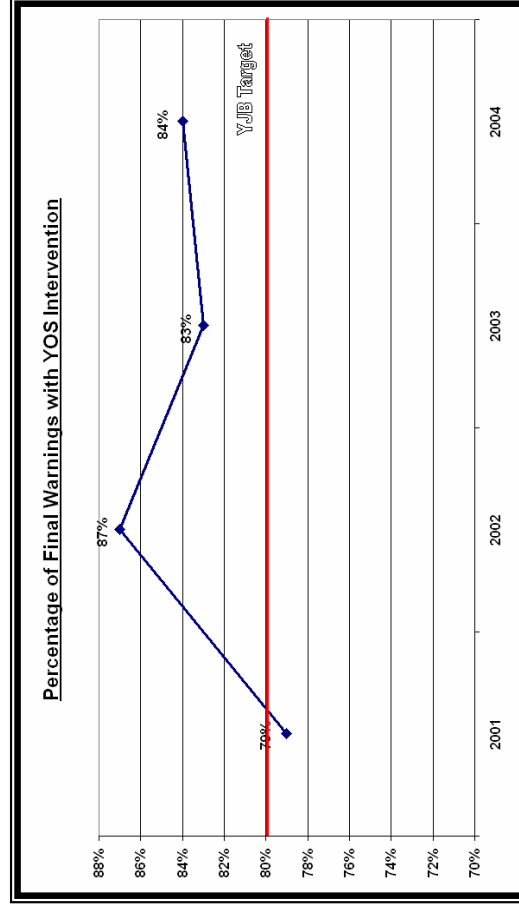
The YOS has performed consistently well against this target since its inception four years ago and an average of 84% of final warnings were supported by an intervention in 2004/5. This is comfortably above the YJB target.

Findings from the recent EPQA audit also provide evidence of ongoing improvements in the quality of final warning service delivery. Whilst the YOS maintain an overall score of two they achieved maximum scores of three in nine of the sixteen effective practice areas. Target scores were met or exceeded in thirteen of the sixteen areas. The YOS will implement outstanding actions from the EPQA Action Plan in 2005/6.

In July 2005, delivery of final warnings will move from a centralised service to one being delivered by the area teams as an integral part of local youth justice services. Whilst this is a positive move to ensure consistency of practice across all YOS service areas within the risk led approach, the YOS will monitor the ongoing delivery of final warning interventions closely to ensure there is no reduction in the quality of service. The Lead Manager for final warnings will co-ordinate a quarterly meeting of final warning practitioners to review local implementation issues and discuss consistency of practice across the Service.

Local delivery will tie in with the final warning surgeries, developed across both counties in

2004/5, which appear to have proved an effective way of improving assessment and delivery services. These will be fully evaluated in 2005/6, as will the content of final warning programmes to ensure they are meeting the needs and risks of young people. The YOS also wants to look at the possibility of using YISP interventions as a diversion from reprimands/final warnings. The biggest risk to continued improvements in the quality of service delivery in this area is associated with the significant increase in final warnings being made in Worcestershire and Herefordshire. In 2003/4, 303 final warnings with an associated YOS intervention were administered. This rose to 504 in 2004/5 representing a 66% increase. This is placing considerably pressure on already stretched resources and may cause a reduction in the high standards currently being achieved.



INTERVENE EARLY ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS: MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMs
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Conduct quarterly review meetings to ensure the quality of final warning practice is maintained throughout the Service	Lead Manager FWs	Oct 05	Reduction in service delivery: Lead Manager DHOS, Information & Perf. Mgr. to be involved.	Final Warning (FW) Performance Measures
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Evaluate the effectiveness of the Final Warning Surgery Model	Lead Manager Fws; Info & Perf. Mgr	Dec 05	Increase in re-offending: Evaluate early.	Final Warning PM; Recidivism PM
Implement the outstanding actions from the EPQA Action Plan	Lead manager FWs	Mar 06	Poor practice / increased offending: Lead Manager to implement.	EPQA (FW)
Check whether final warning victim contacts are captured in the overall victim statistics	Info & Perf Mgr	Oct 05	None	Victims PM
RESOURCES				
Review and modify the content of current final warning programmes to ensure they are need and risk centred.	Lead Manager Fws	Sept 05	None	Risk-led interventions / effectiveness
Consider holding monthly 'final warning practice' meetings for all appropriate practitioners	Lead Manager FWs	from July 05	Potential to impact local delivery model: structured meeting chaired by Lead Manager/Area Team Managers	Restructuring Plan
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Review the training needs of Final Warning Practitioners and ensure they receive necessary 'refresher' training and other training to continue to develop practice-based skills		Sept 05	Budget pressures: commission with wider training	YOS Training Plan
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Review opportunities to set up a 'YISP Diversion Scheme' at reprimand/final warning stage	Head of Service	Oct 05	Negotiations with CF Boards: representation on Boards / evidence of need.	Prevention, CF Plans
Explore opportunities to develop independent RJ/Mediation Schemes that the YOS can use	Lead Manager FWs	Oct 05	Resource constraints: identify external resources	Restorative Justice PM

PROVIDE INTENSIVE COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

The YOS provide ISSP programmes via a West Mercia wide service jointly financed with Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin YOS. This has been a partnership development between the two youth offending services and Youth Support Services. Whilst this partnership will continue in 2005/6, a change in contractual arrangements means that YSS staff will be seconded into the YOS and ISSP Services will be directly managed by the YOS Management Team. The Deputy Head of Service is currently liaising with YSS regarding an ongoing written agreement for the management of ISSP for 2005/6 onwards. A further change to the provision in 2005/6 is the decentralisation of the ISSP team into the Area Teams to ensure that ISSP service delivery is directly tied into local assessment, intervention planning and delivery services and under the direct co-ordination of the Area Team Managers. The YOS is keen to ensure that this re-configuration of service delivery leads to an improvement in ISSP programmes and has scheduled quarterly formal reviews throughout the next 12 months to review the implementation of this new approach. In addition, it is likely that there will still be a cross YOS meeting of all ISSP staff to ensure consistency of service delivery and to discuss practical arrangements relevant to all teams (e.g. service cover, timetabling, practice discussions etc). The Deputy Head of Service will maintain a central overview of service delivery and act as an arbiter of referrals as and when required.

In terms of ISSP requirements the YOS achieved 40 ISSP starts in 2004/5 against a target of 45. This achievement of 89% (starts vs. the target) is a slight improvement on 2003/4 when the start ratio was 87%. The shortfall in start rates for 2004/5 was typically due to a lack of educational availability although staffing issues also had some impact. Lack of suitable education provision not only impacts on the young person but also means that the YOS has to identify additional resources to meet the minimum 25 hours per week requirement. The knock on effect of this is that less programmes can be carried by the YOS at any point thus impacting on start rates. Of those young people who commenced an ISSP programme, 50% successfully completed this intervention by not re-offending and achieving all the requirements in terms of reporting and undertaking the tasks identified in their contract. This is a higher successful completion rate than found in the recent national evaluation of ISSP programmes and suggests effective practice given the high risk of re-offending associated with most young people on ISSP.

This is reinforced by findings from a recent YJB Quality Assurance Review which identified the ISSP Service as a 'mature, well developed Phase 1 Scheme' with 'a high level of commitment of staff from at all levels' and teams which were 'thoroughly committed to the work they are doing and building positive relations with young people in their localities'.

The ISSP Team have been pro-active in developing resources to underpin service delivery. One excellent example of this has been the development of the 'Top Barn' resource in 2004/5 where a range of individual, group and project based work is delivered. The YOS is keen to explore opportunities for replicating this resource across the two counties and expand its use to become a resource for work with all high risk young people.

The YOS recognises that other young people who do not meet the ISSP criteria are at high risk of further offending and this is one factor which underpins the move to the risk led approach. This approach introduces a formal planning, management and review process for all high risk young people and should contribute to the delivery of more effective services to this targeted group. Of particular importance is the goal of working more intensively with the range of young people considered high risk and, in addition to ISSP, the YOS will be delivering other intensive community interventions in 2005/6. An example of this will be the ongoing development of specified activities programmes for young people who do not meet the ISSP criteria.

PROVIDE INTENSIVE COMMUNITY SUPERVISION ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS: MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/IPMS
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Finalise and implement the written agreement with YSS regarding the management of ISSP Services	Deputy Head of Service	July 05	Lack of coherent service delivery model: clear protocol to be est.	ISSP Quality Assurance Review
Undertake quarterly reviews of ISSP provision	Deputy Head of Service	Oct 05	Degradation in performance: regular performance monitoring.	ISSP Quality Assurance Review
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Ensure current ISSP Quality Assurance routines are maintained (and modified as required) in the new local delivery model	Deputy Head of Service	Ongoing	As above	ISSP Quality Assurance Review, YOS Restructuring Plan
RESOURCES				
Implement the revised model of delivering local ISSP Services	Deputy Head of Service	July 05	Lack of flexibility in local delivery: maintain service-wide remit.	ISSP Quality Assurance Review
Explore options for replicating the 'Top Barn' resource in other parts of the two counties		Dec 05	Resource issues: identify additional resources.	ISSP Quality Assurance Review
Review existing Specified Activities Programmes and continue to develop this resource for high risk young people who are not eligible for ISSP		Dec 05	None	YOS programme development
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Undertake briefing session for all YSS staff being seconded into the YOS	Deputy Head of Service	July 05	Lack of integration / culture change issues: full briefing and induction.	YOS Restructuring Plan
Ensure the development needs of the ISSP Team are incorporated into the 2005/6 Training Plan		July 05	Access to ISSP training budget: negotiate with YSS.	YOS/ISSP Training Plan
Ensure ISSP staff are trained in YOIS Plus and Timetabler	Info. & Perf Mgr	July 05	Impact on operational performance: training being provided.	YOS/ISSP Training Plan
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Explore opportunities for partnership resources to contribute to the 25 hour ISSP Programme (e.g. youth service, Connexions etc)	Head of Service	Sept 05	Engagement of partners: representation on Connexions Board and Education Services.	ETE Performance Measure
Work with the Connexions Service to maximise ETE opportunities and develop 'packages of education'		Sept 05	None	ETE PM, Connexions Plan

REDUCE THE USE OF CUSTODY

PERFORMANCE 04/05

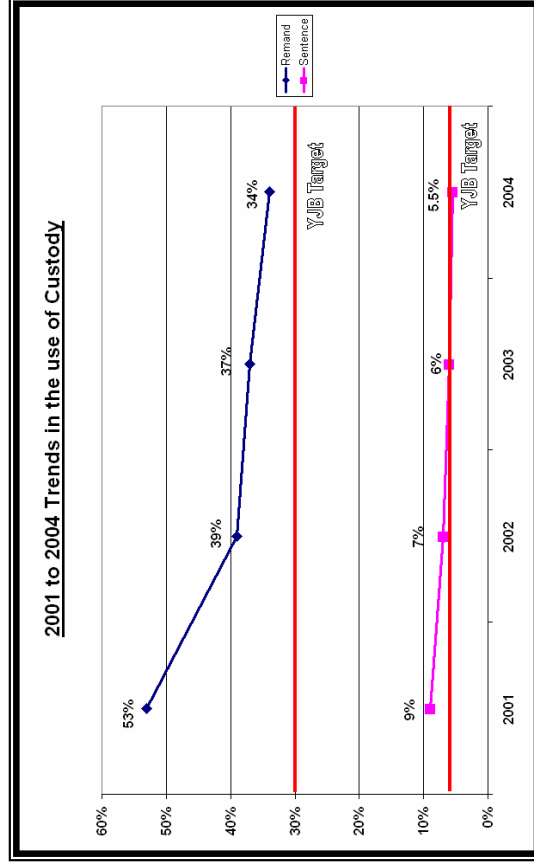
04/05: Percentage of Custodial Remands	34%(41/121)	04/05: Percentage of Custodial Sentences	5.5% (68/1233)
05/06: Target	30%	05/06: Target	5%

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

Considerable progress has been made towards achieving the KPIs associated with custodial remands and custodial sentences over the last four years. The average use of custodial remands has dropped from 53% (2001) to 34% (04/05) and use of custodial sentences from 9% (2001) to 5.5% (04/05). As there are no indications that less serious offences are being committed, this suggests that the YOS has had a growing credibility with the courts over this period to offer realistic alternatives to custody which are effective in managing high risk young people. The introduction of ISSP (both Bail and Sentence) and other intensive community supervision (e.g. Intensive Specified Activity Programmes) have made an important contribution to this trend.

The introduction of the risk led approach should bring more effective identification, targeting and direct work with those young people at highest risk of offending, vulnerability or harm to others. In 2005/6 the YOS will invite Magistrates to attend a Case Planning Forum to see how high risk cases are being managed. In addition, the re-organisation of the Service will bring closer integration of bail support and ISSP Bail and more effective local planning of interventions to target identified risk.

The YOS are committed to tackling ongoing problems that impact on the use of custody. Perhaps the most significant of these is the lack of access to suitable accommodation both remand and on transfer from custody. The impact at remand stage of having no access to an emergency bed is that police detain young people overnight that heightens the risk of a custodial remand at the subsequent court hearing. In 2005/6 the YOS will explore opportunities to have access to an overnight bed with local voluntary organisations. Further progress in reducing custody levels will be influenced by the success of the YOS Accommodation Strategy which requires multi-agency work to resolve complex accommodation issues. At the heart of this lies a deficit in appropriate accommodation although more effective joint work is also required with social care regarding remand placements and there needs to be a greater emphasis on the prevention of homelessness by, for example, the development of effective family work. The YOS will also review the level of custodial cases that have arisen from Breach of Anti Social Behaviour Orders and work with the CDRPs to develop a strategy to manage this. The YOS will also continue to review the quality of internal practice. A YOS Custody Review Panel has been established in 2004/5 that reviews all custodial cases to identify whether the YOS could have offered more effective services (i.e. report and intervention) to prevent the use of custody. This Panel will continue to meet in 2005/6 and expand its remit to look at all reports and remand where custody is an option and see what has proved successful in deflecting custody. In particular the group will monitor whether having access to suitable accommodation may have prevented the use of custody.



REDUCE THE USE OF CUSTODY ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS: MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMS
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Complete 3 month formal reviews of Bail and Remand Services and delivery of ISAP to ensure high quality services are maintained following the re-organisation.	DHOSHOS	Oct 05	None	EPQA
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Continue the YOS Custody Review Panel	DHOS/Lead Manager	Ongoing	None	Custody PM
Review reports that have successfully diverted young people from custody to identify the factors which are linked to a positive outcome	Custody Review Panel	Ongoing	None	Custody PM
Monitor the extent to which access to suitable accom. may prevent the use of custody	Custody Review Panel	Ongoing	None	Custody PM; Accom PM
Monitor the number of Breach of ASBOs that lead to a custodial sentence	Info & Perf Mgr / CR Panel	Ongoing	None	Custody PM, ASBO
RESOURCES				
Implement the Risk Lead Approach across the YOS	HOS, DHOS & Area Team Managers	July 05	Change Management process: involve & consult during change process.	Custody PM, APIS EPQA, risk-led approach
Achieve locally delivered integrated Bail and Remand and ISSP Services	DHOS, Area Team Managers, YSS	July 05	Change process: ongoing monitoring of effectiveness.	Custody PM EPQA remand
Improve access to, and the volume of, suitable accommodation	DHOS, Accom Officer	July 05	Lack of stock: influence housing strat.	Accommodation PM
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Invite Magistrates to observe the Case Planning Forum	Area Team Managers	July 05	None	Engagement with Courts
Ensure all staff are aware of the 'effective practice' messages arising from the YOS Custody Review Panel	DHOS, Area Team Managers	July 05	Communication systems: Area Team Managers to raise at Team meetings.	Custody PM; YOS Training Plan; EPQA
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Explore opportunities for developing supported lodgings with Supporting People	Accommodation Officer	Oct 05	Lack of evidence, size of issue, review: begin engagement process.	Accom PM
Explore options for an overnight emergency bed with local voluntary organisations (e.g. SHYP)	DHOS/Accommodation Officer	Oct 05	Resource constraints: explore resource options with partners.	YOS/Police Protocol YOS/ISS Protocol
Work with Social Care to improve access to remand foster placements	DHOS/HOS/SSD	Oct 05	Develop cost effective resources.	YOS/ISS Protocol, EPQA
Develop strategies to reduce custody with CDRPs (e.g. management of ASBOs, tie in with POPOs Strategy)	HOS, DHOS	Oct 05	Conflicting targets : negotiate and agree overall strategy.	POPO Strategy "Breaking the Cycle"

REDUCE RE-OFFENDING

PERFORMANCE

04/05: % of 2002 Cohort of YP Re-Offending in 2 Year Follow Up	42% (202/481)
05/06: Target reduction of Re-Offending Levels	5%

OVERVIEW

An analysis of the 2002 YOS cohort (that is those receiving a substantive outcome between October and December 2002) compared with the 2001 cohort over a two year follow up period shows that overall re-offending levels have dropped by 4%. This is close to the YJB target of a 5% reduction. The table below shows a more detailed breakdown of levels:

	2001 RE-OFFENDING AFTER 24 MONTHS	2002 RE-OFFENDING AFTER 24 MONTHS
PRE-COURT	41%	36%
FIRST TIER	69%	73%
COMMUNITY PENALTY	77%	78%
CUSTODY	90%	88%

The table identifies that offending levels have:

- Reduced by 13% for the pre court population
- Increased by 6% for the First Tier population
- Not changed significantly for the Community Penalty population
- Shown a very slight reduction for the Custodial population

The reduction achieved in the pre-court population, which significantly exceeds the YJB target, is encouraging and reinforces the importance of the ongoing development of the YOS prevention agenda. The YOS will do more to target those members of the first tier population that it works with (referral orders) and those subject to community penalties and custody. The introduction of the risk led approach should lead to more targeted and effective interventions. It is an ongoing frustration of recidivism analysis that the impact of new initiatives on re-offending can not be demonstrated until the two year follow up period has ended particularly as YOS developments have been so rapid in the last three years.

Further comparisons of re-offending levels in Worcestershire and Herefordshire with those across the West Midlands area and within its 'family' of Youth Offending Services shows variable performance and reinforces the need to have a service delivery model that delivers high quality youth offending services within a risk led approach that targets those young people at highest risk of offending. The small size of recidivism cohorts remains an ongoing problem in terms of the reliability and validity of this offending data and, if resources allow, the YOS will attempt to undertake a full year recidivism study in 2005/6 to see if identified trends are maintained across a wider YOS population.

REDUCE RE-OFFENDING ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS: MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMS
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Analyse ASSET data to identify priority offending risk factors and develop strategies to address these	COSG, HOS, Info & Perf Mgr.	Dec 05	Quality of assessments: ongoing training.	APIS EPQA
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Implement the Risk Led Approach to delivering Youth Justice Services	Management Team	July 05	Change process: management change, consultation & leadership/	Risk-led approach
Undertake a full year analysis of recidivism rates	Performance & Information Manager	Oct 05	Management capacity: use of consultants for initial work.	Recidivism PM
RESOURCES				
Continue the development of YOS Prevention and Early Intervention Initiatives	Management Team	Ongoing	Management capacity: rationalise priority of meetings	Prevention PM; POPO; CYPSP Early Intervention
Develop an Enhanced Specified Activity Programme	HOS/DHOS	Oct 05	Capacity within ISAP: develop within risk-led context.	Recidivism, Custody PM
Develop group work and individual modules for work with High Risk Young People	Intervention review group	Sept 05	Resource/capacity: identify efficiencies / involve staff in development	Recidivism, Custody PM
Implement the 2005/6 Race Action Plan	Management team	Ongoing	Ownership at local level: establish local race forums/processes.	Race Equality Scheme, Race Audit & Action Plan
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Train all YOS staff regarding the principle and practice of the risk led approach	Management Team	Sept 05	None	YOS Training Plan
Provide ongoing INSET training for staff in the key areas of Effective Practice	Management Team	Ongoing	Funding from YJB is limited: joint train with other YOTs/internal trainers.	YOS Training Plan
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Work with partners to improve access to mainstream services that are directly linked to the risk of offending (e.g. ETE, Substance Misuse, CAMHS, Accom)	Management Team	Ongoing	Engagement & capacity of partners: Chief Officers Steering Group input to problem areas.	ETE, CAMHS, Substance Misuse PM

ENSURE THE SWIFT ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

PERFORMANCE 04/05

04/05: % of Pre-Sentence Reports completed in National Standards Time Scales	94% (256/273)
05/06: Target	90%

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

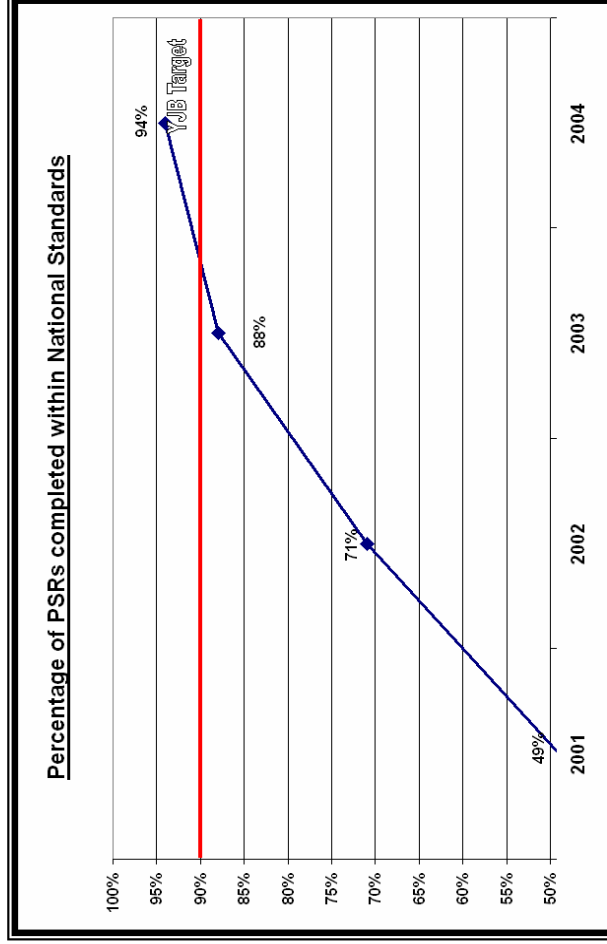
The YOS has showed year on year progress against this target and for the first time in 2004/5 has exceeded the 90% baseline set by the YJB across all four quarters. This is indicative of the way the YOS attempts to build on practice from previous years, identifying and developing good practice whilst ensuring mechanisms to improve the performance and quality of a service area are improved.

The YOS have achieved improvements in this service area by promoting staff awareness of the need to produce reports within the defined national standards and ensuring there is rigorous performance monitoring. The YOS attempt to record reasons in all cases when the report was not completed within national standards. The reasons for 2004/5 can be summarised as follows: (i) Delay for medical/psychiatric assessment = 3; (ii) Young person not attending appointment = 3; Delayed by YOS = 2; Delayed by Court = 2; Reason not recorded = 7.

Where required the YOS look for creative strategies to reduce the barriers to hitting national standards (e.g. admin forward checking the court lists to ensure use of recent PSR's, stand-down reports prepared on the day) and this has proved an effective strategy in increasing performance.

Outside this practice, the YOS is a pro-active member of court tracker meetings which aim to reduce the total time from arrest to sentence and works with all criminal justice partners to keep within the YJB target of 71 working days. The latest national figures show that the

average time from arrest to sentence for PYOs between Jan and March 2005 was 66 days whilst West Mercia have achieved an average of 74 days (Jan-March 05). Whilst this performance relates specifically to court processes rather than YOS work, the Service is working with the LCJB to support performance improvement. The YOS aims to implement the ASSET to Report electronic routine across all teams in 2005/6 after successful outcomes from the pilot in South Worcestershire.



ENSURE THE SWIFT ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS: MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMs
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Continue liaison with the Courts (Youth and Crown) regarding adjournment policies and practice	Area Team Managers	Ongoing	None	PYO protocol, PSR Performance Measure.
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Continue current QA and performance monitoring to ensure that current standards are maintained	DHOS, Team Managers	Ongoing	Need to integrate all PM processes: overarching PM framework revised	YOS Performance Management framework, LCJB – Performance Delivery Group.
Continue monitoring reasons for non-adherence to National Standards	Team Managers	Ongoing	Local ownership by Team Managers: supportive PM systems.	National Standards Audit
RESOURCES				
Implement the ASSET to Report Routine across all Teams	DHOS, Area Team Managers	Aug 05	Problems with software / benefits not seen: project management implementation.	EPOA – PAIS PSRs - PM
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Train team administrators in use of the ASSET to Report routine	Admin Manager / Area Administrators	Aug 05	None	EPOA – APIS PSRs – PM
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Continue participation in Court Tracker Meetings	Area Team Managers	Ongoing	None	PSRs - PM

ENSURE EFFECTIVE AND RIGOROUS ASSESSMENT

PERFORMANCE 04/05

04/05: % Community Start ASSETS	99% (1022/1031)	04/05: % Custodial Start ASSETS	100% (69/69)	2003 EPQA Rating	2
KPI: 05/06 target	100%	KPI: 05/06 target	100%	2005 EPQA Result	2

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

With the exception of a nine cases, the YOS achieved full completion of all assessments (start and end) relating to both community and custodial interventions in 2004/5. This impressive performance has been achieved as a result of increasing staff awareness of the importance of assessment practice and rigorous monitoring and review of this service area. This achievement has not been without frustration, particularly associated with the creation of multiple assessments for young people subject to more than one intervention. The YOS will explore possibilities for distinguishing between 'practice' and 'administrative' assessments in 2005/6 and identify separate routines to manage these. The 2005 effective practice audit resulted in a rating of 2 out of 3 for assessment practice. Whilst improvements were evident, the service recognises that there is further work required on the overall quality of assessments to achieve a maximum score of 3. Outstanding actions from the APIS EPQA Action Plan will be achieved in 2005/6. Ongoing EPQA checklists, dip sampling routines and supervision discussions are key to this continued improvement.

In addition to completing all assessments, 2004/5 has also seen an increase in the scope and range of assessment practice with, for example, the introduction of the mental health and substance misuse screening tools. Consistency of use of these specialist assessments tools will be consolidated in 2005/6.

The YOS has used this impressive baseline to move towards the implementation of a comprehensive risk led approach to all interventions. This aims to build on the established practice of assessing risk of re-offending (using the Risk of Re-Offending Matrix), will improve the consistency of assessments of serious harm to others and will introduce a new risk of vulnerability assessment. In addition the quality of practice will be checked at the end of each assessment using a revised assessment gate keeping tool. The implementation of this risk led approach will lead to a clear differentiation between interventions delivered to high, medium and low risk young people and will aim to target YOS resources to maximum effect and efficiency. A formal Case Planning and Risk Management process for high risk young people should reinforce effective practice for this targeted group. The current YOS Management of Risk Policy is being reviewed in light of recent guidance provided by the YJB on managing risk.

The YOS aims to improve the link between assessment and report writing practice and was the first youth offending service to use electronic routines to generate Pre-Sentence Reports directly from completed ASSETs. Initial evaluations of this approach suggested that Magistrates identified an improvement in the format of reports. Practitioners views were mixed, identifying improvements to software and process that would enhance the use of the routines. The Management Team have agreed the full implementation of the electronic routines across all teams in 2005/6 and are currently devising an implementation approach that will address practitioner concerns.

The COSG needs to have greater access to ASSET aggregate data including identification of underlying risk factors for priority risk areas to assist strategic planning. The integration of the specialist YOS assessment processes and the Common Assessment Framework also need to be considered in 2005/6.

ENSURE EFFECTIVE AND RIGOROUS ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS: MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMS
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Consider the aggregate use of ASSET data to establish service need	Info & Perf Mgr, HOS, COSG	Sept 05	Quality of data: rigorous QA processes.	Overall Y J Plan Partner Agency planning
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Achieve a full implementation of the Risk Led Model across all teams	HOS, DHOS, Team Managers	July 05	Change process / resistance: manage process, consultation.	APIS EPQA Risk-led framework
Implement outstanding actions from the APIS EPQA Action Plan	DHOS, Team Managers	Sept 05	Several improvement plans: co-ordination of all action plans.	APIS EPQA
Review and update the Management of Risk Policy in light of the new YJB guidance	HOS, DHOS	Sept 05	Management capacity: review using working group	MAPPA, Youth Justice Board risk, risk-led framework
RESOURCES				
Consolidate use of the new assessment and screening tools (mental health, substance misuse)	DHOS, Area Team Mgrs, Specialist wkrs	Sept 05	None	APIS - EPQA
Implement the ASSET to Report routine across all teams	DHOS, Area Team Managers	Aug 05	Problems with software / benefits not seen: project management implementation.	APIS - EPQA
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Ensure all staff undertake the YJB Inset training on risk assessment and management	DHOS, Area Team Managers	Dec 05	Training resources: joint training, internal trainers.	YOS Training Plan
Train administrators in the use of the ASSET to Report electronic routines	Area Administrators, Admin Manager	Aug 05	None	YOS Training Plan
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Review options for achieving effective integration between YOS assessment practice and the common assessment framework	HOS	Ongoing	Duplication of assessment/lack of integration: participation on relevant forums.	CYPSP, Prevention PM, POPO, ASB

SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGING IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

PERFORMANCE 04/05

04/05: Percentage of YP in full time ETE at end of Intervention	71% (682/958)	2003 Effective Practice QA Rating	2
05/06: Target	90%	2005 EPQA Result	2

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

The proportion of young people in full time education, training or employment has increased in 2004/5 (71%) compared to the previous years (68% in 2002/3 and 64% in 2003/4). Nevertheless performance against this measure still falls considerably short of the YJB target of 90%. Ongoing monitoring of performance identifies that access to appropriate education, training and employment services remains the biggest barrier to progress in this area. There is a distinction between access to provision for young people of compulsory school age and those who are post 16 and for strategic and operational purposes these should be identified as two distinct groups.

For the compulsory school age group the performance against the target rises to 81%. Each of the three sites have an education worker seconded by the relevant county council who work pro-actively to maintain effective working relationships with both the local schools and re-integration services. The education workers in Worcestershire report to a YOS/ LEA Steering Group that looked at strategic issues regarding young offenders and ensures that the appropriate policies and procedures are in place. Herefordshire are in the process of setting up a similar group with dual chairs representing the YOS and the LA. The Herefordshire post also plans to increase its time to develop links with schools in order to carry out preventative work. School exclusions remain the most significant issue for this age group and difficulties regarding ongoing financial arrangements for excluded young people remain.

For the post 16 population, performance against the target drops significantly with only 58% of young people in full time ETE at the end of the YOS intervention. The main difficulty for this group is access to appropriate ETE provision both in terms of training opportunities, entry to employment provision and access to suitable employment. The YOS & Connexions have also highlighted ongoing difficulties with establishing consistent service provision between the services and this has been reinforced by recent inspection findings of varying practice across the two counties. Unlike many authorities, there is no dedicated seconded Connexions provision to the YOS and whilst both services are attempting to ensure consistency of work between YOS workers and Personal Advisers this has not always been achieved. Strategic and operational Connexions staff have participated in the development of the ETE Delivery Action Plan and are keen to establish more effective working relationships in 2005/6. One important development for the next twelve months is the establishment of a joint strategic and operational planning group which aims to identify barriers to effective working and develop actions to overcome these. An important function of this group will be to establish the time required for effective joint working which will inform future discussions regarding the need for seconded Connexions workers. This group will also define systems for consistent referrals, intervention planning, practice delivery and information exchange as well as looking for opportunities for increased joint training to raise understanding of each agencies objectives and responsibilities. An important aspect of this work will be the clear definition of exit strategies for young people coming to the end of their statutory interventions and the role Connexions can play in this respect. The two partners will also explore opportunities to put together 'packages' of ETE, develop local directories of ETE provision and look at options for extending joint planning for young people leaving custody.

Within the YOS, further work is required to improve the consistency of referrals to the education workers, particularly in South Worcestershire and Herefordshire. This is indicative of a small number of actions that remain outstanding on the EPQA Action Plan that meant that the YOS received a final YJB rating of 2 (rather than 3). The 2005 audit established that the target scores were met or exceeded in 14 of the 16 areas of ETE effective practice with further progress required in meeting individual needs, training and the overall development of ETE Services.

SUPPORT YP ENGAGING IN ETE ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS: MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMS
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Consider ways of enhancing strategic links with key ETE agencies e.g. Connexions, Learning and Skills Council	Chief Officers Steering Group	Ongoing	Resource issues identified: joint bidding/support.	ETE PM, ISSP QA, Connexions Plan
Convene the joint YOS/Connexions Strategic and Operational Planning Group	Deputy YOS Manager	Aug 05	Operational management capacity: prioritise work.	ETE Performance Measure, Connexions Plan
Create YOS/LEA Steering Group for Herefordshire	Deputy YOS Manager	Aug 05	None	ETE Performance Measure, ETE EPQA
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Track a cohort of young people who are not in ETE to identify where the barriers are to effective joint working between the YOS and Connexions	YOS Info Team	Aug 05	None	ETE Performance Measure
Establish clear operational guidelines for joint work between the YOS and Connexions	Deputy YOS Manager	Aug 05	Agreement over level of service provision: discuss at Connexions Board/YOS COSG	ETE PM & EPQA
Improve the consistency of internal YOS referrals to Education Workers	Lead Manager ETE	Aug 05	None	ETE PM & EPQA YOS PM Framework
Implement the outstanding actions from the EPQA Action Plan	Lead Manager ETE	Aug 05	None	ETE EPQA
RESOURCES				
Explore the feasibility of Connexions worker always attending pre-release meetings	Connexions Manager	Aug 05	Resource issue: negotiate with Connexions, demonstrate results.	ETE Performance Measure ETE EPQA
Develop ETE 'packages' of provision jointly with Connexions to ensure full time ETE	Lead manager ETE	Aug 05	None	ETE PM / EPQA
Develop local Post 16 ETE provision directories	Lead Manager ETE	Aug 05	None	ETE PM / EPQA
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Develop joint training opportunities between the YOS and Connexions	Lead Manager ETE	Aug 05	None	YOS & Cxns Training Plans
Ensure all relevant YOS staff undertake the ETE Inset training	Lead Manager ETE	Dec 05	Youth Justice Board Inset resources are limited: deliver internally/joint training.	YOS Training Plan
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Improve joint work between Connexions, LSC and the YOS with the long term aim of improving post 16 ETE provision	YOS Manager	Ongoing	Operational difficulties/capacity & resource issues: address with relevant partners.	ETE PM, Connexions Business Plan, LSC Plan.

SUPPORT ACCESS TO SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES

PERFORMANCE 04/05

04/05: % YP Screened	100% (1039/1039)	04/05: % YP receiving specialist assessment in 5 days	65% (69/106)	04/05: % YP having early access to intervention	100% (29/29)
KPI: 05/06 target	100%	KPI: 05/06 target	100%	KPI: 05/06 target	100%

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

All young people receiving a YOS intervention are screened for substance misuse difficulties using Core ASSET. Application of specialist screening tools are undertaken by the Substance Misuse Workers as required on receipt of a referral. The screening tool used in Herefordshire has been rolled out to Connexions and Children's Social Care for Looked After Children and training will be provided by the substance misuse worker. Further refinements will be required following implementation. In Worcestershire there is a process of compulsory referrals for those young people scoring three or above and a discretionary referral for those scoring two or below. Whilst cases are always discussed with the substance misuse worker, this process facilitates the delivery of low tier interventions by the case manager thus increasing their awareness and skills in relation to substance use. Herefordshire will adopt this policy for 2005/6.

Of those young people screened, approximately only 10% go on to receive a specialist assessment. Compared with the number of young people scoring two or more from ASSET in 2004/5, that is over a third of all young people screened, it is evident that young people are either falling through the net or recording of referrals is incomplete. The Performance and Information Manager will instigate an audit of those scoring two or more in the last quarter of 2004/5 to ascertain reasons which of these factors is having the biggest influence. For both counties, a rigorous quality assurance process is required to ensure all young people scoring two or above are either being discussed or referred to the specialist workers (this can be achieved by checking referrals against ASSET scores using a YOS wizard). Of those who are assessed, only 65% were seen within the national target of five working days. In theory, performance against this target should have improved with the introduction of substance misuse surgeries being rolled out across Worcestershire but this trend has yet to be represented in the target data. The Performance and Information Manager will review all cases referred to surgery that fall outside the five working days to ascertain the reasons for not meeting the target. In addition, procedures will be modified in 2005/6 to ensure the Substance Misuse worker until the appropriate point of the intervention has been reached and that there is cover in Herefordshire for leave and sickness. This is likely to be via an agreement with the local Connexions worker who has been trained in early assessment.

All young people assessed as requiring a tier two early intervention receive one within ten working days, typically delivered by the YOS specialist workers. Again there is a discrepancy arising from the fact that not all assessed young people (regardless of tier) are recorded as receiving an intervention. As the workers are confident that in practice all young people assessed receive an intervention, this is almost certainly a recording issue. This will also be addressed via the development of a revised QA process which will ensure that all records are checked by the substance misuse workers. The YOS will also improve recording of the detail of substance misuse treatment plans in 2005/6.

Worcestershire have all required partnership protocols in place or in final draft ready for implementation. The YOS is well integrated into the 'virtual multi-agency team' (SPACE) and will sustain this participation in 2005/6. The Worcestershire Team are currently looking at Quality Standards for workers against the Drugs and Alcohol National Occupational Standards and Herefordshire would benefit from joining this process. There is more work required in Herefordshire where protocols are required with DASH and Transition Services. ZIGZAG is also currently the subject of review and any recommendations from the review process will need to be implemented in the next twelve months. Overall, the YOS has worked very effectively with its substance misuse partners in 2004/5 to develop assessment and treatment services. One area for investigation in the next twelve months is why referrals of young people with dependency is low from the YOS.

A further goal for 2005/6 is to continue to raise the awareness of YOS workers regarding substance misuse issues. This will be achieved via structured training delivered by the specialist workers focusing on skills, attitudes and engagement and could be supplemented by direct observations of assessment practice.

SUPPORT ACCESS TO SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS:MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMS
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Continue YOS active involvement in SPACE	DHOS	Ongoing	YOS SPACE workers located in YOS not SPACE: ongoing meetings at Ops and practitioner level.	YPSM Plan; Substance Misuse PM & EPQA
Complete review of ZIGZAG and implement required changes	HOS, YPSM Senior Pract (Hereford)	Sept 05	Resources and change process: involve key stakeholders.	YPSM Plan, Substance Misuse PM & EPQA
Finalise and implement protocols in Worcestershire and develop Herefordshire DASH and Transition Service Protocols	HOS, DHOS, YPSM Sen Pract (Hereford)	Sept 05	None	Substance Misuse PM & EPQA
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Implement a consistent referral procedure across both counties	DHOS, YPSM staff	Sept 05	Separate systems/services: agree common approach.	Subst Misuse PM & EPQA
Audit reasons for low referrals vs ASSET scores, reasons why the five target is not met in all cases and treatment vs numbers assessed and introduce a comprehensive quality assurance process	DHOS, Info & Perf Mgr	Aug 05	None	Substance Misuse OM, EPQA & YOS PM Framework.
Revise procedures so that substance misuse referrals are made at the appropriate point in the intervention period	DHOS	Aug 05	None	Substance Misuse PM, EPQA
Improve recording of YOS substance misuse treatment plans	YPSM staff	Aug 05	None	Subst Misuse PM, EPQA
RESOURCES				
Refine the substance misuse screening tool in Herefordshire following multi-agency implementation	Senior Practitioner (Zigzag)	Aug 05	None	Substance Misuse Plan, EPQA & PM.
Investigate reasons why YOS referrals of YP with dependency are so low	DHOS, Area Mgrs, Info & Perf Mgr	Aug 05	None	Subst Misuse EPQA, PM & YOS PM Framework.
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Raise YOS staff awareness of substance misuse issues via structured training and live assessment observations	DHOS, Area Team Mgrs, YPSM Wrkrs	Dec 05	Logistical requirements : identify key staff for priority training.	YOS Training Plan
Improve the consistency of ASSET scoring for the substance misuse	DHOS, Area Team Managers	Dec 05	Quality of ASSET : improve QA processes.	APIS EPQA, Subst Misuse EPQA, YOS Training Plan
Train Cnrxns and Social Care staff on use of the Herefordshire Screening Tool	Senior Practitioner	Dec 05	Capacity : identify key staff	YPSM (ZigZag) Plan
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Reach an agreement with Herefordshire Cnrxns regarding leave/sickness cover	HOS, Senior Pract	Sept 05	None	YPSM (ZigZag) Plan

SUPPORT ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

PERFORMANCE 04/05

04/05: % of YP with Acute MH Probs assessed within 5 days	100% (10/10)	04/05: % of YP with non-acute MH probs assessed in 15 days	98% (79/81)
KPI: 05/06 target	100%	KPI: 05/06 target	100%

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

The YOS have maintained impressive performance against the KPI in 2004/5. All young people with acute mental health problems were assessed in 5 working days and 98% young people with non-acute problems in 15 working days. This has been achieved via the integrated services provided by the two YOS mental health workers. In Herefordshire, this service has been enhanced since March 2005 by the addition of a CAMHS Nurse Therapist who is based in the YOS one day per week and can jointly assess young people with the YOS specialist. Additional improvement to services in Herefordshire include the raising of the CAMHS age criteria to 17 and the introduction of an Early Intervention Psychosis Team (from 13 years onwards) which the YOS is well linked into.

In Worcestershire, the YOS specialist (who is seconded directly from CAMHS) has effective links with the three CAMHS teams and typically gets prompt responses from referrals made. The specialist tends to work with young people who express a preference for a direct YOS intervention and refers other young people to CAMHS. He also has access to an Early Intervention Psychosis Service which has just confirmed funding for two additional outreach workers with whom the YOS will work closely. The age ceiling for CAMHS in Worcestershire remains at 16 and this is a considerable barrier to effective service provision for the older age group. In both counties, ongoing difficulties remain with the transition group, accessing adult mental health services and the differing definitions of mental health between child and adult services.

In addition to assessment services, the YOS delivers a considerable amount of mental health treatment services via its two workers with referrals made to the local CAMHS teams typically if medication is required. In these situations, a young person will go on the CAMHS waiting list, the length of which continue to be a significant problem in Herefordshire.

There is closer integration of the development of CAMHS and YOS Mental Health Strategies and the YOS specialists feedback priority development issues on a frequent basis. One jointly identified priority is to create an evaluation framework which aims to increase user feedback and look at longer term outcomes for young people accessing CAMHS services. The YOS specialists have creative ideas for further development of children's mental health services in 2005/6. These include: (i) the re-introduction of the Care Programme Approach into CAMHS Strategies (this would integrate well with the YOS risk led approach); (ii) formalisation of access arrangements to adult mental health services across both counties; (iii) accessing family therapy services as a core aspect of CAMHS provision which would tie in with the development of parenting services; (iv) the development of services for travellers. Each of these suggestions deserve consideration to assess their merit and feasibility. To facilitate this, the YOS Senior Managers will meet with the mental health specialists early in 2005/6 and will also review representation on strategic and operational mental health forums to ensure efficient and comprehensive representation. In addition to the practice initiatives identified above, the CAMHS protocol needs to be reviewed and updated in 2005/6.

There is a need in 2005/6 to improve the uptake of mental health training for all YOS staff. This should include ensuring both specialists are offering training opportunities to staff in their county. YOS staff in Worcestershire also need to be aware of the mapping services website which is an important community resource. Access to forensic supervision for both specialists also remains a goal for the coming year.

SUPPORT ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS-MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMS
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Convene meeting between YOS Senior Managers and Specialists to review and identify priority service developments for 2005/6	HOS, DHOS	Oct 05	None	CAMHS Strategies, NSF
Review YOS representation on strategic and operational MH forums across both counties	HOS/DHOS/CAMHS staff	Oct 05	Capacity of YOS managers : prioritise meetings.	Mental Health EPQA, CAMHS Strategies.
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Work with CAMHS Services to develop a comprehensive evaluation strategy	HOS/DHOS/CAMHS staff	Oct 05	None	CAMHS Strategies, Mental Health EPQA
RESOURCES				
Create a working group to explore the feasibility of implementing the CPA approach	DHOS/CAMHS staff	Oct 05	Agreement of CAMHS group: briefing	CAMHS Strategies, Mental Health EPQA
Explore opportunities for accessing Family Therapy as a core part of CAMHS provision	HOS/CAMHS staff	Oct 05	As above	CAMHS Strategies, Mental Health EPQA
Formalise arrangements for access to adult mental health services	HOS/CAMHS staff/CAMHS transition worker	Oct 05	Linkage with CAMHS transition work : lack of coordination with current developments.	CAMHS Strategies, Mental Health EPQA
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Offer training in both counties to improve YOS staff awareness of mental health issues	DHOS/CAMHS staff	Dec 05	None	YOS Training Plan
Ensure Worcestershire YOS staff are aware of the mapping services website	CAMHS staff	Aug 05	None	CAMHS PM
Identify forensic supervision for both YOS specialists	HOS	Oct 05	Lack of forensic service available : raise with Health.	CAMHS Strategy
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Continue the active YOS input into the development of both CAMHS Strategies	HOS/DHOS/CAMHS staff	Ongoing	None	CAMHS Strategy
Update CAMHS protocols	HOS/DHOS	Dec 05	None	CAMHS Strategies, Mental Health EPQA & PM

SUPPORT ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION

PERFORMANCE 04/05

04/05: YOS has named accommodation officer	Achieved	04/05: % of YP in suitable accommodation	91% (922/1019)
KPI: 05/06 target	As above	KPI: 05/06 target	100%

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

Performance against this KPI has remained stable over the last two years with 91% of all young people in suitable accommodation at the end of their intervention or on transfer from custody. Further analysis identifies that for two quarters the YOS hit or exceeded the YJB target but this was balanced by the other quarters when the target was not met. The overall data hides problems with regard to access to appropriate accommodation for young people on release from custody with only 74% of these young people considered to be in suitable accommodation. The YOS are concerned that reasonable performance in this area may be hiding housing need on an ongoing basis particularly with regard to inconsistent interpretation of the definition of 'suitable' accommodation. There has been issues regarding the accuracy of recording against this KPI and new guidelines have been given to staff providing further clarity on defining suitability. In addition, end of intervention checklists have been updated to include accommodation and monthly quality checks of recording are now routinely completed.

The YOS has a pro-active accommodation officer who works at a strategic and operational level to try and improve the level and accessibility of appropriate accommodation provision. Access to provision remains difficult, particularly with high risk groups (e.g. sex offenders, substance misuse difficulties, violent offenders, YP on surveillance etc). This is a difficult area to move forward strategically both because there are a substantial number of stakeholders who need to be involved in joint planning and the development of provision can take several years. Nevertheless, the YOS recognises the importance of putting considerable energy into partnership working in this area, particularly in Herefordshire where access to suitable accommodation has been identified as minimal. The YOS is not represented on the commissioning body for Supporting People and will identify opportunities to influence this agenda. It has contributed to the Supporting People 5 year strategic plan and the accommodation officer is investigating possible opportunities to bid for funding. The YOS will also continue to sit on a Worcester City Multi-agency referral panel that picks up young people with multiple needs that fall through the housing net.

Effective joint work with Social Care is essential particularly as there are difficulties with young people meeting the age (often too old) and risk (often too risky) criteria to enable access to remand placements that need to be resolved if the YOS is to be successful in reducing the number of young people receiving custodial remands. The Deputy Head of Service represents the YOS on a Steering Group set up by Worcestershire Social Services to develop a contract foster scheme which may provide limited access to YOS young people. The YOS is also developing a protocol with NCH to formalise working relationships for young people leaving care.

In terms of prevention, there is need to further develop both parenting work and mediation services in 2005/6 to try and prevent family breakdown leading to homelessness or unsuitable accommodation. Whilst there are examples of positive work, for example the jointly run parenting group between the YOS and Bromsgrove Homelessness Strategy (proper name?), these services need to be consistently available across both counties. This would also apply to the development of mentoring services both to work with the young person to prevent homelessness but also to assist the young person through the maze of processes required to look for suitable accommodation.

Overall, the accommodation officer identifies a need to improve the general understanding of YOS staff regarding the availability of local accommodation provision and how they can most effectively tap into this. One possible contribution to this will be to involve YOS staff in training events developed around the Social Services/Centrepoint protocol for 16 and 17 year olds.

SUPPORT ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS: MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMS
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Identify strategies for improving access to suitable accommodation	Accommodation Officer, COSG	Oct 05	None	Local Housing Strategies, Accom. PM, Resettlement Strategy
Continue YOS representation on all multi-agency accommodation forums	Lead Manager Accom	Ongoing	None	Local Housing Strategy, Accommodation PM
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Identify additional accommodation information to be collected by the YOS to inform ongoing needs analysis and accommodation funding bids	Accom. Officer/Info & Perf Mgr	Sept 05	Additional PM burden for staff : link to potential for new resources.	YOS Performance Management Framework
Continue revised quality assurance processes to check the quality of accommodation recording	Accom Officer	Ongoing	None	YOS Performance Management/Quality Assurance Framework
RESOURCES				
Investigate funding opportunities to fund an operational service to young people with accommodation problems in the highest need including mentoring/sessional work support to assist young people find suitable accommodation	Lead Manager Accom	Ongoing	Capacity to develop bid/previous failures to identify funding : closer links with key stakeholders	Local Housing Strategies, Accommodation PM
Review the feasibility of a YOS funding bid to the Supporting Peoples Strategy	Accom Officer	Oct 05	As above	Accommodation PM, Supporting People Strategies
Identify opportunities for closer integration of service development for YOS accommodation, parenting and RJ (mediation) provision	Lead Manager Accom	Oct 05	None	YOS Development Strategy
Increase YOS specialist accommodation resources in Herefordshire	Lead Manager Accom	Dec 05	Capacity/no dedicated resources : identify creative solution.	Local Housing Strategy, YOS Accommodation PM
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Improve YOS staff awareness of accommodation provision and routes to access this	Accom Officer	Oct 05	None	Accommodation PM
Refer appropriate YOS staff to Worcestershire SS/Centrepoint Training	Lead Manager Accom	Ongoing	None	YOS Training Plan
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Ensure access to appropriate remand foster placements for the YOS	DHOS	March 05	Ongoing slow process with SS: continued involvement, role of COSG.	YOS/Social Services Protocol & developments
Complete and implement the joint working protocol with NCH	DHOS	Dec 05	None	Accommodation PM

SUPPORT RESETTLEMENT INTO THE COMMUNITY

OVERVIEW OF 04/05

This is the first occasion the Youth Offending Service has had to comment directly on this area of effective practice in the planning process.

The YOS see this as an area of substantial development in 2005/6 both in terms of improving resettlement services for young people released from custody but also for young people coming to the end of their formal YOS intervention. The developing approach will be underpinned by findings from the EPQA Audit that will be undertaken in the summer of 2005 and the subsequent action plan developed as a result of the audit findings.

That aside, considerable planning work is already undertaken by the YOS and its custodial partners to achieve a smooth transition from custody to the community at the release point of a DTO/Section 90/1 Sentence. Planning for release is considered at the initial DTO planning meeting. In 2004/5 60% of these meetings have been held within the YJB target of ten working days following sentence. Throughout the planning process particular emphasis is placed on trying to minimise disruption to education and accommodation placements so these can be continued on release. The YOS ensures appropriate specialists are in contact with the young person during their custodial period and attend pre-release planning meetings where possible. All of this work requires the ongoing development of positive relationships with staff within the custodial institutions with priority given to Asnfield YOI due to the number of Worcestershire and Herefordshire young people it receives.

The development of a 'Resettlement Action Plan' in 2005/6 will build on current practice and incorporate the actions identified from the EPQA audit into a comprehensive plan to develop this service area. Central to this plan will be increased YOS staff awareness of the importance of clear planning for resettlement, the identification of the central issues to be addressed in the planning process and the consolidation and development of partnership working described above. Key risks to the successful development of effective policy and practice in this area are associated with the difficulties in accessing mainstream services highlighted in other parts of this plan (e.g. accommodation, mental health and ETE provision).

The YOS has been involved in regional Youth Justice Board workshops on the development of a Juvenile Resettlement strategy and it is hoped that this may provide a vehicle to further improve resettlement strategies.

SUPPORT RESETTLEMENT INTO THE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS:MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMS
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Consider ways of enhancing strategic links with other key agencies associated with resettlement	COSGHOS	Oct 05	None	Resettlement PM, Juvenile Resettlement Strategy, PPO Resettlement & Rehabilitate.
Develop a 'Resettlement Action Plan' incorporating the EPQA Action Plan to achieve a comprehensive plan for developing this service area	HOS	Oct 05	None	Juvenile Resettlement Strategy
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Complete EPQA Audit and develop EPQA Action Plan	HOS/DHOS	Oct 05	None	EPQA Resettlement
Ensure the cases of all young people released from custody are reviewed at the first available YOS Case Planning Forum	Area Team Managers	July 05	New process, still being established: review operational practice.	EPQA Resettlement
RESOURCES				
Consolidate practice of ensuring appropriate YOS specialists attend pre release planning meetings based on identified needs/risks from ASSET	Area Team Managers	Oct 05	Capacity of specialists: prioritise based on ASSET score.	EPQA Resettlement
Improve access to (and continue the development of) appropriate community services for young people being released from custody – e.g. access to Connexions, Training provision, suitable accommodation, Princes Trust and other voluntary orgs etc	Area Team Managers, HOS, DHOS	Oct 05	Capacity issues: negotiate with relevant agency.	EPQA Resettlement
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Increase YOS staff awareness of the rights and entitlements of young people released from custody (e.g. Benefits; Looked After Children eligibility etc).	DHOS, Area Team Managers	Oct 05	None	EPQA Resettlement
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Review options for more strategic and operational planning with the Ashfield YOI Management Team to improve resettlement planning	HOS, Management Team	Oct 05	None	EPQA Resettlement, DTO PM

SUPPORT PARENTING INTERVENTIONS

PERFORMANCE 04/05

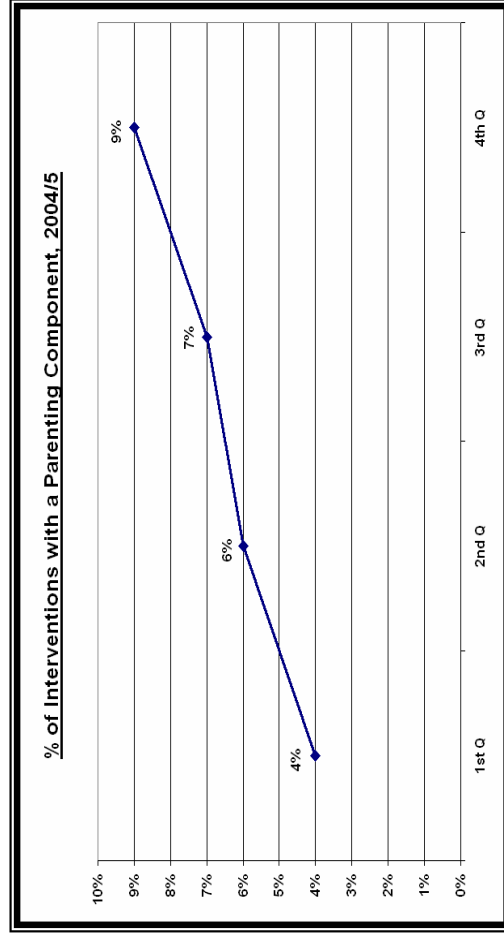
04/05: % of Interventions with Parenting	7% (60/899)	04/05: % of Parents expressing Satisfaction	95% (37/39)	2004 EPQA Rating	1
KPI: 05/06 target	10%	KPI: 05/06 target	75%	2005 EPQA Result	2

OVERVIEW 04/05

There are two aspects to the YJB Parenting KPI. With regard to the percentage of interventions with a parenting component, whilst the average for the year is 7%, the YOS have made steady progress quarter on quarter towards the 10% target (see chart). It is anticipated that this progress will continue in 2005/6 particularly as new guidelines on what constitutes a parenting intervention are being provided to all YOS staff. The YOS far exceeds the YJB target on satisfaction with 95% of parents who expressed a view saying they were satisfied or very satisfied with the YOS Service. The YOS aim to increase the number of parents providing feedback in 2005/6 as this is currently only 65% of all those receiving an intervention.

The YOS have trained 18 staff and mentors in the last twelve months (using Anti-Social Behaviour money) to deliver one-to-one parenting to supplement the group work provision. Whilst these have been utilised they have not been used to their capacity but remain an ongoing resource for future development of Services.

Whilst progress has been made in 2004/5, the YOS recognise that this is a service area where there is scope for considerable improvement in the next twelve months and have been working with TSA (Trust for the Study of Adolescence) to achieve this. Greater clarity is required on what constitutes a parenting intervention, who delivers this and where it should be evidenced to ensure it counts towards performance against the target. In 2005/6 the new Lead



Manager for parenting will convene a 'Parenting Interest Group' to define how parenting services will be developed. The group will conduct an initial audit of current parenting work both within and outside the YOS to establish what provision exists in the county and how the YOS can tap into this. The group will develop Parenting Policy and Guidance to provide clear guidance to staff on what can be counted and how this should be recorded. The parenting worker will run a series of parenting Awareness workshops to introduce the Policy. The group will also take responsibility for implementing the revised parenting assessment tool and finalising the satisfaction form both of which have recently been revised with the aid of the Trust for the Study of Adolescents.

Ongoing resourcing of parenting work is an issue. Whilst the YOS do have a worker responsible for co-ordinating and delivering parenting services, this is not sufficient to meet demand across the whole YOS area. Whilst case managers can provide a limited amount of additional resource, this is an area which would benefit from a resource review. This is reinforced by the need to integrate YOS work across parenting and accommodation and recognise the important role that effective family work can perform in contributing towards reducing homelessness. In 2004/5 there was an important community parenting project in Bromsgrove with the homelessness unit delivering local family mediation. These types of creative resource need to be evaluated with a view to extending their use across the two counties.

The development of partnership working is a key goal for 2005/6. For example the YOS would like to achieve a closer integration with the CDRPs particularly as it is possible to attach a parenting order to an ASBO without an assessment. The YOS will also continue the group work with p's Fund monies).

SUPPORT PARENTING INTERVENTIONS ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS-MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMs
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Convene the YOS Parenting Interest Group to oversee the development of this Service area	Lead Manager Parent	Aug 05	None	County-wide parenting work, Parenting EPQA
Produce Parenting Policy and Guidance document	HOS/DHOS	July 05	None	Parenting EPQA
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Complete audit of existing parenting provision	Management Team	July 05	None	Parenting EPQA
Produce guidance for staff on Parenting recording	Management Team	July 05	None	Parenting EPQA
Implement revised Parenting Satisfaction Form	Area Team Managers	July 05	None	Parenting EPQA
RESOURCES				
Implement revised Parenting Assessment Tool	Area Team Managers	July 05	Capacity of operational staff : show linkage to intervention success.	Parenting EPQA, Parenting PM
Maximise use of staff and mentors with specialist parenting training	Area Team Managers	July 05	None	Parenting EPQA, Parenting PM
Review parenting resources across both counties	HOS/DHOS/Parenting Co-ordinator	Oct 05	None	Parenting EPQA, County-wide Parenting review.
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Conduct Parenting Awareness workshops for all YOS staff	DHOS/Parenting Co-ordinator	Dec 05	None	Parenting EPQA
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Develop closer integration with the CDRPs associated with the delivery of parenting work	DHOS	Dec 05	None	Parenting EPQA, Parenting PM
Evaluate the effectiveness of the Bromsgrove Mediation Project and consider extending this to other areas.	DHOS	Dec 05	None	Parenting EPQA, Parenting PM
Contribute to the development of the 'Cradle to Teenage Parenting Support' initiative	Parenting Co-ordinator	Dec 05	None	Parenting EPQA, Parenting PM

PROVIDE EFFECTIVE RESTORATIVE JUSTICES SERVICES

PERFORMANCE 04/05

04/05: % of Victims offered opportunity to participate	59% (455/767)	04/05: % of victims expressing satisfaction	99% (97/98)
KPI: 05/06 target	75%	KPI: 05/06 target	75%

OVERVIEW 04/05

The YOS did not meet the national target for the number of victims offered an opportunity to participate in restorative justice in 2004/5. Whilst every victim is contacted the YOS have had a policy of not offering this opportunity unless a specialist young person's 'RJ' assessment indicates that any attempt at reparation or mediation has a chance of success. The YOS have implemented this policy to avoid raising false hope of positive RJ outcomes which do not materialise. The YOS will adapt this policy in 2005/6 to offer victims a 'conditional' offer to participate pending the outcome of the RJ assessment and proposes to reconvene the RJ and Victim Focus Group chaired by the new Lead Manager for RJ to clearly map the core processes to be followed by all YOS staff. Whilst the Victim Policy was updated in 2004/5, this will need to be adjusted to take account of any changes to the procedures that arise from this mapping exercise. The RJ and Victim Focus Group will also monitor the ongoing effectiveness of victim services as these are transferred to the local area teams as part of the YOS re-organisation.

Of those victims who did participate and whose views were obtained, an average of 99% reported they were satisfied or very satisfied. Whilst this suggests that the quality of service delivery is good, the number of victims participating in restorative justice processes is still significantly lower than the YOS would like. The YOS will revise the satisfaction form in 2005/6 to collect additional information to evaluate the effectiveness of the YOS Service and identify ideas for the development of a more 'victim friendly' service. The YOS made limited progress with working with corporate victims in 2004/5 and will look at other ways to engage these victims over and above the typical written apology. One possibility would be to identify a retailer who would be prepared to 'represent' corporate victims and develop reparation services with this organisation.

With regard to wider reparation services, 2005/6 will be a transition year with the responsibility for placements previously co-ordinated by YSS transferring to the YOS reparation officer. This is likely to represent a 50% increase in reparation work directly supervised by the YOS and the in-house reparation budget has been increased to reflect this. One priority for 2005/6 will be to monitor reasons for young person's non-compliance with reparation placements. With the integration of victim services into local area teams and the development of in-house reparation, the YOS will be introducing quarterly service wide RJ meetings which will bring together all relevant managers and practitioners.

The YOS have attempted to integrate the development of victim work with the local community safety partnerships. Unfortunately, four bids to the partnerships in 2004/5 for proved unsuccessful but the YOS will continue to seek opportunities for additional funding in the next twelve months to improve and expand victim services. Other priorities for partnership work in 2005/6 include: (i) the YOS involvement in the development of independent mediation services across the two counties. The availability of effective family and victim mediation could impact on the three YOS performance areas (RJ, Parenting and Accommodation) and (ii) ongoing development of the positive relationships with Victim Support in both counties.

From a quality assurance perspective the YOS needs to improve not only the process of victim work but also the way it is evidenced and recorded. There are question marks whether all victim work undertaken by the police is captured in the aggregate YOS data and the Performance and Information Manager will co-ordinate the implementation of integrated recording processes.

PROVIDE EFFECTIVE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SERVICES ACTION PLAN 2005/06

ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE	RISKS:MITIGATION	LINKS PLANS/PMs
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
Convene the RJ and Victim Focus Group to oversee the development of RJ Services	DHOS, Lead Manager	Oct 05	Resource constraints: identify alternative resources.	Restorative Justice PM
Update victim policy to incorporate revised victim processes	Lead Manager	Oct 05	None	Restorative Justice PM
PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY SYSTEMS				
Implement revised and integrated victim recording processes	Area Team Managers	Oct 05	Potential impact on victim satisfaction: review satisfaction.	Restorative Justice PM, YOS Performance Management process
Revise and implement a new Victim Satisfaction Form	Lead Manager, Victim Workers	Oct 05	As above.	Restorative Justice PM
Monitor reasons for YP not turning up for reparation work	Reparation Co-ordinator	Oct 05	None	Reparation Development Plan
RESOURCES				
Implement revised procedures for victim work	Area Team Managers	Oct 05	None	Restorative Justice PM
Continue to explore opportunities to bid for additional victim resources	DHOS, HOS	Ongoing	Capacity to develop bids: utilise template bids.	CDRP Plans, Restorative Justice PM
Expand the volume and range of in-house reparation placements including more creative provision of reparation to corporate victims	Reparation Co-ordinator	Oct 05	None	Restorative Justice PM, Reparation Development Plan
PEOPLE AND ORGANISATION				
Ensure all YOS staff are aware of revised victim processes	Area Team Managers	Sept 05	None	Restorative Justice PM
Hold quarterly RJ meetings involving all relevant RJ managers and practitioners	DHOS	Oct 05	None	Restorative Justice PM
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
Explore opportunities for the YOS to participate in the development of independent mediation services	HOS, DHOS	Ongoing	None	Restorative Justice PM
Continue to develop positive working relationship with Victim Support.	All managers	Ongoing	None	Restorative Justice PM

ENSURE EQUAL TREATMENT REGARDLESS OF RACE

OVERVIEW

The YOS have just completed a Race Audit and Action Plan (see Appendix C) to ensure that any difference between the ethnic composition of offenders in all pre-court and post-court disposals and the ethnic composition of the local community is reduced year on year. The Plan was developed by a RAAP Working Group, chaired by the Head of Service and consisting of YOS management and staff representatives and external membership from the LCJB Community and Diversity Officer, Herefordshire Race Equality Partnership and input from Worcestershire County Council Corporate Diversity Officer. The key issues arising from the plan are as follows:

- 1. Agency response to needs of BME young people:** The audit of case examples raised a number of issues that require further exploration relating to the response by agencies to the needs of BME young people. The RAAP identified that services need to obtain the views of BME young people on their experiences of services and respond to issues that are identified specifically with reference to: (i) management of alleged racist incidents within schools; (ii) young people's experiences of coming into contact with the police; (iii) response to cultural needs of young people on YOS interventions; (iv) the appropriateness of placing BME young people from out of county in rural areas whilst looked after or when leaving care and (v) responding appropriately to the needs of young BME carers.
- 2. Data quality issues:** The audit highlighted a number of young people whose ethnicities were 'unknown' on YOS systems. Actions identified were as follows: To reduce by half the number of 'unknown' ethnicity in remand decisions, offences committed and disposals by March 2006 by liaising with the Police and Courts over data quality.
- 3. Criminal Justice Processes:** The audit raised a number of issues relating to whether the YOS/Youth Justice Agencies are meeting the needs of BME young people, These are as follows; (i) the impact of ASBO conditions on young people and their ability/likelihood of compliance; (ii) the communication and explanation of bail conditions to young people; and (iii) appropriate targeting of Bail Support and Supervision services; and (iv) the impact of language used within Pre-Sentence Reports.
- 4. Contracting and partnership work needs to incorporate race and diversity issues:** The RAAP identified that there is a need to review existing SLA's and incorporate race equality statements within them, that future SLA's need to be compliant with YOS Race Equality and Diversity policy and that a YOS policy on Diversity and Race Equality within the delivery of subcontracted services needs to be developed.
- 5. Service delivery processes (strategic & operation) need to incorporate race and diversity issues:** The RAAP agreed that the YOS needs to implement an action plan to incorporate race and diversity issues more formally within service provision by monitoring the following: (i) young persons' end of order feedback analysis; (ii) changes in Asset/ ONSET (or similar) scores during intervention; (iii) national standards compliance and (iv) fairness of secure placement decisions.
- 6. Lack of engagement and involvement with BME community groups:** The YOS is engaged with a wide range of BME groups/forums and will be taking forward work to engage with BME community groups through the Local Criminal Justice Board Race Forum, working with relevant REC/Race Equality Partnerships across both Counties and through establishing links with local Faith communities. The aim of this work is to create mechanisms to enable BME input into service delivery and to influence policy and practice development.
- 7. YOS HR processes:** To date the YOS has been dependant on HR policies and procedures within its host agency (WCC). However, it is evident that there is now a need to develop YOS owned HR policies and procedures specific to the needs and culture of the organisation. This should be undertaken with all new policies and procedures being developed with the support of WCC and agreed by the Chief Officers Steering Group (Youth Justice).

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF YJ PLAN

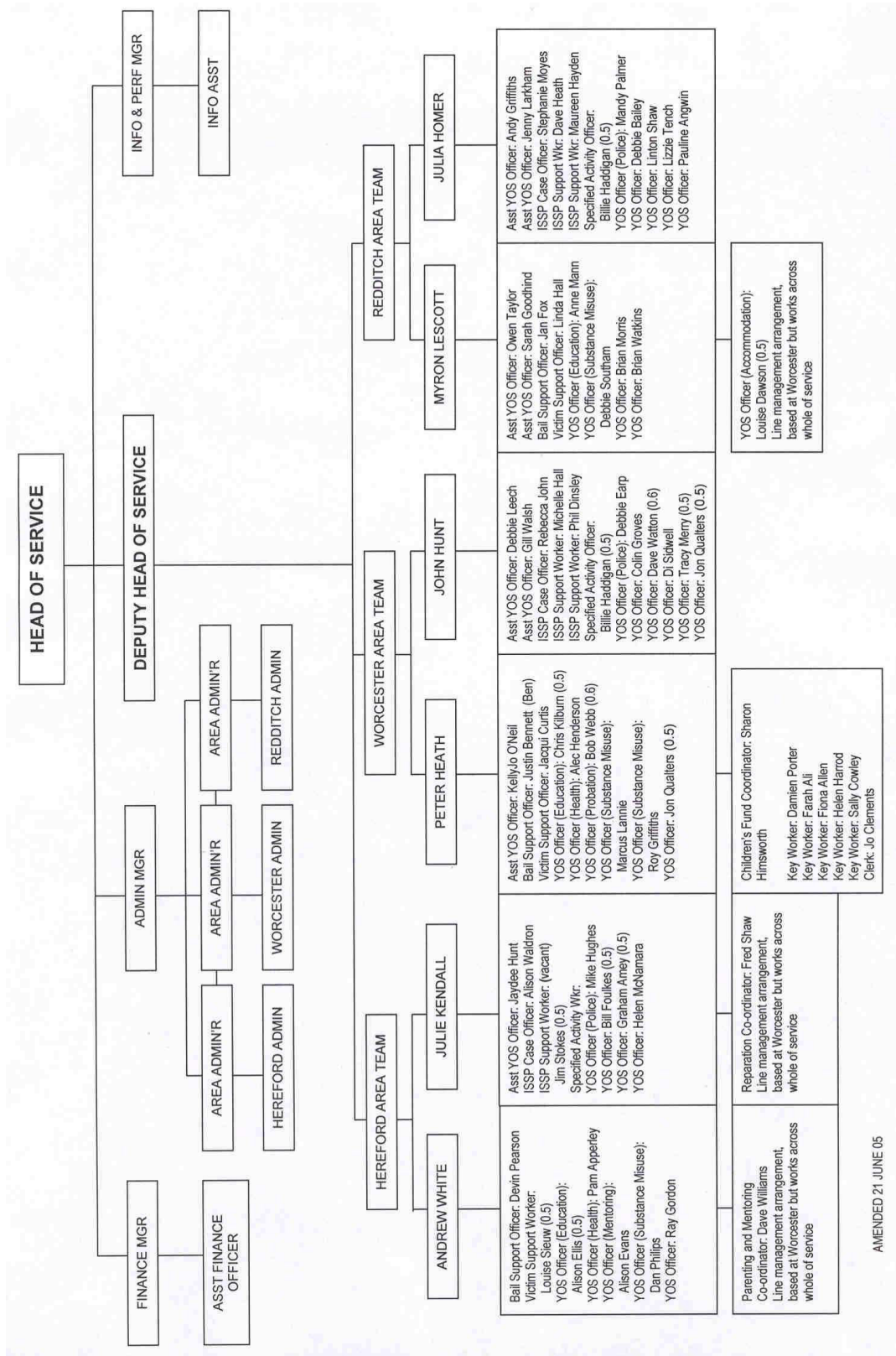
TABLE B: SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL

	Name Of Chief Officer	Signature	Date
Chief Executive Of The Local Authority	Rob Sykes		
Chief Executive of The Local Authority	Neil Pringle		
Education Department Worcestershire	Ruth Chiva		
Children's Services Herefordshire	Sue Fiennes		
Health Service: Worcestershire	Erica Smiter		
Health Service: Herefordshire	Yvonne Clowsley		
Police Service	John Molloy		
Probation Service	Helen Allen		
Social Services Worcestershire	Ann Binney		
Other Partner(s)			

TABLE C: SCHEDULE FOR REVIEW OF PLAN

Review	Review Date	Reviewer
Six month full review of progress against the 2005/6 Delivery Plan	December 2005	Management Board
Six month review on workforce planning and development	December 2005	Management Board
Quarterly review of Delivery Plan within Management Team	August, November, February, May	YOS Management Team
Monitoring of Orange or Red Performance Measures	Monthly	YOS Management Team

APPENDIX A: ORGANISATIONAL CHART



AMENDED 21 JUNE 05

APPENDIX B: PERFORMANCE MEASURES

KPIs

Theme and measure	2001 baseline	2002 outturn	2003 outturn	2004/05 outturn	2005/06 target
Preventing offending and minimising the use of custody					
Prevent offending* At least 200 young people are identified and targeted for support each year New Target for 05/06: Reduce year on year the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system by identifying children and young people at risk of offending or involvement in anti-social behaviour through a YISP or other evidence-based targeted means of intervention designed to reduce those risks and strengthen protective factors as demonstrated by using ONSET or other effective means of assessment and monitoring				155	NEW TARGET
Intervene early: Ensure that proportion of final warnings supported by interventions remains constant at 80%	79%	87%	83%	84%	80%
Provide intensive supervision in the community					
Reduce the use of custody* Reduce the number of remands to the secure estate (as a proportion of all remand episodes excluding conditional / unconditional bail) to 30%: Reduce the number of custodial sentences as proportion of all court disposals to 6%	53%	39%	37%	34%	30%
Reduce re-offending* By Dec 2004 achieve a 5% reduction based on 2000 cohort compared with 2001 after 24 months In Dec 2005 achieve a reduction of 5% based on 2001 cohort compared with 2002 after 24 months	2000 cohort % reoffending after 24 months	2001 cohort % reoffending after 24 months	2002 cohort % reoffending after 24 months	2003 cohort % reoffending after 12 months	2004/5 cohort (number Oct / Dec)
	9%	7%	6%	5.5%	6%

Theme and measure	2001 baseline	2002 outturn	2003 outturn	2004/05 outturn	2005/06 target
Pre-court	48%	41%	36%	27%	Reduction of 5%
First tier penalties	70%	69%	73%	53%	Reduction of 5%
Community penalties	76%	77%	78%	73%	Reduction of 5%
Custody	100%	90%	88%	68%	Reduction of 5%
Ensure the swift administration of justice: Ensure that 90% of pre-sentence reports are submitted within 10 days for PYOs	49%	71%	88%	93%	90%
Ensure that 90% of pre-sentence reports are submitted within 15 days for general offenders	53%	74%	91%	94%	90%
Achieving improved outcomes for children and young people who offend					
Ensure effective and rigorous assessment, planning and supervision Ensure that 100% of assessments for community disposals are completed at assessment stage	75%	90%	98%	99%	100%
Ensure that 100% of assessments community disposals are completed at closure stage	15%	78%	98%	99%	100%
Ensure that 100% of assessments for custodial sentences are completed at assessment stage	43%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Ensure that 100% of assessments for custodial sentences are completed at transfer stage	40%	88%	100%	100%	100%
Ensure that 100% of assessments for custodial sentences are completed at closure stage	15%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Ensure that all initial training plans are drawn up within 10 working days of sentences being passed	56%	70%	70%	60%	100%

Theme and measure	2001 baseline	2002 outturn	2003 outturn	2004/05 outturn	2005/06 target
Support young people engaging in education, training and employment: Ensure that 90% of young offenders who are supervised by the Yot are either in full-time education, training or employment	82%	68%	64%	71%	90%
Support access to substance misuse services: Ensure that all young people are screened for substance misuse				100%	100%
Ensure that all young people with identified needs receive appropriate specialist assessment within 5 working days				65%	100%
Ensure that all young people access the early intervention and treatment services they require within 10 working days				100%	100%
Support access to mental health services: Ensure that all young people who are assessed by ASSET as manifesting acute mental health difficulties to be referred by YOTs to the CAMHS for a formal assessment commencing within five working days of the receipt of the referral with a view to their accessing a tier 3 service based on this assessment	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Ensure that all young people who are assessed by ASSET as manifesting non-acute mental health concerns to be referred by the YOT for an assessment and engagement by the appropriate CAMHS tier (1-3) commenced within 15 working days	56%	90%	89%	98%	100%
Support access to appropriate accommodation Ensure that all Yots have a named accommodation officer and that 100% of young people subject to final warnings with intervention, relevant community based penalties or on release from the secure estate have suitable accommodation to go to			92%	91%	100%
Support resettlement into the community					

Theme and measure	2001 baseline	2002 outturn	2003 outturn	2004/05 outturn	2005/06 target
<p>Support parenting interventions</p> <p>Ensure that 10% of young people with final warnings supported by intervention and community based penalties receive a parenting intervention</p>				7%	10%
<p>Ensure that 75 % of parents participating in a parenting intervention are satisfied</p>				95%	75%
<p>Provide effective restorative justice services:</p> <p>Ensure that 75% of victims of youth crime referred to Yots are offered the opportunity to participate in a restorative process</p>				59%	75%
<p>Ensure that 75% of victims are satisfied</p>				99%	75%
<p>Ensure equal treatment regardless of race</p> <p>All YOTs to have an action plan in place to ensure that any difference between the ethnic composition of offenders on all pre-court and post-court disposals and the ethnic composition of the local community is reduced year-on-year</p>					

EPQA

Theme and measure	Initial score	Predicted score	Actual score
Preventing offending and minimising the use of custody			
Prevention: post 07			
Early intervention: Final warning interventions	2	3	2
Intensive supervision: ISSP post 07			
Managing demand for custody: Remand management 05 – 07 or 06 – 08			
Swift administration of justice: post 07			
Achieving improved outcomes for children and young people who offend			
Restorative justice and victims			
Race			
Recidivism (n/a)			
Assessment, planning interventions and supervision	2	3	2
Education, training and employment	2	2	2
Substance misuse: 05 – 07 or 06 – 08			
Mental health: 05 – 07 or 06 – 08			
Accommodation (n/a)			
Resettlement: 05 – 07			
Parenting	1	2	2

APPENDIX C: RACE AUDIT ACTION PLAN

SUMMARY OF RACE AUDIT & ACTION PLAN

The Youth Offending Service should have an action plan in place to ensure that any difference between the ethnic composition of offenders in all pre-court and post-court disposals and the ethnic composition of the local community is reduced year on year. This action plan is included in an annex within the Youth Justice Plan 2005/06.

A working group was set up in order to take this work forward. The Race Audit and Action Plan (RAAP) working group was chaired by the YOS Head of Service and comprised YOS staff/ managers, seconded staff within the YOS, the Local Criminal Justice Board Community & Diversity Officer, a representative from Herefordshire Race Equality Partnership and with additional input from the Worcestershire County Council Corporate Diversity officer. The RAAP working group undertook 3 distinct areas of work: Quantitative audit of offences, remand decisions and disposals, Qualitative audit of YOS policy and procedures and Action planning in response to the above.

The key issues arising from the plan are as follows: **Agency response to needs of BME young people, Data quality issues, Criminal Justice Processes, Contracting & partnership working, Service delivery issues (strategic & operational), Engagement and involvement of community groups, YOS HR processes.**

- 1. Agency response to needs of BME young people:** The audit of case examples for the Quantitative audit of the RAAP raised a number of potential issues that require further exploration relating to the response by agencies to the needs of BME young people. The RAAP identified that services need to obtain the views of BME young people on their experiences of services and respond to issues that are identified specifically with reference to management of alleged racist incidents within schools, young people's experiences of coming into contact with the police, response to cultural needs of young people on YOS interventions, appropriateness of placing BME young people from out of county in rural areas whilst looked after or when leaving care, responding appropriately to the needs of young BME carers.
- 2. Data quality issues:** The Race Audit & Action Plan process has highlighted a number of data quality issues relating to the ethnicity of young people known to the YOS specially the number of ethnicities that were 'unknown' on YOS systems. The actions identified by the RAAP were as follows: To reduce by half the number of 'unknown' ethnicity in remand decisions, offences committed and disposals by March 2006 by liaising with the Police and Courts over data quality.
- 3. Criminal Justice Processes:** The qualitative audit of cases for the RAAP raised a number of potential issues that require further analysis in terms of the YOS/Youth Justice Agencies meeting the needs of BME young people, They are as follows; The impact on ASBO conditions on young people and ability/likelihood of compliance; Communication and explanation of bail conditions to young people; Appropriate targeting of Bail Support and Supervision services; Impact of language used within Pre-Sentence Reports. The RAAP Agreed that there needs to be more general analysis of the conditions being applied to anti-social behaviour orders, that the methods of communication of bail conditions at the Police Station need to be reviewed to ensure that importance of keeping to bail conditions is clearly understood by young people. This includes a review of YOS responsibilities under National Standard 2.5. Also that there is a review of Remand Management and Bail Supervision Strategies and Guideline to ensure appropriate targeting for BME young people and that custody cases need to be reviewed within YOS Custody Review Forums.
- 4. Contracting and partnership working needs to incorporate race and diversity issues.** The RAAP identifies that there is a need to review existing SLA's and incorporate race equality statement within them, that future SLA's need to be compliant with YOS Race Equality and Diversity policy and that a

YOS policy on Diversity and Race Equality within the delivery of subcontracted services needs to be developed outlining requirements around quality of service provision, monitoring and evaluation of service provision by ethnicity.

5. Service delivery processes (strategic & operation) need to incorporate race and diversity issues. The RAAP agreed that the YOS needs to implement an action plan to incorporate race and diversity issues more formally within the following service provision by monitoring the following: Young persons end of order feedback analysis, changes in Asset/ ONSET (or similar) scores during intervention, national standards compliance and fairness of secure placement decisions.

6. Lack of engagement and involvement with BME community groups: Previous attempts have been made to engage with BME community groups. Work was started with the local Race Equality Council however due to issues within the local REC they were not able to complete this work with the YOS. The YOS is now engaged with a wider range of BME groups/forums and will be taking forward work to engage with BME community groups through the Local Criminal Justice Board Race Forum, working with relevant REC/Race Equality Partnerships across both Counties and through establishing links with local Faith communities. The aim of this work is to create mechanisms to enable BME input into service delivery, development and to influence policy development.

7. YOS HR processes: To date the YOS has been dependant on HR developments within its host agency (WCC) and has utilised relevant HR policies and procedures. However, it is clear that there is now a need to develop YOS owned HR policies and procedures specific to the needs and culture of the organisation. This should be undertaken within the over-arching support of the host agency (WCC) with all new policies and procedures being developed with the support of WCC and agreed by the Chief Officers Steering Group (Youth Justice).

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

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 • Assets maintained well
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 • Assets maintained well • 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 distributor 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.

REPORT OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEE

Meetings Held on 24th May and 19th July, 2005

Membership:

Councillors: R.I. Matthews (Chairman), Brig. P. Jones CBE (Vice-Chairman) Mrs. S.P.A. Daniels, G.W. Davis, D.J. Fleet, J.G.S. Guthrie, J.W. Hope, T.W. Hunt, J.W. Newman, R. Preece, D.C. Taylor, P.G. Turpin.

PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT LICENSING – APPLICATION REQUIRING A DEVIATION FROM POLICY

1. The Committee considered an application for an Occasional Public Entertainment Licence with a finishing time of later than that set out in the Council's Licensing Policies.
2. The applicant was given the opportunity to present his case, as were Officers of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Department.
3. Comments were also considered from the West Mercia Constabulary and the Fire and Rescue Authority. The Committee was mindful of the implications of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the fact that the finishing time was in place to protect the local community and individuals from disturbance by night time events within the County.
4. Having considered all the facts in relation to the application, the Committee took note of the Council's policies but was of the view that the applicant had given satisfactory evidence to suggest that the event would be well supervised in a responsible manner.
5. It was therefore decided that the following extension of hours should be granted, subject to appropriate conditions to be imposed by the Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards, but only because of the exceptional circumstances involved in the application: 'Noztock' Music Festival, Rowden Paddocks, Bromyard on 23rd July, 2005, ending at 5.00 am on 24th July.

THE LICENSING POLICY SCHEME OF DELEGATED POWERS – LICENSING ACT 2003 AND GUIDANCE ISSUED UNDER SECTION 182 OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003

6. The Committee has decided to amend the licensing policy to allow officers to grant personal licences (for an individual to sell alcohol) within the scope of the Licensing Act 2003, in cases where an applicant has unspent convictions and where there are no police objections, in line with the powers set out in Section 120(6) of the Act. Such applications must be approved and would otherwise have to be referred to the Committee for 'rubber stamping'.

KNOWLEDGE TEST – DUAL DRIVERS LICENCES – THE TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT 1847 AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976

7. The Committee has agreed in principle the adoption of a knowledge test as part of the application process for dual Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers Licence applications. The officers have been requested to provide more details about the financial implications before the scheme is implemented.

APPLICATIONS FOR DUAL HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS LICENCES – LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976

8. Two applications for the renewal or grant of Hackney Carriage/Private Hire drivers licences were referred to the Committee in accordance with the Council's terms and conditions and the advice on the interpretation of spent convictions. The applicants and their representatives gave details of the grounds for their applications and provided the Committee with the circumstances under which they had previously held them. Having considered all the facts put forward by the Licensing Manager, the applicants and their representatives, the Committee decided that the Licensing Manager should be authorised to grant the applications because they considered that the applicants were fit and proper persons under the meaning of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

**R.I. MATTHEWS
CHAIRMAN
REGULATORY COMMITTEE**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Agenda papers from the meetings of the Regulatory Committee held on 24th May and 19th July, 2005.

REPORT OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Meeting Held on 3rd June and 15th July, 2005

Membership:

Councillors: T.W. Hunt (Chairman), J.B. Williams (Vice-Chairman),
 BF Ashton, MR Cunningham, Mrs CJ Davis, PJ Dauncey, DJ Fleet, PE Harling,
 JW Hope, B Hunt, Mrs JA Hyde, Brig P Jones CBE, Mrs RF Lincoln, RM Manning,
 RI Matthews, Mrs JE Pemberton, R Preece, Mrs SJ Robertson, DC Taylor,
 WJ Walling

REFERRED PLANNING APPLICATIONS

1. The following Planning Applications were determined by the Committee because (i) they related to the Council's own development or to the development of land owned by the Council; (ii) they were applications referred to the Committee by the Head of Planning Services because the Area Planning Sub-Committees are mindful to approval/refuse them contrary to officer recommendations and Council's Policies; or (iii) they were applications by Members or their relatives.
 - (a). DCNW2005/1029/F – Erection of detached dwelling and garage land adjoining The Forge, Lingen, Bucknell, Herefordshire, SY7 0DY for: Mr and Mrs P Barnett, Bryan Thomas Architectural Design Ltd at The Malt House, Shobdon, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 9NL – refused as recommended
 - (b). DCNE2005/0709/F – Demolition of existing home and new build extra care home and day centre, with associated facilities at Leadon Bank Old Peoples Home, Orchard Lane, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1DQ FOR: Shaw Healthcare, Herefordshire Ltd per Pentan Partnership, Beaufort Studio, 1 Atlantic Wharf, Cardiff, CF10 4AH – consideration deferred for a site inspection by the Committee
 - (c). DCNC2005/0707/F & DCNC2005/0708/C - Proposed new care home and day centre, demolition of existing at Waverley House, Etnam Street, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 8AQ – approved as recommended
 - (d). DCSE2005/0879/F - Refurbishment and extension of existing home to provide 15 place day care centre and 2 crisis care flats at Woodside Residential Home, Reynolds Court, Hildersley, Ross-On-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 7NE – approved as recommended
 - (e). NE2005/0791/F & NE2005/1471/C - Demolition of former school buildings and erection of 15 dwellings at former Cradley Primary School, Cradley – approved as recommended
 - (f). DCSE2005/0795/F - Continuation of use as equine stud farm, site near Bodenham, Much Marcle, Ledbury, Herefordshire - approved as recommended
 - (g). DCSW2005/0720/F - Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 24 houses with parking and/or garages, together with associated roads and sewers, Land at Whitehouse Farm, Kingstone, Herefordshire – deferred at the request of the applicants
 - (h). DCCE2005/0032/F - Retirement village/independent living scheme with village hall and restaurant, welfare and recreational facilities, administrative and care

facilities, self-contained accommodation units and car parking. Ledbury Road Nurseries, Ledbury Road, Hereford - approved as recommended

(i) DCCE2005/0977/F - proposed development to provide 19 no. residential units, with associated garages and road/sewer infrastructure. Mill Court Village, Ledbury Road, Hereford. HR1 2SZ - approved as recommended

(j) DCCE2004/3318/F - demolish existing rear part of building and construct new kitchen, stores and Flat. 17/18 Commercial Road, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR1 2BB – approved as recommended

(K) DCCW2005/1934/T - proposed telecommunications installation. Land on the western side of the A49 (opp 245 Ross Road), Hereford HR2 7PR - It was decided that prior approval for the siting and appearance of the mast is not required

MINERALS POLICY STATEMENT 2: CONTROLLING MITIGATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL AFFECTS OF MINERAL EXTRACTATION IN ENGLAND (MARCH 2005)(MPS2)

2. An information report was received by the Committee about Minerals Policy Statement 2 which had been issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as part of its programme of modernising the Planning system. It was noted that the Statement had been issued following a detailed consultation process and that it had superseded Mineral Planning Guidance Note II “The Control of Noise at Surface Mineral Workings” (1993). The officers appraisal about each aspect of the Statement and its implications for the extraction of minerals in Herefordshire was noted. Copies of the Statement and related annexes had been placed in the Members Room at Brockington.

AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEES

3. Information reports have been received from the three Area Planning Sub-Committees which have dealt with the following matters:

(a) Northern

The Sub-Committee has met on three occasions and has dealt with the planning applications referred to it as follows:-

- applications approved as recommended - 28
- applications refused as recommended - 1
- applications refused contrary to recommendation - 2 (not referred to Planning Committee by the Head of Planning services)
- applications approved contrary to recommendation – 1 (referred to Planning Committee by Head of Planning Services).
- deferred - 2
- site inspections - 6
- number of public speakers - 23 (9 supporters, 9 objectors, 5 parish councils)
- appeals - 7 have been received and 20 determined (1 withdrawn, 5 upheld and 14 dismissed).

(b) Central

The Sub-Committee has met on three occasions and has dealt with the planning applications referred to it as follows:-

- applications approved as recommended – 16
- applications refused as recommended - 1
- applications refused contrary to recommendation - 3 (not referred to the Head of Planning services)
- applications approved contrary to recommendation - 1 (not referred to the Head of Planning Services).
- deferred - 3
- site inspections - 4
- number of public speakers - 11 (6 supporters, 5 objectors)
- appeals - 3 appeals have been received and 7 determined (2 upheld and 5 dismissed).

(c) Southern

The Sub-Committee has met on three occasions and has dealt with the planning applications referred to it as follows:-

- applications approved as recommended – 28
- applications refused as recommended – 1
- applications refused contrary to recommendation – 5 (3 were referred to the Head of Planning Services)
- applications approved contrary to recommendation - 0 (not referred to the Head of Planning Services).
- deferred - 2
- site inspections - 3
- number of public speakers - 38 (supporters - 16, objectors - 17, parish councils - 5)
- appeals - 13 appeals have been received and 8 determined (3 upheld, 3 partially upheld, 2 dismissed).

**T.W. HUNT
CHAIRMAN
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Agenda for the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 03 June and 15 July 2005.

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC MONITORING COMMITTEE

Meetings Held on 9th June, 2005 and 1st July, 2005

Membership:

Councillors: T.M. James (Chairman), Councillor Mrs. P.A. Andrews (Vice-Chairman), H. Bramer, W.L.S. Bowen, A.C.R. Chappell, J.H.R. Goodwin, Mrs M.D. Lloyd-Hayes, J.P. Thomas, W.J.S. Thomas.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2004/2005

1. The second annual report of the work of the Council's Scrutiny Committees has been prepared. A copy is enclosed separately for Members of the Council.

IMPROVING SCRUTINY SEMINAR

2. The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Scrutiny Committees have held a seminar with Directors. This reviewed 2004/05 activity; looked at how to improve scrutiny in Herefordshire using the Centre for Public Scrutiny self-evaluation framework, and examined proposals for scrutiny activity for 2005/06. An improvement programme is being prepared for discussion with all Scrutiny Committee Members. One of the proposals which will be of particular interest to Council is the intention to strengthen the relationship between Council and the Scrutiny Committees. This will be developed over the next few months.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

3. A proposal to increase public participation at all of Herefordshire Council's Scrutiny Committee meetings along the lines piloted by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee has been considered. The view has been taken that it is important that the Scrutiny Committees are able to operate flexibly and responsively. Rather than adopting a prescriptive approach it has been agreed that each Committee should determine how best to encourage public participation in its work, drawing on the experience of the other Scrutiny Committees.
4. It was also noted that the inter-relationship of the Community Forums and the Scrutiny Committees required further consideration.

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

5. The Committee called-in Cabinet's decision on 19th May on the proposed office accommodation strategy. The Committee referred the matter back to Cabinet making a number of requests. Cabinet reconsidered the matter on 23rd June, 2005 and has accepted the requests made by the Committee, agreeing to proceed with the strategy on that basis.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND INTEGRATED ANNUAL OUTTURN REPORT 2004/2005

6. The Committee has noted the revised Performance Management Framework and received the first integrated annual performance report. The Committee has concluded that performance in relation to homelessness, the social care budget and performance in determining planning applications are areas which should be subject to more detailed scrutiny.

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

7. The Committee has expressed its intention to monitor progress towards achieving the savings set out in the Council's Annual Efficiency Statement.

LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

8. The Committee has noted progress towards developing the second Local Public Services Agreement (LPSA2) with the Government and received an update on performance against the targets in the first round LPSA (LPSA1).

BEST VALUE REVIEWS

9. The Stage 3 reports of the Best Value Reviews of Private Sector Housing services and Commercial Enforcement have been approved.
10. Given the resources involved in Best Value Reviews and the changes which have taken place since the introduction of the Best Value regime the Committee has called for a report on the future approach to the Best Value review process.

PAY AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

11. The Committee has noted the Pay and Workforce Development Strategy and the associated operating plan for 2005/06.
12. The Committee had sought a report on the Council's recruitment process, which is part of the Strategy, and its cost and has now received assurances that the Council is seeking efficiencies at every stage of the recruitment process.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

13. Action undertaken to improve the health, safety and well-being of the workforce including the management of sickness absence has been noted. The Committee has expressed its concern about the level of sickness absence, whilst acknowledging the management action which has been taken. It has received an assurance that further work is being carried out to separate out long-term sickness from the statistics and identify the percentage of days lost which this represents allowing a more accurate picture of sickness absence to be established.

ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE INDIVIDUAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

14. The work of the Committees is analysed below as far as practicable under the following five roles for overview and scrutiny: holding the executive to account, best value reviews, policy development and review, external scrutiny, and improvement (performance management and review), the first four of which are identified as key roles in the report on "The Development of Overview and Scrutiny in Local Government published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister". Issues considered by the Strategic Monitoring Committee not all of which are dealt with above because they arise from its role in fulfilling its remit to scrutinise corporate matters, rather than being of Council-wide significance, are listed for completeness.
15. The Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee met on 10th June 2005 and considered the following issues:

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	
Best Value Reviews	Private Sector Housing – Stage 3 Best Value Reviews Update
Policy Development and Review	Green Paper-Independence, wellbeing and Choice
External Scrutiny	
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	Budget Monitoring Performance Monitoring
Other	

16. The newly formed Childrens' Services Scrutiny Committee held an informal meeting in June in view of its new, wider remit to discuss its future role. It subsequently held one formal meeting to consider a call-in of the Cabinet's decision on 23rd June, 2005 on denominational transport, as referred to in the Cabinet report to Council.

17. The Community Services Scrutiny Committee met on 13th June, 2005 and considered the following issues:

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	
Best Value Reviews	
Policy Development and Review	Castle Green Regeneration project Review of how to retain 18-35 year olds within Herefordshire or attract them to it.
External Scrutiny	
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	Youth Service Performance Monitoring
Other	-

18. The Committee also piloted arrangements for enhancing public participation as referred to elsewhere in this report.

19. The Environment Scrutiny Committee met on 6th June 2005 and considered the following issues:

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	-
Best Value Reviews	Commercial Enforcement – Stage 3 Report Improvement Plans
Policy Development and Review	Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11 Corporate Environment Strategy and Revised Policy Biodiversity Strategic Framework
External Scrutiny	Trunk Roads in Herefordshire
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	Capital Programme Revenue Budget GEM report Performance Indicators
Other	

20. The Health Scrutiny Committee met on 16th June, 2005 and considered the following issues:

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	
Best Value Reviews	
Policy Development and Review	Patient and Public Involvement Forums - Protocol
External Scrutiny	
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	Provision of Ear, Nose and Throat Services New General Medical Services Contract 2004-2005
Other	Work Programme

21. The business conducted by the Strategic Monitoring Committee at its meetings on 9th June and 1st July, 2005 is summarised below.

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	Call-in – Office Accommodation
Best Value Reviews	Private Sector Housing Services (Stage 3) Commercial Enforcement – Stage 3
Policy Development and Review	Performance Management Framework Local Public Service Agreement Pay and Workforce Development Strategy (Work Programme – Strategic Scrutiny Reviews 2005/06) Public Participation at Scrutiny Committees
External Scrutiny	
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	Integrated Annual Outturn report 2004/05 Annual Efficiency Statement – 2004/05 Health and Safety Annual Report
Other	

22. Future activity planned to date includes a review by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee of how to retain 18-35 year olds within Herefordshire or attract them to it, consideration by the Environment Scrutiny Committee of performance in processing planning applications, reviews by the Health Scrutiny Committee of the GP out of hours service and communication and morale, and reviews by the Strategic Monitoring Committee of recruitment, ICT services and the operation of the Council's contract with Herefordshire Jarvis Services.

**T.M. JAMES
CHAIRMAN
STRATEGIC MONITORING COMMITTEE**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Agenda Papers of the meetings of the Strategic Monitoring Committee held on 9 June and 1 July, 2005.

REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Meetings held on 17 June and 8 July 2005

Membership:

Robert Rogers (Independent Member) (Chairman); Councillor John Edwards, Councillor John Stone; Richard Gething (Town and Parish Council Representative); John Hardwick (Town and Parish Council Representative); David Stevens (Independent Member),

COUNCILLOR PETER HARLING

1. We paid tribute to Councillor Peter Harling for his outstanding contribution to public service and in particular to the Standards Committee; and we welcomed Councillor John Stone to the Committee following his appointment as Vice Chairman of the Council.

APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATIONS RECEIVED FROM TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILLORS

2. We have granted a dispensation in respect of Bartestree Village Hall Committee to a new member of Bartestree with Lugwardine Group Parish Council who has replaced a former councillor. We have also granted dispensations to four Mathon Parish councillors who are trustees of Mathon Village Hall Management Committee.

PROTOCOL ON THE USE OF COUNCIL RESOURCES BY MEMBERS

3. We have given further consideration to the draft protocol on the use of Council resources by Members. It is now much shorter (with detailed ICT provisions removed) and, we hope, helpful. All Members have been consulted on this final draft.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That the revised protocol set out in Appendix 1 to this report be adopted.

ANNUAL REPORT 2004/05

4. We have prepared our second Annual Report, which covers the Committee's role, its membership, work programme and current issues. The report reflects another very busy year for the Committee. We have sought to ensure that Herefordshire demonstrates best practice and is at the forefront of national developments. The regulation of standards is now part of public life, and plays an important part in enhancing and maintaining public confidence; but the credibility of the system in local government, as elsewhere, depends upon it being open, fair and proportionate. These principles are at the heart of our approach. We are circulating the report to Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority, the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils, Town and Parish Councils in the County, the Standards Board for England and the local media. The report is attached to this report (Appendix 2) and is also available on the Council's website.

DETERMINATIONS BY THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND

5. We have considered progress reports on current investigations by the Standards Board for England in respect of complaints of alleged misconduct against certain councillors. We noted that the number of cases outstanding had reduced significantly and that the SBE is making good progress in dealing with the backlog.

REFERRALS FROM THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND

6. The Standards Board for England has referred two complaints against local parish and town councillors to the Council for investigation under the provisions of the Local Authority's (Code of Conduct)(Local Determinations) Regulations 2003 (as amended). Although we have already held local hearings of complaints, these two cases are the first to be investigated locally. We have met to consider the findings of the investigating officers (from the County Secretary and Solicitor's Department), and will hear the cases on 26 July 2005.

**ROBERT ROGERS
CHAIRMAN
STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Agenda papers of the meetings of the Standards Committee held on 17 June and 8 July 2005

PROTOCOL ON THE USE OF COUNCIL RESOURCES BY MEMBERS**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Herefordshire Council Member Code of Conduct provides that, when using Council resources, you must ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate the functions of the Council or of any office to which you have been elected or appointed.
- 1.2 A breach of this Protocol is a breach of the Code and carries penalties up to and including disqualification from office.
- 1.3 If you are in any doubt about the application of this Protocol, you should seek advice from the County Secretary and Solicitor.

2. Council Resources

- 2.1 These include: the use of Council premises; ICT equipment such as computers and software; telephone and fax; photocopiers; stationery; postage; Council transport; secretarial and clerical support; and allowances and expenses

3. Permitted use

- 3.1 Except as set out in Section 5 of this Protocol, you may use Council resources only on Council business. If you represent the Council on outside bodies you may use Council resources to assist you in this role, and this Protocol applies to such use.
- 3.2 You may use Council resources for political purposes where that use will facilitate the functions of the Council or any office you hold at the Council. This will include e-mailing colleagues in your and other political groups registered with the Council (this will include the Independent Group), setting up political group meetings and conducting discussions on policy with political colleagues locally, regionally or nationally.

4. Prohibited use

- 4.1 You may not use Council resources:
 - For the publication of material which, in whole or in part, appears designed to affect public support for a political party. This includes campaigning leaflets and correspondence.
 - For mass mailings, even if these are related to Council business.
 - During an election period to promote yourself or others as candidates to the electorate.

5. ICT equipment

- 5.1 You may make modest personal use of Council-installed computers but you must not permit others (for example, family members) to do so.

6. Use of the herefordshire.gov.uk address

- 6.1 The Council is statutorily prohibited from publishing material designed to affect public support for a political party. You must therefore not use your Council e-mail address (name@herefordshire.gov.uk) for this purpose nor, on a matter of controversy, to promote a point of view which is associated with a political party.
- 6.2 E-mails from your official address will be seen to be associated with the Council and may get preferential treatment, or may be thought by the public to be seeking such treatment. You should not therefore use the address for placing orders and similar activity as a private individual.
- 6.3 You will be provided with a personal e-mail address to allow modest personal use of ICT equipment as permitted in Section 5.

Herefordshire Council
July 2005

DRAFT

Standards Committee

Annual Report 2004-05



1. The Standards Committee was established under section 53 of the Local Government Act 2000, which required the Council to adopt a code of conduct to replace its existing one, and to incorporate all the mandatory provisions of the Model Code of Conduct issued by the Secretary of State. We first met on 8th February 2002, and agreed to recommend adoption of the Model Code of Conduct without amendment (save to include a gender neutral approach), and to recommend to Town and Parish Councils that they also adopted it. Council adopted the Code on 8th March 2002.

2. Our functions are: to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the members and co-opted members of Herefordshire Council; to assist members and co-opted members to observe their code of conduct; to advise on the adoption and revision of codes of conduct; and to advise, train, or arrange to train members and co-opted members on matters relating to the code of conduct. We carry out the same functions in respect of the 134 Town and Parish Councils for which the Council is the responsible authority. We also have the duty of carrying out local hearings and determinations of complaints referred to us by the Standards Board for England.

3. Our membership in 2004/2005 was:
 - **Robert Rogers (Independent Member) (Chair):** Mr. Rogers has been in the service of the House of Commons since 1972 and is one of the Principal Clerks and a Clerk at the Table. During his time at the House he has been involved in every area of its work including postings as Clerk of the Select Committee on Defence, Clerk of Private Members' Bills, Clerk of the Select Committee on European Legislation, and Principal Clerk of Select Committees. He is married with two grown-up daughters and has lived in the County since 1977. He is also Chair of the Standards Committee of the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority.

 - **Councillor Peter Harling:** Councillor Harling has been a local authority Councillor for forty-four years, formerly with Ledbury Urban District Council, Malvern Hills District Council and Hereford and Worcester County Council. He was Chairman of Herefordshire Council until 13 May 2005. He is also a member of Ledbury Town Council, the Herefordshire Society, is on the Board of Malvern Hills Conservators, and is a Director of St Michael's Hospice, Bartestree. He is retired, having worked in the Motor Industry for thirty-eight years. He lives in Ledbury and is married to Sue, with two grown up daughters and two granddaughters.

 - **Councillor John Edwards:** Councillor Edwards was Vice-Chairman of Herefordshire Council until 13 May 2005 when he became Chairman. He helped to found How Caple, Sollers Hope and Yatton Group Parish Council in 1974, and has been a member ever since. He has been a churchwarden for forty-four years, was County Chairman of the Young Farmers Club in the fifties, and represented local farmers at National level. He is a farmer and landowner in How Caple, and is married with a grown up daughter and two sons, and six grandchildren.

 - **David Stevens (Independent Member):** Mr Stevens is the Chairman of Herefordshire Young Enterprise and West Mercia Crimestoppers, and formerly Chairman of the Area Council of the Herefordshire Chamber of Commerce, and an independent member of the West Mercia Police Authority. He worked for many years with Bulmers' Export Department. He lives in Hereford city, and is married with three grown up children.

 - **Richard Gething (Parish Council Representative):** Mr Gething is Chairman of the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils, Bridstow Parish Council and the Local Access Forum, and Vice-Chairman of the Herefordshire Rural Police Community Consultation Group. He is a retired Army Officer, and currently Co-Director of a management consultancy company (public and private sector). He is married with two grown up sons and lives in Glewstone.

- **John Hardwick (Parish Council Representative):** Mr Hardwick farms in the Fownhope area and for many years has been involved in service to the local community. He is currently Vice-Chairman of the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils Executive Committee, and was formerly the Chairman of Fownhope Parish Council.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2004-05

4. We list below the main features of our work over the past year. Where required, our decisions have been ratified by the full Council.

2 JULY 2004:

- **Protocol on the use of Council resources:** We considered a draft protocol with the key principle that public resources should not be used to further private interests or be improperly used for political purposes. The draft was based on the policy developed for employees and other users of the Council's network to provide guidance for use and to minimise the Council's exposure to technical and legal risk. We also needed to ensure compliance with the provisions of section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986 which prohibits local authorities from publishing political material. Technology had moved on significantly since the 1986 Act; there had been a huge increase in the use of ICT in everyday life; and we felt that the Act was imprecise on the nature of "political use". We sought the views of the Standards Board for England.
- **Planning Code Of Conduct – Revisions:** We reviewed the Planning Code of Conduct following the decision of the Court of Appeal in Richardson. The Court had taken the view that a member of an authority attending a Council meeting could not, simply by declaring he attended in his private capacity, divest himself of his official capacity as a Councillor. He was still to be regarded as conducting the business of his office and only by resigning could he shed that role. There were implications about whether an agent could speak or attend a meeting on behalf of a Councillor and on this we sought from the view of the Standards Board for England.

15 OCTOBER 2005

- **Protocol on the use of Council resources:** We re-examined the draft protocol in the light of the views of the Standards Board for England and consultation with the Members Development Working Group. The Board was of the view that Councillors were not prevented from using Council IT resources for certain political purposes. We were surprised at this, as the Board's advice was appeared to be at odds with the 1986 Act and the interpretative circulars issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. There was also the fact that the Adjudication Panel for England had disqualified a Member for a breach of the Code of Conduct when he used a council computer for private purposes and had allowed his family to do so as well. We decided to pursue the matter further, and to consult all Councillors on the final draft before it was submitted to Council.
- **Planning Code Of Conduct – Revisions:** We heard that the Standards Board for England had not produced formal advice on the matter but had informally supported our approach. We also noted that the Constitutional Review Working Group was in favour of the changes as part of the overall review of the Constitution. We gave further consideration to guidance about planning applications in which a member of the Council had an interest. We noted that the law on the use of agents suggested that an agent could not speak or attend a meeting on behalf of the Councillor in these circumstances. The Board took a contrary view but had produced no formal guidance. We therefore decided that formal clarification should be sought from the Board and submitted with our recommendations to Council.

- **Inquiry into the Role and Effectiveness of the Standards Board For England:** The House of Commons Select Committee on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions) was carrying out an inquiry into the role and effectiveness of the Standards Board for England. We submitted written evidence, among other things emphasising the need for quicker complaint resolution, and making the case for a more decentralised operation of the standards system, with greater local involvement.
- **The Freedom Of Information Act 2000 and the implications for The Standards Committee:** We examined the implications for the work of the Committee, concluding that the great majority of our proceedings and papers are open, but that the Act provided adequate exemptions when confidences (as in local investigations and hearings) might need to be protected.
- **Training and Development:** We attach the highest importance to training for Councillors and increased awareness of the requirements of the Code. The emphasis should be on prevention rather than sanction. A number of events were put on during the year with a Code of Conduct training element. We have co-operated closely with the Hereford Association of Local Councils and support the work it does in this respect.
- **Public Interest Report - Kington Town Council:** Following the publication of a report by the District Auditor on Kington Town Council, we have provided support to the Council in the agreement and implementation of an Action Plan to improve the functioning of the Council. Our Chairman and the County Secretary and Solicitor have since had a series of meetings with Kington Councillors to follow this up.
- **Local Determination of Complaints** We finalised the arrangements for hearing the first complaint against a local Councillor referred to us by the Standards Board for England. Although we have powers to appoint a panel for the hearing we preferred the whole Committee to be involved, especially as it was the first hearing to be dealt with locally.
- **Discussion with Mr Paul Hoey of the Standards Board for England:** We had a frank and most constructive discussion with Mr Paul Hoey, Head of Policy and Guidance at the Standards Board for England. We began by raising our concerns about the time taken for dispute resolution. The Board was receiving an average of 3,500 allegations per year, and its target was to resolve up to 75% of these through means other than investigation. The decision to investigate or not was now taken within ten days in 90% of cases and the Board making great efforts to improve resolution times. The introduction of the Local Investigations Regulations in September 2004 meant that up to 60% of the Board's investigative work was likely to be referred back to local authorities gradually over a three-year period. The Board would then deal only with those matters which required a higher level of sanction to be imposed by the Adjudication Panel, which involved senior members (because of potential conflicts of interest with Monitoring Officers), or which were 'test cases' which used to set precedents for good working practices. The Board's primary function would become to strengthen the role of Standards Committees and Monitoring Officers in order to develop a 'prevention rather than cure' strategy. We welcomed this as being supportive of our own approach. We ended by discussing the Standards Board's review of the Code of Conduct and some of the issues arising.
- **Committee on Standards In Public Life 10th Report: "Getting The Balance Right":** We considered the Tenth Report from the Committee on Standards in Public Life: Getting the Balance Right: Implementing Standards of Conduct in Public Life. We had submitted evidence to the inquiry (available on the Council's website) and gave a broad welcome to the recommendations, especially to the conclusion that the system for determining complaints should be locally based with the exception of the most serious cases.

- **Lobby Groups, Dual-Hatted Members and the Code Of Conduct:** We considered recently issued guidance the Standards Board for England about lobby groups, "dual-hatted" members and the Code of Conduct. We had some concerns that the Council's Planning Code of Conduct conflicted with the Board's that the Code of Conduct does not automatically prevent members from considering the same planning application at more than one level of Local Government, including speaking and voting at both levels. We felt that the Council's Constitution offered the higher standard of conduct and the firmest guidance on what was potentially a highly controversial area. We decided in the light of the guidance that there was some scope for greater flexibility, but identified the risk that, if a local ward councillor had voted on an application at town or parish level, this would be seen by the public as predetermination. We recommended an amendment to the Constitution to reflect this, providing that the view expressed at local level should not be definitive. This was later adopted by the Council.
- **Public Interest Report - Kington Town Council:** We considered progress on the Action Plan for Kington Town Council following the District Auditor's public interest report.
- **Hearing on 4 March 2005:** We reviewed the conduct of our first local hearing which had taken place on 14 January 2005 and fine-tuned our administrative and other arrangements in readiness for our second hearing on 4 March 2005.

1 APRIL 2004

- **Draft Protocol On The Use Of Council Resources By Members:** We considered a further draft of the protocol, with the assistance of recommendations from the Member Development Working Group.
- **" A Code For The Future" : Standards Board for England Consultation on the Code of Conduct for Members:** The Standards Board was reviewing the Code's content with the aim of ensuring that it was easily understood and took account of the realities of serving local communities as a member of a local authority. We have submitted written evidence, which is available on the Council's website.
- **Local Investigations and Determinations:** We discussed the new powers for Ethical Standards Officer to refer complaints for local investigation by Council Monitoring Officers, and the implication that up to 50% of investigations would be carried out locally. We noted the guidance for decisions on local referrals and the increased sanctions available to Standards Committees. We authorised the County Secretary and Solicitor to update the Committee's procedure for local determinations.
- **Town and Parish Councils:** We considered the Standards Board's paper Problematic Parishes, outlining its work in supporting the local parish council sector in compliance with the Code of Conduct. We noted proposed practical measures to support Town and Parish Councils, including the development of diagnostic tools, early warning and prevention strategies for parishes, and working with the National Association of Local Councils and Standards Committees to develop good practice. We are pursuing a number of issues in partnership with the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils.
- **Notification of Financial and Other Interests Form:** We reviewed the form which must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer by all town and parish councillors within 28 days of their election. The requirement for the review had stemmed from a recent Standards Committee Hearing when it had been suggested that the form should be clearer, particularly in relation to Section 6 (beneficial interests in land). We agreed that additional guidance was needed, that it would be helpful if HALC included an article in its newsletter reminding town and parish councillors to update their interests on the Register.
- **West Mercia Independent Members' Forum:** We considered the minutes of the inaugural Forum meeting held on 10 March 2005; the agreement that the Forum should be permanent; and its likely method of operation. We had had concerns that a Forum of this sort, limited to one category of Standards Committee Member, might affect the cohesive approach of Committees such as ours. However, on the basis of the Forum's first meeting we felt that there was a real need for Independent Members in some authorities to be more effectively supported. We felt that it would be useful for our Independent Members to attend the Forum and report back.

- **Review of Standards Committee Hearings:** We reviewed our first two local hearings on 14 January and 4 March 2005 expressed concerns that the sanctions available are insufficient, especially in view of the level of costs of hearings to the Council and to the Standards Board. There is also the problem that the sanctions do not differentiate between County Councils, which meet frequently, and some Town and Parish Councils which might meet only four times a year. We decided to raise these points at the Annual Assembly of Standards Committees.
5. During 2004-05, we have also continued to monitor investigations by the Standards Board for England about complaints which have been made against Town and Parish Councillors. We have dealt regularly with requests from Town and Parish Councils for dispensations (that is, for cases when the number of Councillors who have declared an interest would impede the transaction of business if they were to withdraw).

CURRENT ISSUES

6. We now have considerable experience in the complex business of conducting local hearings, on which we will continue to build. It is impossible to predict the number of referrals we will receive in the coming year and the impact that they might have on staffing and other resources. We will continue to monitor the situation and report to Council as necessary.
7. Our membership has changed for 2005/2006 with the resignation of Councillor Peter Harling as Chairman of the Council. We pay tribute to his outstanding contribution to public service and in particular to the Standards Committee. We have much appreciated his wide experience and sound judgement. We congratulate Councillor John Edwards on his election as Chairman of the Council and welcome Councillor John Stone, the new Vice-Chairman of the Council, to the Committee. Councillor Stone joined the Council in 2000 having been in the teaching profession for many years. He was a member of Brimfield and Little Hereford Parish Council for ten years and is a churchwarden of St Michaels, Brimfield. He has held a number of offices with the Council including Vice-Chairman of the Education Scrutiny Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Social and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee, Chairman of the Courtyard Review Group, a Member of the Herefordshire Local Admissions Forum and Chairman of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education.

CONCLUSION

8. This report reflects another busy year for the Committee. We have sought to ensure that Herefordshire demonstrates best practice and is at the forefront of developments nationally. Codes of conduct, and the regulation of standards issues, are now part of public life. There is no doubt that they play an important part in enhancing and maintaining public confidence. The credibility of the system in local government, as elsewhere, depends upon it being open, fair and proportionate. These principles are at the heart of our approach.

Herefordshire Council

Standards Committee

July 2005

REPORT OF THE STATUTORY ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Meeting Held on 11th July, 2005

Membership:

Councillors Mrs. P.A. Andrews, G.V. Hyde, T.M. James, R.J. Phillips, R.M. Wilson.

1. CHAIRMAN

The Committee elected Councillor R.J. Phillips as its Chairman for the ensuring Council year.

2. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Statutory Accounts Committee was set up in 2003 to approve the Council's Statement of Accounts as set out in Standing Order 9.7 of the Constitution. It comprises the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member (Resources) and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Strategic Monitoring Committee. It is a statutory requirement that the Council's 2004/05 Statement of Accounts is formally approved by 31st July, 2005. This date will be brought forward again next year so that the approval deadline for the 2005/06 Statement will be 30th June, 2006.

The Committee has approved the Statement of Accounts including the final Revenue and Capital Outturn for 2004/05. It has also approved the formal signing of the Statement of Accounts by the Chairman of the Committee on behalf of the Council and the signing of the Statement of Internal Control. The Statement was made available at INFO centres, in libraries and on the Council's website and on request. All notices contain contact details for anyone seeking further information. An article summarising the Statement will appear in the next edition of Herefordshire Matters.

The Committee has noted the information in respect of redundancies and early retirements in 2004/05 and about the Council's bank accounts as at 31st March, 2005.

The Committee has also noted that the Council's external auditors had issued an unqualified certificate in respect of the accounts for 2003/04.

3. AUDIT COMMITTEE

Over the last few years most public sector organisations have set up audit committees. Generally these are thought to be an essential aid to a corporate overview of the internal control environment.

In 1996 the Audit Commission published *Called to Account* which discussed the need for audit committees in local authorities. In particular it saw the need for one committee to deal with the following issues in a way which ensured they were not seen as peripheral to main business:

- internal control and audit performance, which are key corporate governance components
- the integration of internal and external audit and the follow up of the implementation of audit recommendations
- raising the profile of internal control and the management of audit resources in the organisation.

Historically, adoption of audit committees in local government has not been universal, because of their unique constitutional, legal and operating environment.

One of the major difficulties cited for audit committees is the political nature of local authorities and this needs to be dealt with if the committee is to add value to the running of the Council. Most councils agree that the audit committee must act apolitically if it is to be successful. Where audit committees are in place the main business transacted by them is:

- promoting internal control – the systematic appraisal of the controls which help the Council protect its assets and resources. The audit committee can ensure these can be monitored as part of a regular process. This should extend the commitment to an anti-fraud culture in the authority. Thus reports of special investigations, reports of the extent of fraud etc should all be taken here. Within this head is also the regular review of financial procedures
- focusing audit resources – the approval of audit plans, monitoring the quality of audit delivery and performance, ensuring excellent collaboration between the auditor and officers, approving the final accounts, responding to audit recommendations and monitoring the progress on implementation of these recommendations.

The presence of an audit committee allows a corporate response to these issues which potentially would not be available from a more general committee.

The County Treasurer has advised that the Council should consider widening the remit of the current Committee to do this. A proposed set of revised terms and conditions for the Committee would be as follows:

To provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process through consideration of :

- (a) the terms of reference for Internal Audit*
- (b) the Internal Audit strategy*
- (c) the resourcing of Internal Audit*
- (d) the periodic plans of Internal Audit, progress against and material changes made to these plans, and any implications arising from their findings and opinion*
- (e) the adequacy of management response to Internal Audit advice and recommendations*
- (f) the Head of Internal Audit's annual report*
- (g) the arrangements made for co-operation between Internal Audit, External Audit and other review bodies*
- (h) periodic reports by External Auditors*
- (i) approval of the Council's Statement of Accounts and associated reports.*

It is also recommended that the Committee becomes politically proportionate and its current membership be revised to facilitate this.

4. REVISING THE CONSTITUTION

Any proposal to revise the Constitution is required under Standing Order 4.31 to be firstly considered by the Cabinet and Strategic Monitoring Committee before being

agreed by Council. However, the Council can agree to suspend this Standing Order and agree these proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Statutory Accounts Committee provided at least two-thirds of the Council are present at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL THAT:

- (a) **Standing Order 4.31.1 (Changes to the Constitution) be suspended in accordance with Standing Order 4.32 to allow the Council to consider the proposed variations to the Name, Composition and Terms of Reference of the Statutory Accounts Committee as detailed in the Report;**
- (b) **Standing Order 9.7 be revised so that the Statutory Accounts Committee be re-named the Audit Committee and that its membership be increased, if necessary, to reflect political proportionality;**
- (c) **Standing Order 9.7.2 be revised so that the terms of reference of the Audit Committee be as follows:**

To provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework and the associated control environment, independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process through consideration of :

- (a) the terms of reference for Internal Audit*
- (b) the Internal Audit strategy*
- (c) the resourcing of Internal Audit*
- (d) the periodic plans of Internal Audit, progress against and material changes made to these plans, and any implications arising from their findings and opinion*
- (e) the adequacy of management response to Internal Audit advice and recommendations*
- (f) the Head of Internal Audit's annual report*
- (g) the arrangements made for co-operation between Internal Audit, External Audit and other review bodies*
- (h) periodic reports by External Auditors*
- (i) approval of the Council's Statement of Accounts and associated reports.*

and

- (d) **the Chief Executive be requested to execute his delegated powers to make, following consultation with the political group leaders, any adjustment to the number and allocation of seats to give effect to the rules on proportionality, and to make appointments to the Audit Committee in accordance with the nominations of the political group leaders.**

**R.J. PHILLIPS
CHAIRMAN
STATUTORY ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Agenda papers of the Meeting of the Statutory Accounts Committee held on 11th July, 2005.

**REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
WEST MERCIA POLICE AUTHORITY
HELD ON 7 JUNE 2005**

Chair and Vice Chair

1. At the Annual Meeting of the Authority held on 7 June 2005 Mr Paul Deneen (Ross on Wye) and Mr Alan Thompson (Bringsty, Worcestershire) were appointed Chair and Vice Chair respectively for the ensuing year. Both are magistrate members.

Thank you to Past Chair

2. The Authority thanked the outgoing Chair, Mr Bob Forster for his excellent leadership, dedication and commitment over his past two years of office. Mr Forster will continue as an independent member of the Police Authority.

Membership of the Police Authority

3. Following the County Council elections in May 2005 the following councillor members have been appointed to the Authority for a four year term:

Mrs S Blagg	Worcestershire County Council
Mr J-P Campion	Worcestershire County Council
Mr M Kenny	Shropshire County Council
Mr R Peachey	Worcestershire County Council
Mr E Sheldon	Worcestershire County Council
Mrs M Winckler	Shropshire County Council

4. The Authority placed on record its appreciation of the following former councillor members, all of whom had served for at least four years:

Mr J Cairns	Mr W Morris
Mr A Davies	Mr D Wicksteed
Mrs J Davy	

Performance 2004/2005

5. The performance figures for 2004/2005 indicate a reduction in total recorded crime of 11%, a 19% reduction in domestic burglary and a 15% reduction in violent crime. The Police Authority in congratulating the Chief Constable and his officers consider it vitally important that these trends continue so that West Mercia becomes an even safer place in which to live and work.

6. A summary of the key results is shown below:

- Total crime recorded 95,127 compared to 106,831 last year. Reduction of 11%.
- Sanction detection rate 26.4% (up from 21.3% a year ago)
- Domestic Burglary 19% reduction (4790 recorded) and detections up 6% to 25.5%
- Vehicle Crime 9.8% reduction in volume and detections up 3.8% to 16.1%

- Violent Crime 15.1% reduction in volume and detections up 3.4% to 67.9%
- The last time that total crime, domestic burglary and violent crime were below these levels was five years ago in 2000/01.
- The last time that sanction detection rate was above 26% was seven years ago in 1998/9.

Investors in People

7. In May 2005 West Mercia Constabulary was recognised as meeting the Investors in People standard – a nationally recognised and rigorous performance benchmark reached by only a handful of Constabularies. The Chair congratulated the Constabulary on this achievement and particularly the members of staff who were involved in the process of achieving the award.

8. The assessors particularly highlighted the pride, commitment and enthusiasm shown by police officers and staff, a factor that puts West Mercia Constabulary among the top organisations so far accredited.

9. Among the positives highlighted were:

- Process such as PDR (Performance and Development Review) is becoming embedded, with staff recognising their usefulness to development and performance management.
- Very strong and visible leadership at all levels, with a high degree of teamworking.
- A strong performance focus ethic, but which is combined with sharing of good practice and recognition of individual achievements.
- A strong focus on staff welfare, including flexibility in working practices.

Capital Programme

10. The Police Authority has agreed an upgrade to the custody facilities at Shrewsbury Divisional Headquarters at a cost of £1,560,000 in order to provide a custody suite of sixteen cells, three interview rooms, two consultation rooms and one holding cell. The Scheme is subject to planning approval.

Border Arrangements

11. Shared Border Arrangements have been introduced between the Herefordshire Division and the Powys Division of Dyfed Powys Police, which is the first scheme that crosses a national boundary. The six-month pilot commenced on 1 April and there has already been some very positive co-operation between the Divisions.

12. Cross-border initiatives also exist with Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Midlands. These currently cover three areas: Central Motorway Police Group (CMPG), Regional Task Force and Counter Terrorism Support Unit. The four Police Authorities are considering a process for ensuring an appropriate level of Accountability and Governance for these joint-force initiatives.

Recruitment and Retention of Police Officers and Staff

13. The Authority agreed in February 2002 to increase the number of police officers by 300 and the target of securing an overall Force strength of 2400 police officers was achieved in July 2003. Since that decision a further five police officers have been added to the full establishment.

14. As at 1 June 2005 the overall strength was 2387 although 18 probationers joined on the 6 June 2005 to take the strength back up to 2405. 33 police officers (1.38%) and 26 (1.5%) police staff are from visible minority ethnic background.

15. The Constabulary has been conducting Exit Surveys of people leaving and these have been of limited success. Exit interviews have now been introduced and the Police Authority will be receiving reports on their results.

16. A number of Positive Action Initiatives for Recruitment, Retention and Progression have also taken place over the past few months designed to encourage women and people from ethnic minority groups to consider a career with West Mercia Constabulary. There have been informal drop-in events and recruitment seminars, together with workshops and guidance on applications. Contacts have been retained on a database and the Positive Action Team has been involved in specific interventions in under-represented areas. Consideration is being given to extending this initiative to police staff.

Neighbourhood Policing

17. The Government White Paper has a commitment for every community to have access to a Neighbourhood Policing Team by 2008. This is a significant initiative that could have substantial resource implications and the Police Authority is awaiting a further report from the Chief Constable on the detailed costs. The reconstituted Community Policing Boards will play an important part in monitoring the impact of these new teams at the divisional level.

National Quality of Service Commitment

18. Every Police Force has to have in place National Standards of Service by November 2006. The National Quality of Service commitment and the National Policing Plan required all Forces to have an action plan in place by April 2005 setting out how they will meet the November 2006 deadline. It is estimated that the resource implications for West Mercia in terms of Information Technology support, training, staff development, etc will be in the region of £1 million.

19. The Police Authority, in agreeing the Implementation Plan, has asked the Chief Constable to give consideration as to how progress will be monitored, together with the introduction of a mechanism for dealing with complaints about quality of service issues. This will include how the role of the Police Authority as a contact point for the public could be developed.

Quality of Life Indicators

20. The Audit Commission's report "Using Quality of Life Indicators" identifies quality of life as those things that make an area a good place to live in. The 2001 MORI survey for the Commission identified crime levels as being one of the important issues that make somewhere a good place to live.

21. Quality of Life Indicators generally sit within long term community strategies, overseen by Local Strategic Partnerships, and the Constabulary is already an active participant in those.

22. The Authority has considered the results of the Constabulary's Crime and Safety Survey as they relate to Quality of Life indicators, divided into three categories

- (i) How worried are our citizens about something that may happen to them
- (ii) How much of a problem do they consider particular incidents to be – and what is the biggest problem in their area
- (iii) What is the one problem in their area, which, if addressed, would make it a better place to live?

23. In relation to the final category the top ten issues, as identified by respondents to the survey were, and in no particular order:

- ◆ Tackle teenagers (wandering streets / threatening behaviour)
- ◆ More police presence
- ◆ Tackle speeding vehicles
- ◆ Tackle drugs
- ◆ Tackle vandalism
- ◆ More activities for young people
- ◆ Reduce litter
- ◆ Tackle drunken behaviour
- ◆ Better parking
- ◆ More street lighting

Race Equality Scheme

24. The Police Authority has published its revised Race Equality Scheme and this takes into account the recommendations arising out of the Commission for Racial Equality's Formal Investigation into the Police Service.

25. The Authority's Scheme links in closely with the Constabulary separate Scheme and key areas that are addressed are:

- the recruitment, training and management of police officers;
- monitoring of these areas by the police service and police Inspectorate; and
- how police authorities and forces are meeting the statutory general duty to promote race equality, and related specific duties to publish a scheme and carry out employment monitoring.

Health and Safety

26. The Police Authority has agreed a Health and Safety Policy and Strategy for the Constabulary and which covers the period 2005 to 2010. This followed an examination of health and safety in West Mercia and aims to drive proactive ill health and accident reduction.

27. A member of the Police Authority sits on the Constabulary's Health and Safety Group and a report will be presented annually on health and safety issues.

Force Training Strategy

28. The Police Authority has also approved the Force Training Strategy 2005-2008, which sets out the commitments to training and development as a means of helping all staff achieve the skills needed to perform their roles efficiently and effectively. The Strategy includes an Annual Costed Training Plan and a Performance Development Review.

Special Priority Payments

29. The Police Reform Programme provides for a local scheme for Special Priority Payments targeted at front line and operational police officers in particular. The Scheme requires annual ratification by the Police Authority and Home Office. In developing the Scheme for 2005 special consideration has been given to police officers who work significantly long hours for payment and to those officers who undertake frequent periods of stand-by.

30. West Mercia's Scheme allows for payments of between £500 and £3000 (or £5000 in exceptional cases). The cost is anticipated to be £1.5m of which £1.2m will be met by a specific Home Office grant.

Questions on Police Matters at Council Meetings

31. The Authority is required to nominate a member to answer questions on the discharge of the functions of the Police Authority at meetings of the relevant councils and the following members were appointed for 2005/2006:

Herefordshire Council	Mr B Hunt
Shropshire County Council	Mrs M Winckler
Telford and Wrekin Council	Mr J Hicks
Worcestershire County Council	Mr E Sheldon

Police/Community Consultative Groups (PCCGs)

32. The Authority has appointed the following members to attend meetings of PCCGs during 2005/2006

Bridgnorth	Mrs M Winckler
Bromsgrove	Mrs S Blagg/Mr A Thompson
Bromyard and District	Mr B Hunt
Droitwich Spa	Mr E Sheldon
Evesham and Pershore	Mr Z Padda
Hereford	Mr P Dunford
Herefordshire Rural	Mr P Deneen
Kington	Mr B Hunt
Leominster	Mr B Hunt
Malvern	Mr J Champion
North Shropshire	Mr R Forster
Oswestry	Mr R Forster
Redditch and District	Dr G Nathan
Shrewsbury	Mr M Kenny/Ms Pready-James
South Shropshire	Mr M Kenny/Ms Pready-James
Telford and Wrekin	Mr J Hicks/Mr A Selvaratnam
Worcester	Mr R Peachey
Wyre Forest	Mr J-P Campion

Signed on behalf of the
West Mercia Police Authority

P Deneen
Chair

Further Information

Any person wishing to seek further information on the subject matter of this report should contact David Brierley or Ian Payne on Shrewsbury (01743) 344314.

Further information on the West Mercia Police Authority can also be found on the Internet at www.westmercia.police.uk

List of Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of the Police Authority) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda papers for the Annual Meeting of the West Mercia Police Authority held on 7 June 2005.