



GEM / ISO14001 Management Review

October 2006 to September 2007

SUMMARY

GEM (Good Environmental Management) plays a key role in delivering:-

- The Council's commitment to deliver *sustainability* and *safeguarding the environment ... through everything in the Corporate Plan* (1.5)
- The Council's Corporate Plan priority is to *'protect the environment, including by producing much less waste, recycling much more of what remains and significantly reducing carbon emissions'* (5.2)
- The Council's 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."

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Council maintained its Council-wide **certification to ISO 14001**, the international environmental management standard. It is the first shire authority to achieve this.
- The **EcoSchool** scheme registration now covers over 80% of LEA schools and the numbers of schools with awards has increased strongly over the last year.
- **Directorate summaries** of environmental impacts, controls & targets are now in place, covering the whole Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Directors ensure that:

1. Internal Audit include ISO 14001 systems audits in their annual programme.(2.1)
2. The management review minutes confirm that the GEM report has been reviewed and the action points agreed.(2.2)
3. Service plans include specific environmental improvement opportunities for 2007/08 with formal management programmes indicating responsibility and timescales and link these to corporate objectives. (3.2)
4. There is full management and Officer in Charge support and encouragement to allow Energy Champions and staff to be actively involved in the MY Energy project.(3.2)
5. The Climate Change Officer, once appointed, receives support from officers across the authority in provision of data and developing actions to achieve the corporate reduction target.(3.2)
6. ISO 14001 requirements are integrated into to key corporate processes, such as performance management, procurement and communication, now that all Council functions are included. (4)
7. Management of Council owned and managed land with a biodiversity designation is reviewed within the next 12 months to ensure the Council is meeting its NERC responsibilities and its Corporate Plan vision of the county's outstanding natural environment. .(4.1.1)
8. Potential or actual breaches identified are entered on Directorate risk registers. (4.1.1)
9. The revised Environmental Policy statement is adopted.(4.2)
10. A Director-level Sustainability Board is set up to monitor, challenge, improve and publicise the overall sustainability performance of the Council, particularly relating to environmental sustainability. (5.2)
11. Purchases from West Mercia Supplies (WMS) are routinely from the greenlist unless individual items are more than 20% above the cost of the standard range (5.4).

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1 PROCESS

1.1 Input from senior management – a requirement of ISO 14001

The ISO 14001 standard requires that top management review the environmental management system regularly to ensure that it continues to be suitable, adequate and effective to deliver the Council's policy commitment to improving environmental performance and full compliance with all relevant legal and other requirements (see the Management Review Procedure in the GEM Manual).

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

Information from this report goes on to the Cabinet Member (Environment) and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

1.2 Information Collection and Consideration by GEM Team.

This information was collected through the directorate GEM Lead Officers and co-ordinated by the Sustainability Unit. It was circulated to GEM Lead Officers and discussed by the GEM group at their meeting on October 31st 2007.

1.3 Roles of Directorate GEM Lead Officers & Managers

Directorate GEM Lead Officers are nominated by their Directors to act on their behalf. The corporate GEM Group has met 6 times since the last report. Due to reorganisation and staff changes there have been many changes to the GEM group.

Service Managers have a responsibility to maintain good environmental management in their own services and contribute to the Council's requirement for overall improvement in environmental performance. Now that ISO 14001 covers the whole Council, Directorate Management Teams (DMTs) need to integrate service and corporate environmental targets into their Service Plans and performance management arrangements.

Recommendation 1: *In order to maintain corporate ISO 14001 certification it is important that DMTs review and record their environmental performance at least half yearly, supported by their GEM Leads, and keep their Directorate summaries of environmental impact & controls up to date.*

2 GEM AUDITS & SURVEILLANCE

Audits are essential to find out what is working smoothly and where effort needs to be focussed. The audits check systems procedures and performance with regard to sites, contracts, operational controls and services.

Regular and thorough auditing is a requirement of the standard and in July 2007 problems with achieving the number of audits under the 2007 – 2008 audit programme resulted in a non-conformance being raised by the external auditors. In response to this it was decided that a new auditing regime would be developed which was based upon a more integrated system incorporating ISO9001 and health and safety.

2.1 GEM Internal Audits

Until September 2007 a team of over 30 voluntary auditors carried out the internal GEM auditing, drawn from each Directorate. GEM Auditors were supported by training, update meetings and GEM Audit material posted on the Intranet. This system was changed in September 2007 so that a smaller, more highly trained team of auditors could be set up to undertake combined audits under the developing integrated system (ISO14001, ISO9001 and H&S).

GEM Audit Activity 2006/07 (full year)

Number of planned audits	34
Completed/Work in progress	33
Number of non conformances raised	33
Number of non cons overdue for close out	2
Number of observations	116

GEM Audit Activity 2007/08 to Half Year

Number of planned audits (for whole year 07/08)	32
Completed/Work in progress	5
Number of non conformances raised	1
Number of non cons overdue for close out	1
Number of observations	5

Directorate break down re: outstanding non-conformances from 06/07 register is:

- Environment 2 (GIS) (Air Quality Management)
- Chief Executives (Health and Safety links with GEM)

These are scheduled for clearance by the end of December 07.

The new audit team can carry out all the internal audits required under the combined management systems except for the systems audits. These must be carried out by a separate auditing team to ensure impartiality.

Recommendation 2: *Internal audit to include ISO 14001 systems audits in their annual programme.*

2.2 GEM External Surveillance

To maintain ISO 14001 certification our certifiers, SGS, undertake a 5 day surveillance visit every 6 months. Certifiers raise Non conformances (NC) and Observations (Obs). Progress on these is examined at the subsequent visit and NCs and must be formally closed out.

- In Feb 2007 one NCs and seventeen Obs were raised. All NCs were closed out before the July revisit.
- In July 2007 three NCs and seventeen Obs were raised. The NCs related to:-
 - Internal audits (clause 4.5.5)
 - Carbon Management Action Plan (clause 4.3.3)
 - Carbon Management Action Plan (clause 4.5.1)

SGS Non-conformance Jul 07	Responsibility	Due date	Proposed action
The 2006/07 audit plan was not completed – 8 outstanding audits rolled over. Only 3 of 54 audits planned for 2007/08 have so far been carried out and there is little likelihood that the current programme will be completed.	Sustainability Unit	Feb 08	Review the outstanding audits for 2007/08 with a view to postponing those that are not urgent until 2008/09 and targeting those left with the smaller audit team (see 2.1 above). Aim to complete all outstanding audits by end March 2008. Review the audit programme for 2008/09 so that it more closely reflects the significant environmental impacts identified in the service level ICED GEMS, and works for a combined auditing system (see 2.1 above).

SGS Non-conformance July 07	Resp	Due date	Current state & proposed action
<p>A CMAP Update 'Targets 2007 to 2010' document has been produced, supporting the Council's public commitments to a 12.5% carbon reduction by 2012 and a 20% reduction by 2020 (on a 2002 baseline). However it is not clear whether the actions will result in achievement of goals as;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Estimated carbon reductions for each action have not been provided by the relevant service / Directorate (see observation); 2. It was unclear that relevant Directorates / Services had made clear commitments (eg as actions within Service Plans or in the form of suitable performance indicators) to fulfilling their role in all cases; 3. Significant uncertainty exists over 2002 baseline data for the two key data sets making up approximately 90% of the total (landfill gas and property); 4. Improvements known to be ongoing (eg in property) have not been incorporated in the plan; 5. Current performance against baseline is unclear. 	Sustainability Unit	Feb 08	<p>Climate change co-ordinator has given notice and two other post holders who have been undertaking work relating to climate change have left or are due to finish their contracts.</p> <p>Once the climate change officer post is filled these issues will be addressed, working with officers across the authority.</p>
<p>The CMAP 2002 baselines for property and landfill require review to ensure that they are reasonably accurate.</p> <p>The property data appear to contain obvious errors (eg large consumptions for public toilets and cemeteries other than the crematorium) and now requires attention as a priority with input both from environment and property. This will require reasonable assumptions (to be recorded) but discarding of large elements of the data set because of uncertainty should be avoided.</p> <p>Landfill emissions are subject to review by a consultant but it is not clear that this will include the degree to which all pertinent points (eg hours of operation of flare in 2002; estimates for landfills other than Stretton Sugwas etc). Rationale behind the inclusion or exclusion of landfill CO2 emissions (direct and post-flaring) should also be reviewed.</p>	Sustainability Unit	Feb 08	<p>This will be addressed by the Climate change Officer, once appointed.</p> <p>Discussion on the best data set to use is underway. A number of queries have been referred to Property.</p> <p>Landfill figures have been prepared by consultants for the 3 major sites for which the authority has responsibility.</p>

Recommendation 3 (arising from observation by SGS): The management review minutes confirm that the GEM report has been reviewed and the action points agreed.

3 PERFORMANCE AGAINST GEM ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY TARGETS & CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

Objectives and targets are important to ensure that the Council's environmental performance is improving: monitoring is vital in checking achievement.

3.1 Performance against GEM & Environmental Strategy objectives and targets 2006/07

The Environment Strategy 2005-11 continues to provide the framework for major corporate environmental commitments, both internal and external.

A quantitative report against the Environment Strategy targets for 06/07 was reported to Environment Scrutiny on June 19th. A number of data sets were not available at this time. An updated version of this report is posted in the GEM intranet file.

Performance against Environment Strategy targets (internal & external) in 2006/07

Topic	Achieved	Not achieved	Unclear/ no data
Waste	8	2	
Transport	13	8	4
Energy & climate change	2	2	4
Water & Flooding	4	1	3
Natural & built Environment	4	1	2
Planning & Development	4	0	7
Environmental Risks & pollution	6	2	2
Community Involvement & Partnership working	9	1	3

3.2 Service Plans & Environmental Issues

There is a strong emphasis across the Council on taking account of cross cutting themes, including 'safeguarding the environment'.

'Directorate and Service Plans 2007-10: the requirements' stated clearly that:-
"Directorate and service plans must.... include what will be done to address the Council's cross-cutting issues."

Results of audit of Service Plans 07-10 in relation to cross cutting issues, undertaken by Policy Team in May 2007

Theme	No mention	Mentioned	Covered	Covered well or above
All cross cutters	7	5	6	4
Environment	8	1	9	4
Sustainability	10	4	4	4

Only those plans marked "covered well or above" have successfully entered SMART targets and actions as required by the Council Performance Improvement Framework. Just under half of service plans broadly cover the suite of cross cutting issues. Slightly over half are addressing the environment cross cutting theme (which has been in place for longer than some of the others).

Revised guidance on the treatment of cross cutting issues for 2008/11 plans was published in early November.

Recommendation 4: *Service Plans include specific environmental improvement opportunities for 2008/09 with formal management programmes indicating responsibility and timescales and link these to corporate objectives.*

3.3 Carbon Management Action Plan (CMAP) Update

The Council has an explicit Corporate Plan commitment to:-

'Protect the environment, including by ... **significantly reducing carbon emissions**' (5.2).'

The current Corporate Plan target relating to this is:-

We will achieve a 10% reduction in Council carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 2010 (102HC)

Additionally, "*Through the implementation of the Herefordshire Partnership's Carbon Management Action Plan, we aspire to see a reduction in carbon emissions per head of population (58 HCS, target to be set).*"

An overall carbon reduction figure for Council carbon emissions since the 2002 baseline is not yet available due to staff shortages. Building sufficiently comprehensive, replicable and reliable data sets to pick up consumption changes of 1-2% a year is a challenge, being faced across the country - and indeed the world. Nationally discussion continues on the relative importance to be given to reducing direct impacts and to reducing those in the wider community. Both elements are included within the authority's Corporate Plan. The Council is working closely with the Herefordshire Environment Partnership and Herefordshire Partnership on carrying forward Herefordshire's Climate Change Strategy. However the Council only has direct control over emissions resulting from its own activities. Both the initiatives outlined below will help meet the Council's target for reducing carbon emissions from our own estate.

3.3.1 MY Energy

This year GEM has been running a low and no-cost energy saving theme as part of its commitment to reducing costs, resource consumption and carbon emissions. This has been developed through the implementation of MY Energy (Manage Your Energy) a project running with Severn Wye Energy, which aims to reduce electricity consumption by 10% over 15 Council buildings. The project was launched in May 2007 and works with a group of 30 volunteers based in 15 of our office buildings. The volunteer 'Energy Champions' encourage colleagues to switch off and reduce the amount of energy being wasted. The project runs with SWEA and the Private Sector Housing team for one year and aims to increase awareness of energy use at work and in the home. Events held so far have included:

- Sustainable Breakfasts - Jointly run with Integrated Transport to encourage and reward colleagues who travel to work sustainably and promote sustainable travel, Fairtrade Tea & Coffee, Energy Efficiency and the MY Energy project.
- Energy Efficiency Advice Stands - run with the local Energy Efficiency Advice Centre to promote energy efficiency at work and home.
- A regular slot during Central Induction to introduce GEM & ISO14001 and to promote the MY Energy project giving tips on how colleagues can save energy at work.

Whilst the Energy Champions and project team have shown considerable dedication to the project, opportunities for making the project more successful in achieving savings include:

- Attendance at MY Energy Meetings from an officer at Property Services who can answer queries about specific buildings. Also attendance of an Officer from ICT who can answer queries about our IT systems and energy saving practicalities.

3.3.2 Energy Saving Trust

The Council started work with the Energy Saving Trust in autumn 2007, one of a small number of Councils who have been offered free consultancy. Data will be collected on energy use across the Council and provided to consultants who will then provide recommendations for improvement in performance.

Recommendation 5: *Officers in Charge to arrange for meter readings to be collected within the last two working days of the month and recorded with WMS via their website to improve accuracy of billing and monitoring. Any buildings not currently being supplied with electricity/gas via WMS to be reported to Chris Smith via the performance reporting procedure as previously set up so that transfer can be arranged.*

Recommendation 6: *Full management and Officer in Charge support and encouragement to allow Energy Champions and staff to be actively involved in the project.*

Recommendation 7: *Ensure that the Climate Change Officer, once appointed, receives support from officers across the authority in provision of data and developing actions to achieve the corporate reduction target.*

3.4 Plans for 2008/09

The Environment Strategy will be reviewed in early 2008 by the Sustainability Unit, responsible managers and the GEM group to ensure it remains up to date in documenting the authority's major environmental commitments and that all the elements in it can be reported on quantitatively. This will be linked to stronger promotion of Herefordshire as a sustainable Council to the general public.

4 CONTINUING SUITABILITY OF GEM, INCLUDING REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The environmental management system grew rapidly last year as the scope of ISO 14001 certification expanded. It is now important to revisit both system and operational procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose in this larger system. Certain elements of the system that used to be co-ordinated by the Sustainability Unit may now need to be handed to other corporate systems and mechanisms, for instance performance management and commitments in the Environmental Strategy.

In July 07 the Environment Directorate achieved ISO 9001, the international quality standard, for all its operations. The scope for streamlining and amalgamating auditing and procedures within the Environment Directorate is now being examined.

Recommendation 8: *ISO 14001 requirements are integrated into to key corporate processes, such as performance management, procurement and communication, now that all Council functions are included.*

Recommendation 9: *Retender certification contract for ISO 14001 in the coming year and decide whether to include ISO 19001 in the Environment directorate and other sections where it is held, eg ICT, in the same contract.*

4.1 Incidents, near misses and corrective action including legal compliance

4.1.1 Legal Compliance Review

Compliance with environmental legislation and “other requirements” (as required by the standard) was reviewed in October 2007 using a similar format as last year.

KEY FINDINGS

i) Breaches

- Crematorium: Minor breaches of consent (1A)
- Hillcrest Callow Sewage Treatment Plant: breach of consent, formal sample taken (1E)
- Asbestos: 1 minor incident (2D)

ii) Potential breaches

None found.

RECOMMENDATIONS from Legal Compliance Review:

Recommendation 10: *The Building Management System now agreed for use by Property Services for Council property should be installed ASAP at the Hillcrest Sewage Treatment Plant to increase speed of response to plant and non-operational plant malfunction, thus reducing the risk of formal action from the Environment Agency.*

Recommendation 11: *Legal advice be obtained on how to introduce a charging mechanism for occupants connected to Council owned sewage treatment plants, particularly for costs related to misuse of the systems. This is likely to improve legal compliance.*

Recommendation 12: *Strong support for letting a single contract for maintenance of sewage works and interceptors to make monitoring more straightforward. Recommend this includes independent sampling of discharges to watercourses; at least once a year for those Council owned plant with a consent limit set by the EA.*

Recommendation 13: *Management of Council owned and managed land with a biodiversity designation is reviewed within the next 12 months to ensure the Council is meeting its NERC responsibilities and its Corporate Plan vision of the county's outstanding natural environment.*

Recommendation 14: *Potential or actual breaches identified are entered on Directorate Risk Registers.*

4.1.2 GEM Non-Conformities & Observations Register

An integrated register is now in use covering all issues raised by certifiers, internal sources and interested parties. The GEM Group reviews corrective action at regular Standing Agenda meetings.

All entries in the register over the review period were raised by SGS or the GEM auditors with the exception of:-

- **November 2006:** Four entries resulting from the 2006 Legal Compliance Review: 3 relating to failure to inform the Sustainability Unit about breaches of environmental legislation and 1 relating to gaps in the summary sheets at the crematorium.

- **March 2007:** HJS raised the issue of the Lorry wash at Kingsland Depot, where there are discharges to stream via interceptor and surface water drain. No discharge consent in was in place and the matter was the subject of a LRQA audit finding in January 2007. The application for the consent has now been submitted.
- **June 2007:** Failure against consent at Hillcrest sewage treatment works, notified by Environment Agency, where there have been a series of previous incidents & formal samples taken in previous years.

November 07 review		Nov 06 review		Nov 05 review	
Breach of consent/requirements at Sewage Treatment Plants (at Hillcrest)	1	Breach of consent/requirements at Sewage Treatment Plants (All at Hillcrest)	3	Failures at Sewage Treatment Plants	4
No consent in place for other Council operations	1	Breach of consent/requirements by other Council operations	1	Breach of consent/requirements by Council operations	2
		Air pollution from landfill gas flare	1	Air pollution from landfill gas flare	1
		Local environmental quality	1	Local environmental quality	2
		Concerns raised by interested parties	1	Potential water pollution	2
		Document control	1	Fire	2
Procedure weakness	4	Procedure weakness	2	Salt storage	1
		Resourcing /follow through of objectives	1	Noise from Council operations	2

4.1.3 Links to other systems to notify environmental incidents

Health & Safety Accident, Incident and GEM report form

The system is computerised and prompts specifically for any environmental impacts. These incidents are automatically routed to the Sustainability Unit. Two minor environmental issues were been notified through this route during the review period. They required no further action.

Customer Relationship Management

When formal complaints are logged that have environmental impact, Complaints Officers have been asked to alert the GEM team. No environmental issues have been notified through this route during the review period. It is hoped that a more robust system can be wired into the process rather than relying on the Complaints Officers.

4.2 Review of Environment Policy

The Council's environment policy has been in place since 2005. It has been updated to reflect various developments since that time and ensure a good fit with the Environment Strategy. The proposed revision is attached.

Recommendation 15: *The revised Environmental Policy statement be adopted.*

4.3 Changes in Premises, Staff or Services Affecting GEM

After the revision of the Community Strategy for Herefordshire the Environment Ambition Group reformed itself as the Herefordshire Environment Partnership. This group remains

one of the interested parties defined in the Council's environmental management system because of the number of key public, private and voluntary environmental groups represented on it. Additionally the group can provide valued support to the Cabinet member.

Since May 2007 the Cabinet portfolio covering Environment also includes Strategic Housing. The Transport portfolio remains as before.

Herefordshire Connects: provides the opportunity to reduce both mileage and paper use.

The potential formation of a Public Service Trust with the PCT would mark a shift towards commissioning of services. Such a move would make it increasingly important that environmental issues and data reporting requirements are factored into contract clauses.

4.4 Changes in Legislation, Government or Self Set Requirements

Summary of new legislation affecting more than one service:

<p>Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 - Section 40</p>	<p>From 1st October 2006, all public sector bodies have to consider biodiversity in the work they do. The aim is to raise the profile of biodiversity. National Guidance was issued in May 2007.</p>
<p>Energy Performance of Buildings Directive 2002/91/EC</p>	<p>This directive relates to the energy performance of all buildings over 1000m² and has a number of different implementation dates. It requires that any Council buildings with floor area over 1000m² display its energy performance from 1st October 2008.</p>
<p>Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997 (as amended)</p>	<p>In place from 1st October 2006 and affects the fire certification of buildings. This has implications for the Council both acting as landlord and tenant. Our Facilities Manager holds a register of Fire Wardens for main Council buildings and Property Services have organized several training sessions for Fire Wardens during the year. This subject will be addressed in the Officer in Charge of Buildings update meeting scheduled for 3rd December 2007.</p>
<p>WEEE (Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment) Regulations 2006</p>	<p>Covers disposal of all Council equipment containing electronic elements, eg computers, phones and street lighting components. Producers will have a responsibility to take back their own products. Local authorities will be encouraged to provide collection points for householders. The implementation in UK law of this directive came into force 2nd January 2007 and is expected to be operational from July 07. Office Waste procedure (GEMOP14WP) was updated in July 2007 and circulated to all Officers in Charge of buildings by email.</p>

4.5 Resourcing Environmental Improvement

i) Capital programme & environmental improvements

The Council has an annual capital programme for Prudential Borrowing. A capital bidding round is currently in process for 08/09 - bids are due by the end of November. The bids will be evaluated by a Bid Review Group, nominated by members of the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Group, using decision making criteria to be determined in November 07.

Invest to Save bids will be considered, including all bids that can justify significant revenue savings when compared to the capital financing costs over the life of the asset created.

The bid form for 08/09, under 'Other notes' has the following question

'Please give details as to whether there is a legal requirement for this scheme and/or whether the GEM principles have been considered relating to any environmental impact the scheme may have.'

Summary of current position of Capital programme projects with environmental impact

Scheme	£	Summary	Progress at Sept 07
Stretton Sugwas Closed Landfill Site	£110k over 4 years	Replacing gas wells & pipe work of gas extraction system. Agreed for 07/08.	Work completed on Phase 1 - £70K.
Stretton Sugwas Closed Landfill Site	£70k	New gas flare needed to replace poorly designed current flare. This bid has specific legal and environmental requirements. Agreed for 07/08.	Gas flare option appraisal taking place; order to be placed soon for installation Feb/March 2008.
Strangford Closed Landfill	£18k	Installation of leachate wells & gas monitoring boreholes to detect and monitor any adverse environmental effects. Agreed for 07/08.	New conceptual model being undertaken, prior to installation of leachate wells- planned for end of financial year. The need for additional gas monitoring wells is also being assessed, but this bid money was only for leachate wells. Any additional gas monitoring wells needed will be the subject of a separate bid.
Restore Leominster landfill site	£45K	Agreed 04/05	For the installation of the perimeter leachate cut-off drains.
Crematorium rebuild	£3.1M over life of project	Capital bid for building a new crematorium to incoming standards, including those for mercury reduction. Agreed 04/05	Planning Application has been granted and a Contractor appointed. Works are due to commence Autumn 2007.
Second phase of drainage work (Broad Street, Leominster)	£ 75,000	Failed	

Bids in preparation/submitted 07/08 for 08/09	
Upgrade of Sewage Treatment Works	
Second phase of drainage work (Broad Street, Leominster)	£200K

The Council gained £200K funding from Salix in summer 2006 for a loan scheme to allow energy efficiency works on its buildings, which must meet strict payback criteria. This scheme is being led by Property Services. Achieving spend which met the criteria of the scheme has been challenging but it is hoped that PowerPerfactor for large buildings will meet the criteria.

4.6 Performance of contractors and partners

Owen Williams, HJS (now Amey Wye Valley), Severn Waste & FOCSA all have ISO 14001 certification.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and targets relating to sustainability within the HJS/Owen Williams/HC contract were set during the year as part of a review of all KPIs. These are tracked monthly (though some indicators are quarterly or annual) and reported to PPMT.

The HJS Print Unit uses white 100% recycled paper as standard on 4 out of 6 machines. No suitable recycled grade is yet available for the remaining 2 machines. The Council requested that HJS roll out a requirement for use of recycled paper (50% recycled fibre for coated papers and 70% for uncoated papers) to their sub contractors by June 2007. This is the specification recommended by WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) as one that should be achievable with no increase in cost. This has not been achieved at present due to subcontractors continuing to quote substantial premiums for work on recycled paper.

Recommendation 17: confirm the requirement that paper for external printing jobs should now contain a minimum 50% recycled fibre for coated papers and 70% for uncoated papers and seek new subcontractors if prices for this work are unsatisfactory.

4.7 Concerns of Relevant Interested Parties (Including Members) and/or New Environmental Issues

None noted. However there has been a marked increase in the profile of climate change. Interest has grown rapidly and a number of local groups have sprung up to look at reducing community and individual carbon footprints.

4.8 Communication & Training

Questions on GEM were included in the 2007 Staff Opinion Survey, as recommended last year. A number of environmental stories were included in First Press and Herefordshire Matters.

Staff Opinion Survey 2007: Responses to GEM Questions

Statement	Str Agr	Agre	Disag	Str Dis	Unable	N/A	Net Agree
3.9 I understand the impact of my work upon the environment.	17%	69%	4%	1%	8%	1%	81%
3.10 I address the impact of my work upon the environment whenever possible.	16%	64%	5%	1%	12%	1%	74%
3.11 Herefordshire Council is doing enough to protect the environment.	4%	36%	27%	7%	26%	1%	5%
3.12 I would prefer to complete this questionnaire online, and not receive a paper copy next year.	27%	27%	22%	8%	14%	2%	23%

Replies show a strong understanding of and response to environmental issues. Interestingly staff feel equally strongly that not enough is being done. This gives a clear mandate for further action on the environment.

Recommendation 18: Undertake a short on-line survey to investigate the reasons for high number of staff who think we should be doing more for the environment and find out their priorities for further action.

An extended session on climate change and GEM has been included in the corporate induction programme since early 2007. An intranet based GEM presentation for existing staff to use themselves is in the process of development. No training for managers took place during the year, though there was a session on climate change at the Leadership Forum in summer 2007. Training sessions are now scheduled during the coming year for existing staff who have requested GEM training through SRD.

5 OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

5.1 Review of Council Environmental Aspects

Geodiversity has been included within Landscape character. There are currently 17 aspects.

5.2 Sustainability Strategy

This was written by a corporate director level group, led by the Director of Environment and supported by Forum for the Future and agreed by Cabinet early in 2007. An Action Plan is in place. The Strategy and a summary are both posted on the Council website. However there has been limited staff time to follow up actions.

A Sustainability Board has been proposed and it is hoped that it will oversee progress on a number of issues that involve several directorates, such as Sustainability, ISO 14001, climate change, sustainable schools and the Staff Travel Plan.

Recommendation 19: *Set up a Director level Sustainability Board to monitor, challenge, improve and publicise the overall sustainability performance of the Council, particularly relating to environmental sustainability.*

5.3 Timber

After agreement in last year's review that all wood used by the Council should be from demonstrably from legal sources or locally grown (up to 2010), guidance was circulated to all managers known to be using wood directly or through contractors. The easiest and most reliable way to assess the status of different certification schemes (which changes from time to time) is to use those accepted by the Government, as set out on DEFRA's CPET site.

An internal GEM audit of the status of wood purchased is currently underway.

Recommendation 20: *The Council uses the DEFRA Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET), the government site for guidance on legal and sustainable timber procurement, as its own benchmark for acceptable certification schemes.*

5.4 Procurement

The Strategic Procurement & Efficiency Manager in the Resources Directorate is responsible for procurement at a strategic level. It is becoming standard practice to ask all tenderers for their environmental policies. For instance all those tendering for the temporary staff contract were asked for environmental policies. This resulted in some positive developments of the contract. Environmental requirements are being factored into contracts, for instance it is planned to include a double sided default as standard in the contract for new photocopiers.

The national focus on sustainable procurement is strong. The Government is committed to being the leader in Europe on sustainable procurement by 2009 and responded to Sir Neville Simm's Procurement taskforce during the year. The National Procurement

Strategy for Local Government requires that we “Build sustainability into the Council’s procurement strategy, processes and contracts”.

The Council’s Procurement Strategy, updated in July 2007, retains a strong commitment to whole life costing and environmental issues. It states that :-

The whole Council and all contracts are bound by the Council’s environmental policy commitment to “use its influence to actively encourage responsible practice by suppliers and contractors” (section 6.1.1)

And

Whatever method of procurement used, the Council must ensure that providers of services work to environmental standards equivalent to those set within the Council and are made aware of minimum requirements. This may be achieved both by contractual means and through advice, support and guidance. (6.1.2)

Our key purchasing partner, West Mercia Supplies, has an environmental statement, an environmental champion and a sizeable programme of environmental initiatives.

During the year West Mercia Supplies, working with the Environmental leads for the four member authorities, have continued to extend their greenlist, paying careful attention to price. A comparison of the cost of green and standard items showed that several greenlist items were cheaper than their standard comparators and that the Council would have saved £4K overall during 2006/07 if it has bought entirely from the Greenlist.

Recommendation 21: *Purchases from WMS are routinely from the greenlist unless individual items are more than 20% above the cost of the standard range.*

5.5 Local Area Agreement

A new agreement to run from April 2008 is under negotiation. It is hoped that environmental priorities will be included. Follow up at next review.

5.6 EcoSchools

This scheme continues successful in the county there has been a significant jump in the number of schools obtaining awards and renewed interest from many high schools. Numbers continue to be monitored by the Sustainability Unit. At the end of the summer term 2007 84 schools were registered with the scheme. 30 (18) schools had a bronze award, 16 (10) had a silver award and 13 (10) had the top Green Flag award (2006 figures in brackets). Additionally 4 nursery schools have registered, a welcome new development.

6 OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

(Proposed Lead group stated at start of each point, section reference in brackets at the end))

Recommendation 1: Sustainability Unit In order to maintain corporate ISO 14001 certification it is important that DMTs review and record their environmental performance at least half yearly, supported by their GEM Leads, and keep their Directorate summaries of environmental impact & controls up to date. (1)

Recommendation 2 CMB: Internal audit to include ISO 14001 systems audits in their annual programme. (2.1)

Recommendation 3 (arising from observation by SGS) CMB: The management review minutes confirm that the GEM report has been reviewed and the action points agreed. (2.2)

Recommendation 4 CMB: Service Plans include specific environmental improvement opportunities for 2007/08 with formal management programmes indicating responsibility and timescales and link these to corporate objectives. (3.2)

Recommendation 5 Officers in Charge: Officers in Charge to arrange for meter readings to be collected within the last two working days of the month and recorded with WMS via their website to improve accuracy of billing and monitoring. Any buildings not currently being supplied with electricity/gas via WMS to be reported to Chris Smith via the performance reporting procedure as previously set up so that transfer can be arranged. (3.2)

Recommendation 6 CMB: Full management support and encouragement to allow Energy Champions and staff to be actively involved in the project. (3.2)

Recommendation 7 CMB: Ensure that the Climate Change Officer, once appointed, receives support from officers across the authority in provision of data and developing actions to achieve the corporate reduction target. (3.2)

Recommendation 8 CMB: ISO 14001 requirements are integrated into to key corporate processes, such as performance management, procurement and communication, now that all Council functions are included. (4)

Recommendation 9 Environment/Corporate & Customer: Retender certification contract for ISO 14001 in the coming year and decide whether to include ISO 19001 in the Environment directorate and other sections where it is held, eg ICT, in the same contract. (4)

Recommendation 10 Property: The Building Management System now agreed for use by Property Services for Council property should be installed ASAP at the Hillcrest Sewage Treatment Plant to increase speed of response to plant and non-operational plant malfunction, thus reducing the risk of formal action from the Environment Agency. (4.1.1)

Recommendation 11 Property/Corporate & Customer: Legal advice be obtained on how to introduce a charging mechanism for occupants connected to Council owned sewage treatment plants, particularly for costs related to misuse of the systems. This is likely to improve legal compliance. (4.1.1)

Recommendation 12 Property/Amey: Strong support for letting a single contract for maintenance of sewage works and interceptors to make monitoring more straightforward. Recommend this include independent sampling of discharges to watercourses; at least once a year for those Council owned plants with a consent limit set by the EA. (4.1.1)

Recommendation 13 CMB: Management of Council owned and managed land with a biodiversity designation is reviewed within the next 12 months to ensure the Council is meeting its NERC responsibilities and its Corporate Plan vision of the county's outstanding natural environment. (4.1.1)

Recommendation 14 CMB: Potential or actual breaches identified are entered on Directorate Risk Registers. (4.1.1)

Recommendation 15 CMB: The revised Environmental Policy statement be adopted. (4.2)

Recommendation 16 Resources: Clarify the wording of the capital bid question relating to legal compliance and environmental impact to elicit more useful information. Put a mechanism in place to evaluate the answers given and feed them into the decision making process. (4.5)

Recommendation 17 Environment Directorate: Confirm the requirement that paper for external printing jobs should now contain a minimum 50% recycled fibre for coated papers and 70% for uncoated papers and seek new subcontractors if prices for this work are unsatisfactory. (4.6)

Recommendation 18 Sustainability Unit/Research: Undertake a short on-line survey to investigate the reasons for high number of staff who think we should be doing more for the environment and find out their priorities for further action. (4.8)

Recommendation 19 CMB: Set up a Director level Sustainability Board to monitor, challenge, improve and publicise the overall sustainability performance of the Council, particularly relating to environmental sustainability. (5.2)

Recommendation 20 Environment/Resources/Adult & Community: The Council uses the DEFRA Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET), the government site for guidance on legal and sustainable timber procurement, as its own benchmark for acceptable certification schemes. (5.3)

Recommendation 21 CMB: Purchases from WMS are routinely from the greenlist unless individual items are more than 20% above the cost of the standard range (5.4).

Recommendation 22 Officers in Charge: to arrange for meter readings to be collected within the last two working days of the month and recorded with WMS via their website to improve accuracy of billing and monitoring. Any buildings not currently being supplied with electricity/gas via WMS to be reported to Chris Smith via the performance reporting procedure as previously set up so that transfer can be arranged. (3.2)

Sustainability Unit, October 2007

Appendix 1: Progress on GEM Management Review Recommendations agreed by CXMT on 24th November 2006

CXMT Recommendation of November 2006	Action / Response
DMTs review and record their environmental performance at least half yearly, supported by their GEM Leads, using the Directorate summaries of environmental impact & controls. (1.3)	Variable response.
Directorate Summaries (now known as ICED GEMS ¹) are regularly updated by appropriate managers and are used to inform environmental target setting (2.2).	Summaries in place. Difficult to achieve regular update.
Service Plans include specific environmental improvement opportunities for 2006/2007 with formal management programmes indicating responsibility and timescales and link these to corporate objectives. (3.5 & 4.1)	Poor response in 07/08 service plans.
ISO 14001 requirements are integrated into to key corporate processes, such as performance management, procurement and communication, now that all Council functions are included. (4)	Included in updated procurement strategy (updated July 07) Perf management: IPD to Cabinet 20 th Sept + appendices. KL back 1/10
GEM auditors are allocated time by their managers to undertake at least 2 GEM audits annually. (2.1)	Poor response led to decision to move to smaller dedicated team largely within ESS. Internal Audit does not currently include systems audits as routine in their work plan.
The corporate plan indicator for reducing carbon emissions is changed to "Achieve a 12.5% reduction in Council carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 2012". (3.4)	Changed in Corporate Plan 07/08 to 10% by 2010 (HC102)
Reiterate the importance of all legal breaches being reported to GEM as soon as possible after they have occurred to ensure compliance with ISO 14001. (4.1.1).	
Directors ensure that actual & potential risks identified by the Legal Compliance Review are entered on their Directorate Risk Registers (4.1.1)	Progress not known. Registers not held on intranet so not easy to check.
Ensure that sufficient resources are made available to minimise the risk of potential or actual legal breaches identified in the Legal Compliance Review. (4.1.1).	Finance to replace flare approved by Director of Environment. Upgrade of Building Energy Management System (which will assist detection of problems at sewage treatment works) agreed by Herefordshire Connects summer 07.
Paper for Council external printing jobs to contain a minimum 50% recycled fibre for coated papers and 70% for uncoated papers by 1st June 2007 (4.5).	Not yet achieved as HJS/Amey subcontractors generally raising prices substantially for use of recycled paper.
All wood used by the Council is demonstrably from legal sources (5.3)	Information sent out to sections known to be using timber on 05 February 2007 GEM Audit being undertaken Sept 07.

¹ Integrated Control and Enhancement Directorate GEM Summaries