

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PERFORMANCE MONITORING

**Report By: Director of Regeneration and Director of
Environment and Culture**

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To report on the performance indicator position for the Economic and Community Services Division with the Regeneration Directorate and the Environment and Culture Directorate

Financial Implications

2. No direct implications.

Background

3. The Performance Improvement Framework required reporting to Scrutiny Committee at 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 months. This report covers the outturn to the end of September 2008 where this data is available, and the current status.
4. Performance has been judged using the following criteria:
 - Red - Not on target and planned activity not taking place
 - Amber - Not on target, but planned activity undertaken and remedial measure in place; or no data available but planned activity undertaken
 - Green - On target, or baseline data is not available for a new indicator and planned activity has taken place
5. The table in Appendix One includes details of the performance indicators

Summary of Ratings	No of Indicators	Judgement		
		R	A	G
Total Number of Indicators	34	1	10	23

6. The indicators that are listed here are either National Indicators (NI's) of Local Area Agreement Indicators (LAA) agreed as specifically important to the County. These are not all of the indicators for the service areas but cover a broad range which reflects the spread of services.
7. The report includes a number of National Indicators that are measured by 'The Place Survey'. This survey is completed on a biennial basis by the Council in accordance

with the guidelines issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG).

8. Fieldwork is to be carried out between 29th September 2008 and 19th December 2008. From the survey data is to be submitted to the Audit Commission between the 5th and 30th January 2009. Following this a baseline can then be established and the monitored on a biennial basis.
9. The majority of the indicators being reported have yet to establish a baseline and therefore unable to include a commentary on direction of travel. However, included within the commentary, information is provided to indicate what activity is currently taking place to assist the Council in meeting the National Indicators requirements.
10. In summary for Economic and Community Services:
11. The Democracy First project funded through LPSA2 funding has ensured that residents of Herefordshire are better informed in respect of the roles of Parish Councils. The Post Offices Action Plan was agreed by Cabinet on 10th July on how to respond to the forthcoming announcement on post office closures. The Council made a submission to Post Office Ltd in response to the closure programme.
12. The draft Compact Volunteering Code went out to consultation with a closing date of 24th October 2008. There have been a number of events across the county to engage local voluntary and community groups in the development of an implementation plan.
13. The Community Regeneration Team is developing an online resource of village halls to include booking details which will be available to council departments, other service providers and members of the public. This tool could facilitate improved access to key services in rural areas.
14. The employment rate is holding up fairly well given the current economic situation, however work for the self-employed in the construction sector is of concern. Although there have been a few announcements of job losses these have not been much worse than average.
15. Average workplace earnings in Herefordshire are the 13th lowest out of the 14 West Midlands authorities, however, from 2004 to 2007 gross weekly earnings in the county increased by around 11%, compared to the regional average increase of below 10%.
16. The VAT registration rate in Herefordshire is higher than the regional average, generally reflecting the rural nature and higher skills levels among residents. The Council continues to promote the business start-up offer from Business Link and provide suitable buildings, such as the Rural Enterprise Centres, to support new businesses to find suitable short let accommodation that can provide for business growth.
17. The Draft Alcohol Strategy is currently out for consultation and the HCSDP Project Officers continue to promote alcohol harm reduction messages in the community, for example at the Fresher's Fair at Hereford Six Form College and the Hereford Health & Wellbeing Event.
18. Crime figures are calculated on a quarterly basis, showing the number of violent crimes down 20.6% compared to the same period in 2007. For Q1 - the number of robberies has increased by 30.0% compared to the same period in 2007, however it must be noted that the numbers are very low and actually represents just 3 offences.

The number of total recorded crimes in Herefordshire for Q1 is down 8.8% compared to the same period in 2007.

19. The data in respect of the learning outcomes are to be provided by the Learning Skills Council in March 2009, therefore the data for achievement has currently been deferred. A number of courses are currently programmed and rates of achievement will be available July 2008 for learners completing courses.
20. Highlights for the Environment and Culture Directorate include:
21. Walking for health - British Heart Foundation accreditation received and first of the two walk leader courses completed with 6 new trained leaders now active.
22. Year of Reading – monthly programme of activities underway
23. Anti-social behaviour - A multi-agency tasking and coordination group has been established and this meets fortnightly to share intelligence information and use its shared resources to target identified hotspots.
24. PACT meetings - The police and relevant representatives of the Council attend each PACT meeting to identify and respond to local concerns.

Customer Satisfaction

25. The Environment and Culture Directorate has been undertaking regular monthly customer satisfaction surveys since March 2008. The survey is currently limited to requests for service, which are received either through Info by Phone or through the highways inspection system. June was the first month in which data based on the restructured Environment and Culture Directorate was available, so there is no direct comparison with the data collected in the preceding months. At present responses are not disaggregated between services.
26. Responses to the July survey have been analysed, the following being highlights:
27. 70% of respondents were very or fairly satisfied and 23% were very or fairly dissatisfied in July, compared with 81% and 16% respectively in June
28. 57% agreed their issue had been dealt with, 13% felt it had been only partially dealt with and 23% considered the issue had not been dealt with in July, compared with 66%, 3% and 16% respectively in June
29. 52% got the outcome they wanted, 26% did not and 15% considered they only partly received the outcome they wanted in July, compared with 59%, 19% and 6% respectively in June.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT;

- (a) the report on performance be noted;
- (b) areas of concern and exception continue to be monitored.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None