

**To: All Members of Cabinet:  
R.J. Phillips (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**

**Chief Executive's Office**  
Chief Executive: N.M. Pringle  
Your Ref:  
Our Ref: NMP/CD  
Please ask for: Mr. N.M. Pringle  
Direct Line/Extension: (01432) 260044  
Fax: (01432) 340189  
E-mail: npringle@herefordshire.gov.uk

23rd September, 2005

Dear Councillor,

**MEETING OF CABINET  
THURSDAY, 29TH SEPTEMBER, 2005 AT 2.15 P.M.  
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD**

#### **AGENDA (05/15)**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**3. CAPITAL STRATEGY**

To approve the Council's revised Capital Strategy. *(The Strategy is attached separately).  
(Pages 1 - 62)*

**4. CHANGE FOR CHILDREN**

To advise Cabinet of progress on "Moving towards a Children's Trust", Integrated Services and the position locally on Safeguarding Children. *(Pages 63 - 98)*



**5. CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY**

To note the Strategy and endorse proposals for the way forward for change management.  
*(The Strategy will be circulated shortly) (Pages 99 - 132)*

**6. STAFF OPINION SURVEY**

To note the report on the key findings of the Staff Opinion Survey 2005. *(Pages 133 - 136)*

**7. HEREFORDSHIRE THINKS RURAL - ACTION PLAN**

To agree the accountabilities set out for each element of the Herefordshire Thinks Rural Action Plan. *(Pages 137 - 150)*

**8. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT FRAMEWORK**

To give consent for an outline Local Area Agreement (LAA) proposal to be submitted to Government Office West Midlands (GOWM) by the 30th September 2005.  
*(Pages 151 - 204)*

**9. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

To approve the Council's Communications Strategy for 2005/06. *(Pages 205 - 246)*

**10. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY**

To agree the updated Community Involvement Strategy and related long term action plan.  
*(Pages 247 - 270)*

**11. REVIEW OF RELOCATION OF THE LIVESTOCK MARKET**

To consider any reference from the Strategic Monitoring Committee following the call-in of Cabinet's decision on 1st September, 2005 in relation to the Relocation of the Livestock Market. *(A report will be tabled at the meeting if necessary.)*

Yours sincerely,



**N.M. PRINGLE  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**



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





## **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, Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees.
- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the Council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title.
- 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.

Please Note:

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

The Council Chamber where the meeting will be held is accessible for visitors in wheelchairs, for whom toilets are also available.

A public telephone is available in the reception area.

### **Public Transport links**

- Public transport access can be gained to Brockington via the service runs approximately every half hour from the 'Hopper' bus station at the Tesco store in Bewell Street (next to the roundabout junction of Blueschool Street / Victoria Street / Edgar Street).
- The nearest bus stop to Brockington is located in Old Eign Hill near to its junction with Hafod Road. The return journey can be made from the same bus stop.

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



Where possible this agenda is printed on paper made from 100% Post-Consumer waste. De-inked without bleaching and free from optical brightening agents (OBA). Awarded the Nordic Swan for low emissions during production and the Blue Angel environmental label.

# **COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

## **FIRE AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

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

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

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

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

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





# CAPITAL STRATEGY

SEPTEMBER 2005

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

29TH SEPTEMBER, 2005

---

### Wards Affected

County-wide.

### Purpose

To approve the Council's revised Capital Strategy.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

### Recommendation

**THAT the Strategy be approved.**

### Reasons

Cabinet is required to approve the medium term strategy for capital investment. This will serve to influence capital programme considerations in future years. The strategy also provides a comprehensive view on all capital issues.

### Considerations

1. The Capital Strategy has been updated and is included in an appendix to this report. The purpose of the document is to give the Council a detailed overview of the capital programme over the medium to long term and the resources available to fund it.
2. There are several key issues within the Strategy which are worth highlighting for consideration:
  - The Capital Strategy is intrinsically linked to the Herefordshire and Corporate Plan and their objectives and priorities. It is important, however, to ensure current investment pressures, which are not always prominent in such plans, are fully recognised. There needs to be a balance, therefore, between the investment in existing assets and in new initiatives.
  - The relaxation of borrowing powers through the Prudential Code has had a significant and positive impact on the Council's capital programme.
  - Prudential borrowing within the constraints of capped Council Tax increases.

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Steve Cameron, Principal Financial Policy Manager (01432) 261865

- The policy of increasingly seeking to fund assets over their actual life will continue, thus minimising the build up of debt over the long term.
  - A realisation that there are several major strategic issues which will be affecting the capital programme in the future, not least the Edgar Street Grid, Local Area Agreement, office accommodation and associated projects.
3. The Strategy is reviewed annually following the setting of next year's capital programme. The national finance settlement will have a bearing on this, as will the revisions made to the Corporate Plan. Affordability and the investment 'gap' as always will be the key concerns and the Council will continue to search for new funding streams and innovative ways in procurement to address these. This will be particularly relevant for investment in schools and the public infrastructure required for the Edgar Street Grid project.

### **Alternative Options**

There are no alternative options.

### **Consultees**

Not applicable.

### **Risk Management**

The Council needs to take a strategic view on investment issues to ensure there is proper alignment with the Herefordshire and Corporate Plans. It also needs to ensure that short-term investment decisions do not adversely impact on longer-term requirements and affordability concerns are properly taken account of.

### **Background Papers**

Capital Programme Report to Cabinet February 2005

# Herefordshire Council Capital Strategy

**September 2005**

**Capital Strategy Group**  
Financial Policy  
Brockington  
Hafod Road  
Hereford  
HR1 1SH

Telephone:  
Hereford (01432) 261865



# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## **SECTION A - CONTEXT**

1. Introduction
2. Herefordshire Characteristics
3. Capital Programme Financial Background
4. Property Background

## **SECTION B – CAPITAL STRATEGIES**

5. Introduction
6. The Herefordshire Partnership
7. Capital Investment Management
8. Capital Planning Process
9. The Capital Investment Framework
  - 9.1 Transport
  - 9.2 Housing
  - 9.3 Children's Services
  - 9.4 Other Services
10. Capital Investment Priorities and Allocations
11. Capital Monitoring Process
12. Reviewing Capital Strategy and Investment Performance

## **SECTION C – LONG TERM VISION**

13. Introduction
14. Links to Partners
15. Approaches to Consultation
16. Links to Other Relevant Strategies and Plans

## **CONCLUSION**

## **APPENDICES**

1. The Herefordshire Partnership
2. Local Transport Plan (LTP)
3. Housing Investment Strategy (HIS)
4. Education Asset Management Plan (EAMP)
5. Property Strategy
6. Asset Management Plan (AMP)
7. Carbon Management Action Plan
8. Corporate Environment Strategy
9. Capital Planning Process Diagram
10. Accommodation Strategy
11. Prudential Borrowing Allocations 2004/05 & 2005/06
12. Medium Term Financial Plan - Revenue Budget 2005/06

## **GLOSSARY**

## SECTION A - CONTEXT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The objective of this Capital Strategy is to provide a framework within which the Council will work with its strategic partners to: -

- Support the immediate and longer term goals of the Council's Corporate Plan
- Support the ambitions of the Herefordshire Plan
- Assess the options for investment in capital assets
- Prioritise investment in capital assets
- Maximise the efficient use of limited capital resources
- Allocate resources in support of shared ambitions
- Ensure resources are applied to meet legal obligations
- Attract and support external investment
- Ensure Council property is properly maintained
- Ensure a robust monitoring and review process is in place for capital projects
- Ensure a comprehensive appraisal and challenge process is in place for potential new projects

1.2 A corner stone of the Capital Strategy is for the Council to consider a number of fundamental points:

- **What it wants to do**

The Capital Strategy needs to have a longer term vision of 10 to 15 years. Producing a truly corporate capital programme requires commitment from the Corporate Management Board (CMB) and from Cabinet for specific capital investment to meet the objectives of the vision. The capital programme must reflect the strategic objectives of the Council and the proactive management of its assets.

- **What it needs to do**

Short term departmental service pressures and maintenance backlogs may override long term corporate strategic issues. Projects to ensure that legal requirements are met have to be done, as do those which involve essential maintenance. At its simplest the capital programme has to balance these short term operational pressures with addressing the longer term vision and objectives of the Council.

- **What resources are needed**

It is simply not possible to afford everything the Council wants to do in the short and medium term from existing and forecast resources. A longer term strategy is therefore needed to ensure resources are targeted to those areas that best fit the vision.

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- **What resources are available**

The Council is heavily reliant on Supported Borrowing through the Government's Revenue Support Grant and other specific grants to fund its capital programme. Such funding is generally only notified on a short term basis which makes it difficult to make longer term plans. Limited capital receipt reserves may be used if available but these need to be maintained at a prudent level to support future commitments. Prudential Borrowing may be used but the capital financing costs are a direct charge to Council Tax. Members have agreed an annual 'planning target' of £5 million per year for Prudential Borrowing to support the Capital Programme.

# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## 2. HEREFORDSHIRE CHARACTERISTICS

- 2.1 Herefordshire is a rural county situated along the southern part of the English / Welsh border. The landscape is one of beautiful rolling hills and wide river valleys with historic black and white villages, a few larger market towns and the ancient city of Hereford. The County has a long agricultural tradition and is an important centre for British cider making. The economy is diverse with over 7,000 businesses.
- 2.2 Herefordshire has an area of 218,283 hectares - over 95% of which is rural land. It has a population of 177,800 people and one of the five lowest county population densities in England. Hereford City is the main administrative, leisure and commercial centre and has a population of 54,800. The market towns of Leominster (population of almost 11,100), Ross-On-Wye (10,100), Ledbury (9,200), Bromyard (5,800) and Kington (3,200) are the other main settlements.
- 2.3 Herefordshire Council came into being on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1998 as a single tier unitary authority with 58 elected members. The current political makeup of the council is Herefordshire Liberal Democrats (16), Conservatives (21), Independents (17) and Labour (4). An alliance of the Conservative and Independent Groups form the administration.

## 3. FINANCIAL BACKGROUND

The following tables detail the anticipated resources available to fund the capital programme and the indicative budgets over the next three years.

### 3.1 Capital Programme Resources - 2004/05 to 2007/08

	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicative</b>	<b>Indicative</b>
	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Supported Capital Borrowing	17,270	13,679	13,766	13,247
Unsupported Prudential Borrowing	2,733	7,607	5,000	5,000
Grants & Contributions	8,751	11,055	5,703	3,234
Capital Receipts	4,328	4,511	3,299	3,324
Net Revenue Contributions	116	279		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33,198</b>	<b>37,131</b>	<b>27,768</b>	<b>24,805</b>

### 3.2 Capital Budget by Programme Area - 2004/05 to 2007/08

	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Indicative</b>	<b>Indicative</b>
	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Highways and Transportation	12,994	13,424	11,759	12,259
Strategic Housing	3,098	10,325	7,705	5,325
Children's Services	5,746	6,655	3,251	2,763
Adult and Community Services	5,932	3,801	433	125
ICT Services	1,919	2,576	2,233	1,933
Property	2,568	350	250	250
Service Improvement Plan	941			
Unallocated Prudential Borrowing			2,137	2,150
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33,198</b>	<b>37,131</b>	<b>27,768</b>	<b>24,805</b>



## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- 3.3 The tables do not include external funding which has not been confirmed. Significant external funding will be needed for specific schemes such as the Rotherwas relief road unless significant additional Government support is received.
- 3.4 Also not included is funding which is devolved directly to schools as this does not form part of the Councils' capital programme. Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) gives maintained schools direct funding to help support the capital needs of their buildings. It is initially allocated to the local education authorities (LEA) who must then allocate the funding directly to schools using a simple formula based on a standard amount and pupil numbers. In general this funding should be invested as per the priorities agreed and identified in the local Asset Management Plan. The funding can be rolled forward for up to 3 years to enable larger projects to be planned. For example DFC allocated in 2004/05 may be rolled forward until 2006/07, and under the latest Standards Fund criteria must be spent and claimed by 31 August 2007. The total allocation of DFC for Herefordshire for 2005/06 is £2,933,000 with indicative amounts of £3,703,000 for 2006/07 and £3,925,000 for 2007/08. The only limit on the size of a project that can be supported by DFC relates to the amount of DFC that can be accumulated by a school.
- 3.5 The tables do not highlight the gap between investment need and available resources (bearing in mind the level of backlog capital maintenance) but they do take into account current disposal plans for other surplus assets. They assume a level of borrowing in line with current Supported Capital Expenditure levels together with an annual level of Unsupported Prudential Borrowing which has been built into the Council's revenue forecasts.
- 3.6 The Council has limited scope to generate its own capital resources however the property portfolio is kept under continual review to release scarce resources for reinvestment, a policy central to the Property Strategy. The Council is committed to pursuing public/private partnerships as a means of bridging the resource gap it faces, continuing its success at partnership working to secure additional funding.
- 3.7 The Property Strategy (**Appendix 5**) looks at the Council's top service and organisational priorities which in turn drive the property objectives and shape the property vision. This influences the way property is managed and requires suitable systems in place to measure and report on property performance. The implementation plan for the property strategy sets out the process for Service Area reviews and Area Property reviews leading to a Capital and Revenue plan for property by December 2005. The Property Strategy gives a clear programme of action to allow the Council to consider addressing property maintenance backlog issues.

# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## 4. PROPERTY BACKGROUND

4.1 This table shows the assessed maintenance backlog of the Council's assets across its main service areas as at March 2005. The table only shows the overall extent of the portfolio as the values (shown as at March 2004) are mainly discounted replacement cost values rather than market values and may reflect tenancies granted rather than vacant possession. The Property Strategy detailed later in this document sets out a policy of reviewing and challenging property holdings with a view to making disposals as appropriate to rationalise assets and generate capital receipts for further investment.

DIRECTORATE	NO. OF ESTABS	PROPERTY TYPE	BACKLOG £'000	VALUE £'000
<b>Childrens Services</b>	14	High Schools	5,958	63,960
	84	Primary Schools	6,112	61,526
	4	Pupil Referral Units	55	1,136
	4	Special Schools	294	4,203
	1	LEA Pool	63	115
<b>Environment</b>	1	Buttermarket	170	1,321
	52	Car Parks	1,553	4,170
	1	Cattle Market	122	1,534
	4	Cemeteries/Crematoria	23	268
	4	Industrial Estates	491	10,551
	35	Public Conveniences	95	1,467
	69	Smallholding Farms	931	4,249
	9	Highways Depots	268	1,636
	9	Shops	44	2,069
	1	Countryside Park	12	707
	<b>Adult &amp; Community Services</b>	9	Leisure Centres/Pools	625
9		Libraries	60	3,968
6		Heritage Centres/ Museums	239	1,182
12		Picnic Sites	0	67
6		Registry Offices	28	174
7		Tourist Information Centres	38	0
6		Youth Centres	130	976
13		Social Services Premises	327	6,241
<b>Support Services</b>		38	Offices	1,688
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Numerous	Miscellaneous	442	16,054
<b>Totals</b>			<b>19,768</b>	<b>195,399</b>

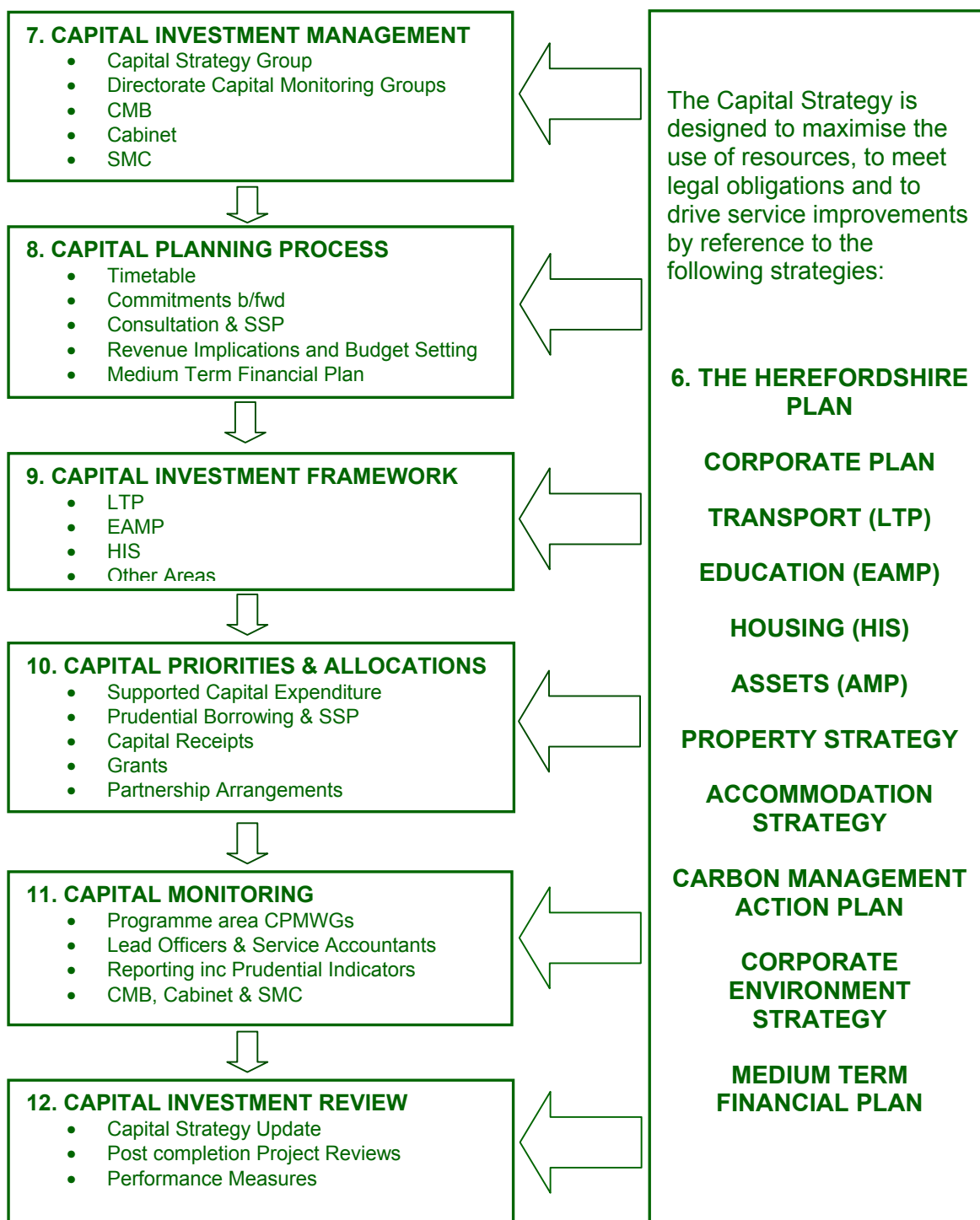
Notes to support data –

1. *This is not a comprehensive breakdown of all properties but instead covers principal properties; some properties are still to be surveyed.*
2. *Backlog figures cover all known planned local authority maintenance expenditure over a five-year period. Herefordshire Council commissions condition surveys on a rolling basis. The use of total figures for a five-year period provides a consistent basis of expressing the backlog, given the spread of survey dates.*
3. *The multi-occupancy nature of many of the Herefordshire Council properties means that both the maintenance backlog figures and the valuation figures may not be under the service category listed. For example, some Registrars offices are located within larger general-purpose offices.*
4. *The backlog figures represent the cost of bringing each asset into an ideal state of repair. This is not necessarily a reasonable expectation in the medium term.*

## SECTION B – CAPITAL STRATEGY

### 5. INTRODUCTION

5.1 This section of the capital strategy looks at the framework within which the Council operates in order to manage, develop, monitor and review the capital programme and how it prioritises its investment in the infrastructure of Herefordshire.



# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

5.2 The Corporate Plan will drive the Capital Strategy at a fundamental level. A number of strategies are incorporated within this overarching plan which include:

- The Herefordshire Plan (Appendix 1)
- Local Transport Plan (Appendix 2)
- Housing Investment Strategy (Appendix 3)
- Education Asset Management Plan (Appendix 4)
- Property Strategy (Appendix 5)
- Asset Management Plan (Appendix 6)
- Carbon Management Action Plan (Appendix 7)
- Corporate Environment Strategy (Appendix 8)
- Accommodation Strategy (Appendix 9)
- Medium Term Financial Plan (Appendix 12)

## 6. THE HEREFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP – ‘HEREFORDSHIRE PLAN’

6.1 The **Herefordshire Plan** - the Community Strategy for Herefordshire - is currently being reviewed. The current review has now moved into consultation with Ambition Groups, interest groups and geographic communities. This will feed into a major, countywide consultation event “**The Herefordshire Conversation**” in June 2005.

6.2 The Council is part of the ‘Herefordshire Partnership’. There is widespread commitment amongst local organisations to the concept of “One Partnership, One Plan” for Herefordshire that will provide an overarching framework to link the needs and aspirations of local people to specific policy agendas and individual organisations’ business plans. The Herefordshire Plan (**Appendix 1**) is the Community Plan and it provides a vision of the County in 2010 that the Partners are coordinating efforts to attain. It outlines the vision, principles and ambitions for Herefordshire. The Corporate Plan augments the link between high level ambitions and the delivery of those ambitions through the activity of individual Directorates. The Council’s own service plans and its financial, capital, human resource, asset management and Information & Communication strategies are all developed to support the Partnership’s 10 stated ambitions.

6.3 The Council is determined to target its efforts and resources into delivering outcomes in support of the Herefordshire Plan ambitions. The Council is nearing the successful completion of its first Local Public Service Agreement with the Government, which was targeted at the ambitions of the Plan. A second Local Public Service Agreement is currently being constructed as an opportunity to further commit to the Vision. The Council’s performance management framework ensures that the services identified in the Plan as being most important to the community are reflected in the LPSA and the Council’s statutory and other business plans. The over-riding aim of the Council’s capital and revenue strategies is to ensure that financial resources are matched to its strategic priorities.

6.4 The Herefordshire Plan identifies the key strategic partners that make up the Herefordshire Partnership. They are: -

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- Advantage West Midlands
  - Herefordshire Council
  - Primary Care Trust
  - Voluntary Organisations
  - West Mercia Constabulary
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - Learning and Skills Council
- 6.5 A significant recent development is that the Council has been selected to develop a Local Area Agreement (LAA) Single Pot proposal for agreement by Ministers early in 2006 with a subsequent start in April 2006. Herefordshire's case is entitled "Herefordshire's Journey to Prosperity - Action to 2020". The proposal is to deliver a shared fifteen year vision with local partners to tackle disadvantage and transform the economy of the County by 2020. The vision is focused on transforming the local economy, with Hereford City as the hub driving the regeneration of the whole County. This reinforces the role identified for Hereford as a sub-regional employment and service centre in Regional Planning Guidance. The Vision is that Herefordshire is a place where people, business and an outstanding natural environment will together bring about sustainable prosperity and well-being for all.
- 6.6 In essence, the action proposed is to bring together existing regeneration programmes in Hereford City into a single transformational regeneration programme to ensure that Hereford is able to succeed as a major sub-regional employment, service and retail centre that will act as a focus for the long term regeneration of the whole County.
- 6.7 The action will concentrate on prioritisation, partnership and pooling of budgets for a single Hereford City programme based on delivering higher skills, better infrastructure and higher paid jobs. The concrete outcomes will be a vibrant and prosperous City centre, a successful and prosperous community in South Wye, including an unblocked Rotherwas Industrial Estate and the Herefordshire Learning Village. These outcomes will in turn have a significant impact on rural Herefordshire including its market towns and will help to maintain balance in the County's economy.
- 6.8 This approach will deliver joined up action and ensure a step change in the City's regeneration. The joined-up approach will also ensure more efficient delivery of individual programmes consistent with the Government's drive for efficiency. A single programme will provide reduced management and monitoring costs and will ensure the opportunity for shared procurement, as well as providing the basis for linking activities in individual programmes to produce better overall results.

## 7. CAPITAL INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The Council has a Corporate Capital Strategy Group (CSG) responsible for strategic issues and service area Capital Programme Monitoring Working Groups (CPMWG) responsible for operational issues. Members are involved at various stages of the process, having input at bid submission (Scheme Selection and Prioritisation process (SSP)) and reports are submitted to Cabinet, Strategic Monitoring Committee (SMC). Members will be involved as part of the process of reviewing and challenging SSP bids at both planning and monitoring stages via the CSG. The CSG reports to the

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

CMB and receives strategic guidance on an ongoing basis.

- 7.2 The Assistant County Treasurer chairs the CSG. The Head of Service (Corporate and Customer Services) and the Head of Business Services (Social Care and Strategic Housing) together with the Property Services Manager are the members of the group. The group is supported by the Principal Financial Policy Manager and the Capital Accountant. The working group currently meets bi-monthly and is responsible to the CMB for: -
- Developing and maintaining the Council's medium term corporate Capital Strategy.
  - Developing the Council's annual capital programme including resource allocation, project selection and monitoring arrangements.
  - Developing and maintaining the Council's medium term corporate Asset Management Plan.
  - Developing and maintaining the Council's corporate property acquisitions and disposals policy.
  - Promoting capital strategy and asset management issues throughout the Council
- 7.3 The CPMWGs are responsible to the CSG for ensuring that the agreed capital monitoring arrangements are effectively and efficiently deployed and that best practice is identified and shared. The Principal Financial Policy Manager chairs the CPMWGs and provides the link between the strategic and operational working groups. Meetings are arranged at appropriate points in the monitoring timetable. The CPMWGs are supported by the lead officers who oversee each specific project and the accountants involved in capital programme management. Regular reports on financial progress compared to the capital expenditure budget for the year are prepared for Officer and Member attention as part of the corporate reporting framework.

### 8. CAPITAL PLANNING PROCESS

- 8.1 The Council reviews its approach to capital planning in order to ensure that the Capital Strategy delivers a capital programme that matches investment to the Council's key priorities and hence those of the Herefordshire Plan. The process diagram shown in **Appendix 10** outlines the annual timetable of events that will be followed unless influenced by statutory obligations or other factors outside the Council's direct control. The process diagram includes the feedback loops to show how consultation and developments in statutory and other local service plans inform the Capital Strategy.
- 8.2 The capital planning process begins with a review of existing statutory and local service plans, consultation feedback and the overall investment/disposal needs coming out of service reviews and Business Excellence (EFQM) assessments, in order to identify the key priorities. Outturn information from the previous year and an assessment of the likely level of future resources is also made and used to update the Capital Strategy by rolling it forward one year. At the same time, the capital Scheme Selection and Prioritisation (SSP) process will be reviewed and updated in the light of experience gained from the previous years process and the outcomes of the review of existing and completed SSP projects.
- 8.3 In the next stage of the process, the capital investment requirements for each service area are reviewed and bids prepared for investment proposals not covered by the



## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

LTP, HIS and EAMP using the SSP process. Although the SSP process and its scoring methodology help to inform and influence capital allocations it is not intended to be a final determinant in setting the capital programme. The CSG oversees this process reporting their findings and recommendations to CMB. Directors then present their resulting expenditure proposals to Council for approval. The process of identifying capital investment priorities is completed in time for the December SCE announcements when the assessment of resource requirements compared to resource availability can begin.

- 8.4 The CSG leads on drafting a capital programme for CMB and Council to consider. Once the capital programme has been approved, Directors can finalise arrangements for an early start in the new financial year for new schemes.
- 8.5 A fundamental element of Capital Planning is the link to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). An extract from the Revenue Budget report to Cabinet 24 February 2005 is included as **Appendix 12**.

### 9. THE CAPITAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

The framework of the Council's Capital Strategy encompasses the following areas and these are looked at in detail in the following paragraphs:

- Transport
- Strategic Housing
- Children's Services
- Other Services

#### 9.1 Transport

- 9.1.1 Herefordshire Council is committed to developing sustainable and integrated transport solutions that meet the needs of the County as well as addressing environmental issues such as congestion, pollution and climate change. Central to the overarching Local Transport Plan are the key objectives of maintaining existing infrastructure, improving facilities for public transport, walking and cycling and managing the demand for car use
- 9.1.2 Herefordshire's first Local Transport Plan (LTP) covered the period 2001/02 to 2005/06. The second Local Transport Plan covers the period 2006/07 to 2010/11 and sets out a comprehensive strategy for the development of a more sustainable and integrated transport system to meet the needs of the County. This is currently a provisional plan and may be subject to some amendment before being submitted to Government. The core objectives are identified in the Executive Summary (**Appendix 2**) and link directly with the Partnership's ambition for transport. The Plan outlines the investment strategy, focusing its approach to addressing considerable urban transport problems in the City (reducing car dependency), social exclusion in a dispersed local community, road safety and maintaining the highway network in a cost effective manner. Development of the LTP has been cross Directorate and it is subject to full public consultation; the programme was designed to give as many residents, interest groups and organisations as possible an opportunity to get involved. Delivering the LTP is a joint effort, involving many partners including the Herefordshire Rural Transport Partnership, South Wye Regeneration Partnership, local schools and businesses. Monitoring is an essential to ensure that investment is directed effectively. The Annual Progress Report outlines the success achieved in public transport facilities, road safety and tackling deterioration in the condition of roads thus contributing to achieving the Council's LPSA1 targets.

# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## 9.2 Strategic Housing

- 9.2.1 Herefordshire Council's Housing Investment Strategy (**Appendix 3**) covers the period 2005/08. The Council is no longer required to submit an annual Housing Investment Strategy but is required to develop a Housing Strategy that is rated as 'Fit for Purpose' following assessment by the Government Office for the West Midlands.
- 9.2.2 The last Housing Investment Strategy for the period 2003/06 was published in July 2002, prior to the Housing Stock Transfer which took place in November 2002.
- 9.2.3 The Housing Strategy for Herefordshire 2005/08 has been developed to encompass the requirements set out for achieving Fit for Purpose. In doing so appropriate consideration has been given to the evaluation of the challenges faced within Herefordshire, the relative priorities and the actions planned to achieve the agreed priorities. Appropriate regard has been given to the important role of partnership working to identify and deliver the priorities including reflection on the successes that have been achieved to date through the use of partnership working.
- 9.2.4 In developing the Housing Strategy, the Housing Ambition Group of the Herefordshire Partnership co-sponsored a stakeholder event in March 2005 in partnership with Strategic Housing Services. The conference brought together a range of partners, stakeholders, users and statutory, voluntary and private representatives for the purpose of establishing the key themes and priorities for housing services in Herefordshire. The Strategy has also been subject to consultation with officers of the GOWM to ensure it satisfies the Fit for Purpose criteria.
- 9.2.5 The proposals for action agreed in consultation with our partners are set out within the strategy. The priorities for action over the three year period covered by the strategy are:-
- To achieve a more balanced housing market
  - To address the increasing levels of homelessness in the County
  - To ensure that vulnerable people needing housing linked to support have their needs met in all parts of the area
  - To improve housing conditions in Herefordshire across all tenures
- 9.2.6 The Council still has a statutory duty to prevent homelessness wherever possible and to assist homeless households when homelessness cannot be prevented. It continues to be the Council's responsibility to provide a Housing Advice Service which offers help and guidance on housing matters across all tenures. The Homelessness and Housing Advice Services are currently operated by Herefordshire Housing Ltd on behalf of the Council but this service is being brought back into the Council during 2005/06. The Council works in partnership with the five largest Registered Social Landlords in the County on the operation of the statutory housing register for the County. HomePoint, as the partnership is known, advertises available properties under a choice-based lettings programme.
- 9.2.7 The Housing Investment Strategy provides a significant contribution to the delivery of the Herefordshire Plan ambitions, particularly in meeting Herefordshire's accommodation needs. Herefordshire is an attractive place to live, with an image of relative affluence, free of any social or economic problems although in reality this does paint too broad a picture. A significant amount of work has, and continues to be



## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

done, to identify housing needs. This has revealed a need for more affordable housing and bringing existing housing up to a satisfactory condition. To meet these needs a balanced investment approach is taken, across all tenures. The Strategy has been adopted by the Housing Ambition Group (of the Herefordshire Partnership) and has been subject to extensive consultation with stakeholders. There are many examples of joint working e.g. Energy Efficiency Consortium, Landlord and Letting Agents, Staying Put Agency, Registered Social Landlords and the Rural Housing Network which provides a rural voice within the West Midlands in informing the Regional Housing agenda. Affordable housing in particular has been embedded in the planning process.

- 9.2.8 The transfer of the Housing Stock in 2002 generated a significant capital receipt which is being used over the medium term to support Strategic Housing investment. However this source of funding will be fully used by 2007/08. An ongoing share of preserved "Right to Buy" receipts will still accrue to the Council and will enable further investment for some years thereafter. However in the longer term the Council will need to secure funding from the Housing Corporation or seek Prudential Borrowing if such investment is to continue in the longer term.

### 9.3 Children's Services

- 9.3.1 Herefordshire's Education Asset Management Plan (EAMP) covers a rolling five-year period; the summary (**Appendix 4**) describes how it supports the ambition to provide excellent education opportunities. It identifies the accommodation needs of Herefordshire's schools on the basis of condition, sufficiency and suitability and sets out the method by which spending priorities will be determined. The EAMP has been the subject of consultation with stakeholders.
- 9.3.2 The Council has recently completed the signing of a Public Finance Initiative (PFI) contract for a new Whitecross High School (providing an additional 150 places); this is an innovative project that aims to provide a community facility that delivers a range of services. The scheduled opening date for the new school is June 2006 although it could potentially open before this time.
- 9.3.3 The management of the Education Capital Programme is to ensure that projects are delivered on time, within budget, but avoiding under spending, and to the user's satisfaction. To make this possible it is necessary to appraise the reasonableness of resources being available and plan over the medium term. Although the EAMP is a five-year plan it is prudent to plan for resource availability on a three-year rolling programme. The introduction of the 3 year Revenue and Capital settlements from ODPM from 2006/07 will help facilitate this approach.
- 9.3.4 Education capital spend has and is estimated to continue to run at around £5m per annum, but this will vary depending on the outcome of the 3 year settlement process and according to any specific grants allocations received from the DfES. The County Treasurer will advise on the level of approved resources in Year 1 and the level of estimated resources available in Years 2 and 3.
- 9.3.5 The Director of Children's Services will formulate a rolling three-year programme for approval by the Cabinet Member. The programme will reflect the needs established in the AMP and the priorities set in the local policy statement. The programme will be monitored and reported to Cabinet as appropriate. As previously mentioned schools receive Devolved Formula Capital funding in addition to the LEA capital funding.

## 9.4 Other Services

- 9.4.1 The Council's corporate Asset Management Plan (AMP) (**Appendix 6**) and Property Strategy (**Appendix 5**), together with ongoing Area Reviews, cover assets used by all other Council services and identifies the investment priorities for assets other than schools, housing and transport. It takes account of the condition of existing assets, the need to maintain them, their sufficiency and suitability. The AMP and Property Strategy are therefore significant elements of the capital investment framework.
- 9.4.2 The Council's revenue and capital accounts are intrinsically linked. For this reason, the revenue implications of the Council's capital investment plans and capital financing costs are taken into account in its budget strategy. Cash flows based on anticipated take up of supported and unsupported borrowing and use of internal reserves underpins the calculations for loan repayments and investment income. The medium-term financial plan, which is constantly being updated, also assumes that the current level of revenue support for capital investment in properties will be maintained and takes the increasing revenue demands for maintaining and running new capital assets into consideration.
- 9.4.3 It is a fundamental requirement of the capital allocation and budget setting process that the initial and on-going revenue implications of capital investment other than the direct capital financing costs are taken into account and catered for.
- 9.4.4 The Council is determined to pursue innovative ways of securing capital investment in support of local, regional and national policy objectives. All opportunities for joint commissioning and public/private partnerships are considered for capital projects. The Council is already party to two public/private partnership schemes through PFI projects for waste management and the provision of Whitecross High School. The Council has demonstrated its willingness to consider alternative service delivery options that will improve investment opportunities in housing (via LSVT), leisure (operational properties transferred to a Trust in April 2002) and residential homes (transferred to Shaw Homes in 2003). It continues to work in active partnership with other organisations to secure additional funding; the Council's Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and Objective2 programme are examples of success in this area. The submission of a broad proposal for a Local Area Agreement seeks to ensure sustainable and continued improvement in those areas of the county where EC funding has been focussed.
- 9.4.5 The SSP process is used each year to capture investment need. A number of capital investment aspirations for 'Other Areas' have been identified as requiring funding in the medium to long term:

### PROPERTY & RESOURCES

- Property maintenance
- Energy conservation
- Disabled Access to all buildings
- New Office Accommodation
- Replacement Cattle Market.

# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## ENVIRONMENT

- Closed Landfill Sites - Engineering works to safeguard the environment at Stretton Sugwas, Leominster, Strangford and Belmont. Potential at Stretton Sugwas to provide energy to the National Grid by collecting landfill gas.
- Flood alleviation schemes.
- Crematorium

## ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Investment in industrial properties that will contribute to the wealth of the County
- Rotherwas Business Centre
- Match funding for major external funding regimes such as the existing SRB Programmes, Objective 2 and Rural Regeneration Zones Programmes where these are consistent with priorities emerging from the Herefordshire Plan.
- Replacement library for Hereford city.
- Redevelopment of Heritage Services.
- Targeting of facilities and space for leisure activities.
- Edgar Street Grid development.

## CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

- Continued roll out of INFO in Herefordshire
- City Centre Contact centre (Info in Herefordshire / IEG / Herefordshire In Touch)
- Accommodation (**Appendix 10**).

## 10. CAPITAL INVESTMENT PRIORITIES AND ALLOCATIONS

10.1 The investment priorities for transport, housing and education are clearly defined by service based capital strategies and asset management plans. The resources available for these services will be allocated and prioritised in line with the relevant strategy/plan. The method of resource allocation outlined in this Capital Strategy for other services provides the basis for developing a medium-term capital programme covering all areas of capital investment.

10.2 The Scheme Selection and Prioritisation (SSP) Process has been used for a number of years and is now well established. Its role, within the Capital Planning process, has been communicated throughout the Council and training sessions have been provided. The SSP provides objectivity in the determination of the relative priorities of capital investment proposals made for other services as a basis for further consideration by members. It is also used to assess proposals to provide capital grants and proposals to bid for external funding needing a contribution from the Council such as joint funded schemes with:

- Central or regional government (e.g. SRB)
- National Lottery (e.g. Heritage schemes)
- European Union (e.g. Objective 2)
- Other public bodies (e.g. PCT)

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- 10.3 The Medium Term Financial Plan takes into account the capital financing costs of Prudential Borrowing of £5,000,000 per year. The capital financing costs are revised based on the actual Prudential Borrowing allocations and an appropriate debt repayment timescale to match the life of assets created. Following previous rounds of SSP Cabinet has approved allocations for 2004/05 and 2005/06 and for subsequent years in advance for specific projects lasting more than one year. These allocations are set out on **Appendix 11**.
- 10.4 The first element of the SSP process tests the impact a proposal has in terms of the principles and values that cement the 10 ambitions in the Herefordshire Plan together and its contribution to objectives identified in the Plan. The Council and its partners have developed an appraisal tool to do this which has been incorporated into an electronic SSP module.
- 10.5 The second element of the SSP process takes the form of a detailed business case for the investment proposal that will need to be completed in detail for all SSP bids. It will involve consideration of the: -
- Contribution to other statutory and local service plans.
  - Extent to which the Council's Best Value and Procurement strategies have been embraced.
  - Consultation – including getting the support of the local councillor.
  - Quality of the measures of success identified for the proposal (measuring performance).
  - Contribution made towards supporting the Council's partnership working ethos.
  - Extent to which the proposal encourages others to use or modify the use of their own resources.
  - Generation of external funding.
  - Legal implications of undertaking the project or not.
  - Financial implications (capital, revenue and VAT) of undertaking the project or not.
  - Environmental impact using a model created by the Environmental Sustainability Unit (Good Environmental Management (GEM)).
  - Likelihood that the project will complete as proposed, on time and within budget.
  - 'Joined-up' thinking.
  - An analysis of risk
- 10.6 Good Environmental Management (GEM) demonstrates to Council's stakeholders that the authority is serious about minimising its negative affects on the environment. GEM is a Council wide initiative where all Directorates took an active part in the development of the system and targets. Teamwork was essential for the accreditation process and demonstrates that the authority can deliver its performance management agenda.
- 10.7 The analysis of risk requires detailed consideration of all elements of risk, identifying the potential occurrence of the risk and the potential impact (each either high, medium or low). Detailed information must be given of how each risk will be mitigated and specify the officer responsible for managing each risk. It is also necessary to determine the inherent risk of not progressing with a particular project.

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- 10.8 The first call on capital resources each financial year will be to cover contractual commitments in respect of on-going projects. The capital monitoring processes ensure that accurate and timely information is available on a regular basis so that the expenditure forecast and funding plan can be regularly updated.
- 10.9 Council's policy continues to direct Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue) (SCE(R)) allocations directly to meet the need identified in the Local Transport Plan, the Housing Investment Plan and the Education Asset Management Plan. There are a number of reasons for this but perhaps most importantly it enables these key strategic services to plan effectively in to the medium term with a certain amount of assurance in funding. Any additional SCE(R) is used to support additional borrowing required for the SSP process.
- 10.10 Under the Prudential Code the Council has the ability to borrow extra funding if it is prudent and affordable to do so. The capital financing costs of such borrowing is unsupported through the Revenue Support Grant mechanism and therefore has to be met directly from Council Tax. The Council has taken the opportunity to undertake significant Prudential Borrowing (PB) to support a medium term capital programme in support of a number of corporate initiatives. The SSP process is used to collate bids and to compare them on a competitive basis. The SSP process seeks to ensure a full business case is completed together with essential information as detailed above.
- 10.11 The capital financing costs of Prudential Borrowing undertaken to fund a new asset will be repaid over the expected life of the asset acquired. This is appropriate to ensure debt is repaid in a prudent manner. It is also indicative of the gradual stance the Council must take towards ensuring debt is only held for assets which do have a remaining value.
- 10.12 A fundamental requirement of the Prudential Code is to set a range of Prudential Indicators (PIs) for each year and, where appropriate, for at least the subsequent two years, in order to support such local decision-making in a manner that is publicly accountable. The PIs must be set before the beginning of each financial year by Council in line with the budget setting process. Regular in-year monitoring of the PIs takes place and any significant deviations from expectations are to be reported accordingly. The indicators include:
- Actual and estimated capital expenditure for the current and future years.
  - Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream.
  - Capital Financing Requirement.
  - Authorised limit for External Debt.
  - Operational boundary for External Debt.
  - Council Tax implications of the incremental effect of capital decisions.
  - Treasury Management Indicators.
- 10.13 A long term view has to be taken on the extent to which the Council builds up its debt in light of an ongoing capital programme. Many assets financed through the capital programme, such as operational ICT infrastructure, only have a short life and it is not prudent to finance their acquisition over the long term. It is expected in the near future that accounting requirements will require that depreciation on all assets must be a direct charge to the Council's revenue account.
- 10.14 Current Financial Standing Orders specify that capital receipts generated by the sale

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

of General Fund assets are usually allocated 50:50 between the service area and corporate receipts reserve. Financial Regulations allow for the receipt from some disposals to be ringfenced for specific reinvestment if appropriate. This policy aims to balance the need to direct resources corporately but also provides an incentive for service areas to sell assets that do not contribute to the effective delivery of services. This policy is reviewed annually. The Council's Property Disposal Policy identifies surplus assets and the agreed disposal plan for each of them.

- 10.15 An agreement with Herefordshire Housing Ltd means a share of capital receipts generated by preserved Right-to-Buy sales are due to the Council and these are directly allocated to Strategic Housing to be reinvested in social housing and regeneration projects as specified in the Housing Investment Plan.
- 10.16 A Property Strategy (**Appendix 5**) has been developed to review the Council's property holdings and guide property decision making and performance measurement in the future. It provides a backdrop by which the property portfolio can be evaluated and assessed. The strategy sets out the property objectives and a vision of the nature of its property portfolio in 5 years time.
- 10.17 The latest forecast of capital resource availability to 2007/08 is shown at 3.1. Current year capital resources are fully allocated by the start of each financial year. An element of future year capital resources will be retained to provide some flexibility to accommodate unforeseen difficulties with existing capital commitments or lower than anticipated levels of resources. The resource allocation system and Prudential Borrowing regime is robust enough to allow a rolling medium-term capital programme covering the current year plus the next two financial years to be developed.

### 11. CAPITAL MONITORING PROCESS

- 11.1 Each capital scheme has a nominated lead officer, supported by a service accountant, responsible to the appropriate CPMWG for reporting on progress in accordance with the capital monitoring arrangements established by the CSG. The capital outturn position for each financial year is reported to CMB and Cabinet by the middle of the following June. The outturn information is used to update the capital programme for current and future financial years.
- 11.2 Routine capital monitoring is an ongoing process with formal monitoring exercises being carried out at the end of July, September, November and January of each financial year, together with an end of year outturn report, in accordance with corporate reporting requirements. The timing of these exercises is planned to coincide with key stages in the capital planning process and will be led by the CPMWG. A Capital Monitoring System has been developed to assist with monitoring progress in financial terms. Each capital monitoring report will include an update of the Prudential Indicators.
- 11.3 The capital monitoring reports include revised forecasts of resources available, actual spend compared to expected spend, capital reserves implications, details of slippages and expected overspending and updated Prudential Indicators.
- 11.4 The provision of timely progress reports to CMB, Cabinet and the Strategic Monitoring Committee (SMC) will allow sufficient time for corrective action or for alternative investment decisions to be taken so that capital resource use is optimised. Monitoring activities will concentrate on those schemes identified as having the greatest value and the greatest potential to slip.



# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## 12. REVIEWING CAPITAL STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE

- 12.1 The Council will review and update its Capital Strategy annually as described in the capital planning and monitoring process diagram shown in **Appendix 10**.
- 12.2 All major schemes plus a sample of the remainder are subject to a post completion review to assess whether they had the desired impact, achieved the stated measures of success and represented value for money. The review process will be managed by the CSG who will seek to ensure that the lessons learnt and examples of best practice identified are reported to CMB, Cabinet and SMC, and communicated across the Council via the CPMWGs.
- 12.3 Corporate performance measures for the Council's Capital Strategy and capital investment decisions have been developed to ensure that: -
- Key targets dates identified in the capital planning and monitoring process are achieved.
  - All capital resources with a time limit are utilised before they expire.
  - The budgets for all capital projects are profiled on Cedar and the actual to expected position is monitored.
  - Central government information requirements on capital financing and expenditure are met on time.
- 12.4 The Capital Strategy is viewed as an essential part of the Council's overall policy framework as an embedded process that sits alongside its other resource management strategies.

## SECTION C – LONG TERM VISION

### 13. INTRODUCTION

- 13.1 This section will look at the longer term strategy and liabilities such as Edgar Street Grid, PFI and Building Schools for the Future.

### 14. APPROACHES TO CONSULTATION

- 14.1 The Herefordshire Partnership has developed a Communications Strategy and has made headway in establishing mechanisms for coordinating community involvement across the public and voluntary sectors through the Community Involvement Coordinator. The main corporate activity has been the establishment of a Citizens Panel ('Herefordshire Voice' – a panel of 1000 local people who act as sounding board) as a key mechanism for the Council and the wider Partnership to ensure that consultation is joined up and duplication is avoided. The Council supports a network of Community Forums that meet quarterly to consider the impact of Council policies on the locality, to propose policy and service delivery modifications and to act as a means of consultation on policy, service delivery and other proposals.
- 14.2 There are well-established mechanisms for consultation within the LTP, HIS and EAMP and on other capital projects, individually. With regard to consultation on overall investment plans, the Council currently includes information in public documents (BVPP and Council Tax leaflets).
- 14.3 The CSG provides a strong focus for capital and asset management issues within the Council, both in terms of consultation and gathering feedback. The CSG consults with the Heads of Service Group and the CPMWGs. The capital planning process diagram at **Appendix 10** shows how feedback from the various types of consultation feeds into the Capital Strategy.

### 15. LINKS TO OTHER RELEVANT STRATEGIES AND PLANS

- 15.1 The capital investment framework is designed to ensure that the Capital Strategy is informed by the capital investment requirements identified in the various statutory and local service plans produced by the Council, each of which sits within the overarching Herefordshire Plan. Examples include: -
- Corporate Plan
  - Local Area Agreement
  - Unitary Development Plan
  - Corporate Asset Management Plan
  - Local Transport Plan
  - Housing Investment Strategy
  - Education Asset Management Plan
  - Local service plans
  - Local Public Service Agreement
  - Community Safety Strategy
  - Implementing Electronic Government Statement



## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- Local Agenda 21 Strategy
  - Procurement Strategy
- 15.2 The Council requires that its statutory and local service plans demonstrate how the services provided support strategic aims and objectives that in turn support the Partnership ambitions and national and regional policy objectives. The Capital Strategy seeks to ensure that resources are allocated to produce maximum contribution toward strategic goals and the Council will be proactive in developing and sharing best practice with its Partners.
- 15.3 A major consideration affecting the longer term capital programme is the Edgar Street Grid (ESG) development. The ESG is significant in terms of the potential significant capital costs involved and the associated affordability concerns. The impact on Council Tax will need to be minimised by passing the risks and liabilities on to the private sector. However it is recognised there will be substantial benefits through significant county wide regeneration.
- 15.4 The master plan and related policies for the regeneration of the 100 acre ESG site to the north of the city centre has been included in the UDP and have been recently been considered at public inquiry. A joint venture company has been established by Herefordshire Council and Advantage West Midlands (AWM). The company will look to procure a private sector development partner over the next year. A board has been set up which includes the Chief Executive, senior members and a representative from AWM. Other members will be recruited from the private sector. The recruitment process for the Chief Executive of the company is underway and a small team of staff will also be recruited. The Council will hold funding on behalf of the company and currently has a revenue budget of £250k. It is intended that a 'Living Land Marks' Lottery bid will be progressed for the ESG and The Courtyard.
- 15.5 In February 2005 AWM provided £1,989,000 funding for the purchase of industrial unit properties at Station Approach Road on the ESG site. Ongoing rental income from these properties will be used to provide funding for future development of ESG.

### CONCLUSIONS

- 16.1 This Capital Strategy sets out how the Council intends to ensure that capital investment decisions are taken in support of strategic aims and objectives at the national, regional and local level. It highlights the difficulties that the Council faces in terms of balancing competing service pressures and the need to prioritise capital investment options effectively in order to obtain Best Value from the limited resources that are available.
- 16.2 Driving strategic change and obtaining best value from the resources used to support capital investment lies at the heart of this Capital Strategy. The Council feels, however, that greater impact and even better value for money could be achieved if bidding processes of funding agencies were streamlined to facilitate partnership working and the Local Government Finance System provided greater flexibility, at the local level, in using capital resources to deliver the Herefordshire Plan ambitions.

### THE HEREFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP – THE HEREFORDSHIRE PLAN

The Herefordshire Plan can be found at [www.herefordshirepartnership.co.uk](http://www.herefordshirepartnership.co.uk)

The original Herefordshire Plan is a blueprint which maps out the vision of the county over the next 10 years, is under review. The Plan, which was first produced in 1999 and was reviewed and updated in 2000 and 2003, is a statement of key priorities for the authority and local communities to work towards in partnership.

The Herefordshire Plan forms the basis of a great deal of activity and development work within the county. It clearly states targets and ambitions which many organisations – including Herefordshire Council, Primary Care Trust, West Mercia Constabulary, the Chamber of Commerce and Business Link Herefordshire and Worcester, the Learning and Skills Council, voluntary and community organisations – are working towards and is a key document

#### **This Vision is based on:**

- Creating fair and thriving communities which will be inclusive for all allowing equal and full access to opportunities and services
- Properly protecting the environment and enhancing it for all those who live in, work in and visit Herefordshire
- Building a strong, competitive and innovative economy with a balanced mix of businesses, jobs and homes through which the local economy can flourish

And is guided by the principles, which seek to:

- Build an equal and inclusive society
- Promote sustainability
- Realise the potential of people and communities
- Encourage participation and partnership working
- Seek continual improvement
- Recognise and make the most of what we've got

The Plan identifies 10 key areas, known as Ambitions to which the Partner organisations are all committed. Ambition Groups drive the process by which the Ambitions may be achieved and are supported in their work by the Partnership Support Team.

#### **The Ambitions are:**

- To Improve the health and well-being of Herefordshire people
- To reduce crime and disorder and make Herefordshire safer
- To reduce poverty and isolation in Herefordshire
- To encourage communities to shape the future of Herefordshire
- To develop Herefordshire as an active, vibrant and enjoyable place to be
- To protect and improve Herefordshire's distinctive environment
- To develop an integrated transport system for Herefordshire

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- To meet Herefordshire's accommodation needs
- To support business growth and create more and better paid work in Herefordshire
- To provide excellent education, training and learning opportunities in Herefordshire for all ages

**Golden Threads have also been identified, which are issues or areas of work which cut across each of the Ambitions, for example:**

- Geographic communities, eg. towns, villages, housing estates
- Communities of interest, eg. young people, families, farming
- Tools and mechanisms, eg. information and communications technology (ICT) , funding, other resources

However, things change over time and the Plan is being reviewed to ensure it is still current and relevant. As a result, extensive consultation with a wide variety of groups has already taken place to ensure the Plan reflects the rich and diverse mix of communities within Herefordshire. During April 2005 farmers, faith groups, Parish Council networks, young people, market town groups and people with disabilities were involved in reshaping the Plan.

In a bid to throw the process open to as many people as possible, a special consultation event - the "Herefordshire Conversation" was held in June 2005. Local people and service providers (Herefordshire Council, Primary Care Trust, West Mercia Constabulary, Chamber of Commerce and Business Link Herefordshire and Worcestershire, Learning and Skills Council, Voluntary and Community Organisations) were invited to come along and consult with organisations which provide services in the county to decide future priorities for local communities.

The day consisted of a number of workshops, covering issues such as:

- The economy (e.g. earnings, businesses, job opportunities)
- Health and well being (e.g. access to health services, health for young and older people)
- Learning and Leisure (e.g. improve vocational training, activities for young people)
- Community Safety and Drugs (e.g. antisocial behaviour, alcohol related crime)
- Environment, transport and housing (e.g. affordable housing, recycling, road congestion)
- Communities (e.g. involvement in the community, demographic and cultural mix)

### LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The Local Transport Plan can be found at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport/3207.asp](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport/3207.asp)

The Local Transport Plan is a statutory plan which sets out the Council's transport policies and programme of transport improvements for a five year period.

The first Local Transport Plan was introduced in July 2000 to cover the period 2001/2 to 2005/6. It replaced the old Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) and introduced a new emphasis on longer term transport planning and a shift in national policy in favour of providing sustainable transport improvements. The Council has also published Annual Progress Reports (APRs) providing a summary of transport improvements for the County. A second Local Transport Plan has been produced.

#### **Herefordshire Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11**

##### **Executive Summary**

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

The Plan is seeking to work towards the following vision:

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

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

##### **Key Priorities for the Local Transport Plan**

**Delivering Accessibility** - Better access to jobs & services, Increased use of sustainable modes of travel, Assets maintained well

**Tackling Congestion** - Reduced congestion, Assets maintained well, Supported and enabled economic development, Increased use of sustainable modes of travel

**Safer Roads** - Improved safety, Assets maintained well, Increased use of sustainable modes of travel

**Better Air Quality** - Safeguarded environment, Reduced congestion, Increased use of sustainable modes of travel

# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## **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 30 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

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

consultation with local stakeholders and include tackling congestion, improving access and safety. Key investment proposals to help deliver these priorities include:

- **Behavioural change** – we acknowledge that we will not be able to build our way out of all of Hereford's transport problems and a key element of our strategy is to encourage behavioural change, reducing the need to travel where possible and encouraging the use of sustainable modes. We have stepped up our programmes for supporting school and workplace travel plans and will continue to promote the sustainable transport infrastructure which we are developing as part of our overall strategy. We have reviewed our approach to Safer Routes to School and now require schools to commit to developing and implementing their own travel plans before infrastructure improvements are implemented.
- **Ongoing public transport improvements** – including continued upgrading of bus stops and shelters to improve accessibility and quality for passengers, ongoing development of proposals for a single, centrally located interchange in coordination with proposals for Edgar Street Grid. We also will seek to work in partnership with the rail industry to provide step free access at Hereford Rail Station.
- **Improving and extending the cycle network** – we will continue to develop the City's cycle network and will seek to extend the Great Western Way route to the north of the City providing safe and direct access to large employment, retailing and leisure facilities adjacent to Holmer Road.
- **Permanent Park and Ride** – development of permanent sites to the north and south of the city centre to provide first class public transport access into the central area. This will reduce traffic congestion in the central area and will improve access for residents from the rural areas travelling in to Hereford for work, retailing, health and leisure based trips.
- **City Centre Pedestrian and Townscape Improvements** – we have implemented a trial pedestrianisation scheme for Widemarsh Street and, subject to further assessment, intend to take forward this scheme and implement permanent proposals with significant townscape improvements for other parts of the central area. These proposals will bring real improvements for pedestrians and will incorporate better access for people with mobility difficulties. Enhancements to the central area will help sustain the viability and attractiveness of Hereford as an important retailing destination.
- **Hereford Intelligent Transport System (Exceptional Scheme Bid)** – development of an intelligent transport system to provide traffic control, bus priority, traffic and traveller information and car park guidance to enable more efficient use of our existing network and help reduce congestion. We intend to submit an Exceptional Scheme Bid to Government in 2007/8 to secure the funding required to develop this system.
- **Rotherwas Access Road and the A49 to A465 link (Major Scheme Proposals)** – we have re-submitted the major scheme bid for the Rotherwas Access Road and aim to complete this important scheme, which will bring both transport and regeneration benefits, by 2008. In working towards the longer term strategy for Hereford we will develop major scheme proposals for the A49 Ross Road to A465 Abergavenny Road link which would form the next stage of a possible outer relief road for the City. We aim to secure major scheme funding approval for this scheme towards the end of the LTP2 period. An important link to this for the future would be the provision of a second river crossing.



## **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

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

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:



## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- 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.

### HOUSING INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Strategic Housing Information can be found at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/index.asp](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/housing/index.asp)

The Council no longer own or manage any homes - they were sold to Herefordshire Housing Ltd who became a Housing Company in November 2002.

Following the transfer of homes, Herefordshire Council continues with a strategic responsibility for other important housing functions:

- It is responsible for producing and promoting a Housing Strategy which sets out how we aim to provide decent affordable housing to meet local needs. This is done by working in partnership with the Planning department, Registered Social Landlords, the Housing Corporation, Government Office for the West Midlands, the Health Authority, Private Sector Landlords and other private and voluntary organisations. Together, we aim to maximise the supply of affordable homes and services to meet housing need in Herefordshire.
- It has a statutory duty to prevent homelessness wherever possible and to assist homeless households when homelessness cannot be prevented. It also continues with its responsibility to provide a Housing Advice Service which offers help and guidance on housing matters across all tenures. The Homelessness and Housing Advice Services are operated by Herefordshire Housing on behalf of the Council.
- It works together with the five largest Registered Social Landlords in the county to operate the statutory housing register. In Herefordshire, there is a choice-based arrangement for allocating affordable homes and this service is operated by Home Point.

Set out below is an extract from the 2005-08 Housing Strategy

### RESOURCING THE STRATEGY

Addressing the housing needs of the area is a major priority for Herefordshire Council and for the agencies involved in the Herefordshire Partnership. It is recognised that the scale of the housing problems to be addressed exceeds the Council's own financial capacity - hence the strong emphasis on partnerships which generate additional resources evidenced throughout this Strategy.

Outside the Council's own resources, key funding sources to address housing issues include:

- Central Government funding for the region, with recommendations developed by the West Midlands Regional Housing Board - these have been determined for 2005/06; priorities for 2006/07 onwards will be determined in the light of the new Regional Housing Strategy to be published in 2005.
- Housing Corporation funding for housing associations and (following the Housing Act 2004) private developers producing affordable housing. The Council's Capital development programme in Section 5 includes a substantial level of funding by the Housing Corporation and the Department of Health.
- Affordable housing achieved without grant funding through planning gain agreements.

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- Financial contributions in lieu of on site provision of affordable housing - currently standing at £567,000, with a further £164,000 anticipated.
- Housing association funding invested in their housing stock to achieve the decent homes standard.
- Personal savings and loans for home improvement invested by homeowners and private landlords, including loans secured through Houseproud.
- Supporting People revenue funding for supported housing projects; linked to capital funds for these projects from the Council, Housing Corporation and Department of Health.
- Partnership funding with energy suppliers for energy efficiency and affordable warmth initiatives.

The Corporate Capital Strategy sets out the framework and mechanisms for the Councils allocation and use of capital funding. It is designed to maximise the use of resources to meet legal obligations and drive service improvements by reference to a number of strategies including the Herefordshire Plan, the Corporate Plan and the strategic plans for Education, Transport and Housing.

The Council has a Corporate Capital Strategy Group (CSG) responsible for strategic capital issues. Elected Members are involved at various stages of the capital strategy process, having input when assessing internal bids for prudential funding and reports are submitted to Cabinet, Strategic Monitoring Committee (SMC). Members will be involved as part of the process of reviewing and challenging SSP bids at both planning and monitoring stages via the CSG. The CSG reports to CMB and receives strategic guidance on an ongoing basis.

The Assistant County Treasurer chairs the CSG. The Head of ICT and the Head of Business Services (Social Care and Strategic Housing) together with the Property Services Manager are the members of the group. The group is supported by the Principal Financial Policy Manager and the Capital Accountant. The working group currently meets bi-monthly and is responsible to the CMB for: -

- Developing and maintaining the Council's medium term corporate Capital Strategy.
- Developing the Council's annual capital programme including resource allocation, project selection and monitoring arrangements.
- Developing and maintaining the Council's medium term corporate Asset Management Plan.
- Developing and maintaining the Council's corporate property acquisitions and disposals policy.
- Promoting capital strategy and asset management issues throughout the Council

The Capital Strategy Group is specifically responsible for developing strategic recommendations to both the CMB and to Cabinet on the allocation of capital resources to projects and service areas, including housing.

# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

A summary of recent spending is shown below:

	2003-04			2004-05			
	Original Budget	Outturn	Over/ (Under) spend	Original Budget	Outturn	Over/ (Under) spend	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<b>Budgets:</b>							
Private Sector Housing	1,284	1,544	260	1,293	1,411	118	1
Disabled Facilities Grants - Discretionary	20	5	(15)		15	15	2
Disabled Facilities Grants - Mandatory	480	375	(105)	600	482	(118)	2
Rent allowance capitalisation	370	370		400		(400)	3
Social Housing Grants	3,100	1,639	(1,461)	3,100	1,191	(1,909)	4
Learning Disability Fund	240		(240)	240		(240)	5
<b>Total Budget to be Financed</b>	<b>5,494</b>	<b>3,933</b>	<b>(1,561)</b>	<b>5,633</b>	<b>3,099</b>	<b>(2,534)</b>	
<b>Financed By:</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	
Supported Capital Expenditure - Revenue	1,500	1,533	33	2,072	2,072		6
LPSA Grant				20		(20)	7
Capital Receipts Reserve	3,464	2,202	(1,262)	2,941	463	(2,478)	8
Learning Disability Development Fund	240		(240)	240		(240)	5
Disabled Facilities Grant	290	198	(92)	360	564	204	2
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>5,494</b>	<b>3,933</b>	<b>(1,561)</b>	<b>5,633</b>	<b>3,099</b>	<b>(2,534)</b>	

Explanation of Over and Under spends within the Strategic Housing Capital Programme.

The Strategic Housing capital programme is subject to continual ongoing changes and it is in practice impossible to restrict specific budgets to specific years. Commitments have to be budgeted for but the actual payment may be made much later. There is a significant lead time for identifying where grants may be needed to making final payments which could be in a subsequent year. The original budget is prepared before the year end and is therefore very susceptible to the inevitable changes at closedown. The original budget is a best forecast at that time of what will be required to ensure a sufficient programme is provided.

Specific differences (corresponding with numbers in the final column in the table above) are:

1. An additional element was brought into the 2003-04 programme for a Special Energy Scheme which was not in the original budget. The increase over the original budget is not overspend but instead additional items being brought into the budget after the original budget is set.
2. Over the two year period the Discretionary DFGs were spent as planned. Mandatory DFGs have underspent in previous years due to anticipated demand being lower than expected and staff recruitment difficulties inhibiting full scale promotion of the scheme.
3. Following the transfer of the Housing Stock certain subsequent costs were allowed to be capitalised. One of these related to Rent Allowances. This happened in 2003-04 but in 2004-05 the funding methodology of rent allowances changed and capitalisation was no longer necessary. This was to be funded from the capital receipts reserve and therefore that funding was retained as a capital resource.
4. A significant programme for using Social Housing Grants is set out over a number of years. The grants are usually paid to registered social landlords and relate to large scale construction projects where delays may occur as project development issues progress. The nature of this budget is that it will be spent over a longer period and the funding from capital receipts reserves will be retained to meet those budgets in due course.

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

5. The budget and funding for the Learning Disability Fund is carried forward and is now expected to be spent in 2005-06.
6. Supported Capital Expenditure is spent as expected. This conditional funding is used before any reserves in order to maintain resources within Strategic Housing.
7. The LPSA grant is now being used in 2005-06.
8. The capital receipts reserve is primarily used to fund the Social Housing Grant Programme. This is a longer term programme and the funding is maintained to ensure that programme can be completed as planned.

The Capital Programme for the three years covered by this strategy is shown below.

	Outturn 2003-04	Outturn 2004-05	Budget 2005-06	Estimate 2006-07	Estimate 2007-08	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<b>Budgets:</b>						
Private Sector Housing	1,544	1,411	1,305	1,160	1,160	
Disabled Facilities Grants - Discretionary	5	15	175	20	140	
Disabled Facilities Grants - Mandatory	375	482	525	525	525	
Rent allowance capitalisation	370					
Social Housing Grants	1,639	1,191	3,500	3,500	3,500	
Extra Care Housing Development			4,600	2,500		
<b>Total Budget to be Financed</b>	<b>3,933</b>	<b>3,099</b>	<b>10,105</b>	<b>7,705</b>	<b>5,325</b>	
<b>Financed By:</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	
Supported Capital Expenditure - Revenue	1,533	2,072	2,080	774	581	1
Prudential Borrowing			180			2
Department of Health			4,600	2,500		3
Capital Receipts Reserve	2,202	463	2,690	4,116	4,429	4
Learning Disability Development Fund			240			
Disabled Facilities Grant	198	564	315	315	315	5
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>3,933</b>	<b>3,099</b>	<b>10,105</b>	<b>7,705</b>	<b>5,325</b>	
<b>Capital Receipts Reserve Position:</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	
B/Fwd as at 1 April	(15,779)	(11,735)	(12,241)	(11,085)	(8,155)	
Capital Receipts expected - RTB		(1,358)	(698)	(668)	(638)	6
Capital Receipts applied	2,202	463	2,690	4,116	4,429	
Internal Transfers	1,842	389	-	-	-	
<b>C/Fwd as at 31 March</b>	<b>(11,735)</b>	<b>(12,241)</b>	<b>(10,249)</b>	<b>(6,801)</b>	<b>(3,010)</b>	

In addition, £567,160 financial contributions have been received from developers in lieu of on-site affordable housing, with a further £164,000 anticipated.

### **Assumptions made for the funding of Strategic Housing Capital Programme (corresponding with the numbers in the final column of the table on page 45)**

1. The West Midlands Regional Housing Board's *Strategy for allocating Single Regional Housing Pot* sets out the strategy for allocating housing funds in the future. Each authority will have to bid for funding and could in theory receive no allocation. A safety net is therefore provided to guarantee a minimum SCE of 40% in 2006-07 and 30% in 2007-08 of the 2005-06 HIS SCE allocation for each Authority. The minimum figure is shown in the table above. It is a significant risk to the viability of a longer term Strategic Housing capital programme should funding not be allocated to Herefordshire above these minimum levels.

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

2. Strategic Housing may bid for internal funding from Herefordshire Council via the unsupported Prudential Borrowing mechanism. However Herefordshire Council's Capital Strategy is to use such funding for areas other than Housing, Transport and Education. It is therefore unlikely that Prudential Borrowing would be used to support Strategic Housing.
3. The Department of Health have committed to providing significant funding towards the development of Extra Care Housing. Only the sums committed are shown above.
4. The Strategic Housing capital programme is heavily reliant on using capital reserves. These capital reserves have resulted from historical Right to Buy receipts together with the significant receipt from the disposal of the housing stock and a share of on-going Right to Buy receipts. The Corporate Capital Strategy is to ringfence these receipts for use by Strategic Housing.
5. It is assumed that a similar level of Disabled Facilities Grant will be provided in future years. If this is not the case this will be funded from Strategic Housing capital reserves.
6. As part of the transfer of the Housing Stock to Herefordshire Housing Limited it was agreed that a share of future Right to Buy receipts would be paid to the Council each year until 2032. The receipts from this are subject to a formula based on the sale price and number of properties sold. Although property values are forecast to increase, the number of properties sold is expected to decrease and therefore the expected receipt will diminish over time.

### EDUCATION ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN - LOCAL POLICY STATEMENT - 2005-2010

#### Context

The Education Asset Management Plan is used to manage the 'education estate' and to determine the Education Capital Programme. It is firmly embedded within a policy and strategy framework alongside the Education Business Plan and the Corporate Asset Management Plan and Capital Strategy, all of which sit under the "umbrella" Herefordshire Plan i.e. the local community plan.

#### Scope

The Education Asset Management Plan covers all sites and buildings occupied or held for education purposes by all Community, VC and VA Schools, Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units. Buildings where the prime use is adult education, youth service, and outdoor education, are covered by the corporate asset management plan. The plan looks forward over a five-year period, and is reviewed annually, re-assessing needs and priorities within the remaining period and adding needs for the fifth year.

#### Roles in developing an AMP

The Council, as LEA, leads on the preparation of the Asset Management Plan, providing technical assistance and professional advice. The Council will also seek external and internal funding to implement major and minor works programmes within the context of the Asset Management Plan. It assists Governors to carry out their responsibilities, offering training and promoting good practice, within current and future LMS arrangements. The collective aim is to ensure that the management of and investment in school sites reflect priorities identified within the Asset Management Plan.

Schools identify needs in the context of their school improvement plans, and state how such work will improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Schools contribute to the development of criteria and schedule of entitlement, which allow priorities to be established. It is also expected that Governors, as stewards of the school premises, will use the AMP to guide them in decisions regarding expenditure of the delegated budget, especially relating to the devolved capital budgets. Schools are required to inform the LEA about how devolved capital has been spent, and the effect on school standards.

The two Diocesan authorities provide an overview of the Roman Catholic aided schools and Church of England aided schools and are involved in the preparation of the plan.

#### Consultation Process

The Schools Asset Management Plan Consultation Group (SAMG) meets termly to focus discussion. The group includes representatives of large and small high schools, large (urban) and small (rural) primary schools, special schools, Community and Aided schools, the Hereford Diocese and the Herefordshire Governors Association. Individuals on the SAMG are also members of the Herefordshire Association of Secondary Headteachers and the Primary Headteachers Group, and share the asset management issues in these broader forums. Local policy statements have been subject to consultation with all there have been no objections or adverse comments from any consultees. This revised local policy statement and the statement of priorities will be made available to all schools.



# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## **Criteria for Prioritising Need**

Expenditure priorities will be given to three broad areas including meeting statutory responsibilities; improving curriculum areas; and exploiting opportunities for external funding. The framework for decision making within these three areas is detailed below within the statement of priorities. The Schools Asset Management Plan consultation group meets termly and discusses proposals for the Education Capital Programme, prior to submission to the Cabinet Member. Schools are consulted on the local policy statement and statement of priorities. In addition, schools are consulted on specific issues such as provision of sports facilities prior to the LEA submitting an application for NOF PE and Sports monies. Furthermore, all High schools have had a specific inspection on science facilities and a full copy of the report together with recommendations has been made available to the Headteacher of all High schools.

## **Seeking Premises Commitments From Schools**

The LEA will monitor schools' expenditure on premises and will advise the school Governors if it is felt that the expenditure is insufficient or inappropriate. Otherwise, the LEA will liaise with primary and special schools annually, and high schools termly, to co-ordinate improvement work. Jointly funded projects are encouraged. The LEA will consider favourably contributing to schemes advanced by schools where a significant financial contribution is being made by the school.

A formal post-project review procedure is being developed to compliment the technical review carried out by property officers. This will consider, in addition to technical aspects, timeliness and cost effectiveness but also 'softer' aspects such as client relationship, fit with service delivery needs and project management. In addition the department will be measuring over a longer time period other performance measures such as the reduction in percentage of emergency Maintenance Work, High Priority Health and Safety instances, those teaching areas that prevent or significantly inhibit the delivery of the curriculum, and in water and energy usage. As in previous years, governor training will be offered, in addition to written manuals and guidance on premises issues to all schools.

## **How Information on all Schools will be set out**

The Corporate Property Officer will establish a framework of users and contributors to the Evolut1on property management database. The system will allow intranet access by each school. Individuals from both inside and external to the Council who will be responsible for the collection, validation, monitoring and periodic updating of data. The data currently stored on the Evolut1on database is held in photographic, plan and scheduled format on the Genes1s system. The Corporate Property Officer will be responsible for reviewing all data held on the system with the review timetable. This list will be developed as the data held becomes more comprehensive. Information pertinent to each school will be sent to that school. An Asset Register of all education property interests held by Herefordshire Council has been completed. Condition surveys are available on all school properties, and Asbestos Registers have been completed for schools. The Corporate Property Officer will issue to all schools a statement of accommodation costs on an annual basis and schools will be advised where expenditure varies significantly from the norm.



# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## **The Basis For Assessing Premises**

Provision has been assessed on detailed Condition, Sufficiency and Suitability criteria. Schools were consulted fully during Autumn 2002, and currently more detailed work is being undertaken to improve the assessments under Suitability. The condition of all premises has been assessed by detailed inspection once every five years and reviewed annually. Surveys have been undertaken by surveyors and engineers using a system of checklists and standard input sheets to ensure consistency of data. Sufficiency is considered at various levels. The LEA assesses the sufficiency of provision on an area-by-area basis through the School Organisation Plan over a five-year period and this will inform the development of the three-year capital programme. At a school level, the overall capacity of the school will be compared to current and anticipated numbers on roll. An assessment of suitability of each space for teaching and learning purposes has been made following the published DfES guidance notes although schools have identified shortcomings.

## **The basis for Monitoring and Reviewing the AMP**

Emphasis is being placed on the asset management plan as a process, and each year within this process there will be a review of changing pupil numbers, changes in the physical condition of buildings, new statutory requirements, schools building regulations and updated guidance, re-assessment of condition and suitability arising from the five-yearly cycle of re-inspection for condition and the two-yearly cycle of re-assessment for suitability and progress in achieving objectives.

This review work will link into the capital strategy for the authority as a whole. The diagram below identifies the timetable in 2005. By the end of May, education capital needs arising from condition, suitability or sufficiency factors or from plans such as the Early Years Development and Childcare Plan and the School Organisation Plan, will be identified to inform the Corporate Capital Prioritisation process. The representative group of headteachers will play a major part in this review prior to the conclusions feeding the corporate capital strategy process, and meetings are scheduled to allow the input to the corporate capital strategy group by May each year.

## **Implementing Government Policy Initiatives/Use of External Funding**

### **Funding**

The Council recognises that there are great benefits to be achieved for schools from external funding and has been pro-active in identifying and bidding for funds to augment DfES resources. The criteria for setting priorities take this into account. Many existing schemes involve non-council or non-education funding. A pro-active role will be maintained in identifying and bidding for external funding. Schools are also encouraged to use initiatives to identify such funding on the understanding that this does not commit central LEA resources without prior agreement. An information pack on external revenue and capital funding opportunities has been prepared and is available to all schools. The LEA has been allocated PFI credit to replace one high school, and work has commenced in the construction of the new school. There is another high school that requires replacement but there will need to be an assessment whether or not other PFI schemes can be afforded. The LEA has submitted a bid to the DfES under the Building Schools for the Future initiative. As part of this scheme, with the exception of Whitecross High School, which is being replaced as part of a PFI scheme, all high schools will be replaced or refurbished to provide 21st Century facilities.

# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## **Best Value**

All schemes are subject to option appraisal. The level of sophistication of these analyses is dependent on the cost and complexity of the project. Life-cycle costing is undertaken for the larger schemes, and options are measured in terms of present day values in line with the Treasury 'Green Book'. The Capital Programme Strategy Group of Council is considering the recommendations of the report 'Modernising Construction'. Discussions continue with Constructionline concerning tendering arrangements. A report is currently in preparation on the local application of partnering arrangements, with a remit to examine probity issues, and the application of a system which may depend on national rather than local contractors. Design and build solutions have been used in the past, and will be considered in appropriate circumstances in the future. The Capital Strategy Group has considered procurement issues, particularly the advice on good practice set out in 'Rethinking Construction'.

## **Community Use**

The Authority will maintain its policy of designing school buildings to encourage use by external bodies (zoning of security, heating systems etc), and undertake joint-use projects where funding is currently available, and, where practical, allow flexibility for joint-use funding in the future. A recent best value review of the provision of school plans recommends that falling pupil numbers in primary schools are seen as an opportunity to expand pre-school provision. The extended School Initiative is being used to encourage the use of surplus space in small rural primary schools. Elsewhere, the opportunity has been taken to develop adult education (UK on-line) and community meeting rooms.

## **Environmental Issues**

The service improvements within Herefordshire Council will be based upon Herefordshire Council's environmental sustainability philosophy. The Council has achieved EMAS award. The present works being undertaken in schools include: rainwater harvesting, woodchip heating, prohibition of CFC materials, hardwoods from sustainable sources. the prohibition of the Dirty Dozen Chemicals as recommended by Friends of the Earth. The consumption of energy expressed as a cost per m2 is being collected as part of the asset management plan, and schools are informed of how their consumption compares to others.

## **IT provision**

The design of new schools and new buildings within schools has incorporated the requirement for IT. These vary considerably, ranging from standard and wireless networks to providing dedicated IT areas in primary as well as secondary sectors, and to creating facilities for high school pupils to undertake homework in primary schools by use of the internet. Electronic whiteboards are being used increasingly. All schools have been connected to broadband. The long-term implications for more radical design solutions are being assessed.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The authority is committed to ensuring that there is no discrimination against children with disabilities. In particular, the Council has committed itself to action in which it does not without justification treat children with disabilities less favourably on the grounds of their disability than a child without disabilities, in the provision made for their education; it will change any policies, practices or procedures which place children with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage compared to other children; and it will take appropriate steps to provide education using a reasonable alternative method where a physical feature places

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

children with disabilities at a substantial disadvantage. The allocation of Schools Access Initiative has been guided by these principles.

### **Inclusion**

The Education Service within its business plan has a clear statement about the inclusion of pupils with special education needs. Three principles underlie the services offered.

1. Children with SEN are entitled to equality of opportunity in education, with the greatest possible access to an appropriate, broad and balanced curriculum, which includes the National Curriculum.

2. Children with SEN should, where reasonably practical and taking into account parental wishes, be educated with their age group in primary and secondary schools.

3. Where it is necessary to provide for children with statements of SEN within the County's special schools, opportunities should be provided for some experience in primary and secondary schools in accordance with their assessed needs. It is expected that these principles will be adopted in all plans, not least the Education Asset Management Plan.

### **Pre-school provision**

The role that schools can play in the Early Years Development and Childcare Strategy is being considered carefully to ensure LEA provision does not undermine existing voluntary and private settings. There are proposals to expand LEA nursery provision within an Early Excellence Centre and at least one Neighbourhood Nursery will be established within a school. The LEA will be guided by the EYDCP in expanding the LEA sector to meet Government targets for universal provision for three-year-olds.

### Herefordshire Council's Property Strategy March 2005

Justify Council property holding, rationalise, release capital, reduce revenue costs, maximise revenue from investment holdings and achieve critical service factors

#### **What are the Council's Top Service Priorities?**

- Maximise the health, safety economic well being, achievements and contribution of every child.
- Improve the achievement of pupils.
- Enable vulnerable adults to live independently and more older people to live in their own homes.
- Recycle waste and reduce carbon emissions.
- Improve the safety of roads.
- More efficient, effective and customer focussed services for communities.
- Promote diversity and community harmony and strive for equal opportunities.
- Develop its community leadership role.

#### **What are the Council's Organisational Priorities?**

- Secure significant efficiency savings.
- Ensure that its essential assets are in the right condition for the long-term cost effective delivery of services.
- Understand the needs and preferences of service users and Council Tax payers.
- Recruit, retain and motivate high quality staff.
- Embed corporate planning, performance management and project management systems.

#### **Which influences the way we manage the portfolio.**

##### **Office Accommodation**

- Consolidate offices in Hereford in a non city centre location.
- Increase utilisation by improved use of space and new workstyle.
- Satellite offices in market towns.

##### **Direct Service Property:**

- Review public car park provision.
- Build new crematorium.
- Review Library provision and assess scope for rationalisation and improvement.
- Investigate refurbishment of the museum and bring the heritage centres up to full DDA compliance.
- Continue to implement the public conveniences Best Value Review recommendations.
- Ongoing review of schools to assess scope for rationalisation in the light of falling school rolls.
- Investigate DDA issues in leased TICs and act accordingly.

##### **Maintenance**

- Seek to eradicate the maintenance backlog.
- Investigate condition and funding to test how the maintenance backlog can be eradicated over a ten year period and act accordingly.

##### **Co-Location**

- Bring forward co-location proposals (on a similar model to the Bromyard Centre), on a phased basis, in Kington, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury and Leominster
- Investigate any other co-location opportunities for offices and other uses, and with partners uses, whenever appropriate.

##### **Investment portfolio:**

- Rationalise the agricultural estate
- Consider future policy for industrial Portfolio
- Continue to implement the livestock market relocation and development in Hereford.
- Consider the capacity for and the desirability of redevelopment of the Buttermarket.
- Consider the financial implications to the Council of retaining or disposing of the Council's retail interests in Maylord Orchard and Widemarsh Street and act accordingly.
- Review Council owned sites used for private car parking to assess whether it is in the Council's financial interest to retain or dispose of them.



#### **This drives the Council's Property Objectives.**

- To provide cost-effective and up to date property meeting service needs.
- To minimise property ownership to that necessary for the Council's needs.
- To justify fully, continued ownership of all property no matter what its use.
- To release capital, to reduce total revenue costs and to achieve value for money.
- To maximise revenue income from investment properties.
- To use property in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner.
- To improve access to Council property.



#### **Which must have a process for implementation.**

- Service Property Reviews by September 2005.
- Area Property Reviews by November 2005.
- Capital and Revenue Plan for Property by December 2005.
- Inclusion in Council Programmes 2006/7 onwards.
- Implementation.



#### **Which shapes the Council's Property Vision.**

- A cost-effective and up to date portfolio
- A reduced investment portfolio.
- Shared use of assets (i.e. co-location).
- A single HQ office, with higher occupancy.
- Satellite offices in market towns, located with other uses.
- Higher quality libraries, by rationalisation.
- Rationalisation of primary and high schools, where possible, to reflect falling school rolls.
- Proper provision for maintenance.
- Redevelopment and regeneration of key areas .
- New service initiatives with recycled capital .



#### **Which means that we must measure how well we are getting there.**

- Develop property performance management systems and indicators

### ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2005

The 2005 AMP will be published on the Intranet in the near future.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - REVIEW OF LAST 12 MONTHS

The last year has been something of a milestone in Property terms for Herefordshire Council. A number of major projects have been completed and important decisions have been made on others. Significant events during 2004/05 can be summarised as follows:

#### 1. Administration Accommodation

The rationalisation of the Council's administration accommodation has continued. The disposal of Trinity House has taken place, two leased properties i.e. 42 West Street, Leominster and Kemble House, Hereford, have been surrendered back to the respective landlords and Grange House, Leominster, has been vacated and awaits disposal. Additional accommodation has been negotiated at Plough Lane, Hereford, and discussions for further accommodation are on going.

#### 2. Homes for Older People

The transfer of management of six Homes to a Partnership arrangement with Shaw Health has now been completed. Since 1<sup>st</sup> August 2004 full property maintenance responsibility has passed to this organisation.

#### 3. Schools

Two new village Primary Schools have been built, one at Lea and one at Cradley. As to the old sites, one site reverted to the Diocese, the other has a split ownership between the Diocese, the Glebe Land interests and the Council. Disposal of this site is now proceeding. The Private Finance Initiative scheme to build a new Whitecross High has commenced and is scheduled for completion by June 2006. The Council's smallest Primary School at Hope-under-Dinmore, has closed and the building has been handed back to the Trustees. Negotiations for new School sites at Staunton-on-Wye and Sutton St Nicholas are now nearing completion.

Whilst the Council was unsuccessful in securing early funding under the 'Building Schools for the Future' initiative it has secured the promise of funding for one more high School by 2011. Based upon this fact feasibility works are on-going for a replacement Minster College, on the Leominster campus. Another school site with major maintenance requirements is Hunderton Infants/Junior Schools. A feasibility study has been undertaken and a bid submitted for a replacement School. Cabinet approval has just been obtained for this project.

#### 4. Leisure Facilities

The replacement of the Sydonia Swimming Pool at Leominster with a new North Herefordshire Pool is in progress. The new pool is scheduled to open in January 2006. Major works have been undertaken at Hereford Leisure Pool to improve compliance to the Disability Discrimination Act and minor works at the other Leisure Centres. In Property terms the Council is working closely with Halo the Trust that runs the leisure facilities, to reduce the maintenance backlog and improve standards within the accommodation.

# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## **5. Carbon Management**

A project to compile and submit a Carbon Management Action Plan has been successfully completed in the last twelve months. The Council is one of twenty-four Councils to successfully complete this project and has been awarded a Certificate in recognition of its efforts. The next stage is to implement the Action Plan through energy conservation works and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction.

## **6. Property Strategy**

The Council's review of its Property Portfolio has continued. The internal review by Scrutiny Committee reported in November 2004 and additional works were identified. These were undertaken between November and reported to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2005. The roles of the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Member for Rural Regeneration, Smallholdings and Commons will continue but there will now be two Groups and two Boards, one with a wide property reference and three smaller Boards. The Boards consisting of both officers and Members will take on the role of a Wider Reference Board. The Groups will be an Investment Group and a Direct Services Group. The terms of reference for these Boards and groups have now been finalised.

## **7. Partnership Working**

The partnership with Herefordshire Jarvis for works and Owen Williams for professional services has continued to develop. On-cost percentages for the Herefordshire Jarvis partnership have been determined, and fee analysis of the Owen Williams contract is in progress.

## **8. Good Environmental Management (GEM)**

Property Services has made a major contribution towards the Council obtaining and keeping accreditation schemes under ISO 14001. Staff have been involved in the audit procedures and to date no major breaches have been identified. The recent approval of the Carbon Management Plan will contribute to this aspect of the Council's work.

## **9. Edgar Street Grid**

A twenty-year plan for the redevelopment of a prime area of Hereford has been published. The Council, in negotiation with Advantage West Midlands, has formulated a Strategy to redevelop this area. The project will be run on Prince 2 principles with a Board consisting of representatives from Advantage West Midlands, Herefordshire Council and External Businesses. The company will be known as Edgar Street Grid (Hereford) Ltd. As a major land owner within the grid the council will play a prominent role in this development.

## **10. Capital Programme**

Similar as in previous years Property Services has been involved in the submission of various capital bids. These have been successful in securing £200,000 for Disability Discrimination Act works and £150,000 for drainage. The energy works are to be considered as an 'Invest-to-Save' bid from the Government's new funding regime. In addition to these property bids approval has also been obtained for a new Crematorium at approximately £3.15million.

## **11. Staffing Issues**

During the last twelve months the number of staff leaving Property Services has increased. This is particularly significant in the Asset Management Section where the Land and Property Information Officer and all the Research Assistants (3 in total) have left. Considerable effort has been invested in reviewing posts, offering incentives such as market supplements and restructuring job descriptions and person specifications to make the posts more attractive, use has also been made of support from other Councils such as Gloucestershire, who now offer support on the management of the Smallholdings Estate.



### **CARBON MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN**

The Carbon Management Action Plan can be found on the Intranet as follows:

<http://intranet/commondocs/DocRoot/GEM/Reducing Carbon Initiative/CMAP - Adopted/Herefordshire CMAP - Adopted.pdf>

### **HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL CARBON MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN 2005/06 – 2011/12**

#### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of the Carbon Management Action Plan (CMAP) is to define the steps that Herefordshire Council will take to secure its contribution to the carbon dioxide reduction targets as part of the Herefordshire Partnership Climate Change Strategy. The CMAP forms part of the valuable process of Herefordshire Council leading by example in the community it serves.

The CMAP has been developed with the assistance of the Carbon Trust and consultants from Energy for Sustainable Development (EST) and covers the period from April 2005 to March 2012.

The CMAP is separated into two three-year phases. Phase 1 runs from 2005 to 2008 and Phase 2 from 2009 to 2012. Phase 1 aligns with current government emissions objectives, including the first round of the European Emissions Trading Directive, while Phase 2 concludes at the end of the first 'Kyoto' commitment period.

The CMAP sets a target for Herefordshire Council to achieve a 12.5% reduction in the 2002 carbon dioxide equivalent emissions from the activities directly controlled by the Council or upon which it has an influence, by 2012, and to deliver a commitment to securing a 20% reduction by 2020.

The emissions reduction target is equivalent to an annual absolute reduction of 1.25% per year. This reduction needs to be secured in the presence of an estimated underlying increase in emissions of 2.5% per year. Even so, the CMAP demonstrates that, by selective action, the target is likely to be exceeded in Phase 1. The emissions reduction target is, however, expected to become progressively more difficult to achieve during Phase 2 unless decisive action is taken to counteract the underlying increase in the growth of electricity consumption.

A detailed baseline emissions inventory was determined for 2002. The baseline included emissions associated with fossil fuel combustion and electricity use in corporate building, schools, street lighting, employee transport and commuting as well as emissions of methane from closed and operational landfill sites.

The total baseline emissions were assessed at 72,428 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year. The target for 2012 implies a reduction of 9,053 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

The CMAP provides for a revision of the targets in 2008. This is necessary to take account of changes in the regulatory background and new opportunities that are expected to emerge in an ever tighter regulatory environment.

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

The key actions for reducing carbon emissions have been determined within the context of the adoption of a Carbon Management Hierarchy, similar in concept to the waste hierarchy. This is based on *avoidance*, *efficiency* and the use of *renewables*. The key actions are:

- **Property rationalisation** - This change process has so far resulted in estimated emissions reductions that have exceeded the targets rate set by the government for the public sector. The savings from continuing the process in 2005/06 are in the CMAP. Property rationalisation is estimated to have reduced energy costs by £354,000 per annum, relative to 2002.

- **Development of Landfill Gas Power Generation** - The Stretton Sugwas closed landfill has been identified as a suitable site for the generation of 'renewable' electricity from methane. The site is considered capable of generating electricity with a minimum revenue of £206,000 per annum over 10 to 15 years, while eliminating around 21,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions per year.

- **Energy Efficiency Measure** – Energy efficiency measures are the main way in which energy costs and emissions can be kept under control. Low cost, short payback period measures were assessed for over 200 buildings including all schools. The predicted value of the annual energy savings is £502,000 for 2005/06.

- **Energy Services** – The CMAP recommends the establishment of an energy services company preferably operated through West Mercia Supplies (WMS). This is the principal means by which incremental energy saving expenditure can be managed for all corporate buildings, and schools. It is designed to fit with the government's aims of the Sustainable Procurement Task Force that will develop a national action plan for Sustainable Procurement across the public sector by April 2006.

- During Phase 1, it is recommended that the energy services be organised in the form of an Invest-to-Save fund.
- At the start of Phase 2, the incorporation of an 'Energy Services Company' limited by Guarantee will be reviewed. This will be timed to coincide with the implementation of the Energy Efficiency and Energy Services Directive currently under negotiation. This directive is expected to impose stretched energy efficiency targets on the public sector as well as new financing options.
- During Phase 1, Herefordshire Council should develop an Invest-to-save fund for energy related projects initially limited to a maximum annual expenditure of £1million (2005/06).
- At the end of Phase 1, the maximum annual expenditure should be progressively reduced to £0.5million per annum. This will release £0.5million per annum in support other front-line expenditure, and will contribute to the Gershon Review efficiency savings.
- Progressively throughout Phase 1, the CMAP envisages that total real expenditure will grow to £1.4million per annum, of which £0.9million will be derived from the invest-to-save fund.
- The maximum annual expenditure through the Invest-to-save fund will be maintained at £0.5 million throughout Phase 2.



## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- Progressively throughout Phase 2, the CMAP envisages that the total real expenditure will grow to £2million per annum, of which £1.5million will be derived from investments from the fund.
  - The overall value of the Invest-to-save fund is expected to stabilise at just under £1million by the end of Phase 2.
- **Fuel Poverty** – The CMAP includes the objective to develop a Fuel Poverty Strategy for the Private Housing Sector during the early part of Phase 1. This will be developed jointly between the HECA service of Herefordshire Council and the National Energy Action (NEA) organisation so that fuel poverty can be positively included in the Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy.
- **The Nottingham Declaration** – The wider communication of the aims of Herefordshire Council in relation to carbon management include the signing of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. This will formerly announce that Herefordshire Council will:
- *Work with central government in delivering the UK climate change programme*
  - *Encourage the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the local community*
  - *Provide opportunities for appropriate renewable energy generation within the local area*

### **CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY**

The Corporate Environment Strategy can be found on the Councils intranet at:

[http://intranet/commondocs/DocRoot/GEM/z\\_GEM\\_backup/Draft\\_Environmental\\_Strategy\\_Summary - 09-06.doc](http://intranet/commondocs/DocRoot/GEM/z_GEM_backup/Draft_Environmental_Strategy_Summary_-_09-06.doc)

The foreword and a summary of this strategy is set out below.

### **CORPORATE ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY 2005 TO 2011**

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

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

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

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

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

### **ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the county as the unitary local authority. The Council shares a vision for a better Herefordshire with a wide

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

range of partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors. This is set out in *The Herefordshire Plan*, within which sustainable development is a guiding principle.

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

### **To meet this commitment Herefordshire Council will:**

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

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

The strategy summarises the policy aims, objectives and action plans that the Council has adopted. Internally the Council is committed to tackling its own environmental impacts, such as waste, energy and transport, right across Council services through its certification to ISO 14001 the international environmental management standard. Externally the authority makes

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

a major contribution to Herefordshire's environment through working in partnership with other organisations and the wider community.

The strategy is backed by an integrated action plan that aligns the aims and objectives described in the strategy with the timed targets adopted for each action.

The information provided in the Strategy specifically covers the following headings:

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

### ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

#### Introduction

From the early life of the Herefordshire Council it has been accepted that office accommodation has not been suitable.

The majority of Directorates operate from different sites, the exceptions being the Education Service and Policy and Community. Split sites can create management problems. Communications become more difficult and costs, both direct and indirect, become harder to manage. There are examples of inefficient uses of space, excessive staff travel and the high costs associated with operating from older and less efficient buildings. Care-taking and custodian services are also replicated therefore costs increase.

Present working practices are traditional and the Council wishes to move towards a more flexible approach to service delivery – the present accommodation cannot be readily adapted to this new environment. Existing space is difficult and expensive to alter, budgets are restricted and the buildings themselves are not always suitable for adaptation.

Flexible working has been difficult to implement because of the poor ICT infrastructure in the County. Working from home also has its own set of problems depending upon the demands of the job. Flexible workspace in the market towns linked to the Info centres has not been created because the schemes have had size and budget constraints.

#### Vision

To provide more efficient, effective and customer focussed services by using information technology and electronic document management to facilitate new ways of working.

Increase utilisation of available space by operating all the Council's main services from one central site and provide satellite Info Centres in the market towns and Hereford along with a Contact Centre.

#### Strategy

The strategy to be adopted in order to achieve this vision is:-

- To have all core and support services co-located on one site along with facilities for a Council Chamber, meeting rooms, Member rooms and offices for the elected Leader and Chairman of the Council.
- To have flexible work space in the main administrative centre that supports flexible working
- To have an Info shop in all of the market towns preferably linked to library and/or other Council services
- To keep the leased accommodation at Thorn Business Park and develop the office as a hub for the ICT network
- To encourage the use of co-working with HJS by locating client teams with the contractor
- To have flexible work space in all the market towns and Hereford City preferably linked to the info service

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- To have a contact centre that moves the Council closer towards delivering e-gov targets and to help drive service improvements
- To have a culture of flexible working which addresses both service delivery and work-life balance issues
- To have an electronic document management system that supports new and flexible ways of working
- To minimise the Council's environmental impact through the better use of natural resources
- To minimise the costs of accommodation by having fewer and more cost effective buildings
- To maximise the savings by terminating leased office space at the most opportune moment (subject to maintaining effective service delivery)
- To realise the maximum value from surplus assets by the phased disposal of freehold property
- To help maintain a viable commercial market for office space in the County by a planned exit from leased accommodation
- To plan office relocations in such a way that staff are not moved twice
- To plan moves that take account of the ICT issues and costs
- To plan maintenance expenditure on the existing estate to ensure the money is spent only where appropriate
- To have access to modern telephony to enable remote working
- To facilitate the project all capital receipts and revenue savings should be "ringfenced" for re-investment in the accommodation project.

### Background information

In the past there have been a number of options considered on how to provide suitable accommodation to meet these strategic aims.

At one time a single building erected on the livestock market site was thought to be a solution.

Late in 2002 an opportunity arose to create a master plan for the Edgar Street Grid. The master plan will guide development in the city for the next 20 years. Due process was followed and consultants were appointed. The study is now at the stage where it is incorporated into the second draft of the UDP.

During the course of the study two important observations were made. Firstly the market site was seen as adding greater value to the regeneration of the city if it was to be developed for purposes other than Council offices. Secondly a single large building was ruled out because it would not be flexible enough to adapt to the changing needs of local government.

In 2003 the opportunity arose to lease space within the former headquarters building of HP Bulmer in Plough Lane, Hereford.

With regard to the HP Bulmer option the whole office block will be leased. Adjacent land and space for car parking will also be made available.

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

There now is an operational requirement to acquire a single site that meets the needs of the Council. It could also enable the phased disposal of leased office accommodation back on to a depressed local market, and allow the Council to sell surplus assets in a measured way so as not to swamp the market and hence depress prices.

All options to negotiate for future development on any suitable site will also be considered from a strategic and financial aspect.

To fulfil the needs of the strategy different sites in or adjacent to Hereford City were examined. Options to develop centralised offices were considered. The sites were:

1. The existing livestock market site
2. The “civic quarter” as defined in the Edgar Street Grid study (Blueschool Street)
3. Land at Rotherwas Industrial Estate
4. Land at Moreton-on-Lugg

These four sites were rejected because of high capital costs

The strategy addressed the three issues raised in “Hot Property”:

Can we make do with less?	The strategy assumes that we can make do with less by introducing flexible working.
Could we relocate somewhere cheaper?	The strategy assumes that it is impossible to radically alter the existing estate to provide open plan flexible workspace. The majority of the Council’s buildings are old and their structural design prevents radical internal rearrangement of space. Council offices are also in diverse locations and as such presents management and environmental challenges which are hard to address given the geography of the estate. It is possible to relocate to somewhere cheaper by taking advantage of existing and new office space at less cost than in the city centre.
Can we share with other agencies?	Herefordshire Council has a history of partnership working and there are examples of where the Council does co-exist very constructively with other agencies. West Mercia Police, at one time, expressed an interest in sharing accommodation with the Council on a centrally located site but pressures from within the organisation demanded early attention to their accommodation problems. As a consequence they have taken a lease on premises in Barton Road.

CAPITAL PLANNING PROCESS DIAGRAM

<p><b>APRIL - MAY</b></p>	<p><b>REVIEW:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herefordshire Plan</li> <li>• Corporate Asset Management Plan</li> <li>• Local Transport Plan</li> <li>• Housing Investment Strategy</li> <li>• Education Asset Management Plan</li> <li>• Other services capital investment plans</li> <li>• Implementing Electronic Government Strategy</li> <li>• Local service plans</li> <li>• Best Value &amp; Business Excellence (EFQM) Reviews</li> <li>• Consultation feedback</li> </ul>	<p><b>REVIEW:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital resource availability</li> <li>• Capital outturn for previous financial year</li> <li>• Changes in central government priorities</li> <li>• Changes in capital control system</li> </ul>
<p><b>JUNE - JULY</b></p>	<p><i>Identify issues with capital investment implications</i></p> <p><i>Conclusions on level of capital resources informs</i></p> <p><b>REVIEW AND UPDATE CAPITAL STRATEGY &amp; ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN</b></p> <p><i>Provides the financial context</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and confirm details of SSP process</li> <li>• Post completion review of all major and sample of minor projects</li> <li>• Review asset base – long-term acquisition/disposal plans (incorporating best value and Business Excellence (EFQM) reviews)</li> <li>• First in-year capital monitoring exercise</li> </ul>	
<p><b>AUGUST – NOVEMBER</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital investment bids for each programme area prepared, assessed by CSG and approved by Members</li> <li>• Consider and implement consultation on overall investment plan</li> <li>• Second and Third in-year capital monitoring exercise</li> </ul>	
<p><b>DECEMBER</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single Capital Pot announced</li> <li>• Post completion review of all major and sample of minor projects</li> </ul>	
<p><b>JANUARY – FEBRUARY</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fourth in-year capital monitoring exercise</li> <li>• Final Single Capital Pot announcements made</li> <li>• Draft capital programme – current year update plus three financial years</li> <li>• Members approve capital programme</li> </ul>	
<p><b>MARCH</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New schemes prepared for early start in new financial year</li> </ul>	



# HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

## APPENDIX 11

### PRUDENTIAL BORROWING ALLOCATIONS 2004/05 & 2005/06

<b>2004/05 Allocations (Cabinet 15/7/04)</b>	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
North Herefordshire Swimming Pool	1,800	395	63		2,258
Friar St Museum Resource & Learning Centre	140				140
Aylestone Park	100				100
Ross Creative Learning Centre	117				117
Ross Library	10				10
Hereford City of Living Crafts	60	60			120
Hereford City Shop Front Scheme	50	50	50		150
Hereford City Eign Gate	100	400			500
Hereford City High Town & High St	145				145
Hereford City Victoria Foot Bridge	100	100	100		300
Ledbury Info	4				4
Disabled Access	200				200
Energy Conservation	100				100
Crematorium Hereford	100				100
Leominster Landfill Infrastructure	45				45
Public Toilets Improvements	150				150
Hereford Cemetery	100				100
ICT - Network Enhancement	770	950	500	950	3,170
ICT - Continuity / Disaster Recovery	250	500	100	100	950
Community Equipment	200				200
Disabled Facilities Grants	200				200

<b>Total 2004/05 Allocations</b>	<b>4,741</b>	<b>2,455</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>9,059</b>
----------------------------------	--------------	--------------	------------	--------------	--------------

<b>2005/06 Allocations (Cabinet 24/2/05)</b>	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Disabled Access	200			200
Leominster Broad Street Car Park	100			100
Powell Croft Sewage Plant	50			50
Restore Leominster Landfill Site	210	500		710
Crematorium	450	800	1,800	3,050
Aylestone Park - Canal Safety	166			166
Public Toilets Improvements	215			215
Relocation Ledbury Library	53			53
Kington Library Refurbishment	535			535
Contact Centre	750	750		1,500
Refurbishment of High Town	2,000			2,000
4 x Minibuses (Soc Care)	97			97
Holistic Resource at St. Owens	9			9
Queenswood Car Park	137			137
2 x Mobile Libraries	180			180

<b>Total 2005/06 Allocations</b>	<b>5,152</b>	<b>2,050</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>9,002</b>
----------------------------------	--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------

<b>Total Prudential Borrowing Allocations</b>	<b>4,741</b>	<b>7,607</b>	<b>2,863</b>	<b>2,850</b>	<b>18,061</b>
---	--------------	--------------	--------------	--------------	---------------

## REVENUE BUDGET 2005/06

### Extract from Cabinet Report 24 February 2005

#### Aligning the Medium Term Financial Plan to the Corporate Plan

3. The Council has recognised the importance of forward planning and has adopted key principles, to be reflected in budget considerations, within a Medium Term Financial Framework. Building on this approach, further work has been undertaken to develop a Medium Term Financial Plan for the period 2005/06 to 2007/08.
4. Cabinet recently agreed the Council's Draft Corporate Plan ("the Plan") for the period 2005-08. The Plan clearly sets out the Council's priorities and its direction of travel over the next three years. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) performs a vital role in resourcing the Corporate Plan and, in particular identifies unavoidable spending pressures and the potential impact on council tax.
5. The savings figure in future years within the MTFP is based upon limiting council tax rises to broadly Government guidelines and provides a guide to the level of resources the Council has available to deliver its priorities within the Plan. There are a number of important factors to be highlighted. There is highly unlikely to be any significant headroom in the budget over the period of the MTFP given:
  - the restrictions in raising revenue locally through capping, particularly in 2005/06.
  - the requirement to identify cash efficiency savings following the Gershon Review.
  - the ongoing pressures in the funding of care for older people and waste disposal and, the continued support for Education in line with Government targets.
6. It is imperative, therefore, for the corporate savings initiative to continue through the Service Improvement Programme (SIP); corporate procurement and reducing base budgets in line with the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. Appendix 1 details the budget reductions agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 27th January, 2005.
7. The constraints within the MTFP demonstrate the need for flexibility in how the priorities within the Plan are funded. Three specific ways of doing this are;
  - the LPSA Performance Reward Grant will be received over the next two years and this is shown as funding improvement in Herefordshire Partnership priority areas.
  - the use of capital investment through both prudential and supported borrowing and this needs to be reflected in the capital strategy.
  - the prudent use of reserves and the flexibility accorded by the one-off changes in the current year's settlement to manage base revenue budget fluctuations over the medium term.
8. A number of priorities emerged from last year's budget considerations with a number of principles being established in setting the current year's revenue budget and the MTFP. These are as follows:

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- (a) The underlying principle of the medium-term financial strategy is that the Council would intend to maintain the real purchasing power of current revenue budgets throughout the life of the plan period.
- (b) An acceptance that the Education budget will largely be driven by a national agenda which has seen investment in Education above the level of inflation throughout the life of this Council. The emphasis within that investment is on passporting cash to schools. The Council wish to support that approach whilst recognising that that does create difficulties for funding central support for schools, particularly in a Council with Herefordshire's characteristics.
- (c) There will be a need to continue to strengthen the Social Care budget through the medium-term financial plan period if the Council is to maintain improvement in this key area of its performance. This is particularly true in the area of care for older people where the Council spends significantly below its FSS.
- (d) The Council has been postponing investment in Information and Communications Technology (ICT), partly because of its poor and inconsistent inheritance but also because of the difficulty of making judicious investment in those areas based on the occupation of existing accommodation. Investment cannot however be further postponed without the Council risking failure in the way it works and delivers services to the public.
- (e) The Council needs to address its performance in relation to highways, transport, planning and waste. This will require prudent investment and the generation of that investment may require the Council to support significant changes in the pattern of provision.
- (f) There is a need to continue to resource activity, which is of direct benefit to the community. Past inspections have led to criticism of levels of investment in adult learning and libraries. The Council needs to maintain resources for these services if it is to continue to offer them. If it is unable to maintain those minimum levels of service then it needs to consider in some cases whether to continue to maintain the services at all in some areas.
- (g) The Council needs to continue to strive for efficiency. It would be foolish to pretend with an organisation of the size of the Council, delivering the range and breadth of services that it does, always maintains 100% efficiency. There is however a recognition that the amount which can be driven out by traditional approaches to improving efficiency are unlikely to be sufficiently significant to support the Council's medium-term financial plan. Cabinet has therefore agreed to look at two specific projects as an alternative to traditional approaches to economies and efficiencies. These approaches are now embodied in the work through the Service Improvement Programme and Procurement initiatives. That is not to say, however, that the traditional approaches would not continue.

The Service Improvement Programme (SIP) - this programme is intended to take a fundamental look at the way in which the Council operates. It will seek to address the prospects for savings by entirely changing operational process. It is believed that there are significant opportunities for efficiency savings. Cabinet has agreed in principle to pursuing this approach, ensuring that savings generated are freed to support the Council's MTFP rather than individual Directorate and Departmental activity.

## HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2005

- (h) Accommodation - the Council's current occupation of accommodation is inefficient both in terms of the actual occupation of space but also in terms of maintenance and loss of staff time. Again Cabinet has approved in principle a process for managing the accommodation requirements of the Council in a way that will be at least cost neutral and hopefully over the planned period will make a modest revenue return for reinvestment.
  - (i) In addition, Cabinet considered the extent it wishes to resource any additional borrowing required as a consequence of the Prudential Guidelines. The MTFP reflects a provisional spend of £5,000,000 per annum. The position will be reviewed annually.
9. The 2004/05 Revenue Budget substantially reflected these principles despite capping. In the light of the funding constraints now faced, however, the above principles have been revisited in Budget Panels over the last two months with a realisation that levels of revenue investment anticipated (i.e. £7,000,000 in total less £1,800,000 invested in 2004/05) may not be able to be maintained in all areas. The following paragraphs highlight the key issues for Cabinet's consideration.

### **Aligning the Medium Term Financial Process to Budget Policy**

10. In determining its budget policy, the Council will need to take into account immediate factors outside the MTFP. These include:
- (a) the need to protect the Council's financial reputation, managing and highlighting potential risks to the medium-term financial strategy both in terms of the forthcoming annual budget but also into future years.
  - (b) continuing to learn from the monitoring of the current year's financial performance translating that practical experience into amendments to the budget for the forthcoming year. This requires an examination of both overspends and underspends although clearly overspends represent a greater risk.
  - (c) assessing the Government's financial settlement for the forthcoming year but also seeking to anticipate trends over the medium-term financial plan period.
  - (d) the level of the Council's general reserves and balances.

AMP	The Council's corporate Asset Management Plan
AWM	Advantage West Midlands
CMB	Corporate Management Board
CPMWG	Capital Programme Monitoring Working Group
CSG	Capital Strategy Group
DBFO	Design, Build, Finance and Operate
DFC	Devolved Formula Capital
EAMP	Education Asset Management Plan
EDBSS	Economic Development and Business Support Strategy
EFQM	European Framework for Quality Management
ESG	Edgar Street Grid
HIS	Housing Investment Strategy
HIT	Herefordshire In Touch
IEG	Implementing Electronic Government
LPSA	Local Public Service Agreement
LSVT	Large Scale Voluntary Transfer
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MTFP	Medium Term Financial Plan
PB	Prudential Borrowing
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PIs	Prudential Indicators
SCE	Supported Capital Expenditure
SCP	Single Capital Pot
SMC	Strategic Monitoring Committee
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
SSP	Scheme Selection and Prioritisation process
UDP	Unitary Development Plan



# CHANGE FOR CHILDREN

## PROGRAMME AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY: CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CABINET

29TH SEPTEMBER, 2005

---

### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To advise Cabinet of progress on "Moving towards a Children's Trust", Integrated Services and the position locally on Safeguarding Children.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

### Recommendation

**THAT Cabinet note the report and comment on the strategy paper and performance outlined in Appendices 1, 2 and 3.**

### Reasons

To demonstrate the direction of travel and performance to date and continue the routine progress reporting to Cabinet.

### Considerations

#### Safeguarding Children

1. In July 2005 the second joint national Chief Inspector's Report on Arrangements to Safeguard Children was published.
2. The report's key findings were:-
  - some agencies still give insufficient priority to safeguarding and children's interests and there are some groups of children, including those with disabilities and those living away from home, whose needs are not always given sufficient recognition or priority;
  - there are still considerable concerns about the differing thresholds applied by social services in their child protection and family support work and about the lack of understanding of the role of social workers by other agencies; and
  - continuing difficulties in recruitment and retention in some services affect their ability to safeguard children effectively and may restrict their capacity to deliver the new Every Child Matters arrangements.

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Sue Fiennes, Director of Children's Services on 01432 260039

3. It is important to outline the Herefordshire position in relation to these findings and summarise the position on children placed out of area (attached at Appendix 1).
4. It is relevant to note that in relation to looked after children the DfES distance tool puts children placed 20 miles from Hereford as "out of area". There are placements 20 miles from Hereford that are in the County.

### **Integrated Services**

5. The development of a framework for future planning is a necessary part of the development of the Children's and Young People's plan for Herefordshire. The attached paper (Appendix 2) is a consultation paper with key partners and stakeholders, including the school sector.
6. The strategy framework points to a Herefordshire shape for services which can combine local primary schools, extended schools and children's centres, alongside "virtual" multi-professional teams covering the 7 proposed locality partnership areas.

### **"Moving Towards a Children's Trust"**

7. At the same time as the JAR inspection, Herefordshire has been asked to update the self-assessment previously reported to Cabinet on our progress on the Every Child Matters, Change for Children agenda. The template has significant sub-questions which are pointing to changes expected some time ahead. This will be used alongside the JAR outcome and with progress on the Local Area Agreement (LAA) - C&YP pillar to inform the agenda for a Herefordshire Priorities meeting on 6th December.
8. The completed template is attached at Appendix 3 and is supported by the C&YP Partnership Board.

### **Alternative Options**

There are no alternative options

### **Risk Management**

The direction of travel towards a Children's Trust needs to be robust to ensure Herefordshire Council and partners are making proper progress. This links to the Corporate Risk on the Children Act 2004.

The establishment of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board in Herefordshire is a vital ingredient of the improvement/change journey. The arrangements are well in place for this to happen before the due date of April 2006.

The integrated Children's Strategy is part of the local area planning and is timetabled to receive feedback from consultation in time for the Children and Young People's Plan to be finalised prior to April 2006.

### **Consultees**

Children's and Young People's Partnership Board for Herefordshire  
Area Child Protection Committee for Herefordshire

### **Background Papers**

Previous Change for Children Cabinet Reports.



## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN HEREFORDSHIRE**

The comments below respond to the key findings of the national Chief Inspector's report on arrangements to Safeguard Children published in July and reflected in the main cabinet report at paragraph 2 under "Safeguarding Children". The Chair of the new Local Safeguarding Children Board (Head of Social Care – Children) has completed an initial response to the full recommendations for consideration at a future meeting of the LSCB.

*Some agencies give insufficient priority to safeguarding and children's interests and there are some groups of children, including those with disabilities and those living away from home whose needs are not always given sufficient recognition or priority;*

Herefordshire has a positive record to taking safeguarding seriously and is in the process of setting up its Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). There has been approval of the principle constitution of the new Safeguarding Board by the Children and Young Person's Partnership Board (CYPPB) in May 2005 and the practical arrangements for the setting up of the LSCB will be reported to the November 2005 meeting in order that there will be full implementation by the due date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006.

### **Children in Education Placements**

The County has 12 children in education placements who are "out of area" by the definition of the DfES. These are placed more than twenty miles from the child's home area. These placements will end within the next 2 years and are fully monitored by staff in the Children's Services directorate. Additionally there are five children who are joint funded by health and the local authority. A proportion of these children are "looked after" children.

### **Herefordshire Looked After children placed outside the County boundary in what could be defined as "out of authority" placements.**

The calculation is based on distance from Hereford City (as distance from the boundary was difficult to measure). There are currently 27 children placed more than 20 miles from Hereford City and 9 children placed within 20 miles of the City (16% and 5% respectively of the total looked after cohort). An explanation of the position of these children is given below, in four placement type categories.

*Children placed with Herefordshire foster carers who live outside the county boundary.*

*More than 20 miles (13 children):*

8 are placed with kinship carers, in placements which meet the children's needs to remain within their wider family network.

5 are placed with Herefordshire approved and supported foster carers in the bordering counties of Worcestershire and Monmouthshire. Two of this group required very specific foster caring skills because of their disability, not available more locally. The other three could not be found suitable more local carers at the time of placement.

11 are placed appropriately in mainstream local authority schools.

2 are placed appropriately in specialist local authority schools because of their special educational needs.

*Less than 20 miles (3 children):*

All three are with the same Herefordshire foster carers who live in Worcestershire but only 16.5 miles from Hereford. More local placements were not available at the time of placement. All attend local authority mainstream schools.

*Children placed with agency foster carers.*

*More than 20 miles (6):*

3 of the children are in permanent placements which are stable and meeting their needs appropriately. None of them could be found suitable local provision at the time it was needed. They needed skilled foster carers. All are in appropriate mainstream education.

1 has moved successfully to a foster home following several years of specialist residential provision, which was not available locally. The need to maintain stability in her educational provision was a high priority in the decision not to bring her back into Herefordshire.

2 are children whose emotional and behavioural needs could not be met by local foster carers.

*Less than 20 miles (3):*

2 required specialist fostering skills not available from the cohort of Herefordshire foster carers at that time. Education stability has been maintained for both.

1 required placement urgently at a time when no local placements were available, although her needs were not complex. The current placement is meeting her needs well, especially educationally and has been made a permanent placement.

*Children placed in agency residential care.*

*More than 20 miles (8):*

All these children have complex needs which has made them very difficult to place, and for whom even specialist foster care has not been a viable option.

4 have special educational needs which cannot be met by Herefordshire's local educational provision. They also have emotional and behavioural problems. They are placed in care settings and residential schools designed to meet their needs.

4 have severe emotional and behavioural problems, requiring specialist therapeutic provision. One child is now ready to move on and will be returning to Herefordshire (private agency foster carers).

*Less than 20 miles (3):*

All have complex needs, as above.

2 have special educational needs. One is attending local education provision in Hereford, and the other is in a specialist educational setting.

1 has specific emotional and behavioural needs which needed specialist provision. There are concerns about the educational provision in this case, which are being addressed.

All children are reviewed as prescribed by the DfES and our own Looked after procedures. The above information was correct as of August 2005.

*There are considerable concerns about the differing thresholds in their child protection and family support work and about the lack of understanding of the role of social workers by other agencies.*

May 1<sup>st</sup> 2004 was the launch of the Child Concern Model (CCM) which was developed by all the agencies through the Area Child Protection Committee. This model aims at developing a common approach to managing concerns about children. An evaluation is currently being undertaken which will report to the Area Child Protection Committee (which commissioned the report) the initial findings in October 2005. The purpose is to recognise that this is a first year evaluation of a three year process. The findings are aimed at developing the model further, recognising training needs, and preparing the ground for evolving the model into the government designated common assessment framework. This is due to be introduced from April 2006 with full implementation within three years. A response to the evaluation with an action plan will be made to the new LSCB and the Partnership board and developments will be incorporated in the Children and Young Person's Plan which is due to be published in April 2006.

The development of the CCM has given confidence to professional and agencies in Herefordshire and early indications of improved outcomes for children.

*Continuing difficulties in recruitment and retention in some services affect their ability to safeguard children effectively and may restrict their capacity to deliver the new Every Child Matters arrangements.*

Herefordshire has not been immune to the national shortage of qualified social workers. This has been exacerbated this year with the change over to the new social work degree which means that there is no one qualifying this year. This is a pressure on all local authorities. Whilst pressure has been particularly experienced in the duty team over the July and August period by the beginning of October this will have improved. Any changeover in staff has implications for training and support. There are significant vacancies in our Adoption and Fostering teams. However the Council has ensured that all children who are looked after (170) and on the child protection register (42) has an allocated social worker. The Children's Services Directorate maintains an "open" approach to recruitment being aware that numbers can fluctuate in this section of our workforce. This situation is closely monitored by senior managers.



### Consultation Paper

# INTEGRATING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE IN HEREFORDSHIRE

## Context

This consultation paper is written in the belief that, as evidenced by the JAR self- evaluation document, the vast majority of children and young people are developing well and flourishing within Herefordshire. However, continued improvement is both necessary and possible. The move towards the greater integration of services is a significant driver for achieving further improvements in the outcomes for all children and young people within the County.

This proposed strategy will be based on the aspirations in the Herefordshire Plan, the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan, "Herefordshire Thinks Rural" and the Council's ICT Strategy.

It is part of the planning for the future in relation to building prosperity in Herefordshire, education performance and improvement, and the Children's and Young People's Plan for Herefordshire.

## Introduction

There is statistical data to show that differentials in the life chances of children remain significant. The Change for Children Agenda aims to meet the concerns that arise from this. This will involve changes in the ways in which we operate, but lead to the achievement of better outcomes for all children and for vulnerable children in particular.

This consultation paper sets out some of the key arguments and reasons for change and provides some ideas for how this can be achieved in Herefordshire. There are 10 sections and each has a series of paragraphs which have been numbered for ease of discussion:

1. Why integrate?
2. Quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services
3. Organisational issues
4. The national framework for integration
5. The government's key messages
6. The local integration agenda
7. The local context-needs and resources
8. Children's Centres
9. A map of the proposed sites for Children's Centres
10. Future possible developments
11. Conclusions
12. Appendices

### 1.0 Why integrate?

- 1.1 At the heart of the debate about integrating services to children and facilities is recognition that better outcomes in education attainment, health and safety, require the combined action of a number of agencies. The focus of Every Child Matters (ECM) is on vulnerable children and young people, especially for those who are in danger of social exclusion. But this is not simply about children with the most complex needs, but about focusing on the needs of **all** children and recognising that outcomes are

linked. For example, ill health in children (or their parents) can lead to under-performance at school, followed by truancy and involvement in crime.

- 1.2 Integration is not, therefore, just about combining services, but about achieving successful outcomes for all children and ensuring that they are well integrated into the local community and wider society. This is often referred to as 'inclusion', and can mean ensuring that children with complex needs are helped to develop their potential as fully as other children. It also means that children of families living in poverty receive the same level and quality of services as those who are not socially excluded. The ECM agenda was clearly driven by government concerns about communication and integration of children's services and the need for improvements in safeguarding arising from the Laming Inquiry Report (2003). The focus is to ensure equal opportunity and social justice.
- 1.3 Another impetus for change is discernible in a report from the Social Inclusion Unit (2001) on life chances in Britain. This showed that vulnerable children and young people were subject to much poorer outcomes than their European counterparts.

The U.K. has:

- One of the highest illiteracy rates in Europe
- The highest rate of teenage pregnancy in Europe
- One of the highest rates of alcoholism in young men aged 18-25 in Europe
- One of the highest proportions of young men in prison in Europe
- 41% of the prison population had been children from the care system
- Drug abuse among UK children is the highest in Europe

Social Inclusion Unit, 2002

- 1.4 Poor outcomes impact on society generally; no one wants to live in a society in which city centres are unsafe at night; crime rates are rising; unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases are increasing. Finally, the integration of services and co-location allows disadvantaged families easier access to help and support services. It has been claimed that ECM is an urban agenda, but the need for local provisions is even more acute in rural situations, where transport and access are sometimes insuperable barriers.

'Social isolation and difficulty in accessing facilities are particular dangers for many: most parts of the county fall within the 10% most deprived nationally in terms of access to services, including GP surgeries, Post Offices, primary schools and supermarkets (IMD), 18% live in households without a car'. (2001 Census). Herefordshire Council CPA Self Assessment, July 2005

## 2.0 Quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services

In addition to improving outcomes, there are three main groups of drivers for service integration: service user experience, organisational efficiency and national policy that drive improvement, particularly school improvement.

### 2.1 Service user experience (from the Office for Public Management-Integrating children's services: issues and practice, 2003)

Not only must services be better at producing their intended outcomes but they should also be easier to use and more responsive. Therefore integration should be aimed at developing and improving services and opportunities for children and their families.

### 2.2 Developing responsive mainstream services. Mainstream services must be able to respond to a wide range of need relating to individual children or families. Some schools and GP practices, for instance, may only provide a narrow response to

children's problems with a knock-on effect in terms of inappropriate referrals of children to specialist services.

- 2.3 **Improved access to specialist services.** The Audit Commission report on 'statementing' (Audit Commission, 2002), graphically illustrates the difficulty that can arise when accessing specialist services. Obtaining co-ordinated services across education, health and social care can be very difficult for service users.
- 2.4 **Avoiding multiple assessments.** Multiple assessments are part of the co-ordination problem. Each professional group attempts to do its best for the child and the family by conducting its own assessment. This undermines the service to users who have to answer the same questions many times. Having been told that many of these assessments are 'holistic', they frequently report that communication between the professions is only partial. It is the users themselves who often end up having to make sure effective co-ordination occurs. This is perhaps the most persuasive reason for establishing multidisciplinary teams and developing forms of integrated assessment.
- 2.5 **Reducing waiting time.** Multiple assessments require separate appointments to be booked with different professionals. Each takes time to arrange. Some professionals are so overloaded that children can wait many months or longer, and they may wait just as long again for services to commence after assessment. For all children, delay means disruption of development and loss of opportunity. It has been claimed that endless protracted assessments can be used to delay effective, but costly, intervention.
- 2.6 **Empowering children and their families.** Where mainstream services are not well geared to their needs and specialist services are in short supply, parents and children often report a lack of support in helping them to obtain appropriate services and information on effective forms of self-care. Consequently there is a demand for information and advocacy services that can operate across the boundaries of all the relevant sectors.
- 2.7 **School effectiveness.** Children's development and ultimate success at school is often significantly improved by well-co-ordinated and effectively targeted early intervention and transition programmes led by professionals, from different disciplines, working together
- 2.8 **Building flexibility and choice.** Where our endeavours build a more responsive, integrated system across the whole of Herefordshire, access to provision can be organised on a flexible basis and meet more individual need. Bringing both statutory and independent/voluntary sectors together will assist in focusing on the child and securing local support for families, thereby enabling more children to say in their local communities and achieve.

### 3.0 Organisational issues

- 3.1 Any difficulties that service users experience in navigating the maze of services or the frustrations arising from duplicated effort, also impact upon organisational morale. Life can become difficult for front-line staff and scarce resources can sometimes be used more productively. Therefore, integration should be aimed at:
- 3.2 **Clarifying staff roles and responsibilities.** Making it easy for front-line staff to find out who does what in each sector, and the processes they use and the response times, if any, to which they work.
- 3.3 **Improving communication.** Contacting people when they are needed. For example, speaking to teachers in the classroom or to community nurses when they are out visiting patients is often difficult. There is also need to agree a common language for describing the requirements of children and their families that both professionals and service users can readily understand.

3.4 **Making best use of innovations in customer contact.** Many children and their families or carers require advice, guidance or reassurance. They need it when they can make most use of it and preferably without having to book an appointment. To do this effectively, requires the better integration of local services.

#### 4.0 **The national framework for integration;**

4.1 The Children Act, 2004, gave force to a programme of changes in children's services where the over-riding objective is to integrate front-line services for children and young people into Children's Trusts. Children's Trust arrangements have four essential components:

4.2 Professionals enabled and encouraged to work together in more integrated front-line services.

4.3 Common processes that are designed to create and underpin joint working.

4.4 A planning and commissioning framework that brings together agencies planning supported by the pooling of resources

4.5 Strong interagency governance arrangements in which shared ownership is coupled with clear accountability

4.6 The government want to see 'personalised, high quality, integrated, universal services'. The LA should engage with schools and preschool settings to ensure that **all children are effectively supported**. Universal services will work with specialist services for children with additional needs. The government suggested the concept of a 'service hub' where all services for children can be co-located and school sites are an obvious location. Children with additional needs should have access to;

- High quality, multi-agency assessment
- A wide range of specialist services close to home
- Effective case management by a lead professional working as part of a multi-professional team

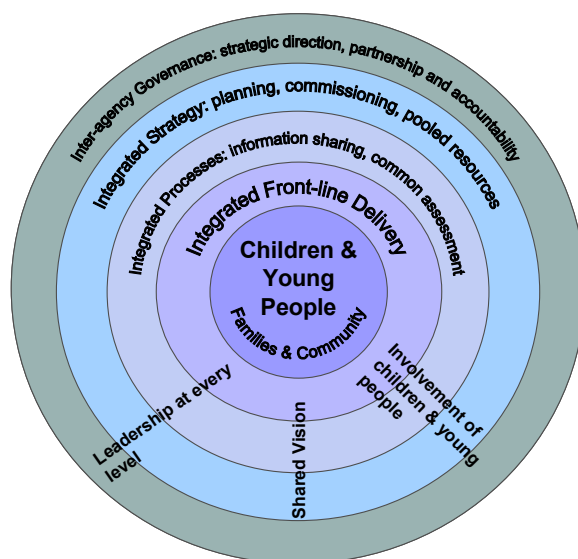
4.7 All of this can be accomplished through;

- Co-location and multi-disciplinary teams
- Lead professional acting as a first point of contact
- Integrated workforce planning
- Common assessment framework
- Information sharing and one database
- Clear lines of accountability

4.8 The government expect local areas to produce plans to show how they intend to move towards children's trust arrangements via the integration 'onion', and it is argued that integrated frontline delivery is core to this.

4.9 The integration 'onion'- This concept places children and their families at the centre of services, strategy and governance:





## 5.0 The Government's key messages (ECM – Change for Children, 2004)

- 5.1 More integrated children's services will mean all children and young people will:
- Be safeguarded from harm;
  - Have better opportunities to develop and reach their full potential;
  - Receive effective support earlier if they experience difficulties; and
  - Be better able to access targeted services faster and with fewer stigmas as a result of closer links between these targeted services and universal services.
- 5.2 Parents and carers from whatever background will:
- Have more and better information, advice and support; and
  - Have access to targeted support when needed.
- 5.3 Every Child Matters proposed a new outcomes framework for children and young people: be healthy; be safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. Every Child Matters "Next Steps" recognised that the realisation of better outcomes for all children required radical change in the whole system.
- 5.4 Every Child Matters "Change for Children" proposed that:

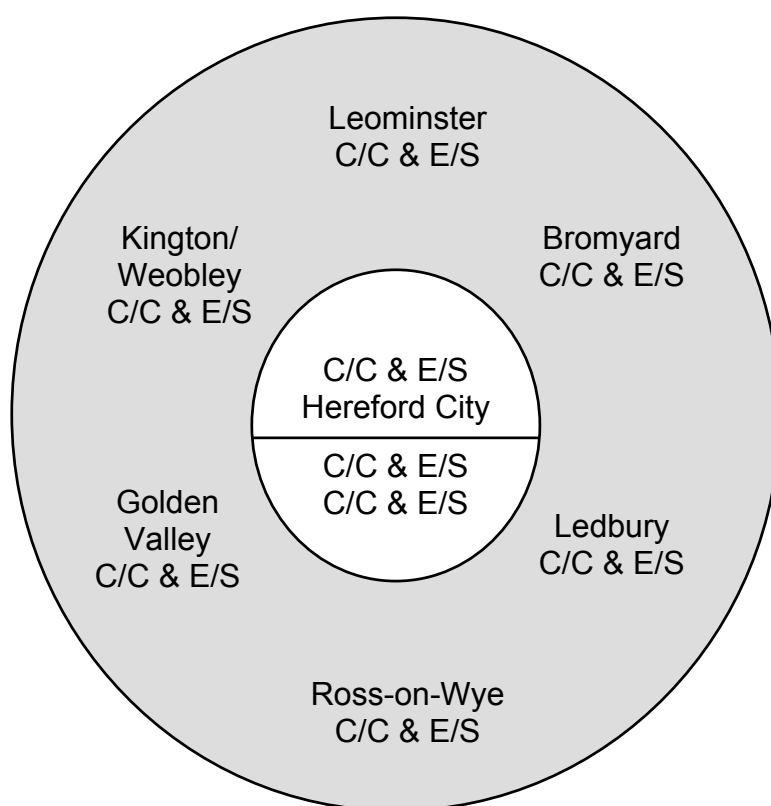
6.0 'The reconfiguration of services around the child and family in one place, for example, children's centre, extended schools and the bringing together of professionals in multi-disciplinary teams in service hubs'

6.1 ECM Change for children

- Information sharing
  - The common assessment framework
  - Core skills and knowledge
  - Lead professional role
- 6.2 It is difficult to envisage how the delivery of these changes can be achieved without the integration of services into co-located multi-agency teams and virtual service hubs.
- 6.3 The Herefordshire area is well placed to press ahead with this agenda, led by Herefordshire Council. Locally there is good partnership working allied to coterminous

boundaries and new structures in place such as the Children and Young People's Partnership Board, and the Children's Services Directorate. Rural sparsity and a pattern of small market towns with problems of distance and access also argue for co-located multi-professional teams, which are community based service hubs. Developments in Children's Centre and in Extended Schools are already proceeding and this work will inform and shape the location of service hubs.

- 6.4 Local developments will be based around schools as envisaged by government in their Every Child Matters agenda and in the Children's Centres and Extended Schools' initiatives. There are currently 14 school partnerships. Based on an analysis of need and considerations of efficiency and effectiveness, seven partnerships are proposed.
- 6.5 At this stage the Council is proposing 7 local **Children's Services Improvement Partnerships** as follows: Children's Centres (C/C) and Extended Schools (E/S)



- 6.6 Support for School Improvement (led by the School Improvement Service) is currently organised around the existing 14 school partnerships. This support for all pupils is based upon national and local priorities, and will continue to be delivered through the 7 Children's Services Improvement Partnerships. The current organisation and location of schools across the County is well established and remains appropriate even at a time of falling pupil numbers. However, the impact of falling school rolls will be moderated by the development of integrated services, shared resources and partnership working. In addition, the 7 Children's Services Improvement Partnerships areas have a geographical relationship to the 3 current PCT localities.
- 6.7 These partnerships will be based around Bromyard, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye, Golden Valley, Kington and Weobley, Leominster and Hereford City. The Council will need to take account of the JAR neighbourhood studies in Kington and South Wye, the social/deprivation factor in the Lea area, and the needs of the 2 voluntary aided high schools, in deciding where service centres should be and how the models should vary in size and shape across Herefordshire. The development of Extended School and

Children's Centre provision should be linked and co-ordinated in these partnership localities, and access/transport considerations planned ahead. Broadly, this would meet requirements for Extended Schools and Children's Centres for Herefordshire.

6.8 These 7 partnerships would also have a multi-agency locality team providing a range of support and advice services to individual children, young people and their families and schools. Initial thinking would suggest bringing together a number of professionals, including:

- Contact Inspectors (SIP – School Improvement Partner)
- Education Welfare Officers
- School Nurses
- Educational Psychologists
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service professionals
- Social Workers
- Teaching Support Services
- Family Support Workers
- Early Years Development staff
- Area Special Needs Co-ordinators
- Police Officers
- Youth Offending
- Youth Workers

6.9 Schools in the 7 partnership areas would need to consider establishing area Extended School Co-ordinators, and where appropriate Learning Mentors.

6.10 The partnerships would require a Herefordshire information sharing agreement, systems development based on the common assessment framework and leadership/co-ordination with clear lines of accountability to the Director of Children's Services and the Children and Young People's Partnership Board. The Partnership Board will develop into a Children's Trust for Herefordshire by 2008. Children's Services and The Children's Trust will commission the service hubs and ensure that plans are in place for:

- Administrative support
- Continuous professional development and staff training
- Evaluation, monitoring and review arrangements
- The consideration of investment in key professional areas.

## **7.0 The local context – needs and resources**

7.1 The partnership areas would need to include developments in both Children's Centres and in Extended Schools. These are already aligning themselves in the pattern described above. The Children's Centre developments have followed a robust and coherent needs analysis based on government directives and using the Index of Multiple Deprivation. They are one of the cornerstones of the Government drive to cut child poverty and social exclusion. Its philosophy is based on the evidence of the very successful Sure Start programmes across the country and is now a central plank in the Change Agenda.

'We want to see strong links between extended schools and Children's Centres. Children's Centres provide holistic services including access to integrated early learning and care, health and family support for children under five and their families... Schools, especially primary schools, may wish to consider co-locating with a children's centre and offering joint services... Funding for children's centres, including capital funds, can be linked with that available for extended school services.

Our plans for a joined-up programme to draw together capital for children's centres, extended services, primary schools and children's social services will help services respond flexibly to local needs'.

Extended Schools: A Prospectus, 2005

Sure Start Children's Centres will provide a range of services depending on local need and parental choice. The aim is for a network of centres across the country, offering information, advice and support to parents/carers, as well as early years provision (i.e. integrated childcare and early learning), health services, family support, parental outreach and employment advice for disadvantaged families. Services offered will not be the same everywhere, because needs and communities vary greatly, but the greatest resource for children's centres will go to those children most in need. The intention is that children's centres services become permanent mainstream community services, which are developed and delivered with the active involvement of parents/carers and the local community.

The Government recognises that children's centres operating in rural areas are likely to need greater flexibility than those that operate in urban areas. Given the nature of rural areas - dispersed communities often with small numbers of children under five years old - the same services may need to be replicated for small groups of families in convenient local venues. Full use should be made of community facilities such as school premises, parish churches and community centres. Local authorities will be expected to develop more flexible models of childcare for centres in rural areas which meet the needs of local communities.

Sure Start Planning Guidance 2005

7.2 The intention is to deliver services to children and their families including:

1. Early education
2. Childcare
3. Health
4. Family support
5. Support into training/employment.

7.3 Herefordshire received notification of an allocation of £337,209 capital and £148,664 (2004-06) during the summer of 2003 to reach 1044 children and create 50 new childcare places. The decision was taken by October 2003 to create 3 Children's Centres at:

Leominster  
Greencroft  
Hurderton / Hollybush

7.4 These Children's Centres targeted 8 out of the top 10 areas of disadvantage in Herefordshire. This was decided using the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation information and the 2005 Super Output Areas. The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a

very important tool developed by government for assessing relative deprivation and is based on those factors well known to correlate highly with child poverty and poorer outcomes, as follows:

7.5 Table Showing Index of Multiple Deprivation Domains

<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation Domains</b>	<b>Summary of Indicators relating to children</b>
Income Deprivation	Children in Income Support households Children in Income Based Job Seekers Allowance households Children in Family Credit households Children in Disability working Allowance households
Employment Deprivation	Unemployment claimant counts People aged 18-24 on New Deal options Incapacity Benefit recipients Severe Disablement Allowance claimants
Health Deprivation and Disability	Comparative mortality rates for men and women Proportion of people receiving Attendance Allowance Proportion in receipt of Incapacity Benefit Limiting Long term Illness Proportion of births of low birth weight
Education, Skills and Training	Working age adults with no qualifications Children aged 16yrs and over who are not in full-time education Proportion of 17-19yrs who have not successfully applied for H>E> Key Stage 2 primary School Performance data Primary School children with English as a second language All absenteeism at primary level
Barriers to Housing and Services	Access to a Post Office Access to food shops Access to a GP Access to a primary school.
Living Environment and Deprivation	Homeless Households Household overcrowding Poor private sector housing
Crime Deprivation	The rate of burglary The rate of theft Criminal damage Violence

**8.0 Resources available**  
**Children's Centre: Phase 2 allocations 2006-08**  
**Extended Schools: 2005-2006**

When planning Children's Centres local authorities should consider the opportunities for schools, particularly primary schools, to co-locate with children's centres and offer integrated services for children and parents/carers from one place. In many primary schools childcare and other provision is already developing on site. Primary schools also provide a natural focus for local communities and parents are already familiar with them. Co-location could result in improved transition arrangements for children starting formal education, both for the children and their families.

A SureStart Children's Centre for Every Community 2005

- 8.1 There has been a change of emphasis by Government and Herefordshire is now being asked, "to develop a minimum number of Children's Centre to reach the rest of the children in the disadvantaged areas and beyond".
- 8.2 The Government suggest an average of 800 children for each Children's Centre subject to local circumstances.
- 8.3 Total money assigned £940,360 capital, £1,027,314 revenue, total £1,967,674 to develop six Children's Centres.
- 8.4 SureStart has conducted studies to determine the best locations for the proposed Children's Centres. Interestingly, the areas of relative deprivation coincide, in the main, with the centres of market towns.
- 8.5 The SureStart analysis has recommended the following geographical locations, which correspond neatly to the proposed school, based locality partnerships, described above.
- 8.6 In 2005-2006 The Extended School Grant of £279,149 is being used to develop full service provision in the South Wye and Weobley areas and to support rural developments in Ledbury and the Golden Valley. The grant allocation for 2006 onwards is not yet known but will be used to support work in the proposed 7 Children's Services Improvement Partnerships.
- 8.7 Lastly, the government are introducing a new scheme of Local Area Agreements (LAAs), which are designed to align and eventually amalgamate various funding streams including those for services for Children and Young People. Developing the plans for children and young people will be one "pillar" of this agreement. The LAA has to be congruent with the Children and Young People's Plan, which will encapsulate the vision described above. It is, therefore, clear that the government is driving the agenda for change and that future funding and operational structures will be based on how local services have been integrated.

## **9.0 The proposed 7 Children's Services Improvement Partnerships Areas**

Appendix 1 attached to this document shows how it is proposed to serve all areas of the County, based upon the catchment areas of High Schools. The circles represent the 9 Children's Centres at which, or from which, many of the services will be delivered.

## **10.0 Future Possible Developments for Children's Centres (Notes from SureStart Proposals)**

- 10.1 Bromyard already has a mini Sure Start project that has been operating for two years. Their funding is due to finish in March 2006. They have already indicated that they wish to be considered for Children's Centre status. There are 309 children aged 0-4 in the ward and an additional 318 in the wards of Frome and Bringsty.
- 10.2 Existing Hereford City Children's Centres will be stretched unless there are additional centres created. There are 3271 children aged 0-4 in the city. One possibility would be expand Hunderton/Hollybush Children's Centre and to create one north of the river based around the wards of Three Elms, Central, part of Aylestone and part of St Nicholas approximately 600 children. (Waiting exact number from the research team).
- 10.3 Kington has been working with Leominster Sure Start for some time to create a centre. Inevitably in the rural areas there are fewer children. Kington Town has 165 and the two surroundings wards Castle 125 children and Pembridge 131 children giving a total of 303.
- 10.4 Other possibilities include Ross on Wye and the wards to the southeast with a total of 856 children, 15<sup>th</sup> on the IMD. Ledbury and Hope End ward with a total of 824, 33<sup>rd</sup> on the IMD and the very rural area to the South West including the wards of Golden Valley North and South plus Vallets, 455 children – this could take in the SOA Allenschurch which is 20<sup>th</sup> on the IMD.

## **11.0 Conclusions**

- 11.1 It can be seen from the information provided that the concept of developing "service hubs" and their location in areas of relative deprivation is already well developed and comparatively straightforward in Herefordshire. The model and the evidence base map well onto one another. A clear view of our long-term destination is apparent. What is not so clear is the route to this destination.
- 11.2 Pointers and signposts for the journey are:
  - The location of the Children's Centres and extended school provision in the 7 proposed Children's Services Improvement partnerships, which could be planned to house multi-professional teams, targeting the complete spectrum of children and young people. In addition, falling rolls and the possibility of surplus accommodation in schools may provide opportunities to further service hub developments
  - This model would require revised management and leadership arrangements.
  - Government plans for the role of PCTs and commissioning of services may provide opportunities to further service hub developments
  - Existing support services could be reorganised and aligned in teams offering services to localities.
  - The development of the Common Assessment Framework, the information sharing arrangements, development of the lead professional role, etc. can only become meaningful in terms of multi-professional co-located system.
  - Shared governance and establishing Children's Trust arrangements must impact on the development and delivery of services.
- 11.3 Finally, this local framework proposal is built on work already underway in developing service hubs in Herefordshire. We have the rationale and the framework; we have identified the locations in line with government guidelines, which offer the opportunity to deliver the agenda.



- 11.4 This consultation paper lays out the rationale and future direction of integrated services for children and young people in Herefordshire. We would welcome any constructive comments and suggestions for the further development of the plan.

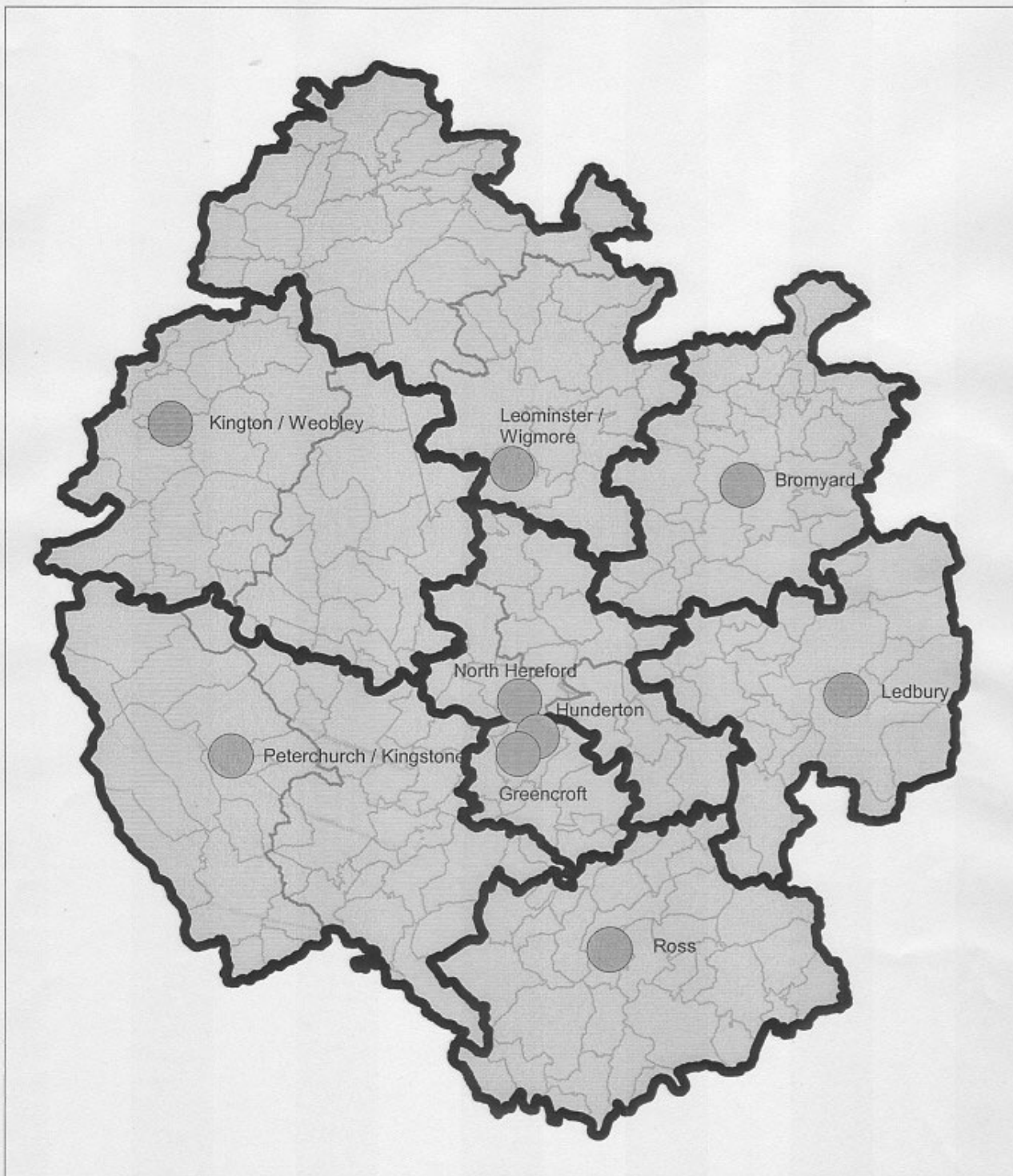
**Any comments and response on this consultation document should be made to Lorna Selfe, Change Manager, by Friday, 11th November either via telephone number: 01432 260801, e-mail: [lselfe@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:lselfe@herefordshire.gov.uk) or in writing to: Children's Services Directorate, P.O. Box 185, Blackfriars Street, Hereford. HR4 9ZR,**

**APPENDIX 1 ANALYSIS OF NEED**

<b>Herefordshire Ranks of IMD 2004</b>	<b>SOA</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>NATIONAL RANK OF IMD (1=most deprived)</b>	<b>NATIONAL DECILE</b>	<b>H'fordshire Decile: IMD 2004</b>	<b>Children's Centre</b>
1	E01013995	Golden Post Newton Farm	3394	20%	10%	G/HH
2	E01014042	Ridgemoore Leominster	5807	20%	10%	L
3	E01014074	Bishop's Meadow Hunderton	6840	25%	10%	HH
4	E01014071	Belmont Road Redhill	6917	25%	10%	G
5	E01014010	Hereford City Centre	7015	25%	10%	HH
6	E01013994	Hunderton	7049	25%	10%	HH
7	E01013993	Brampton Road Newton Farm	7357	25%	10%	G
8	E01013992	Treago Newton Farm	8742		10%	G
9	E01013989	College Estate	8934		10%	
10	E01014048	Grange Leominster	9694		10%	L
11	E01014005	Bromyard Central	10171		10%	
12	E01014086	Courtyard	10211		10%	
13	E01014047	Gateway Leominster	10377		20%	L
14	E01014072	Ross Road Redhill	10395		20%	G
15	E01014064	John Kyrle Ross	11876		20%	
16	E01014073	Putson	12682		20%	
17	E01013991	Hopsvalley	13045		20%	
18	E01013986	Barr's Court	13888		20%	
19	E01014085	Moor Farm & Whitecross	14016		20%	
20	E01014099	Allenschurch	14075		20%	

Herefordshire Ranks of IMD 2004	SOA	NAME	NATIONAL RANK. OF IMD (1=most deprived)	NATIONAL DECILE	H'fordshire Decile: IMD 2004	Children's Centre
21	E01013995	Hinton Road	14141		20%	*HH
22	E01014042	Whitecross – Sainsbury's	14364		20%	*NH
23	E01014074	Eardishill	14411		20%	*SS
24	E01014071	Hospital	14728		25%	*NH
25	E01014010	Fairfields	14867		25%	*GV
26	E01013994	Kington Central	15077		25%	*K
27	E01013993	Aymestrey Horseshoe	15145		25%	*?
28	E01013992	Kingsbridge	15284		25%	*?
29	E01013989	Bromyard Rural	15466		25%	*B
30	E01014048	RotherLacey	15628			*G
31	E01014005	Trumpet	15738			*L
32	E01014086	Frome's Hill	15822			*L
33	E01014047	Ledbury Central	16204			*L
34	E01014072	Treacle Mines	16296			*R
35	E01014064	Greater Docklow	16420			*SS
36	E01014073	Clehonger	16512			*?
37	E01013991	Knillshall	16540			*K
38	E01013986	Symonds Yat	16643			*R
39	E01014085	Black Mountains	16698			*GV
40	E01014099	Leominster – Barons Cross	16713			*SS





**Map Location Title: Children's Services Improvement Partnerships**



**Children's Centres =** ●



**Scale 1 cm: 3,500 m**

Herefordshire Council,  
IT Services Division,  
Thom Office Centre,  
Holme Lacy Road,  
Rotherwas,  
Hereford, HR2 6JT.  
Tel: 01432 260100  
Email: [helpdesk@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:helpdesk@herefordshire.gov.uk)

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.  
Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.  
Herefordshire Council. 100024168. 2004.



## Moving Towards a children's trust

The information in this document will help Regional Change Advisers to identify how they can best support local areas in the change process based on local needs. It breaks down the component parts of a children's trust way of working, highlighting where there are statutory expectations on local areas.

### Section 1 Executive Summary

**Local Authority** Herefordshire Council

**Regional Change Adviser** Kay Whyte-Bell

**Date:** 12th September, 2005

**Document Status:**

**Local contacts who have contributed to the completion of this document:**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Organisation</i>
Lorna Selfe	Change Team Manager	Herefordshire Council

Has the completed document been agreed by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership? Yes

If not, which partners have agreed the completed document?

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Organisation</i>

**Areas of new emerging practice to be highlighted across the whole system (including tools which could be shared more widely):**

--

**Areas for support (nationally & regionally):**

[Nationally] Resolving information sharing and producing a national template and guidance. Issuing further information on commissioning and pooled budgets.

[Regionally]

**Main issues / enablers / barriers to integration**

Workforce development requires funding at the local level. Local Area Agreement is seen as an enabler.

## Section 2

## Managing Change

Q1

**How is the local area managing the change process?**

*Has a project plan with realistic timescales and targets been agreed, if not by when is this expected?*

*How is the plan being reported against and reviewed?*

*What are the accountability mechanisms for monitoring implementation of the project plan?*

*What arrangements have been made to both manage and sustain the change process?*

*What communication mechanisms support the change process?*

*What has been done to ensure that all staff are effectively consulted and are engaged in the change process?*

**Area Maturity:**                    **Mature**                    (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

A Change Team has been established in the Council to oversee the change process for the area. There is a project plan which is being managed through Prince 2. The team reports to the Director of Children's Services. A new Children and Young People's Partnership Board has been formed and a stakeholder day in Spring 2005 agreed the main priorities. A strategic vision has also been developed tasked with the development of the Children and Young People's Plan. Wider communication is managed through a dedicated newsletter. At a strategic level officers meet on a regular basis and minutes are forwarded to the Partnership Board. All staff are invited to briefings on the change process. These briefings are also available to partner agencies and take up has been very positive.

Q2

**What measures has the authority put in place to maintain and improve its existing statutory service provision (e.g. safeguarding children, looked after children services, school attendance, special educational needs, services for children in need, adoption services) while it manages the integration of services?**

*To what extent is effective risk management operating which identifies risks to children, young people, partner organisations, staff, budgets, other resources and service effectiveness?*

*What evidence is there of it being successfully applied?*

**Area Maturity:**                    **Mature**                    (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

The new leadership team under the DCS will continue to build on current planning, risk management, and performance monitoring arrangements that are already in place. The APA dataset, alongside existing processes, will be used to shape, monitor and improve performance. The Children's Service Plan in the Council is the performance management document. An external evaluation of the Child Concern Model is in progress and is due to report in Autumn 2005.

Q3

**How is the local area ensuring that it meets its diversity and equality requirements in the planning of integrated services for children and young people and in the development of the local workforce?****Comments:**

Each service in the Council is conducting diversity impact assessment with 60% of assessments already completed. The wide range of groups and agencies represented on various partnership boards have undertaken an analysis of need. These are being coordinated to inform the Children's and Young People Plan. The Council has an established diversity programme for key managers.

Q4

**What support will the local area require in delivering the change programme?**

*Has recent guidance helped?*

*Which and how?*

*What else can be done nationally or regionally to support local change?*

Support and intelligence from other authorities including best practice signposting.

**Top issues in relation to managing change**

Creating a new culture across the area and the implementation of a robust workforce development programme.



The Children's Workforce Strategy was published for consultation on 1 April 2005, alongside the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge Prospectus. We expect the strategy will have been the subject of local discussion and debate, in addition to the nationally-organised regional consultation events that have been held in June and July. We expect the Common Core to be used as a basis for bringing practitioners together, thus enabling greater understanding of the benefits of multi-agency working. The lead professional role ensures that children, young people, parents, carers and families who have additional and interlinked needs will achieve better outcomes and have a better experience and engagement with services through the provision of integrated support through one practitioner acting in a 'lead role'. Good Practice Guidance on lead professional and resources for managers and practitioners engaged in multi-agency working will be published in Summer 2005.

### **Workforce Development**

Q5

#### **What has the local area done to establish an understanding about the current workforce?**

*Is there an agreed process amongst partners for joining up recruitment activity, for example, has analysis been completed to identify particular recruitment difficulties, in terms of location, type of job, or pay pressure; has analysis been completed to identify recruitment strengths, which might be used to address difficulties elsewhere, such as through joint recruitment exercises?*

*Is there an agreed process for joining up workforce development activity, for example, cross-service training to embed the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge; opportunities for inter-professional learning; approaches to support multi-disciplinary working; agreement of a careers framework?*

*Is there an agreed process for developing leadership and supervision, for example, cross-service training to provide common understanding and ways of working; learning sets especially focused on development of leadership and supervision on multi-agency settings; programmes of succession planning, identifying future leaders?*

**Area Maturity:** Early Stages/Developing (select relevant maturity level)

#### **Comments:**

A new Children's Services training and development officer is contributing to the workforce development strategy and has begun by identifying shared needs with partners in child protection. Workforce needs have not been collated across agencies at this stage. However, initial discussion have taken place regarding the key worker/lead professional agenda. There are opportunities for inter-professional learning. Opportunities for multi-disciplinary working are actively sought. PCT and Children's Services have a number of jointly funded or jointly located posts.

Q6

#### **What plans are there for workforce development?**

*How is the local area addressing workforce development in the private and voluntary and community sectors?*

*How is the local area addressing the workforce remodelling agenda in social care, youth services and the early years, learning from Schools Workforce remodelling and implementation of the NHS Agenda for Change?*

*How is the local area addressing workforce development and leadership issues arising from implementation of the Common Assessment Framework and Lead Professional?*

*What steps has the local area taken to engage with the local Learning and Skills Council, FE and HE partners to support their agenda?*

**Area Maturity:** Developing/Mature (select relevant maturity level)

#### **Comments:**

This is being addressed in the Children and Young People's Plan along with other issues, such as information sharing, which require an integrated approach. The project group, formed regarding the NSF, will ensure there is an awareness raising programme across the multi-agency staff group and incorporates the ECM direction. Specific joint workforce plans are being developed to integrate services to children with disabilities and illness and a joint service manager has been appointed. Joint training is undertaken in child protection and in the development of the Herefordshire Child Concern Model. CAMHS has developed a multi-agency training programme. An area workforce programme is being developed in 2006/2007 based on the solid multi-agency training programmes.

### **Multi-agency working**

Q7

#### **What progress is being made to integrate services at the front-line?**

*How is the local area encouraging the integration of services at the front-line?*

*What services are being delivered through multi-agency working and what models are being used?*

*What progress has been made in linking universal services to more targeted and specialist provision?*

*What support / development is offered to leaders and managers of these services?*

*What challenges are the local area experiencing and what solutions are being considered to overcome them?*

*How has the impact of integration been measured e.g. is there evidence of more accessible services?*

*What successes has the local area had?*

**Area Maturity:** Early Stages/Developing (select relevant maturity level)

#### **Comments:**

This has been incorporated into the vision and will be developed in line with Children's Centres and Extended Schools alongside a service hub model. Specific examples are the Greencroft Children's Centre, Leominster/Kington Sure Start, the CAMHS service, the Youth Offending Service and the Child Development Centre. Discussions have commenced between the PCT and the council regarding the development of a building that will allow the co-location of staff. The Change Team are involved in the identification of areas to be integrated. Services for children with disabilities and illness are to be integrated between health and social care. A joint service manager is now in post. Areas already identified for initial development include defining lead professional (key worker) roles, common assessment framework, single access point and information sharing.

**Q8 What consideration has been given to the concept of a lead professional?**

*How is the local area using lead professional/ key worker models to ensure that the pathways for complex cases are integrated?  
How are they engaging front-line practitioners and their managers?  
What inter-agency systems of accountability are they developing and how will these be implemented?  
What challenges are they experiencing and what solutions are being considered to overcome them?  
What successes has the local area had and how have these been measured?*

**Area Maturity:** Early Stages/Developing (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

The lead professional role is well developed in the Child Concern Model. There are discussion between front line practitioners, their managers and schools about developing this role. There are also discussions with the PCT on the NSF key worker/lead professional interface.

**Integrated services – children's centres**

The government expects there to be up to 2,500 children's centres opened by March 2008. By March 2008 all children in the 30% most disadvantaged super output areas in the country should have access to a children's centre and there should be some outside the poorest areas as well. By 2010 there will be a children's centre for every community.

**Q9 What progress is being made in developing children's centres and integrating early years services with wide children's services?**

*Is there a clear strategy in place, if not by when will this be produced?  
Is there evidence of engagement with all partners in this strategy (including health, private, voluntary and community sectors and other providers, housing, transport, leisure)?  
How are parents and carers being involved in the design of services?  
How is work on children's centres integrated into the overall strategy for children and young people's services?  
How is this being communicated with all settings, practitioners and governors?  
How are LAs and local partners restructuring and reshaping to integrate service delivery in children's centres?  
Are Business Support Officers involved in children's centre planning so that childcare places are sustainable?  
Are there links being made with housing officers to ensure that children's centres are targeting the most disadvantaged children in temporary accommodation?*

**Area Maturity:** Developing/Mature (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

There are 3 Children's Centres in the county with a further 6 planned. All key partners are involved in their development and good progress is being made. The whole system/strategy is planned for consultation from September 2005. The work on Children's Centres will be integrated into the Children's and Young People's Plan. Consultation began at very early stages of the Sure Start initiative and has continued.

**Integrated services – extended schools**

The Extended Schools Prospectus issued on 13 June 2005 sets out a menu of extended services for primary and secondary schools together with funding of £680m over the next 2 years to help all schools become Extended Schools by 2010.

**Q10 What progress is being made in developing extended schools?**

*How many are there in the local area (primary, secondary, special schools)?  
What services are provided / what hours are they open?  
Which multi-agency services are co-located in schools?  
Is there a clear strategy in place based on need, if not, by when will this be in place?  
Is there evidence of engagement with all partners in this strategy (including voluntary and community sectors and other providers, housing, transport, leisure, health)?  
Are children's centres and extended schools being planned together and how is this work being embedded into the wider planning of children and young people's services? Is the local area using its network of School Improvement Partners to ensure that planning of extended services is informed by schools' self-evaluation?  
Has the local area 'achieved' or 'understood' the benefits of locating their children's centres in or near primary schools so parents and carers can access services for all their children?  
How are parents and carers being involved in the design of services?*

**Area Maturity:** Developing/Mature (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

There is an extended schools co-ordinator for Herefordshire. Extensive demographic studies have identified need and plans revolve round this analysis. There is a clear strategy with Children's Centres and Extended Schools together with co-located multi-professional teams (service hubs) being planned together as part of the vision in the Children and Young Peoples' Plan. All partners have been engaged through existing networks. Two schools have full service provision (one primary, one high) with 60% of all schools expected to be offering minimum core provision by March 2008. The three existing Children's Centres are located within or in very close proximity to the local primary school. This principle will be applied to the other centres wherever feasible. Parents and families have been involved through Sure Start.

Q11

## What progress is being made in developing information, advice and support services for parents, carers and families?

*What plans does the local area have for developing these services?*

*Are these services focused on age range, transitions or supporting parents, carers and families in the home?*

*What is being done to ensure effective engagement with all partners in the development of these services, including the voluntary and community sector and other providers?*

*How have children and young people, parents, carers and families been consulted (including those whose views are at risk of remaining unheard) in developing information, advice and support services?*

*What plans are there for using children's centres, extended schools and other outlets as local foci for information to parents, carers and families?*

*Do these plans include utilising information available on the on-line directory for children and young people's services?*

**Area Maturity:**                      **Mature**                      (select relevant maturity level)

### Comments:

A Children and Families Resource Directory has been launched on the Herefordshire Council website as part of the Child Concern Model initiative. It is accessible to parents, families and professionals. There is a Child Information Service in early years, which involved partners in its development. The information available will be subject to ongoing changes as a result of restructuring in the future and the ECM agenda. Consultations with children and young people are numerous (including minority and hard to reach groups). These are currently being coordinated by the Council Communications Officer and Hear By Rights Standards are being considered.

### Top issues in relation to integrated front-line delivery?

Consideration of service provision through service hubs and multi-agency teams

### What further support does the local area require to deliver integrated front-line delivery?

National funding to deliver lead professional coordination and co-location of multi-professional support teams for localities in a very sparse rural area.

**Common Assessment**

The Common Assessment Framework materials were published in April 2005. It is anticipated that implementation will happen in two stages, starting with a testing and development phase within early adopter authorities (April 2005 – 2006) and then roll-out in all remaining authorities by 2008. However, all authorities should be planning for its implementation now.

Q12

**What consideration has been given to the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework?**

*Has the local area begun implementing the Common Assessment Framework, or are they using a local version of common assessment, or are they working towards implementation from April 2006?*

*Is there a project plan for implementing the Common Assessment Framework?*

*How are training needs being analysed and met e.g. is there multi-agency training?*

*How are practitioners being made aware of the Common Assessment Framework and its relationship to other specialist assessments?*

*What approach (technology-based or other) is proposed in the local area to ensure that practitioners can easily and appropriately create, update, store and share common assessment information?*

**Area Maturity:**    **Developing/Mature**    (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

The Child Concern Model, launched in May 2004, has close connections with the Common Assessment Framework. Herefordshire's multi-agency response will compliment the CAF and aid implementation. An evaluation of the Child Concern Model is in progress and due to report by Autumn 2005. A lead officer has been identified to further this work. There is a robust training programme.

Q13

**What progress is the local area making on information sharing?**

*Are there procedures in place to keep the online service directory data accurate and up to date?*

*Who (organisations, the public etc) has access to the online service directory?*

*How well do health, education, and social services practitioners understand when consent is and is not required? How was this understanding established?*

*What kind and how much multi-agency training on information sharing has taken place? What (if any) changes in practice have been observed as a result of this training?*

*What procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the information sharing protocols?*

*What other arrangements have been put in place to support information sharing?*

**Area Maturity:**    **Developing/Mature**    (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

Work in all these areas is being developed through the implementation of the Child Concern Model. Consent and information sharing continues to be a challenge. There is active discussion between the PCT and the Council regarding information sharing protocols. The development of a new NHS electronic system will be a challenge for other agencies in gaining access to information and developing a tracking system for the most vulnerable children. Work is continuing on the development of the social care client services tracking system (CLIX). The services are awaiting further guidance from central government in September 2005. As a wider agenda for integration is rolled out, the information sharing protocols will need to reflect these changes.

**Top issues in relation to integrated processes**

Development of the NHS system and access to information for other agencies

**What further support does the local area require to deliver integrated processes?**

Guidance, due to be issued in September 2005, will help local areas to understand how to deliver.

**Joint planning**

The Local Authority is required to produce a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) by April 2006 that is consistent with the plans of non-LA partners e.g. health plans. A key feature of the plan will be to present a strategic analysis of progress made in improving outcomes for all children and in implementing the agenda for change. The development of local, integrated workforce strategies will be an integral part of the CYPP. The CYPP should summarise local needs for children, probably drawing on audit activity by a number of partners. Needs assessment and mapping of available resources will be key to both informing the strategic plan and to consequent commissioning decisions taken by the local authority and its partners. By 2007 authorities will be undertaking their first review of the CYPP. This review and the self assessment required for Joint Area Reviews and Annual Performance Assessment will form one document.

Q14

**What progress is being made towards joint planning?**

*Is there a CYPP in place already, if not when does the local area expect to have a joint plan completed?*

*How has the local area developed a clear and realistic vision around outcomes for all children and young people, including disabled children and those with special educational needs and looked after children?*

*How is the local area ensuring that all staff understand the vision and how services will work towards it?*

*Are there robust delivery mechanisms in place for the shared vision?*

*What has the local area done to ensure that all partners, including those from the voluntary and community sectors and other providers, have been involved in the planning process?*

*To what extent have children, young people, parents, carers and families been effectively engaged (including those whose views are at risk of remaining unheard) at a formative stage of the preparation of the plan?*

*How does progress made on joint planning fit in with those partners' plans that do not form part of the CYPP?*

*Does the CYPP offer a clear account of how the local area will work together to deliver the NSF?*

**Area Maturity:** Early Stages/Developing (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

The Children and Young People's Plan is well developed and on target for April 2006. Herefordshire is working towards a first draft to be completed by November. The analysis of need is well developed and the Partnership Board have identified Herefordshire's priority areas. Consultations on the CYPP vision are being launched in the Autumn which will involve all partner agencies. Staff are kept informed through road shows and newsletters. Young people, parents and carers have already been consulted and further consultation around targets in the plan are scheduled.

**Understanding the needs of the local area**

A needs assessment is the basis for deciding the priorities and actions which will help to improve the five outcomes and supporting targets. The self assessment guidance for the APA and the JAR refers to current priorities and actions and their basis in an assessment of need. A local needs assessment should involve children, young people, parents, carers and families, communities, the private and voluntary sectors and practitioners.

Q15

**How far has the local area progressed with a needs assessment?**

*Is a suitable level of data from many sources (including School Improvement Partners and schools) being gathered and analysed on a regular and systematic basis to provide a coherent picture of local needs?*

*Does the data support a needs assessment of particular groups of children and young people in the local area?*

*Is data gathered from the periodic assessment of contracts, SLAs and monitoring of in-house service provision?*

*How is the local area ensuring effective engagement with partners, communities, children, young people, parents, carers & families?*

*Have existing services for children, young people, parents, carers & families been mapped?*

*Does the local area have an adequate qualitative and quantitative understanding of their baseline position and local need against the 5 outcome areas, if not, what action is the local area taking to address this?*

*To what extent are issues of service provision in isolated areas and barriers to access being adequately considered?*

*Is the needs assessment of early years and childcare provision being monitored within local area planning so that it is undertaken regularly and consistently?*

**Area Maturity:** Developing/Mature (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

In January 2005 the IMPACT team (health/social care planning) worked with Connexions to map local need and translate the findings into the terms of the ECM and its 25 aims. This work will be progressed through the Children and Young People's Plan and will be used to produce a county wide commissioning strategy. Data from many sources has been gathered and analysed to determine local needs. This need analysis is ongoing and includes assessment of the needs of particular groups of children as well as demographic study of the geographical location of need. Services have been mapped through the joint area review template. A gap analysis is underway. The baseline position is understood and this will inform targets and the local area agreement. Co-located multi-professional teams will mitigate the effects of isolation and difficulties of access.

Q16

**What progress is being made on market development and management?**

*Is there an effective dialogue with local providers (statutory, voluntary and private) and a strategy in place for developing and sustaining the local market so as to meet identified needs, including those for workforce development?*

*What arrangements are in place to ensure that all providers (including the voluntary and community sectors) have fair access of opportunity?*

*Are there satisfactory arrangements to ensure that potential conflict of interest is avoided within the commissioning and procurement processes – including those where in-house officers may be providers as well as commissioners of services?*

*Is thought being given to the right levels for commissioning and purchasing decisions – whether they should be at regional or sub-regional (e.g. for high cost residential care) level; or at school cluster, children's centre, GP level etc? And to the processes involved in each case?*

**Area Maturity:** Early Stages (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

There is a very effective dialogue with local providers in the statutory sector (GP and school representation on the Partnership Board). There is full involvement of the voluntary sector on all major partnerships in addition to a local COMPACT with the voluntary sector. Sure Start has positive private and independent sector involvement.

Q17

**Commissioning and pooled budgets**

**What percentage (in financial terms) of all services being delivered to children and young people in the local area are currently being jointly commissioned (as defined in the statutory guidance for the duty to co-operate)?**

*Are there specific people or teams dedicated to joint commissioning?*

*To what extent does the local area feel that it needs additional skills or experience to undertake work on joint commissioning?*

*Are children, young people, parents, carers, families and the community involved in decisions on joint commissioning?*

*What flexibility does the local area have to commission for preventive services?*

*To what extent are contracts and SLAs increasingly based on outcomes?*

**Area Maturity:** **Early Stages/Developing** (select relevant maturity level)

**Percentage of jointly commissioned services being delivered:** Under 1% %

**Comments:**

Health, Education and Social services have a process of joint provision through a 'virtual pooled budget'. This is now the second year of implementation and the aim is to develop a joint commissioning approach. Herefordshire is also part of a multi-agency West Mercia group (Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire) to jointly commission residential provision for a specific group with particularly complex needs which have been identified by the three authorities as an area for concern. The 'consortium' have gained agreement from the 'choice protects' task force to get support in developing this initiative. An example of pooled budgets in Children's Services is Community Equipment (Section 31). Further developments will be addressed in the Children and Young People's Plan.

Q18

**What progress has been made on pooled budgets and the pooling of other resources to support cooperation between partners?**

*For which services are budgets or other resources being pooled already?*

*What proportion of current spend, on children's and young people's services are actually being pooled?*

*Are there plans to pool other budgets and/or other resources?*

*If so, what stage are these at?*

*To what extent are there clear objectives set for pooling budgets?*

*What are the major barriers and what action is the local area taking to address them?*

*What use has the local area made of the support materials on pooled budgets on the Every Child Matters website?*

**Area Maturity:** **Early Stages/Developing** (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

There are a number of examples where equipment resourcing is undertaken jointly. There are also several areas where staffing is jointly funded e.g. Education Liaison Service, the Youth Offender Service, the Kite Centre (for children with disabilities), Learning & Skills Council, Child Development Centre, Police Family Protection Unit, Connexions, and the Hunderton Room (space in a primary school). Every opportunity is now being taken to pool budgets. The LAA will further these opportunities and enable additional freedoms and flexibilities.

**Efficiency Targets**

Sir Peter Gershon's review of public sector efficiency set out targets for efficiency gains across the public sector. These targets are for 2.5% efficiency gains year on year for the next three years starting FY 2005-06. Efficiency gains refer to either: providing the same outcomes whilst reducing resource input; or improving outcomes for a similar resource input. Gershon efficiency gains are mutually supportive with the Every Child Matters agenda.

Q19

**What ongoing work is the local area doing to improve value for money across children's services?**

*Is the value for money work fully tied in with the Gershon efficiency gains?*

*Are these gains being treated as part of the Every Child Matters agenda?*

*How is the local area ensuring that the quality of existing services is maintained?*

**Area Maturity:** **Early Stages/Developing** (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

The Herefordshire Council have identified a number of Gershon savings. Money saved through this process will be allocated according to priorities and in support of the ECM agenda. A second Local Public Service Agreement is in place and a Local Area Agreement is currently under negotiation.

Q20

### **Meeting the educational and stability needs of looked after children, wherever they are placed**

Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children. The duty will mean in practice that local authorities as "corporate parents" for looked after children will have to give particular attention to the educational implications of any decision they take about the welfare of any child they are responsible for looking after, including those placed out-of-authority. Consultation on draft guidance ended on 9 June 2005 and final guidance will be issued in Summer 2005. The duty came into force on 1 July 2005.

#### **What is the local authority's strategy for working with partners to improve stability and educational outcomes for looked after children, including those placed out-of-authority?**

*Is there a strategy in place to implement the duty under section 52 of the Children Act 2004 to promote the educational achievement of looked after children, if not, when will one be in place?*

*What mechanisms are there for implementing it?*

*How is the strategy linked to the statutory guidance on section 52?*

*Are existing statutory responsibilities in relation to out-of-authority placements (e.g. notification) being met?*

*What steps are being taken to reduce dependence on distant out-of-authority placements (e.g. by developing an adequate supply of good quality local foster and residential care places)?*

*How are good outcomes (with the level of support needed) being secured for children who are placed out-of-authority?*

**Area Maturity:**    **Developing/Mature**    (select relevant maturity level)

#### **Comments:**

The outcomes for looked after children, including the stability of placements, is a Children and Young People's Partnership Board priority and there has already been cross-agency work to identify ways of improving the educational achievement of this group. This area will also be described as a priority in the Children and Young People's Plan. There is a robust strategy contained within the Child Concern Model. There is an Educational Liaison Service (ELS) which has contact with every child in the looked after system. The ELS monitors the progress of looked after children and supports schools and social service staff. The Corporate Parent Group is provided with monitoring reports on the educational progress of looked after children. There is a Cabinet Member for Children's Services who scrutinises monitoring reports.

#### **Top issues in relation to integrated strategy**

Integration of front line delivery will strengthen monitoring and support mechanisms.

#### **What further support does the local area require to deliver an integrated strategy?**

Recognition that fluctuations in performance around this group are due very a small, statistically unreliable cohort rather than failure of provision.



## Section 6

## Inter-Agency Governance

Robust inter-agency governance arrangements are essential to drive the change processes and create the framework for new ways of working in local areas. The key elements of inter-agency governance arrangements will include effective leadership by the local authority; full engagement of all key partners (including private providers, the VCS, children, young people, parents, carers and families); clear accountability; and a shared vision to improve outcomes for children and young people.

### Partnership Arrangements

Children's trusts require a mechanism to bring together all the relevant partners (i.e. those under the duty to co-operate) at a strategic level to discuss the children's agenda (i.e. lower tier authorities; police; probation; SHA and PCT; Connexions; Learning and Skills Council and Youth Offending Teams).

Q21

**To what extent are the partners listed above engaged in decision making arrangements contributing to the local change programme (including Local Area Agreements where relevant)?**

*Have there been particular issues in engaging any of the partners?*

*Is there evidence of effective relationships with each of the above?*

*Are the partners being involved in the design of the children's trust governance arrangements?*

*What steps have been taken to ensure effective links to Local Strategic Partnerships and the Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership?*

*Is the local area finding any issues around for example, accountability, or clarity of operating arrangements? What are these issues?*

*In two-tier authorities, how does the joint decision-making process work?*

*How are any difficulties being overcome?*

**Area Maturity: Mature** (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

Partnership arrangements are already identified as one of Herefordshire's strengths. A local Partnership Board for children and young people has been established and has already identified a vision and a set of priorities. There are clear links with the Change Team which is implementing the local change agenda. A Local Area Agreement is in the draft stage and is closely involving the PCT. A variety of other partnership groups exist within Herefordshire.

Q22

**How is the local authority working in partnership with the following partners?**

*What steps are being taken to ensure they are involved in the following areas: governance, workforce planning, needs assessment, joint planning and commissioning, work on processes?*

*To what extent are arrangements in place to ensure that these bodies are engaged in a way that gets the most from the local diversity of experience and expertise? e.g. is effective use being made of representative bodies, including disability or religious bodies?*

*How is the LA developing the capacity of voluntary and community organisations?*

(a)

**Schools: Area Maturity: Mature** (select relevant maturity level)

The local authority has ensured that all major partners are represented on the major partnerships within the county. Various groups exist including the Children and Young People's Partnership Board, the ACPC, SACRE and there are strong links with the West Midlands Consortium for Travelling Children. Schools have direct representation on the Children and Young People's Partnership Board. These ensure that joint planning and commissioning occur and also ensures that the diversity agenda and the ECM agenda is met. Extended Schools and Children's Centres have a considerable impact on this work.

(b)

**Health Services, including primary care practitioners: Area Maturity: Mature** (select relevant maturity level)

The Children's and Young People's Partnership Board and the Area Child Protection Committee, along with work conducted to implement the Child Concern Model, ensure joined up needs analysis and joint commissioning within Herefordshire. The Lead GP is a member of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board.

(c)

**Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations and other providers: Area Maturity: Mature** (select relevant maturity level)

Through The Alliance, the capacity of which has been enhanced to achieve the joint agenda, voluntary and community sector organisations are involved in all major partnerships and have been engaged.



Q23

**To what extent are children and young people involved/participating in the partnership?**

How does the local area involve children and young people in decision-making about policies, strategies and / or services and monitoring and evaluation (e.g. through a youth forum or involvement of children and young people in partnership bodies)?

Is there a written policy or strategy for children and young people's participation in decision making etc and how is this being implemented, if not, by when will one be in place?

How does the local area seek to engage with hard-to-reach groups such as black and minority ethnic, disabled children and those with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language or looked after children and young people?

Which service areas (health, education, social services, youth services, recreation & leisure, criminal justice etc) does the local area find it most difficult to engage children and young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of?

What are the barriers that prevent or hinder the fuller engagement of children and young people in general, or in the context of particular services as described above?

**Area Maturity:** Early Stages/Developing (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

There are numerous initiatives which have sought to involve children and young people in decision making and in service evaluation. There is now a well formulated project to coordinate these initiatives using Hear By Rights Standards. This work is scheduled to be completed by November to coincide with early drafts of the Children and Young People's Plan. There are a wide range of existing consultations that already inform the CYPP. School Councils are well advanced, alongside work on values education.

Q24

**To what extent are parents, carers and families involved/participating in the partnership?**

How does the local area involve parents, carers and families (including hard-to-reach groups) in the process of planning, delivery and evaluation of work around the change agenda for children and young people's services? e.g. consulting on the quality of service provision and the need for re-deploying family support services to meet needs more appropriately; auditing locally available family support services and promoting these to parents, carers and families as a preventative, universal offer)

What are the barriers that prevent wider engagement and how are these being overcome?

**Area Maturity:** Early Stages/Developing (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

There are numerous individual service consultations with parents, carers and families which are currently being coordinated through a dedicated council officer. Consultations are an integral part of the work of Sure Start/Children's Centres, Children's Fund, PCT and Herefordshire's Family Centre. A major provider, NCH, involves families in looking at the outcome and efficacy of services.

**Director of Children's Services & Lead Member**

Ministers have said that they expect most local authorities to have appointed a DCS and designated a LM by 2006, and all LAs by 2008.

The statutory guidance on DCS makes it clear that there should be a single chief officer who has responsibility for children's education and social service functions and any health functions relating to children delegated to the authority by the NHS and who reports directly to the Chief Executive. Staff in children's education and social services should report to the DCS.

Q25

**Has the local authority appointed a Director of Children's Services?**

Is there a DCS in place?

Does he / she fulfil the requirements above?

What structures have been put in place to support the DCS?

What background is the DCS from?

If there is not a DCS that fulfils the requirements, what other arrangements are in place?

When does the authority plan to appoint?

**Area Maturity:** Mature (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

A DCS has been in post since January 2005. Various structures have been implemented to support this including a Cabinet Member for Children's Services and a Change Team. The authority is Children Act compliant.

The LM should be a single elected member of the executive who, on behalf of the executive or council, has overall political accountability for children's education and social services, and any health functions relating to children delegated by the NHS. In authorities without executive arrangements, it is expected that the lead member will be the chair of a committee responsible for children's services.

Q26

**Has the local authority designated a Lead Member?**

Is there a Lead Member in place?

Does he / she fulfil the requirements above?

If not, are there other arrangements in place?

When does the authority plan to designate a Lead Member?

**Area Maturity:** Mature (select relevant maturity level)

**Comments:**

The lead member was approved by Council in November 2004 and took up responsibilities in January 2005. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services is also the chair of the Corporate Parent Working Group. The Council is Children Act compliant.

### Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)

The purpose of LSCBs is to strengthen local arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We expect all Area Child Protection Committees to grow and develop into LSCBs by April 2006. The following bodies will be included in LSCBs as Board partners: NHS bodies including Strategic Health Authorities, Primary Care Trusts, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts; Police; Local probation boards; Connexions Service; Prisons in the area which normally detain children (this includes Young Offenders Institutions); Secure training centres; The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS); District councils where they exist; Youth Offending Teams are also expected to participate as full members of the Board. We also expect that LSCBs will secure representation from the voluntary and community sectors and others such as schools.

Q27

#### Is an LSCB in place?

*If not is a plan in place to ensure the ACPC develops into a LSCB by April 2006?*

*Has funding either been finalised or are discussions currently on-going?*

*If funding agreed, at what level and what are the contributions from the partners?*

*Has the ACPC/LSCB decided which other Board partners need to be included, in addition to those listed in the Children Act 2004?*

*Has the ACPC/LSCB either chosen a Chair for the LSCB or started the recruitment process? If chosen, is the chair the DCS, someone else from the LA, from another Board partner or independent?*

*Is there a clear view of how the LSCB will fit with the rest of the children's trust arrangements?*

**Area Maturity:**    **Developing/Mature**    (select relevant maturity level)

#### Comments:

Following consultation, the Herefordshire ACPC set up a working group as an extension of the Standing Committee. The ACPC, in consultation with the DCS, will have a clear vision by Autumn 2005 of the future requirements and are intending full implementation by April 2006. The development of the Child Concern Model by the ACPC is an example of mature multi-agency working. A positive transition is expected to the new body. A paper has been presented to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board translating the ACPC into the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the proposed arrangements are supported.

#### Top issues in relation to inter-agency governance

#### What further support does the local area require to develop inter-agency governance arrangements?

# CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

CABINET

29TH SEPTEMBER, 2005

---

### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To provide Cabinet with summary information on the proposed Customer Service Strategy.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

### Recommendations

**THAT the strategy and in particular the change management implications be noted and the proposed way forward endorsed.**

### Reasons

The Strategy which is attached as an appendix outlines Herefordshire Council's vision for Customer Service over the next three years. The strategy is designed to be a high level document setting out the over-arching framework for customer service in Herefordshire.

The strategy aims to "Put the Customer First" – at the heart of everything the Council does and recognises the importance of the diversity of customers' needs in Herefordshire. Ease of accessibility, quality and speed of response received are the criteria against which customers measure a service provider.

### Considerations

#### 1. Current Customer Service Strategy

The Customer Service Strategy 2002-2007 sets out an ambitious plan to ensure the Council delivers the UK's best of class customer focused services. The creation of corporate customer service standards aimed to contribute to the Herefordshire Plan by:

- Creating single Customer Access Points in Market Towns for residents and visitors.
- Helping to tackle poverty and isolation by reducing the need to travel.
- Working in partnership with other bodies to improve the health and well being of residents.

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Julie Holmes, Head of ICT Services on 01432 260225

- Working with community groups to develop and shape the future of Herefordshire.

2. By 2007 the goals to have been achieved included:

- Implementation of an appropriate phone contact service.
- Info Shops/Points in all Market Towns and Hereford City.

Achievements to date include:

- Info Shops/Points have been implemented in the Market Towns and in Hereford City. The last to open in December 2004 was a combined Library, Leisure and Info Point in Bromyard.
- CRM for some front line services in these Info Shops/Points with limited scope and poor user acceptance.

3. However, lack of focus and competing priorities has meant that the previous Customer Services Strategy failed to deliver:

- An appropriate phone contact service.
- A robust, corporate and integrated customer relationship management environment. The CRM application implemented has not been further developed or integrated with further back office transactional systems.
- Reporting for the Info Shops. This has been lost due to other system implementations (eg Academy implementation in Revenues and Benefits)
- A Complaint and Compliment systems. These were simply not included. These have now been specified and are in the process of being implemented following extensive consultation.
- Community access points in the more rural communities further to delays in securing funding with the Herefordshire in Touch programme.

4. Releasing Resources to the Front Line” – Sir Peter Gershon – April 2004

Whilst Councils across England have been focused on delivering improved service to customers through Customer Service Centres; CRM and e-government; the above report has been published which sets out the efficiency agenda putting an emphasis on transactional services i.e. all the processing that happens in the “back office” e.g. revenues and benefits, housing management, planning, parking etc. Logically the two go hand-in hand because many of the “benefits” (service improvements and savings) from investment in web sites, contact centres and CRM systems can only be realised once back office processes have been redesigned and fully integrated with customer service. Looked at together with corporate support services the need for an integrated “architecture” to support frontline delivery emerges.

5. Current Service Provision

Reviews have been undertaken to assess the service currently provided to the customers of Herefordshire Council. Inbound telephone statistics have been reviewed as have the number of services undertaken by the individual Info Shops

and points to give insight into the range of services that we are able to provide “Face to Face”.

#### 6. Customer Service Strategy 2005-2008

Council services should be integrated, responsive, customer focused and cost effective, concentrating on the needs of the customers rather than those of the service providers. The Council must ensure we meet people’s needs appropriately, on time and first time by developing a customer focused culture and using technology to assist with this vision. To achieve this vision several objectives need to be met:

- Create an organisation with the skills, processes and culture to deliver better access to improved public services.
- Make it more convenient, easier and quicker for the citizens of Herefordshire to deal with the Council.
- Make sure that all citizens have equal access to the services they need.
- Make sure that access to the Council services is the same from wherever in the County the citizen is making contact.
- Provide more responsive, more reliable and more satisfying public services that meet the expectations of the citizens for better access to better quality public services.
- Deliver better access to better quality public services in the most cost-effective way.
- Provide an Info by Phone Service - between the hours of 7.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. which will handle all non face-to-face enquiries and requests.

#### 7. The Way Forward – Delivering the Strategy

This strategy aims to focus the organisation around the customer, rather than structure everything around individual services, as the Council do currently. The changes required to achieve this fall into four main categories:

- Cultural - Change Management – the attitudes the Council has and the way the Council behaves.
- Process – Business Process Re-engineering – the way the Council do things.
- Organisational – Change Management – where the Council is located and how is structured.
- Technological – the ICT systems the Council uses to support its transactions.

8. Our goal must be to provide levels of customer service that are among the highest of any council in England. Delivery of this strategy will enable us to achieve this.

9. The strategy represents a step change in service delivery, and although comprehensive programmes in Change Management, Communications and Business Process Re-engineering are key, it is not a leap into the dark. The technology already exists which will support us to make these changes and is

already in use by other authorities.

10. The Council must ensure the right levels of resources are made available to support the required service and will be building on the specialist customer service roles already established in the Info Shops. There will be more opportunities for those people who enjoy dealing with customers to do so and they will have the means to provide better service. There will be increased opportunities for back office service staff to focus on their areas of specialism freed up from much of the routine work and direct phone calls, which will be transferred to the Info front end, leaving the specialists to concentrate on the more complex issues for which they are trained.
11. The Council must also acknowledge that things change. Customers' needs alter and their expectations increase. New technology opens up new possibilities for service delivery. Therefore the strategy will require regular review to ensure the Council is kept aware of new developments and can evaluate the customer service improvement opportunities.
12. A feasibility study into the potential use of the ground floor at Garrick House as an Info Shop for Hereford City is ongoing. Initial findings suggest that this should be a good option offering flexibility in the delivery of integrated front line services. Preliminary planning for the project would see a go-live for the facility in May/June 2006 subject to survey and funding.
13. The Council must understand that this Strategy addresses the services to go through both the Info by Phone and Info Shops/Points. Most importantly, it is not intended to relate to individuals or accommodation.

## **Alternative Options**

None

## **Risk Management**

None

## **Consultees**

None

## **Background Papers**

None

# ICT Services Division

## Documentation

# Customer Service Strategy 2005-2008

---

**Name**

Document Ref:

Version: 003

Issue Date: 12/08/2005

Filename Customer Service Strategy v3.0

---



## Author(s)

Names	Role
Pam Debenham	Project Manager Customer Services

## Document Log

Version	Status	Date Issued	Description of Change	Pages affected
0.1	Draft	20/07/05	Initial draft	All
0.2	Draft	09/08/05	Update	All
0.3	Final	27/08/05	Update	All

## Sign-Off

Names	Contact	Role	Signature	Date
Jane Jones	Corporate & Customer Services	Director Corporate & Customer Services		
Julie Holmes	Corporate & Customer Services	Head of Service Corporate & Customer Services		



---

# Table of Contents

---

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Background</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Customer Service Vision</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4. The Way Forward – Delivering the Strategy</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5. Implementation Plan</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>6. Conclusion</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix A - Detail of Services Provided by Individual Info Shops and Points once CRM Application is Implemented</b>	<b>19</b>

## **1. Introduction**

This document outlines Herefordshire Council's vision for Customer Service over the next three years. The strategy is designed to be a high level document setting out the over-arching framework for customer service in Herefordshire.

The Council is a complex organisation consisting of five directorates each with a number of Business Units offering specialist services, advice and support to the Council's customers.

The strategy aims to "Put the Customer First" – at the heart of everything the Council does and recognises the importance of the diversity of customers' needs in Herefordshire.

It is important that all those working within the Council recognise that structures and organisation charts are not important to customers trying to access the services of the Council. Ease of accessibility, quality and speed of response received are the criteria against which Customers measure a service provider.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Current Customer Service Strategy

The Customer Service Strategy 2002-2007 sets out an ambitious plan to ensure Herefordshire Council delivers the UK's best of class customer focused services. The creation of corporate customer service standards aimed to contribute to the Herefordshire Plan by:

- Creating single Customer Access Points in Market Towns for residents and visitors.
- Helping to tackle poverty and isolation by reducing the need to travel.
- Working in partnership with other bodies to improve the health and well being of residents.
- Working with community groups to develop and shape the future of Herefordshire.

By 2007 the goal to have been achieved included:

- Implementation of an appropriate phone contact service.
- Info Shops/Points in all Market Towns and Hereford City.

During 2004 the priorities changed and focus moved to Library service improvement. As a result:

- Info Shops/Points have been implemented in the Market Towns and in Hereford City. The last to open in December 2004 was a combined Library, Leisure and Info Point in Bromyard.
- An appropriate telephone contact service has not been implemented.
- The CRM application implemented during 2004 has not been further developed or integrated with further Transaction systems.
- Reporting for the Info shops has been lost due to other system changes.
- The Complaint and Compliment systems were specified in July 2005.

### 2.2 "Releasing Resources to the Front Line" – Sir Peter Gershon – April 2004

Whilst Councils across England have been focused on delivering improved service to customers through Customer Service Centres, Customer Relationship Management Systems (CRM) and other e-government initiatives, the above report has been published which sets out the efficiency agenda putting an emphasis on transactional services. That is, all the processing that happens in the "back office" e.g. council tax, benefits, housing management, planning, parking, trading standards, schools admissions, etc.

Logically the two go hand-in-hand because many of the "benefits" (service improvements and savings) from investment in web sites, contact centres and CRM systems can only be realised once back office processes have been redesigned and fully integrated with customer service.

Looked at together with corporate support services the need for an integrated "architecture" to support frontline delivery emerges.

The report sets out the amount of money to be saved across all Public Sector services. As a result of the Gershon recommendations starting from 2005/06 Herefordshire Council has to save 2.5% year on year over the next three financial years.

## 2.3 Current Service Provision

Reviews have been undertaken to assess the service currently provided to the customers of Herefordshire Council. Inbound telephone statistics have been reviewed, as have the number of services undertaken by the individual Info Shops and Points to give insight into the range of services which we are currently providing "Face to Face".

### 2.3.1 Sample of Direct Dial statistics

Analysis of the telephone statistics reveals that Herefordshire Council has problems with answering Direct Dial (DDI) calls and the percentage of missed calls in several instances is exceptionally high and unacceptable for a "customer centric" organisation.

Below is a sample of the first quarter 2005/06 inbound call statistics to Direct Dials.

Extension Number	Department/Service	Number of answered Calls	Number of Lost Calls	% Lost of Total Calls
0011	Trading Standards	171	68	28
0342	Planning Customer	1976	2060	51
0929	P&R Admissions	900	460	34
1616	Finance – Residential Comm.	600	254	30
1619	Blue Badge Line	490	255	34
1627	Adult Team	1837	1298	41
1701	Gypsy Service	843	258	12
1787	Planning Customer	1278	649	34
1913	Private Sector Housing	171	169	50
1991	Estates Section	624	272	30
3200	Hereford Cemetery	879	279	24

The sample data above highlights that the problem is Council wide and it should be noted that overall across the Council in the first quarter 2005/06, the DDI loss rate on all calls was 19%.

Switchboard loss rates are running at 1.5% and the Hunt Groups' loss rates are on average 3.1% across the Council in the first quarter 2005/06.

### 2.3.2 Review of Info Shops/Points

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software started to be implemented in the Info Shops in April 2004. Below is the detail of the services being provided by the individual Shops/Points since the CRM implementation that provides an insight into the breadth of services Herefordshire Council is supporting face to face.

The statistics are based on the CRM system going live in:

Ross and Leominster -	April 2004
Hereford Town Hall -	April 2004
Hereford - Garrick House -	August 2004
Ledbury -	August 2004
Kington -	September 2004
Bromyard -	December 2004

Info Shop/Info Point	Services Provided	Average visitors per month
Ross	99	1457
Leominster	94	1320
Hereford Town Hall	47	193 (end Aug 04)
Hereford Garrick House	65	703 (started Aug 04)
Ledbury	84	614
Kington	40	530
Bromyard	71	712

Customers are using the Info Shops/Points for a variety of services, which include:

Info Shop/Info Point	Service	Volume of users/month
Ledbury	Planning Advice – General	81
Ross	Benefit Applications	120
Ross	Blue Badge Enquiries/Applications	75
Ross	Council Tax Enquiries	74
Ross	Planning Enquiries	155
Kington	Senior Citizen Concessionary Parking Permit	361
Hereford - Garrick	Blue Badge Enquiries/Applications	314
Leominster	Council Tax Enquiry	123
Leominster	Planning Advice General	83
Leominster	Benefit Application support evidence	194
Leominster	Blue Badge Enquiries/Application	91

Visitors and Unclassified enquiries to Info Shops and Points are:

Info Shop/Info Point	Average Monthly visitor figures
Ross	605
Leominster	460
Hereford – Town hall	68
Hereford – Garrick	284
Ledbury	207
Kington	84
Bromyard	595

Full details of services by location are attached in Appendix A.

### 3. Customer Service Vision

Council services are integrated, responsive, customer focused and cost effective, concentrating on the needs of the customers rather than those of the service providers.

We must ensure we meet people's needs appropriately, on time and first time by developing a customer focused culture and using technology to assist with this vision.

Imagine it is 2008, a resident of Herefordshire can access Council services face to face in our Info Shops/Points or via Info By Phone which will handle landline and mobile phone calls as well as SMS, letter, fax. Internet and E-mail enquiries and requests will be received 24 hours a day, 7 days per week and handled either by Info by Phone or in those Info Shops working extended hours. A visitor to one of our fully integrated Info Shops or Info Points across the County, can either use our "online" service points or meet with our fully trained frontline staff face to face. When customers telephone the Council, they are greeted by staff who are fully trained as Info Customer Service Assistants (ICSAs) and can deliver exactly the same service over the telephone as the Info Shops do face to face. If customers go onto the Internet the services that are accessible to them again exactly reflect the services they would receive using our other service delivery methods.

The service provided is consistent, co-ordinated and proactive. ICSAs will be trained to listen and will be able to identify if the customer needs extra help or advice and will help sort out problems and take ownership for problems to resolution.

The Council will ensure services are responsive and accountable to all citizens by regular reporting and consultation.

To achieve this vision several objectives need to be met:

- Create an organisation with the skills, processes and culture to deliver better access to improved public services.
- Make it more convenient, easier and quicker for the citizens of Herefordshire to deal with the Council.
- Make sure that all citizens have equal access to the services they need.
- Make sure that access to the Council services is the same from wherever in the County the citizen is making contact.
- Provide more responsive, more reliable and more satisfying public services that meet the expectations of the citizens for better access to better quality public services.
- Deliver better access to better quality public services in the most cost-effective way.
- Provide a contact centre – Info by Phone – between the hours of 7.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. which will handle all non face-to-face enquiries and requests.

#### **3.1 Create an Organisation with the Skills, Processes and Culture to Deliver Better Access to Improved Public Services**

The most significant requirement for implementation of this strategy is a comprehensive and far-reaching Change Management Programme to bring about changes in attitude and ways of working in the Council through a strong Performance Management Framework. Customer expectations have been raised in recent years in their dealings with other organisations, therefore, the quality of customer experience delivered by the Council must rise to meet this enhanced service expectation.

Training and personal development will be key to the successful implementation of this Strategy. Customer Service training should not be confined to frontline employees (ICSAs) but should be rolled out across the organisation. All new employees will receive customer service training as part of their induction to the Council.

ICSAs require more than just customer service skills. They need to understand the diversity of all our customers' needs, the business as well as the ICT systems they are using. This will mean training – lots of training and development activity tailored appropriately. The actual amount of training will depend on the overall strategy for implementation of any Service and its supporting ICT system(s). All Info team members will be encouraged to study for NVQs.

Changing current work processes is the second significant and far-reaching project of this strategy. Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) will provide the means by which processes are transformed in line with requirements in order to deliver services in new ways to meet customers' needs.

The implementation of the strategy will also involve changes to supporting processes including induction and training, performance management and communication (both internally and with customers).

Impact and needs assessments are extremely important in making sure our services remove barriers and do not create any new ones, particularly for minority ethnic and disabled customers.

Customer feed back and complaints must be viewed as positive opportunities for the Council to improve its service.

### ***3.2 Make it more Convenient, Easier and Quicker for the Citizens of Herefordshire to deal with Public Sector Organisations***

The Council's services will be presented to the customer as a cohesive portfolio, with services provided by partner agencies seamlessly integrated. Customers will not be expected to know or understand the complexities of the Council's inner workings. As many services as possible should be capable of delivery through a single contact – e.g. face-to-face, telephone, online on a 'One and Done' basis or even via DigiTV.

When customers contact the Council, they can expect the ICSAs to access comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date information, about them and their interactions with the Council and associated agencies.

### ***3.3 Make sure that all Citizens have Equal Access to the Services they Need***

All customers should have equal access to the services provided by the Council. This means that we recognise that people have different needs and requirements and we will do all we can to meet these. The Council will use this strategy to harness the power of e-Government positively to tackle exclusion from services and communities.

The Council will continue to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act – DDA – and the Race Relations Amendment Act to make sure that the Council's Info facilities are fully accessible for disabled customers and for customers who use other languages.

---

### ***3.4 Make sure that Access to the Council services is the same however contact is being made***

Customers should be able to contact the Council through their preferred access channel, at a time and from a location of their choosing. It must be remembered that there are many different types of customers with very different needs. These include citizens – residents and visitors, business users and tourists. Despite the choices of channels available, the Council will make sure that responses to customer requests remain consistent irrespective of the access channel used.

### ***3.5 Provide more Responsive, more Reliable and more Satisfying Public Services that meet the Expectations of the Citizens for Better Access to Better Quality Public Services***

Once customers access the service, courteous and knowledgeable ICAs will greet them, keen to help and who take pride in their work. Questions should only need to be asked once of a customer as all information provided earlier will have been captured centrally, including information about accessible formats customers may need such as Braille, large print, or a particular language requirements.

Information will be used in the interest of the customer wherever legislation allows and the customer will be allowed to opt in or out where legislation is unclear whether or not information about them should be shared within the Council.

There will be a published Customer Service Charter, owned by senior management and members, known, understood and believed by all employees.

The first ICA contacted will be able to resolve multiple service requests. When an enquiry needs to be referred to a specialist in the back office or another agency, such as the Housing Association, then the initial contact in the Council will become the customer's advocate or champion and own the enquiry until it is resolved.

### ***3.6 Deliver Better Access to Better Quality Public Services in the most Cost Effective Way***

Customer service will be the focus for plans to bring "joined-up" services to the County in line with the Gershon recommendations. The Council will also need to initiate specific linkages and projects with key partners and agencies. We need to learn best practice from within the public and private sector to ensure we deliver specific initiatives in a timely and cost effective way.



#### 4. The Way Forward – Delivering the Strategy

This strategy aims to focus the organisation around the customer, rather than structure everything around individual services, as we do currently. The changes required to achieve this fall into four main categories:

- Cultural – Change Management – the attitudes we have and the way we behave.
- Process – Business Process Re-engineering – the way we do things.
- Organisational – Change Management – where we are located and how we are structured.
- Technological – the ICT systems we use to support our transactions.

Key to success of the strategy is a unified Change Management and Communications programme to drive the dissemination and understanding of the necessary changes that are essential throughout the Council.

Customer Service Champions should exist at all levels of the organisation and be sufficiently influential to convince management and other staff to ensure their working practices support both the customer and corporate needs, ahead of their departmental needs.

A knowledge management system is required which can handle frequently asked questions – it will be the responsibility of the Transactional functions to provide and maintain the information and the responsibility of Info to ensure that if there are any issues with the information provided they escalate this to the back office for resolution.

A Corporate Electronic Document and Record Management System (EDRMS) is required that will enable documents to flow electronically across all Council locations and departments and records to be managed in line with the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts.

A customer care training and development programme initially for ICSAs will be developed and will then be rolled out to all employees. All new employees will receive customer care training as part of their Corporate Induction to the Council.

In order to ensure that services are delivered in line with best practice, it is necessary to develop excellent standards in customer service. A clear set of customer service standards will be developed, agreed and then widely publicised.

All employees will be provided with a copy of the Customer Service Standards and they will be expected to demonstrate, as part of their Personal Development plans, how they are contributing towards the Council's vision for Customer service. Departments will be expected to demonstrate how they are contributing towards delivery of the Vision through the Departmental Business Planning process.

Customer service cannot be seen simply as an “add-on” to the existing jobs that people do. It needs to become an integral part of their job.

A Corporate Customer Service Group linked to a network of Departmental Customer Service Champions and supported by a group of front line personnel should be established to support the Corporate Customer Services Manager in implementing both the Strategy and the Improvement Plan.

#### **4.1 Change Management**

The strategy will be to create a change management programme for Herefordshire Council to win the hearts and minds of all personnel into the new way of thinking about the provision of services. The programme will be aimed at removing barriers to delivering excellent customer service and ensuring all Council employees agree with the new beliefs, attitudes and ways of working necessary to achieve the changes we need to implement. An implementation plan covering the key tasks is being created and will be included with this document in Appendix B.

#### **4.2 Integrated Delivery Solutions**

The strategy will be to create a uniform service, building on the existing Info service and incorporating a centralised service handling landline and mobile phones, letters and fax. E-mail and Internet requests will be received 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and will be processed either centrally in “Info by Phone” or in the Info Shops outside normal working hours. Centralised telephone and text handling will be achieved in stages through the rationalisation of the current switchboard arrangements, evaluation of the use of DDIs and building on the “virtual” telephone solution currently in place in the Info Shops.

All front line services will be integrated with the Transactional services which they serve to ensure a “one and done” approach to capturing information and requests.

#### **4.3 Centralised Info by Phone**

Consolidating the disparate switchboards from across the Council and many of the DDIs into one “Info by Phone” for non face to face enquiries is the only cost-effective way of achieving the levels of service to which we aspire. However, there are some caveats that must be taken into consideration when creating such a centre within as diverse an organisation as Herefordshire Council.

- The back office experts must own and maintain the information that the ICSAs access in order to deal with customer queries.
- Agreement must be reached between the Head of Customer Service and Heads of Department as to where the cut off is in any given situation before the customer is passed on to the back office for specialist advice – this will to a large extent come out of the Business Process Re-engineering exercise.
- The CRM system must be integrated to those back office (Transactional) systems for which it is capturing and/or retrieving data.
- Adequate resources and training are essential for both the creation of the new service and ongoing running of the service once it is established.
- Any system must be accessible to the deaf and speech impaired as well as people who use other languages.

A location for Info by Phone has already been selected in Plough Lane. This will provide capacity for up to 19 call handlers at any one point in time. Further capacity should be developed over time by using the concept of an extended yet virtual Info by Phone service – either another council department, location or even home workers. It is important that the spirit and culture of the Info Shop/Point is captured within Info by Phone and that both offerings are viewed by staff and citizens as one integrated customer services operation.

#### **4.4 Face to Face Provision**

Many of our customers want to receive services face to face. The Info Shops and Info Points are a successful model on which to build.

Research should be undertaken into the benefit of providing services over longer opening hours. The Bromyard model has been well received by its users and there has been a significant increase in usage of both the Library and the Sports facilities in Bromyard.

There are currently two projects underway regarding mobile technology and kiosks. The Herefordshire in Touch Programme's Community Access Point project is investigating community based access points to be provided to rural parts of Herefordshire, which will provide subsidised broadband access, learning opportunities and online advice via the e-Gateway with a view to reducing social exclusion through their location and promoting the benefits of broadband to the community. Community Access Points (CAP) will be set up through consultation with community groups, dependent on them being able to meet criteria for access and sustainability.

The project will carry out a pilot in five areas to test different models and approaches. Every community will have different requirements, but the project aims to encompass a wide spectrum of approaches in the pilot to enable the roll out to be planned in more detail. The pilot will include areas not enabled for ADSL.

There is also an investigation of Info's requirements for mobile usage in connection with mobile libraries being undertaken. Using these vehicles to provide other council services is a proven model in other authorities.

#### **4.5 Internet Access**

The Council will encourage the use of Internet access to services by both its citizens and its other customers. "On line forms" should be enhanced by the addition of "payments on line" which can be used within both the main service points (telephone and face to face) and on line by Internet users.

Consideration should be given to identifying locations throughout the more remote areas of the county where Internet access points can be located for self- service.

#### **4.6 Management Information**

Integrated Management Information Systems for capturing, monitoring and recording levels of customer contact will be developed to enable us to become more effective and take a more corporate approach to management of customer service activity in the future. This information should be used as a driver for improved customer service.

Systems should be in place to capture all forms of feedback made by customers whether good or bad. This will enable the Council to respond to the needs of customers and should ultimately lead to a reduction in the number of complaints and increase the number of compliments.

Performance indicators will be developed to enable customer service to be monitored and reported. Business Units will provide customer service performance indicators within their annual Business Plans.

Targets will be created and measures put in place to monitor service usage of all contact points including Info Shops, Kiosks, SMS, Info by Phone and Internet on line forms and payments on line.

#### **4.7 Business Process Re-engineering**

Changing our current processes will be a significant and far-reaching project within the Customer Service Strategy. Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) will provide the means by which processes are transformed in line with requirements in order to deliver services in new ways that meet customers' needs. Work to define current and future processes with individual service areas has already begun in conjunction with ICT Services.

Two important outcomes of this exercise will be both the split between those parts of a process which will be handled by the Info team and those that must be passed to the Transactions team (back office e.g. Benefits, Revenues etc.), and the requirements for a corporate electronic records and document management system. The integrated document flow will be critical both to reducing processing time and the need for human intervention at key points as well as hard cashable savings.

#### **4.8 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)**

A key element of the Strategy is the implementation of a CRM solution. CRM can help to optimise service delivery mechanisms, enable better understanding of the customer and provide a more joined up service. CRM can support a front/back office split that allows employees with the best customer facing skills to spend more of their time using those skills.

Currently, although the Council is using Customer Relationship Management techniques to a limited extent within certain departments. This is fragmented, inconsistent and not applied corporately leading to duplication and higher costs.

Implementation of a Corporate CRM solution will take the customer information and best practice that exists at departmental level and manage it on a corporate basis. Ultimately, the customer should be able to view and interact with the Council seamlessly across the various departments.

Mrs Brown has recently moved into the area; she wants to pay her Council Tax, enquire about improvement grants for her home as well as find out how to obtain a wheelie bin. She also mentions the street light is out and that there appears to be an abandoned vehicle on the verge across the road from her home. Finally she is keen to know about her local parish council and elected member. Our goal is to be able to handle all these requests for service on a "One and Done" basis within a single call from the citizen.

CRM requires the Council's service delivery mechanisms to be organised around the needs of the customer rather than reflecting current internal structures. To achieve this will require a complex set of changes including culture and strategy as much as process transformation, restructuring and technology. A change management programme closely aligned with a communications programme will drive these changes

In the context of this Strategy, CRM is not a computer system although as the strategy develops and is implemented, it will need to incorporate an ICT system and other supporting technology as a facilitator to help deliver the business objectives. Technology is an integral component of the solution but is not the solution itself.

CRM will be used to improve the quality and consistency of the customer experience. To do this, the Council will need to become focused on providing a consistent resolution to as many of the customer's service requests as possible from the first point of contact. The Council's knowledge and systems need to be available to customers through all relevant delivery channels, including Info by Phone, Info Shops/Points, Internet and Kiosks.

CRM will allow Council employees to work to their strengths. Those employees with the best customer facing skills will occupy the Info roles, spending most of their time interacting with customers and acting as their advocate. In their turn specialists, managers and some administrators will occupy the back office, where they are able to work uninterrupted by customer contact and are thus more productive in the transactional processes with which they deal.

#### **4.9 Customer Satisfaction Surveys and Complaints Handling**

Part of proactive customer service will be for the ICSAs to contact citizens and other customers who have used the Council's services to undertake a customer satisfaction survey. This must be done in a timely way, within one week of the service provision; this approach will bring out any issues with specific procedures more quickly than waiting for people to complain which will allow the Council to address the issue quickly before it can impact more users of the service.

The ICSAs will also have first line ownership to solve Level 1 complaints, escalating to the back office only once it is established the complainant will not accept the Level 1 solution. It is important that complaints are viewed within the Council in a positive way. They help the Council understand what it can do better and to identify training needs for individuals and departments.

#### **4.10 Emergency Planning and Disaster Recovery**

It is the Council's responsibility to support the Emergency Services and public if and when a major incident occurs in or around the County. Whilst doing this, we must keep the main council services running and co-ordinate what voluntary groups will do to assist in the response.

During a major incident, Info by Phone will ensure the website is kept up to date and operate the Council's Helpline to provide maximum information and offer advice relating to the emergency. The ICSAs will be trained in the Council's emergency procedures.

#### **4.11 Information Communications Technology (ICT)**

Excellent customer service can only be delivered where employees have been provided with excellent accessible information.

Technology is key to the implementation of the improvement plan and strategy. Ideally the technology requirements should be identified once the BPR exercise is complete, however, time frame pressures may not allow this sequential step. Whichever CRM product is chosen it must be proven to have already been integrated with at least 60% of Herefordshire Council's key systems being used in other Councils.

An important principle of the strategy is that this system will be corporate and will be the sole client database for the Authority. Other "expert" transactional systems such as planning, benefits, council tax, electronic social care records, single assessment and highways for example will all require data from this system and to update it in return.

---

Where integration is not real-time between the front and back office systems, all interface options for the CRM to transactional systems should be considered, including Point-to-Point, Data Warehouse extraction using XML, and Middleware.

#### **4.12 Marketing the Service**

There will be a consolidation of extensions in the BT phone book, there are currently approximately 117 separate contact numbers within the Council and consolidation will provide an opportunity to publicise the provision of the “Info By Phone” service for telephone enquiries. Initially publicity should be “low key” until the Council are confident the service improvements are being achieved.

Part of the role out of the implementation of the strategy will be the creation of a communications plan for both internal and external communications.

Focus groups within the County should be set up to discuss the options, although some of this may have already been covered within the Community Access Points project.

#### **4.13 Working with Others**

There are many opportunities to work in partnership with others both within Herefordshire as well as neighbouring local authorities and private sector providers. The benefits that such solutions can bring should not be underestimated and a plan should be created which identifies potential partners so that as the Strategy develops we work with others to find solutions that enable services provided by the Council and partner agencies to be seamlessly integrated.

## 5. Implementation Plan

Once approval has been given to proceed a detailed implementation plan will be created which sets out a multi-phased approach. The first areas to be implemented are currently envisaged as:

Phase	Function	Start	Go live
Phase 1	Trading Standards – Consumer – Business	September 2005	March 2006
Phase 1	Revenues & Benefits – Part 1 to be clarified	September 2005	March 2006
Phase 1	Children's Services – Part 1 to be clarified	September 2005	March 2006
Phase 1	Corporate HR – E-Recruitment	September 2005	March 2006

**Further phases are still to be defined but the full integration of all potential council services will take 18-24 months as a minimum.**

---

## 6. Conclusion

Our goal must be to provide levels of customer service that are among the highest of any council in England and be comparable with the best providers in the private sector. Delivery of this strategy will enable us to achieve this.

It represents a step change in service delivery, and although comprehensive programmes in Change Management, Communications and Business Process Re-engineering are key, it is not a leap into the dark. The technology already exists which will support us to make these changes and is already in use by other authorities

We need to ensure the right levels of resources are made available to support the required services. We will be building on the specialist customer service roles already established in the Info Shops. There will be more opportunities for people who enjoy dealing with customers to do so and they will have the means to provide better service. There will be increased opportunities for specialists to focus on their areas of specialism freed up from much of the routine work and direct telephone calls, which will be transferred to the Info front end, leaving the specialists to concentrate on the more complex issues for which they are trained.

We must also acknowledge that things change. Customers' needs alter and their expectations increase. New technology opens up new possibilities for service delivery. Therefore, the strategy will require regular review to ensure we are kept aware of new developments and can evaluate the customer service improvement opportunities.



## **Appendix A**

Detail of Services Provided by Individual Info Shops and Points once CRM Application is Implemented

<b>Info Shop</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>No of Calls</b>
Kington,Cash Office	Age Concern - General Enquiry	1
Kington,Cash Office	Benefit Application Form Completion	11
Kington,Cash Office	Benefit Application Form Request	38
Kington,Cash Office	Benefit Application Supporting Evidence	73
Kington,Cash Office	Benefits Advice Given	11
Kington,Cash Office	Blue Badge Enquiries/Applications	38
Kington,Cash Office	Business Rates Change of Circumstances	2
Kington,Cash Office	Business Rates Tax Enquiry	7
Kington,Cash Office	Car Park Penalty Notice Challenge Advice	35
Kington,Cash Office	Car Park Season Tickets	1
Kington,Cash Office	Car Parking - General Enquiries	6
Kington,Cash Office	Conservation Areas - Trees	1
Kington,Cash Office	Council Tax Change of Circumstances	56
Kington,Cash Office	Council Tax Enquiry	144
Kington,Cash Office	Development Plans/UDP	4
Kington,Cash Office	Drainage and Sewer Services	2
Kington,Cash Office	Electoral Register Enquiry	1
Kington,Cash Office	Electoral Registration - Issue forms/leaflets	10
Kington,Cash Office	Eng/Trans - General Enquiries	14
Kington,Cash Office	Handling Keys	113
Kington,Cash Office	Hedgerow Protection	1
Kington,Cash Office	Illegal Dumping	1
Kington,Cash Office	Interim Compliments/Complaints Service	4
Kington,Cash Office	Internal Telephone Enquiries	4
Kington,Cash Office	On-Street Parking Permits	1
Kington,Cash Office	Pest Control	1
Kington,Cash Office	Planning Advice - General	123
Kington,Cash Office	Planning Application Enquiries	106
Kington,Cash Office	Planning Guidance	2
Kington,Cash Office	Policy and Resources - General Enquiry	1
Kington,Cash Office	Receive forms for onwards transmission	7
Kington,Cash Office	Reporting Abandoned Vehicles	2
Kington,Cash Office	Senior Citizen Concessionary Parking Permit	3608
Kington,Cash Office	Single Person Discount	24
Kington,Cash Office	Special/Bulky Item Collections	6
Kington,Cash Office	Sundry Invoice Enquiry	2
Kington,Cash Office	Unclassified Service	312
Kington,Cash Office	Visitor Greeting	523
Kington,Cash Office	Waste Management	6
Kington,Cash Office	Water Query	1
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>5303</b>
Hereford,Garrick House	Acquisition/Disposal of Council Property	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Air Pollution	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Animal Health and Welfare	2

Hereford,Garrick House	Benefit Application Form Completion	3
Hereford,Garrick House	Benefit Application Form Request	3
Hereford,Garrick House	Benefit Application Supporting Evidence	17
Hereford,Garrick House	Benefits Advice Given	14
Hereford,Garrick House	Benefits Overview	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Blue Badge Enquiries/Applications	3452
Hereford,Garrick House	Broadband Enquiries	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Car Park Penalty Notice Challenge Advice	151
Hereford,Garrick House	Car Park Season Tickets	56
Hereford,Garrick House	Car Parking - General Enquiries	82
Hereford,Garrick House	Cemeteries	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Change Of Address	4
Hereford,Garrick House	Child/Student Svcs - General Enquiry	7
Hereford,Garrick House	Conservation Areas - Trees	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Council Tax Change of Circumstances	6
Hereford,Garrick House	Council Tax Enquiry	13
Hereford,Garrick House	Display of Minutes and Agendas	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Display Statutory Notices and Registers	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Dog Warden Services	7
Hereford,Garrick House	Drainage and Sewer Services	5
Hereford,Garrick House	Elected Members - General Enquiries	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Electoral Register Enquiry	19
Hereford,Garrick House	Electoral Registration - Issue forms/leaflets	11
Hereford,Garrick House	Eng/Trans - General Enquiries	91
Hereford,Garrick House	Environmental Mgmt/Planning/Sustainability	5
Hereford,Garrick House	Freedom of Information Requests	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Historic Building Advice/Grants	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Illegal Dumping	4
Hereford,Garrick House	Interim Compliments/Complaints Service	15
Hereford,Garrick House	Internal Telephone Enquiries	7
Hereford,Garrick House	Landscape Matters	1
Hereford,Garrick House	LCU - General Enquiry/Service Delivery	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Leases	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Legal Services - Notices/Orders	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Library Services	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Licensing	5
Hereford,Garrick House	Lights Out Line / Street Lighting Enquiry	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Noise Pollution Report / Complaint	7
Hereford,Garrick House	On-Street Parking Permits	211
Hereford,Garrick House	PALS - Availability of NHS Services	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Pensions Surgeries	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Personnel - General Enquiry/Job Opps	4
Hereford,Garrick House	Pest Control	4
Hereford,Garrick House	Planning Advice - General	13
Hereford,Garrick House	Planning Application Enquiries	4
Hereford,Garrick House	Policy and Resources - General Enquiry	3
Hereford,Garrick House	Receive forms for onwards transmission	42
Hereford,Garrick House	Recycling	15
Hereford,Garrick House	Reporting Abandoned Vehicles	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Senior Citizen Concessionary Parking Permit	168
Hereford,Garrick House	Signpost to ABLE	1

Hereford,Garrick House	Single Person Discount	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Social Care - General Enquiry	17
Hereford,Garrick House	Special/Bulky Item Collections	70
Hereford,Garrick House	Taxi Licences and Enquiries	3
Hereford,Garrick House	Trading Standards - General Enquiry	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Traveller Sites	1
Hereford,Garrick House	Tree Preservation Orders	2
Hereford,Garrick House	Unclassified Service	465
Hereford,Garrick House	Visitor Greeting	2659
Hereford,Garrick House	Waste Management	29
Hereford,Garrick House	Water Query	1
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>7730</b>
Leominster, Grange Court	ABLE - Surgery Appointments/Visitors	4
Leominster,Grange Court	Acquisition/Disposal of Council Property	2
Leominster,Grange Court	Age Concern - Age Resource Desk	2
Leominster,Grange Court	Age Concern - General Enquiry	6
Leominster,Grange Court	Air Pollution	3
Leominster,Grange Court	Animal Health and Welfare	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Archaeology - Development Control and Education	1
Leominster, Grange Court	Benefit Application Form Completion	557
Leominster,Grange Court	Benefit Application Form Request	532
Leominster,Grange Court	Benefit Application Supporting Evidence	3105
Leominster,Grange Court	Benefits Advice Given	1195
Leominster,Grange Court	Benefits Overview	41
Leominster,Grange Court	Births Deaths and Marriages	8
Leominster,Grange Court	Blue Badge Enquiries/Applications	1456
Leominster,Grange Court	Business Rates Change of Circumstances	14
Leominster,Grange Court	Business Rates Tax Enquiry	40
Leominster,Grange Court	Car Park Penalty Notice Challenge Advice	132
Leominster,Grange Court	Car Park Season Tickets	33
Leominster,Grange Court	Car Parking - General Enquiries	29
Leominster,Grange Court	Cemeteries	2
Leominster,Grange Court	Change Of Address	27
Leominster,Grange Court	Child/Student Svcs - General Enquiry	18
Leominster,Grange Court	Common Land Searches	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Conservation Areas - Boundaries	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Conservation Areas - Developmnt/Enhancemnt	3
Leominster,Grange Court	Conservation Areas - Trees	28
Leominster,Grange Court	Consumer Advice	3
Leominster,Grange Court	Council Tax Change of Circumstances	941
Leominster,Grange Court	Council Tax Enquiry	1971
Leominster,Grange Court	CTAX Band - Individual	15
Leominster,Grange Court	CTAX Band - Parish	1
Leominster,Grange Court	CTAX Band - Postcode	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Dangerous Buildings and Structures	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Development Plans/UDP	20
Leominster,Grange Court	Dog Warden Services	7
Leominster,Grange Court	Drainage and Sewer Services	12
Leominster,Grange Court	Eco-Schools	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Elected Members - General Enquiries	16

Leominster,Grange Court	Election Forms	13
Leominster,Grange Court	Electoral Register Enquiry	65
Leominster,Grange Court	Electoral Registration - Issue forms/leaflets	315
Leominster,Grange Court	Eng/Trans - General Enquiries	157
Leominster,Grange Court	Environmental Mgmt/Planning/Sustainability	12
Leominster,Grange Court	Handling Keys	12
Leominster,Grange Court	Hedgerow Protection	2
Leominster,Grange Court	Historic Building Advice/Grants	8
Leominster,Grange Court	Illegal Dumping	10
Leominster,Grange Court	Inspection of works on site	7
Leominster,Grange Court	Interim Compliments/Complaints Service	126
Leominster,Grange Court	Internal Telephone Enquiries	90
Leominster,Grange Court	LCU - Collection of Payments	31
Leominster,Grange Court	LCU - Complex Queries	1
Leominster,Grange Court	LCU - General Enquiry/Service Delivery	17
Leominster,Grange Court	LCU - Receipt/Transfer of Forms	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Library Services	4
Leominster,Grange Court	Licensing	6
Leominster,Grange Court	Lights Out Line / Street Lighting Enquiry	4
Leominster,Grange Court	Litter bins	9
Leominster,Grange Court	Local Agenda 21	3
Leominster,Grange Court	Maintenance of Council Buildings	2
Leominster,Grange Court	Noise Pollution Report / Complaint	9
Leominster,Grange Court	On-Street Parking Permits	8
Leominster,Grange Court	PALS - General Enquiry	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Pensions Surgeries	104
Leominster,Grange Court	Personnel - General Enquiry/Job Opps	3
Leominster,Grange Court	Pest Control	24
Leominster,Grange Court	Planning Advice - General	1322
Leominster,Grange Court	Planning Application Enquiries	327
Leominster,Grange Court	Planning Enforcement	6
Leominster,Grange Court	Planning Guidance	11
Leominster,Grange Court	Policy and Resources - General Enquiry	4
Leominster,Grange Court	Potential Benefit Entitlement Calculation	28
Leominster,Grange Court	Radon Advice	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Receive Election Nomination Forms	3
Leominster,Grange Court	Receive forms for onwards transmission	256
Leominster,Grange Court	Recycling	5
Leominster,Grange Court	Report Benefit Fraud	4
Leominster,Grange Court	Reporting Abandoned Vehicles	8
Leominster,Grange Court	Research and Intelligence	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Senior Citizen Concessionary Parking Permit	50
Leominster,Grange Court	Signpost to ABLE	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Single Person Discount	289
Leominster,Grange Court	Social Care - General Enquiry	27
Leominster,Grange Court	Special/Bulky Item Collections	62
Leominster,Grange Court	Street Naming and Numbering	1
Leominster,Grange Court	Sundry Invoice Enquiry	41
Leominster,Grange Court	Taxi Licences and Enquiries	2
Leominster,Grange Court	Trading Standards - General Enquiry	7
Leominster,Grange Court	Traveller Sites	6

Leominster,Grange Court	Tree Preservation Orders	5
Leominster,Grange Court	Unclassified Service	1680
Leominster,Grange Court	Visitor Greeting	5674
Leominster,Grange Court	Waste Management	17
Leominster,Grange Court	Water Query	2
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>21114</b>
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Age Concern - General Enquiry	2
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Animal Health and Welfare	2
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Application Forms for Land Charges Search	3
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Archaeology - Development Control and Education	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Benefit Application Form Completion	26
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Benefit Application Form Request	16
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Benefit Application Supporting Evidence	52
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Benefits Advice Given	16
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Benefits Overview	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Births Deaths and Marriages	33
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Blue Badge Enquiries/Applications	120
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Business Rates Change of Circumstances	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Business Rates Tax Enquiry	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Car Park Penalty Notice Challenge Advice	11
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Car Park Season Tickets	3
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Car Parking - General Enquiries	2
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Change Of Address	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Child/Student Svcs - General Enquiry	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Common Land Searches	4
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Conservation Areas - Developmnt/Enhancemnt	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Conservation Areas - Trees	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Council Tax Change of Circumstances	31
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Council Tax Enquiry	98
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Development Plans/UDP	3
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Display Notice of Meetings	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Display of Minutes and Agendas	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Display Statutory Notices and Registers	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Dog Warden Services	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Elected Members - General Enquiries	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Electoral Register Enquiry	8
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Electoral Registration - Issue forms/leaflets	14
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Eng/Trans - General Enquiries	20
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Environmental Mgmt/Planning/Sustainability	3
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Freedom of Information Requests	9
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Handling Keys	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Hedgerow Protection	2
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Historic Building Advice/Grants	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Illegal Dumping	2
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Interim Compliments/Complaints Service	32
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Internal Telephone Enquiries	5
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	LCU - Collection of Payments	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	LCU - Complex Queries	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	LCU - General Enquiry/Service Delivery	7
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Library Services	118

Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Licensing	5
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Lights Out Line / Street Lighting Enquiry	2
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Litter bins	10
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Local Agenda 21	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Maintenance of Council Buildings	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Noise Pollution Report / Complaint	2
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Pensions Surgeries	18
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Personnel - General Enquiry/Job Opps	4
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Pest Control	5
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Planning Advice - General	20
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Planning Application Enquiries	26
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Planning Enforcement	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Policy and Resources - General Enquiry	3
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Recycling	15
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Research and Intelligence	20
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Senior Citizen Concessionary Parking Permit	5
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Signpost to ABLE	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Single Person Discount	5
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Social Care - General Enquiry	5
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Taxi Licences and Enquiries	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Trading Standards - General Enquiry	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Traveller Sites	2
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Tree Preservation Orders	1
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Unclassified Service	151
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Visitor Greeting	4011
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Waste Management	9
Bromyard,Leisure Centre	Water Query	1
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>4985</b>
Ledbury,St Katherines	Acquisition/Disposal of Council Property	3
Ledbury,St Katherines	Age Concern - General Enquiry	2
Ledbury,St Katherines	Animal Health and Welfare	1
Ledbury,St Katherines	Benefit Application Form Completion	80
Ledbury,St Katherines	Benefit Application Form Request	56
Ledbury,St Katherines	Benefit Application Supporting Evidence	319
Ledbury,St Katherines	Benefits Advice Given	156
Ledbury,St Katherines	Benefits Overview	2
Ledbury,St Katherines	Births Deaths and Marriages	14
Ledbury,St Katherines	Blue Badge Enquiries/Applications	417
Ledbury,St Katherines	Broadband Enquiries	7
Ledbury,St Katherines	Business Rates Tax Enquiry	6
Ledbury,St Katherines	Car Park Penalty Notice Challenge Advice	117
Ledbury,St Katherines	Car Park Season Tickets	8
Ledbury,St Katherines	Car Parking - General Enquiries	38
Ledbury,St Katherines	Change Of Address	97
Ledbury,St Katherines	Child/Student Svcs - General Enquiry	5
Ledbury,St Katherines	Common Land Searches	4
Ledbury,St Katherines	Conservation Areas - Appraisals/Policy/Designation	2
Ledbury,St Katherines	Conservation Areas - Boundaries	2
Ledbury,St Katherines	Conservation Areas - Trees	2
Ledbury,St Katherines	Consumer Advice	1

Ledbury, St Katherines	Council Tax Change of Circumstances	53
Ledbury, St Katherines	Council Tax Enquiry	426
Ledbury, St Katherines	CTAX Band - Individual	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	CTAX Band - Parish	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	CTAX Band - Postcode	4
Ledbury, St Katherines	Development Plans/UDP	7
Ledbury, St Katherines	Display Notice of Meetings	2
Ledbury, St Katherines	Display of Minutes and Agendas	2
Ledbury, St Katherines	Dog Warden Services	10
Ledbury, St Katherines	Drainage and Sewer Services	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Elected Members - General Enquiries	8
Ledbury, St Katherines	Election Forms	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Electoral Register Enquiry	47
Ledbury, St Katherines	Electoral Registration - Issue forms/leaflets	23
Ledbury, St Katherines	Eng/Trans - General Enquiries	247
Ledbury, St Katherines	Environmental Mgmt/Planning/Sustainability	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Food Safety	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Freedom of Information Requests	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Handling Keys	172
Ledbury, St Katherines	Historic Building Advice/Grants	2
Ledbury, St Katherines	Illegal Dumping	3
Ledbury, St Katherines	Inspection/Performance - General Enquiry	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Interim Compliments/Complaints Service	74
Ledbury, St Katherines	Internal Telephone Enquiries	375
Ledbury, St Katherines	Landscape Matters	2
Ledbury, St Katherines	LCU - Assistance with Form Completion	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	LCU - General Enquiry/Service Delivery	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Leases	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Library Services	24
Ledbury, St Katherines	Licensing	11
Ledbury, St Katherines	Lights Out Line / Street Lighting Enquiry	9
Ledbury, St Katherines	Litter bins	3
Ledbury, St Katherines	Local Agenda 21	2
Ledbury, St Katherines	Maintenance of Council Buildings	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Noise Pollution Report / Complaint	3
Ledbury, St Katherines	On-Street Parking Permits	2
Ledbury, St Katherines	PALS - General Enquiry	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Pensions Surgeries	5
Ledbury, St Katherines	Personnel - General Enquiry/Job Opps	16
Ledbury, St Katherines	Pest Control	29
Ledbury, St Katherines	Planning Advice - General	893
Ledbury, St Katherines	Planning Application Enquiries	122
Ledbury, St Katherines	Planning Enforcement	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Planning Guidance	2
Ledbury, St Katherines	Policy and Resources - General Enquiry	11
Ledbury, St Katherines	Potential Benefit Entitlement Calculation	3
Ledbury, St Katherines	Receive forms for onwards transmission	43
Ledbury, St Katherines	Recycling	75
Ledbury, St Katherines	Research and Intelligence	4
Ledbury, St Katherines	Senior Citizen Concessionary Parking Permit	284
Ledbury, St Katherines	Single Person Discount	38

Ledbury, St Katherines	Social Care - General Enquiry	13
Ledbury, St Katherines	Special/Bulky Item Collections	28
Ledbury, St Katherines	Street Naming and Numbering	1
Ledbury, St Katherines	Sundry Invoice Enquiry	11
Ledbury, St Katherines	Taxi Licences and Enquiries	2
Ledbury, St Katherines	Trading Standards - General Enquiry	5
Ledbury, St Katherines	Traveller Sites	6
Ledbury, St Katherines	Tree Preservation Orders	3
Ledbury, St Katherines	Unclassified Service	1691
Ledbury, St Katherines	Visitor Greeting	582
Ledbury, St Katherines	Waste Management	28
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>6759</b>
Ross, Swan House	ABLE - Surgery Appointments/Visitors	7
Ross, Swan House	Acquisition/Disposal of Council Property	1
Ross, Swan House	Age Concern - Age Resource Desk	11
Ross, Swan House	Age Concern - General Enquiry	22
Ross, Swan House	Air Pollution	3
Ross, Swan House	Animal Health and Welfare	16
Ross, Swan House	Benefit Application Form Completion	307
Ross, Swan House	Benefit Application Form Request	321
Ross, Swan House	Benefit Application Supporting Evidence	1920
Ross, Swan House	Benefits Advice Given	801
Ross, Swan House	Benefits Overview	58
Ross, Swan House	Births Deaths and Marriages	3
Ross, Swan House	Blue Badge Enquiries/Applications	1205
Ross, Swan House	Broadband Enquiries	88
Ross, Swan House	Business Rates Change of Circumstances	11
Ross, Swan House	Business Rates Tax Enquiry	34
Ross, Swan House	Car Park Penalty Notice Challenge Advice	336
Ross, Swan House	Car Park Season Tickets	35
Ross, Swan House	Car Parking - General Enquiries	121
Ross, Swan House	Cemeteries	1
Ross, Swan House	Change Of Address	52
Ross, Swan House	Child/Student Svcs - General Enquiry	47
Ross, Swan House	Common Land Searches	3
Ross, Swan House	Conservation Areas - Appraisals/Policy/Designation	3
Ross, Swan House	Conservation Areas - Boundaries	4
Ross, Swan House	Conservation Areas - Developmnt/Enhancemnt	3
Ross, Swan House	Conservation Areas - Trees	16
Ross, Swan House	Consumer Advice	6
Ross, Swan House	Council Owned Small Holding Estate Mgmt	5
Ross, Swan House	Council Tax Change of Circumstances	508
Ross, Swan House	Council Tax Enquiry	1187
Ross, Swan House	CTAX Band - Individual	9
Ross, Swan House	CTAX Band - Parish	5
Ross, Swan House	CTAX Band - Postcode	4
Ross, Swan House	Development Plans/UDP	65
Ross, Swan House	Display of Minutes and Agendas	3
Ross, Swan House	Display Statutory Notices and Registers	2
Ross, Swan House	Dog Warden Services	27



Ross,Swan House	Drainage and Sewer Services	13
Ross,Swan House	Elected Members - General Enquiries	41
Ross,Swan House	Election Forms	1
Ross,Swan House	Electoral Register Enquiry	76
Ross,Swan House	Electoral Registration - Issue forms/leaflets	73
Ross,Swan House	Eng/Trans - General Enquiries	520
Ross,Swan House	Environmental Mgmt/Planning/Sustainability	5
Ross,Swan House	Food Premises - Hygiene	1
Ross,Swan House	Food Premises - Registration	2
Ross,Swan House	Food Standards	1
Ross,Swan House	Freedom of Information Requests	2
Ross,Swan House	Handling Keys	403
Ross,Swan House	Historic Building Advice/Grants	12
Ross,Swan House	Illegal Dumping	10
Ross,Swan House	Inspection of works on site	1
Ross,Swan House	Inspection/Performance - General Enquiry	2
Ross,Swan House	Interim Compliments/Complaints Service	89
Ross,Swan House	Internal Telephone Enquiries	249
Ross,Swan House	Laboratory Services	1
Ross,Swan House	LCU - General Enquiry/Service Delivery	2
Ross,Swan House	Leases	1
Ross,Swan House	Legal Services - Notices/Orders	3
Ross,Swan House	Library Services	82
Ross,Swan House	Licensing	29
Ross,Swan House	Lights Out Line / Street Lighting Enquiry	7
Ross,Swan House	Litter bins	4
Ross,Swan House	Maintenance of Council Buildings	10
Ross,Swan House	Noise Pollution Report / Complaint	5
Ross,Swan House	On-Street Parking Permits	128
Ross,Swan House	PALS - General Enquiry	6
Ross,Swan House	Pensions Surgeries	46
Ross,Swan House	Personnel - General Enquiry/Job Opps	25
Ross,Swan House	Pest Control	48
Ross,Swan House	Planning Advice - General	2486
Ross,Swan House	Planning Application Enquiries	513
Ross,Swan House	Planning Enforcement	11
Ross,Swan House	Planning Guidance	4
Ross,Swan House	Policy and Resources - General Enquiry	23
Ross,Swan House	Potential Benefit Entitlement Calculation	22
Ross,Swan House	Receive Election Nomination Forms	2
Ross,Swan House	Receive forms for onwards transmission	73
Ross,Swan House	Recycling	12
Ross,Swan House	Refer directly to ABLE	1
Ross,Swan House	Report Benefit Fraud	4
Ross,Swan House	Reporting Abandoned Vehicles	13
Ross,Swan House	Research and Intelligence	10
Ross,Swan House	Right to Buy	14
Ross,Swan House	Senior Citizen Concessionary Parking Permit	883
Ross,Swan House	Signpost to ABLE	5
Ross,Swan House	Single Person Discount	205
Ross,Swan House	Social Care - General Enquiry	61

Ross,Swan House	Special/Bulky Item Collections	46
Ross,Swan House	Street Naming and Numbering	1
Ross,Swan House	Sundry Invoice Enquiry	38
Ross,Swan House	Taxi Licences and Enquiries	4
Ross,Swan House	Trading Standards - General Enquiry	9
Ross,Swan House	Traveller Sites	8
Ross,Swan House	Tree Preservation Orders	4
Ross,Swan House	Unclassified Service	7707
Ross,Swan House	Visitor Greeting	1977
Ross,Swan House	Waste Management	31
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>23315</b>
Hereford,Town Hall	Archaeology - Development Control and Education	2
Hereford,Town Hall	Benefit Application Form Request	2
Hereford,Town Hall	Benefit Application Supporting Evidence	2
Hereford,Town Hall	Benefits Advice Given	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Benefits Overview	3
Hereford,Town Hall	Births Deaths and Marriages	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Blue Badge Enquiries/Applications	361
Hereford,Town Hall	Car Park Penalty Notice Challenge Advice	30
Hereford,Town Hall	Car Park Season Tickets	2
Hereford,Town Hall	Car Parking - General Enquiries	5
Hereford,Town Hall	Cemeteries	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Change Of Address	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Child/Student Svcs - General Enquiry	2
Hereford,Town Hall	Conservation Areas - Appraisals/Policy/Designation	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Conservation Areas - Developmnt/Enhancemnt	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Conservation Areas - Trees	3
Hereford,Town Hall	Consumer Advice	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Council Tax Change of Circumstances	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Council Tax Enquiry	5
Hereford,Town Hall	Development Plans/UDP	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Display Statutory Notices and Registers	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Dog Warden Services	4
Hereford,Town Hall	Elected Members - General Enquiries	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Electoral Register Enquiry	2
Hereford,Town Hall	Electoral Registration - Issue forms/leaflets	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Eng/Trans - General Enquiries	14
Hereford,Town Hall	Environmental Mgmt/Planning/Sustainability	2
Hereford,Town Hall	Historic Building Advice/Grants	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Internal Telephone Enquiries	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Licensing	2
Hereford,Town Hall	Maintenance of Council Buildings	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Noise Pollution Report / Complaint	1
Hereford,Town Hall	On-Street Parking Permits	6
Hereford,Town Hall	Pest Control	3
Hereford,Town Hall	Planning Advice - General	13
Hereford,Town Hall	Planning Guidance	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Policy and Resources - General Enquiry	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Potential Benefit Entitlement Calculation	1
Hereford,Town Hall	Receive forms for onwards transmission	7

Hereford, Town Hall	Research and Intelligence	2
Hereford, Town Hall	Senior Citizen Concessionary Parking Permit	8
Hereford, Town Hall	Single Person Discount	1
Hereford, Town Hall	Sites and Monuments Search	1
Hereford, Town Hall	Special/Bulky Item Collections	1
Hereford, Town Hall	Tree Preservation Orders	2
Hereford, Town Hall	Unclassified Service	177
Hereford, Town Hall	Visitor Greeting	94
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>775</b>



## STAFF OPINION SURVEY 2005

### PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

CABINET

29TH SEPTEMBER, 2005

---

#### Wards Affected

No Wards are affected

#### Purpose

To note the report on the key findings of the Staff Opinion Survey 2005.

#### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

#### Recommendation

**THAT Cabinet note the content of the report.**

#### Reasons

The Staff Opinion Survey is carried out annually, and this report is for information on the key findings of the 2005 Survey.

#### Considerations

1. The Staff Opinion Survey 2005 was run during July. In previous years the survey had been conducted in September. It was moved this year so that the results could be used as part of the corporate planning process. 40% of employees took part in the survey compared to 38% in 2004 and a fifth returned the survey form electronically using this new way to give views.
2. The work the Council has done and is doing to improve has clearly made a difference to what employees think. In many areas of the survey the message from employees is that things are getting better. Some of the improvements over the past year which have led to the positive results have included
  - A Pay and Workforce Development Strategy is now in place, around the themes of Leadership, Organisation Development, Skills Development, Pay and Reward, Resourcing.
  - Job Evaluation and Single Status have now been implemented with a range of support mechanisms in place for employees.
  - Management Competencies are in place and are being rolled out.
  - Staff Review and Development has improved hugely – now well over three

---

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

quarters of employees have a review at least annually. The SRD process is firmly linked to the Council's performance management cycle.

- A Council-wide review of recruitment has been undertaken with a recruitment centre being planned for launch in April 2006.
- Improvements to communications have been implemented, for example, the Chief Executive and Leader now regularly hold Talking Point sessions for all employees. Further improvements are being planned
- The Council has signed up to achieving the Investor in People Standard.
- A programme of Diversity awareness is in place.
- A new Directorate structure is taking shape, and is being fully communicated to employees as things progress.

3. Some of the areas where responses by employees are significantly more positive than in either of the last 2 years are,

- More employees think the Council is good to work for – 65% against 59% in 2004, and more agreed that morale in their work area is generally good.
- More employees think that their targets and standards are achievable – 67% against 61% in 2004 and improved over previous years.
- More people are confident that they will still be working for the Council in 12 months time – 61% in 2005 against 51% in 2004, and more agreed that the Council is committed to supporting employees through job evaluation implementation.
- More people agree communications in their service are working well - 63% in 2005 against 58% in 2004. Over two thirds agree that the organisation communicates with employees regularly when going through change, 69% against 63% in 2004.
- Confidence in immediate managers continues to be high. Confidence in senior management has improved with 40% stating they feel senior management decision making is fair compared to 31% in 2004.
- Over two thirds agreed they have a Staff Review and Development discussion annually, and the quality of the discussion has also improved. Employees were also far more confident that there were opportunities for development.
- More agreed that the Council takes into account the views and diverse needs of its service users, that the Council is open, honest, and accountable to all its customers and that customer/client relationships are well managed.

There were two main areas where employees said things had not improved:

- In 2004 62% felt that they could meet job requirements without working long hours. This was 56% in 2005.
- Fewer overall were satisfied with their physical work environment – from 70% in 2004 to 65% in 2005.

4. Staff Opinion Surveys are carried out annually by many Local Authorities. To get a picture of how we fare by comparison, the results are checked annually against other Councils. We compare well against the average for local government in many areas, including:
- the Council being a good employer, and providing recognition for a job well done;
  - understanding about job priorities and objectives, being kept informed about plans and priorities and being involved in decisions and being consulted over changes;
  - training opportunities, having adequate resources for the job, and physical work conditions, work-life balance.

The areas where we do not seem to compare so well are:

- employees are not so inclined to tell people the Council is a good place to work;
  - equal treatment irrespective of gender;
  - opportunities for personal development within the Council, earnings levels, and intention to stay with the Council in 12 months time (though turnover is significantly below the Local Government average).
5. There will be a presentation on the main findings and priorities for improvement to the October Managers Forum. A Core News Special will be issued to all employees at the end of September. Managers will again be asked to involve employees in giving ideas on how they think things can and should be improved. Managers will be asked to ensure output is fed into the Service Planning process, to shape and deliver improvements for service users, as part of *Action for a Better Herefordshire* summed up by the Ps and Qs - Putting people first, Providing for our communities, Promoting the County, Protecting our future, Quality life in a Quality County.

## **Alternative Options**

There are no alternative options

## **Risk Management**

The Survey is a key management process, part of the Council's performance management. It contributes significantly to developing the Corporate Plan, Pay and Workforce Development Strategy and shaping priorities for management action. If the Survey contents are not noted and publicised, employees may feel the Survey is not taken seriously and this may negatively impact motivation and performance.

## **Consultees**

All employees were offered the opportunity to participate in the Survey. The Opinion Research Company is used (at no cost to the Council) for ideas in Survey construct, cross-fertilisation of improvement ideas with other Councils and to benchmark findings in key areas.

## **Background Papers**

None identified.





# HEREFORDSHIRE THINKS RURAL ACTION PLAN

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: RURAL REGENERATION AND STRATEGY

CABINET

29TH SEPTEMBER, 2005

---

### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To agree the actions as set out in the Herefordshire Thinks Rural Action Plan, previously considered by Cabinet at its meeting on the 1st September, 2005.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

### Recommendation

**THAT Cabinet agree the accountabilities set out for each element of the Herefordshire Thinks Rural Action Plan**

### Reasons

When Cabinet considered and approved the Rural proofing model, Herefordshire Thinks Rural at its meeting on the 1st September, it requested that further consideration be given to the responsibility in the action plan for individual actions.

### Considerations

1. The purpose of the request was to ensure that the recommendations in the action plan were carried forward and maintained on a regular basis.
2. At its meeting on the 16th September the Herefordshire Partnership Board considered the outcomes of the piece of work and agreed to look at its implementation as part of the activity around the new Herefordshire Plan. In particular it agreed that the Local Area Agreement (LAA) should be "rural proofed".
3. A Members' workshop on the tool and its applications is being organised for later in the autumn.
4. The action plan has now been updated to reflect responsibility for delivery of the initial actions. This will be reflected in the future Performance Management reports.

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Jane Jones, Director of Corporate and Customer Services on 01432 260037

## **Alternative Options**

None

## **Risk Management**

None

## **Consultees**

None

## **Background Papers**

Herefordshire Thinks Rural Report

## ANNEX 3

# HEREFORDSHIRE THINKS RURAL

## ACTION PLAN

*The Action Plan deals only with those areas designated “quick wins” in the strategy adopted by Cabinet on the 1st September, 2005. An attempt has been made to match individual officers or groups of officers to those actions and to be honest about the extent to which those actions can be delivered in line with the strategy’s recommendations. However, it is important to recognise the need to designate both a member and officer champion to drive the actions of the strategy. This is best achieved by confirming the Cabinet Member for Rural Regeneration as the “Rural Champion”. This would be consistent with the portfolio of that Cabinet Member and allow for actions to be approached in an holistic way. It is further proposed that the Director of Adult and Community Services be designated as the officer champion. However, many of the activities obtained with the actions plan span the work of the Council and for that reason it is proposed that a network of officers be established to act as links to particular actions in the strategy. The action plan as detailed therefore only contains those actions which were described in the Herefordshire Thinks Rural Action Plan as “quick wins” to be achieved by March 2006. It is proposed that progress be reviewed and a longer term view taken at the beginning of the financial year 2006/07 as to which set of actions should form the activities in next year’s action plan.*

## HEREFORDSHIRE THINKS RURAL ACTION PLAN

<b>IMPROVING THE EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION BASE</b>		
<b>Key Activity Area</b>	<b>Quick Wins Achieved by March 06</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b><i>Gather and map quantitative geographical evidence to assess differential needs within County.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use new urban/rural definitions to analyse differences within County and produce clear maps to analyse differences</li> <li>• To be taken into account in the next <i>State of Herefordshire Report</i>, due for publication in February 2006 (N.B. This would mean early achievement, at least in part, of the first of the actions included in the right hand column as to be achieved by September 2007).</li> <li>• Will be considered routinely in future data collection, with a judgement to be made in each case about as to whether it would be appropriate, add value and be cost-effective.</li> </ul>	Lead: Madeleine Spinks, Research Corporate Policy and Research
<b><i>Gather and map qualitative geographical evidence to assess differential needs and aspirations within the County</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build rural proofing into consultation quality check</li> <li>• <i>Exemplar: Check % rural response to consultation for review of Herefordshire Plan; pilot examination of young people's responses for difference across County.</i></li> <li>• Use Parish Plans to gauge rural communities aspirations</li> </ul>	Lead: Community Involvement Coordinator
<b><i>Build a geographical dimension into data collection about delivery accessibility, impact and outcomes of services across the County.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exemplar: Prepare needs analysis for Children and Young People's Plan taking into account current levels of delivery across County.</i></li> <li>• <i>Exemplar: Use data on differential needs to inform and develop extended schools programme.</i></li> <li>• N.B. Research must be consulted by service areas to ensure that the analysis is soundly based and feasible</li> </ul>	Lead: Children's Services Change Manager
<b><i>Opportunities for rolling out to wider partnership</i></b>		
<i>Continue to build on Herefordshire Information and Research Network to share evidence base and to undertake joint consultations</i>		
<i>Use Accessibility Assessment to gather evidence of variation of access to services</i>		

<b>EMBEDDING A RURAL DIMENSION INTO STRATEGIC PLANNING, SERVICE PLANNING, SCRUTINY AND REVIEW</b>		
<b>Key Activity Area</b>	<b>Quick Wins Achieved by March 06</b>	
<i>Embed a rural dimension into corporate, directorate and service planning and wider strategic planning.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and include simple rural proofing checklist in service planning guidance, (including risk register).</li> <li>Guidance for directorate and service plans 2006-07 includes a checklist of all cross-cutting themes that have to be addressed, with links to documented guidance, including the <i>Thinks Rural</i> report.</li> <li>The guidance includes a mandatory template for the identification of risks and control measures.</li> <li>Rural proof review of the Herefordshire Plan.</li> <li>Make explicit how LAA will benefit rural areas (interdependency model)</li> <li><i>Exemplar: Rural proof new strategy for Adult and Community learning. to ensure rural needs addressed</i></li> </ul>	<p>Lead: Corporate Policy and Research Manager</p> <p>Lead: Partnership Team Manager, Herefordshire Partnership Support Team</p>
<i>Include rural challenge in cabinet and other decision-making processes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include rural implications in cabinet papers and briefings.</li> <li>Encourage lead cabinet member to question rural implications of decisions.</li> <li>Guidance note will be issued shortly spelling out the responsibility of lead Cabinet members and members of the Corporate Management Board (CMB) to ensure that all cross-cutting issues, including the impact on rural areas, have been considered in any proposals to be considered by Council, Cabinet or CMB.</li> <li>Ensure contracts for service delivery meet the needs of rural communities - <i>Exemplar</i> Rural proof new Home Care Contract</li> </ul>	<p>Lead: Members Services Manager , Individual Directors, Lead Cabinet Member and lead on Procurement, Cabinet Member Rural Regeneration</p> <p>N.B. it is not proposed to have a further designation on the Cabinet papers but to make sure that this is explicit in the text.</p>
<i>Build a rural dimension into the performance management framework.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Flag' BVPIs that are insensitive or detrimental to rural needs.</li> <li>Meaningless unless linked with the development of separate measurement for rural areas, which is the action proposed for achievement by March 2007 (next column)</li> </ul>	<p>This needs to be linked up with the medium term activity.</p> <p>Lead: Corporate Policy and Research Manager</p>

		<p>BVPIs are those which we have to be reported on. It is as much a question of developing Pis that will reflect the particular context of the rural area.</p>
<p><b><i>Embed a rural dimension into scrutiny and review.</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use internal and external 'rural champions' as part of scrutiny process</li> <li>• Use IDeA checklist (IDeA 2004) in relation to Best Value and rural proofing.</li> </ul>	<p>Lead: Committee Manager (Scrutiny) &amp; Scrutiny Chairman. Will be reflected in the Scrutiny Development Plan.</p>
<p><b><i>Plan response to future rural challenges and opportunities</i></b></p>		
<p><b><i>Opportunities for rolling out to wider partnership</i></b>  <i>Include results of Parish Plans in development of strategic and service plans - roll out inclusion in statutory planning guidance.</i>  <i>Include rural dimension in future Local Public Service Agreements</i>  <i>Develop partnership based Vision for the Countryside, linked to revised Herefordshire Plan and negotiate with Natural England to be exemplar for integration with LSP</i></p>		

<b>BUILDING ON BEST PRACTICE IN RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF RURAL AREAS</b>		
<b>Key Activity Area</b>	<b>Quick Wins Achieved by March 06</b>	
<b><i>Two for the price of one - seize opportunities for collaboration and co-location</i></b>	<p><i>Exemplars:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use new Kington Info Shop to delivery services of other agencies</li> <li>• Challenge 2 new mobile libraries to delivery other services.</li> <li>• Encourage collaboration between schools to delivery extended schools programme, building on the experience of existing clusters of schools</li> </ul>	<p>In terms of the exemplars listed there is an immediate need to challenge the models described as these projects are progressing. There will however be a need to pick up general points in the Service Plans for 2006/07.</p>
<b><i>Use all forms of delivery (including ICT) to improve access to services</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address shortfalls in access to broadband in most remote rural areas.</li> </ul> <p><i>Exemplar: Library Service/Community Access points. Use volunteers and Community Transport to move people and books, co-locate with shops and schools, use any access to IT for ordering and renewals.</i></p>	<p>Lead: Head of Service, ICT Services</p> <p>The CAPs (Community Access Points) project has now gained approval. Need to identify the actual extent of Broadband coverage.</p>
<b><i>Identify and copy best practice</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange networking meeting with other rural councils working on rural proofing (Lancashire, Suffolk, Cumbria, Northumberland, S. Glos, N. Somerset etc)</li> <li>• Take to benchmarking club and IDeA</li> <li>• Embed rural dimension into implementing govt. programmes</li> </ul> <p><i>Exemplars:</i> Design Children's Centres to meet rural needs 14-19 Curriculum - rural access to non vocational learning</p>	<p>Lead: Partnership Team Manager, Herefordshire Partnership Support Team</p> <p>Herefordshire Council is part of the IDEA rural mentoring programme and activity will centre around this in the first instance.</p>
<b><i>Opportunities for rolling out to wider partnership</i></b> <i>Continue to collaborate on co-location and joint delivery of services. Encourage partner organisations to embed rural proofing in service plans</i>		

<b>BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF STAFF AND MEMBERS TO "THINK RURAL"</b>		
<b>Key Activity Area</b>	<b>Quick Wins Achieved by March 06</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Nominate rural ambassadors - both members and staff</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find Staff Ambassadors - preferably from all levels in the organisation .</li> <li>Find Member Ambassadors - at least one to be part of scrutiny and review and one on cabinet</li> </ul> <p><i>Need to make this attractive and fun! - space and time needed to be innovative and visionary.</i></p>	<p>Lead: The Communications Team working with the Cabinet Member, lead Director (Champions)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Include specific rural elements in training and development programmes for staff and members</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include specific rural dimension in induction training for staff and members</li> <li>Strengthen advice about 'geographic location' element in diversity impact assessment training.</li> <li>Communicate evidence base to staff</li> </ul>	<p>Lead: Human Resources working with Members Development</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Encourage innovation, creativity and collaboration in meeting the needs of rural communities</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Flag' strategies and plans that have been rural proofed.</li> <li>Collect best practice case studies, examine for critical success factors and disseminate.</li> <li>Hold council meetings (management and member) in rural locations.</li> </ul>	<p>Lead: Communications Team and Committee Services</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Organise a series of events to learn about, celebrate and disseminate Herefordshire Thinks Rural</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer to be a pilot area for GOWM monitoring rural proofing at a local level</li> <li>Organise and run Think Rural Think Tank Conference including MPs, MEPs etc.</li> </ul>	<p>GOWM already have a copy of the Herefordshire Thinks Rural documentation and this may well be applied across the Rural LAA</p> <p>To be considered post the activities concerned with the rural mentoring programme</p>
<p><b>Opportunities for rolling out to wider partnership</b>  <i>Include challenge to 'think rural' in Herefordshire Driver to embed rural proofing in Herefordshire Partnership activity.</i>  <i>Disseminate partner organisations' best practice in relation to rural delivery.</i></p>		



<b>INFLUENCING OTHERS TO "THINK RURAL"</b>	
<b>Key Activity Area</b>	<b>Quick Wins Achieved by March 06</b>
<b>Challenge national (and regional) government when policies and/or targets are not 'rural friendly'</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish good links with GOWM and Commission for Rural Communities to log difficulties.</li> <li>Focus on a few key issues for influencing campaign.</li> </ul>
<b>Develop an influencing strategy focussed on strengthening the rural voice at regional level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Get the region out of Birmingham" <i>Exemplar: Offer to host regional meetings in Herefordshire. Find opportunity for WM Regional Assembly to meet in/visit Herefordshire</i></li> <li>Make presentations to WM Rural Affairs Forum, AWM, WM Regional Assembly about Herefordshire Thinks Rural</li> </ul>
<b>Roll out Herefordshire Thinks Rural to Herefordshire Partnership</b>	<i>Actions included in each part of Action Plan</i>
<b>Opportunities for rolling out to wider partnership</b> <i>Build on current strategic alliances to 'speak with one voice' on rural issues at a regional level wherever possible - including Herefordshire Partnership, Rural Regeneration Zone Board, Rural Housing Network, Regional Rural Affairs Forum.</i>	<p>Lead: Herefordshire Partnership Support Team link to LAA Development</p> <p>Lead: Herefordshire Partnership Support Team</p> <p>This approach was agreed at the Board meeting of the Herefordshire Partnership on the 16th September.</p>

<b>MANAGE AND REVIEW THE THINKING RURAL ACTION PLAN</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>
<b><i>Agree lead and support staff</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Executive Management Team/Cabinet appoint corporate and member leads.</li> <li>• Corporate lead to identify staff to support the work and provide the 'engine room' for implementing the Action Plan.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Build actions into service and individual work programmes</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herefordshire Thinks Rural to appear as a standing agenda item for Heads of Service Group.</li> <li>• Cabinet agrees actions to ensure strong member involvement including scrutiny.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Agree evaluation and review process</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet requests progress reports on Action Plan implementation (frequency to be decided).</li> <li>• Agree evaluation and review process as part of more detailed Action Plan</li> </ul>
<b><i>Conduct review and amend action plan</i></b>	<i>To be agreed</i>

## RURAL PROOFING CHECKLIST AND FRAMEWORK FOR ITS USE

Taken from Spencer K., Rogers S., (2005) Rural Proofing for Unitary Local Authorities in England, University of Birmingham

(Adapted from the Countryside Agency Rural Proofing Checklist for use by local authorities, from Caffyn, Dahlstrom, Rogers and Spencer, Rural proofing for local authorities, Local Governance, vol. 28, no. 4, 2002 pp. 273-286).

### *Note*

Applying this checklist approach should not be done in isolation, it may be an added aid in relation to the more policy planning integrated approach put forward in the main body of this report.

### *Framework stages for checklist*

- Step 1** An evaluation of how significant the impacts of new or current policies may be on key rural issues.
- Step 2** An analysis of options for action.
- Step 3** An analysis of partners who need to participate, be involved or consulted.
- Step 4** A statement of proposed actions.

### **Step 1. The Checklist**

Each issue questions should be assessed against two criteria:

- a) does it have a significant or not significant impact on rural communities.
- b) does it have a positive or negative impact on rural communities.

Rural issues are identified below, others may be added by local authorities. Some of the example questions may be self-evident, and others may be added as appropriate.

- 1) Protecting/enhancing local facilities and shops  
How does the policy affect rural facilities such as village shops, post offices, pubs, garages, other retail outlets, village halls, banks, churches and community enterprises? Can policies be amended to protect or enhance such facilities?
- 2) Maintaining/improving access to services  
Does the policy impact on access to and maintenance of services for the rural population, particularly for less mobile groups such as the elderly?
- 3) Improving transport links and options

Will the policy affect transport links and options for commuting, accessing services and recreation? Are different modes and uses of transport considered?

- 4) Tackling poverty and promoting social inclusion  
Does the policy affect any disadvantaged groups e.g. elderly, people with disabilities, homeless people, unemployed, women or ethnic minorities? Does it have an impact on sources of information and advice, social services, health, community development and capacity building?
- 5) Providing activities/facilities for young people  
Will the policy impact on young people and how?
- 6) Improving employment opportunities  
Will the policy impact on employment opportunities and how?
- 7) Strengthening/diversifying the rural economy  
Does the policy affect the rural economy? Will it affect market towns, business support, agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, retail, credit sources, community enterprises, farmers markets, training, ICT or start-up premises?
- 8) Provide affordable, quality rural housing  
Will the policy affect the affordability and quality of housing across all types of tenure? Does the policy relate to prices, registered social landlords, developers, planning policies, migration, second homes, the elderly or special needs? Does it enhance sustainable communities?
- 9) Protecting/enhancing the local environment  
How does the policy affect the protection and/or enhancing of the local natural and built environment? How sustainable is this?
- 10) Developing education and training opportunities/facilities  
Does the policy impact upon education and training? How does it affect schools, colleges, ICT, access via local facilities or through transport or distance learning?
- 11) Promoting the use of and access to ICT  
Will the policy have an impact on the use of and access to ICT?
- 12) Encouraging recreation and tourism  
Does the policy affect recreation and tourism? Will it have an impact on rights of way, access to the countryside, recreational activities, local heritage, culture, villages and market towns?

## **Step 2. Options analysis**

The local authority should consider options for action arising from its checklist findings. Where an impact is negative and significant it may require remedial action. Where positive impacts are identified there may be scope for further capitalising on these. Affordability will be an issue, as will be possible working with other partners, seeking new funding or lobbying for action.

## **Step 3. Partner analysis**

Where the options analysis indicates needs for consultation, liaison or joint working, the next step is to identify which partners/stakeholders to engage in the actions required or negotiated. Such groups could be other local authorities, government at

regional levels, business groups, the voluntary and community sectors, local communities and business. It would also be important here to identify whether the issue(s) is significant enough to be raised as part of the local strategic partnership process, or other partnership processes, in order to further encourage joined-up working.

#### **Step 4. Proposed actions**

Proposed actions could be a short summary of:

- actions to take
- who is responsible for each action
- a timetable for implementation of actions

Finally, it is important to take the rural proofing concept beyond policy formation, it should emphasise differential rural implications of a service plan on different communities, age groups and so on. Different approaches to service delivery may be appropriate and this may entail cost variations.



# LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS: OUTLINE PROPOSALS

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: POLICY AND FINANCE

CABINET

29TH SEPTEMBER, 2005

---

### Wards Affected

Countywide

### Purpose

To secure consent from Cabinet to submit an outline Local Area Agreement (LAA) proposal by the 30th September 2005.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

### Recommendation

**THAT Cabinet give consent for an outline Local Area Agreement proposal to be submitted to Government Office West Midlands (GOWM) by the 30th September 2005.**

### Reasons

On the 19th May 2005 Cabinet gave consent for interest to be registered with GOWM in obtaining an LAA. Herefordshire Council duly registered interest in being one of the second round LAAs. On 22nd June 2005 Herefordshire Council was advised that it had been successful, in securing an LAA, and that Herefordshire was to be one of thirteen areas to have a Single Pot LAA. We are now required to submit our outline LAA proposals to GOWM by the 30th September 2005.

### Considerations

1. In May 2005 the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) issued a series of LAA guidance notes, including LAA toolkit documentation, which set out the key headings to be addressed by LAA.
2. On the 21st July a meeting was held with GOWM officers to discuss the content of the outline LAA proposals that were expected as part of our outline LAA proposals.
3. Officers have been identified to co-ordinate the LAA activity, and to lead the work on the individual Service Blocks. In addition officers have been identified to cover individual crosscutting themes.
4. The LAA has to be jointly signed off by the Local Strategic Partnership and the Local Authority. The Herefordshire Partnership Board met on the 16th September 2005 and approved the draft outline proposals. They will be subject to further development in the next week, and the Board Chair and Vice-Chair will agree the final outline

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Steve Martin, Corporate Policy and Research Manager on 01432 261877

submission. The Local Authority, in its role as Community Leader must also separately approve the outline submission.

5. The LAA work will continue to run in parallel with the re-launch of the Herefordshire Plan and provide further focus for the work of the Herefordshire Partnership.
6. The LAA will be negotiated over a six-month period, which will give many opportunities to comment on the LAA content.

## **Alternative Options**

We must make the outline submission by the 30th September 2005. Cabinet may wish to suggest alterations to the outline proposals.

## **Risk Management**

There will be continuing capacity issues, which will have to be addressed at peak times during the negotiations and, to a lesser extent, the implementation phase.

## **Consultees**

GOWM, AWM, Partners in the Herefordshire Partnership, Shropshire and Worcestershire County Councils

## **Background Papers**

Local Area Agreements outline proposals paper



**REPORT TO HEREFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP BOARD 16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2005**

**INITIAL LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT SUBMISSION TO GOVERNMENT OFFICE WEST  
MIDLANDS**

**Introduction**

On the 22nd June 2005 it was announced that Herefordshire had been selected to develop a Local Area Agreement (LAA), and that along with Shropshire and Worcestershire, the LAA would be a Single Pot Local Area Agreement. This gives greater freedom to spend Government funding on the achievement of locally agreed outcomes that have been established as part of the LAA. At present Telford and Wrekin is the only pilot Single Pot in England.

The ODPM describe LAAs as “changing communities for the better: devolving further power to local authorities and their partners who are best placed to define local needs”. We see LAAs as a new way of striking a deal between central Government and Herefordshire and ensuring that the aim and objectives of both parties are addressed. Each LAA will be a negotiated agreement made between Government, Herefordshire Council, the local community and major public service partners, working through the Herefordshire Partnership.

**Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) Requirements**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2005 a meeting was held with GOWM officials, who set out the headings to be addressed in our outline submission. These are:

Vision

- A clear vision about what the LAA will achieve i.e. what will be different as a result of it?
- Synergy between the four blocks so that the agreement will come together as a whole

Outcomes

- Balance between national/local priorities
- Links to local/sub-regional strategies
- High-level indicators

Performance management arrangements

- Ambit
- Style/purpose
- Direction of thinking

Engagement

- LSP
- Other stakeholders
- Direction of thinking

Flexibilities/funding

- Thoughts on how joined-up funding and possible freedoms/flexibilities may overcome potential barriers to delivery of outcomes

Governance

- Existing arrangements
- Proposed arrangements

Paul Cobbing, Head of Sustainable Development, will lead the GOWM negotiating team for Herefordshire. GOWM will negotiate the LAA on behalf of Central Government. The LAA will cover a three-year period starting from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006.

### **Service Blocks**

Work to develop Herefordshire's Local Area Agreement (LAA) is moving on apace. Lead officers for each of the four Service Blocks have been identified as follows:

Children and Young People – Lorna Selfe, Change Manager, Herefordshire Council  
Healthier Communities and Older People – Sue Alexander, Head of Service, Herefordshire Council  
Economic Development and Enterprise – Penny Jones, Community Regeneration Manager, Herefordshire Council  
Safer and Stronger Communities – Mark Turner, Temporary Herefordshire Divisional Commander, West Mercia Police.

Each Lead Officer has involved key staff in their own and partner organisations in developing their outline Service block proposals. An LAA Co-ordinator (Glyn West, Herefordshire Partnership) has brought together the Service Leads, to ensure adequate linkages between the Service Blocks. It will be challenging to avoid duplication of activity across the Service Blocks, whilst avoiding obvious gaps in the outline LAA. Glyn West will also ensure that LAA guidance requirements are followed.

The Service Block Leads have now put together their draft proposals. These address outcomes, freedoms and flexibilities, key indicators, and funding streams. These have to be part of our outline submission to GOWM by the end of September 2005. The outline proposals represent a reasonable first step in setting out our LAA aspirations, but the proposals, as they stand, need further work before submission. As an example, some of the suggested outputs relate to longer term (as much as 10 years for the Hereford Learning Village). We may remove specific numbers initially, and put specific targets forward as part of the negotiations.

### **Vision**

The initial LAA vision was set out in Herefordshire's LAA Expression of Interest. This was defined as "Herefordshire is a place where people, business and an outstanding natural environment will together bring about sustainable prosperity and well-being for all." This remains the vision as set out in the Economy and Enterprise Service Block. Each Service Block has devised its individual vision. The Board will need to decide if it wishes to retain the original overall LAA vision as set out above, or if it wishes, in addition, to reflect the visions of the other Service Blocks.

### **Cross Cutting Themes**

A successful LAA will have to examine Cross - cutting themes. These will cover areas such as Diversity, Rural Proofing, Border Proofing, the Environment, and Sustainability. This is a substantial piece of work, which will be on going for some months. Some external support has been engaged. Alison McLean, will look at the rural proofing element of the LAA outline submission. Alison McLean is now an independent consultant and recently drew up a rural proofing strategy for Herefordshire Council, which is the subject of a separate paper for the Herefordshire Partnership Board.

Other Cross - cutting Theme officers have been identified to work with the Service Block Leads. It is possible further Cross - cutting themes will emerge during the LAA negotiations.

### **LAA and Herefordshire Plan Review**

The LAA work will be undertaken over part of the time that the Herefordshire Plan is being fundamentally reviewed. The Herefordshire Partnership Support Team is managing both activities, and will ensure there is a consistent approach to these two pieces of work. We are describing the LAA as part of the Herefordshire Plan (or Community Strategy) Action Plan.

## **Engagement**

Martin Heuter-Russell and Katleen Vanderstraete (Herefordshire Partnership Community Involvement Team) have drawn up engagement proposals to fulfil the LAA guidance note requirements as far as Community Involvement in both design and delivery are concerned. The involvement of the Voluntary and Community Sector will be crucial in the success of the LAA. A record of meetings is being maintained, which will help to demonstrate the substantial amount of dialogue and engagement undertaken in developing our LAA. This activity should not be underestimated. Although much bigger than Herefordshire, Kent LSP had to undertake a very large number of formal LAA meetings (well over 300), in a four-month period during the engagement stage of its LAA development.

The Community Involvement Team has arranged to meet with the Service Block Leads to ensure a more systematic approach to engagement.

## **LPSA2**

Herefordshire's LPSA2 does not have to be renegotiated as part of the LAA. The LPSA2 will eventually be incorporated into the LAA, and Andrew Tanner, Assistant County Treasurer Herefordshire Council, will co-ordinate this element of the work. Future LPSAs will be negotiated as part of the LAA, and will form the stretch target of the LAA.

## **Performance Management Arrangements**

The current Service Block proposals contain too many proposed indicators, and we will look to reduce them. We will be able to use the work of the Herefordshire Partnership in identifying key performance indicators, and build them into the LAA. GOWM officers have indicated they expect to see around 80 targets in the LAA, down from the hundreds currently in existence. This is in keeping with the LAA emphasis on outcomes, rather than outputs, structures and processes.

## **Timescales**

The first full draft LAA has to be submitted to GOWM by the 11<sup>th</sup> November.2005, and a revised draft has to be presented by the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2006. The final LAA has to be agreed by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006. The experience of the first LAA pilots suggests the latter timescales may be missed. In almost all cases the LAAs were only signed in principle, and LAAs were still being finalised by some Partnerships in late July/early August 2005. The delays were often because the result of the time taken to agree freedoms and flexibilities between Government Offices and Central Departments took much longer than anticipated.

GOWM resources are stretched, and a call has been made by GOWM for Authorities to second staff to help them negotiate other LAAs in the region. Herefordshire Council has been considering this request.

## **Project Management**

The LAA activity is being project managed, using PRINCE2 methodology, by Herefordshire Council's ICT department (Kevin Griffiths, Business Change Manager). A list of contacts is detailed at the bottom of this report. We are required to submit a project plan to GOWM, which sets out the anticipated timescales for negotiating each element of the LAA.

The draft proposals for each Service Block are annexed for consideration. There has been little time to bring these together by developing the key linkages and Cross – cutting themes.

## **Funding Streams and the Single Pot**

The Service Blocks have made a first attempt to identify funding streams. Although Herefordshire will be a single pot LAA, we are unlikely to make significant progress initially. We will be looking to align budgets for the moment, rather than merging them. There is some reticence amongst partners

to identify funding streams that can be merged into the Single Pot. Some of the pilot LAAs have suffered because there was too much concern with funding rather than outcomes.

### **Freedoms and Flexibilities**

Each Service Block has suggested a range of freedoms and flexibilities, but some have not made a strong case in the outline proposals as to why these freedoms are needed and what would be the added value of being granted them. Some of the suggested freedoms can apply across all of the service blocks, e.g. the ability to carry forward project overspends into the next financial year.

### **Training/Seminars**

A number of staff have already attended, or will shortly attend LAA training events/seminars. Those organised by GOWM, the IDeA and Local Government Association have modest or no direct seminar charges, although this does not take into account the time and travel involved for the staff concerned. A number of these events will take place at the end of September and into the autumn, which will be too late for our outline submission.

Four West Midlands LGA seminars have been/will be attended by up to 6 officers from Herefordshire in September on each of the following dates:

Safer & Stronger Communities	8th September
Children & Young People	15 <sup>th</sup> September
Economic Development & Enterprise	22nd September
Healthier Communities & Older People	29 <sup>th</sup> September

The Safer and Stronger Communities Seminar was seen as helpful for those putting the Service Block proposals together. Briefing sessions for elected members have also been separately organised.

There are also a series of LAA seminars being staged by the commercial sector, costing some hundreds of pounds for each individual to attend. It is not considered these represent value for money, and none of these have been taken up to date.

GOWM have advised us that we should pay particular attention to training the Voluntary and Community Sector, and may provide additional training/seminars to assist with this.

### **Budget Implications**

It is not possible to draw up and negotiate the Herefordshire LAA within existing resources. Key staff will have to devote large amounts of time to the work involved. Some of the costs can be assessed fairly accurately, such as Project Management and the use of consultancy time for rural proofing. Other costs, such as attendance at seminars should be modest.

There will be a need to cascade the LAA to at least the third tier in partner organisations, and the time and cost involved is harder to quantify. Its success could depend on the willingness of partner organisations to nominate staff to be trained to do this.

The experience of the initial pilot authorities suggest that up to 5 people are required to work virtually full time on the LAA development and negotiations. All the staff that have drawn up the outline proposals are not necessarily most suited to conducting the negotiating stage. This will have to be revisited once the outline LAA has been submitted.

Resources will be needed to fund the backfilling of posts that are set aside to develop and negotiate the LAA. In the short term additional funding is needed, but some Herefordshire Partnership Support Team resources have been freed up by the suspension of the Management Group. In the longer term the Herefordshire Partnership Support Team structure will need to take into account the implications of managing the LAA, although it is possible this may not lead to any significant budget increases.

## **Governance**

The documentation enclosed with this report does not cover Governance arrangements. We need to put forward proposals for managing and delivering the LAA, including Governance arrangements. It is possible to have the Herefordshire Partnership Board as the LAA Governing Body, and this was broached with GOWM officers during their July visit.

The Herefordshire Partnership governance model is unusual in that the Partnership Board does not contain elected members. GOWM have confirmed that in principle, the LAA governance structure does not require elected members. GOWM will however seek to confirm the proposed structure is fit for purpose, and that there is no democratic deficit. This might, for example, be secured by having elected Councillors serve on the supporting Service Blocks, but no structures have been devised or put forward for GOWM consideration.

There is no model LAA Governance Structure, and the first round pilots have significant variations. There was no separate Economy and Enterprise Service Block in the first round, and the pilot LAA Governance structures are being revisited to reflect the change. Other Authorities have established up to six Service Blocks, whilst some have expanded the current headings (e.g. Safer, Stronger and Sustainable Communities).

The Herefordshire Partnership Board is asked to consider its LAA Governance proposals, to be included as part of our end of September outline LAA submission.

## **Joint Working**

GOWM has asked us to consider LAA Joint Working opportunities with Shropshire and Worcestershire. A meeting has since been held with representatives of the three Counties to discuss the possible areas for collaboration. It was, however, agreed from the outset that each LSP/Local Authority would have its own LAA and that we would not sign up to joint LAA outcomes. Herefordshire representatives put forward 2 areas (affordable Housing and Homelessness). Given this caveat, the initial list of areas for joint working was:

1. Affordable Housing – scope for joint target setting
2. Homelessness - particularly in relation to young people, drug related crime, supported housing, secure housing, vulnerable witness relocation schemes, and Care Homes/Looked after children.
3. Common Access Points – e.g. looking at the Shropshire model or the Worcestershire Hub
4. ICT – common procurement opportunities
5. Diversity – recruitment of staff from the minority communities
6. Rural transport

## **Recommendations**

That the Board:

1. Provide feedback on the draft Service Block proposals, to be included in the outline submission.
2. Propose an appropriate Governance model for the LAA
3. Endorse the on-going work to join up the Service Blocks in the last two weeks of September, and agree the Herefordshire Partnership Chair and Vice-Chair can sign off the outline submission.
4. Support the principle of taking forward joint working with Shropshire and Worcestershire, where appropriate.
5. Consider funding the resources required to negotiate and deliver the LAA.

## Contact List for Herefordshire Local Area Agreement

Name	Role	Organisation	Address	Telephone	Email
Steve Martin	Contact - Research	Herefordshire Council	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 261877	<a href="mailto:smartin@herefordshire.gov.uk">smartin@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Andrew Tanner	Contact - LPSA2	Herefordshire Council	Brockington, 35 Hafod Rd, Hereford, HR1 1SH	01432 260162	<a href="mailto:atanner@herefordshire.gov.uk">atanner@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Kevin Griffiths	LAA Project Manager	Herefordshire Council	Thorn Office Centre, Holme Lacy Rd, Rotherwas, Hereford, HR2 6JT	01432 260656	<a href="mailto:kgriffiths@herefordshire.gov.uk">kgriffiths@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Trish Marsh	Environment - Cross Cutting Theme contact	Herefordshire Council	PO Box 167, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0WY	01432 261930	<a href="mailto:pmarsh@herefordshire.gov.uk">pmarsh@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Carol Trachonitis	Diversity - Cross Cutting Theme contact	Herefordshire Council	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 260616	<a href="mailto:ct1@herefordshire.gov.uk">ct1@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Anne Dowdeswell	Border Proofing - Cross Cutting Theme contact	Herefordshire Council	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 261789	<a href="mailto:adowdeswell@herefordshire.gov.uk">adowdeswell@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Mary Burton	Sustainability - Cross Cutting Theme contact	Herefordshire Council	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 260132	<a href="mailto:mburton@herefordshire.gov.uk">mburton@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Alison McLean	Rural Proofing - Cross Cutting Theme contact	N/A	Adzor House, Wellington, Hereford HR4 8AP	01432 830116 / 07910 969025	<a href="mailto:alisonmclean1@btinternet.com">alisonmclean1@btinternet.com</a>
Lorna Selfe	Service Block Lead - <b>Children and Young People</b>	Herefordshire Council	Education & Conference Centre, Blackfriars St, Hereford, HR4 9ZR	01432 260801	<a href="mailto:lselfe@herefordshire.gov.uk">lselfe@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Penny Jones	Service Block Lead - <b>Economic Development and Enterprise</b>	Herefordshire Council	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 260613	<a href="mailto:le1@herefordshire.gov.uk">le1@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Sue Alexander	Service Block Lead - <b>Healthier Communities and Older People</b>	Herefordshire Council	Garrick House Widemarsh Street, Hereford, HR4 9EU	01432 260069	<a href="mailto:salexander@herefordshire.gov.uk">salexander@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Katleen Vanderstraete	Contact - Engagement	Herefordshire Partnership	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 383037	<a href="mailto:kvanderstraete@herefordshire.gov.uk">kvanderstraete@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Martin Heuter-Russell	Contact - Engagement	Herefordshire Partnership	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 263032	<a href="mailto:mheuter@herefordshire.gov.uk">mheuter@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Philippa Lydford	LAA Support	Herefordshire Partnership	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 261788	<a href="mailto:plydford@herefordshire.gov.uk">plydford@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Ed Hughes	LAA Support	Herefordshire Partnership	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 383635	<a href="mailto:ehughes2@herefordshire.gov.uk">ehughes2@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Glyn West	LAA Co-ordinator	Herefordshire Partnership	PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH	01432 261828	<a href="mailto:gwest@herefordshire.gov.uk">gwest@herefordshire.gov.uk</a>
Mark Turner	Service Block Lead - <b>Safer and Stronger Communities</b>	West Mercia Constabulary	Ledbury Police Station, Worcester Road, Ledbury HR8 1LP	07854 355660	<a href="mailto:peter.wilson@westmercia.pnn.police.uk">peter.wilson@westmercia.pnn.police.uk</a>
Peter Wilson Sue Thomas	<b>Safer and Stronger Communities</b> Support	West Mercia Constabulary	Ledbury Police Station, Worcester Road, Ledbury HR8 1LP	07841 384551	<a href="mailto:susan.thomas@westmercia.pnn.police.uk">susan.thomas@westmercia.pnn.police.uk</a>

HEREFORDSHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT  
(LAA)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE

**VISION**

Herefordshire is a place where people, business and an outstanding natural environment will together bring about sustainable prosperity and well-being for all.

## Introduction

The starting point for this block of the LAA is the Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy approved by the Herefordshire Partnership Board in July 2005. Supported by the Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands, the strategy was instigated in 2003 by the Business, Economic and Tourism Ambition Group of the Herefordshire Partnership, the County's Local Strategic Partnership, in order to give the Group clear guidance on key decisions.

The document also incorporates the agreed Economic Development and Enterprise LPSA2 targets for the county.

## Cross Cutting Themes

In addition to the key outcomes for this service block there are a number of cross cutting themes namely:

Accessibility and Transport  
Capacity Building and  
Sustainability

In terms of sustainability it is proposed that all projects will adopt Good Environmental Management Principles (GEM). By way of example we are currently looking at making the Edgar Street Grid carbon neutral. Additionally a considerable amount of work has already been undertaken by the architects to develop the BREEM rating for the Herefordshire Learning Village from 'Very Good' to 'Excellent'. All four key projects will seek to encompass both sympathetic design and where possible original art work.

## Business Sectors

Whilst the document makes specific reference to the technology and knowledge intensive industries it should be emphasised that all other up-skilling and training outcomes detailed relate to all sectors.

## Partners

This draft has involved consultation with and the input and co-operation from of the following key partners

Advantage West Midlands  
Business Link West Mercia  
Community First  
Connexions  
Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs  
Government Office West Midlands  
Herefordshire Voluntary Action  
Jobcentreplus



## Learning and Skills Council Community Voluntary Action Ledbury & District

The actions, targets and outcomes contained within the document are in line with the Herefordshire Plan, the regional and national strategies appropriate to this block and individual partner organisations business plans/strategies i.e.

- Advantage West Midlands Corporate Plan
- Regional Skills Strategy
- Rural Renaissance Framework
- Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy
- Herefordshire Council Corporate Plan
- National Skills Strategy
- 14-19 Strategy
- Strategic Area Review
- LSC Local Annual Plan
- LSC National Statement of Annual Priorities
- LSC PSA Targets
- 'Valuing People and Places' West Midlands Cultural Strategy
- Herefordshire Cultural Strategy
- 'A Creative County' Herefordshire Arts Strategy
- Accessible Community Transport in Herefordshire, Development and Sustainability
- The Strategy for Volunteering Infrastructure in England
- Herefordshire Voluntary Action Strategic Plan
- Infrastructure Investment Plan Strategy
- Community First Annual Business Plan
- Draft Strategy for Community First
- Partners for Social Enterprise, Social Enterprise Strategy for Herefordshire & Worcestershire
- The West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy (2004)
- Tourism and Leisure COG – Three Year Business Plan 2005 -2008
- Herefordshire Council Corporate Environment Strategy
- A Sustainable Future for the West Midlands a Regional Sustainable Development Framework 2005

<b>Herefordshire Outcome: 1. Improved Gross Value Added (GVA) per head of population compared to the West Midlands average</b>				
<b>Local Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance. Negotiated Indicators or measures</b>	<b>Targets to be achieved by 2008</b>	<b>Partnership (i) Body/agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisation involved</b>	<b>Funding</b>
1.1 Improved competitiveness of employers through reducing skills shortages and skills gaps	Roll out of National Employer Training Programme. Skill shortages currently 4.4% Skills gaps currently 21.8%	% decrease in employers reporting skills shortages and skills gaps	(i) LSC/Providers (ii) AWM	Mainstream LSC and European funding AWM
1.2 Number of businesses receiving publicly funded business support	N° of VAT registered businesses in county N° of businesses receiving support from Business Link West Mercia N° of businesses receiving SFI and GRD grants from AWM	Increase in market penetration from 30% to 35% over next 3 years	(i) Chamber/Business Link (ii) AWM	AWM LSC HC Obj 2
1.3 Increase GVA of businesses receiving in depth publicly funded business support	N°'s of SME's receiving in depth support from BLWM	Increase GVA in SME's receiving support by 5% (from 2% to 7%)	(i) Chamber/BLWM	AWM LSC Obj 2
<b>Freedoms and Flexibilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiver of rules to allow those wanting to start up a business to trade for 6 months without it affecting unemployment benefit. Profits generated during that period to be retained by the individual and released as start up capital at the end of 6 months and reinvested back into the business</li> <li>Inward investment 'sweeteners' to companies on a similar scale as the Welsh Development Agency</li> <li>Co-operative development unit and support for community and worker buyouts as delivered by Wales Co-operative Centre funded by WDA, delivered through Partners for Social Enterprise Consortium</li> </ul>				

<b>Outcome: 2. Increased percentage of working age people in employment</b>				
<b>Local Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance. Negotiated Indicators or measures</b>	<b>Targets to be achieved by 2008</b>	<b>Partnership (i) Body/agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisation involved</b>	<b>Funding</b>
2.1 Improved skills to support City Centre Regeneration	Skills training linked to Edgar Street Grid	TBC – training likely to be required in Construction Skills, retail, creative industries and craft, Business Start up and support	(i) LSC/FE and WBL Providers (ii) AWM	LSC AWM (capital) Objective 2 (capital)
2.2 Improved skills to support City Centre regeneration	Redevelop Folly Lane campus – Learning Village	100 jobs created 3300 assisted to gain	(i) LSC/FE Providers (ii) AWM	LSC Mainstream Education and Workbased

		employment 600 businesses assisted 2300 assisted in skills development 400 increasing leadership & management			learning ESF Objective 3 Co-financing ESF Objective 2 AWM
2.3 Increasing local recruitment to skills shortage areas in City Centre	Develop NHS/LSC/Jobcentreplus Compact arrangement	80 customised pre-recruitment places 50 skills shortage vacancies filled	(i) LSC		ESF Object 3 Co-financing
2.4 Reduce worklessness.	% of Incapacity Benefit claimants moving into employment	To be agreed (IB job outcomes)	(i) Jobcentreplus (ii) PCT Leisure Services LSC Next Steps		JCP/DWP ESF LSC
2.5 Increase potential for local labour supply	N°'s of lone parents moving into employment	To be agreed (lone parent outcomes)	Jobcentreplus LSC Next Steps		JCP/DWP ESF LSC
<p>Freedoms and flexibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waiver of 16 hour rule for individual to access training and retain unemployment benefit</li> <li>• Benefits and support package retained by disabled individuals moving into part time employment in social enterprise</li> </ul>					

<b>Outcome: 3. Increase in the average weekly wage/ More sustainable employment</b>					
<b>Local Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance. Negotiated Indicators or measures</b>	<b>Targets to be achieved by 2008</b>	<b>Partnership (i) Body/agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisation involved</b>	<b>Funding</b>	
3.1 Increase the number of individuals receiving publicly funded business advice to start a business and running a business after 1 yr	N° of Vat registered SME's N° of HC start up grants issued N° of individuals seeking advice via BLWVM N° of businesses trading after 1 year that received support from BLWVM	Increase N°'s seeking advice by 2% Increase N°'s still trading after 1 year by 2%	(i) Chamber/BLWVM	AWM LSC Obj 2 HC	
3.2 Attract/develop technology and knowledge intensive industries	The number of people in technology and knowledge intensive industries	10,286 (enhancement 200)	(i) HC	ESF Obj. 3	

3.3 Upskilled Workforce	The number of Herefordshire residents aged 19+ achieving a Level 2 qualification in manufacturing and engineering	148 achieving L2 and L3 NVQ stretch target	(i) FE and WBL Providers	
3.4 Upskill the workforce	The number of Herefordshire residents aged 19+ achieving a Level 3 qualification in manufacturing and engineering			
3.5 Increase in number of people with higher level qualification	N° of residents accessing a Level 4 and Level 5 qualification through vocational learning routes	100 additional student numbers	HE/FE/WBL Lifelong Learning Network	HEFCE ESF Obj 3 Co-financing
3.6 Improved environmental performance of Herefordshire businesses through training & support	N°'s attending programmes organised by Bridge-it  N°'s of businesses attending Business Partnership meeting  N°'s of local businesses certified to ISO 14001	50 companies completing programme	(i) Groundwork West Midlands HC Economic Regeneration Steering Group: Business Link HC Environmental Health	EC Dev/Groundwork (incl. Regional grant funding)
3.7 Improved environmental performance of Herefordshire businesses through encouraging set up and development of environmental technology businesses	To be advised (Econ. Dev Strategy commitment)	To be advised	(i) HC Econ Regeneration Business Link?	Obj2, AWM, HC
Freedoms and Flexibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer incentives to employers to get involved in training e.g. tax rebates</li> <li>• Change EU funding agreement to 'outside but serving'</li> </ul>				

<b>Outcome: 4. A more highly skilled adult population</b>				
<b>Local Outcomes</b>	<b>Performance. Negotiated Indicators or measures</b>	<b>Targets to be achieved by 2008</b>	<b>Partnership (i) Body/agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisation involved (i) LSC</b>	<b>Funding</b>
4.1 Upskilled Workforce	The number of Herefordshire residents aged 19+ achieving a Level 2 qualification (excluding manufacturing)	2009 achieving level 2 (LPSA2)		Mainstream ESF Obj 3 Co-financing

4.2 Upskilled Workforce	LPSA2 The number of Herefordshire residents aged 19+ achieving a Level 3 qualification (excluding manufacturing and engineering) LPSA2	992 achieving level 3 (LPSA")	(i) LSC	Mainstream ESF Obj 3 Co-financing
4.3 Upskilled Workforce	Increase in adults with qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ESOL	1025 achieving skills for life accreditation (LPSA2)	(i) LSC	Mainstream ESF Obj 3 Co-financing
4.4 A better skilled population in Herefordshire with the focus in the South Wye area	Reduce the number of adults in South Wye with poor literacy, numeracy or ESOL skills, no qualifications and less than level 2 qualifications	2 Learning Ambassadors – 1 dedicated to South Wye area 5 Learning Mentors to be shared between the 2 centres 700 adult learners engaged 350 OCN/accredited units achieved 40% progression rate into further learning, paid employment or voluntary work	(i) HC	LSC Mainstream adult and community learning budgets/ESF Obj 3 Co-financing Mainstream FE and WBL budgets Mainstream FE and WBL budgets
4.5 Improved access to outreach skills activities	Market Towns multi use learning centres at school sixth forms – Ross, Ledbury Kington and Minster	100 starts, 100 IA, and ILPs, 100 skills for life qualifications at entry level 3 or level 1 15 NVQs 15 HE module pilot	(i) LSC	ESF Obj 3 Co-financing LID -
<b>Freedoms and Flexibilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in % of revenue for MTI budgets to support access to outreach centres (applicable to Ross and Leominster only)</li> <li>• Flexibility to count match funding that is defrayed before date of offer letter</li> <li>• Social enterprises based in Hereford City eligible for regeneration funding</li> </ul>				

### Cross Cutting Themes:

#### Transportation and Access to Services Cross Cutting Theme

Outcome 5: Modernised Transport Infrastructure creating the conditions for growth				
Local Outcomes	Performance. Negotiated Indicators or measures	Targets to be achieved by 2008	Partnership (i) Body/agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisation involved	Funding
5.1 Improved access to Rotherwas Industrial Estate by road and by sustainable modes, thereby reducing costs	i) Length of Road Constructed ii) Number of Jobs Secured	1. Access Road completed by 2008 2. 2005 Level of employment at Rotherwas secured	(i) Herefordshire Council (ii) Advantage West Midlands, Department for Transport, Private developers, Rotherwas	Local Transport Plan funding from Department for Transport, Department for Transport Major Scheme

to business and overcoming constraints.	iii) Modal Split for Journeys to work at Rotherwas iv) Number of jobs created following provision of access road	3. 2005 Modal split maintained	Employers and Staff, SMART@ Rotherwas travel plan group	funding, Developer funding, Advantage West Midlands, Herefordshire Council capital programme, SRB, ERDF
5.2 Reduced congestion and increased use of sustainable modes of transport, thereby reducing the costs to business	1. Cycle Trips (LTP2 HC10) 2. Bus Punctuality (LTP2 HC12) 3. Congestion in Hereford (LTP2 HC13) 4. % of Hereford City Workforce covered by Travel Plan (LTP2 HC15) 5. Number of walk trips into Hereford centre (LTP2 HC15)	To be agreed	(i) Herefordshire Council (ii) Highways Agency, Bus Operators, Advantage West Midlands	Local Transport Plan funding from Department for Transport, Highways Agency, Advantage West Midlands, Developer funding
<b>Freedoms and Flexibilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freedom for Highways Agency to use their budgets to fund integrated transport improvements off the Trunk Road network to support reduction of congestion within Hereford City.</li> <li>Flexibility to spend Local Transport Plan capital funding on revenue type projects within rural areas (possibly designated Regeneration Zones such as RRZ or Objective 2 area)</li> <li>Local Authority to control the Transport Regulation 22</li> </ul>				

Outcome 6: Improved Access to Jobs, Training Opportunities and Services				
Local Outcomes	Performance. Negotiated Indicators or measures	Targets to be achieved by 2008	Partnership (i) Body/agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisation involved	Funding
6.1 Targeted and Network of rural public and community transport services provided	1. % of all households and those without access to a car within 15 and 30 minutes of a major centre (LTP PI HC8) 2. Number of users of community transport 3. Satisfaction with local bus services	To be agreed	(i) Herefordshire Council (ii) Community Transport Providers, Bus Operators, Rural Transport Partnership	Herefordshire Council, Department for Transport, Voluntary Sector, Advantage West Midlands, ERDF, RRZ
6.2 Improved coordination of	1. Number of shared	To be agreed	(i) Herefordshire Council	Herefordshire Council, PCT,

Community Transport, Health Care Transport and Social Care Transport	<p>journneys between partner providers</p> <p>2. Number of trips provided</p>	To be agreed	(ii) Community Transport Providers, PCT, Rural Transport Partnership	Voluntary Sector
6.3 Provision of Wheels to Work service secured and mainstreamed	1. Number of clients assisted into employment and training	To be agreed	<p>i) Voluntary Action</p> <p>ii) Rural Transport Partnership, Advantage West Midlands, Job Centre Plus,</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council, Advantage West Midlands, ERDF, RRZ, Job Centre Plus, Connexions, LSS, Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Big Lottery Fund</p> <p>(Flexibility needed to be core funding rather than on a client basis)</p>
6.4 Overcome barriers to access to services through the provision of Community Access Points in the most remote areas of the county	<p>N° of new community cultural facilities</p> <p>N° of community cultural facilities improved</p> <p>N° of residents in target area accessing employment through training advice or specifically targeted assistance</p> <p>N° of voluntary organisations supported</p> <p>N° of capacity building initiatives</p>	<p>18</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p> <p>5</p> <p>16</p>	HC	<p>SRB (HIT)</p> <p>Obj 2</p> <p>HC</p>
6.5 Improved efficiency and effectiveness of support services to voluntary and community organisations through the development of a VCS Hub within the Edgar Street Grid redevelopment	<p>N° of organisations sharing facilities and services</p> <p>N° of organisations supported</p> <p>N° of VCS support functions under one roof</p> <p>N° of organisations achieving quality standards and improved performance</p>	To be agreed	Herefordshire Infrastructure Consortium/Herefordshire Council	<p>Voluntary Sector, Herefordshire Council, Big Lottery, ChangeUp capital fund/Capacity Builders</p>

#### Freedoms and Flexibilities

- Core funding of Rural Transport Partnership to be mainstreamed and provided direct to Herefordshire Council from AWM. Also RTP project funding to be awarded as a delegated fund to Herefordshire Council on the basis of a local strategy and funding allocated locally to appropriate projects.
- Flexibility to allow funding for Wheels to Work provided from Job Centre Plus, Connexions etc to be allocated as mainstream core funding rather than on a client by client basis. This would allow greater certainty of funding and secure the project.
- May need to allow flexibility for PCT and health sector partners to fund community transport for healthcare trips.
- Flexibility to spend Local Transport Plan capital funding on revenue type projects within rural areas (possibly designated Regeneration Zones such as RRZ or Objective 2 area)
- Freedom to 'up front fund' voluntary groups
- Community owned transport schemes allowed to operate mainstream taxi and bus services

#### Capacity Building

Outcome 7: To improve Community involvement in the process of decision making				
Local Outcomes	Performance. Negotiated Indicators or measures	Targets to be achieved by 2008	Partnership (i) Body/agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisation involved	Funding
7.1	Increase in the number of adults who have engaged in volunteering for an average of 2 hours or more per week LPSA2	Baseline survey to be carried out in 2005 5% improvement on baseline	(i) HC and Infrastructure Consortium	HC and possibly Change Up
7.2 Promote Social Enterprise to the voluntary sector	Regular workshops at VCS events – 5 in 2004/5	Increased awareness of model resulting in at least 20% of VCS self identifying as social enterprises by 2008	(i) Partners for Social Enterprise	HC and possibly ChangeUp
Freedoms and Flexibilities:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom to pump prime social enterprise projects with revenue and capital across Herefordshire, combining funding streams and working across geographic boundaries</li> </ul>				

#### Diversity

Outcome 8: Increasing awareness of inclusion issues across the county				
Local Outcomes	Performance. Negotiated Indicators or measures	Targets to be achieved by 2008	Partnership (i) Body/agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisation involved	Funding
8.1 Raising awareness of inclusion issues across the county	Promote diversity and community harmony and strive for equal opportunities	No of racial incidents recorded per 100,000 population	(i) HC	



<p>8.2 Improving the involvement and achievement of excluded groups in learning and skills</p>	<p>Improve parity of participation amongst those 16-19 who are underrepresented.</p> <p>Improve success rates amongst those groups of learners whose rates are below the national benchmark.</p> <p>Increase the number of older (45+) learners engaging in learning activity which is aimed either to upskills or reskill them</p> <p>Reduce overpopulation of particular gender groups where they exist in specific areas of learning</p>	<p>% of racial incidents that resulted in further action</p> <p>% increase in participation of underrepresented group</p> <p>% increase in success rates, EM learners, ex-offenders, people with learning disabilities</p> <p>% increase in older learners participation</p> <p>% increase in women in none traditional areas of learning</p> <p>% increase of men in none traditional areas of learning</p>	<p>(i) LSC</p>	<p>Mainstream and ESF Obj 3 Co-financing</p>
<p>Freedoms and flexibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waiver of the age limit of 60 for individuals to access ESF Obj 3 funded training</li> </ul>				

HEREFORDSHIRE  
LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT  
(LAA)

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES

VISION

Partner agencies in Herefordshire have a shared vision to work together to develop stronger communities. Making the best of the available resources to create a safer place to live, work and visit.

In order to provide some context and clarification around the document please note the following points:-

1. The basis of this document has been the Safer Stronger Communities Fund Statement of Agreed Outcomes 2005/06 –2007/08 document created by the CDRP and dated 10.05.05. The format utilised in that document has been replicated throughout this document with some slight amendments to include the core headings as advised by Paul Cobbing.
2. Most of the key partners/stakeholders have been spoken to individually and their areas of interest brought into the document. These are detailed as Community Safety and Drugs Partnership, Fire and Rescue Service, Highways and Transportation, Environment, Streetscene, Cultural services such as sport (only HALO Sport consulted at this time) and historic environment, Social and Economic Regeneration.
3. All those who have provided outcomes and information for this draft LAA have done so from their current initiatives and targets e.g. CDRP, Herefordshire Council Corporate Plan.
4. This document with its outcomes and performance arrangements is a collation only at this stage. Although they have been put forward by the various partners, some have indicated they need to be confirmed with relevant persons.
5. Not all of those spoken to have identified freedoms and flexibilities associated with their respective areas. These have been indicated in the relevant areas of the LAA.
6. As you indicated, further work will be required to identify benefits of combined single pot funding, effective governance and anticipated benefits from the LAA structure.
7. I have had contact from Martin Heuter-Russell regarding the plan for engagement with local people and The Voluntary Sector. He has indicated that there will be a meeting later this month and these aspects will then be taken into account in the LAA.
8. You will notice that there are still several funding streams yet to be identified.
9. There may be some further work to identify fuller partnership engagement within Herefordshire Council

<b>National Outcome:</b> To reduce crime, to reassure the public reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and to reduce the harm caused by drugs.				
1. Outcomes	2. Performance. Negotiated Indicators or measures	3. Targets to be achieved by 2008	4. Engagement/Partnership (i) Body / agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisations involved	5. Funding
<b>Alcohol Related Crime and Disorder:</b> To reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder and to increase social responsibility through a problem orientated approach to education, prevention, treatment and enforcement.	Reduce common assault by 44% (from 670 to 372) by 2007/08  Reduce wounding by 6% (1174 to 1105) by 2007/08 Reduce alcohol related crime by 10% by 2007/08  Reduce alcohol related crime by 10% by 2007/08  Reduce alcohol related violent crime by 6.9% by 2007/08  Reduce violent crime in Herefordshire by 6.9% by 2007/08	PSA 1: To reduce BSC comparator crime by 15% by 2007/08  PSA 2: Reassure the public, reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, and building confidence in the Criminal Justice System without compromising fairness	Herefordshire Safety and Drugs Partnership  Community Partnership	Anti social behaviour grant  Building safer communities  Drugs Strategy Partnership Grant  Adult Treatment Budget  Drugs Intervention Programme  LPSA reward grant  (Applicable throughout all Community Safety areas)
<b>Anti –Social Behaviour:</b> Reduce anti-social behaviour in Herefordshire through education, prevention and enforcement.	To reduce anti-social behaviour by 10% by 2007/08  To monitor fear of crime and anti-social behaviour in Herefordshire – in line with PSA 2  To reduce the incidence of criminal damage in Herefordshire by 11% (from 2524 to 2246) by 2008  Reduce peoples perception of ASB – please see PSA2	PSA 1: To reduce BSC comparator crime by 15% by 2007/08  PSA 2: Reassure the public, reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, and building confidence in the Criminal Justice System without compromising fairness.	Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership	As previously

<p><b>Domestic Violence:</b></p> <p>To address domestic violence in Herefordshire through education, prevention and enforcement.</p>	<p>To increase the number of calls to the Women's Aid Helpline in Herefordshire by 10% by 2007/08</p> <p>To increase the number of domestic violence incidents reported to the Police in Herefordshire by 10% by 2007/08</p> <p>To increase the number of arrests for domestic violence incidents in Herefordshire by 10% by 2007/08</p> <p>To increase the number of sanction detections in Herefordshire for domestic violence incidents by 5% by 2007/08</p>	<p>PSA 1: To reduce BSC comparator crime by 15% by 2007/08 (?)</p> <p>PSA 2: Reassure the public, reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, and building confidence in the Criminal Justice System without compromising fairness.</p>	<p>Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership</p>	<p>As previously</p>
--	---	---	---	----------------------

<p><b>Drug Supply and Drug Related Crime:</b> To reduce drug-related crime and supply in Herefordshire.</p>	<p>Number of drug supply offences brought to justice</p>	<p>PSA 1: To reduce BSC comparator crime by 15% by 2007/08 (?)  PSA 4: reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs including substantially increasing the number of drug misusing offenders entering treatment through the criminal justice systems.  To reduce the incidence of vehicle crime in Herefordshire by 15% by 2008. (?)  PSA 2: Reassure the public, reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, and building confidence in the Criminal Justice System without compromising fairness.  Reduce the perception of local drug use or drug dealing – please see PSA 2  To increase the number of class A drug supply offences brought to justice in Herefordshire by 25% by 2007/08</p>	<p>Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership</p>	<p>As previously</p>
---	--	--	---	----------------------

<p><b>Drug Treatment and Harm Reduction:</b></p> <p>To enable people with drug problems to overcome them and live healthy and crime free lives.</p>	<p>The number of people undergoing drug treatment in Herefordshire.</p>	<p>PSA 4: reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs including substantially increasing the number of drug misusing offenders entering treatment through the criminal justice systems</p> <p>To increase the numbers in drug treatment in Herefordshire to 500 by 2007/08</p> <p>To maintain a 72% retention rate in treatment for 12 weeks or more in Herefordshire by 2007/08</p> <p>To reduce the offending behaviour of individuals engaged with the Drugs Intervention Programme in Herefordshire (baseline measurement to be set during 2005/06).</p>	<p>Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership</p>	<p>As previously</p>
---	---	--	---	----------------------

<p><b>Offender Management:</b></p> <p>To reduce crime by targeting those who offend most or otherwise cause the most harm to their communities.</p>	<p>The number of offenders engaged with the Drugs Intervention Programme and the Prolific and Priority Offenders Scheme in Herefordshire. The level of their offending behaviour during and subsequent to these initiatives.</p>	<p>PSA 2: Reassure the public, reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, and building confidence in the Criminal Justice System without compromising fairness.</p> <p>PSA 4: reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs including substantially increasing the number of drug misusing offenders entering treatment through the criminal justice systems</p> <p>To reduce the offending behaviour of individuals engaged with the Drugs Intervention Programme in Herefordshire (baseline measurement to be set during 2005/06).</p> <p>To reduce the offending behaviour of individuals engaged with the Prolific and Priority Offenders scheme in Herefordshire by 2007/08.</p>	<p>Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership</p>	<p>As previously</p>
---	--	--	---	----------------------



<p><b>Road Safety:</b></p> <p>To reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Herefordshire's roads.</p>	<p>Number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on the roads in Herefordshire, as measured by STATS 19 (BVPI 99a(i)).</p>	<p>To confine the number of those killed or seriously injured in collisions on Herefordshire's roads to an annual average of no more than 129 for the three-year period 2006 to 2008.</p>	<p>Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership Herefordshire Council</p>	<p>As previously Local Transport Plan - £300,000 pa LPSA Pump priming (provisional) £151,000 (for LPSA period 2005-2007) LPSA2 Performance Reward Grant contribution – TBA Council Revenue Road Safety training/promotion budget - £18,880 pa</p>
<p><b>Freedoms and Flexibilities:</b></p> <p>Freedom to use Fixed Penalty Notice income as required locally (revenue from disorder offences allocated to initiatives addressing alcohol related crime)</p> <p>Seek relaxation of the Highways Agency national criteria for business case justification of expenditure. Their processes for approving significant expenditure will be insufficiently responsive to ensure that trunk road schemes can be identified and authorised in the timescales required to deliver the LPSA2 target. In effect, we would want the Highways Agency to support local prioritisation and implementation of road safety schemes within a local funding allocation. We also wish to see Department of Transport approval for trialling portable variable message signs at accident cluster sites.</p>				

<p><b>National Outcome:</b> To have cleaner, safer and greener public spaces.</p>				
<p>1. Outcomes</p>	<p>2. Performance Negotiated Indicators or measures</p>	<p>3. Targets to be achieved by 2008</p>	<p>4. Engagement/Partnership (i) Body / agency responsible for outcome delivery Other organisations involved</p>	<p>5. Funding</p>

<p>To improve the cleanliness of Herefordshire's streets and public areas</p> <p>To increase the contribution to Local Biodiversity Action Plan process(LIB087)</p> <p>To improve woodland management for biodiversity</p>	<p>To reduce the percentage of streets and public areas falling below Grade B for cleanliness, measured in accordance with Best Value Performance Indicator(BVPI) 199a</p> <p>The status of contribution</p> <p>Woodland SSSIs in favourable or unfavourable but recovering condition</p>	<p>To ensure that no more than 17% of streets and public areas exceed Grade B for cleanliness by 2007/08</p> <p>To achieve "comprehensive criteria" within terms of LIB087</p> <p>% in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition (TBA)</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council Community Safety Partnership West Mercia Constabulary</p> <p>Herefordshire Council English Nature Herefordshire Nature Trust Herefordshire Biological Records Centre Herefordshire Council English Nature Forestry Commission &amp; other land owners</p>	<p>Council Annual revenue budget - £850,000 pa LPSA2 Pump priming (Provisional) £250,000 – LPSA 2005-2007 LPSA2 Performance Reward Grant contribution - TBA</p> <p>Herefordshire Council revenue budget English Nature Herefordshire Nature Trust All partners</p>
<p>Streetscene To roll out an integrated service to wider areas to meet community priorities for local environmental quality, as expressed in Parish Plans and other surveys, in conjunction with the Police move to local Policing (?)_</p>	<p>Cleaner streets Improved ratings on satisfaction with their local environment from residents (via surveys) Increased levels of interagency reporting and response (e.g. Police to Council and vice versa)</p>	<p>2006: pilot joint approach in 3 villages with Parish Plans and analyse data from Parish Plans to inform developments 2007: roll out to cover further areas including development of geographically based front line multi-agency teams and joint response 2008: Complete integration of Streetscene with local Policing</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council (Streetscene client) HJS (Streetscene contractor) Police Other partners within the council to be brought in as initiative rolls out</p>	<p>Streetscene Contact Centre Police – Local Policing Budget</p>
<p>To increase access/ visits to local green spaces, including Public Rights of Way, Parks and the wider countryside.</p>	<p>Number of visits (via surveys) Education and awareness initiatives to encourage understanding and visits</p>		<p>Environment H&amp;T Adult and Community : Parks and Countryside</p>	

Freedoms and Flexibilities:  
 Community Support Officers empowered to carry out enforcement action(Fixed Penalty Notices) for littering and related offences. (?)  
 Delegated authority from the Highways Agency for anti-littering measures on trunk roads.

National Outcome: To increase the capacity of local communities so that people are empowered to participate in local decision-making and are able to influence service delivery.				
1. Outcomes	2. Performance Negotiated Indicators or Measures	3. Targets to be achieved by 2018	4. Engagement/Partnership (i) Body / agency responsible for outcome delivery Other organisations involved	5. Funding
To increase the capacity of local communities so that people are empowered to participate in local decision-making and are able to influence service delivery.	Increase the % of people surveyed who are (1) involved in decision making and (2) feel they influence decisions in their area.  Increase % of people who have worked in a voluntary capacity for at least 12 months.	30% of Herefordshire Voice (survey) respondents who feel that Council does enough to give local people the opportunity to influence important decisions.  30% of young people aged 13-18 who feel that the Council does enough to give young people the opportunity to influence important decisions	Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership  Herefordshire Council	Safer and Stronger Communities Fund
Freedoms and Flexibilities: None identified				

<b>National Outcome:</b> To improve the quality of life for people in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and ensure service providers are more responsive to neighbourhood needs and improve their delivery.				
1. Outcomes	2. Performance Negotiated Indicators or measures	3. Targets to be achieved by 2008	4. Engagement/Partnership (i) Body/agency responsible for outcome delivery Other organisations involved	5. Funding
To raise awareness of inclusion issues across the community	Number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population  The % of racial incidents that resulted in further action	TBD  100%	Herefordshire Council Police	TBD
To tackle problems of social exclusion in rural areas	% of respondents finding it easy to access a (a) local shop; (b) a supermarket; (c) a post office; (d) a doctor; (e) a local hospital; (f) a green space; (g) public transport; (h) shop selling fresh fruit & vegetables; (i) chemist/pharmacy; (j) bank/cash point; (k) library; (l) sports/leisure centre; (m) council office; (n) cultural/ recreational facility	(a)86%; (b)79%; (c)82%; (d)77%; (e)56%; (f)81%; (g)75%; (h)80%; (i)77%; (j)73%; (k)69%; (l)66%; (m)60%; (n)53%	Herefordshire Council	TBD
To provide better public transport in town and country	Local bus services (passenger journeys per year) (000's)	3948	Herefordshire Council	TBD
Freedom and Flexibilities: None identified				

<b>National Outcome:</b> To increase domestic fire safety and to reduce arson				
* (Measures relating to, for example, accidental domestic fires, deliberate fires, fire injuries etc)				
1. Outcomes	2. Performance Negotiated Indicators or measures	3. Targets to be achieved by 2008	4. Engagement/Partnership (i) Body / agency responsible for outcome delivery	5. Funding
To reduce the number of deaths in accidental dwelling fires	BVPI 143i- number of deaths from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.25 currently 0.55	Other organisations involved Fire and Rescue Service Age Concern Social Services L.E.A. Y.O.T.	£30K per annum funding from ODPM to purchase domestic smoke alarms
To reduce the number of injuries in accidental dwelling fires	BVPI 143ii – number of injuries from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	4.8 currently 5.7	As above	As above
To reduce the number of deaths and injuries in accidental dwelling fires	BVPI 142iii – accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings	12.25 currently 13	As above	As above
To reduce the number of deaths and injuries in accidental dwelling fires	Local measure – number of home fire safety checks(HFSC) carried out	None set – currently 2200 HFSC carried out each year	As above	As above
To reduce the number of deaths and injuries in accidental dwelling fires	Local measure – number of smoke alarms fitted by service personnel in domestic dwellings	None set – currently 3000 smoke alarms fitted every year	As above	As above
To reduce the number of deaths and injuries in accidental dwelling fires	Local measure – number of school classes visited every year by service personnel	None set – currently 650 classes receive schools education programme every year	Fire and Rescue Service LEA	Smoke Free Herefordshire
To reduce the number of deliberate fires(arson)	BVPI 206i – number of deliberate primary fires (excluding deliberate primary fires in vehicles) per 10,000 population	2.7 currently 3.0	Fire and Rescue Service	None
To reduce the number of deliberate fires(Arson)	BVPI 206ii – number of deliberate primary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population	4.2 currently 4.8	Police, District Councils Fire and Rescue Service Police	None

To reduce the number of deliberate fires(Arson)	BVPI 206iii – number of deliberate secondary fires(excluding deliberate secondary fires in vehicles) per 10,000 population	14.8 currently 16.3	Fire and Rescue Service Police	None
To reduce the number of deliberate fires(Arson)	BVPI 206iv – number of deliberate secondary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population	0.5 currently 0.7	Fire and Rescue Service Police District Councils	None
Freedoms and Flexibilities: None identified				

<b>National Outcome:</b> Cultural services, including libraries, historic environment and sport, better meet the needs of their communities (especially in disadvantaged areas)				
*(Libraries service standards and impact scores, cultural participation and satisfaction and access indicators.)				
1. Outcomes	2. Performance Negotiated Indicators or measures	3. Targets to be achieved by 2008	4. Engagement/Partnership (i) Body / agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisations involved	5. Funding
Increased participation in sport and leisure	Annual throughput	2005/06 levels +7.5%	Halo Leisure	TBD
Increased participation specifically from people on means tested benefits	B-easy usage and attendances	2005/06 levels + 7.5%	Halo Leisure	TBD
Improved satisfaction levels	Annual satisfaction ratings	Satisfaction levels increased by 5%	Halo Leisure	TBD
Increased involvement in defining local character within conservation areas	Conservation area reviews undertaken with community involvement	16 reviews	Herefordshire Council Parish Councils, Local civic and amenity services English Heritage	Herefordshire Council revenue budget Planning Delivery Grant
Increased access to information about the historic environment	HER performance measures	To meet 1st stage HER performance measures and set basis for achieving 2 <sup>nd</sup> stage within 2 years	Herefordshire Council English Heritage Higher education establishments	Herefordshire Council revenue budget English Heritage

To encourage participation in culture and leisure by breaking down barriers to involvement, meeting the wide-range of needs and aspirations of the Herefordshire community	<p>% of people who use sports and leisure facilities at least once a month</p> <p>27%</p>	Herefordshire Council	TBD
<p>% of people who use libraries at least once a month</p> <p>38%</p>			
<p>% of people who use museums or galleries at least once every 6 months</p> <p>28%</p>			
<p>% of people who use theatres or concert halls at least once every 6 months</p> <p>36%</p>			
<p>% of people who use parks, open spaces, play areas &amp; other community recreational facilities at least once a month</p> <p>55%</p>			
<p>Freedom and Flexibilities: None identified</p>			

<p><b>National Outcome:</b> Better life chances for adults of a working age</p>				
1. Outcomes	2. Performance Negotiated Indicators or measures	3. Targets to be achieved by 2008	4. Engagement/Partnership (i) Body / agency responsible for outcome delivery (ii) Other organisations involved	5. Funding
Regularly identifying and responding to local accommodation needs	<p>The average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need</p> <p>No. of people accepted as homeless &amp; towards whom the council has a full statutory duty</p>	<p>0 weeks</p> <p>417 (?)</p>	Herefordshire Council	TBD

Improving the condition of public and private housing	Proportion of unfit private sector dwellings made fit or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority	4.5%	Herefordshire Council	TBD
Providing affordable and accessible accommodation	No. of new homes & affordable homes built (net of replacements)	100	Herefordshire Council	TBD
Providing good quality education and learning opportunities for all	The number of Herefordshire residents aged 19+ achieving a Level 2 qualification (excluding manufacturing & engineering) (LPSA2G)	872	Herefordshire Council Plus?	TBD
	The number of Herefordshire residents aged 19+ achieving a Level 3 qualification (excluding manufacturing & engineering) (LPSA2G)	878		
	The number of Herefordshire residents aged 19+ achieving a Level 2 qualification in manufacturing & engineering (LPSA2G)	57		
	The number of Herefordshire residents aged 19+ achieving a Level 3 qualification in manufacturing & engineering (LPSA2G)	44		
To encourage sustainable indigenous business development and growth	Average weekly earning in Herefordshire compared with the average in the West Midlands	10.58% lower	Herefordshire Council	TBD
	Gross Value Added (GVA) per head in Herefordshire compared with the West Midlands average	Reduce gap by 20%		
	% of working age in employment (average over year)	80%		



Freedoms and Flexibilities:  
None identified

HEREFORDSHIRE  
LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

AUGUST< 2005

**Vision:**

To improve the lives of children and their families and enable all children and young people in Herefordshire to develop the knowledge, skills and judgement they will need to become well balanced adults able to lead fulfilling and useful personal, social and working lives.

Freedoms and Flexibilities

Require more knowledge of funding streams and initiative prior to completion

Possibilities are:

Flexible models of delivery of children's centres to reflect the rural context of Herefordshire

Increased freedom for individual schools to take part, of their own free will, and using their own budget, in projects and service improvements carried out under the aegis of the LAA, for the purposes of educational benefit

Operating the range of services, which make up a children's centre from more than one physical location

(need to identify why they will be useful and why necessary for the outcome to be achieved

LPSA2

### **Performance Managing the LAA**

Herefordshire Council's Performance Management Framework establishes clear links between the corporate planning process and service objectives. It involves regular performance monitoring to directorate management teams, Scrutiny Committees and Cabinet at 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12-month intervals which include progress against BVPIs, LPSA targets and local targets. This is supported by an established network of performance lead officers within the departments, who also form a corporate group that meets monthly. The LAA will be monitored using this successful process along side regular reporting to the relevant partnership boards and organisations.

Prince 2, where appropriate, will be used as the project management tool.

The PCT have adopted similar policies and procedures to those used by the local authority to improve joint health and social care/education team working.

**OUTCOMES – WHAT THE LAA IS INTENDED TO ACHIEVE.**

### **PRIORITIES FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES:**

To ensure that the LAA continues to support the delivery of the Herefordshire Plan, we wish to use the Herefordshire Plan Ambitions as strategic outcomes. These are:

For the people of Herefordshire to benefit from:

Improved health and well being

Reduced crime and disorder

Lower levels of poverty and isolation

More active and involved communities

A more active, vibrant and enjoyable County

An enhanced and distinctive environment

A better integrated and safer transport system

More appropriate and better accommodation

Improved business growth and better paid work in Herefordshire

An improved range of high quality education, training and learning opportunities.

The Children and Young Peoples Partnership has the following priorities:

Staying Safe: Further implementation of the child concern model

Be Healthy: Improving mental health outcomes  
Improving physical health outcomes

Enjoy and Achieve: Extending services in early years/SureStart  
Improving standards in schools  
Improving outcomes for underachieving groups  
Improving learning and recreation opportunities

Positive contribution: Reducing anti social behaviour

Economic well being: Improving opportunities for economic well being

Better Outcomes for LAC: Improved outcomes for LAC

Better outcomes for LDD: Improving outcomes for LDD

Service Management: Improving access to services

These will be reflected in the Children and Young People's Plan, available from April 2006.

Priorities for the Local Area Agreement

The overall vision is:

*To improve attendance and attainment for children and young people focusing on vulnerable groups and reduce social exclusion.*

The self-assessment conducted for the Joint Area Review of Herefordshire identified a number of areas that required a more focussed approach.

Overall outcomes for children Looked After are good with all children Looked After having an allocated qualified social worker and the Council has achieved a consistently high performance in placement of children within family settings. The overall performance of the service provided by Herefordshire Aftercare Team, formed to promote effective discharge of the council's duties to young people leaving care, has been high with top quartile performance. The Inspection of the Council's Fostering Services acknowledged its overall fitness to safeguard properly the physical and emotional needs of children Looked After. However, the relatively small size of the children in need of protection and children Looked After cohorts does tend to promote greater variance in performance, at least in the short-term, than would otherwise be the case. This has self-evidently contributed to shorter-term difficulties in securing consistent alignment of performance across key indicators for this group and in particular CH02/3,C21 and A3 (from APA dataset).

Herefordshire's children and young people enjoy and achieve well in comparison with national averages and with pupils in similar authorities. However, There is evidence of under achievement in some groups of vulnerable children. There is a continuing need to seek improved levels of performance with regard to meeting statutory deadlines for SEN and there is evidence of under achievement in some groups of vulnerable children. Lower ability children under perform in GCSEs at 5A\*-G. Excluded children obtain fewer GCSEs than the national average, or in comparison to statistical neighbours. The LPSA1 target for attainment at GCSE for children Looked After was not met in 2004. The value added outcomes between Key Stages 3 and 4, particularly for those secondary schools in the DfES collaborative agreement, require improvement.

Improving attendance in school will ensure more children and young people access the high quality education available, whilst improving the efficiency with which statements of special educational need are processed will enable appropriate education to be provided and increase the likelihood of improved outcomes.

The Children's Services Directorate proposes to implement the following targets that encompass this broad agenda.

#### Government priorities

??

The outcomes for looked after children

Development of the Child Concern Model

Good quality education for 5-16 year-olds

Action is taken to promote children's and young people's mental health

The health needs of children and young people with learning and physical difficulties and disabilities are met

Community regeneration initiatives address the needs of children and young people

Priorities for the LAA  
Overall vision – to improve attendance and attainment for children and young people focusing on vulnerable groups

	<b>Outcome Area</b>	<b>Priority area</b>	<b>Specific Priority</b>	<b>LAA Indicators/Targets</b>	<b>Partners &amp; Funding Stream</b>
	<p>Herefordshire Plan Strategic Priority: <i>Improved health and well being</i></p> <p>Every Child Matters Outcome: Being healthy</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Partnership Board Priority: <i>Improving outcomes for children and young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities</i></p>	<p>Improving identification and assessment processes through more integrated services and making services more responsive to local needs</p>	<p>Number of banded funded applications processed? Improve mental health (access to CAMHS) Integration of services Percentage of young people participating in at least 1 hour of moderate intensity sport and physical activity daily. See arts an sports mark schools Access to services for looked after children NEET target for teenage parents</p>	<p>Children's Services PCT Voluntary Agencies</p> <p>Education Health Partnerships Teenage pregnancy SureStart grants and programmes Children's Fund Vulnerable children grant LPSA reward grant Standards funds</p>
	<p>Herefordshire Plan Strategic Priority: <i>Improved health and well being</i></p> <p>Every Child Matters Outcome: <i>Stay Safe</i></p>	<p>Children and Young People's Partnership Board Priority: <i>Improving outcomes for Looked After Children</i></p>		<p>Improved school attendance for looked after children (LPSA2) The proportion of LAC reviews within the preceding 6 months that were completed within the required timescales (maintain at 100%) Number of re-registrations on the child protection register % of under 16s who have been looked after for 2.5 or more years living in the same placement Care leavers in training, education &amp; employment at 19 (LPSA2) Further development of the Child Concern Model Attainment of looked after children</p>	<p>Children's Services PCT NSPCC NCH</p> <p>Adoption support and special guardianship Carers grant Children's Fund Vulnerable children grant LPSA reward grant Standards funds</p>
	<p>Every Child Matters Outcome:</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Partnership Board</p>	<p>To produce improved outcomes for 0-16 year olds</p>	<p>90% of all schools with an arts or sports mark</p>	<p>LSC? Schools</p>

	<b>Outcome Area</b>	<b>Priority area</b>	<b>Specific Priority</b>	<b>LAA Indicators/Targets</b>	<b>Partners &amp; Funding Stream</b>
	<p>Enjoy and Achieve</p> <p>Herefordshire Plan Priority Theme:</p> <p>Improved range of high quality education, training and learning opportunities</p>	<p>Priority:</p> <p>Improving standards in schools</p>	<p>through creating more extended schools and children's centres</p>	<p>accreditation (or their equivalent)</p> <p>100% of primary school pupils have the opportunity to play an instrument</p> <p>Increase the % of pupils in LEA schools achieving 5 or more A*-G grades at GCSE (LPSA2)</p> <p>Increase the % of pupils with 5 A*-C including maths and English (Extended schools) 50% of Primary and 33% of Secondary offering the minimum core provision by 2008 and all schools by 2010.</p> <p>Value added in foundation stage in disadvantaged areas</p>	<p>Standards fund</p> <p>LPSA reward grant</p> <p>Education health partnerships</p> <p>Extended schools</p> <p>Children's Fund</p> <p>CAMHS</p> <p>KS3 central coordination</p> <p>LEA support fro workforce remodelling</p> <p>National training strategy</p> <p>Primary strategy central coordination</p>
	<p>Herefordshire Plan Priority Theme:</p> <p><i>More active and involved communities</i></p> <p>Every Child Matters</p> <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Positive contribution</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Partnership Board</p> <p>Priority:</p> <p><i>Improving learning and recreation opportunities</i></p>	<p>This may need further thought as the youth service currently has low levels of funding and political will might need to be sought</p>	<p>15% participation in youth work programmes</p> <p>Participation in a broad range of high quality activities in and outside school by priority groups.</p>	<p>Youth Service</p> <p>Children's Services</p> <p>Voluntary Agencies</p> <p>LSC</p> <p>Positive activities for young people</p> <p>Transforming youth work performance</p> <p>Improvement fund</p> <p>LPSA reward grant</p> <p>Standards fund</p>
	<p>Herefordshire Plan Strategic Priority:</p> <p><i>Reduced crime and disorder</i></p> <p>Every Child Matters</p> <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Positive contribution</p>	<p>Children and Young People's Partnership Board</p> <p>Priority:</p> <p><i>Reducing anti social behaviour</i></p>		<p>Further reductions in pupil absenteeism in primary and secondary schools (LPSA2)</p> <p>Percentage of children aged 10 or over and looked after for at least 12 months given final warning, reprimand or conviction in the year (PAF?)</p> <p>Number of racist incidents</p>	<p>Children's Services</p> <p>West Mercia Constabulary</p> <p>Probation Service</p> <p>Youth Offending Service (cross-cutting)</p> <p>KS3 behaviour and attendance</p> <p>CAMHS</p> <p>Education health</p>

	Outcome Area	Priority area	Specific Priority	LAA Indicators/Targets	Partners & Funding Stream
				reported by schools	partnerships LPSA reward grant Standards fund
	Every Child Matters Outcome: Economic well being  Herefordshire Plan Priority Theme: Improved range of high quality education, training and learning opportunities	Children and Young People's Partnership Board Priority: Improving standards in schools & Improving outcomes for underachieving groups		Percentage of 18-30 year olds participating in higher education Percentage 16-18 NEET	Connexions Colleges LSC  LPSA reward grant Standards fund Vocational and work related learning
	Service Management	Improving access to high quality integrated services in local communities	Improving access to services through integrated front line delivery and service hubs throughout the county (locality programmes and locality management infrastructure)	Number of new out of school hours childcare places provided Number of children and parents with access to a Children's Centre/Extended school % of families able to benefit/access children's centres and extended school provision Number of families with access to multi- professional, accessible, co- located services	Children's Services PCT Voluntary Agencies Children's Fund  LPSA reward grant Standards fund



Detailed Targets  
 Note LAA targets need to run until 2008/2009

	Target	CURRENT PERFORMANCE (2004/2005)	Performance at the end of the LAA period (2008/2009) WITHOUT LAA	Performance at the end of the LAA period (2008/2009) WITH LAA	Performance enhancement	Grant/Funding
1	100% of primary school pupils have the opportunity to play an instrument					
1	90% of all schools with an arts or sports mark accreditation (or their equivalent)	19 October 2004				
1	Increase the % of pupils in LEA schools achieving 5 or more A*-G grades at GCSE, or an equivalent accredited vocational or alternative curriculum qualification (LPSA2)	88.1% Summer 2004	95.5% (2007/2008)	96.6% (2007/2008)	1%	
1	Increase the % of pupils with 5 A*-C including maths and English					
1	(Extended schools) 50% of Primary and 33% of Secondary offering the minimum core provision by 2008 and all schools by 2010.					
2	15% participation in youth work programmes					
3	The number of half day sessions missed due to authorised and unauthorised absence expressed as a percentage of total number of sessions in primary school by children looked after by Herefordshire continuously for at least 12 months during the previous year	4.68% (839 sessions)	4.5% Three year average ending academic year 2007/2008	4.25% Three year average ending academic year 2007/2008	0.25%	
3	Number of children looked after by Herefordshire continuously for at least 12 months and were of school age, who missed a total of at least 25 days of schooling for any reason during the previous year (PAF C24)	14 September 2004	11 September 2006 10 September 2007 9 September 2008	9 September 2006 8 September 2007 7 September 2008	2 September 2006 2 September 2007 2 September 2008	
3	The number of half day sessions missed due to authorised and unauthorised absence expressed as a percentage of total number of sessions in secondary school by children looked after by Herefordshire continuously for at least 12 months during the previous year	7.66% (1656 sessions)	7.5% Three year average ending academic year 2007/2008	7% Three year average ending academic year 2007/2008	0.5%	
3	The number of those young people who were looked after on 1 <sup>st</sup> April in their 17 <sup>th</sup> year (aged 16) who were engaged in education, training, or	12	41 (2007/2008)	46 (2007/2008)	5	

	employment at the age of 19							
<b>5</b>	Improving the percentage of pupils in primary schools maintained by the authority absent from school for any reason (LPSA2)	5.2%	4.9% (2007/2008)	4.0% (2007/2008)	0.9%			
<b>5</b>	Improving the percentage of pupils in secondary schools maintained by the authority absent from school for any reason (LPSA2)	7.8%	6.9% (2007/2008)	6.0% (2007/2008)	0.9%			
<b>5</b>	Percentage of children aged 10 or over and looked after for at least 12 months given final warning, reprimand or conviction in the year (PAF ?)							
<b>5</b>	Number of racist incidents reported by schools							
<b>6</b>	Number of Children's Centre/Families with access to a Children's Centre/Extended school							
<b>6</b>	Number of new out of school hours childcare places provided							

### LAA Block: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

#### EVIDENCE

The Children and Young People's Partnership Board agreed the priorities in this block on XXXX. Delegates were concerned with mapping the national priorities from Every Child Matters to local priorities. There was also a strong emphasis on those areas that encouraged stronger partnership working. The delivery of high quality services is made more difficult by the rural nature of Herefordshire. The newly emerging extended schools and children's centres initiative was seen as an opportunity to develop locally based services in all communities. Multi-agency integrated delivery of services to children and young people is seen as the way forward for Herefordshire. NEED TO ADD SOME SPECIFIC BLURB ABOUT EACH ONE OF THE PRIORITIES. The following priorities were therefore identified:

Improving standards in schools

Attainment in school and the progress made towards the LPSA1 targets put in place the infrastructure for high quality and high achieving services, which will set Herefordshire in good stead over the longer term. It is recognised that quality children's services are high on both the national and local agendas and Herefordshire is responding to these needs through the changes made and in response to *Every Child Matters*. However, there are still areas where performance is comparatively lower than the average performance across the county.

Improving learning and recreation opportunities

NEED INPUT FROM JON RALPH

**Improved outcomes for Looked After Children**

NEED INPUT FROM HENRY/ANDREW

IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES

Weaknesses identified in the Children's Service plan were identified as

Need to improve allocation and focus of spending on SEN pupils.

Need for robust monitoring of SEN resources.

Resources for families of children with disabilities

Reducing anti social behaviour  
*(From LPSA2) Led by the Anti Social Behaviour group of the Community Safety and Drugs Partnership, this theme is currently receiving a high degree of attention at local and national levels. It will build on work already started around targeting, encouraging reporting, diversionary projects and education. It will particularly focus on preventative approaches, and will link to actions in the alcohol related crime and disorder theme. The theme supports the Herefordshire Plan Ambitions to “Reduce Crime and Disorder” and “More Active and Involved Communities”.*

Possible outcome – *reduction in the number of public disorder incidents*  
 Absence in high schools

Possible indicators could include – number of public disorder incidents and BVI survey of ratings on specified elements of antisocial behaviour

Improving access to services

Herefordshire Council is one of the most sparsely populated local authorities in the country. A direct result of this is that it can face very different challenges to the more urbanised authorities. It DISCUSS RURAL NATURE AND IMPACT ON ACCESSIBILITY ETC

### GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Children and Young People’s Partnership (CYPP) will be involved monitoring in the activity and progress of the LAA and the activities are fully consistent with and complementary to the vision adopted by the CYPP.

ADD LIST OF MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS FOR EACH PRIORITY INCLUDING SPECIFIC DETAILS WHERE PARTNERS ARE INVOLVED

### FREEDOMS AND FLEXIBILITIES

DETAILS OF FREEDOMS AND FLEXIBILITIES (INCLUDING ANY FUTURE PROPOSALS AS THE LAA IS BEDDED IN.

(From LPSA2) Herefordshire warmly welcomes the opportunity to consider freedoms and flexibilities in more depth, and their increased emphasis in LPSA2G. We feel that freedoms and flexibilities will be crucial in achieving significant steps in our outcomes and indicators. The potential for freedoms and flexibilities are being considered – both within and between priority areas, have been part of our consultation process and will be outlined in more detail in the next submission.

The Local Area Agreement will be developed to include specific outcomes, targets and measures in each LAA block. The LAA will also identify the mechanisms to deliver each outcome, and financial contributions, including those from central government.

Outcome	Activity	Indicative Measurement	Notes/Links to other outcomes	LAA
To produce improved outcomes for 0-12(?) year olds through creating more extended schools and children’s centres  Enjoy and Achieve: Achieve stretching national educational standards at primary and	Planned and targeted programme for Extended Schools  Planned and targeted programme for Children’s Centres  Development of criteria for priority areas	A 2.2% increase in pupils attaining 5 A-C grades at key stage 2 (LPSA2) A 2.1% increase in pupils achieving level 5 or above for KS3 maths (LPSA2)	The extended school model is cross cutting with a number of other outcomes: Achieve economic well-being, be health, enjoy and achieve, access to local services, improved capacity	

secondary school	Linking of Children's Centres and Extended School activity Learning through SureStart programmes incorporated into the arrangements for Children's Centres  Full service extended school model is supported through a n interagency (?) project board  Improve youth participation		15% participation in youth work programmes  Further improvement in the stability of placements for looked after children, well above the top quartile (LPSA2) The proportion of LAC reviews within the preceding 6 months that were completed within the required timescales (maintain at 100%) Care leavers in training, education & employment at 19	This has strong links with LPSA2 in relation to retaining young people in the county
Improving learning and recreation opportunities  To produce improved outcomes for Looked After Children  Stay Safe/LAC: Better Outcomes for LAC			Statements of SEN prepared in 18 weeks without exception Statements of SEN prepared in 18 weeks with exception	
Improving outcomes for children and young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities  LDD Outcomes: Better outcomes for LDD Reducing anti social behaviour Positive contribution:	Improving identification and assessment processes through more integrated services and making services more responsive to local needs MORE DETAIL HERE		Further reductions in pupil absenteeism in secondary schools, well above the top quartile (LPSA2) Number of new out of school hours childcare places provided Number of Children's Centre/Families with access to a Children's Centre/Extended school	
Improving access to high quality services	Improving access to services through integrated front line delivery and service hubs throughout the county MORE DETAIL HERE			

HEREFORDSHIRE  
LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

OLDER PEOPLE AND HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

VISION

“IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF LOCAL RESIDENTS BY INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES THAT PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE IN AND OF WHICH THEY HAVE A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP.

ENSURE OLDER PEOPLE RETAIN MAXIMUM INDEPENDENCE AND ARE ENABLED TO FULLY PARTICIPATE IN THESE COMMUNITIES”.

The basis of this document is the *draft* Older Peoples Strategy Framework, LPSA 2, the Health and Social Care Commissioning Plan, the Local Delivery Plan, the Housing Strategy, Herefordshire Council's Corporate Plan, the 2005 POPP application and the ISB8 bid, but it focuses on seven key areas which we believe could be greatly enhanced by using the principles of the LAA guidance

Key theme 1. Citizenship, inclusion and choice (Older people)				
Outcomes	How	P.I.	Partners	Funding
Older people achieving maximum independence.	Develop a matrix of prevention services which allow older people to have choice and control. <i>Services would include; equipment, home support, meals, district nursing, assistive technology, benefits advice, chronic disease management, care coordination, sitter services for use by Ambulance trust to prevent unnecessary admission to hospital, supporting people (readable agenda) and services provided through the Signposting Scheme.</i>	Number of unscheduled acute hospital bed days (defined in DH guidance for LDPs 2005-2008) occupied by a person 75 or over, in NHS hospitals commissioned by Hereford PCT. <i>PCT/LPSA 2 indicator.</i>  C32 number of people helped to live at home. <i>Social Care indicator.</i>	All statutory partners. Voluntary sector. Community.	Social care base budget  Health development money  LPSA 2  Economic regeneration budgets?  IBB8 (if successful)
	Develop a continuum of consistent and equitable intermediate care services, which maximise resources.  Modernisation of day opportunities by maximising the use of community buildings e.g. community centres, pubs, cafes, churches, village halls. Fire stations, to support independence agenda.	" "	PCT Social Care Voluntary sector	PCT development funding and re-working of community hospitals. Social Care. Supporting People
	Extend the use of Direct Payments as part of modernising services.  Review service user engagement in the development and delivery of multi-agency services and develop effective and transparent systems for inclusion.	C51 Direct Payments. <i>Social Care indicator.</i>  TBA	Social Care Voluntary sector  Council PCT Voluntary sector	User and Care involvement team. Voluntary sector funding
<b>Freedom and Flexibilities:</b> To include these services in Social Care performance indicator C32				

Key theme 2. Easy access to key services (Older people)			
Outcomes	How	P.I.	Partners
All older people to be able to access information and key service network through a single access point	Explore a range of options for developing a multi-agency access centre, develop model and establish.	C32 Number of people helped to live at home. <i>Social care indicator.</i>  D55 Acceptable waiting times for assessment. <i>Social care indicator.</i>  D56 Acceptable waiting times for care packages. <i>Social Care indicator.</i>	All statutory partners, health services, utilities, voluntary sector.
Freedoms and Flexibilities:			
			Funding
			Investment to achieve efficiency in savings by reducing duplication in current activity – all partners.

Key theme 3. Income, pensions and benefits (All ages)			
Outcome	How	P.I.	Partners
All older residents claiming their full entitlement of pensions and benefits	Review all current welfare rights providers. Develop joint working between the Councils welfare rights section and the pension service and create a joint team. Ensure the team is linked to the Signposting Scheme and Single Access point.	Number of people in receipt of Pensions Credit. <i>LPSA 2 target.</i>  Number of people in receipt of Attendance Allowance. <i>LPSA 2 target.</i>  Number of people in receipt of Council Tax benefit. <i>LPSA 2 target.</i>  C32 Adults helped to live at home. <i>Social Care indicator.</i>	Voluntary sector Herefordshire Council DWP
Equal opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone but particularly ensuring fairness for older adults and people with mental and physical disabilities and carers.	Establish a local compact between the Chamber of Commerce, Herefordshire Council, Learning and Skills Council and the Primary Care Trust, which states the values and principles which will underpin local employment practice.	Satisfaction survey. <i>New indicator.</i>	LSC PCT Voluntary sector Ch.Comm Hereford Council.
			Funding stream Efficiencies from LPSA 1 and 2 funding, DWP budgets and voluntary sector funding.

Freedom and Flexibilities:

Key theme 4. Appropriate housing and adequate warmth (All ages)				
Outcome	How	P.I.	Partners	5. Funding
Increased health, wellbeing and choice.	Develop a comprehensive range of housing that reflects the needs of the population including affordable housing, extra care, sheltered and supported living accommodation.	<p>100 dwellings per year until March 2008. <i>Local indicator.</i></p> <p>C28 Intensive home care. <i>Social Care indicator.</i></p> <p>C29, Adults with physical disability helped to live at home. <i>Social care indicator.</i></p> <p>C32, Number of people helped to live at home. <i>Social Care indicator.</i></p> <p>Increase the proportion of vulnerable households living in Decent Homes in the private sector to 70% by 2010 and to 75% by 2020. <i>National target</i></p> <p>All social housing to meet <i>Decent Homes</i> standards by 2010. <i>National target.</i></p> <p>Reduction in the use of temporary accommodation by 10% per annum. <i>Local indicator.</i></p>	<p>Herefordshire Council (Strategic Housing, Planning Department, Social Care), PCT</p> <p>Voluntary Sector. Housing Associations. Registered Social landlords</p> <p>Private landlords/developers</p> <p>Housing Corporation</p>	<p>Social Care – residential care budget.</p> <p>Capital reserves.</p> <p>Developers funds.</p> <p>Social housing grant.</p> <p>Strategic Housing capital budget.</p> <p>Supporting People Budget.</p> <p>ODPM Funding</p>
	<p>To improve housing conditions across all tenures by setting a programme to achieve targets for <i>Decent Homes</i> for vulnerable people.</p> <p>Reduce levels of homelessness by developing and implement new “in house” homelessness and housing advice service, including “housing options” approach for housing advice and prevention workers.</p>			



Every home will have adequate, affordable, safe heating and heat efficiency measures in place.	Develop and implement the affordable warmth/fuel poverty strategy.	30% reduction in domestic energy consumption between 1996 and 2011. <i>HECA National target.</i>  <i>Further targets to be developed through the Strategy.</i>	Herefordshire Council. PCT Voluntary sector Fire Service Energy agencies Energy companies Private sector housing	To be determined through strategy.
<p><b>Freedoms and Flexibilities:</b> Ability to use Single Capital Pot for revenue activities to develop joint working in the West Housing Market area. More flexibility in the Supporting People grant regime.</p>				

Key theme 5. Safety at home and in the community (All ages)				
Outcomes	How	P.I.	Partners	Funding
Older people to be and to feel as safe as possible in their own homes and local communities.	All older residents have access to assessment and services through the Signposting Scheme. Increase investment in current scheme and continue to engage new service providers from all sectors. <i>(See attached for services already available through the scheme)</i>  Expand Fire Service run multi-agency safety partnership events for older people.  Introduce the Village Warden scheme proposed in LPSA 2. Monitor the pilot sites and identify resources for expansion if successful.  Reduce distraction burglaries through residents education, neighbourhood watch schemes, residents associations, community development workers and memory minders etc.	The number of residents assessed and receiving at least one resulting service.  Satisfaction survey. <i>(To be developed)</i>  Increase the number of home fire safety checks carried out in households where the head of the house is over 60. <i>Fire service indicator.</i>  To be determined  To be determined	Signposting Partners       Herefordshire council, Hereford PCT, voluntary sector.  West Mercia Police and partners as previously described	LPSA 1. reward grant and LPSA 2. pump-priming grant.    LPSA 2. pump-priming, Hereford and Worcs. Fire and Rescue Service  To be determined
People of all ages to feel safe at home and in their local communities	Cross reference with safer and stronger communities section	Cross reference with safer stronger communities section	Cross reference with safer and stronger communities section	Cross reference with safer and stronger communities section



Key theme 7. Workforce				
Outcomes	How	P.I.	Partners	Funding
A flexible workforce across all Health and Care organisations.	<p>Rationalise existing workforce development posts. Develop a joint workforce development plan.</p> <p><i>This work needs to cross reference with LAA Economic Development and Enterprise and Children and Young People themes.</i></p>		<p>PCT HHT Hereford Council</p>	All workforce budgets
<p>Freedom and Flexibilities:</p>				



## COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2005/06

### PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

CABINET

29TH SEPTEMBER, 2005

---

#### Wards Affected

County-wide

#### Purpose

To approve the Council's Communications Strategy for 2005/06, the key messages and action plans included.

#### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

#### Recommendation

**THAT the Council's Communications Strategy for 2005/06 be considered and approved.**

#### Reasons

The Council's Communications Strategy has been updated for the current financial year to ensure the aims and ambitions within the Council's Corporate Plan and the Herefordshire Plan are communicated to all our audiences internally and externally.

The strategy provides an overarching framework for all communications activity within the Council. The strategy also aims to communicate the achievements of the Council and our partners and emphasise the crucial role every elected Member and member of staff play in communications.

The key messages have been revised to incorporate the Corporate Plan's strapline 'Action for a better Herefordshire'. One of the original 'P's – Preserving our heritage' has been dropped as it was difficult to maintain the direct links with the priorities in the Corporate Plan or the ambitions within the Herefordshire Plan.

#### Considerations

1. Communications is an increasingly important part of the daily life of local authorities. That is especially true in Herefordshire where satisfaction with individual services continues to rise whilst satisfaction rates with the Council as a whole in line with most unitary authorities is falling. However, in Herefordshire the position is exacerbated and is out of step with the Council's performance and reputation both regionally and nationally.

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Jane Jones, Director of Corporate and Customer Services on 01432 260037

2. Following on from the Council's involvement in the "Connecting with Communities" project a number of steps were taken to increase the emphasis on communications
  - Costs of publishing Herefordshire Matters
  - Increasing the staffing within the Public Relations Unit
  - Developing a Communications Strategy
  - Establishing a Communications network.
3. Whilst there has been improvement particularly in communication with staff, (as reflected through the Staff Opinion Survey), there is a continuing need to work hard at communications. The opportunity provided by the establishment of the new Directorate of Corporate and Customer Services to establish stronger links between the Workforce Strategy, community involvement activity and new forms of electronic media is being seized and the capacity of communications throughout the authority strengthened.

## **Alternative Options**

None

## **Risk Management**

The authority will fail to maximise the opportunities presented to promote its work and services and involve people as fully as possible. Satisfaction rates may continue to fall.

## **Consultees**

Head of ICT Services, Head of Human Resources, Community Involvement Co-ordinator, Grant Riches Communications Consultants.

## **Background Papers**

None



HEREFORDSHIRE  
COUNCIL

# Communications Strategy 2005 - 2006

## Action for a better Herefordshire

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

*Quality Life in a quality county*





# Contents

Context and challenges	3
Key Messages	5
Communication Principles	8
Audiences	9
Communications Objectives	10
Communication Tools	11
Resources	12
Partnership Communications	13
Public Relations	14
Media Relations	18
Internal Communications	20
Corporate Identity	24
E-communication	26
Consultation	28
Who's Responsible	31
Where the Communications Strategy fits	33

# Context and challenges

Effective communications are vital so that people in Herefordshire know what the Council does and are satisfied with how we do it. We have a positive story to tell. We deliver some high quality services and do this with relatively low government funding, in an area where the cost of service provision is high.

We have had a longstanding commitment to good communication since taking part in 2002 in the National Connecting with Communities project, sponsored by ODPM, LGA, IDeA and Audit Commission. Since then, we have moved forward on a number of fronts:

- We developed our first communication strategy with an action plan and targets for internal and external communications.
- We worked with senior officers and cabinet to clarify and simplify key messages for internal and external audiences.
- We now regularly publish Herefordshire Matters, our magazine aimed at local residents.
- We have increased the resources in the central PR team, particularly for internal communications. This has allowed us to produce regular internal communications such as Core News, to establish a system of team briefings and to set up Talking Point sessions with the Chief Executive and Leader.
- We set up a council-wide communications network to co-ordinate our work across the authority.
- We have established an intranet and dramatically improved our web site.

We measure our success by the fact that many of the communication actions recommended in the LGA's recently launched Reputation of Local Government project are already happening in Herefordshire:

- Effective media management
- Providing an a-z guide of council services
- Publishing a regular council magazine/newspaper
- Ensuring effective and consistent linkage of council brand to services
- Good internal communications.

We are proud of what we have achieved so far but we are not complacent. Herefordshire is an ambitious, high performing and innovative council facing a number of key communication challenges over the next year:

- In line with other councils, our satisfaction rating has dropped between the BVPIs in 2000/2001 and 2003/2004 from 59% who are fairly or very satisfied to 48%. Even though this dip reflected the national trend, Herefordshire has had a bigger drop in satisfaction (11%) compared with other unitary councils (6%). This is despite the fact that the Council performs above average in most respects and often does substantially better: 30% of its CPA Key BVPI scores are in the top quartile and 65% in the top two quartiles.
- We have to continue to meet the challenge of getting the Council's message out to a predominantly rural and sparsely populated area and communicating with residents in areas of higher social deprivation such as South Wye and central areas of Hereford and Leominster.
- We have to continue to meet the challenge of targeting communications at the changing demographic in the area – inward migration from other regions of England and Wales, an ageing population and a growing number of residents from Eastern Europe and Portugal working in manufacturing and agriculture in the county.
- We need to celebrate our achievements more forcefully so that the people of Herefordshire know what the Council and the Herefordshire Partnership are achieving on their behalf, particularly the benefits of lower crime rates, good education and the work of the Herefordshire Partnership. We also need to highlight the potential benefits from the proposed Local Area Agreement between the Council, the other members of the Herefordshire Partnership and the Government from April 2006 – bringing together in one investment programme of more than £100m, plans for the refurbishment of Hereford city centre, the creation of major new job opportunities in South Wye and the establishment of a learning village to raise skill levels significantly across the County.
- At the same time, we have to highlight the problems and challenges facing the Council such as the lack of affordable housing and the need to stretch financial resources even further, and explain to residents how we are tackling those challenges. In particular, we have to show how the Council is delivering added value through its strategic partners such as Shaw Homes (for older people), Herefordshire Housing (for social housing), Herefordshire Jarvis Services (for highways, property and grounds maintenance) and Owen Williams (for consultancy services).
- Finally, although the staff opinion survey has shown marked improvements in all aspects of internal communications, we recognise that they need to improve further to support improved performance and to encourage all our staff to be ambassadors for Herefordshire Council. Currently, just under two thirds of employees feel that communications within their service area work well. We are committed to improving this performance as we recognise that it underpins our external image and reputation.

The main purpose of this strategy is to lay out clearly the key messages the Council has to communicate, who it has to communicate them to, the tools it will use to accomplish this and how we will measure our success.

This strategy is relevant at all levels within the authority and should be owned by staff and Members alike. It is a working document and will be updated every year.

## Key Messages

The Council's priorities are found in our contribution to the overarching Herefordshire Plan, our community plan – a ten-year vision for the County which underpins the Council's strategic aims and objectives in its own corporate plan. Both the Herefordshire Plan and Corporate Plan are currently being updated and reviewed and the ambitions and priorities are likely to change. These changes will be reflected in the communications strategy once agreed.

From the outset the Council has tried to ensure that the links between service areas and their contribution to the Herefordshire Plan ambitions were clearly set out in service business plans. The Council is encouraged by the fact that 84% of staff are aware of the Herefordshire Plan, according to the 2004 staff opinion survey, and that 60% of staff say they are kept informed about the Council's plans, priorities and performance.

However, to clarify how the Council is working toward the ten ambitions of the Herefordshire Plan these simple messages (which will run through all internal and external communications) have been developed under the overall strap line: **Action for a Better Herefordshire:**

- **Putting** people first
- **Providing** for our communities
- **Promoting** the county
- **Protecting** our future
- **Quality life in a quality county**

The chart overleaf shows how the ambitions of the Herefordshire Plan, the Corporate priorities and the organisational priorities relate to these key messages.

Key message	Herefordshire Plan Ambition	Corporate (external) priority	Organisational (internal) priority
<b>Putting</b> people first	Encourage communities to shape the future in Herefordshire.	<p>Develop the Council's community leadership role.</p> <p>Promote diversity and community harmony</p>	<p>Understand the needs and preferences of service users and council taxpayers</p> <p>Recruit, retain and motivate high quality employees.</p>
<b>Providing</b> for our communities	<p>Improve the health and wellbeing of Herefordshire people.</p> <p>Provide excellent education, learning and training opportunities in Herefordshire for all ages.</p> <p>Reduce crime and disorder and make Herefordshire safer.</p> <p>Reduce poverty and isolation in Herefordshire.</p>	<p>Maximise the health, safety, economic wellbeing, achievements and contribution of every child.</p> <p>Improve the achievement of pupils.</p> <p>Enable vulnerable adults to live independently and enable many more people to continue to live</p>	

	Meet Herefordshire's accommodation needs.	in their own homes.	
<b>Promoting</b> the County	Develop Herefordshire as an active vibrant and enjoyable place to be.  Support business growth and create more and better paid work in Herefordshire.		
<b>Protecting</b> our future	Develop an integrated transport system for Herefordshire.  Protect and improve Herefordshire's distinctive environment.	Improve transport and the safety of roads.  Protect the environment, recycle more waste and reduce carbon emissions.	
<b>Quality life in a quality county</b>		Sustain vibrant and prosperous communities, including by providing more efficient, effective and customer focused services and clean streets.	Secure significant efficiency savings  Ensure that its essential assets are in the right condition for the long term cost effective delivery of services.  Embed

			corporate planning, performance management and project management systems.
--	--	--	--



# Communication Principles

Our communications are underpinned by five key principles:

- **Telling the truth:** our communications will always be honest, trustworthy and credible.
- **People, not statistics:** we will tell the Herefordshire story using plain language and real life examples, not facts and figures and management jargon.
- **Big picture:** our communications will always make the connections between the work of individuals and specific services at the council and the authority's overall reputation and long term aims.
- **Optimism and celebration:** we will focus on what works and what's achievable, finding the heroes within Herefordshire Council and promoting their work, and helping our citizens celebrate their achievements in the county.
- **Communication is for everyone:** we will always use inclusive language and find opportunities for residents and staff to be consulted and involved in our work.

These are consistent with our organisational values of:

innovation and creativity; fairness; partnership working; communications; our people.

# Audiences

## External

- Residents
- Service users
- The media
- Statutory partners
- Business partners
- Local businesses
- Voluntary sector
- Visitors
- National opinion formers e.g. MPs, think tanks, LGA, IDeA
- Regional opinion formers
- Regulators such as the Audit Commission, CSCI and Ofsted.

## Internal

- Employees
- Strategic service delivery partners
- Unions
- Members – executive, scrutiny and backbenchers

These groups are not exclusive and we recognise that through the year we may be targeting new and different groups. Many of these groups will also overlap, e.g. service users and employees, so when we communicate with one audience we need to be aware that these communications may cross over to other audiences. The remainder of this strategy looks at how time and resources will be devoted to communicating with these groups.

# Communications Objectives

## External

- To create a better understanding between Herefordshire Council and individual services in the eyes of our residents.
- To make sure people feel informed about the Council, its services, activities and performance.
- To provide open access to information about the council's spending and full range of services and activities.
- To raise our profile in the eyes of all our key audiences and to get credit for our achievements for the people of Herefordshire.
- To secure positive and accurate coverage of council decisions and activities in the local, national and specialist media.
- To show people we listen and take account of their views.
- To ensure people know how to influence decisions the Council makes.

## Internal

- To create a better understanding about the links between the Herefordshire Plan, Herefordshire Council and individual services in the eyes of staff and members.
- To make staff and members ambassadors for the Council.
- To make sure staff feel informed about the Council, its services, activities and performance.
- To inform and support staff to maintain and improve their commitment and motivation.
- To share information and learning across the Council.
- To listen and respond to the views of staff and members.
- To celebrate the successes of individuals, teams and the Council.

# Communication Tools

We will use a variety of tools to deliver our Communications Strategy. These include:

**Public Relations:** magazine for our residents, campaigns, publications, exhibitions, events.

**Media Relations:** news releases, briefings, media campaigns.

**Internal Communications:** newsletters, intranet, team briefings, roadshows.

**Corporate Identity:** publications, signage, electronic communication.

**E-communication:** website, intranet, SMS messaging, digital TV.

**Consultation:** surveys, focus groups, meetings.

The key role of each function has been set out along with targets against which we will measure our success. These targets will be assessed with data gathered from a variety of sources including the residents' survey, the staff opinion survey, snapshot surveys and Herefordshire Matters.

# Resources

The resources available to implement the Communications Strategy are:

The Corporate Communications Team  
The Communications Network  
Knowledge Management Team  
All staff and Members in their contacts with the public.

Specific communications budgets include:

- Corporate Publications budget - £43,000
- Corporate Communications budget - £194,620
- Herefordshire Matters budget - £42,000

We have recently completed a communications audit to examine activity and spend across the council. As part of this we have identified at least 34 posts that have a key role in communicating with the public, staff or members on specific service issues. We know there is scope for a more efficient delivery of communications and PR support. Over the next year we will look more closely at this to determine how we can use our limited resources more effectively to support both the work of directorates and the corporate message. This approach has the support of the Management Board.

## **The Corporate Communications Team**

It is the role of the Corporate Communications Team to make sure it:

- Communicates about Herefordshire enthusiastically and knowledgeably.
- Meets all agreed deadlines, particularly for media work.
- Maintains confidentiality at all times.
- Works to the highest professional standards.
- Complies with relevant legal requirements and the Code of Conduct on local government publicity
- Provides impartial, professional advice.

## **The Communications Network**

The Communications Network is made up of representatives from the directorates.

The members of the Communications Network have to be the lifeblood of our internal and external communications by being communications champions within their directorates and the eyes and ears for good stories in the directorates. Over the next year we will review the role and membership of this group to make sure we have the right people for the task. This process will be led by Management Board. The Network will be re-launched with an annual programme of work and will be led and driven by the Head of Communications.

Over the next year we will also look at the training and development needs of the Corporate Communications Team team and the Communications Network to ensure they are supported to deliver this communications strategy.

## Partnership Communications

The Council is an excellent partner and the Herefordshire Partnership brings together in common purpose the Council, the Chamber of Commerce for Herefordshire and Worcestershire Business Link West Mercia, the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils, the Herefordshire Primary Care Trust, the Learning and Skills Council for Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the West Mercia Constabulary and a wide range of voluntary and other groups and organisations.

As well as this external partnership the Council also works with a range of strategic partners to deliver services and efficiency savings. This includes work with Herefordshire Jarvis Services and Owen Williams, membership of the West Mercia Supplies Partnership, Herefordshire Housing, Halo, SHAW residential care homes, the Sure Start Programme, the Courtyard Theatre, the Creative Industries Programme and Herefordshire in Bloom.

A key challenge for the Council is to ensure that Herefordshire residents fully understand which services are provided by which partners and that they know how to access them. It is also vital that residents understand the Council's role in both external and strategic partnerships and that the Council gets credit for its activities.

The promotion of many of these activities takes place through the full range of communication activities such as public relations, media work and internal communications and is outlined in more detail throughout this strategy.

# Public Relations

## Key roles

- To create a better understanding among residents about the links between Herefordshire Council and individual services.
- To make sure people feel informed about the Council, its services, activities and performance.
- To provide open access to information about the Council's spending and full range of services and activities.
- To raise our profile in the eyes of all our key audiences and to get credit for our achievements for the people of Herefordshire.

## Action Plan 2005/6

What	Why	Who	Resources	When
Finish the roll out of the Ps and Qs key messages internally and externally: ensure they are present in every corporate document	Gain understanding and ownership of Council's key messages, internally and externally	Corporate Communications Team / ICT	Communications Network	Sept 05 – Dec 05
Produce guidelines on use of Ps and Qs	Provide guidelines on how and when to use Ps and Qs ensuring consistent look and feel	Graphic Designer	Corporate Communications Team	Sept – Dec 05



<p>Review Herefordshire Matters. This would include the following activities:</p> <p>Decide on funding mechanism for production, design and print to increase frequency to 6 times per year.</p> <p>Set editorial policy with a clear set of objectives related to the council's key messages and campaigns for the year.</p> <p>Improve design pending longer term changes.</p> <p>Use freelance journalist to produce feature material based on council key priorities.</p> <p>Commission some strong photography for key features in each issue – make stories picture-led.</p> <p>Market test new dummy publication with sample of employees and with Citizens' Panel.</p>	<p>Improve resident satisfaction with the council.</p> <p>Improve the cost-effectiveness and impact of the council's key communication channel.</p> <p>Greater promotion of council's key messages and activities.</p> <p>Greater impact of existing material.</p> <p>More 'human interest' stories making the link between council and residents.</p> <p>Greater impact and more human interest.</p> <p>Ensure changes are popular with residents.</p>	<p>Director of Corporate and Customer Services</p> <p>Public Relations Officer</p> <p>Graphic Designer</p> <p>Director of Corporate and Customer Services</p> <p>Director of Corporate and Customer Services</p> <p>Public Relations Officer</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Team / Communications Network</p> <p>Corporate Communications Team / Communications Network</p> <p>Public Relations Officer</p> <p>Public Relations Officer</p> <p>Community Involvement Co-ordinator</p>	<p>September 05 – March 06</p>
--	---	--	---	--------------------------------

Produce Corporate Events/Initiatives Calendar	Allows for more planned and pro active communications activity	Corporate Communications and Events Officer	ICT / Communications Network	Dec 05
Produce County guide	To promote Herefordshire	Corporate Communications and Events Officer	Graphic Designer / Communications Network	April 06
Produce A-Z of Council Services	Provide residents with information on services Council offers and useful contact numbers	Public Relations Officer / Graphic Designer	Communications Network	Feb 06 edition of Herefordshire Matters
Produce portable corporate exhibition with key messages and case studies	Can be used across the county at events/meetings to promote the council's work	Communications Officer / Graphic Designer	Communications Network	Jan 06
Develop communications campaign to promote the Local Area Agreement among partners and the public	To promote understanding of the benefits to residents and to ensure buy-in from partners.	Public Relations Officer	Corporate Communications Team	Oct 05
Develop a campaign to promote the council's work on street scene/liveability	To ensure residents know what the council is doing about this key concern and to improve resident satisfaction.	Public Relations Officer	Corporate Communications Team	Oct 05
Develop an 'awards timetable' and ensure the council makes at least 6 entries in major awards schemes.	To raise Herefordshire's profile among opinion formers.	Corporate Communications Team	Management Team / Communications Network	Sept 05 and ongoing

### How we will measure our success

	<b>Baseline 2002</b>	<b>Target 2003/4</b>	<b>Actual 2003/4</b>	<b>Target 2005/6</b>
% of residents satisfied with the Council	53%	53%	48%	53%
% of residents who feel well informed	28%	32%	49%	55% 2007/8
% of residents who don't feel the Council is too remote and impersonal	30%	30%	20%	32% 2007/8
% of residents who feel they know a fair amount/great deal about the Council	18%	22%	21%	26% 2007/8
% of residents who recall seeing a copy of Herefordshire Matters	13%	n/a	51%	n.a.
% of residents who say they find Herefordshire Matters useful	80%	n/a	71%	n.a.

# Media Relations

## Key Role

- To raise our profile in the eyes of all our key audiences and to get credit for our achievements for the people of Herefordshire.
- To secure positive and accurate coverage of council decisions and activities in the local, national and specialist media.

## Action Plan 2005/6

What	Why	Who	Resources	When
Inductions for new journalists and PR unit visits to local media	Increase understanding of respective roles and needs	Public Relations Officer	Corporate Communications Team	Ongoing
Operate a 24/7 reactive media service	Open access to council information and decisions for journalists and the public	Public Relations Officer / Corporate Media Officer		Ongoing
Provide weekly media briefings for Leader, Cabinet, CEX and Mgt Board	Identify upcoming important / contentious issues	Corporate Media Officer / Public Relations Officer	Corporate Communications Team	Ongoing
Develop a rolling programme of proactive media campaigns on key issues.	Improve access for journalists and take a more pro active approach	Public Relations Officer	Corporate Communications Team / Management Board / Communications Network	Programme and key themes to be agreed Sept 05 and rolled out to March 06
Implement software for media management	Improve management of media enquiry system	ICT		Business case submitted but needs firming up and reconsidered. Decision by Information Policy Group by Jan 06

Improve media evaluation – provide analysis of coverage by Directorate to Management Board and communications network.	Allow areas to be identified that need more pro active positive coverage	Public Relations Officer / Admin and Project Support Assistant		Sept 05
Newspaper cuttings available on intranet	Keep staff better informed and provide additional research resource	Admin and Project Support Assistant / Public Relations Officer	ICT	Sept 05
Review media relations via journalist survey	To assess service levels and ideas for improvement	Public Relations Officer		Nov 05
Assess need for media training for key Members and officers	To ensure they know how to handle the media	Public Relations Officer / Members Support / Human Resources		Ongoing

### How we will measure our success

	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target 2003/4</b>	<b>Actual 2003/4</b>	<b>Target 2005/6</b>
% of news releases / statements used by the media	96.75%	90%*	91.7%	92%
% of positive and neutral coverage from national and local media	88%	90%	87%	90%
% of media enquiries answered within the first deadline as above	98%	90%*	98%	99.5%
% of media satisfied with PR's level/quality of service	N.A.	75%	100%	100%

\* This was below baseline but felt it was a realistic target at the time



# Internal Communications

## Key Role

- To create a better understanding about the links between the Herefordshire Plan, Herefordshire Council and individual services in the eyes of staff and members.
- To make staff and members ambassadors for the Council.
- To make sure staff feel informed about the Council, its services, activities and performance.
- To inform and support staff to maintain and improve their commitment and motivation.
- To share information and learning across the Council.
- To listen and respond to the views of staff and members.
- To celebrate the successes of individuals, teams and the Council.
- To make a direct contribution to Pay and Workforce Strategy and Corporate Plan

## Action Plan 2005/6

What	Why	Who	Resources	When
Finish the roll out of the Ps and Qs key messages internally: ensure they are present in every corporate document including interview and induction packs, along with guidelines for their use	To gain understanding and ownership of the key messages	Graphic Designer / Corporate Communications and Events Officer	Corporate Communications Team / Human Resources / ICT	Sept 05 – Dec 05
Produce Corporate Events / Initiatives Calendar	Allow for more planned and proactive communications activity	Corporate Communications and Events Officer	ICT / Communications Network	Dec 05

<p>Review intranet:</p> <p>Clarify editorial responsibility</p> <p>Improve navigation</p> <p>Improve content</p> <p>Compulsory desk top features</p> <p>Messages of the day/daily new update, use as and when, with campaigns</p>	<p>Provide opportunity to share information and learning</p>	<p>Public Relations Officer / Knowledge Manager</p> <p>Knowledge Manager</p> <p>Management Board</p> <p>ICT</p> <p>Corporate Communications Team</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Team / Communications Network</p>	<p>These activities will be integrated in a single project approximately six months in duration. To be prioritised as part of the review of projects called for by Corporate Management Board.</p>
<p>Review and relaunch Core News:</p> <p>Improve editorial content</p> <p>Improve design</p> <p>Increase to monthly publication</p> <p>Reduce/abolish Core News</p> <p>Specials</p>	<p>Improve impact and readership of this core communications product</p>	<p>Corporate Communications and Events Officer / Graphic Designer</p>	<p>Human Resources / Communications Network / Community Involvement Officer</p>	<p>Oct'05 – Feb '06 to review, relaunch in April 06</p>
<p>Review and update Team Briefing guidelines</p>	<p>Ensure consistency with new approach in Core News and build on highly valued method of communication</p>	<p>Corporate Communications and Events Officer</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Team / Human Resources</p>	<p>Oct 05 to review, relaunch in Jan 06</p>



Set up a 'story bank'/series of 'did you know' factsheets	Collect examples of achievement/good practice among council staff. Good tool for Human Resources training, recruitment and inductions	Communications Officer	Admin and Project Support Assistant	Nov 05 and ongoing
Investigate feasibility of setting up employee panel to build on existing focus groups	Sounding board for effective internal communications	Communications Officer	Corporate Communications Team / Human Resources / Communications Network / Management Board	Nov – Dec 05 carry out feasibility study. If agreed roll out with full annual programme Mar 06
Update Managers' Guide to provide guidelines for communications responsibilities and back up workshops	Provide managers with practical back up for delivering communications objectives	Human Resources and Training Officer / Graphic Designer		Nov 2005 and ongoing
Look at outcomes for communications in Core Competencies for Managers	To identify current competence levels	Human Resources Manager – Employee and Organisational Development	Human Resources	Dec 05
Design a supporting communications module for e-learning	To ensure managers understand their role in communications	Human Resources and training officer		
Research feasibility of introducing staff suggestion and staff awards scheme Check with Chris Gooding / Jane	Celebrate innovation and success and build morale among staff	Human Resources and Communications Officer	Corporate Communications Team	Dec 05 to complete feasibility, introduce in 06 if agreed

Develop internal communications campaign to inform staff about implications of customer services strategy/new contact centre	Ensure all staff know what changes will mean for them and for local people	Customer Services	Corporate Communications Team	October 2006
CEX's/Leader's roadshow	Increase visibility of senior management and engage with staff on important issues	Management Board / Communications Officer / Human Resources Manager	Corporate Communications Team	Bi annual as required
Communications staff to job shadow across the organisation	To gain a clearer understanding of communication needs and increase accessibility of PR team	Corporate Communications Team	Admin and Project Support Assistant	Programme from Jan 06
Review communication with Members. Has been reviewed, was member led – needs to be looked at again	Ensure Members are clearly briefed.	Public Relations Officer	Members Support / Corporate Communications Team	Rolling programme of media training with members
Weekly bulletin for staff containing recent news stories and key decisions	Ensure staff feel informed of Council decisions and key initiatives	Communications Officer	Corporate Communications Team / Communications Network	Launch Jan '06
Establish full annual programme for Managers' Forum	To continue to share learning and best practice	At present Policy and Research Manager. Ownership needs to be reviewed by Management Board		Ongoing

### How we will measure our success

	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target 2003/4</b>	<b>Actual 2003/4</b>	<b>Target 2005/6</b>
% of staff who agree that Herefordshire Council keeps them informed about its plans and performance	60%	64%	47%	50%
% of staff who agree that communications within Herefordshire Council work well	39%	50%	34%	38%
% of staff who say that Core News is their preferred vehicle for general information about the Council.	14%	N/a	n/a	N/a
% of staff who say that Intranet is their preferred vehicle for general information about the Council	30%	n/a	n/a	N/a
% of staff who understand the Herefordshire Plan.	43%	n/a	n/a	N/a
% of staff who say morale within their work area is generally good			42%	50%
% of staff who speak highly of Council outside			48%	56%

# Corporate Identity

## Key Role

- To create a better understanding between Herefordshire Council and individual services in the eyes of our residents.
- To create a better understanding about the links between the Herefordshire Plan, Herefordshire Council and individual services in the eyes of staff and members.
- To raise our profile in the eyes of all our key audiences and to get credit for our achievements for the people of Herefordshire.
- To ensure we strike the right balance between the promotion of individual services, Herefordshire Council and our work within Herefordshire Partnership whilst maintaining and reinforcing the strong brand of Herefordshire Council.

## Action Plan 2005/6

What	Why	Who	Resources	When
Finish the roll out of the Ps and Qs key messages internally	To gain understanding and ownership of the key messages and ensure they follow corporate branding guidelines	Corporate Communications Team / ICT	Communications Network	Sept 05 – Dec 05
Review and relaunch Core News:  Improve editorial content Improve design Increase to monthly publication Reduce/abolish Core News Specials	Improve impact and readership of this core communications product while ensuring it follows corporate branding guidelines	Corporate Communications and Events Officer / Graphic Designer	Human Resources / Communications Network / Community Involvement Officer	Oct '05 – Feb '06 to review, relaunch in April 06

Review and update Team Briefing guidelines	Ensure consistency with new approach in Core News	Corporate Communications and Events Officer	Corporate Communications Team / Human Resources	Oct 05 to review, relaunch in Jan 06
Develop Managers' Guide to provide guidelines for communications responsibilities and back up workshops	Provide managers with practical back up for delivering communications objectives in line with corporate guidelines	Personnel Officer / Graphic Designer		Nov 05 and ongoing
Carry out site visits to Council offices to check adherence to corporate standards for publications, displays, signage etc	Ensure consistent promotion of the Herefordshire brand.	Graphic Designer		Bi-annual

### How we will measure our success

	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target 2003/4</b>	<b>Actual 2003/4</b>	<b>Target 2005/6</b>
% of residents who recognise the Council's logo	70%	75%	71%	72%
% of Council publications complying with corporate style guidelines	N.A.	70%	80%	85%
% of signage complying with corporate style guidelines	N.A.	80%	80%	85%

# E-communication

## Key Role

### External

- To create a better understanding between Herefordshire Council and individual services in the eyes of our residents.
- To make sure people feel informed about the Council, its services, activities and performance.
- To provide open access to information about the Council's spending and full range of services and activities.
- To raise our profile in the eyes of all our key audiences and to get credit for our achievements for the people of Herefordshire.

### Internal

- To create a better understanding about the links between the Herefordshire Plan, Herefordshire Council and individual services in the eyes of staff and members.
- To make sure staff feel informed about the Council, its services, activities and performance.
- To share information and learning across the Council.

## Action Plan 2005/6

What	Why	Who	Resources	When
------	-----	-----	-----------	------

<p>Review intranet:</p> <p>Clarify editorial responsibility</p> <p>Improve navigation</p> <p>Improve content</p> <p>Compulsory desk top features</p> <p>Messages of the day/daily new update, use as and when, with campaigns</p>	<p>Provide opportunity to share information and learning</p>	<p>Public Relations Officer ICT</p> <p>Management Board ICT</p> <p>Corporate Communications Team</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Team / Communications Network</p>	<p>These activities will be integrated in a single project approximately six months in duration. To be prioritised as part of the review of projects called for by Corporate Management Board.</p>
<p>Website version of County Guide</p>	<p>Promote Herefordshire to visitors and residents</p>	<p>Public Relation Officer / Knowledge Manager</p>		<p>(See review of intranet note above)</p>
<p>E-gateway and enhancement of online services</p>	<p>Improve electronic access to information and Council services</p>	<p>Head of ICT</p>		<p>(See review of intranet note above)</p>
<p>Improve A-Z page on website</p>	<p>Improve availability of relevant information to customer and make access easier</p>	<p>IT / Communications Network</p>		<p>(See review of intranet note above)</p>
<p>Develop corporate web guidance</p>	<p>To provide guidance over branding, style and approach</p>	<p>Knowledge Manager</p>		<p>(See review of intranet note above)</p>

### How we will measure our success

	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target 2003/4</b>	<b>Actual 2003/4</b>	<b>Target 2005/6</b>
% of residents who are aware that Herefordshire Council has a website	35%	40%	55%	
% of residents who have accessed the website	18%	n/a	28%	
% of residents aware of the website who agree that the website is useful	75%	n/a	87%	



# Consultation

## Key role

- To show people we listen and take account of their views.
- To ensure people know how to influence decisions the Council makes.

The action plan for consultation is outlined in the 'Community Involvement Strategy and Action Plan which is a link document to this strategy. Some key actions to note include:

- New programme of Community Fora.
- Consultation on partnership activities and priorities, principally the Herefordshire plan and the *Herefordshire Conversation*. Regular surveys through the *Herefordshire Voice* citizen's panel.
- Public consultation about Council Tax levels and budget options
- Well-established systems for establishing the needs of individual service users and carers.
- The *Customer Care Strategy* has led to the setting of corporate customer care standards. Major changes in the way services are provided have been made only after careful consultation (for example, the introduction of high street Info Shops followed a survey commissioned from Mori)
- Annual public satisfaction surveys.
- Having led the establishment of *The Herefordshire Equality Partnership*, the Council is identifying all relevant groups so that it can involve them fully.
- Consultation database/activity log.

**Key Actions (for further details please refer to the Community Involvement Action Plan, which can be accessed on our website).**

What	Why	Who	Resources	When
Undertake internal skills audit, leading to staff training programme and useful hints and tips available on Intranet	Assess skills and needs, and to improve staff skills to for high quality consultation with and involvement of communities	Community Involvement Team		Oct 05

Introduce electronic consultation mechanisms to council website	To make available an additional consultation tool and provide publicly accessible consultation database	Community Involvement Team, Web-Services		Oct 05
Review and make recommendations for use of existing involvement mechanisms, such as Community Fora	To make best use of existing mechanisms and increase the public's understanding of council work	Community Involvement Team, Community Forum Coordinator		Dec 05
Identify 'hard-to-reach' and Equality groups and enter into annual involvement programme, based on Equality Impact Assessments	Without fully understanding the needs of all groups in Herefordshire the Council will not be able to provide targeted services.	Community Involvement Coordinator, Diversity Group		Dec 05 and ongoing
Use Customer Satisfaction Surveys, Citizens Panels and other appropriate means to establish the needs and aspirations of communities	To have statistically reliable data available to provide the right services to local people	Research Team		Dec 05 and ongoing

### How we will measure our success

	Baseline	Target 2003/4	Actual 2003/4	Target 2005/6
% of Herefordshire Voice respondents who feel that the Council does enough to give local people the opportunity to influence important decisions	9%	20%	n.a.	n.a.
% of Herefordshire Voice respondents who feel that they can influence decisions that affect their area	32%	35%	37%	n.a.
Number of staff attending consultation training sessions	0	N/a	N/a	50

Number of e-consultations undertaken in compliance with Community Involvement principles	0	N/a	N/a	15
Number of events that specifically target 'hard-to-reach' groups	0	N/a	N/a	5

# Who's Responsible?

There are annual action plans for each communication tool to ensure the communications strategy is implemented. Progress against these will be reported on in the usual way, under the Performance Management Framework, including full performance report at the end of year.

The day to day management of the Communications Strategy sits with the Corporate Communications Team. Other key groups who hold responsibility are:

## **Chief Executive's Management Team**

Members of the Chief Executive's Management Team will be responsible for driving the Communications Strategy. They will actively apply its principles to all aspects of their work.

They will communicate their decisions and the thinking behind them. They will be open, honest and timely in all communications.

They will ensure that they and their immediate staff meet the communications requirements outlined in the 'management competencies'.

They will be responsible for timely identification of important/contentious issues to the Public Relations Team.

## **Key Managers (i.e. members of Managers' Forum)**

All key managers will take responsibility for ensuring successful implementation of the Communications Strategy within their area.

They will also:

- Ensure that all members of staff are aware of the Communications Strategy and the key messages.
- Ensure that all members of staff feel that they can raise any issues of concern and freely express their views and opinions.
- Provide regular feedback to their senior manager, continuing the upward flow of information they've instigated with their staff.
- Ensure that they meet the communications requirements outlined in the 'management competencies'.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of who their Communications Network representative is and their role.

- Management Board have taken part in a 360 appraisal via consultants. Rest of Key Managers still going through 360 via e-enabled assessment (questionnaire)

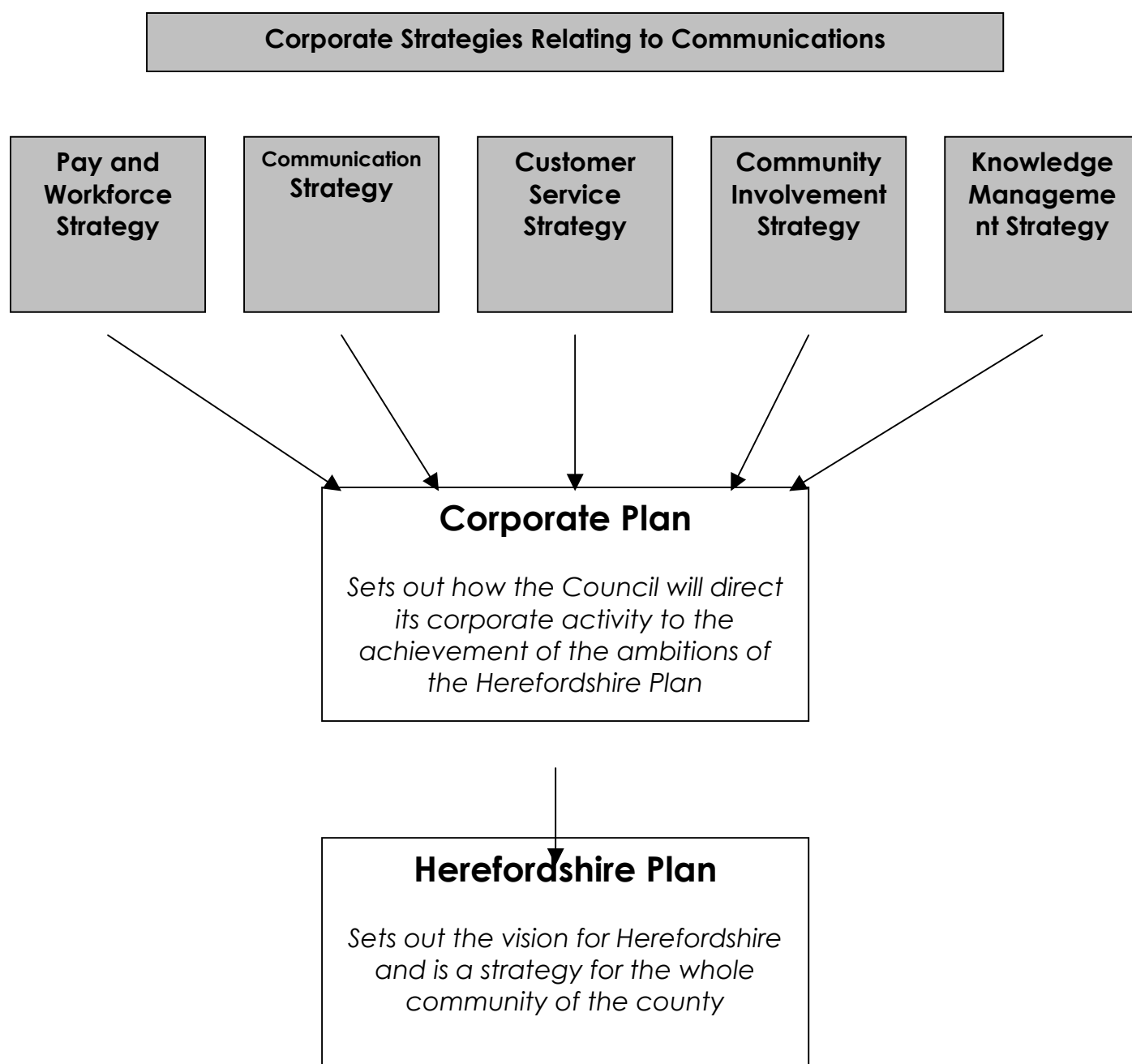
## **Members of the Communications Network**

Each Directorate/Department has a representative on the Communications Network. Each member has the following responsibilities:

- To assist with the implementation of all aspects of the Communications Strategy within their Directorate/Department.
- To actively participation in the Communications Network.
- To actively contribute to the preparation of a yearly schedule outlining key events and issues that require public relations support.
- To liaise with Directorate/Department personnel to provide the Corporate Communications Team with regular content for Herefordshire Matters.
- To liaise with Directorate/Department personnel to ensure that all communications adhere to the corporate style guidelines and communicate the key messages.

However, to ensure full and successful implementation of the Communications Strategy overall responsibility lies with every member of staff and elected representative.

# A Plethora of Plans...Where does the Communications Strategy fit?



# HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: RURAL REGENERATION AND STRATEGY

CABINET

29TH SEPTEMBER, 2005

---

### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To agree the updated Community Involvement Strategy and related long term action plan.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

### Recommendation

**THAT Members note the contents of the report and confirm the action plan.**

### Reasons

The current Community Involvement Strategy, agreed by Herefordshire Council Cabinet in the spring of 2004 outlined the Council's commitment to involving residents of Herefordshire in decisions affecting their lives through a variety of means. This strategy identified a number of key issues and mechanisms, which needed resolution updating, due to changes in government requirements of local authorities' engagement processes. These are highlighted in the Key Lines of Enquiry (KEO) of the Corporate Assessment 2005.

In line with the updated Strategy and new requirements mentioned above, an action plan has been drawn up to accompany this strategy, enabling officers to implement the Council's ambitions for community involvement and consultation as outlined in the Corporate Plan and the Annual Operating Plan.

### Considerations

1. Local Authorities are increasingly required to inform decisions about changes in policy and service delivery through community involvement activities, such as Parish Plans, Community Forums and various means of consultation.
2. Whilst Herefordshire Council has a tradition of involving residents in decision making, Best Practice requirements and expectations about coordination, feedback to consultees and appropriate mechanisms for consultation have changed significantly in the recent past.

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Martin Heuter-Russell, Community Involvement Coordinator on 01432 383032

3. In order to respond to these changes, a number of changes in our approach to community involvement and consultation are required, to ensure that the council's commitments in the Corporate Plan can be achieved.
4. The Community Involvement Strategy therefore makes commitments to agreed standards of consultation; the requirement of all Council departments to log planned consultation with the Community Involvement Coordinator and/or the Principal Research Officer of Herefordshire Council, who will offer advice and assistance to create high quality consultations; the implementation of electronic logging mechanisms for consultation.
5. Responsibility for implementation of this strategy lies with the Director of Corporate and Customer Services
6. A noticeable change to the previous strategy is an embedded list of measurable outcomes, which in return are supported by a long term action plan, to be updated annually, in line with the agreed outcomes within the annual operating plan.

### **Alternative Options**

None

### **Risk Management**

The existing Community Involvement Strategy falls short of current Best Practice and does not relate adequately to the Council's Corporate Plan and Annual Operating Plan. The Strategy and Action Plan outline responsibilities for implementation.

### **Consultees**

This Strategy and the Action Plan have been discussed with Chief Executive's Management Team.

### **Background Papers**

None identified.



# **“Encouraging communities to shape the future of Herefordshire”**

## **Herefordshire Council’s Strategy for Community Involvement**



# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	3
<b>2, The National Context</b> .....	3
<b>3. Purpose</b> .....	3
<b>4. The Strategy</b> .....	5
<b>4. Roles and responsibilities</b> .....	7
<b>5. Quality Standards for Community Involvement</b> .....	9
<b>6. Action Planning</b> .....	10
<b>7. Consultation methods</b> .....	10
<b>8. Our commitment</b> .....	11

## **1. Introduction**

Herefordshire Council has a strong tradition of engaging and consulting with local people and recognises and acknowledges the benefits that good quality community involvement offers to local communities, communities of interest and to Herefordshire Council and our partners. This commitment is also rooted in its core values. The Council has, through its commitment to delivering quality services and supporting the delivery of the Herefordshire Plan, been involved in a variety of good practice initiatives over recent years intended to drive up the levels and quality of community involvement in decision-making, both within the Council and externally.

## **2, The National Context**

Local Authorities are increasingly expected by Central Government and external funders to base their decisions on direct communication with local people, interest groups (so called stakeholders), and do so in a planned and coordinated way. Audit Commission guidance on *Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)* emphasises the role of community involvement in improving Council performance and in identifying the needs and aspirations of local people.

The 2005 CPA Key Lines of Enquiry for Corporate Assessment will *“measure how well local councils understand their local communities (...)* (Audit Commission, CPA Key Lines of Enquiry, 2005, p. 2)

The need for a strategic approach to Herefordshire Council’s community involvement and consultation has been highlighted through a number of routes, including widespread consultation around the Herefordshire Plan and Community Development Strategy, the annual audit of community involvement undertaken by the Community Involvement Co-ordinator in 2002, ongoing dialogue with stakeholders and internal and external inspection, particularly the 2001 and 2004 CPA inspections. It is also recognised that the continued development of this work is significant with benefits to the Council and our partners in supporting the ambition to “Encourage Communities to shape the future of Herefordshire” (Herefordshire Plan).

## **3. Purpose**

*... better to understand the needs and preferences of service users and Council-tax payers, and to tailor services accordingly ...*  
(Herefordshire Council Corporate Plan 2005-8, p. 17)

This Strategy will ensure that action is being taken so that Herefordshire people are able to express their views and aspirations and shape the development of the Council's policies and services that affect them. It follows the 2005 Inspection focus, suggesting that "... *consultation recognizes the range and complexity of service user needs, makes provision for choice and does not make unnecessary demands on those consulted.*" (CPA p. 7). This will be achieved by making sure that the Council's mechanisms for involving and consulting the communities of and in Herefordshire are coordinated and that best use is made of resources. In particular the strategy seeks to ensure that:

- Community Involvement and consultative activity is accessible to and inclusive of the views of all Herefordshire people within the meaning of the current and future equalities legislation<sup>1</sup>
- The aspirations in the current and future [Corporate Plans](#) of Herefordshire Council are being addressed
- Community Involvement and consultation are mainstream activities for all Council departments and services
- Guidance is provided to Council staff, staff in partner organisations and residents in Herefordshire who are or wish to be involved in their communities to ensure that high and consistent standards of community involvement and consultation practice are adhered to;
- Activity is coordinated to ensure lack of duplication and best use of resources which will lead to increased levels of participation;
- The findings of involvement and consultative activity are fed back to participants and promoted to ensure maximum value
- The impact consultation has had on service planning and delivery be explained on a regular basis and Best Practice being shared;
- People who live and work in Herefordshire are provided with clear information to them about their opportunities to get involved and what their involvement can achieve
- A variety of mechanisms are developed and used to consult with residents and partners, including new technologies.
- all stakeholders are committed to the achievement of its aims and objectives

The strategy will ensure that our partners, other stakeholders and communities themselves are clear about how, why and in what ways communities can influence the Council's decisions. The strategy also serves as Herefordshire Council's commitment to meeting the aims and objectives for community involvement as set out in the Herefordshire Plan, the [Corporate Plan](#), and associated documents:

---

<sup>1</sup> Insert here details of legislation

<sup>4</sup> E:\MODERNGOV\Data\AgendaItemDocs\0\7\1\AI00007170\CommunityInvolvementStrategy20051.doc

- **The Herefordshire Plan**
- **The Council's Corporate Plan**
- **Herefordshire Community Development Strategy**
- **Herefordshire Council's communications strategy "Connecting with Communities"**
- **Best Value Performance Plan**
- **Statement of Community Involvement**
- **Race Equality Scheme**
- **Local Agenda 21 (LA21) Plan**

This strategy will also link in with other (strategic) Partnerships, such as the Community Safety and Drugs Partnership, the Primary Care Trust's Patient Advisory and Liaison Service (PALS) and the Learning and Skills Council.

#### **4. The Strategy**

Our aim is to:

**"Improve Community Involvement in the process of decision making".**

The definition of community involvement as used in the Herefordshire Plan:

*"Community Involvement describes the full range of research, consultation and participation of communities and individuals in the decision making process".*

#### ***This might include:***

- *Communities of interest (e.g. young people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, farmers, carers and service users)*
- *Communities of place or "Geographical communities" (e.g. towns, parishes, wards and estates)"*

**Our objectives are<sup>2</sup>:**

Objective	measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To enable more people to be engaged in the democratic process</li> <li>• To continuously improve the ways we involve residents and partners through information, training and sharing of best Practice</li> <li>• To ensure the appropriate involvement of Herefordshire people in the decisions which affect their lives</li> <li>• To enable everyone, especially <a href="#">hard-to-reach groups</a> and groups at risk of disadvantage to make their voices heard, particularly               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Older People</a>,</li> <li>○ <a href="#">Children and Young People</a>,</li> <li>○ Disabled People and</li> <li>○ people from ethnic minorities</li> <li>○ people who live in geographical isolation (e.g. in small villages)</li> <li>○ people who are otherwise isolated</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To increase transparency and accountability</li> <li>• To make best use of available resources and techniques for community involvement and consultation, including the emerging electronic means of consultation.</li> </ul>	<p>%age of residents who feel that they can influence decisions the council makes (based on survey)</p> <p>%level increase in active involvement through volunteering</p> <p>%age of Parish Council seats uncontested</p> <p># of/representation of respective groups to participate in decision making processes</p> <p>%age increase of formal volunteering across the county</p> <p>% of Parishes uncontested in local elections</p> <p># of Parish Plans adopted<sup>3</sup></p> <p>%age of reports of consultations published</p> <p>Demonstrated by publication of Consultation guide and feedback from consultees.</p>

<sup>2</sup> actions and targets are specified in the Long Term Action Plan

<sup>3</sup> see relevant section in the Council's Corporate Plan and Annual Operating Plan

6 E:\MODERNGOV\Data\AgendaItemDocs\0\7\1\AI00007170\CommunityInvolvementStrategy20051.doc

## **Ultimately this should enable the Council, with its partners, to make better decisions and provide better services**

To achieve these objectives this strategy sets out a framework of:

- a. [Roles and responsibilities](#) to ensure the successful implementation of the strategy
- b. [Quality Standards](#) to ensure community involvement is inclusive and effective
- c. Action Planning to commit us to actions that will deliver the strategy
- d. Appropriate [methods for consultation and involvement](#) activity
- e. particular mechanisms to involve those who find it difficult to make their voices heard (to be developed)
- f. Targets to enable us to keep track of where we are aiming to be
- g. Monitoring and evaluation framework to enable us to keep track of progress

### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

Council Members already identify and represent the needs and views of their local communities. Various departments and officers have clear roles in involving and consulting the wider community.

This strategy sets out proposed key roles and responsibilities for community involvement across Herefordshire Council:

- Responsibility for the implementation of this strategy lies with the ***Director of Corporate and Customer Services***;
- Herefordshire Council will nominate elected members, who will have the lead responsibility for action plans designed to ensure that [hard-to-reach groups](#) will be targeted by this strategy.
- Council Members and Chief Officers receive and consider six monthly progress reports, including an annual audit report concerning community involvement in Herefordshire Council.

- **Directors are responsible for:**
  - Including community involvement activities in service plans and contributing these to the Annual Directorate Consultation Plan and Service Plans.
  - Ensuring these are logged on the Community Involvement Database
  - Ensuring that elected members are kept fully informed of proposed activities in their ward;
  - Ensuring that consultations are consistent with the Community Involvement Strategy and discussed with the Community Involvement Coordinator or Principal Research Officer prior to commencement.
  - Ensuring staff are enabled to carry out effective community involvement activity
  - Ensuring that results are fed-back to all stakeholders with clear outlines of how they will be used in service planning

**The Community Involvement Coordinator will be responsible for**

- An annual community involvement audit and other stakeholder involvement throughout the year to
- Advise the Chief Executive's Senior Management Team on the organisational capacity within Herefordshire Council to ensure that principles of community involvement are being adhered to and quality standards met
- An annual community involvement report will be submitted to the Chief Executive's Management Team, reporting on progress against set targets and recommendations for improvements



## **5. Quality Standards for Community Involvement**

These performance standards are intended to ensure that the basic principles of community involvement are adhered to across Herefordshire Council. These principles have been agreed as recently as January 2005. Advice and support will be provided to Council and staff from partner organisations to ensure that we can meet these standards.

- 1. Adequate time will be given to ensure the effective involvement of all stakeholders from the very beginning in planning (staff) and participating (consultees) in involvement activity.**
- 2. The needs of all communities should be considered to ensure that involvement activity is inclusive and ensures equality of opportunity to participate**
  - a. Information will be freely available and in an **accessible** format
  - b. All consultees have been given appropriate assistance to participate in consultation activities
  - c. As far as possible, venues will be chosen which are accessible within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act.
  - d. Involvement and consultation techniques will be chosen commensurate with the target audience and the purpose of the consultation
- 3. All community involvement activity responds to Herefordshire Council's Corporate Plan and will be built into service and departmental plans and information entered on the Community Involvement Database (see Co-ordination arrangements**
- 4. Best practice guidance will be followed, and examples of best practice shared.**
- 5. Consultation resources will be built into departmental and service budgets or additional resources sought**
- 6. Appropriate training and support will be provided to staff to enable them to undertake consultation on behalf of Herefordshire Council.**
- 7. Those consulted will be informed speedily about the outcome of the consultation within 3 months of the end of the consultation**
- 8. Feedback will be given showing what the result of the consultation was and how community involvement has influenced policy, service delivery and decision-making.**

**9. All involvement activity is to be evaluated and where appropriate this evaluation will include participants**

Herefordshire Council will use these performance standards and associated targets as the basis of evaluation for community involvement across the authority.

**6. Action Planning**

This strategy is accompanied with a long-term action plan, broken down into annual action plans, which form part of Herefordshire Council's Corporate Plan. Targets set in this action plan will be reviewed annually in line with other targets and the results will be published on our Community Involvement web pages. This strategy also forms the umbrella for specific action plans, which will be agreed during 2005/6. These action plans will show Herefordshire Council's commitment to serve particular groups in the community, as outlined in para 5 above.

Specific Action Plans will be developed for

- o Older People,
- o Children and Young People,
- o Disabled People and
- o people from ethnic minorities

**7. Consultation methods**

Herefordshire Council will strive continuously to update and improve the methods used for its consultations. Not every method is appropriate for the various groups and individuals in our communities, and we need to tailor the methods we use accordingly. This strategy will therefore identify a range of methods for staff to use in accordance with the Quality Standards and Principles of Community Involvement stated. (as appendix in hardcopy, e-version will have link).

## **8. Our commitment**

The Council commits itself to the following Principles of Community Involvement (courtesy of Bristol City Council)

### **Opinion should be informed**

Consultation will aim to seek informed public opinion and not just instant reaction. Whenever possible, the council's communication mechanisms will be used alongside consultation to inform and stimulate public interest, particularly in relation to major strategic and city wide issues.

### **Decisions should be based on evidence**

The council will adopt clear processes of consultation which, wherever possible, produce results that are measurable and can be evaluated objectively.

### **Purpose should be clear**

Any consultation will contain a clear statement describing why it is being carried out and how the results will be used. The way the consultation links to the council's wider corporate aims, work programmes and statutory policy framework will also be described.

### **Consultation should be well planned and timely**

Consultees will be given adequate time to prepare their response. It is recognised that the length of time will vary depending on the time of year and the level of response that is being sought. Sufficient time will be allowed for the results of consultation to be collated, analysed and considered, so that the results of consultation feed directly into the decision making process.

### **Consultation should be inclusive**

Consultation will aim to be inclusive. To achieve this, the council will give particular consideration to the needs of people with impaired sight or hearing or who have learning difficulties; people whose first language is not English or who cannot read at all and people who might have problems with physical access such as people in wheelchairs and people with pushchairs. In addition, the council will take steps to ensure that the views of younger people, older people, people from ethnic minority communities and others whose views are frequently excluded or overlooked, are actively sought as part of consultation that is inclusive and representative of the community as a whole.

### **Methods should be appropriate and well managed**

The council will use a wide range of public consultation methods. They will be used appropriately, reflecting the strengths and weaknesses of each method and will be managed with a clear understanding of the particular skills, knowledge and resources that consultation requires.

### **Results should be acknowledged and fully considered**

The full range of views expressed during consultation will be acknowledged and attention drawn to areas of agreement and disagreement. The results of public consultation will be weighed carefully together with other evidence and considerations.

### **Accessible feedback should be given**

Accessible feedback will be provided both on the results of consultation and on how they have been used, in order to encourage greater public participation in the future.

**Effectiveness should be evaluated** The effectiveness of major public consultation will be evaluated and the results shared to encourage broader lessons to be learned. Evaluation will consider not only the number of responses received but also the quality, cost and timeliness of the consultation and the overall usefulness of the results in helping to inform decisions.

# Community Involvement Action Plan

## Herefordshire Council

This action plan is designed to put into action the commitments of the Community Involvement Strategy. Ultimately it will help to fulfil the Council's commitment in its Corporate Plan 2005-8 – "... Making it happen through greater Customer Focus (... and customer focus) (Herefordshire Council Corporate Plan 2005-8, p. 21)

Establish details of consultation and involvement activity within Herefordshire Council			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Time scales</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>resources</i>
Undertake skills and method audit, self-assessment of organisational capacity to consult with, and implement recommendations of consultation activity = Community Involvement audit	September 05, then annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess organisational capacity to</li> <li>Devise training/briefing sessions and advice/support structure to</li> <li>Improve quality and effectiveness of consultation</li> </ul>	Cic, cio, pro
Analysis of current and planned consultation activities	September 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To contribute to assessment of organisational capacity</li> </ul>	CIC, PRO
Establish stakeholder	October 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have directorate/departamental</li> </ul>	CIC, CIO,

lists		stakeholder lists available for coordination purposes	Directors
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More intelligent consultation due to targeted consultation with stakeholder list</li> <li>• Better quality feedback from key stakeholders</li> </ul>	
<b>Amend Community Involvement Strategy</b>			
Existing Community Involvement Strategy amended in the light of changed expectations by Government	August 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearer strategy with associated action plans and outcomes</li> <li>• Clear commitments in strategy, agreed by Herefordshire Council</li> <li>• Increased accountability re high quality consultation with partners and public</li> </ul>	CIC
Consult on draft strategy	September 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buy in from council departments, partner organisations in both the public, private and voluntary and community sector</li> </ul>	CIC
Link draft strategy to communication strategy	September 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure compatibility</li> </ul>	CIC
Finalise Community involvement strategy	October 05	Strategy in place	CIC
Publish Community Involvement Strategy	October 05	Publicly available on HC/HP website	CIC
<b>(Draft) Long-Term Community Involvement Action Plan</b>			
Based on revised Community	August – October 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw up action plan and present to CPA supplier group</li> </ul>	CIC

Involvement Strategy, draw up overall draft action plan and thematic action plans		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiate and agree performance measure of this action plan</li> <li>Get agreement for this plan by CXMT and begin implementation</li> </ul>	
Agree final action plan for 2005-2007	October/November 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action plan in place</li> <li>Begin delivery of priority actions</li> </ul>	CIC
Publish action plan	November 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicly available on HC/HP website</li> </ul>	CIC
<b>Implement electronic consultation and feedback mechanisms</b>			
Promotion of the newly introduced electronic resources to Herefordshire Council (and partner) staff	June/July 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One presentation to each directorate, plus two for partner organisations</li> <li>All council departments and partners know about the availability of software, its uses and advantages</li> </ul>	CIC
Implement introduction of electronic consultation software	July/August 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Available to all staff and partners by late Summer 05</li> <li>High take up of use of software (60% of all consultations logged by 12/05, 80% by 3/06, 95% logged by 06/06)</li> </ul>	ICT
Consultation with partners on details of e-consultation software	January 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure appropriate details are agreed for software setup</li> <li>As a result of this ensure highest possible buy in from partners</li> </ul>	ICT
<b>Establish logging mechanisms to ensure information about consultation is available to all staff and public</b>			
Continued logging of consultation activities by Herefordshire Council staff	Spring 05 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High take up of use of software (30% of all consultations logged by 12/05, 40% by 3/06, 50% logged by 06/06)</li> <li>Based on bespoke survey, usefulness of logging mechanism</li> </ul>	All staff

		established by 30% of consultation and service managers (06), 50% (07), 60% (08).		
Update Herefordshire Council and Partnership website to include community involvement webpages	May/June 05 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up-to-date info on Community Involvement available to the public</li> <li>Clear information about consultations available via new software</li> <li>Useful information available to public and partners</li> </ul>		CIC, CIO
Begin publishing "Consult" as online information source	Autumn 05 onwards quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular feedback on Best Practice available to Council and Partner Staff</li> <li>Increased knowledge about consultation available to all staff</li> </ul>		CIC, PRO
<b>Individual action plans agreed for young people, older people, ethnic minorities and disabled people</b>				
Agreement on detailed action plans for young people, older people, ethnic minorities and disabled people sought	October-December 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear communication lines and responsibilities established</li> </ul>		Youth Involvement Race Equality Officer/Diversity Group Disabled People – NN Older People - NN
Responsibility allocated for drawing up individual action plans feeding into community involvement strategy	June 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures that these action plans can be drawn up within agreed time tables</li> <li>Responsibility worked into workplans</li> </ul>		Dto



Establish and act upon process for Equality Impact Assessments	June 06 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated into the corporate consultation programme</li> <li>Clearer understanding of needs of identified groups</li> </ul>	
<b>Ensure that all Council (and Partner) staff have access to support, advice and information about Best Practice in Involvement and Consultation</b>			
Community Involvement Coordinator to undertake briefing sessions with Directorate Management teams re consultation and involvement actions	April/May 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce gaps in knowledge and understanding of requirements, understanding of processes and advice/support available to staff</li> </ul>	CIO, CIC
Finalise useful hints and tips for community involvement web-pages	October 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to all staff to improve quality of consultation with Herefordshire Council</li> </ul>	PRO, CIC
Detailed arrangements established for different consultation fora, e.g. Local Area Fora, Older People's Fora	Winter 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information available on additional face-to-face consultation mechanisms</li> </ul>	CIC
Draw up briefing/training plan for Directorates/staff	Winter 05 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tailor-made sessions to improve knowledge and understanding of how to consult, best practice, etc.</li> <li>Increase in high quality consultation throughout Herefordshire Council</li> </ul>	CIC, PRO

<p>Agree quality standards and monitoring systems for consultation within Herefordshire Council</p>	<p>Summer 05</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal based on Consultation Institute targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• X% of consultations considered by an independent assessor as having had a significant impact on decisions over last 12 months.</li> <li>• X% of key stakeholders<sup>1</sup> have been fully and meaningfully engaged in consultation processes</li> <li>• X% of elected members to whom the consultation is/was relevant consider the output from public/stakeholder consultation helpful to them in the discharge of their duties.</li> <li>• Establish baseline for Herefordshire Council and work towards year on year improvement (to be set after baseline established<sup>2</sup>)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>CIC, PRO</p>
<p><b>Incorporate community involvement and consultation in mainstream corporate culture</b></p>			
<p>Regular feedback to senior management on consultation plans, capacity and progress against set targets</p>	<p>Spring 05 onwards – six monthly</p>	<p>senior management buy in ensured</p>	<p>CIC, Director of Policy and Community</p>
<p>Directorate</p>	<p>Autumn 05</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• firm commitment to planned</li> </ul>	<p>Directorates</p>

<sup>1</sup> Need to ensure who these are: suggest HP partners

<sup>2</sup> see above

consultation plans established		consultations, resources and budgets allocated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>forms basis of Corporate Consultation Plan</li> </ul>	CIC, Policy team?
Incorporation of directorate consultation plans in Annual operating plan	Autumn 05 and annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to ensure Corporate overview and budget allocation</li> <li>ensures that status of high quality, planned consultation is acknowledged</li> </ul>	CIC, Policy team?
Regular workshops/info sessions for decision makers and staff on consultation and involvement principles and techniques/Best Practice	Autumn 05 onwards and evaluation annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>knowledge and understanding of value of high quality consultation</li> <li>ensure that targets for high quality consultations can be achieved</li> </ul>	CIC
Agree corporate consultation programme	November 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>overview of corporate consultations ensured</li> </ul>	CIC, PRO
<b>Increased use of existing consultation and involvement tools</b>			
Review use and role of Community Fora, Scrutiny Committee and make recommendations for future use	Winter 05/06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establish clarity of purpose for these facilities where necessary</li> <li>improved and appropriate use of these facilities, feeding into corporate targets of community involvement</li> <li>improve – where necessary – the accessibility of these facilities</li> </ul>	CIC, Director of Corporate and Customer Services
Use local area fora, Parish Plans and	Autumn 05 onwards and evaluation annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluate effectiveness of existing mechanisms and increase use in line</li> </ul>	CIC, Community

thematic fora to continuously engage with public		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with performance measures (tba)</li> <li>annual evaluation of use of these mechanisms in line with Consultation Strategy commitments and set targets (see above) increase number of Parish Plans adopted</li> </ul>	Forum Coordinator, Parish Plan Steering Group
<b>Increase in citizen's involvement in line with targets set in Corporate Plan, Annual Operating Plan, Annual Public Service Agreement and other relevant strategies</b>			
Use mechanisms outlined above to meet set targets	As of Autumn/Winter 05 onwards	<p>achieving targets set in Corporate Plan, in particular sections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve community involvement in the process of decision making</li> <li>To keep Herefordshire people, our staff and our partners involved and informed about what we are doing and why</li> <li>Increase in volunteering in line with LPSA targets<sup>4</sup></li> <li>Increase in numbers of adopted Parish Plans</li> <li>Take up of e-consultations</li> </ul>	Director of Corporate and Customer Services
Provide appropriate advice, support and training to relevant Council and Partner staff and interested local residents	Winter 05 onwards, annual rolling programme	<p>With agreed year-on-year improvements.</p> <p>More knowledge and understanding of involvement and consultation processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Up to 4 Annual Parish Plan surgeries delivered</li> <li>Annual rolling programme of</li> </ul>	CIC, CIO, PPSSG

<sup>3</sup> The Herefordshire Plan is currently being reviewed; any specific actions from this plan will be incorporated at the earliest opportunity.

<sup>4</sup> A separate action plan will be developed for this

		involvement training delivered and attended by x participants (tbc)	
Undertake consultations to establish appropriateness and usefulness of key Community Involvement actions	06 onwards annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feedback from public about our Community Involvement Programme</li> <li>• adjustment of community involvement strategy and action plan with input from Herefordshire Citizens</li> <li>• greater transparency of Council work and improvement of public perception</li> </ul>	CIC, CIO, Research Team

DRAFT

