

Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s Recommendations – Action Plan v1.4^a

Key:

Directorate	Key to Owners	Abbreviation	Recommendations
Deputy Chief Executive	Head of Communications	HoComm	(a), (d)
Deputy Chief Executive	Head of Customer Services	HCS	(b)
Deputy Chief Executive	Joint Director of ICT	JDICT	(c), (e), (g), (z)
Children and Young People	Assistant Director, Planning, Performance & Development	ADPPD	(f), (r), (s), (t), (u)
Public Health	Assistant Director, Public Health	ADPH	(h), (a1), (c1), (d1)
Sustainable Communities	Assistant Director, highway, transport & community services	ADHTCS	(i), (j), (k), (l), (m), (n), (o), (p), (q), (b1)
Sustainable Communities	Head of Special Projects	HPS	(v)
	All HoS/ADs who are responsible for Providers	ALL	(w), (x)
Deputy Chief Executive	Interim Head of Workforce & Organisational Development	HWOD	(y)

^a 1.2 - [Addition to (z)]

1.3 – [update of (h), (w), (x), (y), (b1) and (c1)]

1.4 – [update of (c), (e), (g) and (z)]

Recommendation No. (a)	That the Communication Strategy be revisited to try to ensure that communities really understand the financial and practical constraints on the Council and are provided with practical information to enable them to help themselves in dealing with the difficulties posed by severe weather conditions, such information should include clear legal advice on the ability of people to help themselves by clearing pavements and on effective, safe methods of snow clearance.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Review the Communication Strategy	HoComm	30/11/10	Community understanding of the service they can expect and how communities can work together to support each other	Programme to produce community guide to severe weather (leaflets, press releases, website and Herefordshire Matters) by Nov 10	
Recommendation No. (b)	That the arrangement for all calls to be handled by the Customer Services Contact Centre and no separate emergency line operated should be monitored to ensure that it is resilient and robust.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
The Head of Customer Services (HCS) and the Emergency Planning Manager (EPM) have agreed arrangements for Customer Services to be responsible for call handling. Monitoring of effectiveness will take place during and after an incident.	HCS	On-going	All calls are handled by CS Contact centre. Activity to be reviewed as part of the monthly SLA review meetings with ADPH.	HCS and EPM are meeting on 8 th September to progress this matter.	
Recommendation No. (c)	That action be taken to improve the website so that winter information can more readily be accessed than it is under the current system of placing information in the news section.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
'Winter information' will be given prominence on the home page of the council website, maybe with the main story/image and in addition, an emergency alerts box will be implemented.	JDICT	30/11/10	The website has a prominent section relating to winter information; sufficient access rights are in place to enable appropriate officers to populate website.	EPM has produced a paper that contains options for improvement. EPM is scheduling a meeting with Knowledge and Web Services Manager to agree which improvements can be implemented, along with a timetable. Web Team have organised a meeting for key stakeholders on 16 September 2010	
Recommendation No. (d)	That the Communication Strategy seeks to ensure that in such situations there is clarity about what the Council's plans are for the next day.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
A statement needs to be put into the Strategy and necessary activity implemented	HoComm	30/11/10	Agreement from all relevant service teams to decide level of service to	Communications and emergency planning to promote requirement to	

				be provided for next day (as part of daily emergency planning)	relevant service managers
Recommendation No. (e)	That Services be reminded again of the importance of keeping material on the Council website up to date and of removing out of date material and ICT services consider what prompts could usefully be implemented to facilitate this process.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
<p>A variety of communiqués be sent to Key Managers etc</p> <p>There is a function within our current Content Management System (RedDot) to remove pages after a set expiry period but this has proven unreliable in the past. As part of the ICT strategy web projects a review of the current CMS is in progress with a view to procuring a replacement for the end of December. This requirement is one of the areas of functionality that will be addressed through that process.</p> <p>In line with recommended good practice service information updates should be managed on key service content pages which are constantly updated rather than through press releases which are archived. Agreement required on most effective method to maintain currency of information on winter service pages with links made to the winter service pages for the detail from news articles so always most current info. Authors for the winter service pages need to be agreed and suitable means to maintain content in timely way enabled.</p>	JDICT	31/10/10	See (c) above	Action contained within report referred to in (c) above.	
Recommendation No. (f)	That progress in implementing the automated system for school closures should be closely monitored, to ensure that it is operational before Winter 2010, noting also ICT's view that a corporate solution would be desirable.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Confirmation obtained that the automated system for school closures has been implemented.	ADPPD	Dec 2010	Countywide system in place and used by all schools	CYPD, ICT have carried out development work with third party supplier. Trial of system to take place Sept 2010; full implementation Dec 2010.	
Recommendation No. (g)	That the specific recommendations put forward by ICT Services in relation to the need to review information flows across all communication channels, the development of a corporate SMS system and the use of social networking sites should be explored.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	

SMS See section (f) Social networking We do have facebook/twitter/myspace/youtube presences for the myherefordshire portal, which could be further developed to support Council objectives as under utilised. With some work and investigation, these could be possibly repurposed for use in emergency situations for example use twitter feeds to populate current data in the Councils winter service pages. However this would have to be done in conjunction with the relevant service managers, web team and communications team,.	JDICT	30/11/10	Utilisation of social networking tools to improve currency of information available to the public	SMS See actions in section (f) a paper was put together for a corporate SMS solution and that is now with JDICT. Social Networking All council news stories are already auto-republished onto a twitterfeed - http://twitter.com/myherefordshire This area will also be discussed in the meeting on the 17 September 2010.
Recommendation No. (h)	That the implementation of the policy prepared by the Joint Emergency Planning Unit to ensure business continuity planning is embedded should be monitored to ensure appropriate arrangements are put in place, and it should also be ensured that the work of the Severe Weather Group to updated emergency plans relating to weather is completed before Winter 2010.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
HPS will prepare a joint policy, in accordance with guidance provided by the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004. The Policy will ensure that business continuity is embedded throughout HPS and aim to ensure that all employees have a clear understanding of: the policy and procedures (including responsibilities at all levels); and, who provides appropriate expertise and facilitates support in order to maintain delivery of key services with the minimum of disruption in the event of a 'disruptive event'. Monitoring of business continuity activity will be captured monthly on the Performance + system. Severe Weather group has met once this year and will meet again before the end of October. Part of that group's activity relates to the signing off of the Flood Plan and progression of the 'cold' weather plan.	ADPH	31/10/10 31/10/10 and on-going	Signed-off Flood plan Signed-off Cold weather plan Exercising of plans Validation of plans.	Done - 15 June 2010 – JMT approved the joint business continuity policy ¹ .
Recommendation No. (i)	That the Winter Service Plan should provide that salt stocks at the start of the winter season should be no less than 6,500 tonnes.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Reference in the Winter Service Plan	ADHTCS	30/09/10		Done - Contained in Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 4.9

Recommendation No. (j)	That the gritting of school bus routes and accesses to schools would repay investigation as part of the review of the Winter Service Plan, given the community impact of school closures.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Reference in the Winter Service Plan	ADHTCS	30/09/10		Done - Contained in Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 2.9
Recommendation No. (k)	That noting the extent of what footway treatment can be delivered is to be reviewed as part of the annual review of the Winter Service Plan, the Committee requests that this will include consideration of pavement clearing machinery in addition to gritting, and the prioritisation of footways for gritting.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Reference in the Winter Service Plan	ADHTCS	30/09/10		Done - Contained in Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 2.10, 2.11, 2.12 and Table 1
Recommendation No. (l)	That the proposed Winter Service Plan for 2010/11 should be the subject of Pre-decision scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the report to the Committee setting out the draft plan, including information on how prioritisation of routes has been arrived at, options considered and the costs of those options, mindful of the Committee's view that there is scope to extend at least some priority routes to some schools and sheltered housing facilities and urban estate roads.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Reference in the Winter Service Plan	ADHTCS	30/09/10		Done - Contained in Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 1.4
Recommendation No. (m)	That the initiative for Parish Councils to organise their own gritting operations on minor roads be supported and encouraged.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Reference in the Winter Service Plan	ADHTCS	30/09/10		Done - Contained in Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 2.17, 2.25
Recommendation No. (n)	That consideration be given to extending and strengthening the arrangements to use contractors and farmers to assist with snow clearance in isolated areas during severe winter weather conditions.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Reference in the Winter Service Plan	ADHTCS	30/09/10		Done - Contained in Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 2.24
Recommendation No. (o)	That action be taken to ensure that the acknowledged safety benefits of improvements to the drainage of the highway and maintenance of effective land drainage are realised.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Reference in the Winter Service Plan	ADHTCS	30/09/10		Done - Contained in Winter Service

					Plan 2010/11 Section 2.19
Recommendation No. (p)	That any bureaucratic barriers regarding the treatment of Council owned car parks and interchanges such as the County bus station should be removed, with consideration also being given to the gritting arrangements for the city bus station.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Reference in the Winter Service Plan	ADHTCS	30/09/10		Done - Contained in Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 2.8 and 2.14	
Recommendation No. (q)	That consideration be given to formally inviting Partners to make a financial contribution to gritting of hospital entrances and the frontages of key emergency service premises and that the gritting of pavements or other means of clearing snow and ice from pavements and possible redirection of funding for this purpose also merits further investigation and consideration.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Reference in the Winter Service Plan	ADHTCS	30/09/10		Done - Contained in Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 1.3 and 4.45	
Recommendation No. (r)	That given the considerable pressures that disruption placed on parents and employers there should be an even greater emphasis placed on schools to try to open, perhaps with clear reasons for closure having to be given, and that further consideration needs to be given to what the Council can do to facilitate schools being kept open and to encourage local resilience.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Assessed as part of the Winter Service Plan, and schools own business continuity arrangements.	ADPPD	30/09/2010	Schools close only when there is no alternative.	Contained in Winter Service Plan, including local resilience. Autumn school bulletin will re-emphasise the need for clear reasons and appropriate planning.	
Recommendation No. (s)	That given the apparent remaining uncertainty over the potential for there to be criticism from Ofsted if schools open but there is limited attendance because of the weather, it is recommended that further guidance is issued clarifying this matter.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Guidance issued to schools to clarify attendance recording. Schools able to legitimately mark absence due to severe weather	ADPPD	Done at the time and will reissue in advance of severe weather	Reissue guidance in advance of severe weather. Inform school improvement, admissions and transport colleagues.	Done at the time and will be carried out in future	
Recommendation No. (t)	That guidance be issued to schools on what practical steps they could take to stay open or for more help to be provided to them to enable them to do so including information on the most efficient way to keep playgrounds safe and usable.				
Executive Response	Agreed				

Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Schools able to discuss steps with property services and local contractors. Reinforce messages to be done in advance of winter.	ADPPD	Nov 2010	Schools able to plan locally to enable them to be open where possible	Contacts and update school bulletin to be issued Nov 2010
Recommendation No. (u)	That consideration be given to how the decision to close schools can be co-ordinated with, or better informed by, the highway service.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Coordinated via links in with the Winter Service Plan arrangements	ADPPD	As occurs	Decisions to close schools are informed by the most up to date environmental conditions, including the state of the infrastructure.	Practicalities of Winter Service Plan to be reviewed in relation to schools, with assistance from Emergency Planning (Oct 2010)
Recommendation No. (v)	That consideration be given to methods of ensuring that household waste sites remain operational.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
This is already in place as the safe operational status of the site is already a contractual requirement. During the recent winter difficulties sites were gritted using on site salt stores without recourse to the Council's own resources. The Waste Services Manager was in daily contact with the contractors and only on very few occasions were the sites closed. This information was relayed to the Communications Team for broadcast on a daily basis. Household Waste Sites are closed as a last resort and only if they can't be cleared of snow and ice. The main issue relating to keeping the sites open is keeping safe road access open for resident's vehicles and for the contractor's vehicles to remove waste and recycling offsite. Consequently, it is the passability of the roads which is again the main issue rather than the sites themselves.	HPS	N/A	Sites open as normal	DONE
Recommendation No. (w)	That contracts with providers should be reviewed and if necessary revised to require providers to ensure they communicate any inability on their part to deliver the contracted service so that alternative arrangements can be made.			
Executive Response	Agreed			
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress
Review contracts; revise if necessary	ALL	31/10/10		
	HSP			DONE - This is already in place and in the case of Waste Management was the subject of daily communication and

					reporting during the winter conditions of early 2010.
		ADHTCS			Facilitated in Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 3.3
Recommendation No. (x)	That providers be required to confirm that they have business continuity plans in place to deal with winter weather and arrangements for reviewing and updating those plans regularly.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Obtain confirmation from providers	ALL	31/10/10		There is a pre qualification questionnaire PQQ, the purpose of which is to enable the Council to assess Potential Providers in accordance with its minimum requirements so that only those Potential Providers, that meet or exceed those minimum requirements, are taken forward to the Invitation to Tender (ITT) stage of the process. The PQQ is designed to elicit from Potential Providers sufficient information that will allow the Council to make such an assessment in the provision of services. The latest PQQ asks for Business Continuity Plans to be in place.	
	HSP	30/10/10		Business Continuity Plans are being discussed with the Emergency Planning Officer, the waste collection contractors, Focsa, the waste disposal contractor, SWS, and the council's Waste Services Manager. In the main, this will be formalising what is already the standard practice and documenting the approach which served us well earlier in 2010. Due for completion in October 2010.	
Recommendation No. (y)	That clear guidance be issued to managers and employees about their responsibilities in bad weather and a more robust approach to redeployment be implemented supported by an appropriate policy document.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
HR to work closely with JEPU (and others) to put into place a process	HWOD	31/10/10	Guidance document prepared and ready for despatch at the appropriate time. Redeployment guidance document Signed off and despatched.	HR have produced a draft overarching policy covering, for example, impact on staffing levels and sources of staffing, managing absence from work, arrangements for re-imburement of	

					additional hours, etc. This would then be supplemented by additional plans and guidance provided by appropriate experts, eg guidance regarding a pandemic, business continuity etc. ²
Recommendation No. (z)	That action should be taken to increase the provision of mobile working opportunities and/or more local access points for workers to work closer to home.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Its part of the accommodation strategy, plus there are related projects as part of the ICT strategy	JDICT	Awaiting a date	Increase in the number of relevant officers being able to work remotely; Increase in the number of local access points	Inclusion of related projects in ICT Strategy work programme	
Recommendation No. (a1)	That, given concern that the Emergency Co-ordinator Scheme may not prove as robust as hoped, take up should be monitored and, if insufficient, alternative action considered.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Development of Emergency Coordinator Scheme	ADPH	Ongoing	Identification and nomination of Parish Emergency Coordinators. Development and issue of Community Emergency Plans.	The uptake of Parish Councils has been reasonably good and continues to attract new volunteers. A number of workshops have been held to provide an: understanding of how Multi-Agency Emergency Planning Identifies and mitigates the risks we face in Herefordshire; introduction to the voluntary sector response; introduction to a Template which Supports Emergency Preparedness at Parish Level and support mechanisms for development – 2 nd version of the 'Community Emergency Plan' template to be issued at next workshop on 21 Sep 2010 . Moreover, West Mercia Police and Hereford & Worcester Fire Service have asked to be actively involved in further plan development.	
Recommendation No. (b1)	That formal negotiations take place with the Highways Agency with a view to bringing their treatment regime within the County into line with that of the Council.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	

Reference in the Winter Service Plan		ADHTCS	30/09/10		Facilitated through the Winter Service Plan 2010/11 Section 2.21
Recommendation No. (c1)	That the Joint Emergency Planning Unit ensure that appropriate provision is made within Severe Weather Plans for 4x4 vehicle usage.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Plans incorporate details for 4x4 usage	ADPH	Ongoing	Plans detail 4x4 useage	Ongoing as plans are developed. Herefordshire 4x4 Response Group (a voluntary organisation) continues to be an active member of the County Voluntary Emergency Committee, the structure and terms of reference of which are being reviewed.	
Recommendation No. (d1)	That West Mercia Police be asked to review the resilience of its arrangements to secure an adequate supply of 4x4 vehicles and the trained staff to drive them.				
Executive Response	Agreed				
Action	Owner	By When	Target/Success Criteria	Progress	
Contact WMP to understand its arrangements; discuss/review the resilience of arrangements	ADPH	30/11/10	The review completed; an 'adequate' supply of vehicles; an 'adequate' number of trained staff	None to date	

Footnotes

- 1 Key points:
 - A Business Continuity Steering Group (BCSG) has been formed to oversee implementation across HPS. The intent of the BCSG is to provide implementation progress reports to the JMT highlighting areas' strengths and weaknesses with BCM implementation. Accordingly, it will oversee the BCM Policy and the preparation and testing of associated Business Continuity Plans (BCPs), in addition to providing a forum for sharing best practice within HPS.
 - Nomination of a Business Continuity Champion, to sit on the BCSG, has been requested from each Directorate.
 - Nomination of a Business Continuity Plan Author has been requested from within each Service Area.
 - Business Impact Analysis interviews are being conducted at Service level under the supervision of the BCSG.
- 2 Pending the implementation of 'Agresso' (a new HR system) in Apr 2011, the JEPU and HR are investigating how and who uses this powerful tool to support the routine business continuity management across HPS and, should an emergency response be necessary. Criticality of staff and posts can be held. This will enable the identification of non-critical staff with the required skills to be made automatically and confirmation of availability. As with the current system once the person is selected the notification letters can be produced automatically. Agresso has the option for staff to enter information to provide a skills database; any courses attended and qualifications achieved through the council would automatically be entered and records would be available for review/update as required and could form part of the SRD process. Agresso can be used to maintain lists of external volunteers for rest centres etc, records of the training, contact details, CRBs etc and can be used to send SMS messages to activate them in an emergency. Agresso would replace the SARS absence reporting system and would allow for daily reporting of absence. This would include what ever category you wished such as pandemic flu, severe weather preventing travel and looking after sick children. The system can give trends and total reports either automatically or on demand. Although NHS staff will continue to be managed by ESR, providing the data is available on ESR, Agresso will be able to access it as the systems can communicate. The Team were not aware of what plans the NHS have when the period of Central Gov funded support for ESR finishes or when the impact of the NHS white paper is identified. The Agresso team are confident that whoever owns the staff redeployment process would not have a high work load maintaining the information as it is either done automatically or by individuals and managers providing the data and inputting it. The main problem would be the level of clearance for access to the data. Agresso is able to produce reports on the data easily such as the number absent with flu, the trend (it can also alert you if a trend reaches a trigger point) the number of critical staff absent, the number of staff redeployed.