

## **GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (GEM) REVIEW**

**Report from: Director of Environment**

### **Wards affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

1. To review the Council's environmental management / ISO 14001 system to ensure that it continues to be suitable, adequate and effective, delivering improvement in environmental performance and full compliance with all relevant legal and other requirements.

### **Financial implications**

2. Ensuring compliance with legal requirements in respect of environmental obligations will require expenditure. Bids have been made for inclusion in the capital programme.

### **Considerations**

3. ISO 14001 requires that top management review the environmental management system regularly. Corporate Management Board undertook a Management Review on 21<sup>st</sup> November, based on a report prepared and agreed by the corporate GEM group. Key findings from the report, which covers the period from October 2005 to September 2006, are appended
4. Reviews at top level by CMB, Cabinet Member for the Environment and Environment Scrutiny are designed to ensure that possible need for changes to the policy, objectives and other Environmental Management System (EMS) elements are addressed, bearing in mind audit results, performance against objectives and targets, concerns of relevant interested parties, changing circumstances and the commitment to environmental improvement.
5. The Review includes key findings from a recent Legal Compliance Review in respect of Council environmental obligations, undertaken to meet the requirements of the ISO 14001 standard.

### **Background**

6. GEM (Good Environmental Management) plays a key role in delivering
  - The Council's commitment to deliver a sustainable environment through everything in the Corporate Plan (1.5)
  - The Council's Corporate Plan priority to 'protect the environment, including by producing much less waste, recycling much more of what remains and significantly reducing carbon emissions' (5.1)

- Its environmental policy commitment to “demonstrable and continuous improvement of its environment performance” across all Directorates
- The Council’s contribution to the Community Strategy for Herefordshire’s guiding principle to “Protect and improve Herefordshire’s distinctive environment”, which states:-“Herefordshire has a rich and diverse environment with many unique features. This resource must be conserved and enhanced through raising awareness and education so that communities and future generation can continue to enjoy and benefit from the distinctive environment. This includes improving local public areas across the county, developing access to the countryside, protecting our biodiversity and tackling climate change through waste minimisation and energy efficiency measures. “

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT: The committee consider the report and submit any observations to the Cabinet Member Environment.**