

HEREFORDSHIRE PLAN AND PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS REPORT

Report By: Director of Policy and Community

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To advise on progress in implementing the Herefordshire Plan.

Financial Implications

2. None.

Considerations

Background

3. Following wide ranging consultation on the original draft a revised edition of the Herefordshire Plan was published in June 2000. The Herefordshire Plan was one of the first wave of community plans published in England. The Plan sets out a vision, guiding principles, ten ambitions and a number of golden threads which together form a ten year strategy for Herefordshire. The Plan is therefore currently at the end of its third year.

Partnership Arrangements

4. The implementation of the Plan is supported by a comprehensive partnership including over 100 organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Core partners with the Council include the Chamber of Commerce and Business Link Herefordshire and Worcestershire, Herefordshire Association of Local Councils, Herefordshire Primary Care Trust, Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire, Voluntary Organisations, and West Mercia Constabulary.
5. The Partnership is led through ten ambition groups which take responsibility for delivering each ambition in the Plan. The Ambition Groups are supported by a Management Group and Board of senior officers from the core partner organisations. In addition there are golden threads running through the activity of all Ambition Groups. For example there is an Information Communications Technology (ICT) Group responsible for the ICT Golden Thread of the Plan.
6. The Ambitions are as follows indicating the Cabinet Member within whose remit the ambition falls and the Scrutiny Committee responsible for scrutinising progress towards achieving the ambitions.

Ambition	Cabinet Member	Scrutiny Committee
Improve the health and well-being of Herefordshire People	Social Care and Strategic Housing	Health Social Care and Housing
Reduce crime and disorder and make Herefordshire safer	Leader	Strategic Monitoring Committee
Tackle poverty and isolation in Herefordshire	Leader	Strategic Monitoring Committee
Encourage communities to shape the future of Herefordshire	Community and Social Development	Social and Economic Development
Develop Herefordshire as an active, vibrant and enjoyable place to be	Community and Social Development	Social and Economic Development
Protect and improve Herefordshire's distinctive environment	Environment	Environment
Provide excellent education, training and learning opportunities in Herefordshire for all ages	Education Community and Social Development	Education Social and Economic Development
Meet Herefordshire's accommodation needs	Social Care and Strategic Housing	Social Care and Housing
Support business growth and create more and better paid work in Herefordshire	Economic Development, Markets and Property Rural Regeneration	Social and Economic Development
Develop an integrated transport system for Herefordshire	Highways and Transport	Environment

7. Underpinning the Ambition Groups there are a plethora of local partnerships throughout Herefordshire based on geographic communities ranging from town centres to housing estates and individual villages. There is ongoing work underway to improve communications and linkages between the Ambition Groups and these key geographic communities.

Member Involvement

8. Member support and involvement in delivering the Herefordshire Plan is an essential element of success and therefore the Plan has been developed using a number of dedicated events with Herefordshire Council Members.
9. Members of the Executive are charged with receiving regular reports on the progress of the Herefordshire Plan generally and the contribution of the different parts of Herefordshire Council to the achievement of individual Ambitions. Wherever possible Executive Members should be integrated into the work of the Ambition Groups.
10. In September 2001 the Strategic Monitoring Committee agreed that individual Scrutiny Committees should receive six monthly reports setting out progress to date, work in hand and future timetables. Where Cabinet Members are responsible for more than one ambition Scrutiny Committees should examine composite reports. In order not to lose sight of the breadth of the Plan the Strategic Monitoring Committee should receive, at least on an annual basis, a report bringing together key activities/themes which are being progressed or emerging.

Achievements

11. The Audit Commission's Corporate Assessment of the Council in December 2002 commented that "the Plan has provided the focus for partnership working and has contributed significantly to the Council being able to attract significant external funding to deliver projects tackling local priorities, such as rural access and pockets of deprivation in Hereford City. In this respect the Plan has enabled the Council to punch above its weight as a small low-funded authority."
12. Details of specific achievements are set out in the Herefordshire Plan Progress Review 2001-2002 copies of which are available in the Members' Room. The Plan is currently being revised and an updated version of the current Plan will be available in the near future. There will then be a fundamental review in 2004, leading to a new Plan in 2005.
13. The Strategic Monitoring Committee has a role in scrutinising progress in implementing all the ambitions in the Herefordshire Plan.
14. Achievements for each of the Ambitions and Golden Threads from the new revision of the Herefordshire Plan include:

A) Golden Threads

Geographic Communities

Achievements include

- Parish plans have been completed on a number of villages in the County and more are underway. Local people are deciding on the priorities for their own communities.

Communities of Interest

Achievements include

- A survey of farmers and farm businesses in the county has been undertaken to find out about the challenges that the industry faces locally

- A group of young people is developing who will provide a voice for their community of interest across Herefordshire

Information and Communications Technology

Achievements include

- The Herefordshire Touch (HIT) Programme has been put in place to ensure that **broadband** becomes available to everyone in the county who wants it.
- Free and independent **ICT advice** is available to all businesses and voluntary and community sector organisations in the County through the HIT programme
- Herefordshire will soon benefit from its own **electronic gateway**, the "Herefordshire Hub". This is a highly innovative project which will allow residents, businesses and organisations easy electronic access to information and services. It will be one of the first gateways to fully meet accessibility requirements and achieve Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) accreditation.
- Adult learners have access to a network of **LearnDirect centres** in Herefordshire's towns and villages, recognised as being amongst the best in the UK.
- **Young people** are being actively involved in a county-wide training programme to increase their IT skills and awareness.

B) Ambition Groups

Improve The Health And Well Being Of Herefordshire People

Achievements include

- Increased schemes to help people with mental health difficulties to live at home
- South Wye mental health drop in café
- New unit to help older people regain independence on target to open in November 2003
- Two rural 'Sure Start' schemes to support families with children under five
- Successful bid for '5 A DAY' funding to increase the number of people eating fruit and vegetables

Reduce Crime and disorder and make Herefordshire Safer

Achievements include

- An increase in the number of anti-social behaviour orders gained across the county, as part of a proactive response against people who impact on others quality of life
- Domestic violence perpetrators programme implemented
- Staffing has been trebled to increase the number in drug treatment and reduce waiting times
- Initiated a specialist young persons' substance misuse team to meet the treatment needs of young people and work on early intervention and prevention

Reduce poverty and isolation in Herefordshire***Achievements include***

- Fact sheets produced on Social Inclusion Issues, including accessible meeting venues
- A Welfare Rights Forum is being established
- A Community Development Worker (Social Inclusion) has been appointed in Herefordshire
- Research into Social Inclusion and Poverty in Herefordshire

Encourage communities to shape the future of Herefordshire***Achievements include***

- Working partnership to draw down money to fund community development and community economic regeneration
- Parish Planning Exercises have been undertaken in villages across the County

Develop Herefordshire as an active, vibrant and enjoyable place to be***Achievements include***

- Funding Fair established as regular programme to support organisations in the voluntary sector to access funding
- Success in obtaining funding for Creative Industries Programme
- Establishment and funding for the Creative Learning Centre in Ross on Wye

Protect and enhance Herefordshire's distinctive environment***Achievements include***

- Herefordshire Biodiversity Action Plan adopted
- Development of a Climate Change Strategy for Herefordshire underway
- Kerbside recycling available in most of the urban areas in Herefordshire
- The 'Herefordshire Rivers' Leader+ programme developed

Develop an integrated transport system for Herefordshire***Achievements include***

- Rural Transport Partnership progress including improved rural bus services and community transport
- Hereford City Transport Review completed
- Wyse Moves South Wye accessible transport group project has achieved new bus services

Meet Herefordshire's accommodation needs***Achievements include***

- Produced Supplementary Planning Guidance for new housing developments, looking particularly at issues of sustainability

- Completed pilot of a Housing needs Toolkit with a local parish council
- Provided a response to the Regional Housing Strategy
- Participated in the development of the Herefordshire Council's Housing strategy

Support business growth and create more and better paid work in Herefordshire

Achievements include

- Produced the Herefordshire Economic Development and Business Support Strategy 1999-2011. This has been used to support funding bids bringing millions of pounds into the County
- Herefordshire Investment Partnership has helped find properties for businesses supporting the creation of hundreds of jobs and helping to safeguard hundreds more
- Partners worked together to develop a new business start-up service that provided training for 225 people between August 2002 and March 2003 with 32 people receiving a start up grant

Provide excellent education, training and learning opportunities in Herefordshire for all ages

Achievements include

- Launched a new WRVS Learning Centre to improve access to adult and community learning
- Secured AWM funding to support a new Engineering Centre of Vocational Excellence
- Ten major employers in Herefordshire signed up to deliver literacy and numeracy training in the workplace
- Nine Herefordshire schools involved in curriculum flexibility partnerships to open up vocational learning opportunities for young people

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Members note the content of the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None identified.