

Cabinet Member Report Highways and Transportation

In response to the invitation from the Environment Scrutiny Committee I am pleased to present the following report.

Overview

The Highways and Transportation Service was reorganised during 2004/5 to deliver services on an area basis. Managers for the North, South and Central areas have responsibility for maintaining the highway network, delivering road transport schemes and providing street and toilet cleansing services. As part of this reorganisation the area teams were collocated at Thorn Depot, Rotherwas alongside Hereford Jarvis Services.

The Department for Transport gives authorities a score in relation to their annual Local Transport Plan (LTP) performance based on an assessment of the Annual Progress Report. Herefordshire Council has been graded "Above Average" and given a score of 86%, an improvement on last year's score (scores for other authorities range from 36% to 96%). This score has also contributed to the Council's continuing Comprehensive Performance Assessment score of "Good".

The authority has been named as one of just 17 new centres of excellence for local transport delivery, including public transport and road safety, by the Local Transport Minister. The Minister commented that the hard work and implementation of improvements by the new centres of excellence for transport has resulted in improvements in the condition of local roads through to better buses and safer streets.

Herefordshire Council's proactive approach has seen the establishment of a Transport Ambition Group to oversee the development and implementation of local transport strategy. This has flowed out of the development of the Local Transport Strategy through the Herefordshire Partnership – itself having received national recognition as a pathfinder.

Examples which impressed the Government included:

- Herefordshire Rural Transport Partnership - one of the first and most successful in the country, delivering, with the voluntary sector, many successful community-based projects.
- St James and Bartonsham Community Travel Plan working with community members to deliver behavioural change through measures such as individualised marketing and innovative street design, drawing upon the significant expertise in this field of Ben Hamilton-Baillie, specialist in urban design and movement.

The Draft Enforcement Strategy for Public Rights of Way was finalised.

The service delivery partnership between Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Jarvis Services and Owen Williams has been developing and strong links have been forged.

Service Delivery 2004/5

Delivering the Programme

In 2004/5, following an increase in funding of £1.25M from the previous year, the Council, once again, stepped up delivery of the Local Transport Plan programme, investing over £11M capital and over £7M revenue funding in a wide range of transport improvements which are delivering important outcomes for the people of Herefordshire. See Appendix 1 for further details.

Cycling – New cycle parking facilities have been installed at Leominster Rail Station providing ease of access and greater security for cyclists. New cycle tracks have been implemented as part of the Roman Road improvement scheme and the Leominster Industrial Estate Access Road scheme. A new cycleway installed in the South Wye area Of Hereford has provided an important link between two schools and the Great Western Way cycle route.

The English Regions Cycling Development Team, an organisation established by the Government, has recently assessed the Council for the standard of the work we do to promote and improve conditions for cyclists. The Council was identified as one of the top twelve authorities in the country, in relation to improved performance in this area and received a commendation for this work.

Pedestrian Access Improvements – A number of pedestrian access schemes consisting of new footways and dropped crossings have been completed at various locations in Hereford, (such as the Lift Scheme in Belmont), Leominster, Bodenham, Bridstow, Burghill, Colwall and Leintwardine. A toucan crossing was also installed in Leominster as part of the Leominster Industrial Estate Access Road Scheme, and Pelican crossings have been installed at two new locations in Hereford.

Public Transport and Accessibility – The complete refurbishment of Leominster Rail Station forecourt has improved the safety and quality of the environment. Completion of the innovative Low Floor Bus Project was achieved with the addition of a further 10 new buses. There are now 50 low floor buses in operation within the county fleet. To complement the investment in vehicles new wheelchair accessible bus stops were provided at 10 locations around the County. The introduction of such vehicles has led to average increases in passengers being carried on these services by 8 per cent. Temporary Park and Ride schemes also operated for the Hereford City over the Christmas period in advance of the proposals for developing permanent facilities.

Significant changes to the local bus network took place in September 2004 and new bus timetables were published to inform passengers of the changes to services. The Council has again received a

commendation for the quality of the timetable information produced by a national independent review.

School Travel – Safer Routes to School Schemes included the installation of dropped crossings and cycle parking at John Kyrle High School and a new footway link at John Masefield High School. Cycle parking facilities have also been provided for a number of schools, and 22 more Schools adopted travel plans during the year.

Promoting Sustainable Transport – A further 13 businesses signed up to implementing the Rotherwas Travel Plan, and the Hereford Mini Map was launched which aims to encourage sustainable travel by highlighting 10 minute walking and cycling zones on a map of Hereford City. The continued promotion of the www.twoshare.co.uk website has proved a success with over 250 people now registered.

Road Safety – Improvements were undertaken at 9 accident cluster sites where there had been 78 road traffic accidents over the previous five year period, and 15 reduced or extended speed limits were introduced in rural areas. An important scheme during the year was the introduction of traffic signals on the A4103/A417 Newtown Crossroads in a bid to reduce road casualties.

Maintenance - Significant highway network maintenance and improvement works including resurfacing, surface treatment and some reconstruction work was undertaken.

The condition of local roads in the County continued to improve, achieving the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) target of no more than 10% of non-principal roads exceeding the prescribed deterioration threshold.

Bridges - The replacement of the bridge at Bridge Sollers in 2004 was a considerable achievement and this has been reflected in the gaining of two prestigious awards during the year. In addition the replacement of Greytree Road Culvert, Ross-on-Wye has minimised the risk of flooding and ensured continued full access to adjacent serviced accommodation for the elderly.

A4103 Roman Road – the improvement of Roman Road between the C1095 Tillington Road and the A480 Credenhill road has been substantially completed. This has brought considerable benefits for vehicular traffic through widening and surface reconstruction, and also for pedestrians and cyclists through the introduction of a new footway and cycleway.

Leominster Industrial Estate Access Road – This new access road was completed in October 2004. This road plays a vital role in opening up a £20 million enterprise park, and also provides for pedestrians and cyclists by creating a new access route into Leominster town centre from the estate.

Meeting and Stretching Targets

Performance against targets is good and the following have been achieved;

- 15% increase in cycling;
- 7.9% increase in the numbers of cycles parked at public cycling parking facilities in the centre of Hereford;
- 7.2% increase in the number of rail passengers;
- 17 employers adopting Employer Travel Plans; and
- 22 schools adopting School Travel Plans.

90% of targets are on track. Appropriate action is being taken to address the one target not on track, reduction in slight casualties, to bring it in line with overall performance.

Other Achievements:

- The Public Rights of Way Service in partnership with Tourism, Parks and Countryside Service, Public Relations and Archaeology ran the 3rd Walking Festival in June 2004. The festival was well received with excellent feedback from both walks leaders and participants alike.
- Transportation as the service joined the scope of ISO 14001, the international standard for environmental management, at the end of July 2004. Transportation exceeded their target for children walking and cycling to school and increasing the use of public transport.
- Improvement Plan for Public Rights of Way as specified in the CROW Act, commenced implementation in 2004.
- Achieved LPSA targets for accident reductions and the condition of local roads in March 2005
- Transportation has been involved in a variety of activities, such as, the Winter Walking Festival, and the Christmas Anti-Drink Drive Campaign.

Service Delivery 2005/6 (April 05 – May 05)

The Department of Transport announced on the 3 December 2004 the Local Transport Capital Funding Allocations for 2005/6. This funding provided through the Local Transport Plan forms a major part of the overall budgets for Highways and Transportation.

The funding allocation is as follows:

	2005/6 Allocation	Notes
Highway Maintenance Indicative Allocation	£7.560 million	£1.318 million increase on 2004/5 allocated by formula. The letter also includes an indicative maintenance allocation of £7.802 million for 2006/7.
Integrated Transport Indicative Allocation	£2.900 million	In accordance with previously notified indicative allocation. However, this represents a reduction on funding compared to 2004/5 primarily as a result of the completion of Roman Road and Low Floor Bus schemes.
Total	£10.460 million	

The Council was required to submit a revised provisional Local Transport Plan (LTP2) in July 2005 with the final version being deposited by April 2006. The final version of the Government guidance was published just before Christmas and the work is underway to prepare a document that complies with the guidance and sets out a comprehensive transport strategy for Herefordshire. This is a major piece of work and is being supported by a number of detailed studies and policy reviews including a feasibility evaluation of Park and Ride for Hereford, an HGV study in relation to North West Herefordshire and the development of an Accessibility Strategy. In addition a review of the Parking Strategy was undertaken by Environment Scrutiny Committee,

Herefordshire Council and Herefordshire MIND have received national recognition after a transport scheme aimed at helping people in isolated communities was short listed and received the top honours at an award ceremony in London in June 2005.

The 'Out and About Transport Project' has provided buses, cars, advice and support to people with mental illnesses across the county. Under the scheme, which has received funding from Advantage West Midlands, Herefordshire Primary Care Trust and Lloyds TSB Foundation, people with mental illness can access mini-buses, cars, travel tokens and support services.

Around 180 people from Hereford, Leominster, Ledbury and Bromyard regularly benefit from more than 600 passenger journeys a month.

Work started in the first week of May on the initial phase of a major enhancement project to revitalise the City centre. The project started with the refurbishment of Eign Gate with the initial phase being completed on 8 June; the entire completed project will be finished by the end of September 2005. The refurbishment of Eign Gate will include new paving, street lighting, seating and the replanting of trees.

The beginning of June also marked the start of the experimental pedestrianisation of Widemarsh Street. The road is closed to vehicular traffic between 10.30am and 4.30pm daily until the end of December 2005. During that period extensive surveys are being conducted and evidence collected to help the Council gain a clear insight into the long-term impacts of a permanent closure before a decision is made.

The Way Forward

The Council has agreed an Annual Operating Plan. This plan is in place to show what and how the Council, and its Directorates will achieve throughout the year, in line with the Corporate Plan targets. The Operating Plan is being reviewed on a regular basis and progress will be reported to Chief Executives Management Team and Cabinet Member.

The actions from the Operating Plan include;

- Implement traffic & road safety schemes, deliver safer routes to schools & highways maintenance programmes / Road Safety Education & Awareness (School Travel Plans) / Traffic Management Act Powers / Prioritise Accident Sites / Prioritise Accident Works / Develop protocols for a Joined Up Approach with Area Teams
- Implement Integrated Transport Plan / LTP (Park & Ride Progression)/ Review Bus Strategy
- Implement LTP Programme / Subsidised Bus Services

See Appendix 2 below for further details of the contribution to the Operating Plan.

As well as the operating plan, the Highways and Transportation Service is supported by a suite of strategies and policies which include the LTP, Highway Maintenance Plan and PROW Strategy. A Transport Asset Management Plan and Winter Maintenance Plan are under preparation.

LPSA2G Priorities, which are being negotiated, include making Herefordshire's Highway network safer and in better condition, and the streets cleaner.

Other changes and projects for Highways & Transportation are:

- The development of Quality Assurance through the rollout of ISO9001.
- The progression of the Rotherwas Access Road
- The monitoring and proposed implementation of Widemarsh Street Pedestrianisation
- Public transport services e.g. securing South Wye services through Wyes Moves

- Flood alleviation scheme in Ross-on-Wye with an estimated cost of £6.5m and a provisional start date of 2006.
- Flood alleviation scheme at the Belmont Roundabout in Hereford assisted through planning gain
- Completion of the Roman Road Improvement Scheme;
- The development of proposals for a permanent Park and Ride sites for Hereford.
- Implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders

Continued investment in our programme of behavioural change measures to encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of travel.

The performance of the Highways Agency in improving safety on trunk roads in Herefordshire continues to be a matter that will be a cause of concern for the Council if their rate of progress does not match that of the Council.

Councillor D. B. Wilcox

Cabinet Member – Highways and Transportation

28th July, 2005

Appendix 1

Local Transport Plan Strategies and Major/Minor Schemes	2004/5 planned LTP spend*	2004/5 Outturn
Transport Strategies		
Hereford Integrated Transport Strategy	237	179
Rural Areas and Market Towns Integrated Transport Strategy	236	195
Countywide (Includes Local Road Safety Strategy)	751	1,157
Major/minor' Schemes		
Rotherwas Access Road	425	450
Roman Road Improvement	3,100	3,835
Low Floor Bus Project	500	501
Managing the Highways Network		
Highway Maintenance	5,022	5,488
Bridge Maintenance	500	482
Capitalise Transport Staff	301	300
Local LTP Capital	11,072	12,587

All figures £000's

*Programme as reported in Annual
Progress Report July 2004

Appendix 2

Extract from the Annual operating Plan 2005-06

Ambition: Develop an integrated transport system for Herefordshire

Council Priority	Indicator	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Milestone	Action	By When
Improve transport and the safety of roads	Number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions	<209	146	LPSA2G indicator & target under negotiation currently <187	6 Monthly - Current Performance / 2	Implement traffic & road safety schemes, deliver safer routes to schools & highways maintenance programmes / Road Safety Education & Awareness (School Travel Plans) / Traffic Management Act Powers / Prioritise Accident Sites / Prioritise Accident Works / Develop protocols for a Joined Up Approach with Area Teams	Jun-05
	Local bus services (passenger journeys per year) (000's)	3,820	3,447	3,928	Annual / 3 month review of the JUP	Implement Integrated Transport Plan / LTP (Park & Ride Progression)/ Review Bus Strategy	Jul-05
	Change in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes (index)	103		104	Annual / 3 Monthly review of JUP	Implement LTP Programme / Subsidies Bus Services	Ongoing

Council Priority	Indicator	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Milestone	Action	By When
	No. of cycling trips (index)	115		118	Delivery against the JUP (quarterly)	Deliver LTP programme	In accordance with the programme
Sustain vibrant and prosperous communities, provide more efficient, effective and customer-focused services and clean streets	% of the non-principal road network where structural maintenance should be considered	51%	29.05%	26%	Delivery against the JUP (quarterly)	Deliver LTP programme	In accordance with the programme
	% of the local authority principal road network where structural maintenance should be considered	Indicator amended for 2004/5	55.38%	3 target to be revised - set on previous indicator			

Appendix 3 National: Best Value Performance Indicators

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
BV96/223 Corp PI	Condition of principal roads - % worse than condition threshold	Indicator being amended	55.38				Targets not required by Audit Commission
BV97a/22 4a Corp PI	Condition of non-principal roads - % worse than condition threshold - classified	51%	29.05%				Targets not required by Audit Commission
BV97b/22 4b	Condition of non-principal roads - % worse than condition threshold – unclassified	44%	19.9%				Targets not required by Audit Commission
	Road safety						
BV99a(i) Corp PI	Number of Casualties All KSI	<209	146	<197	<187	<177	Actual figures relate to Calendar Year 2003.
BV99a(ii)	Percentage Change over previous year - All KSI	-6%	-3%	-6%	-5%	-5%	Targets for casualties are “no more than”.
BV99a(iii)	Percentage Change over 1994-8 average All KSI	-16%	-41%	-21%	-25%	-29%	The percentage increases in slight injuries are less than the anticipated increase in traffic volumes.
BV99b(i)	Number of Casualties Children KSI	19	6	<18	<17	<15	
BV99b(ii)	Percentage Change over previous year Children KSI	-6%	-25%	-6%	-6%	-7%	
BV99b(iii)	Percentage Change over 1994-8 average Children KSI	-15%	-73%	-20%	-25%	-30%	
BV99c(i)	Number of Casualties All Slight Injuries	738	719	<744	<750	<756	
BV99c(ii)	Percentage Change over previous year All Slight Injuries	+1%	-15%	+1%	+1%	+1%	
BV99c(iii)	Percentage Change over 1994-8 average All Slight Injuries	+3%	0%	+3%	+4%	+5%	
BV100	Number of days of temporary traffic controls or closures per kilometre of traffic sensitive road – local authority works only	0.2 days	3.1861 days	1.1 days	1.0 days	0.9 days	Target missed due to Folly Lane works. Target for 2005/6 in line with Joined Up Programme

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
BV102 Corp PI	Local bus services (passenger journeys per year)	3,820,500	3,447,528	3,928,000	3,938,000	3,948,000	Survey of operators currently underway – results due to be available end of May.
	Fair Access						
BV165	The percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people.	96%	93.1%	65%	75%	85%	PI amended – revised targets for 2005/06 2004/05 out-turn lower due to expected works on Commercial road not taking place thus kerb heights not altered.
BV178	The percentage of the total length of footpaths and other rights of way that were easy to use by members of the public – CSS/CA Methodology used to measure	46%	45%	47%	48%	49%	Surveys already completed therefore this is actual outturn.
BV186a	Percentage of principal road network not needing major repair by cost per km	168	103				PI Deleted
BV186b	Percentage of non-principal road network not needing major repair by cost per km	237	269				PI Deleted
BV187	Condition of footways	34.5%	32.35%	34%	33%	32%	
BV215a	The average number of days taken to repair a street lighting fault, which is under the control of the local authority.						New Indicator – Targets not required
BV215b	The average time taken to repair a street lighting fault, where response time is under the control of a DNO.						New Indicator – Targets not required

Local: To be reported to Members

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
Corp PI	Change in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes - 1% growth p.a.	103	102.1 Hereford 99.8 Rural	104	105	106	Data for 2004/5 more robust following improved collection methods. Targets to be revised in LTP 2.
Corp PI	No. of cycling trips (index) based on 12 hour week-day cycle movements	115	128	118	120	123	
	Percentage of subsidised bus services operated with disabled accessible vehicles	75%	79%	80%	80%	80%	Revised target due to Low-Floor Bus Project completed in 2004/5. No further existing contracts can be converted. The expected above-inflation increase in tender prices over the next two years will lead to some existing low-floor contracts not being renewed.
	Kilometres of rural footways constructed	1.25 km	1.5km	1.0km	1.0km	1.0km	
	% of days public conveniences facilities closed	1.15%	2.15%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	Last quarter increase due to problems with water management systems
	Number of Penalty Charge Notices issued – amended indicator	23,000	23,562	23,000	23,000	23,000	
	Percentage (Number) of Penalty Charge notice appeals cases “lost” at appeal as a percentage of those taken to adjudication	<50%	17%	<50%	<50%	<50%	
	Network Serviceability						
	The percentage of major roadwork schemes that over-run the published completion date.	0%		0%	0%	0%	Two projects overrun Folly Lane and Newtown Crossroads. Both traffic signals schemes required re-programming to accommodate greater complexity than envisaged

Ref	Target/Indicator	Target 2004/05	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Target 2006/7	Target 2007/8	Comments
							when completion dated were first published.
	Network Sustainability						
	The annual expenditure for reactive maintenance to running surfaces compared with the annual expenditure for programmed structural maintenance	17%	18%	16%	15%	15%	
	Bridges						
	Number of bridges inspected to safeguard structural integrity (two year rota).	395	428	395	395	395	