

Action Plan-Follow up of Audit Commission Recommendations

	Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
	Recommendations from 2004/05 Audit Commission Reports					
	<i>Procurement Report</i>					
R1	<i>implement an effective working relationship between the political and managerial lead of procurement in order to provide effective leadership and strategy</i>	High	Procurement and Efficiency Review Manager	yes	This is linked to Herefordshire Connects. The integrated back office work stream includes procurement. An OJEU notice for the Herefordshire Connects Programme will be placed shortly. New post in the Resources Directorate. The post is currently vacant. The post will be treated as self funding and should be filled by September 2006.	March 07
R2	<i>Implement the corporate procurement strategy, ensuring actions are clearly outlined, responsibilities allocated and timetables established.</i>	High	Procurement and Efficiency Review Manager	yes	This is linked to Herefordshire Connects. The integrated back office work stream includes procurement. An OJEU notice for the Herefordshire Connects Programme will be placed shortly. New post in the Resources Directorate. The post is currently vacant. The post will be treated as self funding and should be filled by September 2006.	March 07
R3	<i>Establish a centre of procurement expertise which easily provides procurement strategy and operational advice and best practice.</i>	High	Procurement and Efficiency Review Manager	yes	This is linked to Herefordshire Connects. The integrated back office work stream includes procurement. An OJEU notice for the Herefordshire Connects Programme will be placed shortly. New post in the Resources Directorate. The post is currently vacant. The post will be treated as self funding and should be filled by September 2006.	March 07
R4	<i>That a skills audit is carried out across the</i>		Procurement and Efficiency Review	yes	This is linked to Herefordshire Connects. The integrated back office work stream includes	March 07

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	<i>carried out across the council, including members, and that as a result a training and development programme is developed and implemented</i>		Manager		procurement. An OJEU notice for the Herefordshire Connects Programme will be placed shortly. New post in the Resources Directorate. The post is currently vacant. The post will be treated as self funding and should be filled by September 2006.	
R5	<i>Undertake a review of all procurement procedures and practices across the council, using the information gained to design and implement best practice linked with the corporate strategy, training programme and Procurement guidance for staff.</i>	High	Procurement and Efficiency Review Manager	yes	This is linked to Herefordshire Connects. The integrated back office work stream includes procurement. An OJEU notice for the Herefordshire Connects Programme will be placed shortly. New post in the Resources Directorate. The post is currently vacant. The post will be treated as self funding and should be filled by September 2006.	March 07
R6	<i>Publish a guide to 'doing business with the council' on the internet and provide accessible guidance to councillors and staff on procurement procedures</i>	High	Procurement and Efficiency Review Manager	yes	This is linked to Herefordshire Connects. The integrated back office work stream includes procurement. An OJEU notice for the Herefordshire Connects Programme will be placed shortly. New post in the Resources Directorate. The post is currently vacant. The post will be treated as self funding and should be filled by September 2006.	March 07
R7	<i>Prepare and publish a</i>	High	Procurement and Efficiency Review	yes	This is linked to Herefordshire Connects. The integrated back office work stream includes	March 07

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	<i>three to five year forward procurement plan</i>		Efficiency Review Manager		integrated back office work stream includes procurement. An OJEU notice for the Herefordshire Connects Programme will be placed shortly. New post in the Resources Directorate. The post is currently vacant. The post will be treated as self funding and should be filled by September 2006.	
R8	<i>Develop and implement a method for consulting suppliers and implementing improvements as a result</i>	High	Procurement and Efficiency Review Manager	yes	This is linked to Herefordshire Connects. The integrated back office work stream includes procurement. An OJEU notice for the Herefordshire Connects Programme will be placed shortly. New post in the Resources Directorate. The post is currently vacant. The post will be treated as self funding and should be filled by September 2006.	March 07
R9	<i>Design and implement evaluation processes including hard and soft measures of procurement processes in order to improve practice in real terms</i>	High	Procurement and Efficiency Review Manager	yes	This is linked to Herefordshire Connects. The integrated back office work stream includes procurement. An OJEU notice for the Herefordshire Connects Programme will be placed shortly. New post in the Resources Directorate. The post is currently vacant. The post will be treated as self funding and should be filled by September 2006.	March 07
	Core Process Review Report					
R10	<i>Internal Audit's 2005/06 fundamental systems</i>	High	Principal Audit Manager	Yes	The 2005/06 programme includes delivery of all	July 2005 to March

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	<i>fundamental systems audit are delivered promptly, ensuring that all are completed by 31st March 2006 at the latest</i>		Manager		fundamental system testing between quarter two and quarter 4. The pressures in 2004/05 are not anticipated to be repeated during 2005/06.	2006
R11	<i>Budget holder data maintained in Cedar is brought up to date and then updated on an on-going basis for any changes in resources or responsibilities where relevant.</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (DK)	Yes	Action is being taken. The Cedar list of revenue budget holders will be fully updated by the end of June and Directors will be asked to confirm accuracy. A similar process is ongoing for capital budget holders which will similarly require Director confirmation. It is intend to repeat this exercise annually and service accountants have been briefed to keep the Cedar record as up to date as possible.	July 2006
R12	<i>Budget virements are separately identified, evidenced and authorised as recommended in the Assistant County Treasurer's memo.</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (DK)	Yes	Virement policies have now been reviewed and redrafted. These revised policies will be presented to CMB for approval. Once adopted there will be a separate indicator in Cedar enabling the identification of 'true' virements.	July 06

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	<i>Financial Aspects of Corporate Governance Report</i>					
R13	<i>The Service Improvement Programme is supported by a monitoring framework to ensure that 'those charged with governance' are aware of progress and any action that is being pursued due to revisions in initial plans</i>	High	Assistant County Treasurer (AT)	Yes	See Cabinet Report 20/04/06– Herefordshire connects Programme Governance paragraph 37 to 47	
R14	<i>Ensure that budget monitoring, forecasting and reporting focuses on high risk, volatile areas such a Social Care and that effective 'early warning' systems are in place</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (DK)	part	The Council does examine all areas including the former Social care budgets. Delivery programme report to Cabinet on 25 th May will identify important risk management at front line plus increased frequency of budget clinics for Adult and Community Services. Date...	
R15	<i>Consider following up council wide 'mail shot' on fraud prevention and detection with targeted</i>	Medium	Tony Ford	Yes	Now part of the Council's induction programme. Identified as a training requirement for all Audit Services team	December 06

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	<i>training</i>					
R16	<i>Ensure that the Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy available on the website is the final version</i>	Medium	Tony Ford	Yes	Completed 13/9/05	Implemented September 05
R17	<i>Priority is given to ensuring that the council complies with the requirements of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and the UK Money Laundering Regulations 2003.</i>	Medium	Tony Ford	Yes	Procedures in place. Training given to relevant staff. Presentation to Audit Committee Members on procedure. The Assistant County Treasurer(R&B) has been given the role of Money Laundering Reporting Officer (MLRO).	Implement April 06
R18	<i>For future NFI data matching exercises the council's lead Financial Aspects Of Corporate Governance officer attends training provided by the Audit Commission prior to starting work on the matches</i>	Medium	Tony Ford	Yes	It would be helpful if we were informed of the training.	As advised by Audit Commission
R19	<i>Internal and external reporting protocols need</i>	Medium	Tony Ford	No	Protocols were in place at the time of the review this is borne out by the comments in the	

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	<i>to be agreed for the outcomes of NFI data matching investigations</i>				management letter i.e. Although we conclude that appropriate arrangements were in place it was disappointing that the Council did not attend free training.	
	<i>Financial Management follow up Report</i>					
R20	<i>Ensure budgetary monitoring reports submitted to Members are accurate</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (DK)	Yes	Ongoing process	Ongoing
R21	<i>Review budgets from a zero base on a cyclical basis</i>		Assistant County Treasurer (DK)	In part	Adult services and Children Services do this, with other directorates considering their budget plans for the year in light of the approved budget.	Implemented
R22	<i>Document budget setting requirements for budget holders in one set of guidelines, which can be easily understood and digested.</i>	Low	Assistant County Treasurer (DK)	Yes	This will form part of the new Scheme of delegation. Discussions are underway with wide consultation on the format of such a document.	July 06
R23	<i>Include an evaluation of all risks that may impact upon the medium term budget within the budget assessment.</i>	Low	Assistant County Treasurer (AT)	Yes	Director of Resources report to Cabinet has started the process. They will also be included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2006/07 to 2008/09 that is currently in preparation.	July 06

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R24	<i>Adopt a consistent and clear format for reporting the overall financial position and the forecast outturn.</i>		Assistant County Treasurer (DK)	Yes	Revised Integrated Performance report will be presented to Cabinet in July 06.	July 06
R25	<i>Identify both income and expenditure variances and forecasts in financial monitoring reports.</i>		Assistant County Treasurer (DK)	Yes	Completed with particular focus on volatile income such as Planning fees.	Implemented
R26	<i>Review budget profiling and ensure that all budgeted income and expenditure is monitored against profile.</i>	Low	Assistant County Treasurer (DK)	Yes	Review on annual basis next review due June 06. Profiling discussed at Corporate Finance Group on 5 th May 2006.	June 06
R27	<i>Report all significant variances from budget to members and the proposed action.</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (AT)	Yes	Will form part of revised Integrated Performance report will be presented to Cabinet starting July 06	July 06
R28	<i>Adopt a consistent approach to financial monitoring and reporting across the Authority.</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (AT)	Yes	Will form part of revised Integrated Performance report will be presented to Cabinet starting July 06	July 06
R29	<i>Central Finance lead financial awareness workshops for budget</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (AT)	Yes	This is being dealt with through the CPD Group. There are three levels of training and training sessions have been programmed.	September 06

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	<i>holders which emphasizes the adoption of good practices already in place in parts of the Authority.</i>					
R30	<i>Reflect MTFS key priorities in the medium term budget</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (AT)	Yes	Report in progress	July 06
R31	<i>Link corporate priorities to the Medium term Financial Plan over the four years of the plan</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (AT)	Yes	Report in progress	July 06
	<i>R32Put in place a risk register that is monitored and used to assess the risk associated with corporate costs. Use to assist budgetary information.</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (AT)		Duplicates R23	July 06
R33	<i>Ensure that reporting the MTFS covers revenue and capital expenditure for the full period of the plan.</i>	Medium	Assistant County Treasurer (AT)	Yes	Report in progress	July 06

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	<i>E Government Report</i>					
R34	<i>Ensure that the project management arrangements for the latest stage of the e-Gateway project comply with the Council's PRINCE 2 standards.</i>	Medium	Head of Information, Technology & Customer Services	Yes	<p>The Council contends that project management arrangements do comply with PRINCE 2 standards.</p> <p>An action plan is now in place to ensure the continual update of key documentation.</p> <p>Links will be placed in the PID to update its content to the working documents including SRB returns, benefits realisation etc.</p> <p>Change control procedures are now in place for all projects in accordance with PRINCE2 guidelines.</p> <p>The project manager is to undergo PRINCE2 training and the formal project review process that is in place with the Head of ICT and senior managers acts as a means of capturing any potential issues that may arise</p>	September 06
R35	<i>Develop and implement an e government communications plan to ensure that all stakeholders are appropriately informed and consulted.</i>	Medium	Head of Information, Technology & Customer Services	Yes	<p>An action plan is underway to involve even more closely Partnership stakeholders. Part of this will include an updated centralised communication plan. In addition, the Corporate Applications review, Customer Access Points and Customer Services Strategy implementation projects are being aligned with the e-Gateway Programme to ensure better communication to all stakeholders with a clear and consistent message.</p> <p>Stakeholder Management will be revisited during the e-Gateway Strategy work. Alignment of CAPS, e-Gateway and the Service Improvement</p>	September 06

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					Programme will include a citizen consultation to determine priorities.	
R36	<i>Develop a strategic approach to the use of access channels across the Council to ensure appropriate, clear and consistent methods of access are available to citizens.</i>	Medium	Head of Information, Technology & Customer Services	Yes	Contained within draft Customer Service Strategy Connected to Herefordshire Connects	March 07
R37	<i>Ensure that appropriate partner information is easily accessible from the Council web site.</i>	Medium	e-gateway Programme Manager & Jennifer Watkins	Yes	The authority will ensure that Partnerships be made more visible on the site by moving the link to the homepage. Organisational responsibility will be allocated to appoint a department to ensure Partnership information is up-to-date and correct.	September 06
R38	<i>Provide contact email addresses on the web site for all services.</i>	High	Head of Communication	Yes	Generic email addresses for Council Website under review.	December 06
R39	<i>Develop and implement a corporate approach to the performance management of customer services to drive service improvement.</i>	High	Head of Information, Technology & Customer Services	Check	This is already underway. The Corporate Performance Management project is underway to ensure a consistent approach to improvement.	March 07
R40	<i>Review the implementation of the</i>	High	Head of Information, Technology &	Yes	CRM requirements gathering has now been completed across the entire organisation	March 07

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	<i>implementation of the CRM system and assess the benefits of integration with back office systems.</i>		Customer Services		completed across the entire organisation. However, a corporate strategy review is underway and some of these requirements may alter.	
R41	<i>Develop a corporate approach to the use of ICT and e-government to address social inclusion that allows for shared learning and economies of scale.</i>	Medium	Herefordshire Connects Programme Board	Yes	The authority will incorporate this into the Corporate ICT Strategy project already underway	March 07