

**Chief Executive's Office**

Chief Executive: N.M. Pringle

**To: All Members of Cabinet:  
Councillors:  
R.J. Phillips (Leader)  
G.V. Hyde (Deputy Leader)  
Mrs. L.O. Barnett  
P.J. Edwards  
Mrs. J.P. French  
J.C. Mayson  
D.W. Rule MBE  
R.V. Stockton  
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Your Ref:

Our Ref: NMP/CD

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17th September, 2003

Dear Councillor,

**MEETING OF CABINET  
THURSDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003 AT 2.15 P.M.  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD**

**AGENDA (03/14)**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**3. NOTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD ON 4TH SEPTEMBER, 2003 (03/13)**

To receive the notes of Meeting (03/3) held on 4th September, 2003. *(Notes have been previously circulated to Cabinet Members only)*

**4. REVENUE BUDGET 2004/05 - 2007/08 BUDGET FORECAST**

To note the latest resource forecasts. *(Pages 5 - 8)*

**5. APPROACH TO REVENUE BUDGET 2004/05 - 2007/08**

To consider how to take forward initial consideration of the forthcoming year's revenue budget 2004/05 to establish principles for the setting of the annual revenue budget for the four year period of this Council culminating in the budget for 2007/08. *(Pages 9 - 12)*

**6. COUNCIL TAX CONSULTATION**

To consider the approach to consulting the public on council tax and budget issues. *(Pages 13 - 16)*

**7. BALANCE OF FUNDING REVIEW**

To receive an update on the Council's response in relation to Local Government Balance of Funding Review. *(Pages 17 - 20)*

**8. HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT PLAN - MONITORING REPORT**

To consider and agree the first monitoring report on the Herefordshire Council Improvement Plan and to identify any action to be taken as a result. *(Pages 21 - 40)*

**9. REVISED RACE EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN**

To comment on and approve the revised action plan and timetable. *(Pages 41 - 50)*

**10. 2003/2004 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE OUTTURNS**

To note details of the Council's reporting and scrutiny arrangements in relation to the National Best Value Performance Indicators, and an update on corporate performance from 1st April to 31st July, 2003. *(Pages 51 - 68)*

**11. COUNTY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP**

To approve, in principle, the establishment of a Herefordshire/Worcestershire joint County Partnership for the delivery of sport and physical activity throughout the County. *(Pages 69 - 70)*

**12. PUBLIC LIBRARY POSITION STATEMENT**

To approve the Public Library Position Statement before submission to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). *(Pages 71 - 88)*

**13. CHILDREN'S CENTRES**

To approve a strategy for the development of Children's Centres in Herefordshire, which would involve the provision of services to young children and their families in areas of deprivation. *(Pages 89 - 92)*

**14. HEREFORDSHIRE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (UDP): PART 1 (STRATEGY)**

To give initial views on strategic planning policy matters raised by representations to Part I of the UDP, prior to detailed consideration by the UDP Group. *(Pages 93 - 100)*

**15. EXTRA CARE HOUSING**

To approve the development of Extra Care Housing within Hereford City. *(Pages 101 - 110)*

**16. HEREFORDSHIRE HOMELESSNESS REVIEW AND STRATEGY 2003**

To note the Homelessness Review and to agree the Homelessness Strategy, including the associated Action Plan, prior to full publication in accordance with the requirements of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Homelessness Unit. *(Pages 111 - 116)*

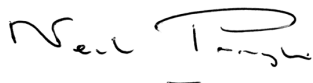
**17. REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS AND REGIONAL HOUSING BOARD ALLOCATIONS STRATEGY**

To note the Regional Housing Strategy and Allocations Strategy for the West Midlands which will form the basis of investment and other decisions taken by the Regional Housing Board. *(Pages 117 - 120)*

**18. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE IN 2002-03 HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL SOCIAL SERVICES**

To note the performance assessment by Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) for 2002-03. *(Pages 121 - 130)*

Yours sincerely,



**N.M. PRINGLE  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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



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# **COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

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# REVENUE BUDGET 2004/05 - 2007/08 BUDGET FORECAST

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide.

### Purpose

This report informs Cabinet and updates Members on the latest resource forecasts.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the budget forecast be noted.**

### Considerations

#### Government Funding

1. The spending pressures are set against resources likely to be made available centrally through the Comprehensive Spending Review 2002 and shows our potential increase in Formula Spending Shares (FSS). These forecasts have been adjusted slightly since a similar report was taken to Chief Executive Management Team in July to take account of emerging funding and function changes. These include:
  - Flood Defence being funded directly by Government through the Environment Agency (i.e. Flood Defence Committees currently funded by way of a levy on local authorities).
  - Transfer of the Children's Grant into FSS (or mainstream funding), it does not therefore increase the overall level of Personal Social Services (PSS) funding.

These figures will change further up to the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement to be announced towards the end of November as more grant changes are released and school numbers are known. A concern to highlight at this stage is the potential for the addition to the FSS for Herefordshire being less than the current grant funded expenditure.

When applying the national FSS increases the total for Herefordshire is due to rise by £8.3million and is detailed by service block as follows:

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Ian Hyson, County Treasurer on 01432 260235

<b>Service Block</b>	<b>2003/04 £m</b>	<b>2004/05 £m</b>	<b>%age increase</b>
Education	79.723	84.297	5.7
Personal Social Services	32.490	35.725	10.0
Fire	5.054	5.252	3.9
Highways	8.412	8.626	2.5
EPCS	36.895	36.544	-1.0
Capital Financing	6.469	6.935	7.2
<b>Total FSS</b>	<b>169.043</b>	<b>177.379</b>	<b>4.9</b>

2. The net aggregate external finance (Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates) is estimated to increase nationally by 4.9% which results in a guideline Council Tax increase of 6.2%. The spending pressures which have been identified so far to maintain a standstill budget position point to an increase well in excess of this figure at around 13%. These spending pressures include:

- Waste Disposal
- Job Evaluation
- Revenue funding of existing commitments within the Capital Programme and
- Replenishing reserves.

We are also making an assumption at this time that the Education FSS increase will be 'passported' into the Education budget and this will need to cover all of their spending requirements. If the Government proceed with certain targets it has proposed on schools funding then this will have an impact on non-schools budgets. These issues are going through a national consultation process at this time.

In future years potential Council Tax increases, before taking into account of possible budget pressures, are broadly in line with Government targets starting at 6% in 2005/06 and reducing by a percentage point a year after. The vagaries of national funding need to be taken into account, however, and various funding or function changes can change the impact these forecasts have on actual local funding quite significantly.

#### **2004/05 Budget**

3. Services have been asked to identify their spending pressures and the proposals for consideration of the Revenue Budget for 2004/05 and beyond are set out in a separate paper on this Cabinet agenda.

## **Alternative Options**

There are no alternative options

## **Consultees**

None identified.

## **Background Papers**

None identified.



# APPROACH TO REVENUE BUDGET 2004/05 - 2007/08

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide.

### Purpose

To consider how to take forward initial consideration of the forthcoming year's revenue budget 2004/05 to establish principles for the setting of the annual revenue budget for the four year period of this Council culminating in the budget for 2007/08.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

### Recommendation

**THAT the proposed arrangements for the approach in relation to the revenue budget for 2004/05 through to the revenue budget for 2007/08 be approved.**

### Reasons

The Council has tried over several years to refine the budget process to improve the build up not only of the annual revenue budget but the forward budget strategy of the Council. Whilst seeking to make the process as inclusive as possible, it is important also to recognise the key role for the Executive in the annual budget process.

### Considerations

1. It is important just to give the context of the past consideration given to the annual revenue budget. When the Cabinet and Scrutiny model was first introduced, the Council attempted an extensive and inclusive approach to the consideration of the annual budget. That involved the overall framework for the budget being set by Cabinet but individual Programme Panels then received reports from their own Cabinet Members and Directors identifying service pressures and identifying a range of possibilities to meet different targets for budget reduction. The proposals made by the Executive following involvement of the Programme Panels were then scrutinised by individual Scrutiny Committees.
2. The difficulty of proceeding in that way was that it encouraged Programme Panels and Scrutiny Committees to take an insular look at the pressures and difficulties in their respective Programme Areas rather than to address the budget across the Council as a whole. That task was then effectively left to Cabinet and to the Strategic Monitoring Committee towards the very end of the budget process and it was from those two bodies that the final recommendation to Council emerged.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Ian Hyson, County Treasurer (01432 260235)

3. The process adopted for the last two years moved away from that model accepting that the initial stages of the budget preparation needed to involve Cabinet Members and Directors but also needed to be “inquisitorial”. Once the broad financial parameters within which the budget had to be set were established, then the Budget Panel was responsible for examining the budget of each Directorate with both the Director and relevant Cabinet Member(s) being required to justify expenditure, to describe service pressures and to react to how the budget might be confined within the known financial parameters. The Budget Panel was constructed in a way which also allowed the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Strategic Monitoring Committee to be part of that process.
4. It is suggested that the Council should build upon and expand that practice which has had some success.

## Proposals

5. It is proposed:
  - That a Budget Panel be appointed with a membership as indicated later in this report.
  - That a higher profile be given to the role of Cabinet Members in receiving representation from other Members of the Council on their own priorities for the revenue budget. That could either be in written form or by pre-arranged appointment.
  - The need was recognised for a wider briefing of all Members of the Council, perhaps most appropriately through a seminar. The most effective timing for such a seminar could be immediately after the Secretary of State’s announcement of the 2004/05 settlement.
6. It has been previously accepted that the Budget Panel formed to undertake the examination of the individual budget presentations should be representative of the political groups, the Executive and Scrutiny. It is also important that the group should be contained to a size which would enable the “inquisitorial” approach to be effective. The previous principles established the appointment of the Leader of the Council, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Strategic Monitoring Committee and the four political group leaders with no substitutes being permitted. Two of the group leaders namely the Leader of the Council, Councillor R.J. Phillips, and the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor T.M. James, will be appointed both by virtue of their group leadership and by office. It is, therefore, proposed that additional membership be considered in accordance with paragraph 7 below.
7. Whilst Budget Panel is not a body that needs to be politically proportionate, it is important to recognise the potential imbalance of political representation and it is recommended that consideration should be given to enabling the Leader of the Council to appoint two further Members, neither of whom should hold a major service portfolio.
8. Budget Panel would then report on its findings and make initial recommendations to Cabinet for consideration. It is important to re-state the responsibility for the recommendations on the budget ultimately lie with the Executive, although the final budget will be determined by Council as a whole.

9. Once the Budget Panel is established, then it will report to Cabinet. Recent announcements suggest that the settlement may be available by mid-November this year as opposed to the normal date early in December. If advantage is to be taken of that advancement in the timetable then work will have to be undertaken during October and early November. It would then be possible for further consultation to take place on the Executive's initial budget proposals before these were finalised towards the end of January/beginning of February. The opportunity would then exist for the Strategic Monitoring Committee to offer its views on the budget prior to Cabinet making its recommendations to the annual budget meeting of the Council in March. Again, it is important to emphasise that the role of the Strategic Monitoring Committee is to scrutinise the budget proposals put forward by the Executive, not to put forward its own alternative budget proposals. That latter role is the function of the opposition group(s) when the Executive's proposals come before Council.

### **2004/05 AND BEYOND**

10. It is important that the budget process does not concentrate solely on the 2004/05 revenue budget. It is also important that the Budget Panel take into account the medium-term financial planning needs of the authority both in terms of its capacity to finance the longer term programme and also in relation to the impact on services. The Budget Panel will therefore require spending needs to be addressed wherever practicable over a four year period. There are a number of important reasons for this approach:
- the need to align expenditure with a strategy for council tax
  - the need to plan expenditure in a way that is consistent with both the current LPSA and any successor LPSA
  - to ensure that the Council can plan both increases and decreases in service delivery levels in line with likely resources
  - to ensure that future expenditure implications of current decisions are reflected at an early stage in the budget
  - to ensure that if the Council should wish to take advantage of the flexibility afforded by the introduction of Prudential Guidelines for borrow in support of capital spending that this can be financed as part of the longer term revenue budget.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

The most realistic alternative options are outlined in the course of the report and are effectively the reverse of what is proposed.

### **CONSULTEES**

None identified

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None identified.





# COUNCIL TAX CONSULTATION

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide.

### Purpose

To consider the approach to consulting the public on council tax and budget issues.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

### Recommendation

**THAT the options available for consultation be considered.**

### Reasons

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has previously issued guidelines for local authorities, which are actively seeking to improve consultations and address the perspective that "local government has been historically weak at communicating with the public". (MORI Review for DETR 2001).

### Considerations

1. Acknowledging the difficulties involved in effectively consulting on the subject, the Council has concentrated its energies in seeking engagement on a range of issues through broadly based focus groups and through Herefordshire Voice (Citizens' Panel). Direct consultation specifically on the subject of council tax and budgets has generally been limited to presentations to Local Area Forums although a limited exercise on seeking views on priorities for spending was undertaken last year with inconclusive results.
2. The options for developing the Council's approach include the following:
  - Referenda.
  - Opinion Surveys.
  - Survey of Citizens' Panel Members.
  - Focus Groups.
  - Community Workshops.
  - Public Meetings.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Ian Hyson, County Treasurer on 01432 260235

- Interactive Web Site.
  - Shared Interest Forums.
  - Local Area Forums.
  - User Forums.
  - Mailed Consultation documents to stakeholders.
3. Whilst Local Area Forums have provided an effective means of engaging with the wider community on many issues, they have proved less effective on annual budget issues. Presentations on the complexities of the financing of local government have been well received but the Forums have found it difficult to maintain the same level of engagement in indicating where service priorities should lie. This is at least partly because of the wide range of interests within the community; partly because of the differing levels of knowledge of “the system”, and; partly because of the unwillingness to engage with the issue of which services to reduce or forego to invest in services to which priority is given. It is important to acknowledge how difficult it is for those who are not regularly involved with local government to engage on that basis.
  4. It is felt that the best solution for the forthcoming year will lie with continuing to build on the range of activity previously attempted. Continued use of Herefordshire Voice (Citizens’ Panel), focus groups drawn from the Citizens’ Panel and Local Area Forums could all be important components of effective consultation. Consideration could be given to the wider use of the media.
  5. Just as important, however, is establishing a framework within which a significant number of people can engage. Providing some context and background to the choices is a vital ingredient of successful consultation as is the structure and the questions used to elicit views. Work has started on a simple presentation of the limited options open to the Council and the constraints within which it operates. The Policy Team have been asked to make a significant input to that process, drawing also on the expertise of the Communications Team within the Public Relations Unit. There is also a need to take a careful look at what has proved to be successful elsewhere.
  6. The national context is also important in the light of the recent statement issued by the Rt. Hon. Nick Raynsford, MP in relation to the potential for council tax capping in 2004/05. The full text of the statement is not reproduced in this report but the gist of the advice is that the Minister will look critically at the levels of council tax increase imposed in 2004/05 and has removed the exemption from council tax capping for those authorities categorised Excellent or Good in the Comprehensive Performance Assessments. Again, demonstrating effective consultation could be an important element of the discussion if a Council was to be called in to explain an excessive council tax increase.
  7. There will also be a need to consider whether any of the opportunities afforded by the provisions of the Local Government Bill should be included in the consultation process.
  8. Subject to the views of Cabinet, a further report will be presented as part of the ongoing budget process.

## **Risk Management**

Failure to consult with the public would reduce the Council's capacity to justify to

Government its decision ultimately taken on next year's council tax.

### **Alternative Options**

There are no alternative options.

### **Consultees**

None identified.

### **Background Papers**

None identified.



## BALANCE OF FUNDING REVIEW

### PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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#### Wards Affected

County-wide.

#### Purpose

To receive an update on the Council's response in relation to Local Government Balance of Funding Review – Invitation to submit papers letter from Nick Raynsford on 16th July this year.

#### Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

#### Recommendation

**That the content of the proposed response be considered and any amendments made as appropriate.**

#### Reason

To provide a formal response to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

#### Considerations

1. The response, as set out in the following paragraphs, addresses the fundamental issues as laid out in his letter, although it has not sought to take a view on each of the detailed questions raised. These will be more thoroughly addressed in the responses provided by the Society of County Treasurers and the Unitary Treasurers' Group. We have also used the Local Government Association (LGA) draft response as a basis for constructing ours, although our views do not necessarily concur on all aspects. The main issues are as follows:

##### **Accountability**

##### *Spending Targets*

2. The Government has a mandate to deliver its priorities, e.g. Education, through local authorities, and this should not be challenged. We also strongly believe that these mandates are best delivered locally. Accountability, however, lies with what is being delivered and not the means to do so. Enforcing targets for increases in spending per pupil is a crude way of ensuring that the appropriate amount of additional resources reaches schools. This, together with other measures affecting our budget decision-making, take little or no account of local need and priorities. It creates a

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Andrew Tanner on 01432 260162

dichotomy between the requirements to be an 'excellent' CPA authority which knows what is needed locally and can deliver effectively, but then has its hands tied by nationally prescribed spending targets.

### *Ring Fenced Funding*

3. Ring fenced grants are another method of central control which result in a significant administrative overhead and cost. The statutory and other key service targets developed nationally provide the national accountability and local authorities need to have the flexibility in funding to develop their own solutions. The quantum of local government funding needs to be at least maintained, therefore, but the current ring fenced proportion of 11% needs to be significantly reduced.

### *Gearing*

4. The issue of gearing to a certain extent *increases* local accountability, as marginal budget increases have to be funded locally. With fixed central grant income, then this will always be the case, only that with a greater proportion of expenditure funded *locally the impact on the local taxpayer will be greater*. Local taxpayers will ultimately be concerned about the additional burden in pure cash terms and not necessarily percentage increases, which we believe distorts the gearing debate.
5. To summarise, we believe greater accountability in the funding system will come from:
  - *A significant reduction in the proportion of central funding coming through ring fenced grants and*
  - *The cessation of any future targets by Government for ensuring minimum spend in services.*

### **Fairness And Equalisation**

6. Fairness and equalisation covers three objectives:
  - That each Band D Council property in England will pay the same amount in Council Tax.
  - That each local authority will provide a minimum level of service.
  - Affordability.
7. These are both fine in principle and the current system of distribution attempts to distribute resources in a manner to go some way towards meeting these objectives. There is a particular local problem, of course, in Herefordshire in that we are the second most sparsely populated authority in the country and we do not believe that the sparsity factor built into the formula adequately reflects the additional cost we face in providing services. This paper is, however, not directly concerned with such issues albeit that their importance should not be diminished in a wider debate. The provision of a minimum level of service will always be a relatively subjective judgement unless it is seen in a minimum amount of spend per capita. This is immediately distorted by the differing costs of service provision across the country.

### **Equalisation**

8. The equalisation process introduced this year is meant to have gone a long way in

ironing out the variations caused by differing tax bases. Full equalisation in terms of matching needs with resources, however, will cost an additional £4.8bn on tax revenues.

9. A shift in balance of funding to more locally raised revenue will require pooling arrangements nationally if equalisation is to be maintained and there are fundamental flaws in doing this. Politically it could be very difficult to explain to local taxpayers that, as a 'net loser' they are funding other areas in the country, particularly if their tax liability has increased.

## **Affordability**

10. Affordability is increasingly becoming a key issue, and particularly so in Herefordshire where 19% of the population is over 65 and average weekly earnings are 18% below the Great Britain average. As Council Tax increases are greater than inflation, the tax itself becomes increasingly regressive. A local income tax would overcome this problem but there are associated concerns here, which would need to be thoroughly addressed such as:
  - The overall tax burden on individuals does not increase; and
  - the overall tax yield may reduce as increasing direct income tax may increase the black economy.

## **Summary**

11. There are several initiatives which the Government has introduced in the last few years, which have been very welcome, but we will reserve judgement until they have been fully implemented, and the real effects are noticed locally. In particular, we refer to:
  - Public Service Agreements.
  - Business Growth Incentives; and
  - The Prudential Code for borrowing.
12. These reward local innovation and responsible local management and this is vital for strong delivery of services.
13. We are more ambivalent, however, to major structural change in the funding system mainly owing to the fact that Herefordshire is a low wage county and a greater proportion of the Council Tax collected locally will need to be clearly demonstrable as not increasing taxpayers' overall burden.
14. The potential costs involved of conversion as against the perceived additional benefits would suggest that the current system needs to be modified as described above but not overhauled.
15. We do strongly support the need for less central control over spending decisions in line with the New Localism philosophy currently in vogue, which has strong support in every local authority.

## **Risk Management**

It is important that we make a formal response to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) as failure to do so may marginalise the contribution Herefordshire Council needs to make on an issue which could potentially have a significant local impact.

## **Consultees**

None.

## **Background Papers**

Letter from Nick Raynsford, Local Government Association dated 16 July 2003.



# HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT PLAN - MONITORING REPORT

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To consider and agree the first monitoring report on the Herefordshire Council Improvement Plan and to identify any action to be taken as a result.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

### Recommendations

- THAT (a) the monitoring report on the Council's Improvement Plan be agreed;**
- and**
- (b) any action Cabinet wishes to take as a result of the monitoring report be identified**

### Reasons

The Council is required to have an Improvement Plan in place following the outcome of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and to implement appropriate monitoring arrangements.

### Considerations

1. In September 2002, the Council was subject to CPA along with all other upper tier authorities in the country. The assessment resulted in a report outlining the Council's strengths and weaknesses under a number of headings and culminating in a series of recommendations. The Council initially challenged the report in respect of a number of issues, including individual section scores, lack of appropriate audit trail for some of the conclusions drawn, nuance and grammatical errors. The final report was sent to the Council in November 2002.
2. One of the requirements of CPA was that the Council should draw up an Improvement Plan. Herefordshire Council's Improvement Plan is drawn from the recommendations outlined in the CPA report and those outstanding from the previous improvement plan arising from the Improvement and Development Agency's peer review in 2001. The Improvement Plan was agreed with the Audit Commission

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Hilary Preedy, Policy Officer on (01432) 260378

in February 2003 and forms the basis of the Council's audit and inspection programme for the next three years. The Plan was developed as a strategic plan for improvement over three years with actions focused around five key areas: leadership and vision, performance management, key resources, organisational development and learning and communications.

3. The CPA process also required the Council to identify six improvement priorities to be delivered over the 12 months to December 2003. The Council was keen, however, to focus on long term improvement and incorporated the so-called "CPA priorities" into the overall Improvement Plan. By way of clarity, a summary of these priorities is set out on page 4 of the Improvement Plan.
4. Monitoring of the Improvement Plan was agreed on the basis of using "faces":
  - ☺ Smiling face indicates action completed or full on track for completion
  - ☹ Straight face means that issues have arisen but which are not expected to impact on the achievement of the overall Plan
  - ⊖ Sad face means that there are significant issues that could affect the timing or performance of the Plan
5. The Improvement Plan envisaged monitoring to be undertaken at the agreed performance monitoring intervals, namely 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 months. Given the strategic nature of the Improvement Plan, it is unlikely that significant progress overall will be made in each two-monthly interval although specific actions may warrant closer monitoring. Cabinet is asked to consider, therefore, the frequency of monitoring reports that it wishes to receive.
6. The detailed progress report is appended at Appendix 1 and indicates that the majority of actions have a smiling face, being either completed or fully on track for completion by the target date. In relation to the "CPA priorities", these are fully on track and will be completed by the end of December 2003. Highlighted below are those issues arising in each of the five areas which have either a straight or sad face:

#### **Leadership and vision**

- **Race Equality Scheme – straight face:** the first year's action plan was not completed and a revised action plan has now been developed. There have been some delays in moving forward with the Steering Group.
- **Disability Scheme – straight face:** the original target date of June 2003 was not met and a revised target date of December 2003 has now been agreed. Implementation is due to start in January 2004 to meet the Council's statutory obligations by October 2004.

#### **Performance management**

- **Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) – straight face:** there are a number of issues highlighted in relation to the achievement of the LPSA targets. A separate LPSA monitoring report will be submitted to Cabinet at the end of September.

## Key resources

- **Project management: review and revise cross Council strategies and programmes in light of agreed methodology – straight face:** the list of cross Council strategies which should be revised in the light of the agreed methodology for project management (PRINCE2) was compiled in March 2003. The managers responsible for their delivery have been offered the full PRINCE2 training with a view to then revising their project plans.
- **Scrutiny review of property – sad face:** the scrutiny review of property is included in the work programme of the Strategic Monitoring Committee with a target date for completion of December 2003. The review was delayed because of the election/change of administration and although some data gathering has started, no revised timetable is yet in place.

## Organisational development and learning

- **Management of change/organisational development – straight face:** this element has been removed from the Modernisation Programme and is being taken forward by a small group of officers. Some activities have been identified although there is no formal work plan in place.

## Communications

- **Team briefings: random spot checks – straight face:** the first survey is due to take place in August 2003.
- **Staff roadshows – sad face:** the Improvement Plan commits the Management Team to two staff roadshows each year. To date, in 2003, no roadshows have taken place and none are yet planned.
- **Work shadowing – straight face:** work-shadowing commitments are in place for Directors/Heads of Department. However, the picture is more inconsistent at Head of Service level where only a few Heads of Service, such as Head of Engineering and Transportation, regularly undertake programmed work shadowing
- **Connecting with Communities – straight face:** the deferring of a decision in respect of the future of Herefordshire Matters is likely to impact on the overall achievement of the Connecting with Communities action plan.
- **Local Area Forums – straight face:** this action was due for completion by December 2003. Given that future work is on hold pending a decision by Cabinet, it is unlikely that the Council will meet this timescale. There remains some uncertainty about the future of Local Area Forums, which are seen as a key part of the Communications area of the Improvement Plan.

## **Alternative Options**

There are no alternative options

## **Risk Management**

Failure to fulfil the actions identified in the Council's Improvement Plan may result in an increased programme of audit and inspection

## **Consultees**

None identified

## **Background Papers**

None identified



# Committed to excellence...

*Review  
September 2003*

- ...**Putting** people first
- ...**Preserving** our heritage
- ...**Promoting** our county
- ...**Providing** for our communities
- ...**Protecting** our future

*Quality life in a quality county*

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- ☺ Smiling face indicates action completed or full on track for completion
- ☹ Straight face means that issues have arisen but which are not expected to impact on the overall Plan
- ☹ Sad face means that there are significant issues that could affect the timing or performance of the Plan

Any revised targets are shown in **bold**

# Leadership and vision

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress update
A clear understanding of the impact of Council activity on achieving the Herefordshire Plan ambitions	Produce a <a href="#">Corporate Plan</a>	Chief Executive	Chief Executive's Management Team Policy Team	January 2003	😊 Corporate Plan completed and approved by Council – 17 January 2003
	Adopt a corporate planning template	Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team	January 2003	😊 Adopted as part of the Corporate Plan
	Implement corporate planning template	Chief Executive's Management Team	Policy Team	March 2003	😊 Implemented through the performance management framework (see below)
	Review corporate planning template	Chief Executive's Management Team	Policy Team	March 2004	😊
	Implement, in full, the Council's <a href="#">Race Equality Scheme</a>	Head of Policy and Communication	Race Equality Steering Group	March 2005	☹️ Revised action plan being developed Workforce monitoring now in place. Qualitative research on black and minority ethnic perceptions commissioned Awareness raising campaign underway Pilot monitoring exercise introduced alongside the comments and complaints procedure Common racial incident reporting form introduced across all local agencies
Elimination of prejudice within the council and in its dealings with others					

# Leadership and vision

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress update	
	Prepare a Disability Scheme to ensure the Council meets its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and other related legislation	Director of Housing and Social Care Director of Education Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team	June-2003 <b>December 2003</b>	☹️	Revised timescale agreed by CXMT. Working Group established to develop Scheme – July 2003
	Implement the Disability Scheme	Chief Executive's Management Team	Managers' Forum	December-2003 <b>January 2004</b>	☹️	
	Implement, in full, the <i>Promoting Equal Opportunities</i> section of the <a href="#">Human Resources Strategy</a>	Director of Environment	HR Strategy Group	December 2005	☺️	Disability Symbol gained Text for Personal Employment Pack for existing employees being put together Targeted equalities training currently being planned
Management of organisational change/development across the Council	Implement, in full, the <i>Change Management Programme</i> in the <a href="#">Modernisation Programme</a>	Director of Environment	Programme Board	March 2005	☹️	Revised as part of revisions to Modernisation Programme and moved to Organisational development and learning element of the Improvement Plan



# Performance management

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
Focus on performance to drive corporate and service improvement	Implement a <a href="#">corporate performance management framework</a>	Chief Executive	Head of Performance Management Policy Team	March 2003	☺ Framework produced by 31 March 2003; formal launch on 21 May 2003 to Managers' Forum. Commitments for all CXMT in place by 31 March 2003; Commitments to be in place for all Heads of Service by 30 August 2003
	Implement performance monitoring in line with agreed intervals at all levels in the organisation	Head of Performance Management	Directorate resources	March 2005	☺
	Implement performance validation system	Head of Performance Management	Principal Internal Auditor	March 2003	☺ Validation systems underway on 16 key CPA indicators
	Review corporate performance management framework in light of full outturns	Chief Executive	Chief Executive's Management Team Head of Performance Management	May 2004	☺
	Revise Staff Review and Development process to incorporate target setting in line with business planning	Head of HR Head of Performance Management	HR Services	March 2003	☺ Revised SRD process in place by 30 April 2003

# Performance management

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
	Implement, in full, the <i>Achieving management excellence</i> section of the <a href="#">Human Resources Strategy</a>	Strategic Head of HR	HR Strategy Group	December 2004	<p>😊</p> <p>Pilot run of management competencies underway from September 2003</p> <p>Programme of performance management training underway</p> <p>EFQM assessment of all services carried out in 2002/2003</p>
Improved services for the community	Deliver, in full, the Council's <a href="#">Local Public Service Agreement</a>	Policy Officer Assistant Treasurer (Financial Policy and Audit)	Lead Officers	March 2005	<p>😞</p> <p>Full progress report to CXMT – mid-September 2003</p>

## Key resources

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
Corporate project management arrangements	Review current models for project management	Director of Environment	Policy Team	January 2003	☺ Review of project management models reported to CXMT on 18 March 2003
	Implement agreed model for <a href="#">project management</a>	Director of Environment	Managers' Forum	March 2003	☺ Agreed model (PRINCE2) implemented from 31 March 2003 through targeted training programme – first training undertaken in April 2003
	Develop and run bespoke training to support the agreed model for project management	Head of HR	HR Services	September 2003	☺ PRINCE2 pilot training programme launched 7 April 2003 with roll out of awareness sessions for Key Managers during August/September 2003
	Review and revise as required all current service and cross cutting strategies to incorporate agreed model	Lead officers		September 2003	☹ Strategic programmes and projects reviewed as part of CXMT report of March 2003. No evidence of revisions having taken place
	Review approach to project management	Chief Executive's Management Team	Policy Team	March 2005	☺

## Key resources

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
Comprehensive risk management arrangements	Revise current <a href="#">Risk Management Strategy</a> to incorporate operational risk and links with performance management	County Treasurer	Risk Management Strategy-Working Group <b>Performance Leads</b>	March 2003	☺ Risk Management Strategy incorporated in performance management framework
	Implement revised strategy	Chief Executive's Management Team	Risk Management Strategy-Working Group <b>Performance Leads</b>	June 2003	☺
	Develop and run bespoke training to support the Risk Management Strategy	HR Services	Risk Management Strategy-Working Group <b>Performance Leads</b>	June 2003	☺ Training incorporated into the performance management training
Improved Council-wide procurement	Review approach to risk management	Chief Executive's Management Team	Risk Management Strategy-Working Group <b>Performance Leads</b>	March 2005	☺
	Implement, in full, the Council's <a href="#">Procurement Strategy</a>	County Secretary and Solicitor	Contract Officers' Group Procurement Officer	March 2005	☺ Review of strategy scheduled for autumn following externalisation of HCS and strategic review of WMS planned for January 2004 Awareness Training for all authorised purchasing officers delivered and strategic procurement

## Key resources

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
					<p>training session delivered</p> <p>Central Purchasing Service set up in relation to paper, mobile phones, corporate travel.</p> <p>Review of Code of Practice on allocation of contracts and financial standing orders due for completion - September 2003</p> <p>Compliance with EU procurement rules - complete</p>
Improved asset management	Undertake in-depth scrutiny review of property in line with <a href="#">scoping statement</a>	Chief Executive	Environment Directorate Committee Manager (Scrutiny)	December 2003	<p>☹</p> <p>Timescale delayed due to election/change of administration. Some data gathering has started although no revised timetable in place</p>
	Develop and implement <a href="#">Regeneration/ Accommodation Strategy</a>	Director of Environment	Accommodation Project Board Regeneration Project Board	March 2007	<p>☺</p> <p>Consultation underway on Edgar Street Grid proposals including debate regarding future office accommodation</p>

## Key resources

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
	Implement, in full, the <i>Promoting Flexible Working</i> section of the <a href="#">Human Resources Strategy</a>	Head of HR	HR Strategy Group	December 2005	<p>😊</p> <p>Pilot flexible working to be carried out in Revenues and Benefits No progress in relation to Work Life Balance pre-assessment</p>
Deliver a single broadband telecommunications infrastructure	Implement, in full, the <i>Herefordshire in Touch</i> programme in <a href="#">e-Modernity</a>	Head of e-Modernity	Programme Manager	December 2005	<p>😊</p> <p>Broadband plan revised in the light of the new regional ICT strategy and technical innovation It is hoped that negotiations with telecommunications suppliers will conclude by the end of 2003 with a view to broadband services becoming available early in 2004</p>

# Organisational development and learning

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
A competent and effective workforce	Implement, in full, the <i>Improving recruitment, retention, making best use of skills and potential</i> section in the <a href="#">Human Resources Strategy</a>	Head of HR	HR Strategy Group	December 2005	☺ Exit surveys in place No progress on Career Information Point Focus group from Herefordshire Voice being set up to consider Council's reputation as an employer Targeted survey regarding Essential Skills drafted
	Implement, in full, the <i>Ensuring a safe and supportive working environment</i> section of the <a href="#">Human Resources Strategy</a>	Head of HR	HR Strategy Group	December 2005	☺ Health and Safety induction for all new employees in place Revised bullying, harassment and grievance policies drafted Review underway of lessons to be learnt from complaints
Better passporting of learning throughout the Council	Develop systems for sharing learning across the Council through the use of existing mechanisms such as use of case studies, Managers' Forum and the Intranet	Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team HR Services Managers' Forum	June 2003	☺ Systems developed and launched at Managers Forum – January 2003
	Implement systems for sharing learning	Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team PR Team	September 2003	☺ Systems currently being implemented

# Organisational development and learning

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
Management of organisational change/ development across the Council	Review systems	Director of Policy and Community	Policy Team HR Services	December 2004	☺
	Implement, in full, the <i>Change Management Programme</i> in the <a href="#">Modernisation Programme</a> <b>Implement activities identified</b>	Director of Environment and Director of Policy and Community	Organisation Development Group	March 2005	☹



# Communications

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
Timely communication of significant information to all staff	Ensure 100% penetration of Team Briefings	Chief Executive's Management Team	Managers' Forum	January 2003	Commitment to Team Briefings re-emphasised at Managers' Forum - January 2003
	Carry out random spot checks of Team Briefings to ensure compliance every three months	Public Relations Officer	Public Relations Team	From March 2003	First survey planned for August 2003
	Implement, in full, the <i>Improving communications</i> section in the <a href="#">Human Resources Strategy</a>	Head of HR	HR Strategy Group Public Relations Team	December 2005	Progress as per Connecting with Communities element
Opportunities for all staff to "have their say"	Run two staff roadshows per year	Chief Executive	Chief Executive's Management Team	December 2004	No roadshows held in 2003 to date
	Hold two open meetings annually for all staff within each Directorate/Department	Chief Executive's Management Team	Directorate/Departmental resources	December 2003	Open meetings held in all Directorates/Departments
	Review success of open meetings	Chief Executive's Management Team	Public Relations Team	March 2004	
	Consider and implement other opportunities for all staff to feed back ideas	Chief Executive's Management Team	HR Services Directorate/Departmental resources	June 2003	Mechanisms in place in Directorates/Departments although not clear how learning shared across the Council

# Communications

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
	Directors and Heads of Service to undertake half-day work shadowing four times a year	Chief Executive's Management Team Heads of Service	Managers' Forum	March 2005	☹ Work shadowing in place for Directors but not yet for the majority of Heads of Service (except Head of Adult Services and Head of Engineering and Transportation)
Effective communications outside the Council	Implement, in full, the recommendations of the <a href="#">Connecting with Communities project</a>	Director of Policy and Community	Communications Network Public Relations Team	March 2005	☹ Draft Communications strategy completed Council-wide communications network formed Measures taken to improve communications around job evaluation. Decision on future of Herefordshire Matters deferred pending work on costings and joint publication New Members - media training Media satisfaction survey to be carried out in autumn 2003

# Communications

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
	Implement, in full, the Access to services programme in <a href="#">e-Modernisation</a>	Director of Policy and Community	Programme Board Top 10 customer services group Info in Herefordshire	March 2006	<p>☺</p> <p>Programme progressing well - improving front office services by using new technology to enable more queries to be dealt with on the first contact. Telephone access also being improved</p> <p>Top 10 customer services group disbanded and its work being taken forward as part of the Service Improvement Project, due to report in August 2003. Any future work will be within the remit of e-Modernisation.</p>
	Implement, in full, the Council's <a href="#">Customer Service Strategy</a>	Customer Services and Development Manager	Top 10 customer services group	March 2004	<p>☺</p> <p>Customer Standards agreed - to be launched in September 2003</p>

# Communications

What we want to achieve...	What we will do...	Who is responsible...	With these resources...	When we will achieve it...	Progress to date
	Consistent use of corporate stationery across the Council	Director of Policy and Community	ICT Services	March 2003	<p>☹️</p> <p>Revised corporate style guidelines have been produced. Revisions to the correspondence/report templates are being made. The revised style guidelines are scheduled to be issued in September/October 2003</p>
Improved consultation arrangements	Implement, in full, agreed proposals to develop of <a href="#">Local Area Forums</a>	Director of Policy and Community	LAF Lead Officers Policy Assistant	December 2003	<p>☹️</p> <p>Further work on hold pending outcome of Cabinet discussions</p>
	Implement, in full, the Council's <a href="#">Community Involvement Strategy</a>	Director of Policy and Community	Community Involvement Co-ordinator	March 2004	<p>☺️</p> <p>Some additional support for its implementation being provided through the Graduate Trainees in Policy and Community</p>

# REVISED RACE EQUALITY SCHEME ACTION PLAN

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To comment on and approve the revised action plan and timetable.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

### Recommendations

- THAT (a) the revised Race Equality Scheme action plan and timetable be approved;**
- and**
- (b) a progress report be presented to Cabinet and Strategic Monitoring Committee in November/December 2003.**

### Reasons

Cabinet considered progress against the original action plan at its meeting on 19th June, 2003. At that meeting concern was expressed regarding the relatively slow progress against some elements of the original action plan and a revised action plan and timetable was requested.

### Considerations

1. It is an integral part of the Race Equality Scheme that the Authority progress is monitored. The revised action plan has been considered by Chief Executive's Management Team and will also be reported to Strategic Monitoring Committee. The plan will then be made available via the Council's web site.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Alan Blundell , Head of Policy and Communication on (01432) 260268

## **Risk Management**

Failure to make significant progress against the action plan would compromise compliance with the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000. This could expose the Council to legal action. Failure to progress satisfactorily could also damage the perception of the Council by staff, the general public, and in particular ethnic communities.

## **Consultees**

Chief Executive's Management Team

## **Background Papers**

None identified.

## COUNCIL-WIDE ACTIVITIES

- To ensure that all Councillors, Council employees and those working with or for the Council understand their responsibility for implementing equalities, the standards of behaviour required by the Council and the consequences of unacceptable behaviour.

Ref	What we will do...	To achieve...	By when...	Resources required...	Lead responsibility...
CA2	Undertake research into minority ethnic residents within Herefordshire	An understanding of the spread of minority ethnic residents in Herefordshire	September 2004 Interim report December 2003	Management of project Input from partners	Steering Group
CA3	Introduce amendments to policy development process and Forward Plan	A mainstreaming of race equality considerations into decision making	February 2004	Reliant upon information from impact assessment in January 2004	County Secretary and Solicitor
CA4a	Identify priority services based on new impact assessment .	An appreciation of those services having the greatest impact on and relevance to minority ethnic residents	February 2004. In the interim priorities will be set by Customer Top 10 group as these are the recognised customer interfaces	Managers Forum Staff Training Staff Awareness	Steering Group
CA4b	Develop and oversee the implementation of monitoring procedures for all priority services	A better alignment of services to the needs of Herefordshire's residents	June 2004 Monitoring pilot April-Dec 2003, main rollout dependent upon the results on new impact assessment	New impact assessment (see CA4 a)	Steering Group
CA5	Revise business planning framework and self-assessment	A mainstreaming of race equality considerations into service planning and delivery	September 2003	Performance Management Framework	Steering Group
CA6	Undertake further assessment of functions and services	An up to date and robust approach to race equality	May 2006	See CA4a	Steering Group

Ref	What we will do...	To achieve...	By when...	Resources required...	Lead responsibility...
CA7a	Provide equality training for all Council Members	A better approach to the promotion of equality, good race relations and elimination of discrimination	March 2004 Introductory event October 2003	Trainer time and resource from the Diversity Group Linkages with Members Support Group	Member Support Officer and Personnel Manager (Employee and Organisational Development)
CA7b	Provide equality training for Cabinet and Strategic Monitoring Committee	A more focused implementation and scrutiny of the Council's approach to race equality	April 2004 (As Above)	Trainer time and resource from the Diversity Group	Steering Group and Personnel Manager (Employee and Organisational Development)
CA8a	Review the formal complaints procedure to ensure that all explicit race harassment and victimisation complaints are accelerated into the formal procedure	A commitment to confronting and dealing with explicit racism within Herefordshire	September 2003	Staff time	Customer Services and Development Manager
CA8b	Ensure a unique identifier for complaints relating to racial discrimination	A better appreciation of the number and scale of complaints of racial discrimination against the Council	December 2003 May to November 2003	Herefordshire Race Equality Group	Customer Services and Development Manager
CA8c	Report on findings quarterly to the Steering Group and ensure appropriate corrective action	A mainstreaming of race equality considerations into service delivery	December 2003 (first report)		Steering Group
CA9	Publish annual report on the implementation of the Scheme	A greater awareness of what the Council has achieved in relation to the Scheme and its Action Plan over the year	May 2004	PR	Steering Group



# Appendix 1

Ref	What we will do...	To achieve...	By when...	Resources required...	Lead responsibility...
CA10	Ensure that Race Equality Implications are considered in the Council's approach to procurement	Ensure that Race Equality considerations are an important factor when securing goods and services from external suppliers	February 2004		Steering Group

## SERVICE SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

- To eliminate barriers for anyone who needs or wishes to access services delivered by the Council, including barriers relating to affordability, language, accessibility, culture and attitude.

Ref	What we will do...	To achieve...	By when...	Resources required...	Lead responsibility...
SA1	Develop and Implement formal monitoring of priority services in each Directorate/Department	A better alignment of services to the needs of Herefordshire's residents	March 2004		Each Director/Steering Group representatives

## CONSULTATION

- To consult with the community, including its own employees, to ensure that people take part in identifying needs and allocating resources to meet those needs.

Ref	What we will do...	To achieve...	By when...	Resources required...	Lead responsibility...
C1	Refine policy development process	A mainstreaming of race equality considerations into key decision making	March 2004		Steering Group
C2	Identify community groups for consultation purposes	The direct involvement of minority ethnic people in Council planning and decisions	December 2003	Race Equality Development Officer Policy Unit Communities Against Racism Group	Steering Group

## EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

- To ensure that everyone is treated fairly in recruitment to, and employment with, the Council.
- To understand customers' needs by reflecting the diversity of the local community (such as ethnic origin, gender, age, disability, etc) in the workforce.

Ref	What we will do...	To achieve...	By when...	Resources required...	Lead responsibility...
ET1a	Further review of ethnic press to advertise Council vacancies	Promotion of equality	May 2004	Personnel Officer time for action and advertising agency links	Personnel Manager (Systems, Occupational Health and Safety)
ET1b	Analyse how easy the Council makes employment opportunities available	Promotion of equality	September 2004	Personnel Officer time for action and advertising agency links	Personnel Manager (Systems, Occupational Health and Safety)
ET2a	Review equality monitoring systems for employment to cover				
	Recruitment and section	A fair treatment for all applicants	April 2004	Database records, Personnel support time	Personnel Manager (Systems, Occupational Health and Safety) and Personnel Officer
	Staff employed	A fair treatment of all staff employed	April 2004	Database records, Personnel support time	Personnel Manager (Systems, Occupational Health and Safety) and Personnel Officer
	Access to training opportunities		April 2004		
	Staff involved in grievance processes	A fair treatment of all staff employed	April 2004	Spreadsheet development and officer time for development of recording cases	Personnel Advisor and wider DPO group
	Staff involved in disciplinary processes				

Ref	What we will do...	To achieve...	By when...	Resources required...	Lead responsibility...
	Staff involved in harassment and bullying complaints				
	Staff who benefit or suffer detriment from performance assessment procedures				
	Staff turnover statistics	A fair treatment of all staff employed	April 2004	Personnel Officer time to develop monitoring and recording process	Personnel Manager (Systems, Occupational Health and Safety) and Personnel Officer
ET2b	Report on the findings of statistics in relation to ET2a above in line with the requirements of the Race Equality Scheme	An equality balance with the wider economically active population	October 2003 (first report)		Head of Human Resources
ET3a	Revise Staff Review and Development scheme to ensure that equality training is highlighted as part of the annual process	A mainstreaming of equality considerations into employee development	March 2004		Personnel Manager (Employee and Organisational Development)
ET3b	Revise policies to ensure that they comply with the equality statement including, for example, recruitment and selection, equal opportunities in employment, disciplinary procedures, grievance procedure and bullying harassment and bullying procedure	A better promotion of equality and elimination of discrimination	May 2004	Personnel Officer and policy development time	Personnel Manager (Employee and Organisational Development)

Ref	What we will do...	To achieve...	By when...	Resources required...	Lead responsibility...
ET4b	All new starters to receive equality training as part of central induction	A better promotion of equality and elimination of discrimination	September 2004	Trainer time and staff time for development	Personnel Manager (Employee and Organisational Development)
ET4c	Training for each member of the Managers' Forum	A strategic management and mainstreaming of race equality implementation	January 2004	External trainer time and staff time for development	Personnel Manager (Employee and Organisational Development)
ET4d	Training for all Complaints Officers	A mainstreaming of race equality issues into service delivery	June 2004	Trainer time and staff time for development	Personnel Manager (Employee and Organisational Development)
ET5	Incorporate diversity training workshop into the generic skills training programme – run two modules	A better promotion of equality and elimination of discrimination	April 2004	Trainer time	Personnel Manager (Employee and Organisational Development)
ET7	All managers to take a proactive approach to eliminating racist jokes and inappropriate comments/behaviour	A better promotion of equality and elimination of discrimination	March 2005	Delivered as part of training programme in ET5	Personnel Manager (Employee and Organisational Development)
ET8	Develop support networks for minority ethnic staff	A better promotion of equality and elimination of discrimination	December 2003 Levels of interest being sought through Core News September 2003	Officer time	Head of Human Resources

## 2003/2004 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE OUTTURNS

### PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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#### Wards Affected

County-wide

#### Purpose

To note details of the Council's reporting and scrutiny arrangements in relation to the National Best Value Performance Indicators, and an update on corporate performance from 1 April to 31 July 2003.

#### Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

#### Recommendation

**THAT the Council's monitoring arrangements for the National Best Value Performance Indicators, and corporate performance from 1 April to 31 July 2003 be noted.**

#### Reasons

The Council has developed revised performance monitoring arrangements as outlined in the Comprehensive Performance Self-assessment document submitted to the Audit Commission. The revised arrangements ensure that the Chief Executive's Management Team, the Strategic Monitoring Committee, Scrutiny Committees, and Cabinet are all involved in the performance monitoring process.

#### Considerations

1. During 2003/2004 corporate performance will be reported to Cabinet at 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12-monthly intervals in line with the Council's Performance Management Framework. However, due to different data collection arrangements, some performance indicators are monitored less frequently than others. Appendix 1 provides details of the frequency of collection for national and local corporate performance indicators reported to Cabinet.
2. Performance against the National Best Value Indicators is analysed by the Audit Commission and used as part of the Council's overall Comprehensive Performance Assessment. Appendix 2 provides details of the National Best Value Performance Indicators in terms of the frequency of collection and scrutiny arrangements.
3. Corporate performance for the period 1 April 2003 – 31 July 2003 has been reported on an exception basis and only those indicators where there is a variation on the target of at least + or – 10% are highlighted.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Tony Michael, Policy Officer, on (01432) 261823

## Above target performance

4. **Housing benefit security – the number of fraud investigations, per 1,000 caseload (National Indicator – BVPI 76c):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 38 per 1000, whilst performance for the 4 months up to 31 July was 43 per 1000. The monitoring and prompt closure of not proven fraud cases has resulted in an increased number of investigations being undertaken.
5. **Housing benefit security – the number of prosecutions and sanctions, per 1,000 caseload (National Indicator – BVPI 76d):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 6 per 1000, whilst performance for the 4 months up to 31 July was 7 per 1000. The “scoring” system applied to referrals received ensures that priority is given to quality referrals resulting in more sanctions being administered.
6. **Number of recorded complaints, both formal and informal (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 285, whilst the number of complaints recorded for the first four months of this year is already up to 205. The high level of recorded complaints reflects improved collection arrangements and a greater focus on customer service issues across the authority.
7. **Use of public transport (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is to increase expenditure on the use of public transport by 5%. Performance for the 4 months up to 31 July 2003 showed a 39% increase, compared to the same period during 2002/2003.

## Areas for Improvement

8. **Average time for processing new housing benefit claims (National Indicator – BVPI 78a):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 33 days, whilst performance for the 4 months up to 31 July was 50 days. A significant amount of downtime in software systems, the implementation of tax credits and shortages in staffing resources, have all lead to a down turn in performance in this area. The assessment team is now at full compliment and the majority of system issues have been resolved. Additional staff will also be recruited to deal with the implementation of Pension Credits in October. As a result, it is anticipated that performance will improve over the remaining 8 months of 2003/2004.
9. **Average time for processing notifications of changes of circumstance for housing benefit claims (National Indicator – BVPI 78b):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 9 days, whilst performance for the 4 months up to 31 July was 13.5 days. The late notification by the Inland Revenue of working tax and child tax credits entitlements in April resulted in a significant amount of additional changes in circumstances to be dealt with by the Benefits Team. Compared with the same 4 month period last year, the team have had to deal with 1,333 more changes in circumstances. These have now been cleared and an improvement in this area is expected during the next monitoring period.
10. **Percentage of housing benefit renewal claims processed on time (National Indicator – BVPI 78c):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 83%, whilst performance for the 4 months up to 31 July was 33%. Due to system problems the number of renewal claims processed was down during April. These problems have now been resolved and performance during July was up to 56%. From October 2003, there is no longer a requirement to issue renewal claims to pensioners and this will have a further positive impact on performance.



11. **The percentage of standard searches carried out in 10 working days (National Indicator – BVPI 179):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 100%, whilst performance for the 4 months up to 31 July was 74%. However, this compares with an outturn performance of 58% for 2002/2003, demonstrating a significant improvement in the percentage of searches undertaken for the current year. Provisional figures for August 2003, show that a 100% turnaround of searches has been achieved during the month, suggesting that the upward trend in performance is continuing.
12. **Percentage of complaints resolved at Complaints Officer level (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 70%. Performance for the 4 months up to 31 July was 15%. Directors and Heads of Department are currently reviewing arrangements for resolving complaints at Complaints Officer level.
13. **Percentage of complaints resulting in change of practice (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 6%. Performance for the 4 months up to 31 July was 3%. Directors and Heads of Department are currently reviewing arrangements for introducing changes as a result of customer complaints.
14. **Staff mileage (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is to reduce mileage by 1%. Performance for the 4 months up to 31 July 2003, compared to the same period during 2002, showed a 0.5% reduction. Directors and Heads of Department are monitoring staff mileage within their areas to ensure that the corporate target is achieved over the course of 2003/2004.
15. **First Stop INFO customer enquiries resolved within agreed timescales (Local Indicator):** The target for this indicator during 2003/2004 is 80%, however performance for the 4 months up to 31 July was 53%. Service level agreements and the procedures for dealing with first stop customer enquiries are currently being reviewed in order to improve response rates.

## **Risk Management**

Failure to review monitoring arrangements, performance and improvement activity would undermine the implementation of the Council's Performance Management Framework.

## **Background Papers**

None identified.



## 2003/2004 Corporate National and Local Best Value Performance Indicators Reported to Cabinet

<b>NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>			
<b>BV ref</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target for 2003/2004</b>	<b>Monitoring frequency</b>
<i>Corporate Health</i>			
BV1a	Does the authority have a community strategy developed in collaboration with the local strategic partnership for improving the economic, social and environmental well being in a way that is sustainable?	Yes	Annual Collection
BV1b	By when will a full review of the community strategy be completed? If such a review was scheduled for this year, was it completed on time?	December 2005	Annual Collection
BV1c	Has the authority reported progress towards implementing the community strategy to the wider community this year? If no, by when will this be undertaken?	Yes	Annual Collection
BV2a	The level (if any) of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms	Level 2	Annual Collection
BV2b	The duty to promote race equality	50%	Annual Collection
BV3	The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by their authority. (Information collected every three years)	70%	Every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV4	The percentage of those making complaints satisfied with the handling of those complaints. (Information collected every three years)	60%	Every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV8	The percentage of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services which were paid by the authority within 30 days of such invoices being received by the authority	100%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV9	Percentage of council tax collected	98.4%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV10	The percentage of non-domestic rates due for the financial year which were received by the authority	98.8%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV 11a	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	39%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV 11b	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are from black and minority ethnic communities	2%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV12	The number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent employees	8.5 FTE	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV14	Early retirements (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the total workforce	0.27%	Annual Collection
BV15	Ill-health retirements as a percentage of the total workforce	0.14%	Annual Collection

<b>NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>			
<b>BV ref</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target for 2003/2004</b>	<b>Monitoring frequency</b>
BV 16a	The number of staff declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act disability definition as a percentage of the total workforce	1%	Annual Collection
BV 16b	The percentage of staff declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act disability definition compared with the percentage of economically active disabled people in the authority area	1% people with disabilities compared to 7.8% people listed as having limiting long term illness	Annual Collection
BV 17a	Minority ethnic community staff as a percentage of the total workforce	1.06%	Annual Collection
BV 17b	The percentage of employees from minority ethnic communities compared with the percentage of the economically active minority ethnic community population in the authority area	1.06% 0.8%	Annual Collection
BV 76a	Housing benefit security – the number of claimants visited, per 1,000 caseload	175	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV 80a	User satisfaction survey – contact with the office	85%	Every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 80b	User satisfaction survey - service in the office	85%	Every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 80c	User satisfaction survey – telephone service	70%	Every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 80d	User satisfaction survey –staff in the office	90%	Every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 80e	User satisfaction survey -forms	70%	Every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 80f	User satisfaction survey – speed of service	80%	Every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 80g	User satisfaction survey – overall satisfaction	80%	Every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 126	Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households	8	6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV 127a	Violent offences committed by a stranger per 1,000 population	Data collected during 2003/2004 will be used to set targets for future years	6,8,10 and 12 monthly

<b>NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>			
<b>BV ref</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target for 2003/2004</b>	<b>Monitoring frequency</b>
BV 127b	Violent offences committed in a public place per 1,000 population	Data collected during 2003/2004 will be used to set targets for future years	To be determined during 2004/2005
BV 127c	Violent offences committed in connection with licensed premises per 1,000 population	Data collected during 2003/2004 will be used to set targets for future years	6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV 127d	Violent offences committed under the influence per 1,000 population	Data collected during 2003/2004 will be used to set targets for future years	6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV 128	Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population	8.15	6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV 156	The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people	30%	Annual Collection
BV 157	The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a percentage of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery	100%	6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV 175	The percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action	100%	6,8,10 and 12 monthly
BV 176	The number of domestic violence refuge places per 10,000 population which are provided or supported by the authority	0.2	Annual Collection
BV 177	Percentage of authority expenditure on legal and advice services which is spent on services that have been awarded the Quality Mark and meet a priority legal need identified in the Community Legal Service Partnership strategic plan	Data collected during 2003/2004 will be used to set targets for future years	To be determined during 2004/2005
BV 179	The percentage of standard searches carried out in 10 working days	100%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly

<b>LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>
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Description	Target for 2003/04	Monitoring Frequency
<b>Authority-Wide Indicators</b>		
<b>People</b>		
Percentage of Staff Review and Development interviews completed in previous 12 months	100%	6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Percentage of agreed training plans arising from SRD interviews	90%	6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Penetration of Core News – percentage of staff receiving each issue of Core News	95%	Annual survey to be undertaken during Sept. 2003
<b>Communications</b>		
Number of recorded complaints, both formal and informal	285	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Percentage of complaints resolved at Complaints Officer level	70%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Percentage of these complaints resulting in change of practice	6%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Number of telephone calls answered as a percentage of all telephone calls received	80%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Percentage of telephone calls answered in 10 seconds	90%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Percentage of positive or neutral coverage from national and local media	90%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
<b>Resources</b>		
Percentage variance on budget	1%	Annual Collection
Capital spend	100% of resources used within time limits	Annual Collection
Staff mileage	1% reduction	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Use of public transport	5% increase	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
<b>Access/Equalities</b>		
Percentage of employees receiving corporate induction within 3 months of commencing employment	100%	6,8,10 and 12 monthly
<b>Legal and Corporate Governance</b>		
Quality of advocacy in court of the in-house legal service as rated by court staff	Good or better	Annual Collection

<b>LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>		
Description	Target for 2003/04	Monitoring Frequency
Cost of providing the legal service	At least 30% cheaper than comparable costs in the private sector	Annual Collection
Success rate in claims for possession	100%	Annual Collection
Court proceedings issued against the Council for an uninsured claim which was successful at trial where the Legal Service has advised they should or could be defended	0	Annual Collection
Successful administrative law actions against the Council except where a strategic decision has been made at senior level to test a particular point of administrative law or practice	0	Annual Collection
Success rate in court actions of all types (excluding cases where a decision has been made to proceed with court action following advice from the Legal Service that there is a less than 50% chance of success)	At least 90%	Annual Collection
Success rate during the year of public enquires in which the Legal Services has provided the advocacy	At least 50%	Annual Collection
Number of contested Parish Council elections	No Parish Council elections expected in 2003/04	Annual Collection
Percentage of electorate from Wards affected by content attending Council/ Committee meetings	2%	Annual Collection
Percentage of direct services achieving/ maintaining identified excellence standard (e.g. ISO 9000, Lexcel)	88%	Annual Collection
Number of non-conformances identified during external audit.	0	Annual Collection
Number of complaints upheld by standards committee	0	Annual Collection
Percentage of key executive decisions open to public scrutiny	90%	Annual Collection
<b>Public Relations</b>		
Reply to telephone calls within five rings	100%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Answer media enquiries within first deadline	100%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Use of news releases/statements by the media	98%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Percentage of graphic design commissions completed within agreed customer deadlines	100%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly

<b>LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>		
Description	Target for 2003/04	Monitoring Frequency
<b>Research</b>		
Number of different service areas and organisations represented at HIRN meetings	60	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
<b>Info in Herefordshire</b>		
Resolution of first stop customer enquiries	80%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Resolution of one stop customer enquiries	100%	4,6,8,10 and 12 monthly
Percentage increase in number of service level agreements with public/private and voluntary agencies	37%	Annual Collection



## Monitoring and Scrutiny Arrangements for 2003/04 Best Value National Performance Indicators

*Strategic Monitoring Committee = SMC*

*Economic and Social Development Scrutiny Committee = S&EDSC*

*Education Scrutiny Committee = EdSC*

*Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee = SC&SHSC*

BVPI Ref.	Description	Scrutiny Committee and reporting frequency
<b>Corporate Health</b>		
BV 1	Community Strategies	SMC - annual
BV 2	The equality standard for local government in England	SMC - annual
BV 3	The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided	SMC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 4	The percentage of complainants satisfied with the handling of their complaint	SMC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 8	Invoices paid on time	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 9	Council Tax collected	SMC - annual
BV 10	Non-domestic rates collected	SMC - annual
BV 11a	Women in senior management	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 11b	Black and minority ethnic staff in senior management	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 12	Sickness absence	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 14	Early retirements	SMC - annual
BV 15	Ill health retirements	SMC - annual
BV 16	Disabled employees	SMC - annual

## Appendix 2

BVPI Ref.	Description	Scrutiny Committee and reporting frequency
BV 17	Black and ethnic minority employees	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 76	Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) security	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 78a	Speed of processing new claim to HB/CTB	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 78b	Speed of processing changes of circumstances to HB/CTB	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 78c	Renewal claims to HB/CTB	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 79a	Accuracy of HB/CTB claims	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 79b	Accuracy of recovering overpayments	SMC - annual
BV 80	Overall satisfaction with the service	SMC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 156	Building Accessibility	SMC - annual
BV 157	E-government	SMC 6,8,10,12 months
BV 179	Planning searches within 10 days	SMC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 180a	Energy Consumption	SMC - annual
BV180b	Energy Consumption	SMC - annual
<b>Education</b>		
BV 33	Youth service expenditure	S&EDSC – annual
BV 34a	Surplus places in primary schools	EdSC - annual
BV 34b	Surplus places in secondary schools	EdSC - annual
BV 38	5 or more A*-C GCSEs	EdSC - annual
BV 39	5 or more A*-G GCSEs	EdSC - annual
BV 40	Key Stage 2 Math tests	EdSC - annual
BV 41	Key Stage 2 English tests	EdSC - annual
BV 43	SEN statements	EdSC - annual

## Appendix 2

BVPI Ref.	Description	Scrutiny Committee and reporting frequency
BV 44	Pupils permanently excluded	EdSC – annual
BV 45	Absence in secondary schools	EdSC - annual
BV 46	Absence in primary schools	EdSC - annual
BV 48	Schools under special measures	EdSC – annual
BV 159	Permanently excluded pupils attending alternative tuition	EdSC - annual
BV 181	Key Stage Three Results	EdSC - annual
BV 192	Quality of teaching for early years and childcare services	EdSC - annual
BV 193	How the authority's Schools Budget compares with its Schools Funding Assessment	EdSC - annual
BV 194	Proportion of children level 5 or above, KS2 in English and Math	EdSC - annual
<b>Social Services</b>		
BV 49	Stability of Placements for Looked After Children	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 50	Educational qualifications for Looked After Children	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 51	Cost of services for Looked After Children	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 52	Cost of services for intensive social care for adults	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 53	Intensive home care for over 65s	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 54	Over 65s helped to live at home	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months

## Appendix 2

BVPI Ref.	Description	Scrutiny Committee and reporting frequency
BV 56	Percentage of items of equipment delivered within 7 working days	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 58	People receiving statements	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 161	Employment, education and training for care leavers	SC&SHSC - Annually
BV 162	Reviews of child protection cases	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 163	Adoptions of children looked after	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 195	Acceptable waiting time for assessment	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 196	Acceptable waiting time for care packages	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
<b>Housing</b>		
BV 62	Unfit private sector dwellings	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 183	Length of stay in temporary accommodation	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
<b>Cleanliness</b>		
BV 199	Local street and environmental cleanliness	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
<b>Waste</b>		
BV 82a	Household waste recycled	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 82b	Household waste composted	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months

## Appendix 2

BVPI Ref.	Description	Scrutiny Committee and reporting frequency
BV 82c	Household waste used to recover other energy sources	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 82d	Household waste landfilled	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 84	Household waste collected per head	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 86	Cost of household waste collection	ESC - Annual
BV 87	Cost of waste disposal	ESC - Annual
BV 89	The percentage of people satisfied with the cleanliness standard in their area	ESC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 90a	The percentage of people satisfied with household waste collection	ESC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 90b	The percentage of people satisfied with waste recycling	ESC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 90c	The percentage of people satisfied with waste disposal	ESC– every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 91	Residents served by kerbside recycling	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
<b>Transport</b>		
BV 96	Condition of principal roads	ESC - annual
BV 97	a) Condition of non-principal roads b) Condition of unclassified roads	ESC - annual
BV 99	Road safety	ESC - annual
BV 100	Road works	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 102	Passenger journeys on buses	ESC - annual
BV 103	The percentage of respondents satisfied with local provision of public transport information	ESC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)

## Appendix 2

BVPI Ref.	Description	Scrutiny Committee and reporting frequency
BV 104	The percentage of all respondents satisfied with the local bus service	ESC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 165	Pedestrian crossings for disabled people	ESC - annual
BV 178	Footpaths and rights of way	ESC - annual
BV 186	Roads not needing repair	ESC - annual
BV 187	Condition of surface footway	ESC - annual
<b>Planning</b>		
BV 106	New homes on previously developed land	ESC - annual
BV 107	Cost of planning	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 109	Planning applications within 8 weeks	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 111	The percentage of applicants satisfied with the service received	ESC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 188	Delegation of Decisions	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 200	Plan Making	ESC - annual
<b>Environmental Health and Trading Standards</b>		
BV 166	Environmental health and trading standards checklist of best practice	ESC 4,6,8,10,12 months
<b>Culture</b>		
BV 114	Adoption of local authority cultural strategy	S&EDSC – annual
BV 119a	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority sports and leisure facilities	S&EDSC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 119b	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority libraries	S&EDSC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 119c	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority museums	S&EDSC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)

## Appendix 2

BVPI Ref.	Description	Scrutiny Committee and reporting frequency
BV 119d	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority arts activities and venues	S&EDSC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 119e	The percentage of residents satisfied with the Local Authority parks and open spaces	S&EDSC – every 3 years (next info Jan. 04)
BV 170	Number of visits to museums	S&EDSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
<b>Libraries</b>		
BV 117	Number of visits to libraries	S&EDSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 118	The percentage of library users who found the book/information they wanted or reserved it and were satisfied with that outcome	S&EDSC – annual
<b>Community Safety</b>		
BV 126	Domestic burglaries	SMC 6,8,10,12 months
BV 128	Vehicle crimes	SMC 6,8,10,12 months
BV 174	Racial incidents	SMC 6,8,10,12 months
BV 175	Racial incidents with further action	SMC 6,8,10,12 months
BV 176	Domestic refuge places	SMC annual
<b>Community Legal Services</b>		
BV 177	Percentage of expenditure on Community Legal Service priorities	Priorities will be identified during 2003/2004 and targets established for 2004/2005 - to be reported to SMC
<b>Cross-cutting BVPIs</b>		

## Appendix 2

BVPI Ref.	Description	Scrutiny Committee and reporting frequency
BV 197	Teenage Pregnancies	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months
BV 198	Participation in Drug Treatment Programmes	SC&SHSC 4,6,8,10,12 months



# COUNTY SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To approve, in principle, the establishment of a Herefordshire, Worcestershire joint County Partnership for the delivery of sport and physical activity throughout the County.

### Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

### Recommendation

- THAT (a) the Herefordshire Council joins the Worcestershire County Sports Partnership to deliver the sport specific initiatives for an initial trial period of twelve months to deliver Active Sports;**
- and**
- (b) a review of the partnership be undertaken when the Regional Sports Board is in place.**

### Reasons

The majority of County Sports Partnerships have emerged over the last three years to manage Active Sports programmes, however they are now being developed to deliver a wider remit. Herefordshire are currently working with Worcestershire on the delivery of Active Sports in Herefordshire but have not yet committed to the wider partnership working remit.

Funding nationally is being directed through County Sports Partnerships of which there are 45 potentially identified nationally, six in the West Midlands region. It is unlikely that Herefordshire would be considered as a separate partnership, due to the population. No account is taken of geographical area. Within the West Midlands region some of the partnerships contain Unitary Authorities and if Herefordshire were to be considered as a lone partnership the fear is that a number of other authorities would wish to pursue this option.

### Considerations

#### 1. Financial Consideration

A range of national initiatives are potentially being funded in the future through County Sports Partnerships and the most significant of these is the potential core funding from the DCMS to employ staff through each County Sports Partnership. The intention is for each partnership to have a Development Manager, an Operation Manager and an Administrator, Herefordshire would potentially miss out on this

opportunity.

2. We would have to commit a large proportion of our sports development budget to the partnership, the exact amount is yet unknown. The County Sports Partnerships are seen as one of the main mechanism for accessing funding from the regional sports board, within the new look Sport England, the Regional Sports Board holds a crucial role and will make decisions on all grant aid programmes that are awarded within the community stream of funding. However, the Regional Sports Board is not set up yet and therefore it is difficult to know how this board will operate.
3. Sport England is being encouraged by the government to support the County Sports Partnerships and the recent re-structuring of the regional office has aligned its staffing structure and resources across the six County Sport Partnership areas already in operation.
4. **Positives**  
There are a number of positive outcomes of working in a County Partnership these include: being partners in a major national initiative. The potential to bid to other funding bodies some of which work across the two counties at present. A wider opportunity to offer training courses based on a larger number of coaches. Some Governing Bodies of sport are already operating across the two counties so planning would be more joined up. The partnership should be able to benefit from examples of good practice in all districts and areas. Working through the partnership on the sports specific side would enable us to target other strategic areas.
5. **Negatives**  
There are too many unknown factors. These include the financial commitment; the extent of the projects that could be delivered through the partnership; the possibility of a top-heavy organisation resulting in a continual pull on resources; the geographical area of Herefordshire not being taken into consideration and the loss of local needs and local drivers directing the work. It is unknown how the partnership work and sport specific initiatives would detract from our current working with health initiatives, crime and reduction.

## **Alternative Options**

That Herefordshire Council actively seeks a separate identity and discontinues the working partnership with Worcestershire.

## **Risk Management**

No major issues identified at this stage.

## **Consultees**

Worcestershire All Sports Partnership (WASP)

Sport England

## **Background Papers**

None identified.

# PUBLIC LIBRARY POSITION STATEMENT

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To approve the Public Library Position Statement before submission to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (Attached at Appendix 1).

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

### Recommendation

**THAT the Public Library Position Statement be approved.**

### Reasons

The Position Statement assessment will contribute towards the Council's Libraries and Leisure 'score' in the next round of Comprehensive Performance Assessments.

### Considerations

1. In previous years the Council has had a statutory requirement to submit an Annual Library Plan to the government. As part of the process to reduce the number of plans local authorities are required to prepare for central government, from 2003 the requirement is to submit a Position Statement, a substantially shorter document. The deadline for this submission is 30th September 2003.
2. The Position Statement will be used by the government to assess the progress being made on implementing the new national framework for public libraries (*Framework for the Future*, March 2003) and meeting the Public Library Standards (introduced April 2001).
3. Guidance on what is required was issued to each authority in May 2003, together with details of how the statements will be assessed and scored. The Council will be assessed against two criteria:
  - a) the *quality of the evidence* that authorities are providing excellent policies and practices to implement Framework for the Future, in line with local needs
  - b) the authority's approach to meeting the public library standards, including *evidence that the authority has demonstrated that resources are adequate*
4. The draft local framework for libraries compares local performance and resourcing

with the ten most rural library services in England. Herefordshire is the lowest spending authority and has the smallest number of staff and libraries per head of population.

5. Herefordshire does not currently meet the key library standards covering total and convenient opening hours; distance to travel; visitor numbers; and books and media added to stock. Performance against the first two will improve significantly with the opening of the new Bromyard library in 2004.
6. The Audit Commission report on the library service (August 2002) assessed the service as 'fair, with uncertain prospects for improvement'. It highlighted poor quality buildings, limited stock, restricted opening hours, unclear service priorities, below average visitor numbers and little marketing and promotion in its 'fair' assessment. The 'uncertain prospects...' assessment noted the limited investment into the service and in particular no identified resources for a new city library, increased opening hours and stock, and improved rural access.
7. Significant progress has been made to address some of these issues including:
  - investment of £110K for opening hours and marketing in the current year
  - a local framework identifying clear priorities
  - new innovative and integrated facility for Bromyard (500% increase in opening hours)
  - new sites identified for Kington and Ledbury
  - new city library included in Edgar Street Grid development
  - increased visitor numbers
  - review of mobile services.

However the identified pressure for investment into the bookfund was not met and the low levels of staffing (fourth lowest in England) severely restrict progress in developing and delivering improvements.

## **Risk Management**

The Position Statement will be assessed externally for the quality of the evidence provided, and the result will feed into the next CPA process.

## **Consultees**

None at present

## **Background Papers**

None identified

## 1. CORPORATE VISION AND AMBITION FOR THE PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE

The Council has identified that the library service is central to delivering a range of corporate and partnership priorities - access to services and information; modernisation of public services; learning; cultural opportunities; building stronger communities. It has established a clear strategic vision for libraries that incorporates local and national priorities; local circumstances; all the main themes of *Framework for the Future* and the targets within the standards.

### 1.1 Corporate context

The local strategic partnership – the Herefordshire Partnership – has set out its vision and ambitions in the Herefordshire Plan. Three of the Ambitions are particularly relevant for the library service:

- Tackle poverty and isolation in Herefordshire
- Develop Herefordshire as an active, vibrant and enjoyable place to be
- Provide excellent education, training and learning opportunities for all ages

The Council has aligned its priorities to the Plan, and these include:

- Increasing economic and social prosperity
- Enhancing the quality of life
- Community engagement and community leadership

The library service sits within the Policy and Community Directorate whose objectives include:

- To provide access to information
- To provide access to a choice of learning, leisure and cultural opportunities
- Create the conditions for economic prosperity and community wellbeing

In early 2002 the library service was moved into a new division of Customer Services, Libraries and Information; joining the Council's INFO in Herefordshire one-stop shop service, and led by a new Head of Customer Services and Libraries. Initial developments in the structure of the new Division were the first responses to the Audit Commission report on the service (*fair service, uncertain prospects for improvement*, August 2002), which highlighted several areas for improvement. The new divisional management team was complete by January 2003 and immediately established a common vision, purpose and set of values:

**Vision** - *Strive to achieve excellence in all we do*

**Mission/Purpose** - *To increase the take-up and access to information, advice and cultural opportunities*

**Values** – *People, Customer Service, Improvement, Partnership, Access, Consultation*

### 1.2 Service priorities

With the appointment of a new Libraries Operations Manager ('County Librarian' role) work commenced on establishing a local strategic framework and vision for the future of the library service which would establish clear priorities and objectives. This was in particular to take into account:

- Council / Herefordshire Partnership priorities and objectives
- Local decline in use of traditional library services
- Current levels of provision and performance
- Imminent national framework and the existing library standards
- All national reports / guidelines / best practice examples which the county had not yet incorporated into its library service provision

The completed draft framework (*'An eye on the future'*) establishes that the most significant characteristic about Herefordshire that affects the library service is the low population density - the fourth lowest in England for public library authorities – and its distribution across the county. Benchmarking performance and resourcing against the 10 services with the lowest population density shows that per head of population Herefordshire has the lowest spend, staffing, opening hours and number of libraries. There is also a significant disparity in the overall size of collections; acquisitions; population and staff. This unique local 'reality' therefore requires local solutions that will not necessarily correspond to those identified nationally.

The draft proposes that the library service focuses its services on four priority communities and groups of individuals:

- ***Geographically and / or Socially Excluded***
- ***Young people***
- ***Readers***
- ***Learners***

To increase the uptake of services the library service must improve in the following four areas:

- *The **quality and standard of services offered** –customer service, materials, buildings*
- ***When, where and how** these services can be accessed*
- *Provision of the key **resources** of books and media, staff, ICT*
- *Increase the **awareness and profile** of the service with non-users, officers, elected members and partners*

These improvements will be delivered by the following:

- ***Partnership working***
- ***Better resource management***
- ***Innovative delivery methods***
- ***Marketing and promotion***
- ***Effective engagement***

Extensive stakeholder consultation is currently underway on the draft framework, with any revisions scheduled to take place before January 2004.

### **1.3 Capacity to achieve the vision**

To achieve its vision for libraries the council will need to communicate it to all stakeholders; provide strong leadership and effective management; ensure a joined-up approach across directorates; provide additional resources in key areas; work in partnership with other agencies; ensure effective monitoring and performance management. In the last 18 months considerable progress has been made, and actions have been taken or are underway which address all of these factors:

#### ***Establish and communicate the vision to stakeholders***

- Local strategic framework '*An eye on the future*' drafted – for the first time libraries have a strategic vision with clear priorities which integrate national policies and local circumstances
- Extensive stakeholder consultation planned for the draft framework, assisted by one-off budget allocation of £45K
- Additional engagement activities underway to help promote framework and collect more data and responses

#### ***Strong leadership and effective management***

- Libraries placed into new division with own Head of Service
- Two most senior library posts revised and recruited to externally late 2002

- New divisional structure includes business development, marketing, project management, training and development sections
- New divisional management team is multi-disciplinary with practical management experience of customer services, public libraries, private sector, leisure and community facilities, ICT, health and legal services.

### ***Joined-up approach across directorates***

- Division is corporate lead in introducing innovative uses of technology and organisational - wide approaches that will deliver access to services - face to face, by telephone and electronically. Libraries are now at the heart of the Council's programme for one stop access to services.
- Divisional Management Team members represent the division on all the key access to services, ICT and modernisation boards and panels
- Two Cabinet Members with direct responsibility for divisional services (Community and Social Development; Human Resources and Corporate Support Services)

### ***Provide additional resources***

- £180K additional funding 2003/4 (staffing, Peoples Network, R&D)
- £800K capital for new joint library and one stop shop in Bromyard.
- sharing ICT infrastructure costs with partners and schools
- integrating staffing and co-locating facilities to achieve efficiencies

### ***Work in partnership***

- new Bromyard library and Halo Leisure Trust / Learn Direct
- Social Services / Looked after Children
- Colwall Millennium Room Trust
- Sub-regional purchasing consortium for books

### ***Performance Management***

- New corporate framework introduced encompassing *Herefordshire Driver* EFQM-based self-assessment tool, business planning, staff review and development, monitoring.
- First divisional business plan 2003/4

More specific evidence examples can be found throughout this statement.

The Council is confident that it has made the necessary changes to successfully implement its vision for libraries. The timescale is dependent on the speed with which additional resources will be realised by a combination of new money; efficiency gains derived from integration, co-location and introducing new and innovative service delivery models; successful bids to external sources; and new partnership arrangements.

## 2. RESPONSE TO FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

### 2.1 *Books, reading and learning*

#### Key strengths

- Adult Reader Development work already mainstreamed within resource provision, including support for 9 reading groups – 3 are library-based
- Young Peoples team leading the way in stock management and a range of informal learning and partnership projects
- Active participant in all national schemes for children and adults – Orange, Booker, BBC Big Read, World Book Day, Chatterbooks, National Reading Challenge, Bookstart, Bookstart Plus, Carnegie/Greenaway shadowing, Harper Collins *Book of the Month*, etc
- Ever increasing range of partnerships in place – local / regional / national; neighbouring library authorities; other council directorates; further education; arts; health

#### Constraints

- Low profile of library service with many potential partners
- Existing culture, policies and perceptions inhibit delivering learning
- Limited impact / outcomes evidence to support development and expansion of existing schemes

#### Challenges

- Increase capacity to promote reading and learning through restructuring and new partnerships
- Develop joint delivery partnerships with adult and community education providers
- Introduce more stock promotion at all service points – regardless of space
- Duplicate good practice across all service points
- Greater exploitation of web-based resources and delivery

#### Policies and practices

##### *Adults*

- Countywide stock teams and budgets introduced from April 2003
- Fiction, Large Print and Spoken Word received largest budget increases
- Multi-volume long loan collections now available for reading groups
- Best Seller standing orders extended to *all* libraries and mobiles in 2003
- Local history collection identified as *our* key learning resource to exploit in partnership with Cultural Services and local groups
- Introduced CD Spoken Word to begin aligning with RNIB national plans
- Reading and learning identified as key sub-brands for our marketing / branding strategy
- Adult basic skills students / classes encouraged to use libraries
- Provision made to cater for less popular / high demand resources eg foreign language films; Leominster Library is a 'Poetry Place'; re-subscribed to regional SEALS scheme (European language fiction collections)
- Member of new Literature Development Forum

##### *Young People*

- Four main libraries have special homework collections
- Bulk loans for playgroups, childminders, after school clubs & foster carers
- Annual Childrens Book Festival led by Schools Library Service
- *Stories from the Web* subscribing authority
- Recommended authors, homework and student survival guides available through libraries and website
- "Look it up" project - homework support for foster carers at Leominster



- Schools Library Service serves the county's 84 primary schools, 14 high schools and 6 special centres providing a project collection, advisory and mobile library service. Managed by libraries but also has a functional relationship with the Education Directorate

### Evaluation

- Increased use of management information from Talis system to assist with stock management
- Feedback forms for book festival, summer reading challenge etc
- Customer Comments books at all libraries / mobiles
- Satisfaction surveys
- Regular stock edits

### Educational Development Plan

Library services make an active contribution towards:

- Priority 1:2 Raising Attainment in Early Years
- Priority 1:2 Raising Attainment in Primary Literacy:  
eg. the School Library Service Inset day "Talking into Reading"

### Priorities, Targets and Timescales

- Create the first countywide Reader / Literature Development post to co-ordinate promotions, projects and partnerships across all sectors (restructuring and 2004/5 budget bid)
- Review risks and benefits of full integration of Schools Library Service with public libraries (fully implement results by autumn 2005)
- Introduce regular '*Silver Surfer*' sessions following local success of national event (enabled through opening hour extensions)
- Work with local RNIB college and Social Services to promote CD Spoken Word to all potential users in the county (underway)
- Expand Harper Collins *Book of the Month* concept with locally selected multi-volume promotions (2004/5 fiction stock plan)
- Duplicate success of first Chatterbooks group at more libraries / schools (new Bromyard library early 2004)
- Introduce Poetry Reading Groups with Creative Industries / Ledbury Poetry Festival (underway – begin early 2004)
- Exploit in 2004 the fact that some local schools set the 2003 Reading Maze as summer holidays homework
- New Bromyard Library will pilot both magazines for loan, and utilising one-stop interview rooms as bookable study space during evenings / weekends

## 2.2 Digital citizenship

### Key strengths

- Peoples Network in place since January 2002
- Libraries main provider of community ICT access across the county
- Library Service plays a lead role in the Herefordshire in Touch Programme – includes ICT access and the e-Gateway (community content)
- Service wide ICT training programme for library staff

### Constraints

- Financial resources (although some success in additional resource bids based on strengths above)
- Dependency on related projects (e.g. delays in delivery of the e-Gateway whose toolkit will be used for content creation)

- Ensuring development is consistent with that of partner organisations, corporate policies and local programmes and initiatives
- Levels of ICT skills in workforce

### **Challenges**

- ICT Training for staff, both initial and continuing
- Ensuring that library administration procedures keep pace with service development capabilities
- Securing longer term financial resources to maintain the 'cutting edge'

### **Policies and Practices**

- Free broadband access at all 10 libraries, filtered for under 18s with AUP
- Smartcard pilot at Colwall – allows self-service booking for Peoples Network terminals and printing
- E-Gateway will enable content generation by the service and its customers via the People's Network with the benefit of a structured content management system

### **Electronic services**

- MS Office Pro
- Online catalogue, enabled for self-renewal and other borrower facilities
- Britannica Online and XRefer subscriptions, both allowing remote access to library members

### **Involvement in implementing e-government strategy**

- Key partner in countywide Herefordshire in Touch SRB funded programme to widen community access to ICT
- Libraries and schools are first stage of county broadband network and are vital community access points
- Senior divisional managers are members of all key corporate ICT strategic and working groups
- 80% of library stock ordered via EDI

### **Evaluation**

- Customer / staff surveys
- Pilot projects eg Smartcard
- Monitor usage data

### **Priorities, Targets and Timescales**

- Offer all public facing services identified as capable of electronic delivery by March 2004 to meet corporate PSA target
- Upgrading web OPAC autumn 2003 which will add search access to other databases and digital content, community information, search engines. Online reservations will also be enabled, and Webwords links into spoken word catalogue records to allow users to sample before they borrow
- Introduce colour printing for public terminals at main libraries
- Introduce Talis Mobile on all 3 mobile libraries
- Rollout Smartcard pilot to all libraries as part of countywide citizen e-card
- Meet all front and back office ESD targets by summer 2004 by integrating EDI into the system and applying Purchase Order Processing System to non stock procurement.

## 2.3 Community and civic values

### Key strengths

- Clear focus on customer service as main driver for service improvement
- Understand need to consult and engage with users / non-users to become customer-driven rather than service-led
- Resourced commitment to creating a distinctive 'brand' for the library service
- Strong local strategic partnership – *Herefordshire Partnership*
- Strong sense of local identity already exists as most of the population live in market towns / villages rather than urban conurbations

### Constraints

- Existing building network and opening hours restrict opportunities to 'launch' new brand – no high profile 'flagship' building for Hereford City
- Historically low profile for service with stakeholders
- Uneven distribution of outreach provision – both geographically and by target group

### Challenges

- Co-ordinate introduction of restructuring, integration, co-location and branding
- Balance tensions between socially inclusive services and customer-driven provision

### Policies and practices

- Draft framework identifies '*geographically and socially excluded*' as a priority group for the future
- Build consultation into all service development and improvement activities
- Work through partnerships to deliver services to 'hard to reach' groups – young people at Kington; Looked after Children
- Utilise all national reading and learning schemes and promotions to help promote libraries, literacy and learning opportunities
- Library user groups at Hereford and Leominster
- Involve young people in selecting new materials for libraries

### Developing citizenship and encouraging community identity

- New Bromyard library will be part of a multifunction site offering library, information, advice, cashier, leisure, learning, youth and tourist information services; located at the heart of the town and open 7 days, 90 plus hours a week; with a single reception point
- Proposed new integrated facilities for Kington and Ledbury will both refurbish and modernise and bring back into use historic listed buildings situated in the heart of their communities; combining improved access to services with cultural and community regeneration
- Introducing more locally-delivered services using local staffing / volunteers will increase community 'ownership' of library and related services

### Links with improving and developing customer services

- Division is corporate lead for customer services, introducing innovative uses of technology and organisational - wide approaches that will deliver access to services - face to face, by telephone and electronically
- Libraries integrating further with council one-stop shop *INFO in Herefordshire* service – including co-location and development of generic reception / library assistant role
- New Bromyard development will pilot a single reception staff team drawn from one-stop shop, leisure centre reception and library staff

### Evaluation

- Survey / consultation results fed back into resource allocation, business planning, ICT developments
- Combine management information from Talis and census data to target services and resources; help develop new delivery models and patterns

- Pilot projects to trial and evaluate new approaches to service management and delivery; development of new services

### **Priorities, Targets and Timescales**

- Integrate divisional management and reporting structures; operational and support staffing (underway)
- Launch new 'brand' for the library service at new Bromyard library and rapidly roll it out across service during first half of 2004
- Develop and promote clear service standards for libraries alongside integration and branding developments (summer 2004)
- Sustain consultation programme - opening hour patterns; new Bromyard users; books, media and magazine provision; lapsed users (2004/5)
- Centralise management and delivery of all existing outreach services, and introduce minimum levels of service across the county (through restructuring)
- Pilot seasonal opening hours at selected libraries summer 2004 to meet demand from fruit pickers for Internet access (predominantly East European students)

## **2.4 Building capacity to deliver transformation**

### **Key strengths**

- Clear role and vision established for libraries within council
- Change, modernisation and innovation driving service improvements
- Budget growth
- ICT infrastructure
- Integration will increase capacity and skills base

### **Constraints**

- Low profile of service with stakeholders
- Current structure

### **Challenges**

- Prioritising training and development needs against existing resource
- Successful change management to introduce integrated division
- Limited experience of partnership working in some areas

### **Improving leadership, staff capacity and skills**

- Divisional Training and Development Manager and support appointed
- Divisional Training & Development Policy – first in county – which recognises and encourages difference between training and development activities
- Head of division and two senior library posts new appointments
- Base budget increases have grown workforce
- 300% increase in training and development budget from 2003/4
- Staff review (SRD) process at 6 month intervals, with improved reporting structure
- Competency-based revised job descriptions / person specs being drawn up, evaluated through NVQ process
- Divisional-specific training courses being organised – commencing with Health & Safety – more relevant and focused, cheaper, quicker take-up
- Corporate online Management Competency package being piloted - based on 360 degree feedback from manager / colleagues / own staff

### **Restructuring proposals**

- Integration of library and INFO one-stop shop staff
- New Bromyard Library acting as a pilot
- Council / partner / library reception services as core skill

- Create progressive customer service training path
- Divisional geographical-based management / reporting structure
- More flexible staffing to implement personal / career development opportunities outlined in T&D Policy eg work shadowing, job swaps
- Build-in cover for releasing staff for training, development and effective face-to-face communication
- Remove Sc4 'glass ceiling' for non-professional staff
- Increase capacity to work with young people
- Formalise countywide stock team approach
- Create a single outreach / delivered services team
- Create a Reader / Literature Development post
- Centralise enquiry and phone renewals
- Review risks and benefits of fully integrating Schools Library Service with main public library services

### **Evaluation**

- Monitoring divisional business plans with EFQM
- Extensive stakeholder consultation on draft framework – mailings, roadshow briefings, attending team meetings
- Corporate and Divisional staff surveys – results being fed back into business planning
- SRD process
- Secondments / temporary appointments to trial new roles and responsibilities for non –professional staff
- Staff working groups and workshops to give senior management interactive feedback

### **Partnerships**

- *already in place:*

- Halo Leisure Trust – new Bromyard
- Herefordshire Lifelong Learning Partnership
- Colwall Millennium Room Trust
- Learn Direct – Colwall / new Bromyard
- Social Services - Looked after Children
- Worcester / Shropshire / Telford – stock consortium
- Shropshire – *Feast of Words* book festival
- Courtyard Theatre – Childrens BookFestival
- Arts Council West Midlands - *Poetry Places* project
- South Wye Excellence Cluster – Bookstart Plus
- Primary Care Trust – Bookstart
- Youth Service - Kington

- *under discussion / planning stage:*

- Cultural Services / Arts Council– Reader / Literature Development post for county
- Creative Industries / Ledbury Poetry Festival – Poetry Reading groups
- RNIB local college / Social Services – CD spoken word provision
- Leintwardine Village Hall Committee / Teme Valley Youth Project (Wigmore) / Wigmore High School – new service delivery pilots
- Worcestershire / Shropshire – joint reader development project

### **Priorities, Targets and Timescales**

- Increase capacity through restructuring and integration (top 3 tiers and professional roles in place by April 2004)
- Develop new partnerships through draft framework consultation – targeting social care, health, education and the voluntary sector in particular
- Implement full potential of Training and Development Policy
- Improve organisational learning opportunities

### 3. PUBLIC LIBRARY STANDARDS

#### 3.1 Position at March 31<sup>st</sup> 2003

*PLS1 Distance to a library.* The Council has previously decided not to meet this standard, as it believes it to be inappropriate for a large rural area. Even when applying the more realistic target of 85% (applicable to County Councils) current performance falls well short. A fleet of 3 mobile libraries provides services to most communities more than 2 miles from a static library, with multiple stops in many villages. The 'within a quarter of a mile of a mobile stop' contextual indicator for authorities with a population density of 2 or less has not yet been analysed, but clearly when applied it will make a significant difference. Implementation of the model outlined below will also improve our current performance.

The draft framework identifies several complementary approaches to improving physical access for the more isolated communities and individuals:

- Complete overhaul of the mobile service to include procuring a more flexible vehicle fleet; new timetables; variable delivery frequencies; and application and regular monitoring of the 'quarter mile' indicator
- Free-up capacity for the larger communities by serving single household stops with a 'housebound-type' service delivery or -
- - access to a local / community drop-off point - facilitated by either staff or volunteers; served by a vehicle-based delivery system (exploring all available options including mobiles, library courier, new vehicle procurement, other council departments, voluntary sector, commercial providers); and supported by our sophisticated online catalogue and other web services
- Potential expansion of mobile fleet if Schools Library Service is integrated more closely with public library provision

A sophisticated model is planned to develop and set clear service standards for communities that would effectively identify *which* of the various delivery options they should receive (static facility / mobile / drop-off point etc) and the level of access (opening hours / length and frequency of stops). The model will take account of community size, current use, age profile, transport profile, distance to nearest static library, suitable locations / partners etc. The necessary processes in setting and agreeing the service standards will include analysis of performance against PLS1.

*PLS3 Aggregate / convenient opening hours.* Full implementation of this years budget increase, together with the opening of the new Bromyard library in January 2004 will see the service close to the standard. (New library will be open 90 plus hours a week). The potential re-allocation of some current mobile provision to target sheltered housing / EPHs may affect this. However the current model for replacement facilities at Kington and Ledbury of integrated libraries / one stop shops would see 6 or 7 day opening introduced and take the service well beyond the current standard.

*PLS4 Larger libraries open 45 hours or more.* The City Library will meet this standard when latest increases are implemented autumn 2003.

*PLS6 Electronic workstations.* Lack of physical space has been the only factor hindering progress towards this standard. However a combination of building alterations, the new Bromyard library and consolidation of OPAC-only terminals means the standard will be met by January 2004.

*PLS9 Request satisfaction times.* A varied package of measures is underway to improve performance here:

- Taking ILL function out of the 2 main libraries and centralising it
- Increased spend on books
- Introduction of a county-wide stock team, with selection and requests now formally linked
- Doubling library courier capacity autumn 2003 – currently mornings only

- Current policy of buying / borrowing all requests has not been reviewed since pre-unitary days, but this is scheduled for 2004

*PLS11 Library visits.* 2002/3 saw an increase in visits (just under 4%) driven we believe by the introduction of the Peoples Network, but performance is still well below the standard. It is anticipated that many of the key priorities and planned actions for the service – increased opening hours, new buildings, co-location, new mobiles, more stock, marketing and consultation - will see this trend continue. However our intended local solution of offering more remote access and new *locally* delivered services is in direct conflict with increasing physical visits to our sparse network of libraries.

Analysis of the results from a countywide postal survey of non-users (August 2003), focusing on what factors would see people start / restart using libraries, will be applied as soon as available. Longer term if the review of the Schools Library Service leads to fuller integration with public library services then a further improvement will result from inclusion of the schools mobile usage.

*PLS12-15 User satisfaction.* Adult and Childrens PLUS surveys are scheduled for October 2003.

*PLS17 Additions to stock.* Current analysis shows a budget increase of c25% (£70K) on the materials fund is required to meet the standard. During 2003/4 an underspend on the transport budget will meet some of this shortfall but this option will not be available the following year. The service will review its current procurement of non-book media to see if it can secure better terms. It is already part of a sub-regional book consortium that has secured significantly better discounts than previously. A clear priority within our local framework to target provision at those who need it most means that more alternative formats are required, items which tend to have above average unit costs.

*PLS19 Staff with appropriate ICT qualifications* There is now very positive progress on service wide ICT staff training programme which was hindered during 2002/3 by Audit Commission and CPA inspections together with organisational changes. Some advanced training workshops have been held locally and work is currently underway on determining the delivery method of the remaining outcomes. Having a Training & Development Manager in post will add far more structure to training activities than previously which should assist greatly in work towards achieving the standard.

### **3.2 Local targets - services for people with disabilities, for ethnic minorities, for socially excluded people and for children.**

The service has not yet set specific targets for any of the above groups. Our first broad 'target' is to engage with these groups either directly or through partner organisations so as to get an accurate picture of their needs and views; as well as to map their distribution across the county using the 2001 census data.

Our current consultation programme is designed to progress this – partner / potential partner organisations; non-user postal survey; mobile library and visually-impaired users; adult and childrens PLUS survey. The results of this programme should be available before the end of the year, and together with the completed strategic framework will provide an excellent platform of *evidence* from which to set appropriate targets. This timescale will also ensure resources can be re-allocated for 2004/5 onwards to help meet them. All of the above groups are recognised as priority groups within the draft framework.

## 4. RESOURCES

### 4.1 Spaces

#### Key Strengths

- New Bromyard library opens January 2004 – in partnership with Halo Leisure Trust, INFO one-stop shop and Learn Direct
- Modern, well-sized libraries in main 2 market towns (Leominster / Ross)
- Future developments will be integrated sites with INFO one-stop shop service and other partners

#### Constraints

- Low density network - > 17K population per library
- 50% current libraries too small
- 40% will not meet DDA requirements
- City Library not fit for purpose
- All 3 mobiles overdue for replacement
- Limited space at headquarters or elsewhere for managing stock

#### Challenges

- Realise a new central flagship library through the Edgar Street Grid proposals
- Make integrated sites work (Bromyard is the pilot)
- Mobile replacements allow more flexible service delivery options
- Match funding for next integrated site proposals (Kington / Ledbury)
- Offering a modern library service from converted Listed Buildings (Kington / Ledbury)
- Seek alternatives to two 6 hour libraries (Leintwardine / Weobley)
- Develop and deliver new local / community drop-off points to 'grow' service space via innovative partnerships

#### Available Resources and Timescales

The council is committed to pursue funding to move Kington and Ledbury libraries into refurbished and larger listed buildings, with Advantage West Midlands and Heritage Lottery as the main two external funding sources. A replacement Central Library is included within the major city centre development proposals around the Edgar Street Grid. The service has commissioned a feasibility study for integrating the local INFO shop into Ross Library, to be resourced by a combination of 2004/5 capital bid and substantial rental savings on the existing shop.

Potentially by 2007 four of the five market towns will have integrated library / one-stop shops open 6 or 7 days a week. Together with the largest 2 standalone libraries this represents around 90% of the total current service usage (visits / loans).

Revenue funding to lease replacement vehicles for all 3 mobiles is already in the budget. Development of the new delivery model (*see 3.1 above*) and the procurement process is scheduled to begin before the end of 2003.

Central management and support functions will be co-locating at new leased directorate premises from early 2004. This will free up space at headquarters; potentially for stock management work and an improved outreach / delivered-services function.



## 4.2 Stock

### Key Strengths

- Member of sub-regional stock purchasing consortium
- Wide range of stock promotion initiatives and schemes subscribed to – both adult and childrens
- Countywide stock teams and budgets introduced April 2003
- Online catalogue to help exploit collections
- Major local history collections
- Increasing use of management information and benchmarking

### Constraints

- Limited staff capacity to manage stock effectively
- Historically low level of investment has resulted in excessive retention of older material
- Legacy of pre-unitary economies of scale still influencing some aspects of current provision
- Limited space (size and number of libraries) to promote stock

### Challenges

- Increase materials budget
- Incorporate increased staff capacity for stock management during restructuring
- Improve balance of stock within and between service points
- Introduce more stock promotion at all service points – regardless of size and design

### Available Resources and Timescales

Underspends on staffing and transport in 2002/3 and 2003/4 have allowed additional investment into materials, but neither option is expected to be available by 2004/5. Inadequate budgets for equipment, training and marketing were given top priority in 2003/4 when re-allocating existing resources, but £12K was reallocated to Inter Library Loans, effectively releasing the same amount back into the materials fund.

Analysis of performance against PLS 17 suggests an increase of c.25% is needed, and this is included in our initial submission to the 2004/5 budget process. A smaller growth bid for 2003/4 (c15%) was cut when the final budget decision limited the size of council tax increase.

### 4.3 Staffing

#### Key Strengths

- Strong divisional leadership with management committed to engage effectively with all staff
- New Divisional Management Team with varied multi-disciplinary experience
- Divisional training and development policy implemented
- Continuing integration of staffing is increasing capacity, expanding the skills base and disseminating best practice

#### Constraints

- Geography and size of the county inhibits flexible staffing, face to face communication, training
- Historical structure still in place – incompatible with current and future plans for integration, stock, career development, flexibility
- Below average wages regionally / nationally
- Physical position and distance from major conurbations hampers recruitment

#### Challenges

- Maximise potential of both restructuring and divisional integration to meet multiple aims – service delivery / career development / increased capacity
- Secure additional resources for development posts - not just for opening hours
- Create more flexible work force to deliver more customer-focused services
- Adjust and lower the age profile of the service
- Exploit INFO's experience of customer service, liP and Chartermark
- Introduce new working arrangements with new partners – including volunteers
- Continue to breakdown professional / non-professional barriers

#### Available Resources and Timescales

Based on 2001/2 data Herefordshire had the fourth lowest level of staffing in England. Too few libraries and below average opening hours partially account for this, but the physical distances between service points cancel this out (no library has more than one other within 5 miles, and 4 are more than 10 miles from the nearest).

The new divisional management structure provides a range of support and development functions, which frees up professional time for service delivery and development (consultation, statistical returns, ICT, training, marketing etc).

The growth in the 2003/4 budget is not only seeing an increase in opening hours but has allowed the service to double the driving hours for the delivery van and build in some additional cover to release staff for training and development. The latter is crucial as historically low levels of training opportunities, together with the inevitable changes coming with restructuring and integration, means there will be significant demand to release staff from timetables.

A potential lack of capacity at professional / middle-manager level is the factor most likely to inhibit the speed at which the authority improves the development, management and delivery of quality services. Integration of divisional staffing will have a significant impact on this capacity – and in particular co-location of facilities (eg new Bromyard library is extending opening hours from 18 ½ to over 90 for an additional £10K).

## 4.4 ICT

### Key Strengths

- Free broadband internet access at all 10 service points
- Online catalogue
- Smartcard pilot project at Colwall
- Partnership with Learn Direct at 2 libraries
- Regular upgrading of hardware and software to help meet priorities and plans
- Secured funds from corporate modernisation budget on the basis of our lead role in the modernisation agenda and our commitment to it
- Divisional management team member is also the Directorate ICT Client Officer and has a good client/contractor relationship with corporate IT Services
- On course and capacity to meet 2005 e-Govt targets in full, both front and back office

### Constraints

- Only 2 libraries and headquarters on corporate voice network
- No local digitisation work
- Centralised purchasing of hardware and control of software installations / upgrades
- Dependency on other projects/initiatives, e.g. the Herefordshire e-Gateway for content creation
- No public colour printing

### Challenges

- Secure resources to maintain Peoples Network hardware
- Corporate policies covering security issues do not compromise current public-facing services
- Deliver more web-based services through the new Herefordshire e-Gateway
- Continuing and appropriate staff ICT training
- Extract and exploit more management information from Talis

### Available Resources and Timescales

In July 2000 no library in Herefordshire had a computer, either for public or staff use aside from 'dumb' terminals operating the library management system. In a little over 3 years the service has delivered a modern broadband ICT infrastructure with high spec multifunctional staff and public computers, remote online access, EDI stock procurement and has generally earned itself a reputation as a lead example in service development using ICT.

Division is the budget holder for all aspects of own ICT provision, and the £35K revenue costs of the broadband network were secured with the substantial savings on the library management system costs after contract renegotiation in 2002/3. From 2003/4 an additional £70K was awarded to cover support costs for the ICT infrastructure and the internet feed (post NOF); and a one-off £20K from the corporate e-Modernisation budget to install the corporate voice network at the central library.

New digital photocopiers will be installed in 2003 which will incorporate colour copying and will be capable of integrating with the People's Network terminals to offer choice in printing finishes. A new Web OPAC server has just been installed and by the end of 2003/4 all remaining old ICT hardware will have been replaced in readiness for the new Windows-like GUI for the LMS.

Funding for a rolling programme of public ICT hardware replacement has been included in the 2004/5 budget bids.



## CHILDREN'S CENTRES

### PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE AND STRATEGIC HOUSING

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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#### Wards Affected

Central; St. Martins and Hinton.

#### Purpose

To approve a strategy for the development of Children's Centres in Herefordshire, which would involve the provision of services to young children and their families in areas of deprivation.

#### Key Decision

This is a Key Decision because it is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in Herefordshire in an area comprising one or more wards. It was included in the Forward Plan.

#### Recommendation

**THAT the strategic plan based on the approach outlined in the report be submitted to DfES.**

#### Reasons

To develop provision of services to young children and their families in areas of deprivation. The DfES requires that the strategy be formally approved by Cabinet prior to submission.

#### Considerations

1. The DfES conducted a review of national childcare policy, the results of which were published in November 2002. One of the outcomes of this review was the proposal to establish a Children's Centre in every area of disadvantage. In June 2003, details were published on how this was to be achieved in each LEA. The DfES have set a number of explicit targets for Herefordshire. A central target is that Children's Centres in the County should be developed in order to provide for at least 1044 children by 2007 in terms of services listed below and to create an additional 50 childcare places. The indicative resources allocated to Herefordshire are £337,209 for capital purposes and £148,664 to support revenue expenditure over 2004-06, to enable these targets to be achieved.
2. Best use of these resources can be made by expanding existing or planned centres in order to provide the core services for Children's Centres which must include -
  - Good quality early education and full day care provision

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
George Salmon, Head of Policy and Resources on 01432 260802

- Parental outreach
  - Family Support services
  - Child and family health services, including ante-natal services
  - Support for parents/children with special needs
  - Centres that will act as service hubs for parents and providers of childcare services
  - A base for childminder networks and a link to local Neighbourhood Nurseries, out of school clubs and extended schools.
3. The relevant Herefordshire wards that fall into the category of the most 20% deprived wards nationally are:

St. Martins

Hinton

Central

The DfES acknowledge that in rural areas such as Herefordshire there is significant deprivation, that cannot be identified by ward level statistics. The DfES has already accepted that fact by approving the Sure Start for an area stretching from Kington to Leominster. The DfES have also accepted that development of a Children's Centre in such areas would meet their criteria.

4. Discussion within the Herefordshire Early Years and Childcare Partnership has concluded that the strategy school focus on delivering the Children's Centre services through the following projects.
- Leominster Family Centre. This would involve Leominster and Kington Sure Start Unit developing a system for linked services through the Primary Care Trust, Leominster Infant school (including the Early Years Centre), local childcare providers, Leominster Community Day Nursery and Bargates Nursery. Work is in hand to identify an appropriate site in Leominster for the development. The Leominster wards are accepted by the DfES as a pocket of disadvantage. This project could potentially create an additional 20 childcare places.
  - Hunderton Family Centre. This would involve an outreach part of the Hollybush Family Centre, the Primary Care Trust and Hunderton Infants school. There is a Neighbourhood Nursery also on this site. Other services have also been developed in the Hunderton area for early years through the Education Action Zone and will continue under the auspices of the Excellence Cluster. There is no capital investment needed on this site to develop a Children's Centre but the extension of services would be dependent on the revenue allocation under the Children's Centres Programme. The Belmont ward is in the top 20% of disadvantaged wards. This project could potentially create an additional 24 places.
  - Greencroft Early Excellence Centre. This would involve Marlbrook Primary School, the Early Excellence Centre, Blackmarston School and the Primary Care Trust. The Hinton and St. Martins ward is in the top 20% of

disadvantaged wards. A capital contract to build "Greencroft," the Early Years centre on this site has now been let, with completion planned by May 2004. This project will create an additional 30 childcare places.

## **Alternative Options**

At present there are no alternative options that could both deliver the range of services envisaged and meet the DfES requirements. If any of the three projects identified became impossible, there would need to be discussion and support given to other early years providers to develop their services.

## **Risk Management**

By relying on existing settings, the strategy minimises the risks in terms of delivering the programme within the resources given.

## **Consultees**

To be considered by the Early Years and Childcare Development Partnership at their meeting on 25th September, following discussion by the Finance, Policy and Review sub-group of the Partnership, (on which Health Authority, Social Services, private and voluntary sector are represented) and the Leominster and Kington Sure Start Management group.

## **Background Papers**

A letter from the DfES inviting bids for Children's Centres





# HEREFORDSHIRE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (UDP): PART I (STRATEGY)

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: ENVIRONMENT

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To give initial views on strategic planning policy matters raised by representations to Part I of the UDP, prior to detailed consideration by the UDP Group.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

### Recommendation

- THAT (a) the UDP Group develop its recommendations to Cabinet and Council on the basis of the following considerations:**
- (i) Vision and guiding principles: affirming the role of the Plan in contributing to the ambitions of the Herefordshire Plan;**
  - (ii) Sustainable development (policy S1): confirming and clarifying the central role played by sustainable development in the Plan, setting out a clearer statement of the Plan's development strategy based on a sequential approach which incorporates the use of previously developed land and buildings;**
  - (iii) Development requirements (policy S2): taking a precautionary approach to development in areas of flood risk by directing development to locations at lower risk of flooding, consistent with other sustainable development objectives;**
  - (iv) Housing (policy S3): confirming the overall total and distribution of housing development and the level of affordable housing sought, with a clearer statement of locational strategy in tandem with the changes recommended to policy S1;**
  - (v) Employment (policy S4): confirming the overall approach to the scale and location of new employment development;**
  - (vi) Town centres and retail (policy S5): clarifying the sequential approach and including reference to the requirement to demonstrate need;**

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Dr. Dave Nicholson, Chief Forward Planning Officer on (01432) 261952

- (vii) **Transport (policy S6): including reference to the hierarchy of transport modes defined in the Local Transport Plan;**
- (viii) **Natural and historic heritage (policy S7): confirming the Plan's overall approach to environmental protection, including the landscape character assessment approach and the use of supplementary planning guidance;**
- (ix) **Recreation, sport and tourism (policy S8): continuing with Plan policies to balance development with environmental considerations;**
- (x) **Minerals (policy S9) and waste (policy S10): revising the Plan to take account of the revised national guidelines for aggregate provision and the scenarios for sand and gravel and crushed rock supported by Planning Committee 17 July, and the agreed Best Practicable Environmental Option for the management of waste (Cabinet 10 July);**
- (xi) **Community facilities and services (policy S11): including specific reference to education.**

and

- (b) **the membership of the UDP Group as considered by Cabinet on 12 June 2003 be re-affirmed.**

## **Reasons**

An initial Cabinet view on matters of strategic importance is required in order to allow the UDP Group to develop more detailed recommendations to Cabinet and thence to Council. In addition, following discussion at Council in July, Cabinet has been asked to reconsider membership of the UDP Group

## **Considerations**

### **Introduction**

1. Cabinet last considered UDP matters in June 2003, establishing the UDP Group of members to assess the representations made to the Deposit Draft. It was envisaged that an initial report would be made to Cabinet in respect of comments made to chapters 1-3 of the Plan (Vision, Guiding Principles and Part I policies), and this work has now been completed.
2. This report considers each of the principal policy areas in the UDP in turn and outlines the main considerations arising. The UDP Group will then consider in detail the representations made to the Plan, together with responses and recommendations. A full copy of the responses and recommendations to the Group on Chapters 1-3 of the draft UDP have been circulated to Cabinet members under separate cover, for information.
3. Several areas are subject to continuing investigations, and this may lead to further changes to strategic policies. However fundamental changes are unlikely. The detailed consideration of representations to Part II policies may also lead to additional changes to Part I policies. Finally, Regional Planning Guidance (RPG) is subject to review, with the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the current draft expected in the autumn.

The recommended responses to UDP representations have been developed on the basis of the existing Guidance. It is expected that the new Guidance will be completed and available so as to inform the Inspector's consideration of the UDP, affording an opportunity for any required amendments to be made.

### **Vision and guiding principles**

4. The positive links established between the UDP and the Herefordshire Plan attract support as well as objection that the Partnership has no role in planning. The UDP's vision statement is shared with that of the Herefordshire Plan. Close links between community strategies and development plans are a key feature of the Government's current planning reforms. The collaborative working with Ambition groups undertaken during the Plan's preparation has put the UDP at the forefront of this process, and reflects the fact that the UDP is a key mechanism both for delivering many aspects of Partnership ambitions and ensuring a measure of coordination. The role of the UDP in this respect should be confirmed.
5. Responses on the Plan's guiding principles raise many issues. Several respondents query the meaning and weight given to sustainable development, and this issue is discussed further below. A number of changes are proposed within Chapter 3 to ensure that the approach to sustainable development is defined as clearly as possible, focussing on matters relating to land use and development. Other issues raised where changes are proposed to the Plan include energy efficiency and transport.

### **Sustainable development (policy S1)**

6. The use of the terms 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development', and the prominence given to them in the overall strategy, received a number of objections. Environmental groups stressed the need for more robust definition and explanation as a foundation for the development strategy and Part I policies. In contrast, business and development interests expressed concern that the concept should not become an environmental strait-jacket curtailing justified new development, and that definitions should embrace social and economic objectives as well.
7. Several commentators disliked the way the policy set out preferred locations for development (first preference is within Hereford and the market towns; second, greenfield sites on their edges; third, main villages). Some objectors argued for more concentration in Hereford, to the greater exclusion of the market towns and rural settlements, citing revised support for this in the emerging RPG. Counter claims were made for extension of the sustainable village categories to other specific rural settlements, suggesting alternative criteria, or seeking an alternative scattered pattern of development. Others noted that there was no mention of priority being given to previously developed land. The approach was seen as sitting uncomfortably in the middle of more general sustainability principles.
8. The role of sustainability in the UDP, as set out variously in Chapter 1 and 3 and in the sustainability appraisal, needs to be drawn together and consolidated, ahead of the strategy and Policy S1. The distributional strategy for new development stems directly from the approved RPG with which the UDP must conform (although as indicated above this may need to be reviewed as the new Guidance emerges). However, the sequential approach to development set out in policy S1 has been revised to remove duplication with policy S3, clarify the relationship to the re-use of previously developed land, and relate the development strategy more clearly to sustainable development principles.

### **Development requirements (policy S2)**

9. The policies set out under this heading attracted much support. One key issue has arisen, namely the Plan's approach to development in areas of flood risk. Flood risk issues are set to take a higher profile as the UK planning system responds to climate change, and this is reflected both in the guidance and views expressed by the Environment Agency. Both the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) and the Agency have expressed concern at the approach taken in the Plan, with a fuller statement sought by the Government Office in policy S2. A suitable change has been drafted to meet these concerns by taking a risk-based precautionary approach to flood risk, with sites at lower risk of flooding being given priority over those at higher risk in terms of development.
10. There are implications for other chapters of the Plan. Indicative flooding maps have been prepared by the Agency, and these are under discussion with the Agency to ensure that as far as possible the areas shown as at risk of flooding on the UDP proposals maps are accurate. A number of the Plan's housing and employment allocations are affected, including land at Rotherwas. For these a 'sequential test' statement is being prepared, setting out the flood risk issues. When complete and agreed with the Agency this will be published with the Revised Deposit Draft UDP. Sites may be removed from allocation as a result.

### **Housing (policy S3)**

11. Housing issues - both policies and proposals - tend to loom large in development plan preparation and the Herefordshire UDP has been no exception. Comments on the Housing chapter accounted for over a third of all comments on the Plan. In particular a number of the Plan's housing proposals at Leominster, Hereford and Ross-on-Wye proved controversial, and a considerable number of alternative housing sites were put forward across Herefordshire.
12. The strategic housing policy S3 also attracted a large number of representations. Perhaps the foremost issue is the distribution of development between Hereford, the market towns, the larger and smaller villages, and the wider rural areas. Not surprisingly, alternative views were expressed. Many commentators held that housing was too dispersed and that more should be directed to Hereford and the market towns, so reducing the amount expected to come forward as 'windfalls' and increasing the amount allocated as proposal sites. This view was expressed for instance variously by GOWM and a range of development interests, with PPG3 being cited in support. Others queried the attempt to direct development in the rural areas to the more sustainable settlements. In response, the proposed distribution of housing development represents a sensible interpretation of national and regional guidance to the situation in Herefordshire. An excessive urban focus is not appropriate for a large rural county whose population is more widely dispersed than in most other English counties. In addition, there are real limits on the infrastructure of the City and market towns which have been recognised in drawing up the Plan. Recent monitoring (Housing Land Study 2003, Planning Committee 17 July) shows the Plan's strategy to be realistic, achievable and on track. The overall response to these issues at this stage should be to confirm the proposed distribution of housing development set out in the Plan.
13. As suggested above, there is scope to simplify policies S3 and S1 which both include locational policies. The recommended approach is to remove the potential for confusion by dealing with broader issues linked to previously developed land and buildings in policy S1, with the locational issues covered in policy S3.
14. The related issue of whether the allocation set out in the approved RPG (11,700 dwellings 1996-2011) should be accepted has also again been raised. The Council has agreed these figures previously and the Plan has of course been prepared on this basis.

Again, alternative views are expressed. Crudely put, development interests tend to seek an increase while environmentalists look for a reduction. In short, there is no case for a departure from the regional allocation to Herefordshire or for re-opening an issue considered in full within the RPG process.

15. In the rural areas, the approach to defining main villages and smaller settlements has come under scrutiny. The Plan defines these groups of settlements using a range of 'sustainability' criteria linked to population and services, so as to provide a consistent basis for managing growth and meeting local needs arising. Again, the overall approach should be confirmed.
16. Policy S3 sets out that 2,300 affordable dwellings should be provided as part of the overall total to help meet housing needs arising in both urban and rural areas of the County. This figure has come under criticism, with various objections seeking a reduction, and will need to be defended through the Plan and Inquiry process.
17. Finally, the housing distribution figures recorded in policy S3 may need to be revisited as a result of the UDP Group's detailed consideration of site specific issues. In addition, two pieces of technical work are underway which will feed into the Group's work. These are a review of the Plan's housing capacity study and a review of non-housing allocations (mainly employment) in the Local Plans, pursuant to PPG3. Where such land has not come forward for the development proposed, this could lead to a change in allocation, to housing, being recommended within the UDP.

#### **Employment (policy S4)**

18. Whilst this chapter yielded a healthy level of response, most representations were to the Plan's employment allocations, notably new sites at Holmer and Ross. Existing employment areas, such as at Rotherwas, also attracted objections. As with housing, the main strategic issue is the level and distribution of new employment development, with views variously expressed that more land should be allocated at Hereford and that too much land has been allocated overall. The Plan's allocations have been devised by balancing housing growth with employment land needs and are able to accommodate both recent take up levels and forecast requirements. They offer a variety of sites and locations to meet a wide range of needs, and should be confirmed.
19. More generally, the CPRE seeks a broader employment policy which contributes to a more sustainable economy. In response, it must be understood that the UDP is simply part of the Council's response to employment issues in Herefordshire, picking up those aspects related to land use and development which fall under the Planning Acts. The holistic approach in fact lies across a family of documents including Advantage West Midlands (AWM) Regional Economic Strategy and the Herefordshire Partnership's Economic Development Strategy, both of which have fed in to the UDP preparation process.
20. No changes are being recommended to policy S4 in response to these objections. The policy contains a reference to 'sites contained in adopted Local Plans which are confirmed' and this will be reviewed and updated pursuant to a Government Office objection elsewhere. Such sites need to be included in the UDP in their own right, rather than simply because of their inclusion in a Local Plan.

### **Town centres and retail (policy S5)**

21. Policies in this area generated relatively modest levels of comment. However, the Plan's proposals for Hereford, notably the the relocation and redevelopment of the Hereford Livestock Market, proved controversial. Many objectors raise issues such as doubts over financial viability which lie outside the scope of the land use planning system. In any event this aspect is being addressed through the joint study with AWM.
22. Minor changes are recommended to policy S5, to clarify the reference to the sequential approach (used in selecting locations for new retail development), and to include reference to the requirement for applicants to demonstrate that there is a need for the development proposed.
23. The masterplanning exercise for the Edgar St grid is expected to lead to further changes being made to the Plan. Significant proposals are emerging affecting the principle of land use on specific sites, such as for food retail on the Livestock Market, or for infrastructure such as the northern link road. These should be included in the Plan if they can be shown to be realistic and capable of implementation in the Plan period. This will particularly apply where compulsory purchase is a possibility and the strength of the statutory development plan may be needed to support such action. In the case of food retail on the Market site, Government policy (PPG6 and subsequent clarifications) requires the Council to be able to demonstrate that there is a need in retail terms for the development proposed. This is being addressed as part of the Edgar Street grid study. However to date there has not been a requirement to identify additional new land for food retail in Hereford.

### **Transport (policy S6)**

24. The Plan's transport policies have generated much comment, particularly around such issues as the Hereford Transport Review (Multi Modal Study), links to the Local Transport Plan and individual transport projects, including road proposals. Changes are proposed to policy S6 to respond to concerns raised by including cross reference to the 'hierarchy of transport modes' already defined in the Council's Local Transport Plan.
25. Within the Part II policies of the Plan, much comment is made both for and against specific road schemes. Whilst these will need to be considered in detail by the UDP Group, the results of the Hereford Transport Review cast doubt on the continued safeguarding of land for the Hereford Outer Relief Road north of Holme Lacy Road. Proposals for protecting any western route, if this is supported, would need to be brought forward as part of a separate exercise which would also address the funding of such a scheme.
26. The proposals for a new road being investigated as part of the Edgar St grid work will also have implications for this chapter if agreed.

### **Natural and historic heritage (policy S7)**

27. Comments under this heading tend to be directed at the wording of the Council's policies. Much useful and detailed material has been received from such statutory bodies as English Heritage and English Nature. The new, more sensitive approach to landscape character assessment, replacing Areas of Great Landscape Value, also received comment. There was again much support from the statutory agencies, while others sought the exclusion or inclusion of specific tracts of land, or questioned whether too much detail had been left to supplementary planning guidance. The approach has been to make full use of such guidance and this is consistent with Government calls for plans to be shorter and more focussed. The approach taken to landscape character

assessment should be confirmed.

28. A number of specific sites throughout the County have been put forward by objectors for protection as amenity areas/land, including sites in Hereford or in villages such as Cradley. These will be assessed and recommendations made throughout the Part II stage of the process.
29. Only minor changes are being recommended to policy S7, with the Plan's overall approach to environmental protection proceeding unchanged.

#### **Recreation, sport and tourism (policy S8)**

30. Responses to this policy emphasise that tourism developments in particular need careful handling to avoid impacting on the very qualities that visitors seek. The Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) for instance raises issues of sustainability (environmental, resource use and economic) and problems of scale, future trends and environmental implications, and questions whether these have been satisfactorily dealt with in the Plan. Others such as the Countryside Agency and Friends of the Earth support the approach taken. The Council's Tourism Strategy 2002-2007, produced in November 2002 with support from AWM as part of recovery from foot and mouth, addresses these wider issues with the UDP providing a complementary framework of planning policy against which to judge applications. The overall aim is to balance environmental effects with the development proposed. Plan policies on such aspects as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the wider landscape also help protect the County's tourism assets. Taken together, the Tourism Strategy and the UDP do ensure that the wider sustainability issues linked to recreation and tourism are properly addressed.
31. No changes to policy S8 are being recommended. The policy provides a sound basis for promoting and assessing tourism and recreational development.
32. A wide range of other issues are raised in the comments to other recreation and tourism policies, including many site specific issues concerning both the Plan's proposals, such as Haywood Country Park, and other sites suggested for recreational use, such as Unity Gardens (off Ledbury Road, Hereford). The latter has generated significant support, both in terms of individual representations and a petition. Again these will be addressed by the UDP Group as the process develops.

#### **Minerals (policy S9) and waste (policy S10)**

33. Policy S9 has generated a number of comments raising issues of mineral demand and supply. These have been assessed in terms of the revised national/regional guidelines for aggregates provision and the scenarios for sand and gravel and crushed rock supported by Planning Committee on 17 July. Elements of this chapter will need revising to take the new guidelines and their implications on board. However no changes are needed to policy S9 in this respect.
34. One change of note is proposed, to clarify the protection given to areas of landscape and nature conservation value. At present, the Plan requires mineral developments affecting such areas to demonstrate that they are in the public interest. The proposed change is to provide for their protection other than in exceptional circumstances. These would be defined in terms of the need to meet aggregate guidelines and other Plan policies on landscape/nature conservation areas, which take a graduated approach including the public interest requirement for sites of international importance.
35. Representations to the waste policy S10 have been assessed in the context of the

Cabinet decision in July defining the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) for managing waste arising in the County. The BPEO itself now needs to be incorporated into this policy and a change is proposed to do this.

### **Community facilities and services (policy S11)**

36. Representations to this policy raise a limited number of issues focussed on education, renewable energy, and libraries. A change is proposed to the policy in order to include reference to education. On a specific issue, inclusion of the redevelopment of the Folly Lane campus is sought by an objector. No reference is needed to this scheme within the strategic policy. The proposal is expected to be for redevelopment within existing use boundaries to normal planning standards. A change is proposed to give support in principle to the scheme within the Plan's supporting text.

### **Membership of the UDP Group**

37. Following discussion at Council in July, Cabinet has been asked to reconsider membership of the UDP Group with a view to including the Chairman of the Central Area Planning Sub-Committee.

38. Cabinet agreed in June 2003 that the Group would comprise six members, namely the Cabinet members for Environment and Highways and Transportation, the Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee, and the Chair and Vice Chair of Environment Scrutiny Committee. At the same time, Cabinet acknowledged the importance of providing for the views of local members to be taken into account in the work of the Group. This will allow the views of all members to be fed into the process and ensure a fully inclusive approach. On this basis no expansion of the 'core' Group is seen as necessary.

### **Alternative Options**

A number of alternative options have been considered above.

### **Risk Management**

It is important that UDP representations are fully and properly considered by the Council and this report is the beginning of this process.

### **Consultees**

The report deals with the response to the first public deposit period of the UDP. A number of initial meetings have been held with objectors to explore their representations and further meetings are envisaged to discuss matters arising from members considerations.

### **Background Papers**

None identified.



## EXTRA CARE HOUSING

### PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: SOCIAL CARE AND STRATEGIC HOUSING

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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#### Wards Affected

County-wide

#### Purpose

To approve the development of Extra Care Housing within Hereford City in partnership with the Extra Care Charitable Trust and selected Registered Social Landlord.

#### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

#### Recommendation

**THAT Cabinet reaffirms its support, and approves the development of an Extra Care facility within Hereford City to be developed in partnership with Extra Care Housing Trust and selected Registered Social Landlord.**

**THAT Cabinet supports the proposal to use the former Nursery Site, Ledbury Road, Hereford, for the purposes of developing an Extra Care Housing scheme, subject to relevant planning application processes and land disposal considerations.**

**THAT Cabinet agrees that the Council will assist the current leasehold occupiers of the site by offering a suitable alternative location for their operations through a possible facilities sharing arrangement at an identified site.**

#### Reasons

The provision of an Extra Care facility in Hereford City will promote independent living and provide older people within the County with choices and opportunities consistent with relevant housing, social care and health strategy considerations of national government and of the Council.

Although the current occupant of the proposed site leased the former Nursery Land for a limited 2 year period in the full knowledge that the lease would end in March 2004, the Council would like to assist the leaseholder to locate alternative accommodation.

#### Considerations

1. Extra Care has developed over the past decade as a response to five principal factors:
  - Increasing levels of frailty among existing tenants/householders

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Richard Gabb, Head of Strategic Housing Services on 01432 261902

- Increases in age on admission, accelerating the frailty profile within sheltered housing schemes
  - The need to find new uses for conventional sheltered housing as it has become increasingly difficult to let
  - The opportunity to provide an alternative to residential care at a reduced cost to social services and the public purse
  - Better space standards and higher level of independence and privacy for residents who would otherwise be in residential care
2. Extra Care promotes independent living and provides older people with an opportunity to retain a home of their own where care provision is adapted to meet their changing needs without the need for re-housing or residential placement.
3. There is a substantial national policy framework which promotes the ethos of independent living which is facilitated through Extra Care provision.
- **NHS and Community Care Act 1990**, - the Act recognised that a pattern of provision is required within which people might expect to be cared for within their own housing rather than an institutional setting
  - **The NHS Plan** – contains an explicit aim to tackle health inequalities and recognises the importance of enhancing quality of life, not just increasing the length, giving prominence to the values of dignity and independence.
  - **Modernising Social Services promoting independence, improving protection, raising standards** – with ‘promoting independence’ as a key objective of this policy the policy also suggested a need to provide services which are ‘convenient to use, can respond quickly to emergencies’ and are of ‘top quality’
  - **Royal Commission into Long Term Care** – noted for its recommendations concerning the cost of long term care in residential and nursing homes. Research also commended alternative patterns of care to existing provision.
  - **Supporting People** – the regime provides an opportunity for funding services in a strategic way, tying in with the strategic aims identified for services for older people. At a local policy level, the **Herefordshire Shadow Supporting People Strategy 2003/4** identifies the contribution Supporting People can make to Social Care’s strategic aim to develop ‘extra-care’ housing for older people. Older people have been identified as a high priority area for service development in 2003/4.
  - **Quality and Choice in Housing for Older People** – Recognises the importance of the ‘housing context’ in which a future pattern of accommodation and care may be set. The guidance also considers that the majority of older people will want to remain in their homes but will want to be able to access services that make their continued occupation viable.
  - **National Framework for Older People** – Sets out national standards of care and commits government funding to ending discrimination in health and social care on grounds of age and aims to promote active, healthy life in old age. Overall, there is an underlying theme within the framework of keeping older people independent and avoiding premature admissions into institutional care (i.e. residential and nursing homes)
  - **Best Value** – establishing best practice, seeking value for money, engaging in continuous improvement with the involvement of service users and carers in the

design and evaluation of services.

- **Priorities and Planning Framework 2003-6 (DoH); Improvement. Expansion, Reform: the next three years.** Appendix A of the framework reproduces the Public Service Agreement which contains Objective II; *'to improve the quality of life and independence of older people so that they can live at home wherever possible, by increasing by March 2006 the number of those supported intensively to live at home to 30% of the total being supported by social services.*
4. At a local level, the business case for investment in Older People as previously presented to Cabinet, outlines the strategic framework to improve services. This included increasing the housing options available by providing extra care housing units as a priority for the county.
    - **The Herefordshire Plan** – contains 10 ambitions including *'Meeting Herefordshire's Accommodation Needs' and Improving the health and well-being of Herefordshire People.* 'Helping people to stay independent' is one of 5 key routes towards achieving this ambition and Extra Care, as a concept, has this at its heart.
    - **The Housing Investment Strategy 2003/2006** - identifies Extra Care as a strategic priority for development.

#### **Extra Care in Herefordshire**

5. The concept of Extra Care housing was first considered by the Council's Social Care Committee on 15 June 2001 to assist in meeting the long-term care needs of older people. This was supported by the Council at an Extraordinary Meeting on 20 July 2001.
6. "In principle" approval was given by Cabinet on 12 September 2002 for the provision of an Extra Care housing scheme in Hereford City, together with modernisation of existing sheltered housing schemes in order to provide a county-wide service. This "in principle" approval was reaffirmed by Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2003 in considering the business case for Investment in Services for older people.
7. A project development team comprising officers and representatives from Extra Care Housing Trust has been taking forward the development of the Extra Care housing scheme in Hereford City. The Council owned site at the former Nursery at Ledbury Road has been identified as being of appropriate size and location to accommodate an Extra Care scheme on the scale proposed for Hereford City.
8. Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Committee were updated on 17 June 2003 with a further briefing due at the end of September. The current position on scheme development can be summarised as follows:
  - I. Needs Analysis has been undertaken to support the Hereford City provision and future schemes in the more remote areas of the county. This necessary work caused some delay in the process but will inform relevant planning and commissioning decisions. This work is now complete and evidences a need to respond to changing age profiles and increasing care pressures in Herefordshire.
    - Age Concern survey of over 55's confirmed over 94% wished to maintain a degree of independence
    - Herefordshire's population growth 2001/2011 estimated to be 30%, double

the national rate of 15%

- Health and Care provision currently will result in either Residential or Nursing Care
  - A snapshot in August 2003, showed the number of older persons 'awaiting a service', whose first choice would be unlikely to be residential care home or institutional settings, (but for whom the cost and practicality or providing long term home support package is not sustainable) was 12 in Hospital and 4 at home.
- II. A project plan has been established outlining remaining actions.
  - III. The local authority will be seeking the undertaking of market testing by Extra Care Housing Trust shortly. This will help inform the size and scope of tenure to be developed within the scheme.
  - IV. Land assembly enquiries are under way on the Hereford City site in preparation for further consultation and planning application submission.
9. Initial development/feasibility studies have recognised the need for possible negotiations with the allotment society to either purchase additional land or enter into a land swap deal. Informal discussions with the Chair of the society have been favourable regarding the potential for release of allotment land for the development. Design proposals do not facilitate the retention of existing greenhouses etc. utilised by the current occupier of the former nursery site.
  10. The Extra Care Charitable Trust has indicated that there is substantial charitable and private funding available and obviously this will be key to the viability of the scheme.
  11. Funding for the proposed scheme has been identified from the Council's own housing capital resources. However, wherever possible this will be offset by submitting a regional bid at the appropriate time to the Housing Corporation and Department of Health to secure additional funding. This follows the recent announcement by the Department of Health of the provision of an additional £87m to be distributed by the Housing Corporation in support of Extra Care housing schemes nationally. The existence of an element of private sector funding within the proposals for the Hereford City site appear to meet one of the conditions attached to the award of funding.
  12. With Capital costs to be established through the bidding process, it has been estimated that the Hereford City scheme is expected to benefit from £1million of private/charitable funding secured by the Extra Care Charitable Trust. With a large proportion of Capital costs to be met from borrowing funded through sales and rental income, it has long been anticipated that a further £3 million will be required to be funded through Housing Capital receipt contributions and through bids for Government grant.
  13. Officers will be developing bids in partnership with RSLs for submission to the Housing Corporation in October 2003 and the Department of Health in November 2003. Bids for resources would be based upon the commitment of local authority funding of £1 million towards the scheme, a sum which may require review should government funding not extend to the £2 million provisionally estimated to be required. It should also be noted, however, that the Council will need to make a decision with regard to land disposal as the anticipated £4 million in grant/charitable costs does not include land purchase costs associated with land assembly e.g. purchase of the former Nursery site from Property Services.

14. An indicative level of £150,000 has been suggested as the likely annual revenue implications from Supporting People grant towards housing related support. This contribution would, of necessity, need to be funded from savings made through the de-commissioning of other services following scheme reviews.
15. Once Capital bids have been received and assessed an RSL partner will be selected. The design of the remaining balance of care and support required will enable the determination of other revenues costs which would be met from self-funding, Social Care and other budgets (subject to types/levels of care deemed appropriate). A team of officers has been identified to take forward this piece of work once approval to proceed is secured.
16. The site is currently occupied by an organisation known as Unity Gardens under a lease agreement which is due to expire in May 2004. The lease was let for a limited 2 year period on the strict understanding that the Council would seek to take back the land at the end of the lease period. No rent is paid and Business Rate benefit at 80% is received by the organisation.
17. On the basis that the development proposals would not facilitate the continued occupation of the site by Unity Gardens, officers have explored options that might enable Unity Gardens to continue operations in some form at an alternative site. Whilst under no obligation to do so, bearing in mind the clear position stated by the Council at the commencement of the lease, initial discussions have been held within the Council regarding the potential for Unity Gardens to enter into an agreement with the Council which could enable their operations to continue through a partnership arrangement at the Widemarsh Workshops, adjacent to Moor House. The facilities available at Widemarsh Workshops are described within the attached papers.
18. The supplementary information sheet attached to this report outlines the possible advantages and objectives which would be sought from such an agreement. Any proposal would, of course, be subject to Unity Gardens willingness to consider this compromise position as a means to secure their continued operations, albeit at a different site.
19. To conclude, the development of Extra Care housing has been identified as providing an important contribution to tackling difficulties relating to delayed discharge not least in offering more flexibility and sustainable accommodation for older people as their long term needs change.
20. The provision of Extra Care housing in a variety of forms will enable a greater number of older people to continue to live independently in their own homes, providing greater choice and opportunity in meeting the long term needs and aspirations of Herefordshire's ageing population.

## **Alternative Options**

The development of Extra Care housing is consistent with relevant housing, social care and health strategies at both national and local level. A decision not to develop Extra Care housing would be contrary to the strategic direction.

## **Risk Management**

Failure to develop Extra Care housing will fetter the Council's ability to provide affordable

and flexible housing and support solutions for Herefordshire's older population. Similarly it will limit the Council's ability to respond to increased expectations and demands being placed on older peoples' services.

A decision not to support the development of the scheme within the former Nursery site at Ledbury Road would cause long term delays in completing the development due to the difficulties that would be experienced in identifying an appropriately sized and located parcel of land and in re-securing the charitable funding currently on offer to support the scheme.

## **Consultees**

Market testing will be undertaken by Extra Care Charitable Trust. Planning consultation will be undertaken as part of the formal planning application process. Ongoing consultation with voluntary and statutory agencies will be undertaken as the scheme is developed although extensive national consultation has been undertaken in developing the concept of Extra Care housing. Members of Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Committee have been fully consulted on the proposed development of Extra Care including visits to other schemes operated by Extra Care Charitable Trust.

## **Background Papers**

None.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION SHEET****FOR REPORT TO CABINET****25 SEPTEMBER 2003****Introduction**

This paper is to give further detail on the proposed option for Unity Gardens to be offered for use, part of the Horticulture Area at Widemarsh Workshop, Hereford. It will outline background to the proposal as well as show how it fits in strategically with other Herefordshire policies and plans.

**Background**

Widemarsh Workshop was opened twenty years ago to provide a sheltered workshop to people with disabilities. It has been successful in offering a protected environment for people with a range of disabilities over this time but little has changed at the service since it opened. Widemarsh Workshop currently offers a service to forty four people a day over a five-day week. It offers experience in packaging, woodwork, printing, horticulture, catering and housekeeping. Over the last ten years changes have taken place in terms of the type of service we offer across the County.

Whereas Widemarsh Workshop was the only centre offering work experience to service users, this is now offered at the other three centres across the County. We are now offering a range of choices to users at all centres, in line with current policies. Other agencies, such as Workmatch now offer a more structured employment experience in community placements. Service users have thus tended to move on to Workmatch when they wished to extend their opportunities. This has reduced the skill level at Widemarsh Workshop and fewer experiences have been offered, particularly within the horticulture section.

**Referrals**

The workshop is currently funded from the Learning Disability budget but also provides placement to users with mental health difficulties and physical difficulties. New referrals to the service are via a community care assessment, which then goes to a funding panel for approval in line with the Councils eligibility criteria. There are a number of users at the workshop who will not have had a CCA due to the time they have been at the centre and may not fulfill current criteria.

In March 2001 the Government published a White Command Paper, *Valuing People*, with strong emphasis on modernising day services as they felt our services were too socially isolating and gave service users little opportunity to access normal community activities. We undertook a review of city services as a result of this and produced an Outline Development Plan in February 2002, which went out for wide consultation. All services were assessed using a Toolkit from the White Paper Support Team and the score for Widemarsh Workshop was quite low in a number of important areas.

An external consultant has drawn up a report on Widemarsh Workshop, which identified all that was lacking in the current service. One idea is for Widemarsh Workshop to become a small

## APPENDIX

business park with a mixture of social enterprises and units for local business. The horticulture has fine gardens but it has not been developed as a community resource. The consultant believed that there was a need to separate the gardens from the workshop and develop it as a public accessible resource. This would mean that the service users would work for a purpose in the gardens and it would become a valued activity.

The development plan required a network of local, community-based projects and social firms. Widemarsh Workshop has the potential for this, as mentioned above. Unity Gardens could be the first step for horticulture to move down this path.

The Joint Review of Social Services reported in July 2003, with the comment that “Parts of the service remain traditional building-based facilities that are not involving users fully enough in the wider life of the community or stretching them to develop their skills adequately”.

### Funding Implications

The budget for Widemarsh Workshop is currently £226,000 and as part of Day Services Modernisation, we are exploring better use of budgets due to our spend being higher than average.

As a Council, we are unable to access external funding but if we work in partnership with the Voluntary Sector, we can access both Government and Grant monies. This money could contribute to any future developments within the modernisation process while giving benefits on all sides.

### Strategic Links

1. **The Herefordshire Partnership** produced ambitions for Herefordshire. This project will link in with these **ambitions** in the following ways:
  - It will **reduce crime** because there has been vandalism at Widemarsh Workshop at the weekends and in the evenings. If people are there more often this will decrease and reduce the cost caused by such things as broken windows, etc.
  - It will **improve the wellbeing** of people with learning disabilities, helping them to achieve more **independence** in the choice to work with Unity Gardens and increases social inclusion and general activity. This will also make a positive contribution to increasing the general health of people with disabilities.
  - In support, it will also **decrease social isolation and tackle poverty** by increasing availability of fresh food and produce - a situation that will give people with learning disabilities a feeling of equal opportunity.
  - The project is supporting the **local community** and encouraging an activity that will improve the **quality of community involvement**, which is lacking at Widemarsh Workshop. It is also supporting a cultural facility, promoting an active lifestyle and providing a resource for further training for people with learning disabilities to be involved in. There is also a link with learning about the environment with gardening



## APPENDIX

projects and thus Developing Herefordshire as an **active, vibrant and enjoyable place to be.**

- This would also be **supporting business growth**, as there is the potential to develop a social, business out of this move where it could become an organic gardening company. Unity Gardens could also offer New Deal placements for people with learning disabilities, which would prepare them for work. People at Unity Gardens would also have the opportunity to share their skills and knowledge with those with learning disabilities in what would be an innovative project.

### 2. The Learning Disability Business Plan Objectives include:

- An increase in the development of employment opportunities by developing community based work projects.
- The white paper Valuing people has given us a number of objectives, which relate to this project:
  - To modernise day services to enable people to exercise real choice on how they spend their days.
  - To make full use of transport and access mainstream community and leisure activities
  - Ensure public services provide a lead in the employment of people with disabilities
- The Mission Statement for the Councils Community Involvement Strategy is to “Improve Community Involvement in the process of decision-making”.

Our objectives are:

- To make best use of available resources for community involvement
- To enable more people to be engaged in the democratic process
- To ensure the appropriate involvement of Herefordshire people in the decisions which affect their lives

This project would clearly support this aim.

### Possible Ways Of Working Together

1. It may be possible to work through a Service Level Agreement to ensure that the needs of all sides are met. This could cover agreed quality standards, the area of the resource to be used by all parties and to what use it could be put.
2. There are obvious costs associated with running Widemarsh Workshop and while we would hope for some form of rental for the land, we recognise that the possible social and training benefits for the current users could potentially outweigh any costs. The Learning Disability

## **APPENDIX**

Service would be pleased to see appropriate referral mechanisms and training outcomes agreed in respect of the individuals accessing services in partnership with Unity Gardens whereas we understand these are unclear at present.

3. The other potential area for discussion could be the café area where it may be possible to look at charging rent for a resource, which would generate income for Unity Gardens.
4. We are keen as a service to work in Partnership with a number of agencies, as we are aware that this brings positives to all the participants in a project.

**Glyn Cook**  
**Operational Manager – Opportunities and Resources**

16 September 2003

# HEREFORDSHIRE HOMELESSNESS REVIEW AND STRATEGY 2003

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: SOCIAL CARE AND STRATEGIC HOUSING

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To note the Homelessness Review and to agree the Homelessness Strategy, including the associated Action Plan, prior to full publication in accordance with the requirements of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Homelessness Unit.

### Key Decision

This is a Key Decision because it is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in Herefordshire in an area comprising one or more wards. It was included in the Forward Plan.

### Recommendations

- THAT (a) **the detailed analysis of the extent of homelessness in Herefordshire contained within the Homelessness Review 2003 be noted;**
- and
- (b) **the Homelessness Strategy 2003, including the associated action plan, to meet the national and local targets necessary to maintain the Council's three star homelessness service, be agreed.**

### Reasons

The Council is obliged, under the statutory requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002, to carry out a review of homelessness and to write a five year homeless strategy by the 31st July, 2003, setting out an action plan to meet specific outcomes.

N.B: A draft of this review and strategy was submitted to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the 31st July 2003, as requested by the Homelessness Unit, subject to possible changes and/or full ratification by the County of Herefordshire District Council.

### Considerations

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002, the Review has considered:
  - a) The levels and likely future levels of homelessness in the County

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Adam Russell, Supporting People Manager on 01432 383070

- b) The activities and services provided, which help to prevent homelessness, help to find accommodation for homeless and potentially homeless people or provide support for them, including support to prevent them from becoming homeless again
  - c) The resources available to Housing Services and Social Services, other public authorities, voluntary organisations and other agencies for providing those services
2. The Aims and objectives of the Homelessness Strategy comply with those set out in the Homelessness legislation, which are:
    - a) The prevention of homelessness
    - b) Ensuring there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are, or who may become homeless
    - c) Ensuring there is satisfactory support for people who are, or who may become homeless, or who need support to prevent them from becoming homeless.
  3. The aim of the County of Herefordshire District Council was to incorporate the above aims into a multi-agency Homelessness Strategy for Herefordshire, delivered by a partnership of statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations. This partnership seeks to address the accommodation, health, support and other needs of homeless people and ensure the provision of high quality homelessness advice and other services to prevent homelessness occurring.
  4. As is the case in many rural authorities, Herefordshire is experiencing substantial and sustained increasing demand for affordable housing against a decreasing supply. This is a consequence of the combined effect of Right to Buy across the county and considerably diminished opportunities for many local households to access either owner occupation or the private rented sector, both of which are operating in buoyant and very competitive markets.
    - a) The average price of a house in Herefordshire at £147,826 exceeds the average for England and Wales (HM Land Registry figures for the period October to December 2002)
    - b) Herefordshire as a whole has a higher proportion of its housing in the most expensive valuation bands than is the case either regionally, or nationally
    - c) The average price for a semi-detached house is £118,277. Assuming a 5% deposit the earnings needed, if the mortgage is calculated at 3.25 times earnings, would be approximately £34,573 per annum. Set against this, the average gross annual earnings for Herefordshire during 2002 were only £19,377.
    - d) Average earnings in Herefordshire are 87% of the regional average and just 79% of the national average
    - e) As at December 2002 the average (median) private sector rent for a 3 bedroom house in Herefordshire was £450 per calendar month
  5. The shortage in the supply of affordable housing for vulnerable single people and homeless families is a critical issue for Herefordshire, particularly as it is likely that the high levels of homelessness in the County will continue to rise without effective and targeted programmes of intervention. This will need to be balanced by continued initiatives to increase the supply of accommodation, which is affordable to local people.
  6. On the positive side all the agencies concerned with the provision of services to homeless people, or those at risk of homelessness, have demonstrated a high commitment to work together to maximise the capacity to respond. The Homelessness

Strategy has been jointly developed and is a multi-agency response to the needs of homeless people in the county and those who are at risk of homelessness.

7. The Herefordshire Plan is the overarching strategic document for Herefordshire Council and its public, private and voluntary sector partners. The Herefordshire Plan aims to provide an Action Plan for the County through the realisation of 10 'Ambitions.' The Homelessness Strategy links directly to the Ambition to 'meet Herefordshire's accommodation needs.'
8. The Strategy is well integrated with the Supporting People Shadow Strategy and has important links to the Housing Investment Strategy, the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy and the various Health and Social Services plans and programmes.
9. As part of the Review process we have aimed to establish, as comprehensively as possible, a profile of homelessness in Herefordshire. We recognise however, that there are existing gaps in our knowledge and that the collection of data and information must be an ongoing and shared process. This, in turn, will inform continued Strategy development and the annual Monitoring and Evaluation procedure.
10. The Homelessness Review established that:
  - a) Homelessness in Herefordshire is increasing – from 254 accepted homeless households during the 1998-99 financial year (the first year of the Unitary Authority) to 417 households during 2002-03
  - b) Families with children, or expecting their first child represented 61% of homeless households during 2001-02, followed by vulnerable young people (12%)
  - c) The main reasons for homelessness in Herefordshire are parental eviction, breakdown in a relationship where there has been actual violence, or threats of violence and termination of private sector Assured Shorthold Tenancy
  - d) 153 homeless households were in temporary accommodation as at 31st March, 2002 (82% in self-contained accommodation, 11% in hostels and 7% in Bed and Breakfast)
  - e) There were almost 5,000 households on the Herefordshire Home Point Register as at 31st March, 2003, with an average of 19 households bidding for each property advertised
  - f) 72% of the properties sold under Right to Buy were three and four bedroom houses
11. The Homelessness Review identified the resources currently available for the provision of homeless services and preventative activity as follows:
  - a) The provision of tenancy and re-settlement support services are important preventative activities, particularly for those who are particularly at risk of repeat homelessness. Tenancy support services are provided, by a number of different agencies, to vulnerable groups including homeless households in temporary accommodation, people with mental health needs, women and their children experiencing, or at risk of domestic violence, teenage parents, ex-offenders and vulnerable young people.
  - b) There are a number of supported transitional housing schemes operating in the County, which aim to address the needs of vulnerable people to enable them to successfully sustain independent living. Current transitional housing provision includes that for ex-offenders, people with mental health needs and young people between the ages of 16 and 25 years.

- c) The provision of affordable housing is vital in a high cost housing environment that is inaccessible to many homeless and low-income households. The Council is committed to the continued provision of new social housing, the promotion of low cost home ownership schemes, improving standards in the private rented sector and increasing the supply.
- d) There is a strong voluntary agency commitment in the County to homelessness prevention and the provision of high quality services. This is formalised in the Herefordshire Homelessness Forum, which has been and remains a vital partner in the Strategy development process.

12. The following have been identified in the Homelessness Strategy as key actions:

- a) Reduce the numbers of young people becoming homeless from the parental home
- b) Reduce the numbers of repeat homeless households
- c) Ensure young people leaving care do not become homeless
- d) Ensure that women and their children with more complex issues, arising from their exposure to domestic violence, have access to appropriate housing and support
- e) Identify if there are any preventative measures, which could be implemented to reduce the numbers of households becoming homeless due to termination of Assured Shorthold Tenancy
- f) Ensure that the customer care approaches and housing management practices of all social landlords work to prevent homelessness and repeat homelessness where possible
- g) Ensure there is sufficient support available for people who are, or who may become homeless
- h) Identify and reduce the numbers of rough sleepers in the county and 'hidden homeless' households
- i) Enable access to affordable and / or appropriate housing
- j) Ensure the provision of high quality housing advice and more effective promotion of services aimed at homelessness prevention
- k) Identify the means through which the employment and training needs of homeless and previously homeless people can be met
- l) Reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation as temporary housing through the provision of alternative supported temporary accommodation
- m) Enable existing services and agencies to work more effectively and coherently together to meet the needs of homeless people and those at risk of homelessness
- n) Ensure that the needs of homeless people are considered in the development of strategies, plans and policies across statutory bodies and partner organisations
- o) Develop ways in which homeless and previously homeless people can participate effectively in seeking practical solutions to tackle homelessness and social exclusion

13. Due to the significant issues that have been identified there will be an Annual Review and Development process and an annual Action Plan.

14. The Annual Review will enable:

- a) The regular and consistent monitoring of performance against targets
- b) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the Strategy

c) The tracking of homelessness trend data and preventative activity.

15. A Review Group, composed of selected members of the Strategy Development Group and the Herefordshire Homelessness Forum, will undertake the Review and Evaluation process. The Review Group will meet on a quarterly basis and the resulting review will be presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committee annually.

## **Alternative Options**

There are no alternative options

## **Risk Management**

The onus of responsibility for managing homelessness and implementing the Homelessness Act 2003 in Herefordshire falls on the Council. Failure to carry out the actions detailed within the Homelessness Strategy 2003 will result in the Council being unable to respond to the growing problem of homelessness in the County.

Consideration will need to be given to the resources available to implement the action plan, as although every effort has been made to contain the plan within existing or available resources, some of the necessary actions will incur costs above and beyond these resources.

## **Consultees**

Consultation on the Homelessness Review and the Homelessness Strategy 2003 was carried out in partnership with the following :

DAT (Drug Action Team); Hereford and Worcester Connexions; Housing Benefits, Herefordshire Council; Herefordshire Primary Care Trust; Hereford Diocese; Herefordshire Women's Aid; Worcester and Hereford Youth Offending Team; Shelter West Midlands; Open Door Project; SHYPP (Supported Housing for Young People Project); Gloucester and Hereford YMCA; CLD Youth Counselling Trust; Brookfield School; Ledbury Youth First; Home Point Herefordshire; Job Centre Plus; Social Services Aftercare Team, Herefordshire Council; Herefordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services; Hope Scott House; Enabling Team, Herefordshire Council; Integrated Mental Health Service; Marches Housing Association; Social Care, Herefordshire Council; Housing Options, Herefordshire Housing; Welfare Rights, Herefordshire Council; Strategic Housing Services, Herefordshire Council; Citizens Advice Bureau; Stonham Housing Association; Local Education Authority; Elgar Housing Association; Newton Farm Community Association Advice Centre; Supporting People Team, Herefordshire Council; CPRE Herefordshire.

## **Background Papers**

None identified.





# REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS AND REGIONAL HOUSING BOARD ALLOCATIONS STRATEGY

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: SOCIAL CARE AND STRATEGIC HOUSING

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To note the Regional Housing Strategy and Allocations Strategy for the West Midlands which will form the basis of investment and other decisions taken by the Regional Housing Board.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

### Recommendation

**THAT the contents of the Regional Housing Strategy for the West Midlands and the Regional Housing Board Allocation Strategy be noted.**

### Reasons

The Regional Housing Strategy sets out the priorities under which the Regional Housing Board intends to allocate housing investment resources across the West Midlands Region. Together with the Regional Housing Board Allocation Strategy it will directly impact on the resources available to the Council and its partners in future years.

### Considerations

1. In February 2003 the Deputy Prime Minister published the "Sustainable Communities: building for the future" plan. The document set out a broad set of funding and policy initiatives designed to tackle the housing problems existent throughout England.

Key changes announced within the plan were

- a) the formation of a Regional Housing Board in each region
- b) the development of a Regional Housing Strategy

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Richard Gabb, Head of Strategic Housing Services on 01432 261902

- c) creation of a single pot for housing capital investment combining resources formerly allocated through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Fund (ADP) and the Housing Investment Programme (HIP)
  - d) a new process for allocating the above resources.
- 2. The Regional Housing Board for the West Midlands was established during 2003 and comprises the following membership:
  - a) Government Office for the West Midlands (Chair)
  - b) The Housing Corporation
  - c) Advantage West Midlands
  - d) English Partnerships
  - e) West Midlands Regional Assembly
  - f) West Midlands Local Government Association
  - g) Representative (Chair) from the Regional Housing Partnership.
- 3. The strategy has been prepared by the Regional Housing Partnership on behalf of the Regional Housing Board and developed from contributions made from 4 sub-regions comprising:
  - a) West Mercia (comprising Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin)
  - b) Staffordshire,
  - c) Birmingham and the Black Country
  - d) Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire.
- 4. The Board was tasked with completing four main tasks:
  - a) to develop, by July 2003, a Regional Housing Strategy for the West Midlands that clearly identifies regional priorities for investment
  - b) to ensure that the strategy takes into account other relevant strategies in place or in development, especially planning and economic.
  - c) to make recommendations to Ministers on resource allocations from the Single Regional Housing Pot for investment by local authorities and housing associations for 2004/5 and 2005/6
  - d) to monitor the progress of the strategy in the delivery of national and regional policies and objectives.
- 5. The strategy is seen as a transitional piece of work due to the short timescale for development and the identification of further research which is required to inform and address specific issues. Similarly, ministers confirmed that a transitional two-year period for the Single Regional Housing Pot would involve the majority of HIP funding (70%) still being

allocated to local authorities in accordance with the General Needs Index formula in 2004/2005 and 2005/2006. Additionally, existing Housing Corporation pipeline commitments to capital schemes would also impact on the size of the 'discretionary pot' available for the Regional Housing Board to allocate according to priorities identified within the Regional Housing Strategy.

6. Eight priority investment 'themes' are set out within the strategy which reflect the diversity of issues affecting the West Midlands region and, by implication, indicate the difficulties that will be faced in allocating resources to the satisfaction of all sub-regions and their constituent authorities.
7. The eight priority themes are:
  - a) Urban Renaissance
  - b) Rural Renaissance
  - c) Low demand and the restructuring of housing markets
  - d) Affordability
  - e) Poor house condition issues
  - f) Community Cohesion and meeting black and minority ethnic housing needs
  - g) The Supporting People agenda
  - h) Issues related to asylum seekers and refugees.
8. The priority areas of most relevance to Herefordshire's issues centre around Rural Renaissance, affordability, poor house conditions and the Supporting People Agenda. However, a cornerstone of the strategy's purpose is in arguing that there needs to be a stronger 'regional' approach to housing strategy and an acceptance that actions at a regional and sub-regional level have cross-boundary implications. Similarly, there is an expectation that locally available funding e.g. receipts from stock transfer, will be brought to bear in complementing funding made available to local authorities through the Regional Board allocations.
9. For Herefordshire's purposes, the strategy has identified that remoter rural parts of the West Midlands region will require actions at a regional level with an emphasis on addressing issues of unfitness in the private sector and the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.
10. A series of further actions have been identified as part of the development of the West Midlands Regional Housing Strategy which Strategic Housing will engage with to ensure local priorities are recognised for the purposes of attracting regional investment:
  - a) The development of Housing Investment Plans for the 4 sub-regions including West Mercia

- b) The development of regional Homelessness Strategies and Supporting People Strategies
- c) Measure to address future data requirements to ensure a firm evidence base
- d) The development of target's and monitoring mechanisms.

11. The Regional Housing Strategy and Allocations Strategy have been submitted to the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister for comment and approval. It is anticipated that decisions relating to funding allocations under the Single Regional Housing Pot arrangements will be made, following Ministerial approval, in October 2003.

### **Alternative Options**

There are no alternative options as the report is for information purposes.

### **Risk Management**

It is important that the Council engages fully with the development of sub-regional and regional strategy development associated with the move towards the Single Regional Housing Pot in order to maximise investment monies for Herefordshire in tackling the four strategic housing priorities.

The Stock Transfer (LSVT) receipt is a depreciating resource thereby necessitating the securing of regional funding in the longer term.

### **Consultees**

The West Midlands Regional Housing Strategy was developed in consultation with the full range of housing and related agencies within the West Midlands region.

### **Background Papers**

None identified.

# ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE IN 2002-03 HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL SOCIAL SERVICES

## PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: SOCIAL CARE AND STRATEGIC HOUSING

CABINET

25TH SEPTEMBER, 2003

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To note the performance assessment by Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) for 2002-03.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

### Recommendation

**THAT report and the improvements and capacity issues outlined be noted.**

### Reasons

The Annual Review of Performance gives the Council a statement of progress and the need for improvement which forms the basis of star rating decisions in November 2003.

### Considerations

1. There is a requirement to present the SSI performance report to the Council's Cabinet (attached as Appendix 1).
2. The report covering 2002-03 does include the assessment undertaken by the Joint Review - in Autumn 2002 presented to Cabinet on 10th July, 2003.
3. This performance report does go forward to contribute to the star ratings in November 2003.
4. The main area of concern is the performance in Older People's Services which is an important area for priority action change and investment. The detailed Older People's Business case is to be presented to Cabinet in October 2003.
5. Performance in the children's area is sustained and this was demonstrated in the SSI evaluation of the self-audit following the Victoria Climbié Inquiry audit. This showed Herefordshire was serving most children well and had promising capacity for further improvement. This is significant in the context of the outcomes for children central in the Government Green Paper - Every Child Matters, published on 8th September, 2003.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Sue Fiennes, Director of Social Care and Strategic Housing on 01432 260039

6. The Performance Report does include the matters discussed at the recent SSI Annual Review meeting with the Council and local partners. The Draft Joint Review Action Plan supported by Cabinet in July 2003 will be agreed formally (including amendments from consultation) in early October 2003.

### **Alternative Options**

This is a requirement, therefore, there are no alternative options.

### **Risk Management**

The challenge on improvement in Older People's Services is noted in the report.

### **Consultees**

All partner agencies and people in Herefordshire consulted as part of the Joint Review.

### **Background Papers**

None identified.

## PERFORMANCE REVIEW REPORT 2003: HEREFORDSHIRE

### SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

#### Improvements observed since the last review

Assessment has highlighted the following improvements since the last review:

- ◆ The 2001/02 Performance Indicator (PI) data that became available subsequent to the last review, and which informed the November 2002 star refresh, showed that overall the council's work to improve child protection services, to provide safe and secure care for children looked after and to increase their life chances had shown significant improvements. These improvements have been sustained during 2002/03 and confirmed through the Joint Review and the Climbie Audit. (Standard 1)
- ◆ Improved management of child protection processes had decreased numbers on the register, considerably improved performance in reviewing and for duration on the register.  
  
(Standard 4)
- ◆ The Performance and Improvement Group had been successful in managing access and workloads; all children on the register and looked after children were allocated to social workers.  
  
(Standard 5)
- ◆ The priority given to safe and secure care for looked after children had maintained a good level of performance overall and realistic forecasts have been made for a sustained good level of service;
  - a very high proportion of children were in fostering placements;
  - an increased proportion were cared for by family and friends;
  - stability of placements had improved, especially long-term stability;
  - there had been particular improvement in adoptions of looked after children consistent with new service developments; and
  - a high level of attention to children's health was maintained.
 (Standards 1,3 and 4)
- ◆ The already excellent performance in supporting care leavers had improved. (Standard 3)
- ◆ Significant and needed improvements in increased life chances for looked after children had been achieved:
  - considerable improvement in absences from school had been gained through good joint working with education services;
  - an already good performance in the achievement of educational qualifications had seen improvement; and
  - final warnings and convictions of looked after children had reduced.

(Standards 1 and 3)

- ◆ The timeliness of initial and core assessments had improved significantly. (Standard 4)

### **AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Assessment has highlighted the following concerns about performance:

- ◆ A more consistent quality of assessment and care planning for children across the service was required, which focussed on outcomes and, for children on the child protection register, identified clearly what had to change in order to secure their safety and welfare.  
(Standard 4)
- ◆ Clearer eligibility for services and agreement with partner agencies about responses to children for whom there are welfare concerns but who do not meet the child protection threshold.  
(Standard 5)
- ◆ The council had embarked on a number of initiatives in response to the two areas identified above; the practice support project, case recording standards and audits and the development of the Herefordshire Child Concern Model. Implementation of the latter is to begin in the autumn. Together these should impact on the high rate of re-registrations on the child protection register.  
(Standards 4 and 5)
- ◆ Consistent with its strategy of focusing first on improving child protection and the care of looked after children the council now planned to give more attention to services for children in need and especially for children with disabilities. Attention was needed to:
  - integrated access and assessment and care planning arrangements through the joint team;
  - more support services for families; and
  - transition to adulthood.(Standards 4 and 3)

### **Capacity for Improvement** (Standard 6)

Assessment has highlighted the following improvements to capacity:

- ◆ Strong leadership and securing increased and effective management capacity had shown tangible results in improvements, particularly in child protection and looked after children's services.
- ◆ Good partnerships and a positive ACPC had been major factors in the forward movement of the services and planned service developments are embedded in partnership working.
- ◆ Supervision and staff development processes work well for staff in children's services.
- ◆ There is a strong ACPC training programme and training is being enhanced especially by a major training initiative for team managers and a 'whole- team' approach to professional development.
- ◆ Performance management has had a clear impact on the services at council, senior



management and operational levels. Appropriately, more attention is now being given to quality aspects of performance.

- ◆ Clear priorities have been set for service improvement and these are reflected in the budget to the extent that, although the council spends just below the average for its comparator group overall, its relative spend on family support services is just above the average.

Assessment has highlighted the following concerns about capacity:

- ◆ The need for a more effective case management information system (CLIX);
- ◆ The lack of capacity for strategic workforce planning.

## SERVICES FOR ADULTS

### Improvements observed since the last review

Assessment has highlighted the following improvements since the last review:

- ◆ Access to services for older people and adults with physical disabilities has been improved:
  - locality teams have been re-configured;
  - fair access to care criteria have been implemented;
  - a hospital social work team established;
  - new duty arrangements are in place; and
  - outposting and linking of social workers with GP practices has continued.(Standard 5)
- ◆ Once assessed service users receive a relatively responsive service:
  - most smaller equipment for daily living is delivered within three weeks;
  - waiting times for care packages have improved; and
  - most users said they got help quickly.(Standard 4)
- ◆ Management capacity for adult services has increased:
  - in late 2001/02 a Head of Adult Services was appointed
  - in late 2002/03 a second service manager post was filled and both postholders have briefs for service re-design and improvement; and
  - a new senior practitioner/assistant team manager post has been appointed in each of the three locality teams for older people and adults with physical disabilities; and
  - a new senior practitioner post has been appointed in the older people's mental health service.(Standards 1,2 and 4)
- ◆ Although performance in the numbers of people with mental health problems being supported to live at home and those with learning difficulties had both deteriorated a little the PIs remained in Band 3 i.e. 'acceptable' and Band 4 i.e. 'good' respectively. At the same time, the historical pattern of high rates of admissions for both these user groups to residential and nursing home care had been reversed. People had been given more appropriate alternatives that better promoted their independence. In 2002/03, the rate of

admissions of adults with disabilities to residential and nursing home care improved from an already 'good' to a 'very good' performance. In 2001/02 and in relation to its population, Herefordshire no longer had the highest number of people with mental health problems in institutional long-term care relative to other councils in its comparator group. Although the rate of admissions of people with learning difficulties had declined the council still had a historical legacy of the highest number of people from this user group in institutional long-term care within its comparator group. (Standard 3)

- ◆ Relatively good progress had been made in implementation of the National Service Framework for mental health services for adults of working age:
  - the Care Programme Approach had been implemented;
  - the assertive outreach service had been extended; and
  - the introduction of crisis resolution and early intervention services were priorities for the current year.(Standard 1)
  
- ◆ Within a difficult historical context of only one-third of adults with learning disabilities living with family carers and so high numbers in long term residential and nursing home care (but none in long-stay hospitals), and the consequences this has for setting carers' expectations, alternatives to institutional care are being offered and have been taken up:
  - Some people have moved out of residential care into supported tenancies;
  - five people have been supported to buy their own homes;
  - a train and build scheme has been planned which gives individuals opportunities to take part in building their own homes and subsequent cost benefits; and
  - a supported living project to support people living with carers who are over 75 years old has also been planned.(Standard 1 and 3)
  
- ◆ A relatively high number of people use the Herefordshire Direct Payments scheme. This has increased from 33 to 50 in the year and performance had just reached the 'acceptable' level. The increase has included small but significant numbers of older people and people with a learning disability. Most users of the scheme had physical disabilities and performance in supporting people from this group to live at home improved to an 'acceptable' level.  
(Standard 3)
  
- ◆ A management review of the sensory loss services was completed and improvements made; a Service Level Agreement had been completed with an external provider of services for hearing impaired people and one was soon to be finalised for services for visually impaired people.(Standard 2)

## **Areas for improvement**

Assessment has highlighted the following concerns about performance:

- ◆ There has been no significant progress in developing services to promote the independence of older people:
  - in 2001/02, the council had the lowest per capita spend on older people compared to others in its group (but had a relatively high expenditure on mental health and learning disabilities services);
  - relatively few older people receive a service as Herefordshire assesses the lowest proportion of its population for services in its comparator group;

- a realistic improvement in the numbers assessed is planned for 2003/04 which could bring the council up to a Band 3 i.e. 'acceptable' level. (The council has one of the lowest levels of care managers/social workers for adults and older people in its group but this will improve with the addition of three new posts.);
  - the council has a good record of performance in not admitting a high proportion of older people to long stay residential and nursing home care and although the number has decreased it had not been matched by increased intensive provision in the community (This PI -C28- increased marginally and moved to the bottom of Band 2 i.e. 'ask questions about performance' where it is forecast to remain in 2003/04.)
  - older people receiving intensive home care as a percentage of all older people receiving intensive home care, residential and nursing home care remained static at 12.5 percent in 2002/03 and is forecast in the council's Delivery and Improvement Statement (DIS) to reduce to 12 percent for 2003/04. (Subsequent work by the council has identified a rise of 15.5 percent as the true forecast but this means that performance will remain in Band 2 i.e. questions about performance'.)(This Performance Indicator -B11- is included in the council's Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) as target to be 'stretched' to 20 percent by 2005, but a national target of 30 percent by 2006 has now been set for all councils.)(Standards 1 and 3)
- ◆ Although the council achieved its target for delayed transfers of care at 31 March 2003, the pattern of delays has been volatile and otherwise above the target. During the late winter the level of delays almost reached the point at which they become a 'hot spot' nationally. This arose from budget pressures in social services and the need to reduce the potential, demand-led overspend. This pressure, which has been the pattern over recent years, has its roots in the council's low level of investment in services for older people and lack of capacity for refocusing and modernising services to promote independence.(Standards 1 and 3)
  - ◆ The Joint Review found an inconsistent and sometimes poor level of care management and assessment practice. Relevant PIs that were identified as requiring improvement over the year have either deteriorated or improved little, supported this finding:
    - the PI for the percentage of people assessed who received a statement of need -D39- deteriorated and was significantly under the forecast figure (The plan is to increase performance by greater than that forecast for last year but if achieved this is likely to bring performance only up to Band 2 i.e. 'ask questions about performance');
    - the PI for carers' assessments -D48- was also significantly under forecast and remains in Band 2 i.e. 'ask questions about performance. (The plan for 2003/04 is to reach the level forecast for last year which will reach the bottom of Band 3 i.e. 'acceptable'.); and
    - the PI for reviewing of care packages -D40- improved a little, but was considerably under forecast and remains in Band 2 i.e. 'ask questions about performance'. (The ambitious plan for 2003/04 is to increase this performance fourfold up to the bottom of Band 3 i.e. 'acceptable'.)

Securing a more consistent and inclusive assessment and care management practice is a management priority for this year through increased management capacity in the locality teams, case recording standards and audits and the practice support project led by a Service Manager.  
(Standard 4)

- ◆ Within the integrated mental health service for adults of working age, which is supported by a Section 31 agreement and a pooled budget there is a need develop:
  - more integrated working and systems at operational level (This has been achieved in the older people's mental health service); and
  - integrated performance management arrangements up to strategic level. (Standards 4

and 1)

## **Capacity for Improvement** (Standard 6)

Assessment has highlighted the following improvements to capacity:

- ◆ The 2003/04 budget increases for services for older people, both from internal and external sources, have been ring-fenced.
- ◆ A number of key plans and service developments have been and are intended to contribute to the modernising of services for older people and to increase service capacity. They include:
  - the refocusing of the in-house home care service;
  - the joint commissioning of the Hillside intermediate care centre;
  - the transfer of the management of the council's elderly persons homes to a 'not-for-profit-' organisation; and
  - new approaches to contracting domiciliary care from the independent sector.
- ◆ The increased management capacity for improving performance in services for older people, led by the Head of Adult Services, should provide a better basis for the improvements not achieved in 2002/03. Capacity has been improved within the teams and a range of approaches to improving practice led by the new service manager have been launched.
- ◆ The enhanced profile and capacity for performance management across the council and within social services should strengthen the performance culture. The main elements are:
  - a new Performance Management Framework for the whole council and the plan to recruit to a new corporate post of Head of Performance
  - the further development of quality assurance systems in social services ;
  - the use of business planning in social services;
  - the appointment of a Service Improvement Manager; and
  - the appointment of a Client Index Support Officer and internal audits of data quality.
- ◆ The improvement plan resulting from a recently completed Best Value review of Human Resources services throughout the council is being implemented and the appointment to the new post of Head of Human Resources has enhanced the previously limited capacity for strategic workforce planning.

Assessment has highlighted the following concerns about capacity:

- ◆ The most significant challenge to improvement is in the level of investment of older person's services. Councillors and senior managers are fully aware of this as an impediment to modernising the services. It appears to be straining the good partnership working that has been built up with health partners over recent years. An outline business case has been put to the council and the plan is to follow this with a detailed business case in the autumn
- ◆ The council has had difficulty in aligning forecasts of improved performance against key PAF PIs with planned changes in the level of service provision. The business case is expected to and will need to identify the scope and scale of the planned service changes and link plans, forecasts and finances across the system.
- ◆ The need for a more effective case management information system (CLIX).
- ◆ The Joint Review identified lack of management capacity in both the learning disabilities

and mental health services for working age adults.

- ◆ The results of Best Value reviews within social services have yet to make an impact, but the implementation of the improvement plan from the review of home care services has begun and the review of carers' services is nearing completion.
- ◆ The council-wide Human Resources strategy is being implemented and the first monitoring report has shown improvement in most areas, except for :
  - equal opportunities and diversity both in service provision and employment;
  - the social services average sickness rate increased to nine percent compared to six percent in the previous year.
- ◆ The percentage of gross expenditure on staffing which was spent on training in 2002/03 was below the average for the comparator group and has been at this level for some years, although training opportunities for social services staff have been widened through greater access to corporate provision.
- ◆ Work begun on a workforce development plan has been frustrated by lack of training and development capacity.

