

# A G E N D A

## Environment Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday, 5th December, 2005**

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Time: **10.00 a.m.**

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

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

*For any further information please contact:*

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

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

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**County of Herefordshire  
District Council**



# AGENDA

## for the Meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee

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

Councillors P.J. Dauncey, K.G. Grumbley, J.G.S. Guthrie, T.W. Hunt,  
J.W. Newman, Ms. G.A. Powell, Miss F. Short and J.B. Williams

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| <b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  |         |
| To receive apologies for absence.  |         |
| <b>2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)</b>   |         |
| To receive details any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.   |         |
| <b>3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>   |         |
| To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.  |         |
| <b>4. MINUTES</b>  | 1 - 14  |
| To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th October, 2005.   |         |
| <b>5. SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY</b>   |         |
| To consider suggestions from members of the public on issues the Committee could scrutinise in the future.   |         |
| <b>6. GEM PERFORMANCE 2005/06 : HALF YEAR REPORT</b>   | 15 - 32 |
| To review the Council's environmental management / ISO 14001 system over 2005/06 to the half year to ensure that it continues to be suitable, adequate and effective and deliver improvement in environmental performance. |         |
| <b>7. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PERFORMANCE</b>  | 33 - 42 |
| To report progress against the Government's BV109 target for 2005/06 and any outstanding actions in order to achieve the target.   |         |
| <b>8. ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING</b>  | 43 - 50 |
| To advise Members of the revenue budget monitoring position for the Environment Programme Area budget for the period to 31st October 2005.   |         |

**9. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2006/7**

To consider a new Committee work programme for the period 2006/7.

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## **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

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

The Council has established Scrutiny Committees for Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing, Children's Services, Community Services, Environment, and Health. A Strategic Monitoring Committee scrutinises corporate matters and co-ordinates the work of these Committees.

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

The principal roles of Scrutiny Committees are to

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

Formal meetings of the Committees are held in public and information on your rights to attend meetings and access to information are set out overleaf

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#### **1. Identifying Areas for Scrutiny**

At the meeting the Chairman will ask the members of the public present if they have any issues which they would like the Scrutiny Committee to investigate, however, there will be no discussion of the issue at the time when the matter is raised. Councillors will research the issue and consider whether it should form part of the Committee's work programme when compared with other competing priorities.

Please note that the Committees can only scrutinise items which fall within their specific remit (see below). If a matter is raised which falls within the remit of another Scrutiny Committee then it will be noted and passed on to the relevant Chairman for their consideration.

#### **2. Questions from Members of the Public for Consideration at Scrutiny Committee Meetings and Participation at Meetings**

You can submit a question for consideration at a Scrutiny Committee meeting so long as the question you are asking is directly related to an item listed on the agenda. If you have a question you would like to ask then please submit it **no later than two working days before the meeting** to the Committee Officer. This will help to ensure that an answer can be provided at the meeting. Contact details for the Committee Officer can be found on the front page of this agenda.

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(Please note that the Scrutiny Committees are not able to discuss questions relating to personal or confidential issues.)

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### **Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing**

*Statutory functions for adult social services including:*

*Learning Disabilities*

*Strategic Housing*

*Supporting People*

*Public Health*

### **Children's Services**

*Provision of services relating to the well-being of children including education, health and social care.*

### **Community Services Scrutiny Committee**

*Libraries*

*Cultural Services including heritage and tourism*

*Leisure Services*

*Parks and Countryside*

*Community Safety*

*Economic Development*

*Youth Services*

### **Health**

*Planning, provision and operation of health services affecting the area*

*Health Improvement*

*Services provided by the NHS*

### **Environment**

*Environmental Issues*

*Highways and Transportation*

### **Strategic Monitoring Committee**

*Corporate Strategy and Finance*

*Resources*

*Corporate and Customer Services*

***Human Resources***

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## **COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the meeting of Environment Scrutiny Committee held at No 1 Committee Room, Shirehall, St Peters Square, Hereford on Monday, 24th October, 2005 at 2.00 p.m.**

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

**Councillors:** P.J. Dauncey, K.G. Grumbley, J.G.S. Guthrie, T.W. Hunt, J.W. Newman, Ms. G.A. Powell, Miss F. Short and J.B. Williams

**In attendance:** Councillors: P.J. Edwards (Cabinet Member - Environment), J.W. Hope MBE, T.M. James and R.M. Wilson

**27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor D. B. Wilcox as Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation).

**28. NAMED SUBSTITUTE**

There were no substitutes.

**29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**30. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 26th September, 2005 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

**31. SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY**

No suggested areas for scrutiny were raised by members of the public.

**32. BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

The Committee was informed of progress upon the preparation of the Council's Biodiversity Strategic Framework and actions in hand to support related activity.

At the June 2005 meeting the Committee received a report setting out the strategic objectives which would form the basis of a framework for the Council's work in relation to biodiversity conservation. While work on preparing the Statement was proceeding, a delay had occurred to take advantage of funding opportunities and to assess the implications of new advice in relation to biodiversity conservation, as set out in more detail in the report.

The Committee received a short presentation on 'Herefordshire Lifescape'. The Committee heard that the Council had recently completed the pilot project, which

had been substantially funded from external sources (LEADER+ and English Nature) to investigate how biodiversity and landscape potential might be promoted to local communities.

The Committee noted that while a lot of good environmental work had been carried out on the river Monnow, that area had not been included as the project had been based on the landscape included in the LEADER+ scheme, namely the valleys of the rivers Arrow, Frome, Lugg and Wye. While data was collected on footpaths, no biodiversity guidance had been issued to landowners. There were however, plans to place a toposcope at Coleshill. No adverse comments had been received during the community input stage to the project concerning green lane use by four-wheel drive vehicles. However, the current project covered a limited area of the County and it was thought that comments may be received when the project was expanded to other areas following the recent funding agreement with the Forestry Commission. Guidance arising from the project produced for specific Parishes would be distributed for information to Members of the Committee.

Questioned on whether the Lifescape project was giving value for money the Committee noted that the Council had drawn in funding from a number of different sources, was working with other partners in this subject and that the data collected would provide evidence that the County was improving its biodiversity conservation.

**RESOLVED: That the report on issues being considered for inclusion in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategic Framework be noted.**

**33. SECOND REVIEW OF THE VOLUNTARY CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE USE OF POLYTUNNELS IN HEREFORDSHIRE (Pages 1 - 6)**

The Committee considered whether revisions were needed to the Code of Practice for the use of Poly tunnels in Herefordshire in light of experience through the growing season of 2005.

The Head of Planning Services reported that following consideration by this Committee in June 2004, the decision by Cabinet in October 2004 to approve the Code of Practice provided for it to be reviewed in two years time i.e. in 2006. This decision further required that an update position in respect of the application of the Code be reported to Cabinet and the Environment Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis. His report was therefore made at an interim stage with the intention of updating the Committee as to progress. His report briefly outlined the history of the issue; the number of planning applications received for poly tunnels; the number of notifications in accordance with the Code of Practice; enforcement issues and case law, including public local inquiries. The report also highlighted that as part of the new development plan system (the Local Development Framework), pre application consultation could be requested through the forthcoming Statement of Community Involvement, the principals of which the Code was in accordance with. He commented that the outcome of the two public local inquiries (Brierley Court, Herefordshire and at Waverley Borough Council, Surrey) may help establish the planning basis for the control of poly tunnels.

The Director commented upon the difficult issue of balancing the need for a successful agricultural economy with the environmental concerns expressed by campaigners against poly tunnels. In the absence of a definitive legal definition for when poly tunnels came within planning control the Code of Practice was the best available means of control.

In response to a question concerning the volume of traffic generated by this type of agricultural operation, particularly in narrow country lanes, Councillor K.G. Grumbley

suggested that Section 3 bullet point 2 of the Code be amended to read: "The grower will submit local and landscape impact statements accompanied by mitigation measures. The local impact statement should specify, as a minimum, the proposed vehicular routing, volume and type of traffic. Mitigation measures may include one-way routes, hardening of passing places or surface improvements. Routing should be included on the location plan (Checklist item 9). Landscape impact mitigation may include the use of less reflective or coloured polythene." Having heard legal advice concerning the criteria for making Traffic Regulation Orders the Committee debated the suggestion and noted the current intention to get growers to co-operate in implementing mitigation measures. It was proposed that the issue merited further consideration by the Cabinet Member (Environment).

Questioned on the speed of securing compliance with the Code the Cabinet Member (Environment) stated that once instances of non-compliance were identified the appropriate enforcement action was undertaken, however, with further resources, Planning Services could be more proactive in both enforcement of and guidance in relation to the Code.

Issues concerning any adverse effect on the economy of the County, in particular tourism, and the use of new technology would be further considered by the Polytunnel Review Group when it reconvened in 2006.

In view of the number of written questions received from the public prior to the meeting, it was confirmed that an individual written response would be given in each case. A copy of the questions/comments and the subsequent response is set out at appendix 1 to these Minutes.

The Chairman permitted a number of questions or comments from the public attending the meeting, the principal points being:

- Responding to whether there was a deliberate link between this agenda item and the previous item on Biodiversity, the audience noted that environment issues were the primary remit of the Committee. Many of the environmental aspects of polytunnel use had been touched on during the review (as set out in the Committee's report on the findings of the Polytunnel Review published June 2004).
- In relation to the issue of increased water run off due to the expanse of plastic the Committee were informed that this was a general issue affecting not only polytunnels, but any covered surface e.g. residential development. The Committee was informed by a grower that it was in the grower's interest to both preserve the soil and store and recycle the water.
- The Committee heard from a grower that he considered it impossible to efficiently grow organic strawberries without polytunnels. He had 3 acres under green polytunnels and while he thought the visual effect had improved further research work was needed.
- Concerning the siting of polytunnels in the County the Director of Environment considered that in accordance with the 2 year time scale in the Code, many polytunnels were being relocated to new sites, hence there were less in the south of the County.
- Reference was made to the legality of the Code. The Committee were informed that the current Code was legal. In relation to enforcement, under the Code, the grower undertook to provide notice to the Council confirming that notification had been given to the relevant Parish Council(s) and nearby neighbours of the intention to erect polytunnels. The Head of Planning Services reported that the Code was not an instrument of enforcement but a

means whereby planning officers were made aware of proposed sites and thereby considered and advised on planning issues. Planning Services was made aware of issues by the public and Parish Councils on a weekly basis and each issue was looked into when raised.

- Issues around noise were dealt with under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- A view was expressed that the Council was ignoring two clear pieces of case law and that the Council would ignore the outcome of the current two local public inquiries. It was also suggested that the Council was acting inconsistently with other authorities and that this caused problems where the policy of both Wye Valley and Malvern Hills AONBs (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) was concerned. The Committee heard that the cases were neither comprehensive nor clear cut and in the circumstances the Council considered that the Code was wholly appropriate. The Council would consider the outcomes of the two public local inquiries in relation to their relevance to the polytunnel issue.
- A further grower informed the Committee that the majority of growers complied with the Code. Growers were embracing new technology e.g. less reflective plastics. He claimed that there was no evidence of any detrimental effect on the environment (wildlife) and that a last season strawberry field was now producing a good crop of winter wheat. He was not aware of any detrimental effect on tourism caused by polytunnels. He was happy to comply with the Code and contribute to the next review.
- The Committee noted that planning application CW05/0698/F for 'raised bed cultivation' at Marden had been withdrawn pending an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) due to the suspected presence of a protected species (Greater Crested Newt).
- Responding to a suggestion that the Council encourage growers to plant other crops e.g. grape vines in the Wye Valley, the Committee was informed that the Council was unable to prescribe the type of crops farmers wished to grow.
- It was suggested that as the Code was only voluntary there was therefore little legal power to enforce it. It was further suggested that to abandon the Code now in favour of requiring a planning application would cause severe difficulties, and be costly for the Council.

**RESOLVED:**

**That**

- a) **the experience of the past 12 months of operation of the Code of Practice be noted;**
- b) **a further report be made in the event of any significant change in case law which would change the basis of the current Code of Practice;**
- c) **the Cabinet Member (Environment) be recommended to consider incorporating the pre-consultation requirements of the Code of Practice into the draft Statement of Community Involvement currently in preparation;**
- d) **the Cabinet Member (Environment) be recommended to continue to operate the Code of Practice subject to a full review in October 2006; and**
- e) **the Cabinet Member (Environment) be recommended to consider**

amending the Code at Section 3 bullet point 2 to read: "The grower will submit local and landscape impact statements accompanied by mitigation measures. The local impact statement should specify, as a minimum, the proposed vehicular routing, volume and type of traffic. Mitigation measures may include one-way routes, hardening of passing places or surface improvements. Routing should be included on the location plan (Checklist item 9). Landscape impact mitigation may include the use of less reflective or coloured polythene."

#### 34. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee was advised of progress with regard to the 2005/06 Environment Capital Programme within the context of the Herefordshire Council Capital Programme.

The Assistant County Treasurer reported that the total of the Capital Programme had decreased from £13,461,000 notified to the previous meeting to £12,047,000 being a net reduction of £1,414,000. The project in relation to City Centre Enhancements for £2,000,000 had been transferred to the Economic Development Capital Programme. A number of other minor changes had increased the programme by £586,000. The current Capital programme was indicated at appendix 1 to the report.

In response to a question concerning transfers between Capital and Revenue budgets at the time of the last budget round, particularly in relation to the revised forecast figure of £4,843,000 for Capitalised Maintenance of Principal Roads, the Director of Environment confirmed that the revised forecast figure was as printed and clarified the general budgetary position in this context.

The Committee noted that the specific expenditure heading for Vehicle Activated Signs may be phased out as this type of sign should be considered and if necessary included in any individual speed reduction scheme.

**RESOLVED that the position set out in the Capital Budget Monitoring report be noted.**

#### 35. ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee was advised of the latest budget monitoring position for the Environment programme area revenue budgets for the period to 30th September, 2005. The report listed variations against budget at this stage of the year.

The Director of Environment and the Assistant County Treasurer reported the current budgetary position and highlighted a potential overspend in relation to winter and road maintenance. While car parking income looked likely to exceed its target by £200,000 a shortfall of £30,000 was expected in income from de-criminalised parking. With the forthcoming renegotiation of contracts for public transport an overspend of £35,000 was expected in 2005/6 rising to £250,000 on 2006/7. It was expected that some of the additional costs could be mitigated by the increase in car parking income. Anticipated over-expenditure on Street Cleansing (£160,000) and public toilets (£50,000) would be contained within the Highways and Transport budgets by the reallocation of resources. It was expected that expenditure on Licensing would exceed income by £50,000 as the income received had not come up to expectations.

The Waste Disposal P.F.I contract budget was expected to break even after taking into account the virement to Homelessness in 2005/06. The position was worse than 2004/05 due to the increased proportion of the contract (i.e. up to 25.7% from 24.77%) being borne by the Council and a reduction in the amount received for P.F.I. credits because of a change in the charging basis being used.

Building Control and Development fee income was above budget by approximately £280,000. However, it was anticipated that the target income would be exceeded by £200,000 for the year. £304,000 of the Planning Delivery Grant had been brought forward into 2005/6.

The Committee noted the report that in the event of a standard winter, highway winter maintenance costs could exceed the budget by £200,000. On questioning this position the Committee were informed that a £108,000 reserve could be used to support any shortfall and in the event of a particularly bad winter the Government's 'Bellwin Scheme' could be called on however, certain criteria would need to be met.

**RESOLVED: That the position set out in the Environment Revenue Budget Monitoring report be noted.**

### **36. BEST VALUE REVIEWS - IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

The Committee received a report on the remaining actions and exceptions to the programmed progress in the improvement plans resulting from the Best Value Reviews (BVR) of Development Control, Public Conveniences and Public Rights of Way, detailed at Appendix 2 to the report.

Following consideration of the Best Value Review of Commercial Enforcement - Stage 3 report at its meeting on 6th June 2005, the Committee considered the draft improvement plan for the Service prior to being finalised by the Cabinet Member (Environment) for implementation. The draft Improvement plan was attached to the report at appendix 1.

Following concerns regarding performance against BVR performance indicators relating to planning applications determined within specified timescales, an action plan had been drawn up and progress against these actions was indicated in appendix 3 to the report.

**RESOLVED: That the report on the implementation of improvement plans (Appendix 2), including the draft improvement plan for Commercial Enforcement (Appendix 1) and the action plan relating to planning applications (Appendix 3) be noted.**

### **37. MONITORING OF 2005/2006 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - APRIL 2005 TO SEPTEMBER 2005**

The Committee was updated on the exceptions to the targeted progress made by the Environment Directorate for the six months April to September 2005 towards achieving the performance indicators/targets which appear in the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Director of Environment highlighted that the performance target for BV165 – percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people – had changed in that crossing places at road junctions now needed to be included. The Directorate were currently struggling to achieve the revised target. Also in relation to this target the Committee noted that arising from the delay to the Commercial Road resurfacing programme, currently programmed for 2005/2006, works would be undertaken to



footway, cycle and bus facilities at the location. The provision of a box junction at the Commercial Road / Stonebow Road junction would be investigated.

Referring to the 'Kilometres of rural footway constructed' target the Committee noted that the 2.01km achieved so far related to the Roman Road scheme. The Committee was informed that a footway scheme at Bodenham, which had been temporarily held up due to compulsory purchase issues, was about to commence.

Commenting on the planning targets the Director of Environment reported that generally, staffing levels had recovered and the action plan referred to in minute No 36 – Best Value Reviews – would address outstanding issues. He commented that when compared with the recent high number of planning applications the numbers were now showing signs of reducing. He also reported that during discussions with the Audit Commission the Commission had commented that, compared with other authorities, Planning Services were providing planning guidance on applications too early in the planning process. This issue would be reconsidered, however, he warned that if the Service limited the guidance given to final submission stage the Services may be accused of a reduction in the level of service.

**RESOLVED: that subject to the comments detailed above, the report on the Monitoring of 2005/2006 Performance Indicators – April 2005 to September 2005 be noted.**

The meeting ended at 4.15 p.m.

**CHAIRMAN**



**Questions (or comments) received for Environment Scrutiny Committee on 24th October, 2005.**

| <b>Agenda Item 6 (Biodiversity)</b> |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1                                   | <p>H M Morgan Wye Valley AONB &amp; Walford PC</p> <p>English Nature, another Statutory Consultee, was only told of this application by us just before the planning meeting at which permission was given for 66 caravans. They then objected on environmental grounds as affecting AGLV.AONB, SSSI &amp; SAC designated areas. How then can your committee reconcile this planning permission with your 'Biodiversity &amp; Planning Advice (See Agenda Page 9, Para 13.2) This requires that matters to be monitored include:- 'Changes in areas designated for their historic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional, sub regional, and local significance.'?</p> <p><i>The planning application was for a scheme of 66 caravans at Coleraine Buildings, Coughton, Ross-on-Wye, planning reference DCSE2005/0042/F.</i></p> <p><i>The planning application was not referred to English Nature because the development site is over 4 km from the nearest designated area of concern for them - i.e. the River Wye. In the event the letter from English Nature was received in time to be reported verbally to the Southern Area Planning Sub-Committee but, upon close reading of the letter, it can be seen that their principal cause for concern was the impact of drainage from the development site and their principal recommendation was that the Council should liaise closely with the Environment Agency on this matter. In fact the application had been the subject of extensive consultation with the Environment Agency on this very topic and, indeed, still remains undetermined pending final resolution of the drainage issues. Consequently, the process used has protected and continues to protect the interests referred to in the Biodiversity and Planning Advice.</i></p> |
| <b>Agenda Item 7 (Polytunnels)</b>  |  |
| 2                                   | <p>H M Morgan Wye Valley AONB &amp; Walford PC</p> <p>The Voluntary Code of Practice for the use of Polytunnels in Herefordshire was much discussed at an open public meeting at Sellack on 19<sup>th</sup> Sept 2005,organised by HWVAS &amp; which I chaired. Unanswered questions concerned:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The 'unlawfulness' of this code, as repeatedly stated by H.C.'s own Barrister recently at the Brierley hearing? <p><i>Counsel for the Council said that it may have been the case that the earlier version of the Code was unlawful as there was no reference to the maximum of 2 years. This is now not the case. The Council's own legal advice remains that the Code is a lawful response to current circumstances a point which is reinforced by the fact that it's operation has been scrutinised on two occasions by the local Government Ombudsman with no adverse comment. No individual or group has yet seen fit to challenge the legality of the operation of the Code through the Courts.</i></p> </li> <li>2. What happens to polytunnels after 4 years in an AONB (or elsewhere)? <p><i>After two years of operation under the terms of the Code a grower will be required to remove any polytunnels or seek planning permission for their siting for a longer period. In the event that a grower has evidence that polytunnels have been in use continuously for a period in excess of four years they will be at liberty to submit an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use or Development.</i></p> </li> <li>3. When will Herefordshire benefit from proper planning law as applies in Gloucestershire &amp; elsewhere?</li> </ol>   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p><i>As far as the Council is concerned planning laws are properly enforced. The Council is aware that Gloucestershire County Council takes a different view on polytunnels. The operation of the Code will be reviewed in the event of any new case law arising or changes in national planning regulation or policy and in any event on a two yearly basis.</i></p> <p>4. Why does this unlawful code allow 2 years polytunnel permanence when the leading case stipulates only 1 season – certainly less than a year?</p> <p><i>There is no case directly applicable to the issues involved but the Council is fully aware of cases that have relevance to the issue. These cases have pointed out that each case rests on its own circumstances. The Code applies in circumstances where the use of polytunnels is considered not to require planning permission. The two year term for the temporary use of polytunnels is provided for in the Code</i></p> <p>5. When will polytunnels be removed/restricted from/in the AONB?</p> <p><i>The use of polytunnels in all areas is governed by national policy and guidance and the Code. It is the Council's view that their use in any area including an AONB in compliance with the Code is lawful.</i></p> |
| 3 | <p>H M Morgan, Wye Valley AONB &amp; Walford Parish Council</p> <p>Within Code Appendix 1, whilst polytunnel users are exhorted to 'use all reasonable endeavours' inter alia, to avoid noise etc, there is no mention at all of the use &amp; spraying of toxic chemicals. As you may know, past fruit residue levels are now causing considerable concern as are the effects from drift, on neighbours. Pending the resumption of proper lawful controls, will your committee urgently consider this as a Code control priority?</p> <p><i>The Polytunnel Review Working Group had evidence presented to it that pesticide use in polytunnels is less than in the open. The use of polytunnels allows for the reduction in the use of pesticides and their containment. The use of pesticides and herbicides is a routine farming activity and not one regulated by either the Council or by planning legislation.</i></p>   |
| 4 | <p>Mr A. Green, Ivington</p> <p>Polytunnels are spreading throughout Herefordshire – the southern approach to Leominster is white polythene. The Council can proactively act now to control their spread in the landscape by restricting their location and so minimise their environmental impact or seek reactively to try to undo what harm has taken place.</p> <p><i>Comment only</i></p>   |
| 5 | <p>Mr A. Green, Ivington</p> <p>County property owners in rural areas purchase their homes for their rural situation. Polytunnels are outside the common definition of traditional agricultural landscape. To tolerate the uncontrolled spread of polytunnels in Herefordshire, even in the short-term, is to dilute the very essence of Herefordshire</p> <p><i>Comment only</i></p>  |
| 6 | <p>Mr A. Green, Ivington</p> <p>S&amp;A Davies at Brierley Court have not removed their 2003 polytunnels despite the passing of two years. These structures were the subject of a statement by Hereford Council's barrister at the 2005 Public Inquiry when it was stated 'enforcement' was likely if they were not removed by November 2005. What is the current position?</p> <p><i>The Council is currently considering the expediency of further enforcement action at Brierley Court.</i></p>   |

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| 7  | <p>Mr A. Green, Ivington</p> <p>S&amp;A Davies at Brook Farm and Ox Pastures, Marden have not removed their two-year old plus polytunnels despite the Code of Practice.</p> <p><i>The Council is closely monitoring the use of polytunnels at Marden and is currently considering the expediency of enforcement action.</i></p>   |
| 8  | <p>Mr A. Green, Ivington</p> <p>The Inspector at the July 2005 Brierley Court Planning Inquiry found the Code confusing and unhelpful. Ergo it needs revision.</p> <p><i>The original decision of the Council to introduce the Code provides for a full review of the operation of the Code every two years. A full review will commence in 2006.</i></p>   |
| 9  | <p>Mr M. Hooper AVRA</p> <p>Mr Hoopers letter and enclosure has been forwarded to Members of the Committee.</p>   |
| 10 | <p>R. Elliot &amp; S Lawrance, Hoarwithy</p> <p>We are aware of the overall situation regarding voluntary codes of practice and other legal issues, but our comments are straight from the heart.</p> <p>We run a guest house in Hoarwithy and we are now experiencing a downturn in repeat business as a direct result of the polytunnel development at Pennoxstone Court. Basically, our guests do not want to return to the area because, quite simply, it has been ruined.</p> <p>For instance, it is no longer possible to take good photographs of the three churches, Hoarwithy, Kings Caple and Sellack because the best views have now been spoiled by the unsightly presence of polytunnels.</p> <p>With specific reference to Agenda Item 7, Paragraph 19 (Second review of voluntary codes of practice for the use of polytunnels in Herefordshire) we would like to point out (as others no doubt have done) that we are in the middle of an AONB and therefore the unchecked growth of polytunnels is inappropriate.</p> <p>We would also add that, whatever has been said or not said to Mr Cockburn, the acreage of ground covered with polytunnels has grown year on year in the three years since we moved into Aspen House, and now covers such a huge area that, not only does it appear to cover most of the fields across the river from Hoarwithy, but also it is now visible as one drives down the hill from Little Dewchurch. More fields are being prepared for polytunnels even as we write.</p> <p>Voluntary practice or not, Mr Cockburn seems to be covering fields in plastic just as fast as he can, and the idea that these structures are temporary is laughable. We have seen plastic on this site since the day we moved into the village. As for the fact that the plastic might be removed in the winter months, this still doesn't help visitors to the area - they mostly come in summer!</p> <p>On top of that, this activity within an AONB is simply not right in principle, and we would like our comments to be taken into account in any discussions the committee has on the matter</p> <p><i>The Council is aware of the sensitivities around the use of polytunnels in highly regarded landscapes and considers the sustenance of a vital and dynamic rural economy to be one of its key priorities. The Council must however balance the interests of <u>all</u> concerned groups, individuals and businesses who live and work in the countryside</i></p> |
| 11 | <p>Mr E. Kelly, CPC</p> <p>Mr Kelly's letter and enclosure has been forwarded to Members of the Committee.</p>  |

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| 12 | <p>Mr Potts</p> <p>My question is what is being done to minimize the increased risk of flooding not only to the road running through Burmarsh but also to the properties of Little Fromington and Hawkersland Cottage?</p> <p>The volume of water coming off the area will increase substantially following rainfall and this is a stretch of road already liable to flooding.</p> <p>An irrigation system is also being developed on the land which will further exacerbate the problem. Can you advise please?</p> <p><i>The use of polytunnels does not necessarily result in increased run off of rainwater. Growers commonly use micro irrigation systems which use captured rainwater and therefore make a positive contribution to the effective use of water resources and reduce run off.</i></p>   |
| 13 | <p>Mrs J. Ellerton, Wickton Action Group</p> <p><b>The Report</b></p> <p>1.1 Given the title of the ESC's Second Review prepared by the Head of Planning Services, is Herefordshire Council's Code of Practice now considered a Voluntary Code and if so when was it changed and on whose authority?</p> <p><i>Whilst the word voluntary is used in the report title the title of the Code remains "The Herefordshire Code ..." as shown at Appendix 1 and has not changed.</i></p>  |
|    | <p>1.2 With reference to Para 19 of the report of the Second Review of the 'Voluntary' Code of Practice for the use of polytunnels in Herefordshire, do Councillors <b>not</b> also consider that the transport, ecological, labour, community &amp; local amenity impacts of polytunnels merit an assessment similar to the impacts of polytunnels on the landscape? If not, why not?</p> <p><i>The impacts listed are an inevitable consequence of any large scale agricultural operations as evidenced by current levels of traffic associated with the apple and potato harvests. Apart from the controversial impact of the use of agricultural plastic in the countryside the impact on the road network, local ecology, labour and community are arguably an inevitable result of modern, large scale agriculture and are not attributable solely to polytunnel growing operations.</i></p>   |
|    | <p>1.3 Under the Code, applications are sought in respect of polytunnel development. Para 10 of this report suggest planning enforcement action may be taken if applications are not forthcoming. On that basis, what is the difference in development terms between polytunnel development under the Code and polytunnel development outside the Code? In other words, why does it constitute development if an application is not made under the code but if it is made under the Code, it is not deemed development by Herefordshire Council?</p> <p><i>In the absence of a substantive body of case law or any national policy or guidance the Council has taken a decision that any polytunnel growing operations which exhibit characteristics of permanency will require to have planning permission. Such characteristics include a declared intent to leave operational polytunnels in the same location for longer than two years or the use of "out of soil" growing methods.</i></p> |
|    | <p>1.4 Does the ESC not consider that the implementation of both Recommendations B and C would be premature in the light of the announced December publication of both reports relating to the Public Inquiries at Brierley and Waverley?</p> <p><i>Recommendation b) provides for a mechanism to review the Code as a direct and necessary response to any decisions arising from both the</i></p>  |

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|     | <p><i>Waverley and Brierley cases. Recommendation c) provides for the consultation provisions of the Code to be incorporated into the draft Statement of Community Involvement which is a statement of how the Council will consult the Community on planning related policies and decisions and is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</i></p>   |
| 1.5 | <p>Is the ESC satisfied that the democratic process has been best served by the absence of public and community consultation over the past year with regard to the impacts and experiences of large-scale polytunnel development and which omission is now reflected in the Report of the Second Review?</p> <p><i>One of the key aims of the Code is to encourage a dialogue between the growers and their immediate neighbours. Throughout the process of the development of the Code there has been a comprehensive process of consultation resulting in a full dialogue between the Council and the varied and diverse interests in the wider community.</i></p>  |
| 1.6 | <p>The figures quoted in the Second Review are misleading in regard to the current total area of all polytunnel development in Herefordshire. The effect of polytunnel development is not just limited to a specific location, but needs to be assessed by the ESC cumulatively across the county. Will the ESC provide a comprehensive listing of the acreage and location of polytunnel sites across the county? This must include all polytunnel sites, both before and after adoption of the Voluntary/Non-Voluntary Code of Practice and consist of both those with and without planning permission.</p> <p><i>A comprehensive survey of the use of polytunnels throughout the County will be undertaken as part of the full review of the Council's policy and the operation of the Code in the latter half of 2006.</i></p>  |
|     | <p><b>Planning Issues</b></p> <p>2.1 Would the ESC please make clear their reasoning for not including the previous planning judgements of Skerritts and Brinkmans? The relevance of these cases to current polytunnel issues cannot be ignored and indeed, other planning authorities consider these judgements as being central to their policy of requiring planning permission for all polytunnel development. Why not in Herefordshire?</p> <p><i>The implications of both the Skerritts and Brinksman cases were considered during the drafting of the Code. Although Herefordshire Council considers the seasonal use of lightweight, temporary Spanish polytunnels to constitute an agricultural use of land it requires planning permission for other types of polytunnel usage.</i></p> <p>2.2 If under the Code, polytunnels constitute development after two years, why is not the same activity called development from the first day of construction? It is an accepted feature of Development Control that development requires planning permission whether it is temporary or permanent.</p> <p><i>If a grower chooses to continue to use polytunnels in the same location outwith the 2 years provided for in the Code the Council will require planning permission to be applied for as a consequence of the use contemplated having acquired a characteristic of permanence.</i></p> |
| 2.3 | <p>Could you explain why putting trestle tables in the polytunnels suddenly means planning permission is needed – the visual impact, traffic use, environmental damage etc. is the same and in fact good Herefordshire Grade A land need not be ruined and it could all be grown in grow bags on an industrial site.</p> <p><i>The use of the trestle growing method is by implication a manifestation of permanence as no locational rotation is required to protect the long term condition and fertility of the soil being used. In view of this characteristic of</i></p>   |

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|  | <p><i>implied permanence the Council considers that planning permission is required.</i></p>  |
|  | <p><b>Other Matters</b></p> <p>3.1 The current Code of Practice does not prevent the two year rotation of tunnels adjacent to the original location, thus enabling the effective permanence of polytunnels in a particular area without planning permission. Will the ESC seek to address this issue?</p> <p><i>The 2 year rotation provided for by the Code means that polytunnels cannot be located on the same site for longer than 2 years without requiring planning permission.</i></p>   |
|  | <p>3.2 Does the ESC believe that the ecology of the environment is adequately protected under this Code of Practice and if so how?</p> <p><i>The Code is silent on the impact of the use of polytunnels on the wider ecology of an area. There is no evidence to support any claims of the detrimental impact of polytunnels on the wider ecology of an area.</i></p>   |
|  | <p>3.3 At Wickton, a further 400 acres of plastic piping and covering have been installed with no notification to the Council, Parish Council or neighbours. Does the ESC intend to take enforcement action?</p> <p><i>Works involving the laying of plastic piping as part of irrigation systems are agricultural permitted development. All other works being undertaken at Wickton are subject to a notification provided by the grower to the Council.</i></p>  |
|  | <p>3.4 Further deviations from the Code include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The plastic is not removed from the frames but only rolled down and remains attached to the structure for all to see throughout the year<br/><i>The rolling back of the polythene covering leaves the tunnel in a non-operational state as it does not fulfil its function of supporting a protective covering for the growing crop. Although left hanging from the frames in a rolled –up state the polythene is no longer covering the frames and is therefore no longer creating the impact in terms of reflectance and glare which is the main visual impact.</i></li> <li>▪ No Landscape Assessment accompanied by ‘mitigating’ measures has been provided<br/><i>A Landscape Assessment has been provided in accordance with the terms of the Code and has been commented on by the Council’s Landscape Officer.</i></li> <li>▪ Waste polythene is not removed and lies beside the bridle path<br/><i>The grower in this case is aware of the terms of compliance with the Code in respect of unused polythene and a visit by an Enforcement Officer is planned to ascertain any breach of the Code in this respect.</i></li> <li>▪ As you consider compliance with the terms of conduct will bring benefits to growers and residents, could you please list the benefits to residents who live near the sites?<br/><i>The principle benefit to the wider community is that of promoting dialogue concerning the impact of an agricultural operation between the growers and parish councils and near neighbours whilst providing the Council with valuable information with regard to the extent of polytunnel usage.</i></li> </ul> |



**GEM PERFORMANCE 2005/6: HALF YEAR REPORT****Report By: Director of Environment****Wards Affected**

County-wide

**Purpose**

1. To review the Council's environmental management / ISO 14001 system over 2005/06 to the half year to ensure that it continues to be suitable, adequate and effective and deliver improvement in environmental performance.

**Financial Implications**

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

**Considerations**

3. The appended GEM report (Appendix 1) gives summary information on the Council's environmental management system.
4. Annexes to the appended report give more detailed information on responses to previous reviews and progress with the Council's Carbon Management Action Plan.

**Background**

- 5 Environment Scrutiny have a role in scrutinising performance of the ISO 14001 system on behalf of Herefordshire residents.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT The report be noted, subject to any comments Members may wish to make to the Cabinet Member, Environment.**

**Background Papers**

- None identified.



# GEM / ISO14001 MANAGEMENT REVIEW

OCTOBER 2004 TO SEPTEMBER 2005



## SUMMARY

GEM (Good Environmental Management) helps deliver the Council's Corporate Plan priority to 'protect the environment, including by recycling much more waste and significantly reducing carbon emissions' (5.1) and its environmental policy commitment to "demonstrable and continuous improvement of its environment performance" across all Directorates. The Council is committed to extending its certification to ISO 14001, the international environmental management standard, to all activities and services by July 2006.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Publication of the Environment Strategy with baseline information,
- Carbon Management Action Plan, Resource Efficiency Guide & revision of Environment Policy agreed
- Support for County-wide bid for Fairtrade status
- EcoSchool scheme registration now covers two thirds of the county's schools
- Expansion of ISO 14001 scope continued



## **1 PROCESS**

### **1.1 Input from senior management – a requirement of ISO 14001**

The ISO 14001 standard requires that top management review the environmental management system regularly to ensure that it continues to be suitable, adequate and effective to deliver the Council's policy commitment to environmental performance and full compliance with all relevant legal and other requirements.

These reviews address the possible need for changes to the policy, objectives and other environmental management system (EMS) elements in the light of audit results, performance against objectives and targets, concerns of relevant interested parties, changing circumstances and the commitment to environmental improvement.

### **1.2 Information collection and consideration by GEM team**

This information was collected through the directorate GEM Lead Officers and co-ordinated by the Sustainability Unit. It has been circulated to GEM Lead Officers by written procedure.

### **1.3 Roles of Directorate GEM Lead Officers & managers**

Directorate GEM Lead Officers are nominated by their Directors to act on their behalf. The corporate GEM Group has met 7 times to date in 2005. Directors have recently been asked to nominate GEM Leads, as there have been many changes due to reorganisation and staff changes. In addition GEM Leads should now be able to support Directorate Management Teams (DMT) in integrating service and corporate environmental targets into their Service Plans and performance management arrangements.

Service Managers have a responsibility to maintain good environmental management in their own services and contribute to the Council's requirement for overall improvement in environmental performance. It is recommended that GEM Lead Officers attend DMT at intervals to support them in this and that GEM continue to be a standing agenda item on DMTs at least twice a year to maintain effective oversight of progress.

## **2 GEM AUDITS**

### **2.1 GEM Internal Audits**

A team of over 30 auditors, drawn from each Directorate, undertakes GEM audits under the direction of the Principal Internal Auditor, Tony Ford. GEM Auditors are supported by training, update meetings, monthly bulletins and GEM Audit material posted on the Intranet. Further support is available from both the Internal Audit section and the Sustainability Unit.

GEM Audit activity during 2005/06 to half year

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| NUMBER OF PLANNED AUDITS   | 36 |
| COMPLETED/WORK IN PROGRESS | 20 |

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Trish Marsh, Sustainability Officer on 1930

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| NUMBER OF NON CONS            | 18 |
| NUMBER OF NON CONS STILL OPEN | 14 |

## **2.2 Findings and actions taken in response to GEM internal Audit.**

Audits identified the following areas of weakness: non-conformances have been raised and corrective action timetabled. Further audits of areas of weakness will be scheduled.

- Support for Officer in Charge - no deputy in place: this can lead to weaknesses in, for instance, testing of fire equipment and drills
- Contractors not signing in when they attend premises - this can lead to work being done on the fabric of the building without reading the Asbestos Register, thus risking disturbing asbestos
- Contractor Communication - difficulties in getting contractors to provide relevant environmental information.
- Document Control - need to ensure that the most up to date documents are in use by relevant staff and that staff are informed of revisions.

Eight new GEM auditors were trained in June 2005 to undertake site audits. Training on auditing contracts was also provided to existing auditors in June.

## **2.3 Changes to GEM Internal Audits**

Quarter 1 and quarter 2 audits were tackled in a fortnight at the end of June 2005 to see if this approach would help to increase the profile of the audits and make it easier for auditors and auditees to make time available. Results were promising and it is now proposed that audits will be concentrated in 2 periods a year.

Extensions in ISO 14001 scope and recent changes to the standard have led to a revision of the audit schedule. There will be a move away from checklist based audits towards service based and systems audits. In addition audits are being transferred to an electronic format that should make access and response to findings easier.

These changes will be fully embedded for 2006/07. Training for existing auditors to equip them to undertake service and system audits will take place in February 2006. Support of managers to allow time for the completion of audits is essential.

## **2.4 GEM External Audits**

To maintain ISO 14001 certification our certifiers, SGS Yarsley, undertake a surveillance visit audits every 6 months. Certifiers raise Corrective Actions (CA) and Opportunities for Improvement (OI). Progress on these is examined at the subsequent visit and CAs must be formally closed out.

- In July 2004 one CA and eight OIs were raised. These were all addressed by the time of the February 2005 surveillance visit. The CA related to omissions in carrying out the Officer in Charge duties at Garrick House due to inadequate handover.
- In Feb 2005 two CAs and fifteen OIs were raised. The first CA related to changes required by the updated 2004 standard relating to "other

requirements” and control of documents of external origin. The second CA related to shortcomings in the Council’s oversight of Severn Waste’s operation of a Waste Transfer Station.

### **3 IMPROVEMENTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE & PERFORMANCE AGAINST GEM OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 Key achievements**

A number of key documents have been agreed during this year that lay a firm foundation for evaluation of performance. This is important as the scope now covers service impacts as well as impacts from Council premises.

- Environment Strategy – passed by Cabinet Member in March 2005. Gives information on key Council commitments already in place. Baseline information has also been provided.
- Environment policy - revised and passed July 2005
- Resource Efficiency Code of Practice signed by Chief Executive in June 2005
- Carbon Management Action Plan agreed by Cabinet in March 2005: this commits the Council to a 12.5% reduction by 2012 from 2002 baseline.
- The Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in autumn 2005. The Declaration is a voluntary statement of commitment that the Council recognises the seriousness of climate change and will take appropriate action accordingly. The key commitment made by the Council is to devise and implement a community Climate Change Strategy for Herefordshire by March 2006. The Environment Ambition Group of the Herefordshire Partnership is currently co-ordinating this task and have recently completed a major consultation exercise.

ISO 14001 Certification now covers many mainstream Council services so Service environmental impacts are now being evaluated, as well as the longer-established impacts and controls relating to Council premises.

- Increased emphasis on documenting environmental impacts and controls by service and directorate as they come into the scope of certification to enable managers to access this information easily.
- Certification to the 2004 revision of the ISO 14001 in July 2005
- Extension of ISO 14001 scope: in July 2005 the scope extended to cover Strategic Housing, County Treasurers and those elements of Environmental Health & Trading Standards not already covered.

#### **3.2 Performance against objectives and targets 2004/5**

Performance on the GEM programme for 2004/5 was reported to the Cabinet Member (Environment) and Environment Scrutiny on 8th December 2004 (half year) and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2005 (end year).

### 3.3 Performance against objectives and targets 2005/6

The half-year performance on the GEM programme for 2005/06 was reported to the GEM Group in October. This includes:

- Staff Transport - Performance against first two quarters of last year: Car mileage down 9.5%, cycle miles up 118%, public transport journeys up 7%.
- Targets – A total of 7 GEM Targets were due for completion on or before 01/11/05. Four of these are complete. Three are still outstanding, these are:-

*Thorn Salt barn* – this is now operational and salt is being transferred

*HJS Key Performance Indicators & Environmental Performance Indicators* – Baselines have been set and monitoring is underway but targets not yet set (see 4.1)

*Biodiversity Action Plan Review* – This has not yet been received from Herefordshire Nature Trust.

#### 3.3.1 Carbon Management Action Plan (CMAP) Update

GEM is the reporting instrument for CMAP. See Annexe 2 for a breakdown of progress on actions due to start before September 2005.

### 3.4 GEM Plans for 2006/7

The scope of the certificated ISO 14001 system will roll out to cover all remaining Council activities and services by July 2006. There will be increased emphasis on including targets to drive environmental improvement in Service Plans and the Annual Operating Plan.

## 4 CONTINUING SUITABILITY OF GEM

### 4.1 Performance of contractors and partners

- FOCSA, our waste disposal contractors, achieved certification to ISO 14001 in January 2005.
- Owen Williams, our term consultant, achieved certification to ISO 14001 in April 2005 for their Herefordshire Office.
- West Mercia Supplies have recently agreed an environmental statement, appointed an environmental champion and embarked on a sizeable programme of environmental initiatives.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Environmental Performance Indicators (EPIs) relating to sustainability within the HJS/OW/HC contract have been revised and baselines set. Performance re current projects is being measured and the Partnership Project Management Team will establish targets.

Discussions regarding a corporate catering client officer are in progress. HJS can offer menus using an increased percentage of local food on request.

The HJS Print Unit started producing committee agendas on recycled paper in January 2005 and is now using 100% recycled paper as standard on 4 out of 6 machines. No suitable recycled grade is yet available for the remaining 2 machines. At the Council's request, HJS are currently rolling out a spec for use of recycled paper (50% recycled fibre for coated papers and 70% for uncoated papers) to their print sub contractors.

## 4.2 Legal compliance

Compliance with environmental legislation was reviewed in November 2005 using the same format as last year. Key findings:

- Continuing compliance problems at Callow Sewage Treatment Works - see 4.3 below
- Delays in responding to the Hazardous Waste Regulations: these are now being addressed

## 4.3 Corrective Action Forms

Corrective Actions Forms (CAFs) are raised internally when non-compliance is identified, including any points raised by Regulators. Corrective action is agreed and the forms signed off once these have been actioned. CAFs are recorded and reviewed regularly at GEM meetings.

17 CAFs have been raised since the last Management Review. These can be summarised as follows: -

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Consent failures at Sewage Treatment Plants | 4 |
| Noise from Council operations               | 2 |
| Breach of consent by Council operations     | 2 |
| Potential water pollution                   | 2 |
| Fire  | 2 |
| Salt storage                                | 1 |
| Air pollution from landfill gas flare       | 1 |
| Local environmental quality                 | 2 |
| Changes in liability re roadside trees      | 1 |

The most recent CAF relates to changes in guidance on inspection of roadside trees. It is important that Council services managing land ensure that their arrangements for inspecting roadside trees are adequate. The Council may also wish to develop guidance for landowners on suitable inspection regimes to minimise unnecessary felling which would have a deleterious effect on the county's landscape.

Eleven CAFs have been closed out. Three CAFs are overdue for close out :-

- Replacement of the Stretton Sugwas landfill flare. A capital bid has been resubmitted.



- Sewage Treatment Works: result of formal sample by Environment Agency awaited. It is hoped that this will demonstrate that preventative measures now in place have been successful
- Noise complaint re Enviroability recycling operations of in Old Station Yard, Ross

#### **4.4 Links to other systems to notify environmental incidents**

##### **Health & Safety**

The PS01 forms are now headed 'Accident, Incident and GEM report form'. The system has been computerised and GEM related incidents are automatically routed to the ESU. None have been received in the period.

##### **Customer Relationship Management**

This system has now been computerised and a link to GEM included for environmental issues raised by those making complaints, comments or compliments. No environmental issues have yet been notified via this route as yet.

#### **4.5 Main changes in legislation or government requirements.**

- Clean Neighborhoods and Environment Act - contains a range of measures to improve the quality of the local environment by giving Local Authorities and the Environment Agency additional powers to deal with Fly-tipped waste, Litter, Fly posting & Graffiti, Abandoned vehicles, Dogs and Noise
- High Hedges Act gives local authorities the power to deal with complaints about high hedges which are having an adverse effect on a neighbour's enjoyment of his or her domestic property
- Securing The Future – updated national Strategy for Sustainable Development
- Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive - the objective of the SEA is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans, with a view to preventing environmental degradation and promoting sustainable development
- Hazardous Waste Regulations – these apply controls on movements of substances, such as interceptor waste, on the revised Hazardous Waste List.
- Commons Act - expected to pass in Easter 2006 – brings in considerable extra responsibilities for local authorities

These matters are reported in more detail in the recently completed Legal Compliance Report and Register of Environmental Legislation.

#### **4.6 Changes in premises, staff or services affecting GEM**

Reorganisation has resulted in changes to the GEM group and responsibility for some environmental aspects such as purchasing. Directors have been asked to review their GEM Lead Officers in the light of this and developments in the brief of the GEM group.

The development of the incoming Local Area Agreement (LAA) has led to proposals for a change in the vision for the Herefordshire Plan and the Corporate Plan. This vision still places the environment centrally. However it has been proposed that ambitions are changed to reflect the LAA blocks. This would mean that there would

no longer be a discrete environment ambition and the Herefordshire Partnership Environment Ambition Group would not be expected to continue in its present form. This group is one of the interested parties defined in the Council's environmental management system because of the number of key environmental groups represented on it. Work is in hand to propose further environmental outcomes for the LAA., currently in its first draft.

#### 4.7 *Communication*

The findings of the Staff Opinion Survey 2004 showed the number of respondents aware of GEM was up to 79% (71% in the 2003 survey). The numbers who understood how their job impacted on the environment also rose from 63% to 70%. However only 16% of respondents felt the authority was taking sufficient steps to reduce the environmental impact of their area of work. Over half of respondents supported more action to reduce waste, increase recycling, reduce energy use and control the use of paper and other resources.

As a result of this positive support, the GEM team worked with officers responsible for Gershon to draw up the Resource Efficiency Code (annexe 3) to drive both financial and environmental savings.

## **5 CONCERNS OF RELEVANT INTERESTED PARTIES (INCLUDING MEMBERS) AND/OR NEW ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

- **Transco pipeline** – potential effect on Council owned land and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) such as the county's rivers
- Case law related to claims from falling **roadside trees** could increase the potential for removal of roadside trees by private landowners to eliminate risk.
- **Potential loss of orchards**: this has led to work to assess their social and environmental benefits as well as their indirect economic benefits to the county, eg for tourism
- **Quality of school meals / use of local food**: a group including the Council and the Bulmer Foundation are undertaking a Sustainable Food Project to source more local food for school meals. Property Services has refurbished or installed new kitchens in ten schools this year to date.
- **Fairtrade**: The Council passed a motion of support for the community bid for Fairtrade status for the county in May 2005. The council is now working with the county steering group to progress the bid and is now serving Fairtrade tea and coffee at its meetings.
- **Climate Change** continues to rise up the national agenda and is one of the 4 priorities in 'Securing the Future'. The new UK Climate Change Programme is due out by the end of the year and the updated Nottingham Declaration will be launched on December 5<sup>th</sup> 2005.
- **Sustainable procurement** – national targets dates for local authorities are coming up. These are included in the current programme.

## **6 OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**

### 6.1 *Review of Council environmental aspects*

- Local environment quality – added to list
- Animal & Human Health (relevant to the work of Environmental Health) – awaits discussion by GEM Group

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Trish Marsh, Sustainability Officer on 1930

## **6.2 Sustainability Framework**

This is currently under development, led by the Director of Environment. A Sustainability Report on 2004/05 information will be produced by end of 2005/06.

## **6.3 Review of procurement strategy**

The National Procurement Strategy for Local Government requires that we

“Build sustainability into the Council’s procurement strategy, processes and contracts”.

The Procurement Strategy was updated in July 2005. It states at para 6 that :-

“In the context of a procurement process, obtaining the best value for money means choosing the bid that offers the best combination of whole life costs and benefits to meet the Council’s requirements. This is not necessarily the lowest initial price option and requires an assessment of the ongoing revenue and resource costs, as well as the capital investment. The Council’s requirements will include social, environmental, sustainability and other strategic objectives defined at the earliest stages of the procurement cycle. “

A Cabinet Member for this portfolio is now in post. Strategic responsibility for Procurement will be transferred to the new Resources Directorate.

## **6.4 EcoSchools**

Sixty-Eight Schools are currently registered on the EcoSchool scheme, six of which have the bronze award, seven of which have the silver award and eight of which have one or more green flags.

An EcoSchool Day was held at Lugwardine Court on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2005 around the themes of the EcoSchools programme, including food, transport and waste. The Sustainability Unit coordinated the event. Over 25 schools and more than 150 children attended. Feedback was very positive.



## GEM / ISO14001 MANAGEMENT REVIEW:

OCTOBER 2004 TO SEPTEMBER 2005

**Annexe 1: Progress on GEM Management Review  
Recommendations agreed by CXMT on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2004**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 The environmental policy be updated by Spring 2005 to reflect the achievement of ISO 14001 and the inclusion of public facing areas such as waste (6.1).             | Revised policy agreed June 2005   |
| 2 The GEM group decide in January 2005 on the programme to roll out ISO 14001 certification to further activities and services at the triennial review in July 05 (9). | Schedule in place and roll out in progress: due for completion July 2006.   |
| 3 The recommended response to corporate CARs be agreed (4.1).  | CARs raised by SGS were signed off by them in Feb 05. Some internally raised CARs are still open.   |
| 4 The recommended response to delayed targets be agreed (5.2).   | Programme updated.  |
| 5 KPIs covering environmental issues be agreed with HJS and targets set (5.3).   | Two environmental KPIs and four EPIs have now been agreed with HJS. Some baseline information has been received for 2004/05. Results will be tracked quarterly by the GEM group (see 4.1 in main report).   |
| 6 A mechanism be set up to facilitate access to and exchange of performance information and procedures between partners, including environmental information (5.3).    | An extranet will not be set up. However HJS and Owen Williams environmental leads are invited to GEM meetings quarterly and liaise as appropriate between meetings.   |
| 7 The Service Planning template include a prompt for contributions to corporate objectives, including the environment (9).   | Corporate Plan commitments to the environment have been strengthened and made more explicit (1.5 & 5.1). The Service Planning Guidance for 06/07 states that each plan should "show the contribution it will make to Council-wide policies, strategies and programmes, such as ... sustainable development".<br><br>The environmental policy and Carbon Management Action Plan are included in the list of Council-wide policies and programmes to be taken into account when drawing up Plans. Environmental content of plans will be assessed as part of the Quality Assurance process. |
| 8 Officers be reminded of the requirement to buy through WMS and strongly encouraged to buy Green list items (5.4)   | Mentioned regularly in GEMGen. The Env Co-ordinators from the 4 constituent authorities & WMS now meet quarterly.   |

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Trish Marsh, Sustainability Officer on 1930



## GEM / ISO14001 MANAGEMENT REVIEW:

OCTOBER 2004 TO SEPTEMBER 2005**Annexe 2: Progress on Carbon Management Action Plan (CMAP) Actions due to start before October 2005 GEM**

| CMAP Action due to start                                      | Progress to date  |
|---|---|
| Energy Monitoring linked to Billing Schools/Buildings (trial) | <p>Progressing jointly with West Mercia Supplies (WMS) and npower regarding which scheme to proceed with. Npower “smart” meters appear to be the way forward as they allow data to be monitored in near real time, thus avoiding reliance on estimated bills.</p> <p>Once in place, these meters are expected to allow corrective action to be taken on an exception basis when excessive consumption relative to “benchmarks” is registered</p>  |
| Landfill Gas Design   | <p>Outline design has started jointly with a potential service provider. The likely favoured option is a subcontracted installation paid for by sale of a proportion of the power sales contract. The unit would occupy one or two containers, including all services, and would be remotely monitored, operated and serviced by the contractor. Grid connection costs have been determined.</p> <p>The landfill gas generator needs to be implemented before end 2008/09 since after that date the Government intends to remove landfill gas generators from Renewable Obligation qualification (to be put before Parliament in April 2006). Existing generators at that date will remain within the scheme until 2027.</p> <p>Key funding for additional boreholes to be drilled in autumn 2005 was not achieved – this has introduced a 12 month delay and the work will need to be completed in summer 2006 to allow implementation in 2007/08.</p> <p>The price obtained for renewable power has increased from 6.5 p per unit in the CMAP to 9.5 p per unit (Oct 2005), a 46% increase, which increases the already promising annual revenue potential of this scheme by a further £100,000 a year.</p> |
| Energy Services Review (ESCO)                                 | <p>The review was proposed to WMS at their last board meeting and agreement obtained to proceed to design and develop a Herefordshire scheme.</p> <p>Since that decision Worcestershire have agreed to join with Herefordshire in developing a system and the work on the detailed billing structures will begin in the new year.</p> <p>Shropshire and Telford &amp; Wrekin can elect to join at any time in the future. Each scheme is ring fenced for participating authorities.</p>   |

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Trish Marsh, Sustainability Officer on 1930

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Transportation Emissions Data (from Council contractors) | <p>Transport emissions data have yet to be included in the CMAP. The largest potential savings is expected to result from the adoption of "Trapeze" transport logistics software, which is being implemented in Adult Social Care and Children's Services as part of the LTP.</p> <p>Trapeze is being implemented now and will be operational from start of 2006/7. A baseline will be determined for March 2006 as part of the CMAP review.</p> <p>The CMAP will pick up the change in journey distances linked to the newly announced bio-fuel obligation which will require up to 5.4% of bio-diesel and bio-ethanol to be added to road fuels by 2010.</p> |
| Fuel Poverty Strategy                                    | <p>Fuel Poverty Strategy funding was secured from NEA and the process begun. Two workshops were held and the results co-ordinated into a preliminary strategy. The process has now been halted until such time as a new HECA (Home Energy Conservation Act) officer is appointed and can act as Lead Officer.</p>  |
| Property Rationalisation                                 | <p>Property rationalisation is continuing and planned to expand beyond the original assumptions included in the CMAP. The additional changes will be built into the annual CMAP review due in March 2006.</p>  |
| No Cost Measures   | <p>Resource Efficiency Code was issued under GEM (annexe 3): energy was included as a separate heading focussing on no-cost measures.</p>  |
| Low Cost Measures  | <p>Low cost measures have been reviewed. Amongst those with the best potential are the use of PowerPerfecter® equipment in schools and corporate buildings to match voltage levels and produce up to 20% reductions in power demand.</p> <p>A series of on-site test results have been undertaken in a school, however, further data is needed and further sites are being investigated.</p> <p>New low cost voltage conditioning units suitable for lighting looms are being investigated. The focus remains reducing electricity demand and cost.</p>  |
| Medium Cost Measures                                     | <p>Medium term cost measures include the on-going "energy conservation" programme. A methodology for quick appraisal under building maintenance and new build conditions is being written.</p>   |



## Herefordshire Council Resource Efficiency Code of Practice



The Council is committed to using resources effectively in order to release funds for front line services, increase efficiency and cut waste & environmental impact.



### **ENERGY** Avoid use where possible...Use efficiently...Buy renewables

**49% of staff support reductions in energy use**

***When you are out of the room for a short period (over 15 minutes) turn off***

- ◆ All lights and
- ◆ Computer monitors

***When you leave the office for the day turn off***

- ◆ All lights in empty rooms
- ◆ Computers, monitors, printers, photocopiers
- ◆ All other equipment

**Close windows/blinds: this keeps heat in during the winter and out during the summer**

**Wear appropriate clothing for the weather/season and adjust the temperature of your working environment to a comfortable level while minimising the use of heating and air-conditioning**

*Council offices run on 100% renewable electricity - emitting no greenhouse gases*

Electricity costs are rising and so is our consumption: Council sites use 6.9 million kilowatt hours (kWh) costing £365,000 a year. Our 2,000+ monitors each use an average 50W per hour. Computer base units use 40Wh and around 20Wh even when switched off – you have to turn off at the wall to cut use to zero.

The authority uses 4.1 million kWh to heat Council buildings, costing £50k a year - £1000 a week.

### **USING LESS** Avoid use where possible...Reduce use...Use efficiently...

**51% of staff support controls on use of paper & other resources**

**Copying hierarchy:**

**Read on screen...photocopier...laserjet...inkjet**

**Set your printer & photocopier defaults to 'double-sided' printing & 'ink/toner saving' or 'fast print'.**

**Use [refurbished print cartridges](#) & save around 50% of costs**

**Use your photocopier effectively to save paper, toner and energy**

**Don't print unless necessary**

- ◆ Read documents and make revisions on-screen
- ◆ Check print run numbers carefully
- ◆ Use colour sparingly
- ◆ Use scrap paper to print out drafts/emails etc

**Use mugs & glasses rather than disposable plastic cups**

Inkjets cost more per sheet than lasers, which cost more than printing via a networked photocopier.

Click to [link to 'set printer defaults'](#).

[WMS Green List](#)

The authority spends nearly £3,000 a month on paper.

Mary Tittle on 0597 will let you know your local expert.

Council staff photocopy over 6 million sheets a year & use over 10 million sheets in total – equivalent to 5,500 sheets each per year. A full colour sheet costs 50 times more than a black and white letter.

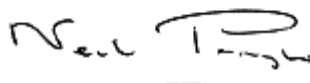
Plastic cups cost 1p each + we pay to throw them away

*Continued...*

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Continued...</b>  |  |
| <b>Send documents by email rather than post whenever possible</b>  | 1 <sup>st</sup> class stamps now cost 30p ...  |
| <b>Don't post to Council offices – use internal post</b>   | Envelopes cost c.1p each   |
| <b>Use old or multi-use envelopes for internal use</b>   |  |
| <b>Recycle paper, plastics bottles, cardboard, cans &amp; printer cartridges etc where possible through the Council weekly collection scheme</b>                 | Council offices recycled over 49 tonnes of paper in 04/05. See your site's Officer in Charge.                                |
| <b>Make sure recycled materials can find a market:</b>   | State 'Recycled' on 'Herefordshire In Print' <a href="#">order form</a> in 'Additional Production Information' box           |
| ◆ <b>Specify recycled paper for print jobs where appropriate</b>   | <a href="#">WMS Green List</a>   |
| ◆ <b>Use recycled paper &amp; brown envelopes (viz C5s)</b>  |  |
| ◆ <b>Use other recycled / low impact office products</b>   |  |
| <b>CUTTING WASTE      Avoid use...Reduce...Repair/Reuse...Recycle</b>  |  |
| <b>57% of staff want to see reductions in Council waste and more recycling</b>   |  |
| <b>Reduce the number or size of bins at your premises by cutting waste &amp;/or increasing recycling</b>   | Council services pay over £25,000 a year to dispose of 6 tonnes of office waste a week.                                      |
| <b>Offer your surplus equipment to other services</b>  | See " <a href="#">Having a clear out?</a> "  |
| <i>92% of white photocopying paper bought from WMS is made from recycled materials</i>   |  |
| <b>TRANSPORT      Use the most environmentally friendly option practical for your journey      Walking/Cycling - Public Transport - Private Vehicle (shared)</b> |  |
| ◆ <b>Why not share journeys with colleagues and plan your route to minimise mileage (&amp; claim an extra 5p/mile)</b>   | Business mileage costs the Council almost £1million pa   |
| ◆ <b>Walking between offices is often as quick as driving</b>  | Transport emissions have forced the declaration of Air Quality Management Areas in central Hereford & Leominster (imminent). |
| ◆ <b>Cycle payments are now 20p/mile and many offices have free pool bikes (apply to Transportation for one if there isn't one at your building)</b>             | Lift sharing one day a week can reduce fuel costs by 20% - <a href="http://www.twoshare.co.uk">www.twoshare.co.uk</a>        |
| ◆ <b>Flexible or home working allows you to adjust your working day to avoid congestion - check with your manager</b>  | Also see <a href="#">staff travel plan</a> .   |
| <b>Give public transport information for meeting venues</b>  | <a href="http://www.herefordbus.info">www.herefordbus.info</a>   |
| <b>Try conference calling instead of meetings – you can connect with up to six Council staff this way, including one external caller</b>                         | See the Telephone Extension User Guide.  |
| <b>Try video conferencing</b>  | Shared use <a href="#">pilot</a> with Owen Williams underway.  |
| <i>19 pool bikes are available at 13 Council offices: see the Council's <a href="#">staff travel plan</a></i>  |  |

Figures are best available approximations, based on 2003/4 unless stated otherwise.  
 Figures on staff views are taken from the Staff Opinion Survey 2004

Agreed by Chief Executive



27<sup>th</sup> June 2005

## DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PERFORMANCE

**Report By: Director of Environment**

### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

1. To report progress against the Government's BV109 targets for 2005/06 and any outstanding actions in order to achieve the targets.

### Financial Implications

2. Failure to meet the targets will result in reduced Planning Delivery Grant in future years.

### Background

3. The Government's targets for Development Control are focussed on the speed of processing planning applications and are:

| Performance Indicator | topic  | Target |
|-----------------------|--|--------|
| <b>BV 109 a</b>       | % Major applications determined in 13 weeks      | 60%    |
| <b>BV 109 b</b>       | % Minor applications determined in under 8 weeks | 65%    |
| <b>BV 109 c</b>       | % Other applications determined in under 8 weeks | 80%    |

### Current Position

4. Out-turn figures for the past three years are:

| Ref           | Target     | 2002/03 | 2003/04    | 2004/05 | Performance 2005/06 |         |         |
|---------------|------------|---------|------------|---------|---------------------|---------|---------|
|               |            |         |            |         | Apr-Jun             | Apr-Sep | Apr-Oct |
| <b>BV109a</b> | <b>60%</b> | 42%     | 53%        | 46%     | 41%                 | 44%     | 46%     |
| <b>BV109b</b> | <b>65%</b> | 62%     | <b>67%</b> | 51%     | 56%                 | 53%     | 56%     |
| <b>BV109c</b> | <b>80%</b> | 77%     | 76%        | 64%     | 64%                 | 67%     | 70%     |

Further information on the subject of this report is available from P. J. Yates,  
Development Control Manager, tel 01432 261782

5. The 2004 out-turn performance for BVPI 109 and performance from April to June 2005 (directly attributable to loss of staff, recruitment difficulties and MVM issues) have been sufficiently under target that the Council is being proposed as a Planning Standards Authority for all three elements of BV 109 for 2006/07
6. The potential impact on the CPA Service Block is that whilst Environment will score 2 for 2005 the fact that the Council is a Planning Standards Authority will restrict the maximum score for the Service Block to 2 for 2006 if we do not meet the BVPI 109 targets.
7. Councils are being identified as Standards Authorities for 2006/07 based on 12 months performance from July 2004 to June 2005. The categorisation is therefore based on old data which does not fairly reflect current performance. In detail performance within the current year shows a clear trend, thus:

**Direction of Travel – April to November 2005** (figures in **bold** where targets achieved)

| Type  | April – June 2005 | July - Sept 2005 | Oct – mid Nov 2005 |
|-------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Major | 42%               | 43%              | <b>63%</b>         |
| Minor | 42%               | 61%              | <b>73%</b>         |
| Other | 61%               | 74%              | <b>87%</b>         |

8. In the light of the recent upturn in performance I am optimistic that the targets for BV109 b and c will be met during 2005/06 taken as a whole. The more problematic area is the one of major planning applications, i.e. BV 109 a, which typically require section 106 agreements and are the more complex to deal with in all respects. Efforts for the remainder of 2005/06 need to be focussed on this area of work. This is reflected in the updated Improvement Plan for Development Control Performance.
9. A significant reason for the lower performance figures in the first two quarters of 2005/06 is that key vacancies existed in the Enforcement Team, and the Manager post was vacant from March until mid-August. This had the effect that planning officers, and especially the Area Team Leaders, had to spend a lot of time on enforcement and complaints thereby reducing significantly the time available for dealing with planning applications.
10. It should also be recognised that the Development Control Team still has some key vacancies. The vacant post of Principal Planning Officer for one of the three sub-divisions of the Northern Area has not been filled having been advertised three times in the past four months. Furthermore, in September 2005 one Senior Planning Officer and the Team Leader for Minerals and Waste also resigned. There are, therefore, currently three vacancies in the Team (with the minerals and Waste post being especially significant). The remaining officers still have caseloads on average at over 200 cases per officer per year. This is significantly in excess of the 150 cases per officer which is now recognised, nationally, as a suitable figure for efficient and effective operation of the development control service.
11. Herefordshire Council is by no means alone in facing these difficulties. 70 local planning authorities have been named as Standards Authorities for 2006/07 for major

planning applications including Unitary authorities with large rural areas such as Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and the Isle of Wight Council. Other large rural unitary authorities are also named as for Minor and Other categories including, for example, North East Lincolnshire Borough Council. The table below sets out some comparator authority figures, firstly comparing three large rural unitary authorities and then three urban unitary authorities. Where Councils have met the BVPI targets the percentage figure is shown in **bold**.

| <b>Section 1</b>       | <b>Large Rural Unitary Authorities</b> |                  |                  |                  |
|------------------------|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Local Authority</b> | <b>Herefordshire Council</b>           |                  |                  |                  |
| <b>Performance</b>     | <b>2001/2002</b>                       | <b>2002/2003</b> | <b>2003/2004</b> | <b>2004/2005</b> |
| Major decisions        | 46                                     | 63               | 57               | 82               |
| % in 13 weeks          | 52%                                    | 42%              | 53%              | 46%              |
| Minor decisions        | 893                                    | 921              | 946              | 1191             |
| % in 8 weeks           | 58%                                    | 62%              | <b>67%</b>       | 51%              |
| Other decisions        | 1941                                   | 2119             | 2070             | 2155             |
| % in 8 weeks           | 67%                                    | 77%              | 76%              | 64%              |
| Total received         |  | 3456             | 2844             | 3646             |
|                        |  |                  |                  |                  |
|                        | <b>North Lincolnshire Council</b>      |                  |                  |                  |
| <b>Performance</b>     | <b>2001/2002</b>                       | <b>2002/2003</b> | <b>2003/2004</b> | <b>2004/2005</b> |
| Major decisions        | 58                                     | 51               | 47               | 53               |
| % in 13 weeks          | <b>66%</b>                             | 47%              | 45%              | <b>61%</b>       |
| Minor decisions        | 564                                    | 673              | 668              | 768              |
| % in 8 weeks           | 60%                                    | 48%              | 35%              | 64%              |
| Other decisions        | 734                                    | 888              | 1941             | 1311             |
| % in 8 weeks           | 77%                                    | 67%              | 59%              | <b>86%</b>       |
| Total received         |  | 1757             | 1927             | 2142             |

|                    | <b>East Riding of Yorkshire Council</b> |                  |                  |                  |
|--------------------|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Performance</b> | <b>2001/2002</b>                        | <b>2002/2003</b> | <b>2003/2004</b> | <b>2004/2005</b> |
| Major decisions    | 148                                     | 146              | 135              | 179              |
| % in 13 weeks      | 52%                                     | 52%              | 49%              | 55%              |
| Minor decisions    | 1261                                    | 1321             | 1404             | 1435             |
| % in 8 weeks       | 59%                                     | 58%              | 52%              | 59%              |
| Other decisions    | 2371                                    | 3044             | 3597             | 3573             |
| % in 8 weeks       | 76%                                     | 77%              | <b>80%</b>       | <b>83%</b>       |
| Total received     |   | 4948             | 4511             | 5813             |
|                    |   |                  |                  |                  |
| <b>Section 2</b>   | <b>Other Unitary Authorities</b>        |                  |                  |                  |
|                    | <b>Birmingham City Council</b>          |                  |                  |                  |
| <b>Performance</b> | <b>2001/2002</b>                        | <b>2002/2003</b> | <b>2003/2004</b> | <b>2004/2005</b> |
| Major decisions    | 208                                     | 163              | 298              | 243              |
| % in 13 weeks      | 27%                                     | 27%              | 38%              | 50%              |
| Minor decisions    | 1034                                    | 1330             | 1475             | 1440             |
| % in 8 weeks       | 40%                                     | 45%              | <b>65%</b>       | 64%              |
| Other decisions    | 4544                                    | 4366             | 4920             | 5304             |
| % in 8 weeks       | 61%                                     | 68%              | <b>80%</b>       | <b>81%</b>       |
| Total received     |   | 6782             | 6280             | 7570             |
|                    |   |                  |                  |                  |
|                    | <b>Newcastle City Council</b>           |                  |                  |                  |
| <b>Performance</b> | <b>2001/2002</b>                        | <b>2002/2003</b> | <b>2003/2004</b> | <b>2004/2005</b> |
| Major decisions    | 61                                      | 82               | 63               | 64               |
| % in 13 weeks      | 43%                                     | 42%              | 56%              | 53%              |
| Minor decisions    | 349                                     | 382              | 440              | 390              |

Further information on the subject of this report is available from P. J. Yates,  
Development Control Manager, tel 01432 261782

|                    |                                   |                  |                  |                  |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| % in 8 weeks       | 60%                               | 44%              | 58%              | 60%              |
| Other decisions    | 1282                              | 1785             | 1867             | 2041             |
| % in 8 weeks       | 65%                               | 53%              | 77%              | 70%              |
| Total received     |                                   | 2467             | 2524             | 2612             |
|                    |                                   |                  |                  |                  |
|                    | <b>Warrington Borough Council</b> |                  |                  |                  |
| <b>Performance</b> | <b>2001/2002</b>                  | <b>2002/2003</b> | <b>2003/2004</b> | <b>2004/2005</b> |
| Major decisions    | 70                                | 67               | 70               | 86               |
| % in 13 weeks      | 44%                               | 30%              | 44%              | 46%              |
| Minor decisions    | 295                               | 358              | 378              | 442              |
| % in 8 weeks       | 38%                               | 37%              | 60%              | <b>66%</b>       |
| Other decisions    | 1473                              | 1592             | 1773             | 5304             |
| % in 8 weeks       | 74%                               | 62%              | 68%              | 79%              |
| Total received     |                                   | 2082             | 3708             | 2530             |

### Future Action

- 12 The Development Control Improvement Plan is kept under constant review, with adjustments being made as appropriate. Most recently a review of arrangements for Section 106 agreements has commenced. This is being progressed jointly with the Legal Services Manager and will result in Heads of Terms for section 106 agreements being set out in reports to the Area Sub Committees and include setting out strict timetables for completion of agreements. Further minor adjustments to office practices have also been introduced, for example, to expedite the issue of Decision Notices once planning decisions have been made.
- 13 Further progress with recruitment to the three vacant posts in the team is required.
- 14 The commencement of scanning plans and publication of application details on the Council's website will require further changes to office practice which, in the short term, may have adverse effects in order to set the new systems up effectively. However, in the medium term this should result in benefits to the service, for example, by enabling electronic consultation with statutory consultees rather than relying on posting multiple copies of paper plans.
- 15 A further area for improvement is in the quality of planning application submissions. A planning application validation SPD is due to be included in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The Statement of Community Involvement will also place requirements on the developers of major applications at pre-submission stage which should result in

planning applications being better prepared before submission. A further future development would be the expansion of the current supplementary planning application guidance, for example, to include a residential design guide. This, however, can only be considered in the context of the LDS as a whole.

- 16 The Development Control Improvement Plan is appended to this report at **Appendix 1**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT Members note and comment on, where appropriate, the implementation of the Improvement Plan.**

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- None identified.



**Development Control Action Plan**

| <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Milestone/Target/When</b>  | <b>By When</b>                    | <b>Lead officer(s)* and resources</b>   | <b>Progress to end of September 05</b>  |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Participate in implementation of corporate GIS project                                    | Publish details of MVM based planning register on line<br>Improve "Pendleton" score and meet requirements of BVPI 205             | Ongoing                           | Head of Planning<br>Planning Services User Group<br>DC Manager<br>ICT                       | Data cleansing and validation complete.<br>Implementation continuing towards go live date in December.  |
| Participate in implementation of corporate Electronic Record & Document Management System | Implement corporate ERDDMS<br>Capture historic Planning and Building Control records.<br>Re-engineer DC and BC business processes | Early 2006<br>Mid 2006<br>Ongoing | ICT Project Manager<br>Head of Planning<br>DC & BC Managers<br>Planning Services User Group | Corporate ERDMS currently on hold.<br>Alternative UK Planning on line documentation and application handling package pilot implementation now approved. |
| Maintain sufficient staff and financial resources to deliver planning services            | Fully staff existing structures   | Ongoing                           | HoS<br>DC Manager<br>DC Team Leaders  | Currently 3 vacancies in DC. I recently advertised and 2 awaiting recruitment authorisation.  |
|   | Maintain register of external contractors / self employed staff   | Ongoing                           | DC Manager Team Leaders / CADPOG  | Maintain updates to CADPOG register of available staff.   |
|   | Consider paying retainers to potential consultants in order to ensure availability  | N/A                               |   | Considered but found not to be good value for money   |
|   | Payment of Market Forces Supplements  | Ongoing                           | HoS<br>Head of HR   | To be re-considered following unsuccessful recruitment round in November.   |
|   | Create and develop trainee posts  | 2006                              | HoS<br>DC Manager<br>Head of HR   | Requirement for career graded posts to enable recruitment at entry level  |
|   | Visit schools to promote careers  | March 2006                        | DC Manager / Personnel  | DC Manager to develop programme   |
| Current development plan coverage for Herefordshire                                       | Adoption of Unitary Development Plan BVPI 200   | Early 2007                        | HoS<br>Forward Planning Manager   | UDP Inquiry concluded in June. Inspectors report awaited before mid 2006. UDP adoption anticipate early 2007.   |

| <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Milestone/Target/When</b>  | <b>By When</b> | <b>Lead officer(s)* and resources</b>   | <b>Progress to end of September 05</b>   |
|---|---|----------------|---|--|
| Improve back office through   | Re-engineering processes for the determination of applications                | Ongoing        | HoS<br>DC Manager<br>DC Team Leaders    | Continue with review and overhaul of current DC practise eg despatch of decision notices, preparation of S106 agreements |
|   | Implement & utilise Corporate GIS   | December 2005  | Planning Service and ICT                | Corp GIS available from early December to provide internet application searches and access to MVM 20/20 records          |
|   | Document Management system providing external/internal access to back office  | December 2005  |   | See comments re: UK Planning   |
|   | Electronic submission of planning applications                                | Ongoing        |   | Level 2 integration with Planning Portal in place. Electronic applications now being received.                           |
|   | Consultation by email   | Early 2006     |   | Means of electronic capture of application documentation required eg UK Planning before e-consultation possible.         |
|   | Monitoring of area team and individual performance                            | Ongoing        | HoS<br>DC Manager<br>DC Team Leaders    | Ongoing  |
| Information gather from other Authorities                           | Carry out statistical and process benchmarking exercises with high performers | Ongoing        | HoS<br>DC Manager & Team Leaders        | DC Manager to undertake  |
|   | Visit other Authorities who operate a single planning committee               | TBA            | CSS / Member Services / Head of Service | Committee Services to arrange  |
| Conduct staff meetings on issues raised by the Staff Opinion Survey | Agreed action following meeting   | Ongoing        | Head of Planning Services               | Considered and discussed at monthly DC staff meeting   |
| Identify training needs in SRD's                                    | Training programme for SRDs   | Ongoing        | DC Team leaders                         | Ongoing as part of SRD programme   |

| <b>Actions</b>                       | <b>Milestone/Target/When</b>      | <b>By When</b> | <b>Lead officer(s)* and resources</b>       | <b>Progress to end of September 05</b>                             |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|---|--|
| Revise processes for S106 agreements | Agree process with legal Services | Ongoing        | HoS<br>DC Manager<br>Legal Services Manager | Possible report to Planning Committee on 25 <sup>th</sup> November |



**ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING****Report By: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT****Purpose**

1. To advise members of Budget Monitoring the position for the Environment Programme Area budgets for the period to 31<sup>ST</sup> October 2005. The report lists the variations against budget at this stage in the year.

**Financial Implications**

2. It is expected that all budget variances will be contained within the overall 2005/06 Revenue Budget for Environment.

**Considerations**

3. The detailed report on Budget Monitoring is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.
4. The total Environment Budget for 2005/06 is the amount reported to the last meeting of the Committee which was £24,093,980.
5. The Budget for 2005/06 incorporates net underspending of £491,000 brought forward from 2004/05 from Highways and Transportation (-£439,000), Environmental Health and Trading Standards (£170,000) and Planning (£760,000). This excludes any underspending or overspending on the Waste Management PFI contract, which is transferred to reserves.
6. In overall terms the Environment Budgets are expected to come in on budget but this may be because of additional income from car parking and planning. Some reallocation of resources may be necessary.

**Highways and Transportation**

7. The Highways budgets are under considerable pressure particularly in relation to road maintenance including winter maintenance, verge and drainage maintenance, street cleaning and public toilets. Every effort will be made to contain spending within the budget but this may require some reallocation of reserves.
8. The income budget for Car Parking, however, looks likely to exceed its income target by £200,000 however there is a slight fall in the expected income from De-criminalised Parking of £30,000.
9. With forthcoming renegotiation of contracts in relation to Public Transport, an overspending of £35,000 is expected in 2005/06 rising to £250,000 in 2006/07. Some of these additional costs can be mitigated by the increase in Car Parking income.

## Environmental Health and Trading Standards

10. The spending on these services looks very much in line with the budget at present. It is expected that expenditure will exceed budget by £50,000 on Licensing as income has not increased in line with running costs. The Waste Collection contract is expected to exceed the budget by £75,000 after taking into account the projected surplus on Trade Waste.
11. The Waste Disposal P.F.I contract budget is expected to break even after taking into account the virement to Homelessness in 2005/06. The position is worse than 2004/05 because of the increased proportion of the contract (i.e. up to 25.7% from 24.77%) being borne by the Council and a reduction in the amount received for P.F.I. credits because of a change in basis being used. Previously our PFI credits had reduced in cash terms by 4% per annum but after a careful cash benefit analysis we have accepted a Treasury proposal that we should receive a fixed annual amount for the remaining years of the contract.

## Planning

12. During the first seven months, building control and development fee income is above budget by approximately £325,000. Whilst income continues to be buoyant, volumes of applications are falling and it is possible that the full year's additional income will not be as high as £325,000.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for 2005/06 be noted subject to the comments which members may wish to make.**

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None identified.

**Summary**

|   | <b>2005/06<br/>Budget<br/>£000</b> | <b>Actuals to<br/>Period 7<br/>£000</b> | <b>Budget to<br/>Period 7<br/>£000</b> | <b>Variance to<br/>Period 7<br/>£000</b> | <b>Forecasts<br/>2005/06<br/>£000</b> |
|---|------------------------------------|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Environmental Health &amp; Trading Standards</b> | 11,143                             | 4,661                                   | 6,515                                  | (1,854)                                  | 11,193                                |
| <b>Highways &amp; Transportation</b>                | 9,143                              | 4,983                                   | 5,462                                  | (479)                                    | 9,343                                 |
| <b>Planning</b>                                     | 2,681                              | 645                                     | 1,436                                  | (791)                                    | 2,431                                 |
| <b>Central Support</b>                              | 1,127                              |   |  |  | 1,127                                 |
|   | <u>24,094</u>                      | <u>10,289</u>                           | <u>13,413</u>                          | <u>(3,124)</u>                           | <u>24,094</u>                         |

| Areas of Activity  | 2005/06<br>Budget<br>£000 | Actuals to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Budget to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Variance to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Forecasts<br>2005/06<br>£000 |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b><u>Environmental Health &amp; Trading Standards</u></b>       |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| <b>Operational Budgets</b>                                       |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| Air Pollution  | (32)                      | (43)                           | (19)                          | (24)                            | (32)                         |
| Landfill and Contaminated Land                                   | 112                       | 42                             | 72                            | (30)                            | 112                          |
| Water Pollution  | 1                         | (4)                            | 0                             | (4)                             | 1                            |
| Pest Control   | (52)                      | (55)                           | (41)                          | (14)                            | (52)                         |
| Dog Control  | 36                        | 8                              | 21                            | (13)                            | 36                           |
| Animal Health and Welfare  | 7                         | (35)                           | 4                             | (39)                            | 7                            |
| Licensing  | (304)                     | (284)                          | (177)                         | (107)                           | (254)                        |
| Trading Standards  | 49                        | 38                             | 29                            | 9                               | 49                           |
| SMSS Head of Env. Health/Trading Standards                       | 246                       | 19                             | 128                           | (109)                           | 76                           |
| SMSS Commercial team   | 21                        | 4                              | 12                            | (8)                             | 21                           |
| SMSS Pollution Control   | 36                        | 17                             | 21                            | (4)                             | 36                           |
| Travellers Sites   | (28)                      | (3)                            | (13)                          | 10                              | (28)                         |
| Cemeteries   | (13)                      | (11)                           | 5                             | (16)                            | (13)                         |
| Crematorium  | (305)                     | (159)                          | (172)                         | 13                              | (305)                        |
| Waste Collection (Domestic)                                      | 2,829                     | 1,596                          | 1,421                         | 175                             | 2,999                        |
| Waste Collection (Trade)   | (160)                     | (394)                          | (116)                         | (278)                           | (160)                        |
| Waste Disposal   | 5,564                     | 2,089                          | 3,591                         | (1,502)                         | 5,564                        |
| Recycling  | 227                       | 108                            | 94                            | 14                              | 227                          |
| <b>Total Operational Budgets</b>                                 | <b>8,234</b>              | <b>2,933</b>                   | <b>4,860</b>                  | <b>(1,927)</b>                  | <b>8,284</b>                 |
| <b>Staffing Budgets</b>  | <b>2,712</b>              | <b>1,578</b>                   | <b>1,549</b>                  | <b>29</b>                       | <b>2,712</b>                 |
| <b>Staff Related Running Costs</b>                               | <b>197</b>                | <b>150</b>                     | <b>106</b>                    | <b>44</b>                       | <b>197</b>                   |
| <b><u>Total Environmental Health &amp; Trading Standards</u></b> | <b><u>11,143</u></b>      | <b><u>4,661</u></b>            | <b><u>6,515</u></b>           | <b><u>(1,854)</u></b>           | <b><u>11,193</u></b>         |



| Areas of Activity                          | 2005/06<br>Budget<br>£000 | Actuals to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Budget to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Variance to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Forecasts<br>2005/06<br>£000 |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b><u>Highways and Transportation</u></b>  |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| <b>Operational Budgets</b>                 |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| Highways - Prof. & Engineering Staff       | 113                       | 146                            | 193                           | (47)                            | 113                          |
| Highways - Roads Maintenance               | 2,329                     | 1,590                          | 1,128                         | 462                             | 2,454                        |
| Highways - NRSWA                           | (117)                     | (57)                           | (69)                          | 12                              | (117)                        |
| Highways - Winter Maintenance              | 530                       | 173                            | 193                           | (20)                            | 530                          |
| Highways - Drainage/Flood Alleviation      | 139                       | 34                             | 40                            | (6)                             | 139                          |
| Highways - Street Lighting                 | 777                       | (37)                           | 413                           | (450)                           | 777                          |
| Highways - Bridgeworks                     | 67                        | 70                             | 33                            | 37                              | 67                           |
| Highways - Public Rights of Way            | 223                       | 113                            | 112                           | 1                               | 223                          |
| Highways - Shopmobility                    | 16                        | 9                              | 9                             | 0                               | 16                           |
| Street Cleansing                           | 789                       | 531                            | 439                           | 92                              | 949                          |
| Public Conveniences                        | 252                       | 212                            | 156                           | 56                              | 302                          |
| Environmental Support Group/Sustainability | 38                        | 19                             | 22                            | (3)                             | 38                           |
| <b>Total Operational Budgets</b>           | <b>5,156</b>              | <b>2,803</b>                   | <b>2,669</b>                  | <b>134</b>                      | <b>5,491</b>                 |
| <b>Staffing Budgets</b>                    | <b>2,353</b>              | <b>1,568</b>                   | <b>1,372</b>                  | <b>196</b>                      | <b>2,353</b>                 |
| <b>Staff Related Running Costs</b>         | <b>297</b>                | <b>94</b>                      | <b>113</b>                    | <b>(19)</b>                     | <b>297</b>                   |
| <b>Support Services</b>                    | <b>121</b>                | <b>0</b>                       | <b>0</b>                      | <b>0</b>                        | <b>121</b>                   |
| <b><u>Total Highways</u></b>               | <b><u>7,927</u></b>       | <b><u>4,465</u></b>            | <b><u>4,154</u></b>           | <b><u>311</u></b>               | <b><u>8,262</u></b>          |

| Areas of Activity                                 | 2005/06<br>Budget<br>£000 | Actuals to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Budget to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Variance to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Forecasts<br>2005/06<br>£000 |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Operational Budgets</b>                        |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| <b>Transportation/Other:</b>                      |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| Transport - Prof. & Engineering                   | (292)                     | 49                             | 33                            | 16                              | (292)                        |
| Transport - Public Transport (incl. Rural)        | 876                       | 662                            | 1,075                         | (413)                           | 911                          |
| Transport - Other Funded schemes                  | 0                         | (33)                           | (35)                          | 2                               | 0                            |
| Transport - Design/Planning                       | 30                        | 24                             | 17                            | 7                               | 30                           |
| Transport - Traffic management                    | 86                        | 31                             | 46                            | (15)                            | 86                           |
| Transport - Road Safety                           | 3                         | (7)                            | 2                             | (9)                             | 3                            |
| Transport - Bus Stations                          | (14)                      | (1)                            | (6)                           | 5                               | (14)                         |
| Transport - Concessionary Travel                  | 311                       | 70                             | 156                           | (86)                            | 311                          |
| Highways- Car Parking                             | (1,200)                   | (850)                          | (681)                         | (169)                           | (1,400)                      |
| Highways- DeCrim. of Parking enforcement          | (449)                     | (275)                          | (337)                         | 62                              | (419)                        |
| Transport - Searches                              | (2)                       | (1)                            | (1)                           | 0                               | (2)                          |
| Highways - S.38 Fees                              | (43)                      | (12)                           | (25)                          | 13                              | (43)                         |
| Director of Environment                           | (101)                     | 22                             | 6                             | 16                              | (101)                        |
| <b>Total Operational Budgets</b>                  | <b>(795)</b>              | <b>(321)</b>                   | <b>250</b>                    | <b>(571)</b>                    | <b>(930)</b>                 |
| <b>Staffing Budgets</b>                           | <b>1,698</b>              | <b>767</b>                     | <b>990</b>                    | <b>(223)</b>                    | <b>1,698</b>                 |
| <b>Staff Related Running Costs</b>                | <b>117</b>                | <b>66</b>                      | <b>68</b>                     | <b>(2)</b>                      | <b>117</b>                   |
| <b>Support Services</b>                           | <b>196</b>                | <b>6</b>                       | <b>0</b>                      | <b>6</b>                        | <b>196</b>                   |
| <b><u>Total Transportation</u></b>                | <b><u>1,216</u></b>       | <b><u>518</u></b>              | <b><u>1,308</u></b>           | <b><u>(790)</u></b>             | <b><u>1,081</u></b>          |
| <b><u>Total Highways &amp; Transportation</u></b> | <b><u>9,143</u></b>       | <b><u>4,983</u></b>            | <b><u>5,462</u></b>           | <b><u>(479)</u></b>             | <b><u>9,343</u></b>          |

| Areas of Activity                  | 2005/06<br>Budget<br>£000 | Actuals to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Budget to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Variance to<br>Period 7<br>£000 | Forecasts<br>2005/06<br>£000 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b><u>Environment Planning</u></b> |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| <b>Operational Budgets</b>         |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| <b>Building Control:</b>           |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| Building Control Fees              | (625)                     | (486)                          | (365)                         | (121)                           | (725)                        |
| Building Control                   | 33                        | 11                             | 19                            | (8)                             | 33                           |
| <b>Development Control:</b>        |                           |                                |                               |                                 |                              |
| Development Control Fees           | (872)                     | (715)                          | (509)                         | (206)                           | (1,022)                      |
| Development Control                | 40                        | 73                             | 23                            | 50                              | 40                           |
| Forward Planning                   | 29                        | 18                             | 17                            | 1                               | 29                           |
| Conservation Grants                | 43                        | (82)                           | 25                            | (107)                           | 43                           |
| Conservation Management            | 68                        | (63)                           | 40                            | (103)                           | 68                           |
| Management and Administration      | 521                       | 24                             | 277                           | (253)                           | 521                          |
| <b>Total Operational Budgets</b>   | <b>(763)</b>              | <b>(1,220)</b>                 | <b>(473)</b>                  | <b>(747)</b>                    | <b>(1,013)</b>               |
| <b>Staffing Budgets</b>            | <b>3,047</b>              | <b>1,752</b>                   | <b>1,778</b>                  | <b>(26)</b>                     | <b>3,047</b>                 |
| <b>Staff Related Running Costs</b> | <b>251</b>                | <b>113</b>                     | <b>131</b>                    | <b>(18)</b>                     | <b>251</b>                   |
| <b>Support Services</b>            | <b>146</b>                | <b>0</b>                       | <b>0</b>                      | <b>0</b>                        | <b>146</b>                   |
| <b><u>Total Planning</u></b>       | <b><u>2,681</u></b>       | <b><u>645</u></b>              | <b><u>1,436</u></b>           | <b><u>(791)</u></b>             | <b><u>2,431</u></b>          |



**ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK  
PROGRAMME 2006/07****Report By: Chairman, Environment Scrutiny Committee****Wards Affected**

County-wide

**Purpose**

- 1 To consider a new work programme for 2006/07

**Financial Implications**

- 2 None

**Background**

- 3 The current Committee Work Programme expires following the March 2006 meeting. It is intended that the Committee meeting on 27th March 2006 will debate issues concerning:
  - Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.
  - Regular monitoring items of: Capital & Revenue budgets; Performance Indicators; Best Value Review Improvements and Contribution to Herefordshire Ambitions.
- 4 The Committee is therefore requested to consider the proposed work programme for the period April 2006 to the end of March 2007. In accordance with the principles outlined in the Scrutiny Improvement Plan of developing a themed approach to issues debated at Committee, the following programme attached at appendix 1 has been prepared following consultation with the Vice-Chairman and the Director of Environment. Members are reminded that guidance for developing an effective work programme is contained in the Scrutiny Handbook previously issued to Members.
- 5 Other issues the Vice-Chairman and Director are aware of for consideration as the programme is developed are:
  - Any specific issues arising from the Corporate Plan;
  - Waste Management;
  - Implications from the "Hampton Review" concerning regulatory inspections and enforcement – within the context of this Committee.
  - Scrutinising progress following the Parking Review;
  - Scrutinising progress with the Local Transport Plan 2.

- 6 Should any urgent, prominent or high profile issue arise, as Chairman I may consider calling an additional meeting to consider that issue.
- 7 Should Members become aware of any issues they consider may be added to the scrutiny programme they should contact either myself as Chairman or the Vice-Chairman to log the issue so that it may be taken in to consideration when planning future agendas or when revising the work programme.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT subject to any comment or issues raised by the Committee the work programme be approved and recommended to Strategic Monitoring Committee.**

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- None identified.

| <b>June 2006</b>      |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Officer Reports       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations by the Cabinet Members</li> <li>• Good Environmental Management Issues (GEM)</li> <li>• Presentation on Bio Fuels</li> <li>• Capital Budget</li> <li>• Revenue Budget</li> <li>• Report on Performance Indicators</li> <li>• Best Value Review Improvement Plans</li> </ul>  |
| Scrutiny Reviews      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Polytunnel Review Working Group to be reconvened early in 2006. Note: This may be subject to the outcome of two local public inquiries.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>September 2006</b> |   |
| Officer Reports       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travellers Policy and Site Provision Review – Consider work so far and invite Member involvement in the further development of the Travellers Policy and review of site provision.</li> <li>• Report on.</li> <li>• Capital Budget</li> <li>• Revenue Budget</li> <li>• Report on Performance Indicators</li> <li>• Best Value Review Improvement Plans</li> </ul> |
| Scrutiny Reviews      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The findings of the Polytunnel Review Working Group.</li> <li>• Travellers Policy and Site Review Group underway.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>December 2006</b>  |   |
| Officer Reports       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GEM</li> <li>• Capital Budget</li> <li>• Revenue Budget</li> <li>• Report on Performance Indicators</li> <li>• Best Value Review Improvement Plans.</li> </ul>   |
| Scrutiny Reviews      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The findings of the Travellers Policy Development Review Group.</li> </ul>   |

| <b>March 2007</b> |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Officer Reports   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Biodiversity Strategy Issues</li><li>• Capital Budget</li><li>• Revenue Budget</li><li>• Report on Performance Indicators</li><li>• Best Value Review Improvement Plans</li></ul> |
| Scrutiny Reviews  |   |